

Kindling curiosity

Why and how do we encourage curiosity in (anthropology) students?

TLHE 2019/20 project

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Abstract: This TLHE essay focuses on the kindling of student curiosity – a curiosity perhaps too often hindered by present-day university politics and pedagogics. As research has shown, curiosity can be said to be a foundational aspect of good and effective learning and student motivation. Furthermore, curiosity is not only core to learning *per se*, it is also integral to anthropology’s main methodology, namely ethnography. An ethnographer needs to be not only organized and prepared to learn about the life of the people s/he studies; s/he first of all needs to be open-minded and inquiring. In this way, an exploration and encouragement of anthropology students’ curiosity is both a central didactic method and central to their education in anthropology. Furthermore, as demonstrated by studies of what employers of anthropologists look for in potential candidates, a worldly curiosity and a creative mind are in fact core skillsets that employers find attractive and which, therefore, will get new-fangled candidates employed. Bearing all this in mind, this TLHE essay offers insights into the still scarce yet budding educational research of curiosity and curiosity-based learning (CBL). Subsequently, the essay provides descriptions and discussions of how I attempted to form and conduct my teaching of the master’s course on anthropological project design with a focus on the encouragement of student curiosity.

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Introduction: ‘You tell me?’

Today’s teaching is almost over. Three hours have passed, and a certain amount of fatigue has set in – a fatigue visible in the eyes of the master’s anthropology students I teach and, perhaps more so, in mine. Contrary to how the class is usually taught, we are not gathered in a classroom at the University of Copenhagen but looking at each other through a screen. Using Zoom, a computer technology that facilitates online meetings and teaching, the students and I have spent the day talking about ‘fieldnotes’ – that is, we have been discussing how we as anthropologists observe, and write down what we observe, when conducting our ethnographic field studies. Personally, I feel like today’s teaching has been productive. The students have asked questions – and good ones – and they have used another online platform, Padlet, to write down and discuss their own thoughts about what they – literally – want to take notice of during their individual field studies which they are soon to embark on. As a teacher, I feel confident that they are on the right path and that the class has produced the wanted learning outcomes. Yet, before ending today’s session, I allow the students to ask questions and speak their minds – something I always do as way of collectively summing up a given day’s lessons. A student writes to me, using Zoom’s chat function, saying that she has a question. ‘David, knowing my project, what do you think I should do? I mean, I’ve heard what you’ve said today, but I still think it is difficult to know what to write down and what not to write down. I’m afraid it just sometimes feels a bit overwhelming and confusing. Sorry’. Contemplating her question, a question and a concern that is not in any way atypical, I eventually answer her by voicing, more or less, the following words: ‘You tell me?’

While my asking the student to answer her own question did regrettably come off as overly crude, it is nevertheless illustrative of what I wish to discuss in this essay. In a nutshell, I wish to discuss how one (as a teacher and as a university) may encourage students to more actively and self-reliantly engage themselves with the questions and conundrums that their teaching inevitably spurs. Put differently, *I have made it my TLHE project to examine how one may structure and conduct one’s teaching in order to kindle student curiosity*. Indeed, as research has shown, teaching that spark and encourage student curiosity is a form of teaching that also increase ‘student learning’, ‘student motivation’ and ‘student independency’ (cf. Friedlander, 1965; Day, 1968; Jones, 1979; Rossing and Long, 1981; Opdal, 2001; Binson, 2009; Pluck and

Johnson, 2011; Jackson and Ward, 2012; Riehle, 2012; Shenaar-Golan and Gutman, 2013; Hopkins and Craig, 2015; Archer et al., 2017; Gurning and Siregar, 2017; von Renesse and Ecke, 2017) – all core qualities which many universities around the world, UCPH included (<https://om.ku.dk/strategi2023/uddannelse/>), strive to develop in their students. Furthermore, curiosity is not only a general quality of good university teaching and student learning, it is arguably central to the anthropological discipline. In other words, a good and skillful anthropologist is expected to have developed and to be able to retain a curiosity about the people and phenomena we study (cf. Okely, 2013). This has much to do with the key method of anthropology, namely the ethnographic field study. In conducting our ethnographic field studies, we anthropologists set out to study and learn about other people's way of life. As the aim is to learn about the perspectives of those we study, we anthropologists are thus taught to remain curious and open-minded rather than falling prey to our own pre-conceptions (ibid). Lastly, curiosity is not only valued academically but is also seen as having a value in terms of anthropologist employability. As labor market studies have indicated, curiosity is one of the key qualities that employers look for when seeking out new candidates for open positions (Kelley, 2005) (see also: <https://www.magisterbladet.dk/magasinet/2020/magisterbladet-nr-4-2020/antropologerne-har-smidt-tropehjelmen-og-udskriver-fakturaer>). Employers, in other words, expect people with an anthropological background to be able to contribute with inquisitiveness and innovation rather than “only” being competent cogs in the machinery.

In this way, my answering ‘you tell me?’, as exemplified in the introductory vignette, was an, albeit rudimentary, attempt to kindle curiosity in the student. Knowing her project, and knowing and believing in her ability, I wanted her to actively apply herself and that day's teaching to her specific educational issue rather than becoming a passively awaiting recipient of knowledge. I, in other words, wanted her to curiously engage herself, knowing that a significant learning outcome for an aspiring anthropologist doesn't solely lie in the answer itself but, more so, in learning how to pose the right questions and finding ways to answer them oneself – an ‘open-ended’, inquiry-based rather than ‘closed’ way of teaching known to be effective as documented by higher education research (Hattie, 2015; Schneider and Preckel, 2017) .

Now, if relying on the above-mentioned research, then kindling and/or keeping student curiosity should be central in (anthropological) university teaching. However, many have argued that present-day university politics and pedagogics are, perhaps, killing rather than kindling curiosity (Archer et al., 2017). As Hattie has much similarly argued: ‘today's university students are ... not necessarily self-regulated ... and need to be deliberately taught’

(2015: 79). The lack of student independence in thought and learning certainly has to do with variety of things such as political pressures, economic cutbacks, a greater emphasis on grades, “finishing on time” and a growing evaluation of a university degree in terms of student employability (cf. Tran, 2015). Surely, in a Danish and UCPH setting, this may be related to different university politics such as ‘fremdriftsreformen’ and ‘dimittendbeskræftigelse’ (Andersen and Jacobsen, 2017) – the latter being one of the primary issues that the newly appointed Head of the Department of Anthropology has promised to solve (<https://antropologi.ku.dk/ominstituttet/Nyheder/antropologis-nye-leder-skal-oege-dimittendbeskaeftigelsen/>)

While I personally find the existing critiques of how these mentioned developments are troubling university teaching (and research) to be valid, this essay won’t go into this debate in much detail. Put differently, rather than focusing on how student curiosity may/may not be hindered in current university contexts, the essay applies a more positive spin. Bracketing potentially existing problems, I, in other words, simply want to explore how certain kinds of (anthropological) teaching may enhance student curiosity. I will do so by, first, considering and summarizing the still somewhat sparse yet inspirational research on the value of curiosity in higher learning (cf. Friedlander, 1965; Day, 1968; Jones, 1979; Rossing and Long, 1981; Opdal, 2001; Binson, 2009; Pluck and Johnson, 2011; Jackson and Ward, 2012; Riehle, 2012; Shenaar-Golan and Gutman, 2013; Hopkins and Craig, 2015; Archer et al., 2017; Gurning and Siregar, 2017; von Renesse and Ecke, 2017). Secondly, building on this research, the essay will provide examples of how I, then, tried to form and conduct my teaching in order to foster curious mindsets among my students enrolled at the spring 2020 master’s course ‘Anthropological project design’. While I did manage to include certain, so to speak, curious intentions and interventions in my teaching, I must however also admit that I did so in a way that definitely could have been more thought through – a lack of planning not made easier by the fact that I didn’t myself plan the course curriculum (but was simply asked to teach it) as well as by the corona/covid-19 pandemic and the sudden move to pure online teaching. Therefore, I urge the reader to consider the deliberations and outcomes discussed in this essay not as providing any definitive answers but, rather, as a simple invitation to think more about the potentials (and problems) of what has also come to be known as ‘curiosity-based learning’ (CBL) (cf. Binson, 2009; Jackson and Ward, 2012). Having turned the last page of this essay, my simple hope is that I have – at least slightly – persuaded you of the benefits of a more intentional focus on kindling student curiosity in both the planning and doing of our teaching obligations.

