



With the use of a reflective model (such as the Gibb's reflective cycle), write a reflective report on how the learning in this module has helped you develop your academic skills.

MICHAEL OYEDEJI
STUDENT ID: 2327584
MODULE CODE: LCLM 4001
MODULE: ACADEMIC SKILLS
LECTURER NAME: Dr Laila Maazouz
WORD COUNT: 1357



22 AUGUST 2024

Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	p.4
2. Description.....	p.4
3. Feelings	p.4
4. Evaluation.....	p.5
5. Analysis.....	p.5
6. Conclusion.....	p.6
7. Action Plan.....	p.6
8. Conclusion.....	p.7
9. References.....	p.8

1. Introduction

In this reflective report, using my chosen reflective model of learning; Gibb's reflective cycle (1988), I will be reporting how its stages of description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan have successfully contributed to my academic skills of paraphrasing, academic writing and referencing. Therefore, the agenda of this report is to form a coherent and critical argument to showcase my learning. In providing evidence that demonstrates the academic skills tasks that have helped me in my learning, I will refer to tasks done in the academic skills module. Furthermore, through reflecting upon my learning experiences and tasks in the classroom, I have been able to effectively identify areas that I'm lacking in or experiencing hinderances in.

2. Description

The Gibb's cycle was developed by Graham Gibbs' in 1988 to give structure to learning experiences (Gibbs', 1988). Through its cyclic framework it allows for experiences pertaining to learning to be examined, allows for adequate planning and to evaluate aspects of learning that went well and did not. Initially, before my knowledge and use of the Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, I encountered considerable challenges in paraphrasing sources for the PowerPoint task for digital safety, I faced challenges in condensing the information whilst wanting to include all the relevant information. Furthermore, I experienced difficulties in describing these in my own words, along with writing these opinions into short and concise sentences whilst incorporating all the necessary information and remaining original. Therefore, this created challenges within my ability to effectively paraphrase. Moreover, when researching online articles that revealed that this is an area where many students struggled in (Alaofi, 2020), gave me relief that I was not alone in this daunting and challenging process. Furthermore, the description stage of the cycle has prompted me to outline the necessary research and writing skills to support my academic writing to further amplify the quality.

3. Feelings

The aspect of feelings in Gibb's' reflective cycle refers to the adverse feelings that emerge due to difficulties in getting work right. These were feelings I resonated with as I experienced frustration in terms of producing successful academic writing that aligned with the academic standards in the assignment brief and reaching academic deadline too. This manifested considerable difficulties in other areas of my academic skills such as referencing, academic writing and paraphrasing which made me less confident and second guess my

abilities. In the domain of referencing, this generated issues in ensuring that the citations were according to the Harvard referencing style along with the references too, which were things I was not familiar with in the past. However, when I learnt about the Gibbs' cycle in the academic skills lecture, and started to apply and adhere it to my learning, then did understanding these processes needed for success in academic skills become easier. Although compared to other student's testimonies on how the Feeling Cycle reduced their stress during adverse experiences (Li et al., 2020), I did not share this same sentiment. Alternatively, for me the Gibbs' cycle made understanding those essential components of academic skills easier which in turn as a by-product led to a reduction in stress and the adverse feelings.

3. Evaluation

The Evaluation stage of the Gibbs' Cycle focused on what areas did and did not work within a given situation (Gibbs', 1988). Within this stage, I am able to identify which areas worked well with paraphrasing which were texts that focused on descriptions, listing and providing definitions. However, an area that did not work well for me was paraphrasing texts that involved producing counter arguments and providing critical information. Reflecting on my past learning experiences along with feedback on one my PowerPoint task by my lecturer, made me realise that effectively paraphrasing is an area I struggled with which had an impact on the progress of my academic writing. In regards to referencing there were missing information such as the accessed date. Furthermore, the evaluation stage has been important in allowing me to master the specific citation style needed, and to deeply evaluate the task to effectively paraphrase rather than just rephrasing the text.

