

Reflective practice



Reflective practice is the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning, which, according to the originator of the term is, one of the defining characteristics of professional practice. According to one definition, it involves paying critical attention to the practical values and theories which inform everyday actions, by examining practice reflectively and reflexively. This leads to developmental insight.

Reflective practice can be an important tool in practice-based professional learning settings where individuals learning from their own professional experiences, rather than from formal teaching or knowledge transfer, maybe the most important source of personal professional development and improvement. As such, the notion has achieved wide take-up, particularly in professional development for practitioners in the areas of education and healthcare. The question of how best to learn from experience has wider relevance however, to any organizational learning environment.

In particular, people in leadership positions have a tremendous development opportunity if they engage in reflective practice. Models of Reflective Practice The concept of Reflective Practice centres around the idea of lifelong learning in which a practitioner analyses experiences in order to learn from them. Reflective Practice is used to promote independent professionals who are continuously engaged in the reflection of situations they encounter in their professional worlds. Several models of reflection exist and are used to draw lessons out of experiences.

Argyris and Schon 1978

Argyris and Schon pioneered the idea of single loop and double loop learning in 1978. The theory was built around the recognition and amendment of a perceived fault or error. Single loop learning is when a practitioner or organisation, even after an error has occurred and a correction is made, continues to rely on current strategies, techniques or policies when a situation again comes to light. Double loop learning involves the modification of personal objectives, strategies or policies so that when a similar situation arises a new framing system is employed.

Schon himself introduced some years later the concept of Reflection-in-action and Reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action can be described as the ability of a practitioner to 'think on their feet', otherwise known as 'felt-knowing'. It revolves around the idea that within any given moment, when faced with a professional issue, a practitioner usually connects with their feelings, emotions and prior experiences to attend to the situation directly.

Reflection-on-action on the other hand is the idea that after the experience a practitioner analyses their reaction to the situation and explores the reasons around, and the consequences of, their actions. This is usually conducted through a documented reflection of the situation. Kolb 1975 Kolb was highly influenced by the research conducted by Dewey and Piaget in the 1970s. Kolb's reflective model highlights the concept of experiential learning and is centered around the transformation of information into knowledge.

This takes place after the situation has occurred and entails a practitioner reflecting on the experience, gaining a general understanding of the concepts encountered during the experience and then testing these general

understandings on a new situation. In this way the knowledge that is gained from a situation is continuously applied and reapplied building on a practitioners prior experiences and knowledge. Gibbs 1988 Graham Gibbs discussed the use of structured debriefing to facilitate the reflection involved in Kolb's 'experiential learning cycle'.

He presents the stages of a full structured debriefing such as, description " what happened? Don't make judgements yet or try to draw conclusions; simply describe. " Then, feelings " what were your reactions and feelings? Again don't move on to analyze these yet. " For the evaluation, " what was good or bad about the experience? Make value judgements. "

The analysis is " what sense can you make of the situation? Bring in ideas from outside the experience to help you. " Next, ask yourself, " what was really going on?" and " were different people's experiences similar or different in important ways? " The conclusions in specific is about our own specific, unique, personal situation or way of working. Then, we should have our personal action plans such as " what are you going to do differently in this type of situation next time? " or " what steps are you going to take on the basis of what you have learnt? " Johns 1995 Johns' model is a structured mode of reflection that provides a practitioner with a guide to gain greater understanding.

It is designed to be carried out through the act of sharing with a colleague or mentor, which enables the experience to become learnt knowledge at a faster rate than reflection alone. Johns highlights the importance of experienced knowledge and the ability of a practitioner to access,

understand and put into practice information that has been acquired through empirical means. In order for this to be achieved reflection occurs through 'looking in' on one's thoughts and emotions and 'looking out' at the situation experienced. Johns draws on the work of Carper (1978) to expand on the notion of 'looking out' at an experience.

Five patterns of knowing are incorporated into the guided reflection, having a practitioner analyse the aesthetic, personal, ethical, empirical and the reflexive elements experienced through the situation. Johns' model is comprehensive and allows for reflection that touches on many important elements. Brookfield 1998 Critically reflective practitioners constantly research their assumptions by seeing practice through four complementary lenses: the lens of their autobiography of learners of reflective practice, the lens of learners' eyes, the lens of colleagues' perception and the lens of theoretical, philosophical and research literature.

Reviewing practice through these lenses makes us more aware of the power dynamics that infuse all practice settings. It also helps us detect hegemonic assumptions—assumptions that we think are in our own best interests but actually work against us in the long run (Brookfield 1998). To become critically reflective Brookfield thinks that the four lenses will reflect back to us a stark and differently highlighted picture of who we are and what we do. Lens 1, our autobiography as a learner is an important source of insight into practice.