Understanding and teaching curiosity

A first question in need of an answer in a discussion of student curiosity is probably ‘what is curiosity?’ While this question is not at all easily answered, and the cause of some debate in the literature, there seems to be somewhat of a consensus that the concept of curiosity has to do with a strong desire or interest in knowing something/someone. As Jackson and Ward have for instance put it, curiosity is ‘an eager desire to know’ (2012) or, in the words of Binson ‘curiosity is defined as a disposition to inquire, investigate or seek after knowledge’ (2009:14). Furthermore, people may be intrinsically curious at heart or already very interested in a given subject/object (ibid). Yet, curiosity may also be ‘piqued’, i.e. generated in a person (ibid). To be sure, such both intrinsic as well as inspirational aspects of curiosity are also, largely, the definition offered in reputable dictionaries. Moreover, to be curious is not only related to one already being inspired or to have specific form of desires/interests; to be curious also denotes being somewhat ‘unusual’ (ibid). Thus, one may say that curiosity is both related to the existence or encouragement of a strong interest *as well as* said interest not solely lying inside the boundaries of normalcy. Curiosity is, in short, about being more or less intensely interested in something, yet being so in an open-minded way that allows not only for the already anticipated but also for the unexpected.

With this as a broad yet useful working definition, additional steps have been taken in homing in on different kinds of curiosity. In research, for example, a distinction is often made between a ‘general curiosity’ or a ‘specific curiosity’ (Kidd and Hayden, 2015) (see also: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/our-innovating-minds/201707/creativity-whats-curiosity-got-do-it>). This distinction includes the following:

‘One type of curiosity is *general curiosity*. Sometimes referred to as "diversive" curiosity, this form of curiosity is associated with quite broad interests in seeking out many different kinds and varieties of novel information. It can be seen as emphasizing breadth rather than depth of exploration. General curiosity leads us to enjoy learning about new and unfamiliar topics or abstract concepts.

A second type of curiosity is *specific curiosity*. It is associated with efforts to learn or acquire particular sorts of information, especially facts that might fill a "gap" in one's knowledge about

a particular problem. This form of curiosity is associated with a more focused form of cognitive search. Specific curiosity is what might prompt us to stick with trying to solve a particular perplexing riddle, or to figure out precisely how a complicated piece of machinery works.’ (ibid, emphasis added)

Following this division, we may conclude that curiosity may be more or less undirected and adventurous, producing a ‘broad’ or ‘surface’ knowledge about many things *or* it may be directed or focused, producing a ‘deep knowledge’ (op cit) about given matters of interest. Herein also lies how curiosity relates to not only knowledge-generation but to creative thinking and innovation. As studies have suggested, curiosity can be seen as one of the core building-blocks of creativity. This is especially true of ‘general curiosity’ as such an open-mindedness and broad interest provides, in this case, the student with new-fangled perspectives and ideas to use in his/her thinking process (ibid).

Why curiosity works

”Curiosity is an aspect of intrinsic motivation that has great potential to enhance student learning.”(Pluck and Johnson, 2011: 24)

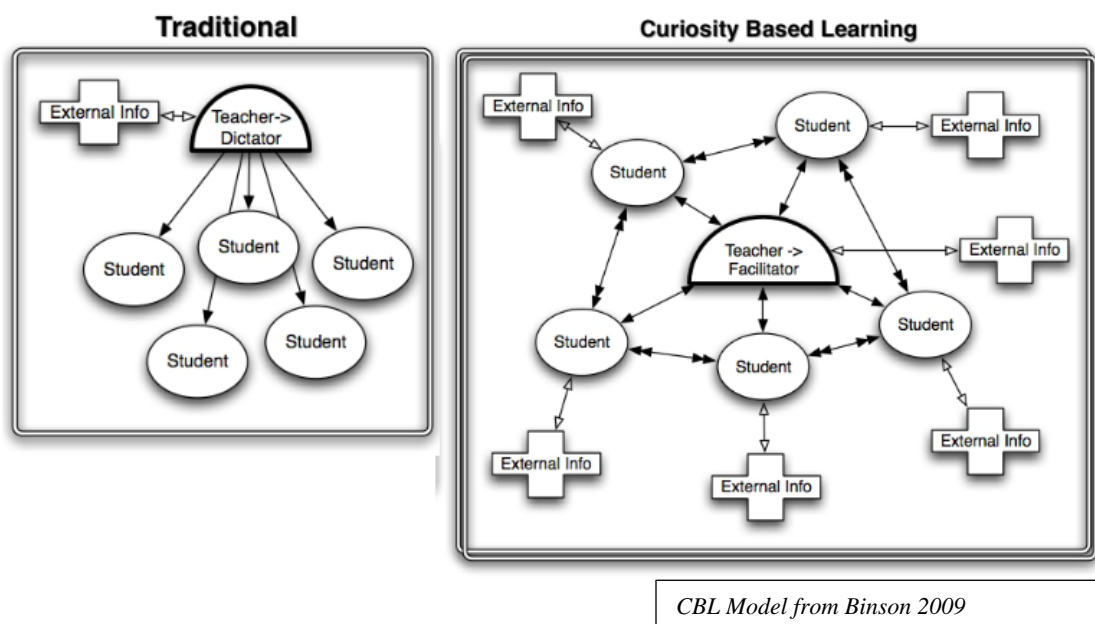
Another question is of course how curiosity may, then, be of benefit in the university classroom and to university students. Here, most research on the matter suggests what Pluck and Johnson also suggest in the above quote – namely that curiosity has a positive effect on the individual learners’ knowledge acquisition as well as being a key ingredient in promoting students’ personal motivation and their taking responsibility for their own learning. This is a conclusion also reached by other educational scientists who point to the benefits of curiosity in both young (Gurning and Siregar, 2017)) and adult learners (Rossing and Long, 1981) (see also (Day, 1968; Jackson and Ward, 2012)

While the literature is in disagreement about whether, for example, ‘specific curiosity’ or ‘general curiosity’ work best – Jones (1979) arguing that curiosity needs to have a specific direction and object to become useful and, contrarily, Koutstaal contending that a more broad-minded curiosity ‘sparked deeper idea generation, indirectly boosting creativity [with] specific curiosity had only a weak effect on idea generation’ (<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/our-innovating-minds/201707/creativity-whats-curiosity-got-do-it>) – there is a widespread agreement in terms of how curiosity works to

promote student learning, motivation and independence. Briefly summarized this has to do with how, as Jackson and Ward have argued, curiosity is used to encourage students

‘to explore a topic and arrive at [their own] conclusions ... exhibiting an ‘Active Learning’ behaviour, actively seeking out existing or discovering new knowledge rather than passively soaking up knowledge from a recognised source’. (2012)

Put differently, when, first, forcing and emboldening students to encounter the content of their course curriculum in an unprejudiced and interested way and, secondly, to actively apply themselves in their learning, the teacher’s role develops from that of ‘the dictator’ to that of ‘the facilitator’ while the student themselves, to some degree, become their own teachers (cf. Binson 2009) (See also model below). In modern higher education patois, a focus on curiosity is thus a gateway to a ‘flipped classroom’ (Bishop and Verleger, 2013) – and as scholarship here has taught us, students who become actively engaged in their own learning-process quite simply do better than those who are not (cf. Schneider and Preckel, 2017)



Curiosity-based learning (CBL)

Knowing what is meant when talking about curiosity, as well knowing the essential ideas behind why it actually works in enhancing student learning, motivation and independence, we

can now turn to the important question of ‘how to do it?’. How, in other words, do we as teachers create forms of teaching that kindle curiosity?

