

What do I already know / What have I learnt so far? I have learnt a lot of new Welsh in the last year since beginning the CAMAU Welsh course provided by my setting.				
What do I want to develop? I want to develop my confidence and presenting skills, as I feel that I am not confident in this area.				
Objective	Actions (How will I achieve this objective/what needs to be done?)	Resources (What support and resources are needed to achieve this objective?)	Target date for achieving objective	Success criteria (How will I know I have achieved this goal; how will I review this?)
Complete my degree course at UWTSD	To make sure that this objective is completed I will attend University for the next two years, making sure that I complete all assignments to the best of my abilities, making sure that I use my study time wisely for research and reading and handing all assignments in on time.	To complete this objective, I will be using resources provided by the University and lecturers, using my prior knowledge, and understanding of the topics, and making sure that all research that I do involves relevant resources. If I need any support, I will contact my lecturers and if needed members of staff within student services.	I would like to have completed this by July 2025.	Once I have completed my degree, I should be receiving my results in July 2025. Hopefully, I will have passed the course, and I will be allowed to graduate with everyone on the course. I will be happy with any grade that I receive if I pass and complete the course.
Complete Level 3 CAMAU Welsh Training	Completing this objective will consist of; using the online course that CAMAU provide, making sure I understand the information that is provided and finding ways that I can implement the language into my job role daily.	The resources that I will be using are the online training course that CAMAU provides, using my prior knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language if I need any further support, I will be in contact with the team at CAMAU or I will speak to a Welsh-speaking member of staff within my setting. Available at: https://learnwelsh.cymru/work-welsh/camau/	I would like to complete this course by December 2023. I have spoken to the team at CAMAU, they will be releasing level 3 at the end of October 2023.	Once I have completed this course, I will receive an email containing a certificate as proof of completion. During the course I will make sure that I am completing it to the best of my abilities, and if there is anything that I am unsure of to make sure that I go back over it.
Build my confidence in presenting and talking in front of others	To achieve this, I feel that I would need to communicate more within lectures. To do this I will need to put forward my views and opinions more often. I will also need to take part in more group work or presenting assignments to be able to gain more confidence.	I would do research to find ways in which I could try and gain more confidence. I would also keep pushing myself to talk more in front of others.	I would like to have achieved this by the end of July 2025, by the time I am completing the course. This will mean that I am able to implement it into my job more.	I will know that I have achieved this once I am able to confidently talk in front of others to present my work.

What is reflection and reflective practice?

Reflective practice is a cycle where practitioners should be continually monitoring, evaluating and revising how they practice. This can help practitioners reflect on their teaching methods for the day, week or month and figure out what worked well and what could have been improved. Practitioners may initially try and teach in one way hoping that it will suit all children, then may have to reflect and think about what they can do to adapt their teaching for all children. (Colwell, J. 2019).

Edwards. H (No Date) talks about the emphasis on a higher need for efficient and more regular reflective practice. This can allow for there to be a greater understanding from everyone within the setting concerning the provision followed and identifying the strengths and weaknesses within. Doing this can allow for an accurate evaluation of the provision throughout the setting.

Why is reflective practice important to EY practice?

Reflective practice is an important part of practice for everyone within the Early Years sector. Not only will it benefit the practitioners themselves to advance and develop their teaching skills, but it will also benefit the children within their classes.

Through practitioners reflecting on their practice, allows them to; make sure that all children's needs are being met, that all children have access to suitable resources to support learning, and that their work challenges them allowing the children to learn and making sure that the practice that the practitioners provide benefits the children as well as their parents. (PACEY, 2016).

The theory of reflective practice:

Two prominent theorists are mentioned when researching reflective practice: John Dewey and Donald Schön.

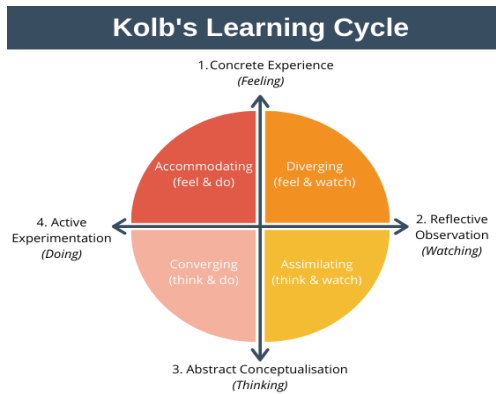
Dewey could not stress the importance of reflective thought, as he believed it was significant in allowing practitioners to learn through experiences. Dewey believed that once reflective thought had begun, it would enable practitioners to see the issues within the experience and reflect on what they could do to improve. This is referred to as "felt difficulty". Dewey put forward that when reflecting on a previous experience, practitioners should always produce questions relating to the experience and, finally, what actions could have been taken to have had a different outcome (Iriss, 2017).