As we talk to each other about critical events in our practice, we start to realize that individual crises are usually collectively experienced dilemmas.

Analysing our autobiographies allows us to draw insight and meanings for practice on a deep visceral emotional level. Lens 2, our learner's eyes. Seeing ourselves through learners eyes we discover that learners are interpreting our actions in the way that we mean them. But often we are surprised by the diversity of meanings people read into our words and actions.

A cardinal principle of seeing ourselves through learner's eyes is that ensuring the anonymity of their critical opinions. You have to make students feel safe. Seeing our practice through learners eyes help us teach more responsively. Lens 3, our colleague's experiences. Our colleagues serve as critical mirrors reflecting back to us images of our actions. Talking to colleagues about problems and gaining their perspective increases our chance finding some information that can help our situation. Lens 4, theoretical Literature. Theory can help us 'name' our practice by illuminating the general elements of what we think are idiosyncratic experiences.

Rolfe 2001 Rolfe's reflective model is based around Borton's 1970 developmental model. A simplistic cycle composed of 3 questions which asks the practitioner, What, So What and Now What. Through this analysis a description of the situation is given which then leads into the scrutiny of the situation and the construction of knowledge that has been learnt through the experience.

Subsequent to this, ways in which to personally improve and the consequence of one's response to the experience are reflected on. SWOT

Analysis What is the meaning of SWOT analysis? Scott Holsman (n. d) explained SWOT is a powerful technique for uncovering and understanding your own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats you face. At first, this SWOT analysis is actually use widely in a lot of organization, business and industry. But according to Jerry Schultz (n. d) nowadays, SWOT analysis also beneficial to some community health and development, personal growth and even education. All of these due to the fact that, by constructing a SWOT analysis, you will be able to explore possibilities for new efforts or even a solutions to your problems.

Next, in some ways, a SWOT analysis can shows you some opportunities for success in context of threats. Not only that, you will find that it is much easier for you to make decisions about the best path for your initiative. Let just say that you want to become a successful English Language teacher in the future, and for valid reasons, you might need a big plan for it because you cannot simply study with recklessly and magically you are able to obtain good results in your studies.

Therefore, by constructing SWOT analysis it can help you handle both ordinary and unusual situations by giving you a tool to explore both internal and external factors that may influence your journey to become a successful English Language teacher. Firstly, what you need to do is construct a four column tables which each column respectively containing your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Before you list down all of your strengths, first you need to figure out, what are the positive aspects of yourself and your current academic situation?

For example, probably your strengths are, you are high in confidence, enthusiastic, motivated, adaptable and a good communicator. Secondly, for the next column which is your weaknesses, you have to brainstorming of what are the negative aspects of yourself and your present situation.

Perhaps, you have problems on decision making, poor time management, have very short attention span and you are that person who are actually do not know how to control and manage your stress.

Thirdly, for the opportunities column which is the third column, you have to think analytically and critically on what aspects presently or in the near future could you use to help yourself? For example, maybe you can complete your course to the highest grade possible, meaning that you try and achieve a higher CGPA in your studies, because when you obtain such a good pointer, thus it creates possibility and also opportunities for you to earn yourself a well-satisfied job in the future.

Next, you can perhaps continue your studies at the top university and successfully become a fully qualified English teacher. For the fourth and final column which is threats, you have to think also on what aspects in your life or in the future may work to your disadvantages. Probably, your first threat is when you want to further your studies in degree; you are facing with financial problems. Secondly, you are not academic enough to complete your course. Here, it means that you unable to get the marks and grades that you need, especially in exams.

If you are unable to step up to the required standard of what the university want, you will not be able to complete your degree successfully which then

eventually jeopardise your dream career. On the first paragraph, I stated earlier about by constructing SWOT analysis, you will be able to explore possibilities for new efforts or even solutions to your problems and shows you some opportunities for success in context of threats. It means that somehow threats are able to create opportunities and possible solution to your problem.

For example, when you know that perhaps in the near future will face with possible financial problems (threat), it will create an opportunity for you which is, this financial problems motivate you to study even harder and to achieve 4.00 for your CGPA which then it is easier for you to apply for any scholarship (opportunity). In conclusion, Matthew Walsh (n. d) explained, when compiling this SWOT analysis, it can gives you better understanding of your own skills and what you need to develop in order to complete your overall goal; in this case, to become a successful English Language teacher.

How Do I Do Reflective Practice? According to the New Oxford Dictionary (2004) translated by Zubaidah binti Abdul Rahman, reflective means thinking deeply about things while practice means the usual or expected way of doing something in a particular organization or situation. Therefore in our perspective, reflective practice is thinking deeply about an expected way in particular organization learning and teaching or situation. In simpler words, we can conclude that reflective practice is the process which we practice some reflection about what we have done in the past and what we will do in the near future.