

Principles of Teaching, Learning and Emergent Technologies

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Micro- Teaching
Critical Reflection and Evaluation

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Introduction

Having the ability to reflect, self-awareness will enable learners to analyse their feelings and therefore recognise what caused the problem and what affects that had on them, in order to make changes in future practice (Coles, A., 2004). Likewise, reflection can be demonstrated as a learning tool (Boud et al., 1985). According to Reece and Walker, (2006) the terms 'reflection' and 'reflective practitioner' are two very common terms when reading anything about teaching, in addition these are also very important concepts when discussing reflective practice. Furthermore, following the completion of the micro-teach the model which I will be demonstrating throughout is the Gibbs (1998) Reflective Cycle which stated by Reece and Walker, (2006) is a "much more accessible model". The Gibbs (1998) model includes six different stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion and Action Plan. Moreover, Coles, (2004) also suggests that this Model emphasises the demand to constantly reflect on actions in order to develop professionally. Equally, Reece and Walker, (2006) stated that "A sign of a true professional is to undergo an experience, reflect upon it and learn so that there is an improvement in their professional practice. The UK Professional Standards Framework will be referenced throughout when used. This framework includes many aims such as to support professional development when teaching and supporting learning (Heacademy., 2011).

Description

I was set a task, to plan and design a 30- minute micro-teaching lesson including appropriate learning objectives, two teaching and learning strategies and also two technological teaching resources. In addition, I was provided with a lesson plan template. The lesson plan details included the stage, the focus, the strategy and the time, also the assessment strategies used and the informal lesson evaluation. After completing the lesson plan template, I then had to decide the emergent technologies which I will be using to present my lesson, this was through the use of a PowerPoint Presentation. Reece and Walker, (2006) stated that "PowerPoint is a useful presentation package and, used in conjunction with a lecture, forms a useful learning method".

Moreover, the other types of technologies which I demonstrated within my presentation was a Kahoot Quiz online and a YouTube video, so that I could assess what knowledge of the learners had gained from the lesson. In addition, I ensured to cover a great deal of theory on the topic of 'Introduction to Nutrition' and also giving out a handout for the learners to fill in, a video link was shown before the learners took part in the quiz at the end. Furthermore, on the day of the micro-teaching I delivered my lesson to seven of my class peers, which did not had any previous knowledge to the topic, after completing the micro -teach I had previously created Evaluation Forms to give to each of my peers so that I got get instant feedback on my lesson. I also got professional feedback form Marc Flagg who was observing my lesson. (V1, V2, V3, V4, K1, K2, K4, K5, V1, V2, V3).

Feelings

Prior to my micro-teach, I was extremely nervous. I felt nervous because this was my first ever micro- teach and I had no experience with teaching others. Also, I was feeling very anxious that my emergent technologies such as my PowerPoint, YouTube video and quiz were not going to work which would have put me into a very difficult situation. However, I had a hard copy of my PowerPoint presentation and also paper copies of my online quiz if that happened not to work for any reason. Therefore, even though I was really anxious I did have a plan B. During my micro-teach I was still very nervous, getting up for the first time to teach a lesson, however I made sure that I was loud and clear when presenting especially for my aims, objectives and also all the other content within my PowerPoint. Moreover, I felt that I was rushing my slides and I started to worry that I was going to finish my lesson before the 30 minutes. Likewise, one of my peers had created a Kahoot Quiz for their micro-teach and it happened not to work for them. Therefore, towards the end when I knew the quiz was coming up I felt a bit uneasy, thinking my quiz was not going to be successful but thankfully the quiz was a success and I was very happy with the outcome because I was able to identify all the different results from each of the learners and who really understood the lesson and who not did. After the micro-teach I was pleased to have completed my first lesson. Furthermore, I was extremely surprised with all feedback from both the learners and the observer.

Starting with the feedback from the observer, I was shocked to see that he said that he wrote “A superb confident lesson”. This really shocked me because I was very nervous and I thought that might have shown during my micro-teaching, however I came across more confident than I thought. The overall feedback from the learners was good and they really enjoyed taking part in my quiz, watching the video and also completing the handout which I provided. In addition, I was happy with my first micro- teach and I am looking forward to the next one. (K4, K5).

Evaluation

Reece and Walker, (2006) suggest that evaluation has emerged due to the increasing acceptance of professional autonomy and accountability, and professionals should practice how they want however, they also need to maintain and develop their standards of practice. (The UK Professional Standards Framework).