The four stages of Kolb's learning cycles allowed him to create his experiential learning theory. This theory relates to the internal cognitive process of learners. The learning cycle consists of a four-step learning process: concrete learning (feeling) – the learner being able to depend on being open-minded, ability to adapt to change and being dependable on feelings, rather than a methodical approach. Reflective observation (watching) – understanding ideas from a different point of view, having careful judgement and creating an opinion on the foundations of thoughts and feelings. Abstract conceptualisation (thinking) learners use logical approaches, ideas and theories instead of their thoughts and feelings to gain an understanding. This is done by planning and building ideas to solve issues. Finally, active experimentation (doing) is the stage where learners can experiment through an active learning experience; this should be done by taking a practical approach instead of an observational approach (Structural Learning, 2022).

Schön's reflection within the learning process allowed him to identify two types of reflection: reflection in action and reflection on action. These were created to help practitioners contrast reflection upon what happened during an event and reflection after the event (University of Hull, 2023).

Schön believed that professional growth only began once a professional began to view experiences with a critical mindset and start doubting their actions. Doubting experiences allows for questions to be formed and for the experiences to be seen as having problems, allowing the practitioner to adjust the experience in hopes that it can be improved for the next time (Wilson, G. 2021).

He described reflection in action as 'thinking on our feet', the practitioner being able to change and adapt the experience whilst it is happening and then describing reflection on action as looking back on an experience and thinking about what happened, why it might have happened and what they could have done for the outcome to be different. Reflection on action is also connected to a practitioner's reflective writing when they reflect upon their experiences and evaluate what could have been done differently (Iriss, No Date).

Model 1**Model 2****Analysis of models – compare/contrast/pros/cons.**

Kolb believed that learning was a never-ending cycle, continually starting the cycle over again once an experience has been completed. This allowing for an experience to be had, then being able to learn and adapt from the experience itself. The learning cycle is a 4-step cycle, beginning on the Concrete Experience stage this allows for reflection upon feelings experienced from doing or seeing something. Next, would-be Reflective Observation, reflecting upon what had been experienced and thinking why and what happened. Then the cycle would move onto Abstract Conceptualisation, thinking about what has been learnt and whether the experience can be adapted, or a new experience being created. Finally, Active Experimentation, being able to put new and old experiences into practice and seeing if they work. This then leading to start the learning cycle over again. (Begerpen be, 2020)

During research of Kolb's model it has shown some pros and cons of the model itself, an example of these are; A pro of the model would be that it can help the practitioner and the children to learn and understand what way of learning is best for each child, secondly that it is a flexible learning cycle and it can be applied to a range of different subjects or job roles, for example, business studies and nursing. Cons of the model would be, that not every child may be able to adapt to using this learning cycle as they may be set in one way of learning, this then leading to the practitioner having to adapt in the way that they apply the model. Secondly, the practitioner would need to have a good understanding of the model to be able to implement it into daily practice.

Gibbs (1988) reflective cycle is a 6-step cycle that allows practitioners to reflect upon their experiences. It helps practitioners reflect on what went well and what could have been done better and create an action plan to improve where needed. The model is split into two sections, step 1-3 focussing on what has happened, and step 4-6 focussing on how the experience can be improved. The model was designed initially for experiences that would be repeated. However, it is now also used for one-time-only experiences also.

Through researching Gibbs' (1988) reflective cycle, it has shown the model's pros and cons. Some of the pros are that the model allows the person to learn over time; it is not expected to be learnt quickly, allowing over time to gain a more detailed and balanced judgement. Also, the model is straightforward and uncomplicated to understand, allowing the reader to have a straightforward understanding of how the reflection needs to take place. However, there are also some cons when looking at the model; for example, some people may need help comprehending and talking about their feelings to others. This would mean that the first section would be challenging to complete. It is a reactive model that reflects on what the experience was like instead of being a proactive model. If it were a proactive model, this would allow the practitioner to see the issue and correct it before the experience has happened (Expert Programme Management, 2019).

Conclusion

To conclude, through researching both Kolb's and Gibbs models of Learning Cycles it has shown that Gibbs' model allows reflection of learning to be completed in more depth than what Kolb's model does. Even though they may be as effective as the other, online sources suggest that Kolb's Learning cycle would be more effective for writing upon a written piece of reflection, whereas Gibbs model of the Learning Cycle would be more effective for reflecting upon experiences and being able to structure more learning from experiences.

This paper will analyse and recognise the significance of different aspects of professional practice and why they are essential to meet the individual and inclusive needs of the children within the setting.

Early Years Matters (2023) talks about the importance of ensuring that all children benefit best from their experiences through the Early Years. This outcome can be achieved simply by practitioners and external professionals working as a team to support the children through their learning, development and play. Practitioners working with external professionals can help provide parents and carers with the best professional support and guidance to contribute to the children's learning and development. Professionals working alongside practitioners, parents and carers would be ALNCO, Social Services (CAFCASS, foster care), Health Services (health visitors, SALT, paediatricians), Childcare Provisions (Childminders, Nurseries, After after-school club) and Voluntary Organisations. These are just some examples of other professionals.

