

ACADEMIC AND EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

BMSW4001



REFLECTING ON MY LEARNING DURING THIS MODULE

PREPARED BY
HASSAN ABBAS
2010829

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Introduction

Every course is an experience, and this learning experience can be structured and summarize through reflective writing. These skills will help to acquire academic and employability skills of a student. The course works and instruction will help me to strengthen my present skill and acquire some new skills. In university, there will be various course and each course is a learning experience. Here, in this assignment, a reflection of the learning experience of the ACE course will be provided within a framework which will explain the course experience in different stages, identify learning and learning gap from the experience and plan to reduce those gaps. This will help to identify how the course impacted me and why some of the topics were not effective. The reflective writing of the assignment will also acquire the skill of reflection. Overall. It's the feedback and description of the whole learning experience in a reflective way.

In this assignment, I will use Gibb's reflective model and it provides a structure of the learning process from the experience. The reflective model represents the stages of learning by doing. It will be helpful to reflect the learning process from doing different activities throughout the course. It will analyse the overall situation and provide with a feedback. The learning cycle is applicable to both repetitive and one-time learning (Gibbs' Reflective Cycle: Helping People Learn From Experience, 2020). There are six stages of the reflective cycle and each stage will reflect the learning experience from different aspect and stage. The stages are:

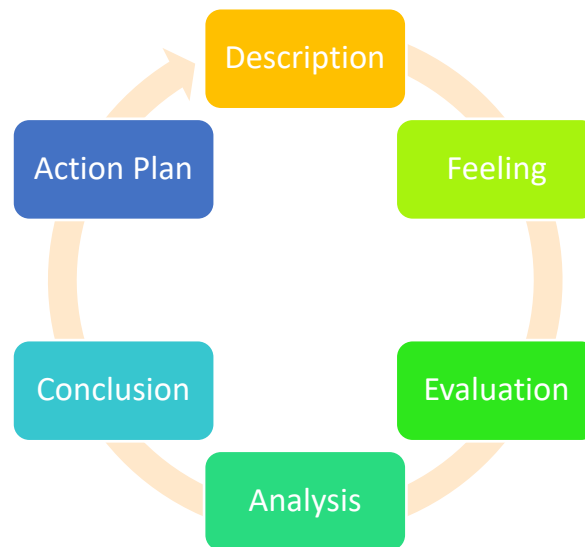


Figure 1: Gibb's Reflection Model

Source: self-designed

Description

In this stage, the experience of the learning process will be described in detail. Throughout the course, the course instructor instructed about time management .

Time management: From the beginning the instructor always told us about importance of time management in professional and academic life. She explained to us the various techniques and strategies to manage time more effectively and efficiently. She used to provide strict timeline for assignment.

Academic writing: Academic writing was an important part of our course. The instructor often provided us with a different source for learning the styles of academic writing and she also provided us with the format of it. She instructed how we can plan our writing structure and improve vocabulary level. She also provided us with different source from where we can have

good praxis of research. We had to submit different academic writings on a different topic. This academic writing also related to research, referencing, summarizing and paraphrasing. She also distinguished between acceptable and unacceptable source of information which is very important in formal academic writing to validate information.

Paraphrasing: In academic writing, often we had to use information from different sources and direct use of this information would cause plagiarism. I learned how we can use the 4R's of paraphrasing strategy which is: read, restate, recheck and repair to paraphrase the different types of paraphrasing successfully (Wu, 2007). We had to paraphrase the article from the provided sources of the instructor. After submission, she provided us the feedback on our in-class task.

Referencing: The instructor also showed us method of Harvard of citation and referencing. There are different styles out there but as an undergraduate Harvard was most preferable for us. We were informed about different tools and websites from which we could take help to generate reference manually or automatically.

Summarizing: Summarizing articles or any journals are another important part of academic writing. The instructor showed us different video and provided us with different articles and journal and we had to summarize those in the class. She also taught us about different tools to use for paraphrasing and summarizing. The instructor provided us with a common word list that we can use while summarizing any writing, paragraph or essay. The main point of summarizing is to ignore the information which are irrelevant and not important. The instructor showed us how we can identify them and ignore them. She also told us about different strategies for summarizing and told us to evaluate our writing. She also provided us with the link of different websites that can be useful for summarizing activities and exercise and test the summarizing skill.

Feeling

In the feeling stage the describer reflects his/ her feeling before, during and after the experience (Davies, 2012). I faced a problem regarding time management.

Time management: After applying the time management techniques provided my instructor my skill of time management improved. I was able to do half of my work timely but before that I couldn't finish the one fourth of my task timely even.

Paraphrasing: My feelings about the learning process of this course were quite confusing at first. I got really confused about different paraphrasing style (Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, 2020). After doing different academic writings on different topic my paraphrasing skill improved.

Academic writing: I was also stressed about my academic writing style and tried to define a unique style of my writing. I was always worried about my academic writing quality and format but later after submitting in-class exercises throughout the course and working on my feedback I felt pretty confident about my writing structure but my vocabulary range needs to be developed to improve my writing quality. I often got confused about acceptable and unacceptable academic source and used informal vocabulary

Referencing: I have also learned to use Harvard referencing style and I was pretty confident using this.

Summarizing: I felt difficulties in the case of summarizing. Often I felt confused about the main point and irrelevant information. I also didn't understand many words which made it more difficult for me.