Moreover, following the completion of the micro-teach experience I was able to identify many different aspects which I feel went well, and which did not go so well. The first aspect which I feel went well was my lesson aims and learning objectives, as I feel that they were very clear and easy to understand. It is very important that as the teacher you are aware of what you want your students to learn. Therefore, this requires identifying the learning outcomes which are known as the aims and objectives. Reece and Walker, (2006) implies that aims are fairly general statements and also describe the overall lesson. Therefore, when creating my aim for the lesson I made sure it was not difficult, in order to make sure it was achieved by the end of the lesson. Likewise, my learning objectives were created by using the SMART Philosophy, which includes Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound.

Another aspect of my lesson which I feel went well was the presentation of the lesson. When creating the lesson plan, I demonstrated the use of the three key stages including an Introduction, Development and a Conclusion. Reece and Walker, (2006) stated that “a good lecturer ‘tells students what is going to be told’, ‘tells them’ and the ‘tells them what they have been told’”.

Additionally, I included different emergent technologies such as the use of PowerPoint Presentation, a YouTube video and a Kahoot Quiz online which I had created to assess the learners. Furthermore, "PowerPoint can be an effective tool to present material in the classroom and encourage student learning" (Northern Illinois University., 2019). Sheehan, K. (2019) indicated that "PowerPoint is used for both educational and business purposes because it allows for easy and creative presentations".

The use of a video link explaining the 'Eat Well Guide' was a very good use of technology to get the point across easily by using a short two-minute video which was created by the Government. The video included a great deal of images and it showed the 'Eat Well Guide' in the easiest design possible and it was also great method for me to make the lesson more interesting. Cox., (2019) suggested that "Technology is a great way to keep your lessons interesting" and therefore, using technology in many different ways such as a video, as a teacher you will notice the interest level in your classroom increase. Furthermore, I feel that using a simple video was going to benefit the learners and excessive technology will enhance the teaching and learning experience because the teacher is changing the teaching strategy from 'Teacher Talk' to allowing the learners to watch and learn from a video which is very helpful to them.

Besides, the aspects which I felt that went well there are also many aspects which I felt did not go so well. These include one of the emergent technologies, I created and used which was the Kahoot quiz online. I feel that I could have created a much more enhanced quiz with extra questions because my quiz only included seven questions, which at the time I felt was a lot for learners with no previous knowledge. However, with the content that I had covered I feel I could have created an additional four or five questions into the quiz. In addition, creating games and quizzes are a fun way to get the learners involved and competitive. Cox., (2019) infers that "Games are also a great way to keep lessons interesting". Furthermore, from looking at the evaluation forms from the learners I was able to appreciate that they really enjoyed the quiz and thought I was fun and interesting. Another bad aspect about the teaching experience which I identified was, I did not ask the learners enough questions throughout the lesson.

I feel I did not do this because I was too nervous and very anxious, and I thought they might not know the answers and the classroom would be silent. However, asking the learners questions within a lesson is very important. According to Hall, (2016) questioning the learners is key, in order for the teacher to identify what the learners know and also identifying the gaps in knowledge and understanding to ensure to close the gaps between what they already know and what the learning goals are. Furthermore, if I was to ask more questions I would have known a lot more about what the learners might have already known about the topic and then I could have asked the correct questions to avoid the silence, this would have also improved the interaction with myself and the learners. (A1, A3, K1, K2, K4, K5)

Analysis

Higher education is changing rapidly and students are often likely to see themselves as consumers and therefore they come with higher expectations when receiving the teaching and learning experience, furthermore emergent technology is a vital tool to meet the needs and expectations by increased teaching materials in and out of the classroom (Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., 2014). Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., (2014) also implies that due to the high raise in HE expectations, the use of technology is also more likely to provide a more engaging and comprehensive live interaction between all. In addition, the use of emergent technologies within my micro-teach was very important in order to enhance the learning and teaching experience, making it interesting for the learners. Moreover, the use of a PowerPoint Presentation to create my lesson has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include easy, creativity and flexibly because as a teacher you might need to quickly set up a presentation or new information has been released and you need to be able to quickly adjust the presentation. You can be as creativity as you want, therefore I added animation, colour and images which I thought might have a big impact on my lesson and that it could motivate and encourage the learners. However, there are also disadvantages when using PowerPoint presentations, these include having to use a computer or projector and electricity is required and therefore, there is the big risk of technical difficulties (Sheehan, K., 2019).

In case of a technical difficulty I ensured to print out a hard copy of my lesson plan and also the lesson PowerPoint.