Though most literature on the matter has satisfied itself with pointing to the benefits of curiosity, a few, fairly recent higher education studies have tried to develop what, amongst other things, has been termed ‘curiosity-based learning’ (CBL) (Binson, 2009; Jackson and Ward, 2012). Such studies dwell not only on with the positives of curiosity but make suggestion in how to form teaching sessions to foster curiosity in students. Binson (2009), for example, has created a list of CBL approaches to and activities in teaching – a list which draws on and relates to similar constructivist pedagogical methodologies such as constructivism, experimental learning, problem-based learning, and especially, Binson argues, inquiry-based learning methods:

1. Student centered;
2. Instructor as a facilitator;
3. Investigative and explorative;
4. Requires an interactive group;
5. Activities designed to make the students aware of their initial self-limiting baseline of curiosity;
6. Activities designed to increase the student’s self- awareness of the importance of curiosity;
7. Activities designed to increase the student’s level of curiosity;
8. Experience with multimodal methods of representing and defending ones research
9. findings;
10. Experience with a model method of research that can be generalized for later use with any subject.

As Binson argues, alongside Jackson and Ward (2012), CBL is especially similar in its approach to inquiry-based teaching (ibid) by being student centered (1), seeing the instructor as a facilitator (2), fostering investigation and exploration (3) and requiring interaction (4). Yet, CBL also differs and is unique by its focus on the specifically curiosity-kindling approaches/activities listed from 5-10. While scholars admit that different ways of achieving both 1-4 and 5-10 in one’s teaching exist concrete teaching approaches are also offered. These include for example:

1. The teacher being friendly and respectful toward students
2. The teacher being willing to listen
3. The teacher showing signs of humor and enthusiasm
4. The teacher showing a strong energy and passionate interest in subjects
5. The teacher stimulating student thinking, questions and discussion
6. The teacher asking rhetorical / open-ended questions
7. The teacher not providing the entire answer but using, for example, key words etc.
8. The teacher making students draw up concept maps (or in other ways explore concepts themselves)

9. The teacher using examples, analogies etc. from other spheres of life or from the teacher's own research to relate content to students.
10. The teacher setting up and allowing students to explore and experiment

In short, as I will later touch upon in relation to my own attempt to kindle student curiosity, these approaches can be said to involve creating a specific 'curious atmosphere' in the classroom (1-4), applying a form of 'open-ended' teaching (4-7) as well as including a certain amount of experientiality (8-10).

To sum up, then, CBL is a way of teaching with a strict focus on fostering 'student initiative' and 'auto-didactics' (Jackson and Ward 2013) as well as allowing room for 'student self-expression and processes' (Binson 2009:13). Furthermore, as yet to be mentioned, CBL methods also very much rely on the teacher's ability to create a class-room atmosphere which invites students to not only participate but also to think and express themselves freely (cf. Jones 1979). Curiosity, in other words, can only be kindled if the teaching the students engage in doesn't make them docile but rather makes the active subjects. Importantly, however, the activation of student minds (and bodies) should not be uncontrolled and chaotic, without any direction. It demands of the teacher – or rather the facilitator – as Jones has contented, that s/he takes control and provides a limited yet not overly limiting framework in which the students can actively and inquisitively participate as well as a framework and teachings that the students recognize, though not entirely. As Jones has found out, '[A]rousal of curiosity even in adults may only be possible when the stimulus enticers include elements that are both novel and somewhat familiar.' (Jones 1979: 671). To be sure, herein lies one of the secrets of CBL – creating teaching that harbors both the familiar and unfamiliar; teaching that actively takes the students' and their thinking from inside the box to outside of the box.

Some curious interventions

With the knowledge of the potentials of curious students in mind, I set out to promote and kindle such curiosity in my classroom. Specifically, I did so during my spring 2020 master's course on 'Anthropological project design' (see description of content and learning outcomes below).

Content

Anthropological Project Design prepares students for carrying out an anthropological project in the third semester. Through the development of their own projects, students are taught how to create a project design, how to identify anthropological problems they can pursue in their project, how to combine theory and methodology in their design, and how to apply ethnographic methods in practice. The course emphasises the importance of gaining knowledge of the regional context and thematic issues for delimiting a project proposal. Moreover, students are trained in ethnographic methods, field note taking, and in handling the ethical and practical challenges of their project.

Learning Outcome

Knowledge

- To demonstrate knowledge of a broad regional and thematic field as a context for the project design
- To have an overview of relevant literature

Skills

- To independently formulate a precise research problem and operationalise it in research questions
- To elaborate a project design that enables the acquisition of ethnographic material to answer the research questions
- To prepare an analytical framework for the planned project

Competences

- To make analytical choices in light of a state of the art review of the literature within the field
- To take responsibility for creating, organizing, and planning a project that can be carried out in collaboration with interlocutors and/or co-researchers
- To make methodological choices in light of a research problem and to critically evaluate such choices
- To critically discuss ethical and practical challenges in the project.

As described above, the course aims to teach anthropology students how to write up an anthropological project design – and doing so in preparation for the following semester's fieldwork which they are subsequently supposed to embark on.

As an anthropological master's course, it would be fair to say that a focus on curiosity is of specific relevance. One may even say that it is an essential part of the course. It is so in a dual way. Curiosity is automatically a big part of the course as students join the course, themselves being inherently curious about certain issues that they themselves want to anthropologically explore. As such, most of the time, one as a teacher doesn't need to convince the students to be curious about what they are about to learn/do. Nevertheless, as already mentioned, curiosity can be also said to be a cornerstone of the anthropological cum ethnographic methodology or mindset which the course wishes to encourage. The fundamental idea is for the students to find, propose and explore issues in unprejudiced and interested ways, developing and staying curious about that and those they are to ethnographically research. In this way, keeping or kindling student curiosity during the course is essential and, although it's not, perhaps should be an official learning objective of its own.

As such, in wanting to rouse curiosity in anthropological project design students I may have set myself up for a rather easy task. This I admit. Still, remembering that curiosity is something that is not only 'good to have' but actually a 'must have' in writing and conducting an anthropological project, I nevertheless found it of great value to focus on in my teaching.

Building on the aforementioned literature's insights into how one may encourage student curiosity, I chose three didactic avenues or interventions which I attempted to incorporate in my teaching. These were

- 1) creating a curious classroom atmosphere,
- 2) open-ended ways of teaching, and
- 3) student explorations.

