



REFLECTIVE REPORT

Academic Skills Module - LCLM4001

Malgorzata Maciejuk

2416874

Lecturer: Sukhpreet Grewal



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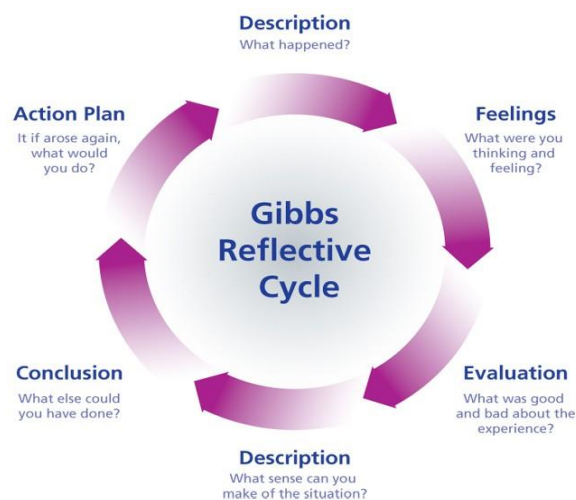
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INTRODUCTION

In this reflective report I will be discussing three topics: notetaking, research skills and paraphrasing. This report will relate to academic skills that I learned during this module. The skills of notetaking, research skills and paraphrasing are key to understanding effective learning. Dewey (1993) said: 'the process of reflection vital for deepening learning and improving academic skills. Academic skills module not only enriched my knowledge but has also developed the competences necessary for everyday life. I believe that these skills will be crucial in my career, preparing me for future professional challenges and providing me with effective opportunities in the dynamically changing world of work. 'Good study habits and strategies can result in improved academic performance' (Shunk, Zimmerman, 2008), which I would like to be able to use in my future. Another goal I would like to achieve is better results in my studies.

REFLECTIVE MODEL

In this report, I will be using the Gibbs's Reflective Cycle. Graham Gibbs published his Reflective Cycle in 1988, which consists of six stages that include questions to guide the deep investigation procedure of situations or topics. I presented the stages of the Gibbs reflective model:



(Stewart, 2015)

1. Description
2. Feelings
3. Evaluation
4. Analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Action plan

I found it the most suitable to apply it in my report as in my opinion is mirroring my own experience. A strong reason for what I decided to use it is that it is validating and encouraging to express feelings in reflection.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

- NOTE-TAKING SKILLS

In the second week of my studies, the teacher demonstrated notetaking techniques. She presented and explained five different types of notes. The first method is the diagrammatic model, which involves, in its simplest form, placing the main idea in the middle of the page to which you attach topics.

Another method called 'A mind map is a visualization technique that links a central concept to other concepts, connecting many others related ideas,' which means branches extend both forward and backward, connecting to central concept according to the experts said (Chisellabs, 2021).

Linear notes is another technique, which are presented as a list on the page and organized by numbered bullet points or headings and subheadings.

Tabular notetaking helps summarize and compare information, such as differing viewpoints in debates. It allows you to evaluate perspectives, enhance knowledge, and prepare for tests or exams. This technique is useful in social learning contexts, lectures, or study groups, where comparing perspectives can be engaging and informative. Personalize your chart by experimenting with headings and categories and consider how different approaches relate to broader themes or interpretations by various theories (6. Tables).

The fifth technique is 'The Cornell Method' and divides a page into three sections: cues, notes, and summary. This allows students to engage with the material actively (Pauk, W. & Owings, A.M 203). This method aims to facilitate more effective learning and organization of information.