4. Analysis

The stage of the Gibbs' cycle allows you to understand what occurred and how to extract relevant meaning from it (Gibbs', 1988). This stage equipped me with the knowledge of identifying the issues that caused me to struggle in the areas of referencing, academic writing and paraphrasing. 'Paraphrasing, has been supported by past literature that concurs that it is a skill that requires a deeper understanding of the given material (Keck, 2014), compared to simply skimming over the text. This has generated reflection in my learning process of the academic skills content by understanding that time management is an essential skill needed for paraphrasing. Therefore, in the application to my future learning experiences, this will encourage me to condense the academic texts that I need into smaller forms to allow deeper reading and understanding and to allow adequate time to focus more on the material to achieve information before attempting to paraphrase.

Additionally, in the aspect of referencing the analysis stage of the Gibbs' cycle revealed that the challenges that I experienced in referencing was my unfamiliarity with the desired referencing style, Harvard referencing, which then generated inconsistencies in the citations in the practice tasks during the reference lectures, allowed me to rehearse this process more to be able to accurately give credit. This has been corroborated by academic sources that argue that accurate referencing is essential for academic writing as not only does it give credit to the authors (Neville, 2016), but confers integrity onto my own work. Therefore, in applications to my future I will take this onboard more to prevent plagiarism.

5. Conclusion

I have concluded that there is a need for me to develop strategies to maintain my areas of strength and to fix my areas of weakness in the areas of academic writing, paraphrasing and referencing. Although, I mentioned time management as important in my paraphrasing but incorporating summarisation in my own words along with thorough engagement with the source material will be helpful. These benefits can be extended to increasing my academic writing by completing these in details and drafting plans before writing the academic assignment in question to achieve better results. Lastly, using referencing management tools like cite for me and the inbuilt referencing software on Word document can be helpful in counteracting the human errors that may occur whilst I am referencing. Therefore, these conclusions were useful tools in guiding my action to improve my academic skills.

7. Action Plan

Finally, this stage of Gibb's cycle focuses on. For academic writing I made it my mission to effectively plan and outline the essays over a long period of time compared to what I used to do. I also ensured that these examinations were thorough to allow for more structured paragraphs that were coherent with clear focus. For paraphrasing this involved having time manage to set aside the reasonable amount of time I felt that I needed for rereading the material, writing the information from memory along with cross-checking against the original text. Lastly, for referencing, I consistently checked the guidelines provided by the lecturers and used the websites the provided such as cite for me. Therefore, these were relevant for me, and an action plan I desire to take for learning to improve my academic skills are consulting with the lecturers through 1-1 appointments and using the discussion boards within the modules to answer my queries. and by allocating significant time aside to focus on reconceptualising the presented information rather than my usual tendency or surface level analysis.

8. Conclusion

To conclude, Gibbs' reflective cycle has largely contributed to the development of my academic skills particularly in academic writing, paraphrasing and referencing. Engaging with each stage of the reflective progress, particularly the analysis and action plan stages, have allowed me to examine my learning processes, draw upon adequate reasoning, and determine which strategies to optimise my success as a scholar. Moreover, this has allowed me to increase my technical skills in using inbuilt computer software for referencing along with being more confident in handling academic texts.

References

- Alaofi, A.O., 2020. Difficulties of summarizing and paraphrasing in English as a Foreign Language (EFL): Saudi graduate students perspectives. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 8(2), pp.193-211.
<https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v8i2.17788>
- Gibbs, G., 1988. Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. *Further Education Unit*.
- Keck, C., 2014. Copying, paraphrasing, and academic writing development: A re-examination of L1 and L2 summarization practices. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 25, pp.4-22. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.05.005>
- Li, Y., Chen, W., Liu, C. and Deng, M., 2020. Nurses' psychological feelings about the application of Gibbs reflective cycle of adverse events. *American Journal of Nursing*, 9(2), pp.74-78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.05.005>
- Neville, C., 2016. *The complete guide to referencing and avoiding plagiarism*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

[Accessed date 22/08/2024]