

Tutor name: Sylvia Hoffmann

Student name: Amir kanjani

Student ID: 2412195

Introduction

Reading and interpreting literary works require critical thinking, analysis, and personal reflection. Literary works are often designed to conceal the author's intentions, compelling readers to engage deeply with the text to uncover hidden meanings. This process involves understanding the events and themes within a story and reflecting on personal experiences and perspectives to draw connections with the text. One powerful approach to facilitating this process is using reflective models, particularly Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, which provides a structured method for analysing and evaluating one's thoughts and actions about a text. Reflective writing allows readers to express their interpretations and opinions, promoting a deeper understanding of the material by examining how personal experiences shape one's interpretation (Adeani et al, 2020) (Febriani, R. B. ,2019).

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle is a widely used framework for structuring reflective thinking. Developed by Graham Gibbs in 1988, the cycle consists of six key stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan. These stages guide individuals in reflecting on their experiences, starting with a detailed description of the event or experience, followed by an exploration of emotions, a critical evaluation of what worked or didn't work, and an analysis of the situation to understand underlying causes. The cycle then concludes and develops an action plan for future improvement. In the context of literary analysis, Gibbs' model helps students and readers think critically about the text, evaluate their understanding, and consider how their personal experiences influence their interpretation of the literary work (Gibbs, G. ,1988).

This reflective process is crucial for students, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes, where literary works are often complex and require students to comprehend the content and engage critically with the text. Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, students can systematically explore their thoughts and feelings about a story, evaluate their interpretation, and analyse how their personal context shapes their understanding. This report will reflect on how learning and applying Gibbs' Reflective Cycle has helped me enhance my academic skills, particularly in note-taking, research, and academic writing.

Note-Taking Skills and the Role of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Effective note-taking is essential in academic learning, allowing students to organize and retain key information from lectures, readings, and other resources. Initially, my note-taking was essential, focusing mainly on recording information without fully engaging with the material. However, applying Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to my learning process has significantly improved my approach to note-taking.

The first stage of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, **Description**, encouraged me to be more deliberate in my note-taking by focusing on capturing the main points, context, and purpose of the material I was engaging with. Instead of just transcribing information, I began noting why specific concepts or ideas were relevant to my studies, making it easier to understand their significance later.

The **Feelings** stage of the cycle also helped me become more mindful of my emotional responses to the material I was learning. This reflection prompted me to recognise when I found something interesting or confusing, which helped me structure my notes accordingly. For instance, if I felt confused about a particular concept, I would take the time to make note of my questions or areas of uncertainty, which later became a focus for further research and clarification.

Through the **Evaluation** and **Analysis** stages, I learned to assess the effectiveness of my note-taking strategies. I would reflect on whether my notes were clear, organized, and helpful during revision. By evaluating my notes after a study session, I could identify gaps in my understanding or areas where my notes were too vague. This reflective process helped me improve the structure of my notes, ensuring they were comprehensive and aligned with my academic work goals.

The **Conclusion** stage allowed me to draw insights about enhancing my note-taking in future sessions. For example, I concluded that incorporating visual aids like diagrams or mind maps could help me organize complex concepts more effectively. Additionally, I realized that summarizing key points in my own words rather than copying verbatim from textbooks or lectures made it easier for me to grasp and retain information.

Finally, the **Action Plan** stage of the cycle encouraged me to refine my note-taking practices continuously. I set specific goals, such as reviewing my notes after each lecture and actively seeking opportunities to condense and rephrase information. Over time, this ongoing cycle of reflection and adjustment has led to more efficient

and effective note-taking, allowing me to organise information better and improve retention, which has been invaluable in my academic progress.

Finding Information and the Role of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Finding relevant information is essential in academic work, and initially, I found this task challenging. Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle has significantly improved my ability to gather and organize information effectively.

In the **Description** stage, I learned to clearly define my research goals before beginning the search, focusing on relevant sources. Reflecting on my **Feelings**, I became more patient and methodical, recognizing when I felt overwhelmed and learning to take breaks to return with a fresh perspective.

During the **Evaluation**, I assessed the reliability of the sources and how well I was organizing the information, which encouraged me to prioritize peer-reviewed articles and refine my note-taking. In the **Analysis** stage, I began synthesizing the information, ensuring that each source contributed meaningfully to my work.

The **Conclusion** stage helped me recognize the importance of a systematic approach to research, such as using specific keywords and organizing citations. Finally, the **Action Plan** stage prompted me to improve my search techniques and develop strategies to ensure I gather credible, relevant information in future projects.

Academic Writing and the Role of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle

Academic writing requires clarity, structure, and the ability to engage with sources critically. At first, I struggled with organizing my thoughts and presenting them coherently. However, using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle has dramatically improved my academic writing skills by encouraging continuous reflection and refinement.

In the **Description** stage, I began by clearly understanding the writing task and identifying the key points I needed to address. Reflecting on my **Feelings**, I noticed that I often felt uncertain about how to structure my arguments. By acknowledging these feelings, I could focus on planning my work step-by-step, which helped alleviate anxiety and allowed me to write more confidently.

The **Evaluation** stage enabled me to assess my writing more critically. I started evaluating whether my arguments were clear and logically organized. If I found parts

of my writing confusing or underdeveloped, I would make revisions, ensuring each section contributed to my overall argument.

During **Analysis**, I focused on improving my use of evidence. I analyzed whether the sources I included were relevant and if my reasoning was sound. This reflection encouraged me to integrate sources more effectively and avoid superficial explanations, improving the depth of my writing.

The **Conclusion** stage helped me recognize areas for improvement. I reflected on the writing process, understanding that I needed to allocate more time for revising and proofreading. I also realized the importance of clarity and structure in presenting my ideas.

Finally, in the **Action Plan** stage, I set goals to improve my writing, such as creating detailed outlines before starting, reading my work aloud to catch errors, and seeking feedback from peers or instructors to strengthen my arguments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle has enhanced my academic skills. Promoting structured reflection helped me improve my note-taking, information-gathering, and academic writing abilities. Each stage of the model encouraged me to assess my work critically, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies for future success. Overall, this reflective approach has enhanced my academic performance and equipped me with valuable skills that will continue to support my learning journey.

References

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