Another use of emergent technology which I demonstrated within my lesson was a Kahoot Quiz online which I had created to assess and test the learners at the end of the lesson. The quiz was a multiple choose test with seven questions and four answers to select from. Furthermore, technology can provide many different opportunities in which a teacher can assess the learners, also the teacher can monitor and support the learners progress (Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., 2014). Likewise, I had created the quiz-style assessment to test the knowledge of the learners and identify who had the answers correct and who did not. According to Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., (2014) quiz-style computer assessment will allow high levels of cognitive skills to be tested and also multiple choose quizzes are commonly known forms of objective tests. Additionally, there are many advantages and disadvantages of using a multiple choose test, the advantages include quick and easy to score, especially electronically because the answers are previously selected on the quiz, however, creating the quiz is very time consuming and it takes skill to conduct (Maryellen Weimer, P., 2018). Moreover, I feel the quiz which I created was easy to set up and the content included was good, although it did take a great deal of time to create. Moreover, Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., (2014) also stated that “there should be feedback statement – the response students will receive after submitting their answers”, therefore this would provide the students with further guidance. However, I did not provide this within my quiz or after my quiz and I feel this could have really helped my learners to understand what they had done wrong, which would have improved the learning experience for those involved.

Although, I used a great amount of emergent technologies, one of the key areas which I feel would have improved the teaching and learning experience would have been the questioning of the learners. According to Wilson, (2014) questioning is a process designed to find out what an individual understands about the topic and questioning is one of the most common used method for assessment. As a result, questioning the learners is very important and there are many essential purposes to this method.

The purposes include immediate feedback on the learning understanding, allows learners to review their previous knowledge and experiences in order to understand and also improves the chances that the knowledge will be retained, and questioning will also encourage the learners to focus of the key issue, which enables both the learner and teacher to recognise the progress over a period of time (Hall., 2016). In addition, good questioning will enhance the learning and teaching experience because it will allow the teacher to test the knowledge or understanding, especially those open-ended questions which will encourage and provide an opportunity for the learner to give a full answer (Wilson., 2014). (A1, A2, A3, K1, K4, K5, V1).

Conclusion

In conclusion, I feel that the overall teaching and learning experience was successful. I demonstrated a wide range of emergent technologies; the key use of technology was the PowerPoint Presentation. Other emergent technologies which I demonstrated within the PowerPoint was a YouTube video link and a Kahoot quiz online, also additional materials included a handout and an evaluation form to complete. In addition, I feel that using different types of technologies within your lesson plans is very important and I feel that they do enhance the learning and teaching experience. Also, it is becoming essential due to the HE learners increasing their standards and becoming more like consumers rather than learners, therefore putting more pressure of the teachers to create more interesting lessons. Furthermore, using emergent technologies it a vital tool demonstrated to increase the level of interest within the classroom (Fisher, Exley and Ciobanu., 2014). Although the micro-teach was successful, I feel there were many positives and negatives about the experience. The positives include: the number of learners which was very small with only seven. Another positive about the experience was that all my planned emergent technologies all worked successfully with no technical difficulties. However, the negatives about the experience include being extremely nervous and anxious, however from the feedback I was happy to find out that I deliver a very confident lesson.

In order to improve the teaching and learning experience, personal development and future practice it is important to look at what you need to improve on and make recommendations for the future to enable the improvement. For future practice I will ensure to be less nervous and more confident when delivering my lesson. Herbert-Smith, K., (2018) stated that "Having confidence as a teacher can improve your overall effectiveness as well as your wellbeing". Therefore, confidence is essential when teaching because the learners are likely to spot the lack of confidence which and then lead to problems with classroom management. Moreover, in order to improve my confidence I will need to ensure to be prepared, walk around the classroom more and standing confidently, ensure not to be afraid of criticism from feedback and instead use it in order to improve and I need to identify and know my strengths by making sure to reflect on each lesson (Herbert-Smith, K., 2018). Another further recommendation for development and improvement would be to make professional development goals for myself, which will help to ensure improvement. According to Cox, (2019) goals that can not only help you as a teacher to improve but can also help the learners improve these include: make learning more fun, give the learners some reign because study shows giving your learner some control can be very beneficial, also giving them more motivation.

Action Plan

If I was to do the micro-teach again, I would continue to break up the lesson by demonstrating a wide range of emergent technologies in order to enhance the learning and teaching experience and also to ensure to keep the lessons interesting and motivating. Emergent technologies which I will continue to use include creating different types of quizzes to create healthy competitiveness and fun within the lesson and to also asses and test the learners, finding a suitable short YouTube video and I will also continue to use PowerPoint presentation. I will start to change up the activities within the class by demonstrating different emergent technologies such as a live interactive poll, using a different online quiz such as 'quizizz' to mix things up and also I would like to do more group working activities to get the learner thinking and working together, maybe as a team against another team.

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