While they obviously differ from one another, my idea was for them to come together to promote curiosity-based learning, doing so by insistently creating a didactic space in which students feel welcome but also urged to apply themselves and their thinking in broad-minded and independent ways. Underneath I describe these three didactic avenues/interventions in more detail – both including their intention and what became of them. Followingly, in the essays next section, I will discuss (some of) their outcomes as I contemplate the both quantitative and qualitative feedback which the students provided me with as I, quite frankly, asked them to evaluate whether had found my teaching curiosity-kindling.

1. Creating a curious classroom atmosphere

During my teaching, I put a lot of effort in always approaching my teaching in a positive and friendly spirit – even if tired and troubled. The same goes for the way in which I approach and encounter my students, their interests and their worries. Disregarding what I taught, I insisted on letting the students know how truly interesting and fascinating I found it – also allowing my own interests and passions to shine through. While my active focus on appearing welcoming, enthusiastic and, indeed, curious may sound somewhat inexplicit, carefree or even theatrical, there is a body of literature (as earlier mentioned) that point to its benefits – both in terms of kindling curiosity but, more importantly, also in terms of creating a classroom in which students are more willing to be active learners and thus better learners. To be sure, if the student feedback (described further below) I got is of any value, then my deliberate attempt to create a welcoming and curious classroom was both noticed, appreciated and of worth.

2. Open-ended ways of teaching

This openly relates to the situation described in the introductory vignette where I asked, 'you tell me?' During my teaching I have made a conscious effort to both ask rhetorical

questions as well as open-ended questions, forcing/encouraging students to themselves seek out answers and argue rather than waiting for me to provide them with resolutions. Doing so, getting students to not only ask questions but answer their own (or their co-students) has been proven by many studies (both on classroom didactics and peer feedback (cf. Hattie 2015, Schneider & Preckel 2017) to be immensely productive. It forces the students, themselves, to be a creative force and to think through their questions. It is an opening up, rather than a closing down. And as studies have shown, students who are given the time to properly mull over their own questions, issues, problems etc. before the teacher jumps in with an answer, become students who both learn more, who remembers and who will become more self-governing as learners. This “open-endedness” has, for example, also been part and parcel of my weekly presentation of course readings where I have tried (yet also failed) to lay out the meanings of texts in non-conclusive ways, thus rousing the students to think with me. Indeed, on a more general level (remembering Binson 2009), I have attempted rouse the students approach the curriculum and their own projects in the same open-ended and non-conclusive ways, thus avoiding pre-conceptions and, hopefully, pushing them to enquiringly explore subjects at hand. Moreover, in every class I have incorporated opportunities for the students to themselves discuss, debate and investigate – urging them to remember that in anthropology, it is all about making an argument, i.e. no right or wrong answers exist as such, but good or worse arguments do. Prompting them to think of anthropology as a matter of empirically and theoretically substantiated argumentation has indeed been a something that the students have pointed to as a liberating (i.e. hopefully curiosity generating) aspect of my teaching as it changed their thinking from being result-oriented to being process-oriented.

3. Student explorations

During my teaching of the course, I have made attempts to invent what may be called ‘student explorations’ as part of a given day’s teaching. These are, however, not only “mere” 10-15 minutes student exercises where the students discuss certain questions/matters in groups, for example, or via OBL tools (something which I also make them do). Rather, ‘student explorations’ build on a growing teaching tradition at my department, noticeable in for example Stine Krøijer’s TLHE work on ‘the anthropological apprenticeship’ and, maybe most clearly, in the department’s Ethnographic Exploratorium (EE), being a (in Danish) ‘forum og et rum (CSS. 4.1.12)

til fremme af samarbejdende og eksperimenterende forsknings- og undervisningsaktiviteter på Institut for Antropologi med deltagelse af studerende og ansatte forskere.’ (<https://antropologi.ku.dk/etnografisk-eksploratorium/>)

What unites the above styles/ways/environments of anthropological teaching is that they all try to encourage student-teacher collaboration in experimental ways. And what they have all managed to demonstrate is that such experimental collaboration is of great benefit to the students. It invites the students into the actual process of research – and, in doing this, it shows the students what is required as anthropologists-cum-researchers and, more importantly, that they themselves already possess the ability to explore and create insights as anthropologists. The collaboration thus encourages students to be active in their own learning and it helps to raise the students’ self-confidence.

With this in mind, I have attempted to create, in class, my own form experiments. As the aim of the anthropological project design course is to prepare the students for their upcoming fieldwork, I specifically wanted them to, together with me, apply themselves and their thoughts to, chosen by me, concrete cases. As an example, I asked them to think about and go explore what a study of Copenhagen Central Station could involve. What would they, observing the everyday life of the station, choose to focus on(?), how(?) and why(?) if they were to do a study of this train station? This collaborative exploration proved tremendously prolific, I believe, as it allowed them to (in a, so to speak, “quick and dirty” way) create a miniature project design, thus applying the abstract concepts of their textbooks to a tangible reality. Going back to one of the key lessons in CBL learning, then one may say that allowing the student to actively experiment with their learnings and putting them to use, is exactly allowing for their creativity and curiosity to flourish. In this concrete case, it liberated each of the students from the confines of their own projects, which they, as earlier discussed, are otherwise overly focused on. Being “liberated”, they, without much assistance, managed to employ and enhance their anthropological knowledge – perhaps exactly because they didn’t think of their respective exams but were engrossed in the experiment at hand.

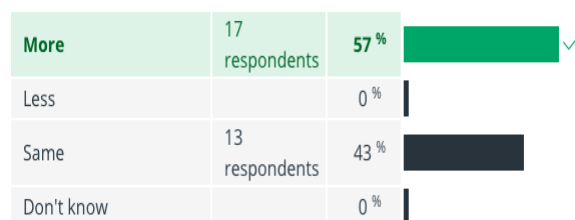
In sum, the three above attempts to kindle curiosity in the classroom and among students are more about the ‘microstructure’ (Schneider & Preckel 2017) than the macrostructure of the course teachings – that is they are possible interventions which one may incorporate inside an

already given structure. To be sure, a more overall and planned approach would have been of added value. Unfortunately, as I didn't have a say in the planning of the course but only in the teaching of it, I could only apply my curiosity-based learning interventions as part of my teaching and not, more generally, as part of the course curriculum.

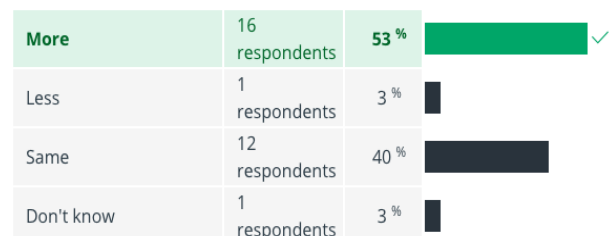
Some curious outcomes

What, then, did my attempts to kindle curiosity amount to? In order to answer this question, I, by the end of the course, asked the students to fill out an online and anonymous evaluation form. In designing the evaluation form, I focused squarely on how my teaching had indeed kindled student curiosity (or at least not killed it) as well on the outcomes of CBL described in the literature, namely that CBL should not only promote curiosity but subsequently make students more motivated, more knowledgeable and more confident in themselves as students/learners and thus more independent. Almost half of the students answered my survey (n=30). Their answers can be found below in figure 1.