In the Early Years, all practitioners need to have values. The University of Bradford (2023) talks about professionals having values that will portray them in a professional, reliable and honest image towards others. They also talk about how most settings and organisations will have their values, so it is essential to be aware of these if the setting has them. While in a lecture, the writer of this paper worked with peers to collect a list of values that practitioners should have: commitment, accountability, teamwork, professionalism, positivity, loyalty and empathy.

Communication is the most vital skill that is required from a professional. To work in the early years sector, all practitioners should have mastered the skills of Effective Communication; this is a two-way process, whether between children, parents, carers or outside agencies working in the community. For Effective Communication, the people involved must feel comfortable doing so. Communication is about more than just talking. It also has to do with body posture, how we speak, context and the overall effectiveness of listening (Dunhill *et al.*, 2009, p. 20). It is a collaborative process that can be used by two or more people at once, allowing them to communicate thoughts, feelings, views, opinions and any vital information that may need to be passed on (The National Archives, 2009). Raising Children (2023) states that children learn about themselves and the world around them by forming relationships with parents, carers and family members. This is because relationships allow children to express themselves and give them the confidence to laugh, ask questions, cry, want to have a cuddle or want to answer a question.

NSPCC Learning (2023) states, "Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding means protecting children from abuse and maltreatment and preventing harm to children's health or development.

The Child Brain Injury Trust (2023) states the importance of recognising the signs of abuse or maltreatment in children and that it is paramount that all professionals should be aware of the signs, some of these being a change in behaviour, aggression, impulsiveness or even a personality change. All children must be safeguarded from harm, abuse and maltreatment; when safeguarding is effectively carried out, it should mean that no children will be left undetected if they are going through any of the above. Child abuse, maltreatment, and harm can have serious long-term effects on the mental and physical health of children and young people, so if practitioners and external professionals work together to intervene early, they can reduce these risks. Anyone within the Early Years setting should have an in-depth understanding of safeguarding. This can be done by researching safeguarding, checking the local authority page for child protection and safeguarding guidance, attending the training courses settings regularly put their practitioners onto and even downloading the Wales safeguarding app on a device.

Multi-agency working refers to various teams of professionals across the county working together to provide services for children, young people and their families. This is where more than two services, teams or agencies simultaneously work with the same family. Often, practitioners and settings will work alongside other professionals to help support children and their families to the best of their abilities. (Baker. B *et al.* 2012)

In Wales, a programme called Families First, a Team Around the Family (TAF) helps bring together a range of professionals to support families and ensure their needs are met. Within the TAF are health professionals, school nurses, social services, well-being professionals, family learning providers, PCSO, housing services and schools (Welsh Government, 2013).

Observations are considered a vital part of good practice; it is through observations that practitioners understand where a child is with their learning in the provision and what the next steps for the practitioner will be to help ensure that the child's needs are being met. It is essential that during an observation, the practitioner makes sure that the results are accurate and that they hold the information that is needed (Barber, J. and Paul-Smith, S. 2010 p. 3 - 5). Planning is crucial to making children's learning fun, meaningful, effective and progressive. However, it is also essential that practitioners are flexible with their planning. Not all children will respond to them the same way as others; some may find the activity too easy or complicated, or the activity may go down another route (Barber, J. and Paul-Smith, S. 2010 p. 28-29).

This is where planning the moment can be helpful. Planning in the moment is a child-led approach to learning, where a practitioner can plan one activity and let the children's minds and creativity turn it into multiple. The practitioner then carefully observes the activity and notes the children's interests, tailoring future activities to how the children learn (Structural Learning, 2022).

The UN on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states all children and young people's rights. It is an important agreement signed by a range of countries that have agreed to protect the rights of children and young people. The rights apply to anyone under 18 years old, no matter gender, race, colour, language or disability. It is in place to ensure that children can grow up in the spirit of peace, freedom, tolerance, dignity and solidarity (Together, 2023)

The four fundamental principles of the UNCRC are non-discriminatory, the best interest of the children, the right to survival and development and the views of the child. To ensure that all practitioners and professionals can implement these into their settings, they should ensure that all policies are underpinned and mention the UNCRC; the child's rights should be incorporated within the standards for the setting. Practitioners should use language that familiarises the children with their rights, for example, 'your thoughts and feelings are valued, and I am here to listen; you can talk to me about how you feel'. The settings can also have the child's rights printed and put around the classroom for the children to read (Children's Commissioner for Wales, 2023).

To conclude, all the points discussed above have an impact on practitioners and the way that they practice daily. All practitioners should be aware of these and ensure they are up to date on all relevant information, training and ways of practice.

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