Evaluation

The whole experience was not fruitful for me. Some of it worked very well and I failed to absorb some of the lesson (Potter, 2015). The evaluation will help to evaluate the learning and problem of my experience.

Academic writing: Before the course, I had a vague idea about academic writing. I was apprehensive about my writing standard, structure and vocabulary. Now, I gained a certain standard of writing and I have a clear idea about the principles and structure of academic writing but I faced difficulty using different range of formal vocabulary and differentiating between the acceptable sources and unacceptable sources was difficult for me. Sometimes I ended up writing in informal tone or language and use information from sites such as Wikipedia or random personal blog. The instructor marked those and told me about this.

Paraphrasing: I can also do paraphrasing quite successfully and learned the strategies properly. I used three techniques for paraphrasing and which are: changing words, changing order of words and changing class of words. There were some free tools which I found in the internet to check plagiarism, I used those and paraphrased the lines if I found any plagiarism. Now I don't have to face the case of plagiarism anymore.

Time management: Time management was a huge problem for me. Albeit I applied the techniques instructed by the lecturer, still sometimes I face problem regarding time management. I improved my time management problem but I could not overcome it totally. The tricks of arranging tasks on urgent basis and busy routine really helped to improve my time management problem. But still now I miss many deadline and face problem sometimes to manage the tasks within time. The strict deadline of coursework also helped.

Referencing: I have learned to use the Harvard referencing style but sometimes I face problems using website for referencing such as cite this for me. Especially website referencing using the website or tools is confusing for me. Manual citation also takes time whereas using the online tools can help me to work faster. There are different variations of Harvard referencing style based on university which is as well confusing for me.

Summarizing: Summarizing the idea is a bit difficult for me if the topic is abstract and sentences are large (Friedberg, 2005). Often I feel lost to put my own words while summarizing and break down the large information to make a synopsis. Apart from this, my lexical resources were not enough to summarize a bit complex article and sometimes I would miss the main points.

Analysis

This stage delineates the situation of evaluation and describes the reason why some of them went well and some of them were difficult to process (Sekarwinahyu, et al, 2019, February).

Academic writing: The instructor told us about the importance of academic writing throughout my academic life so I became passionate to improve my writing standard. The continuous feedback helped me to improve my academic writing skill and understand its format. There are numerous words and information so it was hard to keep those track. Though the instructor provided me feedback she didn't provide any written document or guideline about formal words and acceptable documents. I didn't also pay much attention regarding this.

Paraphrasing: The paraphrasing strategy and tools were quite helpful for me to learn to paraphrase successfully. The continuous in class exercises of paraphrasing helped me in this regard. I searched online to look for a different style, strategy and example of paraphrasing. The research and overall course task helped me to develop this skill.

Time management: Time management is a problem that cannot be overcome rapidly. It became my habit to procrastinate and it is taking time to adapt those strategies with my habit of mismanagement of time but it is improving gradually.

Referencing: In most of the academic writing, we used the Harvard referencing style and teacher always emphasised on this as this style of referencing and citation is mainly used by the university or undergraduate students. So, in my writing, I always used this style so I couldn't get much scope to practice other styles.

Summarizing: My reading skill needs to improve. It becomes tough for me to find the zest of a very long and complex sentence. In many non-fiction, writing sentences are long and complex so I face difficulty to summarize them. Though the instructor told us about different summarizing strategy but I couldn't implement them properly and the practice test on summarizing was not enough for me. I also didn't check out the website link and didn't try to practice myself.

Conclusion

By highlighting my changes and learning, I can say it was overall a positive experience. I should have more attentive about my course details and each topic. I will constantly try to identify my learning gap from any learning experience and reduce them as much as possible (Tawanwongsri & Phenwan, 2019). For this course, I will make an action plan to improve my weaknesses. I have learned sometimes I have to guide me and dig the course content for improving my learning experience and skill set. I also didn't use many tools and pay attention to tips and strategies which affected my summarizing and academic writing skill. But these skills are extremely useful for my later academic and professional life so the action plan will help me overcome the gap of learning in the process.

Action plan

I had some learning gap and I face some difficulties during the course. To reduce this gap, I will implement some strategy and plans. It will help me to increase the effectiveness of my learning process and my strategies are as follows:

- Reading research papers regularly to increase my reading habit and vocabulary range.
- See videos and read blogs on differencing among various accepted source of information and formal language

- Making guidelines about accepted sources and avoid the personal blog source or unaccepted source
- Taking notes of mistake of referencing and citation and making follow-ups according to that and using tutorials on online referencing site.
- Implementing different techniques of summarizing and practice summarizing regularly because practice is the key.
- Check out different websites about summarizing exercise and activities and self-evaluate them
- Setting a deadline and emergency deadline for each task and keeping the schedule busy to avoid procrastination. This will help me in time management.

By implementing this action plan, I will try to overcome my learning gaps and difficulties.

Conclusion

The learning experience from the coursework was overall satisfactory. It helped to improve different types of skills especially academic writing which consists of different other skills like academic writing, referencing, summarizing and paraphrasing. Meantime I also faced some difficulty in some course topic and it created some learning gaps. This learning gap also created my gap in skill such as summarizing and referencing. This learning gap has been created due to both learning and teaching method. My habit of procrastination also aided this gap. The lack of attention and proper plan for practice was behind those gaps. So, now I have made an action plan to overcome those gaps and follow the strategies in future because the learning cycle is repetitive.

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