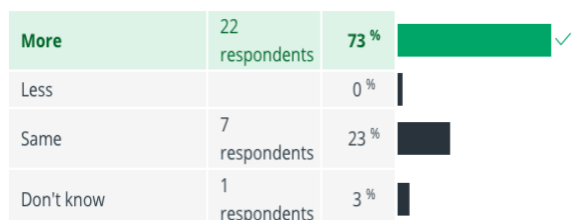
Has my teaching made you less or more curious about anthropology/your studies?



Has my teaching made you less or more motivated as anthropology students?



Has my teaching made you less or more knowledgeable about anthropology?



Has my teaching made you less or more confident in your studies/as a student?

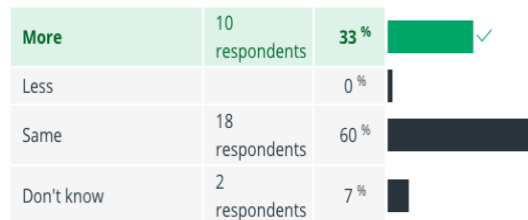


Figure 1: Student scores of CBL

Furthermore, I didn't only ask them to quantitatively score their own sentiments, I also asked them to, in writing, elaborate on:

- 1) "how/why you thought my teaching made you less or more curious about anthropology/your studies. Was it, for example, my personality, style, presentations, exercises, references to my own work etc. that worked/didn't work?"
- 2) "about what you think would make you (even more) more curious about your studies?"

I here included all the students' answers (including both English and Danish answers):

1) Please, in your own words, say a few words about how/why you thought my teaching made you less or more curious about anthropology/your studies. Was it, for example, my personality, style, presentations, exercises, references to my own work etc. that worked/didn't work?
I think the exercised you have made us do in class are useful. Also I like your style of teaching. I like how you emphasise you don't know everything and are willing to discuss different viewpoints in a non-judgmental way - I always find that a really good quality in teachers.
I think you have done a very good despite the circumstances of the COVID-19 situation.
I like that when you teach method it is not just a 'cross-off'-list. For example not only that we have to include 'ethical considerations', but actually consider which considerations and why (!)
It was very nice that you connected your teaching with the difficulties of your own work. It became more alive like that.
I liked the student exercises, both on- and offline. They made me do some creative on the ground thinking, but also made me engage with the literature in different ways. I was already very curious about all the things anthro can offer, so that didn't change much, but it was nice to work with this curiosity in the exercises.
I do think sometimes we talked a bit too long about one subject, which then limited the amount of discussions/exploring of other subjects we could perhaps have done.
Jeg synes, at din undervisningsstil har været sjov og afslappet - hvilket har gjort helheden af undervisningen mere spændende.
Jeg synes, at referencerne til dit eget arbejde har udgjort et fint grundlag for videre refleksion og diskussion.
It has been nice to have been taught by such a passionate teacher. You could feel whenever you were excited about the topic and seemed interested in our projects. And I liked how you used your own work as well. Except for the whole corona-thing I have really enjoyed this semester!
Du virker personligt investeret i faget og oprigtigt interesseret i vores projekter og velvære på holdet. Jeg kan godt lide, at du giver udtryk for (ofte ret eksplicit), hvor du selv placerer dig i ft. diskussioner mm inden for den antropologiske disciplin. Det gør din undervisning personlig og dig som underviser 'approachable' - man føler, at du mener det oprigtigt, når du siger, at man altid kan skrive til dig med spørgsmål (det er ikke alle lærere, man får den vibe af). Fornemmelsen af, at du interesserer dig for vores projekter, får man, når du fx henviser til dem i undervisningen - den gestus indikerer (i mine øjne i hvert fald), at du tager os seriøst, hvilket er ganske motiverende.
I only got the chance of a few teachings with you. I really liked your way of teaching! But I think this course is a bit different to teach in terms of provoking increased curiosity for anthropology. I already love anthropology, and you definitely did not destroy that interest, but I think the format of project design did not allow you to make it expand further. For that to happen I guess I would need some more theoretical perspectives/ideas, and some new-thinking illuminating insights from global fieldsites. But you were to teach ethics and methods in this course - which you did in a very engaging and interesting way :)
Din personlighed og lidt carefree, ikke så mange fucks giving, attitude og din mere sådan "business"-orienterede tilgang (her forstås den måde du lægger vægt på, at man skal kunne stramme sin tekst og sit fokus til og kunne pitche sin idé på en skarp og vedkommende måde og dermed sælge sit projekt) har været meget befriende for mig. Jeg har virkelig sat pris på din ærlighed omkring, hvordan akademia fungerer. Det er måske noget jeg har savnet lidt på studiet. Altså jeg har været lidt træt af det der med, at vi ikke bare kan tale ærligt om, at det jo også handler om at kunne sælge sin idé på en spændende måde, og at man, for at kunne komme i mål med det, må skære nogle nuancer og andre perspektiver fra. Jeg har godt kunnet lide, at du har gået ind i debatterne og udfoldet dine egne holdninger. Derudover har det været inspirerende for mig at høre om dit arbejde med politiet, fordi jeg selv er interesseret i det område. Så det har føltes ret vedkommende for mig personligt. Jeg kan desværre ikke sige, at jeg er blevet meget mere motiveret eller engageret på det her semester, men det ville være meget unfair at lægge det over på dig. Du har virkelig haft dine odds imod dig. Jeg har personlig været ret så umotiveret og uengageret på det her semester pga. corona og onlineeksistens, men jeg kan egentlig ikke komme på noget, jeg oplever, du kunne have gjort meget bedre. Dog har det måske været lidt udfordrende at få helt klare svar på eksamenskrav og -form, men det er jo heller ikke lige det, der er dit fokusområde for ønsket forbedring (tværtimod kunne man sige :)). Håber du kan bruge det til noget. Jeg synes bare, at du skal carry on med din gode energi og fede humor.

