

John dewey

Profession, Teacher



Introduced his theories and concepts on how people think. He identified a number of different modes of thought including reflection. He saw reflection as an aspect of thought, a rational and purposeful act that is more than mere thinking. Dewey contrasted routine action with reflective action, laying the roots of reflective practice in teaching (Kodiak-Myers, 2012, p. 5). In his notion of reflective action he described a willingness to engage in self-assessment, which required flexibility, analysis and social awareness (Pollard, 2005, p. 3). His reflection described a willingness to consider different possibilities and the ability and desire to recognize various opinions (Skateboarders, 2012, p. 5). Reflection, as a familiar activity, is often misunderstood, overlooked in the formal process of teaching and equated with similar activities such as thinking about the day, making sense of experiences we had or discussing recent occurred events and issues. In these daily activities teachers assume that learning occurs (Bout, Gogh, & Walker, 1985, p. 8).

Employing a reflective teaching approach, a teacher will be in control of the teaching process and its outcome, giving the teacher the ability to research on the effectiveness of his teaching enabling him to assess if learning indeed occurs (Killeen, 1989, p. 52). In this assignment I will first, explain reflection. In this explanation I will consider the different classification, categories and some characteristics of reflection. Next I will argue that reflection within the learning process is important for the teacher.

I will thereafter critically discuss some of the advantages and limitations of along feedback from students in the reflective practice and will conclude that the advantages outweigh the limitations of giving feedback. For a

teacher to employ a reflective practice he or she needs to firstly understand the meaning of reflection. Rodgers (2002) is of the opinion that, after almost a century of considering reflection there is no clear understanding in our academic literature of what exactly reflection is. She reconsiders Dew's concept of reflection and formulated four criteria that she felt characterized his concept of reflection.

She speaks of reflection as a meaning making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next", as a " systematic, rigorous, deadlines way of thinking" that " needs to happen in community, in interaction with others" and it requires " attitude that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others" (Rodgers, 2002, p. 845). Reflection starts when a person inquires into his or her experiences and knowledge relevant to the experience, enabling him or her to ascribe meaning to his or her beliefs (Collier, 1999, p. 73). Learning is affected through a process of thinking and reflecting on new experiences in relation to an excellent knowledge base and own understanding. Collier (1999) refers to Kitcheners research that suggests a continuation of the reflection process, where knowledge is first viewed as certain and absolute, learned from authorities and direct observations. This absolute acceptance of knowledge develops, as the individual's own experiences and knowledge develops to " uncertain, relative and personal constructed" (1999, p. 174).

Suchman (1987) is of the theory within practice, and the use of such a process ultimately leads to expertise. He identified two possible processes of reflection, a retrospective analysis of experiences, the reflection-on-action

and the reflection-in-action, which is the process of reflection as an active part of the experience. In the reflection-on-action a teacher will reflect after a lesson on the process by thinking about the lesson, reflecting on the good and bad moments in the lecture, considering how to improve on the bad elements and how to build on the good moments.

Reflection-on-action will be possible through self-examination, student assessments, student feedback of lesson ND discussions of mentor teachers (Howell, 2014). Reflection-in-action is used more by teachers with existing knowledge of teaching and experience of the learning process and is used to assess the student participation, knowledge, understanding and learning during the lesson (Howell, 2014). A third process of reflection is a proactive reflection known as reflection-for-action (Collier, 1999, p. 174). Howell (2014) uses this third process of reflection, before-action, which allows her to consider her lesson before it takes place.

This process of reflection allows the cheer to be in a position to consider what will be taught, how it will be taught and he or she can develop an inner attitude of gratitude that will positively influence the attitude of the learners. Reflection does not always occur on the same level and, is depending on the circumstances and experiences of the teacher. Reflection will be influenced by the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter, her understanding of the teaching process as well as her personal circumstances and attributes. Howell (2014) identified these levels as technical, practical and critical reflection.

