

Analyzing reflections: A work in progress



Connect Conference

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Reflection is...

*...a deliberate practice of thinking about past experiences or knowledge in order to **make meaning**, enable better choices or actions, or **increase effectiveness** in future attempts. In other words, reflection is a constructivist act that serves to **transform a learners' schema** (Stewart, 2011, p. 38-39).*

*If learners can strengthen their abilities to [reflect critically], not just in retrospect but also in day-to-day practice—while interacting with economically marginalized children, for example—they are better prepared to **adjust their ideologies or worldviews toward a social justice stance** (Gorski & Dalton, 2020, p. 359).*

DEAL Model Ash, Clayton, & Atkinson (2005)

Describe

Examine

Articulate **L**earning

- *What did I learn?*
- *How, specifically, did I learn it?*
- *Why does this learning matter?*
- *In what ways will I use this learning?*

Jacoby's (2014) Framework for Reflection

- What?
- So what?
- Now what?



Comparison of Reflection Quality

The games that were taken place for the remaining time there, were really fun and interacted and helped build the friendship between us EMU students, and the children of Estabrook.

-excerpt from a weekly reflection journal

*Week three was the “everyone is awesome” lesson. This week really made me think of how singing would probably be a good idea. The ELs seem to really engage with, and learn from songs. So I believe **in a future classroom I should probably incorporate some sort of song.***

-excerpt from weekly reflection journal

Sample Reflection

"Learning about [the school's] mission has made me consider my role in the local community and what actions I could take to be more active. Recently, I decided to volunteer with Washtenaw Literacy (which was also introduced to me from a previous TESOL class) and have found it to be rewarding. By being aware of places such as [the school] and this community organization, not only am I able to broaden my opportunities as an EL teacher, but it has also helped me become a better person and consider how I could play a more active role in my community".

-Excerpt from a final reflection paper

Proposed Research: Analysis of Reflections for Learning



- **Problem:** How to evaluate reflections for demonstrated learning.
- **RQ :** To what extent can meaningful learning be evaluated through reflections?
- **Data Collection** – pre and post reflection assignments
- **Data Analysis** – Ward & McCotter (2004) rubric? Jacoby (2014) framework? Gorski & Dalton (2020) rubric? other?

Table I. Typology of Approaches to Reflection in Multicultural and Social Justice Teacher Education.

	Approach	Purpose	Characteristics
Conservative	I. Amorphous “cultural” reflection	To reflect broadly on one’s understandings of “other” cultures, usually in an essentializing way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vague focus on “culture” • Avoidance of focus on racism, heterosexism, or other justice concerns • Danger of confirming stereotypes of “the other”
Liberal	II. Personal identity reflection	To reflect on one’s personal identities without grappling with the implications of difference or power or how identities influence one’s worldviews or understandings of justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of role of personal identity in life and school experiences • Focus on “diversity” but not on justice or oppression • Lack of connection between identities and their impact on teaching practice
	III. Cultural competence reflection	To reflect on one’s teaching practice with “diverse learners” in light of one’s identities and life experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural competence framing related to teaching “diverse learners” • Absence of reflection on beliefs or actions related to oppression against or advocacy for marginalized students
Critical	IV. Equitable and just school reflection	To reflect on one’s preparedness and willingness to be an agent of social justice change in a school context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit examination of positionalities and responsibilities related to oppression and liberation in schools • Presumption of educator as a social justice change agent
	V. Social transformation reflection	To reflect on one’s preparedness and willingness to be an agent of social justice change in and out of school contexts and to reflect on the areas of continued growth one needs to be an agent of social justice change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection between oppression and anti-oppression in schools and outside schools • Incorporation of forward-leaning reflection related to continued needs for development as social justice advocates

Dimensions & Qualities of Reflection (Ward & McCotter, 2004)

	Routine	Technical	Dialogic	Transformative
Focus of concern	Self-centered	Task based	Learner centered	broader concerns & impacts
Process of inquiry	Limited inquiry, some blame on others, general focus	Some questions, some implied questions, stops after initial round	Situated questions lead to new questions, open to other perspectives	Ongoing inquiry, asks hard questions, challenges beliefs & assumptions
Change in practice	Mechanistic analysis, no personal response	Some personal response, but no change	New insights about strengths & weaknesses leading to improvement of practice	Reframing of perspective leading to fundamental change of practice.

Sample Analysis

Week three was the “everyone is awesome” lesson. This week really made me think of how singing would probably be a good idea. The ELs seem to really engage with, and learn from songs. So I believe in a future classroom I should probably incorporate some sort of song.

Presents background information. = description

Expresses claim about the value of singing = **What?**

Connects songs & learning. = **So what?**

Considers future practice = **Now what?**

Focus of Concern = **Dialogic**, learner centered

Process of Inquiry = **Routine**, limited, general focus

Change in Practice = **dialogic**, new insights leading to improved practice

What is your experience with student reflections?

How do you assess learning through reflections?

References

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