<p>For me, the way in which you involve your own point of view without making it the only valid point of view has made me reflect upon many of the ways in which I see anthropology. Probably because I didn't always agree and in some ways I think that it is more valuable to have a teacher who opposes your views than one who agrees with everything.</p> <p>Also thumbs up for making the online format work and for making it enjoyable!</p>
<p>I think the references to your own work was very inspiring. Also, just the reminder of the seriousness of anthropology was very motivating and made me more eager to keep on going and explore the possibilities and liminations within the field.</p>
<p>Dear David,</p> <p>Thank you for some great teaching. It was nice that you wasn't so very confused about the digital elements such as chat, muting and so. The digital teaching did not seem so strange to you - that was nice, and helped me through the teaching :)</p> <p>Furthermore I liked, that for the most part the excercises were something you could do on your own, and not in groups, breakout rooms or the like. Great presentations with quotes and great use of the course literature.</p> <p>Regarding my curiosity in anthropology, I might be too swallowed up in planning my project design, confused by corona and so, to become inspired at this point :) But that's not your fault - blame on the corona :)</p>
<p>I think your way to involve students in the way you do has helped me in an otherwise very "unproductive environment" due to the coronavirus and my general lack of motivation to both my own effort and interest in anthropology at the moment. I have generally been very unmotivated for my studies ever since we moved to the digital world, but thanks to your encouraging way of teaching I have at least participated in your lectures and got to think about ideas like art/science and ethics. I liked how you have generously shared your own experiences from fieldwork and invited us to take part in the discussions. A way for anthropology students to become more curious under these current circumstances could perhaps also be to include the weird circumstances as a point of reflection for anthropology - how anthropological knowledge can help us understand the current situation, for example by drawing on classics like purity/danger, or how the computer screen affects our way of being students (like Daniel Miller's video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSiTrYB-0so on how it can sometimes be easier to 'open up' in online interviews for example). But thank you for all your encouraging and positive attitude in teachings! I haven't read any of the provided literature this semester (!!!?) (something that I have always read t-h-o-r-o-u-g-h-l-y), so in that way my motivation in general is really lacking. But thank you for all the work you have done for us, inviting us to and helping us to still reflect on anthropology, even under the current discouraging circumstances!</p>
<p>Din egen entusiasme for faget og dit store engagement omkring alle vores projekter. Dét, at du ikke er bleg for at melde din egen holdning til tekster, teori mm på banen, så man ved hvor du står.</p>
<p>It was all the group discussions and that you allowed us to engage a lot. I feel like you talk a bit much about your own field work though</p>
<p>I have become more curious and definitely more motivated after your lectures. In my opinion, especially your teaching style (which is both very professional and down to earth at the same time) as well as the exercises have worked really well.</p>
<p>All texts have been backed up by great integration of personal experiences as well as inspiring hands-on 'core of the discipline' techniques in terms of both practical methodology and academic writing.</p>
<p>I liked your teaching style and that your mood was always positive. Was very uplifting. I think the teaching was very theoretical and you explained the texts super well which was actually really useful - but it didn't make me that more curious. Although you used examples from own fieldwork I think I (personally) would have been more curious if it had been examples from a fieldwork closer to my own project and interests.</p>
<p>I have really liked the way that you have used concrete examples from your own studies during your teaching. it makes it easier to listen actively, when you are a student and it also enables you to nuance a point.</p> <p>For me personally, it would make it even better, if your examples were not only from your own fieldwork, but if you could draw lines or conclusions between different fields or studies made within anthropology</p>
<p>Hej David - du får den lige på dansk, for der er jeg trods alt stærkest og kan formulere mig bedst.</p> <p>Jeg har ikke haft fornøjelsen af dig i præ-corona-tiderne, men har haft fornøjelsen af din undervisning i løbet af online-undervisningen de sidste mange uger. Bare det at du undersøger om det har gjort os mere nysgerrige synes jeg er helt vildt fedt. Det, der især har været fedt har været din måde at udtrykke din egen holdning uden at prædike den. Man kan fornemme, hvor du står og det er også ud fra det at du lærer os noget. Især din undervisning om "art" vs "science" gjorde mig nysgerrig på, hvordan jeg egentlig selv opfattede antropologi? Det er både din personlighed og din undervisningsstil jeg har været rigtig glad for. Det er helt tydeligt, at du er passioneret omkring det du laver, og du ved hvad du laver. Det at du inddrager dit arbejde har også virkelig gjort mig opmærksom på og lært mig meget med det at studere dem med magt, for det tænker jeg politiet er. Jeg er ked af at det har været nødvendigt at have digital undervisning, men samtidig er jeg virkelig glad, fordi det har givet mig lov til at modtage undervisning af dig. Dine øvelser og alle de ting vi "reflekterede over sammen" (hver for sig), har virkelig gjort indtryk og jeg synes du har formået at gøre ting som metode endnu mere spændende og jeg tænker især over din udtalelse om hvorvidt man kan gøre alt, så længe argumentet holder. Det hjælper mig, når jeg sidder og sveder over denne opgave (samt mit selvstudie, hvor jeg</p>

<p>prøver at argumentere for at konsulenttydelser er magi). Det blev rigtig langt, og jeg har ikke læst korrektur. Men jeg er virkelig glad for din undervisning og det har bestemt gjort mig mere nysgerrig.</p> <p>Jeg ønsker dig alt godt fremover, da jeg ikke tænker jeg kommer til at modtage undervisning fra dig igen, men er glade på de studerendes vegne, du skal undervise.</p> <p>Overall i really like your teaching, including the things above which you have listed. For me the reason for not having become more curious is because there have not been set enough time of to include the students in exercises and hearing them talk. I can see that you always have prepared student exercises, but often the time there you talk ends up taking a bit to long, so there is less time to include us students. For me it is harder to be curious if i mostly listen and is not included as much my self. Bu the student exercises which you have prepared are really good for creating curioussity - we should just have more time for doing them.</p>
<p>Jeg har kun oplevet din undervisning som fælles hold over zoom. Her oplevede jeg først og fremmest et virkelig lækkert design på dine slides - det virker måske som en lille ting, men for mig har det gjort strukturen og formålet med undervisningen mere klar og let at forholde sig til. Du har været god til at bruge forskellige platforme, som fx padlet - jeg synes, du har været rigtig god til at acceptere, hvis folk ønskede at være anonyme, og gennem anonyme kommentarer på padlets, er det mit indtryk, at flere faktisk er kommet til "orde" end ved normal undervisning, hvor det ofte er det samme, der siger noget. Dette kunne jeg godt ønske mig mere af som supplement til normal klasseundervisning. Et eneste ønske i forhold til zoom ville være brug af breakout rooms, hvor man random taler med og SER nogle af sine medstuderende - vi gjorde det med Lars, og det gav en helt anden oplevelse, at tale med sine medstuderende i små grupper.</p> <p>Du er meget inspirerende og har en god balance mellem at fortælle om dine egne erfaringer og trække det op på et mere generelt antropologisk niveau.</p> <p>Tak for god undervisning</p>
<p>I think you're very encouraging in your style of teaching, meaning that you create an atmosphere where we as students are feel comfortable enough to ask whatever question that's on our mind (or at least that what I think). I also like that you're so transparent in your way of thinking.</p>
<p>I think that the questions in this survey are a bit too "big" - at least i couldnt truthfully answer anything but "the same". However, I did really like your teaching. I think you are engaging as a lecturer in the sense that you are very lively and that your interest in the topic shows. So it is def. not boring.</p> <p>I also like your straight forward style, and your dislike of academic jargon. Personally i like when lecturers are open about their personal oppinions, and i think you did that in a good way stressing multiple times that it were only your oppinions and that people were allowed to disagree.</p>
<p>I think you're a good teacher and it's clear that you put a lot of effort into your teaching and that you are passionate about teaching. I think in general it's hard to teach virtually and personally I find it hard to concentrate when having to look at a screen for three hours - it doesn't allow for the same dynamics as in a real life class room. But like I said I could tell that you were very aware of it and made an effort. You're also good at encouraging people to speak up without pressuring them - I always dislike when teacher pressure students to participate, so that's been nice. I would have most likely participated more actively myself had the teaching not been virtual, and I can imagine it's been hard to teach a bunch of black screens. All in all, keep up the good work and thank you for your enthusiasm!</p>
<p>It like the critical approach you have to anthropology - but at the same time constructive.</p>
<p>I appreciated that you brought the field of anthropology a bit more down to earth, which was much needed post analytical approaches last semester. The few "think on your feet"-exercises we did pre COVID were a nice reminder of what we actually are capable of. I appreciated that we weren't forced into new groups every time we had class but stayed with our workshop groups for exercises etc. I know this varies between students, and part of it might have to do with me getting placed in an awesome group.</p> <p>You're a good teacher. One of the best I've had studying at KU!</p> <p>Word of advice, work on your time management or switch up the order of what group you talk to first and last, so it's not always the same group being left with little time to spare :-)</p>

Figure 2: Student comments on CBL

<p>2) Please, in your own words, say a few words about what you think would make you (even more) more curious about your studies?</p>
<p>I think that if I had more examples of current (academic) anthropology that is being useful in the world today, I would be more intrigued.</p> <p>More diverse topics. I focus a lot on a particular topic, and while it was nice and insightful to learn more about the police and crime as a topic besides my own, an even wider range of topics might be nice. I liked whenever I would hear more about everyone's projects - enabling the class to learn more from other students' projects might be nice. Perhaps not only in our workgroup, but even wider. The vast range of topics and interests is what makes me more curious to everything else anthro has to offer besides my own focus.</p>