The chemical level is concern with " effective application of educational knowledge and skill", the practical level describes " an experience so that a subjective perception or commitment to a certain theory or system" is noticed and critical reflection is " indicated by a high degree of open-mindedness including ethical/moral and social considerations" (Collier, 1999, p. 174). These levels of reflection exist and work together (Howell, 2014) and research has indicated that new teachers often apply all these levels of reflection and all levels are equally important in the learning process Collier, 1999, p. 74). The teacher, as well as the learner in the sense that both teacher and learner bring certain attributes to the learning process, will influence the process. Unless a teacher is capable of reflection he might not be able to bring about long term positive outcomes within the learning process. Teachers are often influenced by outside factors when faced with difficult situations within the class room and can easily, unconsciously develop standard problem solving tactics, left unexamined for years (Shortchange & Vassals, 2005, p. 45). Shortchange & Vassals (2005, . 9) refers too five phase structured reflection process. In this process there is an action from the teacher, followed by a retrospective look back on the action, an awareness of essential aspects of the action, the creating of alternative methods of action and a re-trial of the action. Palmer, as quoted by Howell (2014) stated, " good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher". Every teacher has certain identities, pre-set ideas and assumptions which he or she brings into the class room and these identities, personal views and assumptions will influence how e or SE teach and what he or she teach.

This in turn will influence what our described as paradigmatic, prescriptive, and casual assumptions (Brookfield, 1995, p. 4). Paradigmatic assumptions are very difficult to identify and they are basic structuring of ideas we use to order the world, perspective assumptions are assumptions about what we think ought to happen in a situations and causal assumptions assist us in understanding the different processes within the working world and how processes work (Brookfield, 1995, p. 3).

As teachers we must be able o reflect on these predetermined assumptions to enable us to build on our professional development. According to Shortchange & Vassals (Shortchange & Vassals, 2005, p. 53) it is important for a teacher, specially a new teacher to be able to get in touch with these different identities. They refer to reflection, which can take place on different inner levels. Where a teacher sees him or herself in a specific role within the class room, the teacher might be set on a mission to fulfill this role and beliefs which in turn may create behavior issues in the class (Shortchange & Vassals, 2005).

It s only if the teacher reflect on what it is that he or she is doing that causes the behavior problem and ask why he or she is doing it that they might find an alternative to their perceived reality. This requires the teacher to do introspective reflection of her own actions, which is a very difficult task for anybody to achieve. Often reflection can focus mainly on the technical or practical levels, without being critical. According to Brookfield (1995, p. 9) critical reflection will assist the teacher in unearthing the ways in which power is present in and distort the educational recess.

Reflection is important for teachers both in their professional development as teachers as well as their personal growth as educators. Reflection will lead to new and better understanding of the learning process, often plagued with assumptions. The application of a reflective practice will lead to better Judgment, an examined common sense and better learning and understanding of our students who, in observing us, will develop their own reflective practices (Howell, 2014).

Part of a reflective practice includes consultation with our peers and the enquiry into our teaching by way of student evaluations. Student evaluations can form a very good reflective technique enabling a teacher to reflect on how her classes are received by her students instead of assuming that learning has taken place. An advantage of student feedback is to determine from the students how they engage with the lesson, what did they find interesting and what did not work for them.

One of the disadvantages of this form of feedback could lead to very subjective feedback from students, which is not a reflection of the true ability of the teacher. Brookfield (1995, p. 7) refers to the "perfect ten syndrome" where teachers who receive a less than perfect score assume that they are not worthy teachers. Teachers disregard the complimentary and good feedback, concentrating only on the negative aspects of the feedback. This reaction is based on the preconceived assumption of teachers that good teaching is always followed by positive and good student evaluations.

Critically reflection will assist the teacher in recognizing these unrealistic assumption and enable him or her to know that the "complexities of

learning" as well as the students win attitudes towards their studies and the teacher self has influenced the low score. Equally, a perfect score could be indicating the teachers only accommodated the students in their preferred learning styles without testing the student outside of critique and was not developed to be the only answer in the learning process however I think that the advantages of reflective practice including student feedback outweigh the disadvantages.

Student feedback is important for the teachers' own understanding of the learning process and it can contribute to the students sense of ratification in the learning process, displacing the inherent assumption of teacher power over student. As a negative aspect of the student reflections it may over power students, giving them the false assumption that they control the learning process. I think that the teacher and the students, accepting the true negative issues as such, should critically reflect on the outcome of student feedback in an open process in a positive manner to overcome the negative issues.

At the same time positive issues should also be considered and build on in future. In conclusion I can say that reflection is a process of deep questioning set assumptions and beliefs within the learning process to enable a better understanding of the process, to develop as a diverse teacher and to ensure maximum learning within the learning process. If reflection takes place before-action, the teacher will be able to prepare with gratitude, to enter the learning action with thankfulness and to convey a positive and thankful attitude to the students, creating an optimal learning environment.