During this topic I felt fascinated to learn about the different methods of taking notes. I was worried that I would not be able to remember and distinguish between the

techniques presented. I was confused by the tabular method of taking notes, from my point of view it is difficult to manage. At first, I thought the subject was easy, because I could take notes, but it turned out that the biggest part was to be a good listener and observing the slides to catch the most valuable key words. Thanks to the teacher, who spoke with good speed, at the end of the lecture I felt satisfied with the way the topic was presented. I think that useful examples which the teacher gave us helped me a lot to understand the subject and to expand my knowledge of notetaking. What was not good was that one of the students interfered with others listening to the lecture which distracted me. Note taking is a key process for organising and recording information in an accessible way. Notes, which are an abbreviated version of source texts, make it easier to remember the most valuable information. Experts have stated that notetaking is usually done during lectures to help capture important points. Various methods, such as visual notes or lists, can significantly increase the efficiency of learning. The main purpose of notetaking it is not only to preserve knowledge, but also to facilitate later recall. The notetaker tries to make the notes useful for himself, regardless of the teacher's evaluation. Therefore, notetaking is an effective strategy to support the knowledge acquisition process (Siegiel, p.4-5). In order to improve my skills in this area, I will focus on capturing key information and experimenting with combining different styles of notes. In addition, I intend to use a notetaking application to enable me to compare which development is easier for me.

- **FINDING INFORMATION/ RESEARCH SKILLS**

In the following lectures, the topic was how to find information / research skills, which play a key role in academic skills. Searching for information is an important process in today's world, because of the availability of a lot of sources. In order to use these tools effectively, it is important to be able to select the right key words to make it easier to search online resources and databases. Trustable sources of information can be found in library databases. Care should be taken in the selection of sources, as much of the information on the internet may come from sources that are not supported by expert evidence.

During the introduction to the lecture, my knowledge was based on basic information retrieval skills, as I did not realize how many more important things to pay attention to. I was confused when the teacher said that the website Wikipedia is not a reliable

source, because everyone can add information at any time, so I concluded this is not supported by evidence. It worried me how much I had missed out in my search. By the end of module, I had more knowledge than before, which will help me to improve my academic skills. It was useful to emphasise that not necessarily the first result of a search is the true information, several sources should be examined to compare the information contained in order to separate the true from the false. The way my teacher imparts knowledge in her lectures is clear and understandable, allowing me to have a good understanding of the subject. I think that everything was fine in this lecture, the only thing that bothered me was that the temperature in the classroom was too warm.

According to Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008), effective research skills involve not only the ability to locate information but also the capacity to evaluate its relevance and credibility.

I would like to focus on developing habits that will allow me to have an effective research strategy. Furthermore, in the future I would like to improve finding information in university online library and how to use Google Scholar.

- **PARAPHRASING**

Last topic of my reflective report presents paraphrasing. Briefly paraphrasing is writing or speaking another person's ideas in your own words. When we paraphrase, we must keep the original structure of meaning of the text or oral expression by changing the words. In relation to the topic, other skills are also involved, e.g., you can quote the author in full, use synonyms to preserve the meaning of passage or preserve key words when paraphrasing. Also, it is used to demonstrate whether you understand correctly, helping to clarify ideas created by someone else and it is important to provide references to prevent plagiarism.

In my lecture I was not comfortable with understanding the concept. I asked the teacher to give me examples of paraphrasing. In that module we did exercises related to the topic, which after the end, all was clear to me. I was concerned about the length of the material because there should have been more time allocated to the subject in order to understand it properly. Begin more familiar with these topics is becoming useful and understandable. In addition, it has improved my communication skills by showing me how to express myself accurately and convey my thoughts.

Godfrey (2016) said paraphrasing skills are an essential skill in academic writing, reflecting the author's knowledge of the source material while avoiding plagiarism.

I focused on exercises in paraphrasing from various sources not only text but also video, and podcasts to improve my skills. Nowadays, originality is valued and noticed by others, which is why I want to use these skills to transform text into something unique that could help me in my future career.

CONCLUSION

In this report I have looked at how I have been able to develop my skills in notetaking, finding information and research skills, as well paraphrasing. When taking notes, I understand the value of being a good listener, interpreting context and remaining observant. These skills will help me further in my education, as they are important in gathering learning material. I also recognize the importance of critical thinking and fact-checking when conducting research, as I have learnt that not all sources of information are trustworthy. Learning to paraphrase has proven to be useful because I can now convey the information in my own words and show deeper understanding of the topic without risk of plagiarism. All these techniques combined are excellent tools for academic development and I will be incorporating them into my academic skills.

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