Jeg bliver mere nysgerrig ved:
- at have spændende undervisning, hvor man som studerende bliver inddraget
- at læse inspirerende tekster
- at høre om andres feltarbejde/studie
Måske mere snak i plenum om vores individuelle projekter (dette har af gode grunde været svært over zoom)
Jeg kan helt klart mærke, at jeg er mest interesseret, når pensumteksterne er spændende. Jeg synes, der har været et par stykker, som har været meget inspirerende på det her semester, men ellers har det måske været lidt tørt og meget gentagelse fra 3. semester (metode). Men det er jo heller ikke dig, der sammensætter pensum, så det kan du måske ikke bruge til så meget...
To keep on challenging the views of one another in anthropology, meaning to make room for discussing and presenting different views and through this opening up for new ways of thinking.
I think you did really good under the circumstances. Maybe you should consider standing up at some point, or showing something not only on the shared screen - there is something demotivating about looking at a powerpoint on a screen.
And more breaks - my experience is that zoom-lectures just makes you 'zoom out' all the time, therefore breaks are totally essential (at least for me ;-))
Reading and discussion inspiring work - like the Livingston text - hearing about different takes and methods as well as other people's curiosity really makes a difference.
Tid til fordybelse :)
I think I mentioned it in the previous question - more reflections on the coronapandemic and what is happening in general in the world right now would perhaps help curiosity a great deal (although not necessarily helping our project designs ;))
Måske lidt mere tid til at høre på mine medstuderende og dele mine egne erfaringer (gruppearbejde) -> men det er jo skidesvært når vi ikke kan mødes fysisk. Så ærligt talt synes jeg ikke rigtig der er så meget du kunne have gjort anderledes.
No having online teaching.
I'm generally very curious about anthropology, but I'm experiencing quite a difference in orientation from where I did by bachelor's (Aarhus) and KU. It seems like there is a bigger focus on tradition here, which results in a more 'conservative' orientation, e.g. syllabus, examples of ethnographies, exam styles etc. I would make me more curious to be introduced to more 'fringe' stuff, i.e. tendencies and debates within anthro unfolding right now.
-
I may have answered this already, but more examples from different areas within anthropology.
In the beginning of a course like Project Design, it could maybe have made sense to do some exercises where you would swap projects within a group and give your own take on someone's potential future fieldwork or something like that.
I think that the most interesting thing about project design is all the different projects, so maybe you could allow more time to explore and ask questions about the other projects
Du får den igen på dansk. Det tror jeg ville have været at få lov til at modtage undervisningen sammen med de andre i et rum, hvor vi kunne holde kaffe pauser og have uformelle snakke og rent faktisk kunne få en diskussion og køre. Men det er jo formatet under corona, så der har jeg desværre ikke nogle konstruktive kommentarer du kan bruge videre frem.
Being more included in the classes by spending more time discussing thing in groups with other peers.
Be able to meet up at university of course - but that is not your fault.
Jeg kender en studerende ved et andet fakultet, hvor de har frokostmøder på de enkelt hold i disse tider, hvor man skal stille mere uformelle samfund. Jeg har måske savnet muligheden for de hurtige spørgsmål, man vanligvis kan stille sin underviser på vej ud af lokalet. Det bliver meget anonymt, når vi er 50-60 mennesker samlet og samtidig meget udstillende at træde frem og stille et spørgsmål, synes jeg.
I think bringing in more guest lectures would make me more curious about my studies.

This is just a thought: maybe if you could relate the discussions to current debates at the department or elsewhere in the academic community. Sometimes it feels as if us students are 10-20 years behind on the academic debate...
More practical exercises regarding fieldwork. Because there's so much focus on theory. We always hear how participant observation and semi-structured interviews are the pillars of anthropological data collection but we very rarely, during our studies, get a chance to do this. On the third semester and of course the fieldwork it seems like we're expected to just go out there and do it. And maybe that's the way it is, but I would like some more hands-on teaching on how to actually conduct and interview and do participant observation. Maybe more workshops or interviewing each other in class, or have "homework" where we are to do participant observation different places and write about it like it was part of a fieldwork. That would definitely motivate me and make me more curious about the potentials of anthropology and anthropological data collection.
If there was not so much pressure on grades and exams, there would for sure be more freedom to engage in issues that you are curious, but necessarily don't feel confident in. There should be more space to explore different areas - and less pressure on finding your true 'passion'.
Less pressure on having things figured out by the beginning of the master program.
More pass/fail exams as oppose to graded - e.g. the project design course: do we really need that to be graded? Either you make a feasible design or you don't, in my opinion.
More options for electives - hard to specialize in e.g. urban anthropology or environmental anthropology when there are zero courses offered on the subject, or you have exhausted all options in a semester.
It has been really nice that we haven't had overly focused on the exam this semester.

Figure 3: Student comments on how to improve CBL

A curious discussion

In terms of design, my student evaluation survey on their experiences of CBL certainly has many shortcomings. For one, it's impossible to know whether their answering 'same' when being asked about whether my teaching made them more or less curious is a good or bad thing. That is, does it mean that they were already very curious and that I thus didn't need to further kindle their curiosity? Or does it mean that they were not that or only a little curious and that my teaching failed to pique and enhance their curiosity levels. Also, the survey really can't be used to draw any causal conclusions, saying for example that it was most-certainly my kindling of their curiosity that made them more (or less) motivated, knowledgeable and confident. The students' scores when it comes to these matters may just as well be an expression of other parts of the teaching or, indeed, of their own doing. Furthermore, as no similar surveys done on this course or on related (anthropological courses) exist, I have no means of comparison – that is, it is impossible for me to know whether my 'curious' interventions actually worked in comparison with, say, other forms of teaching with less CBL elements. Lastly, as seen in the students' qualitative assessments of my CBL, then my asking such quite abstract questions didn't necessarily make it easy for the students to answer and to answer in specific ways, leading them to all sorts of replies and conclusions.

That being said, with all the above limitations in mind, there is at least a glimpse of hope or maybe even success to be found. More than half of the students who answered the survey felt that the teaching had made them more curious, more than half felt more motivated,

more than 2/3 felt more knowledgeable and around 1/3 felt more confident about themselves as students. Furthermore, none but one felt that the CBL teaching had a negative effect, one saying that s/he unfortunately felt less motivated (an answer which, in reading the student's written comments, appear a bit strange as her/his comments are frankly quite positive). As such, seen as an isolated case and remembering the methodological/statistical issues mentioned above, my CBL teaching can be said to have produced at least some positive outcomes in line with what the literature on curiosity and CBL proposes. Furthermore, as also mentioned by students in their written commentary, this accomplishment should also be seen in the light of the corona/covid-19 crisis and the inevitable negative effects that the crisis has had on teaching and the students' learning and, indeed, mental health (negative effects described in another unfortunately not publicly published survey conducted by the Department of Anthropology). In other words, even though the teaching had to, suddenly(!), be moved online and even though the students have struggled to find comfort in this new situation, the teaching still seemed to produce what appears to be positive curiosity-based outcomes.

Now, in zeroing in on the outcomes, a good place to look would be the students' own deliberations as shown in figure 2 and 3. I'm not going to go into all of them and the richness and varieties of them. Instead, I have, of my own accord, tried to single out some of the answers (in English and Danish) the students gave which somewhat summarize how curiosity was kindled – or not – in my teaching:

- I think the exercised you have made us do in class are useful. Also I like your **style of teaching**. I like how you emphasise you don't know everything and are **willing to discuss different viewpoints in a non-judgmental way** - I always find that a really good quality in teachers.
- I think you're very encouraging in your style of teaching, meaning that **you create an atmosphere where we as students are feel comfortable** enough to ask whatever question that's on our mind (or at least that what I think). I also like that you're so transparent in your way of thinking.
- Jeg synes, at din undervisningsstil har været **sjov og afslappet** - hvilket har gjort helheden af undervisningen mere spændende. Jeg synes, **at referencerne til dit eget arbejde** har udgjort et fint grundlag for videre refleksion og diskussion
- I appreciated that you **brought the field of anthropology a bit more down to earth**, which was much needed post analytical approaches last semester. The few "**think on your feet**"-exercises we did pre COVID were a nice reminder of what we actually are capable of.
- I think you are engaging as a lecturer in the sense that you are very lively and that **your interest in the topic shows**. So it is def. not boring. I also like your straight forward style, and your dislike of academic jargon.

- Overall i really like your teaching, including the things above which you have listed. For me the reason for not having become more curious is because there have not been set enough time of to include the students in exercises and hearing them talk. I can see that you always have prepared student exercises, but often the time there you talk ends up taking a bit too long, so there is less time to include us students. For me it is harder to be curious if i mostly listen and is not included as much my self. Bu **the student exercises which you have prepared are really good for creating curiossity - we should just have more time for doing them.**
- **Dine øvelser og alle de ting vi "reflekterede over sammen"** (hver for sig), har virkelig gjort indtryk og jeg synes du har formået at gøre ting som metode endnu mere spændende og jeg tænker især over din udtalelse om hvorvidt **man kan gøre alt, så længe argumentet holder.** Det hjælper mig, når jeg sidder og sveder over denne opgave (samt mit selvstudie, hvor jeg prøver at argumentere for at konsulenttydelser er magi). Det blev rigtig langt, og jeg har ikke læst korrektur. Men jeg er virkelig glad for din undervisning og det har bestemt gjort mig mere nysgerrig. Jeg ønsker dig alt godt fremover, da jeg ikke tænker jeg kommer til at modtage undervisning fra dig igen, men er glade på de studerendes vegne, du skal undervise.

With a view to these comments, coupled with those I haven't included here, I feel compelled (and, yes, proud) to conclude that my CBL approach was well-received. Thinking about my three earlier CBL interventions (1. Creating a curious atmosphere, 2. Open-ended teaching and 3. Student explorations), I am also glad to see that these are aspects of my teaching of the things that the students themselves have noted and thought positively of.

With an eye towards the future and an advancement of CBL methods, the students, I believe, have also offered many good ideas in terms of one might do this – ideas that, again, seem in line with the existing findings of higher education literature and CBL:

- **More practical exercises** regarding fieldwork. Because there's so much focus on theory. We always hear how participant observation and semi-structured interviews are the pillars of anthropological data collection but we very rarely, during our studies, get a chance to do this.
- I think bringing in **more guest lectures** would make me more curious about my studies.
- I may have answered this already, but **more examples from different areas within anthropology.**
- In the beginning of a course like Project Design, it could maybe have made sense to **do some exercises where you would swap projects within a group** and give your own take on someone's potential future fieldwork or something like that.
- I think that the most interesting thing about project design is all the different projects, so maybe you could allow **more time to explore and ask questions about the other projects**
- I think that if I had **more examples of current (academic) anthropology that is being useful in the world today**, I would be more intrigued.
- **Måske mere snak i plenum om vores individuelle projekter** (dette har af gode grunde været svært over zoom)

Again, knowing the findings and recommendations of the CBL literature, specifically, and the higher education literature, more generally, the students' own suggestions certainly ring a bell. What they ask for, what they think will make them more curious (and better) in their studies, is, overall, an added incorporation of practical exercises and opportunities to be presented to and themselves explore and discuss other perspectives. Put differently, they are indeed calling for added ways of being activated and included in the teaching as well as for ways that will inspire/force them to rethink and potentially think differently.

A curious conclusion

It feels safe to conclude that curiosity-based teaching has a value in higher education. Most of all, this is a conclusion one can draw with reference to the, to be sure, somewhat scarce yet nevertheless promising studies of the benefits of kindling curiosity in students. What these studies demonstrate is that curiosity is an if not foundational then highly contributing aspect of knowledge acquisition. Curious students, however, don't only become better learners, studies show, they also become more motivated and self-regulating in their studies. Obviously, these are qualities which all/most universities hope to find and develop in their student population. Yet, as earlier mentioned, curiosity and what it produces are something that the discipline (and thus also the education) of anthropology especially cherish as it is seen as a specific anthropological competence useful if not indispensable when doing anthropological work both in and outside of academia. Anthropologists, in short, need to learn to be curious about whatever we engage in or with. Such an interest and open-mindedness are what makes the academic anthropologist better able to learn the, at times, very different perspectives of that and those we study. It is also what makes the anthropologist working in the private or public sector able to contribute with unusual or even innovative insights – something which is not rarely expected of the anthropological alumni. Curiosity, thus, is not a cuddly curio in university teaching, as one may think. It is not an arbitrary abstract matter but something, if properly kindled in students, may produce concrete positive outcomes – going from inside the individual anthropological classroom and ending up producing a promising anthropological career.

This is why we as (anthropological) university teachers need to be serious about curiosity. In a nutshell, this is a seriousness I have sought to promote and apply in my attempt to make my anthropological project design students (more) curious. As discussed and demonstrated in this essay, this was something I managed to do with varying degrees of success. Admittedly, for different reasons, many of the them being faults of my own, my TLHE

project's plan to introduce more methodical ways of doing curiosity-based teaching ended up being somewhat unsystematic. Nevertheless, I did end up trying to incorporate 3 curious interventions/approaches in my teachings – 3 interventions inspired by the literature on CBL to be potential catalyst of student curiosity. And in my asking the students to evaluate whether my teaching had made them more (or less) curious about their studies, the numbers did suggest that an, albeit statistically insignificant, positive change had occurred. In a more qualitative sense, this was a positive change confirmed by the students in their written comments.

Bracketing the success (or lack thereof) of my own attempt to kindle curiosity in my students, I think the above and this essay may be used to raise a bigger point. Indeed, if research on the positives of CBL is to be trusted, then a concrete suggestion would be to better incorporate the kindling of curiosity as a central part of our university educations when not only teaching but already when creating the curriculum. As my own futile attempts as well as the research suggests, this may be done by both tinkering with overall macrostructures of our teaching as well as by tinkering with the microstructure. Another very concrete example would be to include curiosity as one of the concrete learning objectives/outcomes of specific courses. This openly highlights the value of 'being curious' to the students and it forces the teacher to incorporate it in his/her teaching.

Indeed, whatever way we choose to further the importance of curiosity in higher education teaching, the first step is ultimately to acknowledge it is a quality in and of itself – as something we need to focus on and foster rather than just hoping that our students themselves will bring it the table or that it will automatically spring out of our teaching. Sadly, as I see it, student curiosity seems to be more killed rather than kindled at today's universities, UCPH included. To end this on a more poetic if not silly note, I would nonetheless urge us to remember that, in university teaching, curiosity doesn't kill the cat. It creates the cat. And, bear with me, catches the mouse.

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