

Stimulating the Students' Reflection

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Abstract: *The importance of reflection was frequently noted in the literature. Reflective competence was regarded by many educators as an essential characteristic for professional education. Activities to promote reflection were limited because of the misunderstanding about reflection's definition and the complicated model of reflection. We, therefore, designed a literature review to clarify the definition and model of reflection. Our aim of this paper was to construct situation to stimulate Vietnamese students' reflection.*

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I. Introduction

Today's students have to refresh and update knowledge and skills. Preparing professionals possess the capabilities which can help students solve the problems in future career.

Reflection noted in the general education literature and is increasingly described as essential attributes of competent professionals who are prepared to address these challenges.

Despite reflection's currency as a topic of educational importance, and the presence of several helpful models, there is surprisingly little to guide educators in their work to understand and develop reflective ability in their learners, especial in Vietnam.

This paper will design for reviewing the literature of reflection about definition and the model, and find out methods to stimulate the Vietnamese students' reflection.

II. Definition Of Reflection

Many definitions of reflection can be found. To guide our review we used three definitions, to reflect both the nature of the reflective activity and its translation into professional practice.

Dewey defined reflection as "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends" [2]. It means that reflection shares similarities with our understanding of critical thinking.

Moon describes reflection as "a form of mental processing with a purpose and/or anticipated outcome that is applied to relatively complex or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution" [7].

Boud et al. (1985) define reflection as "a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to a new understanding and appreciation" [1].

All three definitions emphasize purposeful critical analysis of knowledge and experience, in order to achieve deeper meaning and understanding. Boud's definition more explicitly focuses on one's personal experience as the object of reflection, and is more explicit about the role of emotion in reflection.

III. Model Of Reflection

Reflection was introduced from Dewey (1933). There were many models to stimulate the reflection's ability. However, there are two major dimensions to the models of reflection:

Iterative dimension

The process of reflection is triggered by experience, which then produces a new understanding, and the potential or intention to act differently in response to future experience.

1. Schon's model

Schon's model present the following key words in his model [10].

- Knowing-in-action,
- Surprise,
- Reflection-in-action,
- Experimentation,
- Reflection-on-action

In this model, based on the knowing-in-action, the learners have to find the problem to trigger their thinking and they will implement the experimentation. The problem they can find from the reflection-in-action or reflection-on-action.

Reflection-in-action is concerned with practicing critically. So, student practicing with patient at the hospital is making decisions about the suitability of their activities, which activities to do next and judging the success of each activity at the same time as they are conducting the activity.

Reflection-on-action, on the other hand, occurs after the activity has taken place when you are thinking about what you (and others) did, judging how successful you were and whether any changes to what you did could have resulted in different outcomes. This is usually the type of reflection which you are asked to write about as part of your studies.

2. Boud's model

Boud mentioned to the following words for reflection's model [1].

- Returning to experience,
- Attending to feelings,
- Reevaluation of experience,
- Outcome/Resolution

The reflection will be happened whenever the learners have to think/implement the experience and combine with their feeling to evaluate their outcome. As the result, the learner will find the solution for their problem and apply it for the new situation.

To develop the reflection, these models approve that the learners have to do and get experience. However, the students will not get experience without the situations or suggestion from the teacher.

Vertical dimension

It includes different levels of reflection on experience. Generally the surface levels are more descriptive and less analytical than the deeper levels of analysis and critical synthesis. The deeper levels appear more difficult to reach, and are less frequently demonstrated.

1. Dewey's model

Dewey's model is the emphasis on thinking. In Dewey's reflection, the students have to feel difficulties and formulate question, problem and they must discuss together to find the hypothesis [3]. They will experiment or observe the hypothesis to find the best one. In this model, the reflection was divided into raise question or formulates the hypothesis or the solution

- Content and process reflection,
- Premise reflection/critical reflection.

2. Mezirow's model

In Mezirow's model, the reflection of students will be divide into[6]:

- Habitual action is the action the students do without any thinking about that.
- Thoughtful action/Understanding is the action the student implements with understanding what they do. However, they cannot apply in the new situation.
- Reflection is the action the student implements with understanding what they do. They can apply that in new circumstances.
- Critical reflection is the action the student implements with understanding what they do. They can apply that in new circumstances and create the new knowing-in-action.

3. Hatton and Smith's model

In this model, the authors separate into different level of reflective [4]:

- Description – in this level, the learner can write about their experience or their knowing-in-action without any thinking
- Descriptive reflection - in this level, the learner can write about their experience or their knowing-in-action with thinking about their working and explain about that.
- Dialogic reflection – in this level, the learner can discuss together and learn together and help to explain the problem of their peers.
- Critical reflection - in this level, the learner can think by themselves based on their experience and their peer's experience. As the result, they can get the new knowledge.

4. Moon's model

In Moon's model, the author remark to the following word to arrange the level of reflection [9]:

- Noticing – The student has to register the topic, event or incident as being interesting or important in some way.
- Making sense – The student thinks more about what they have noticed and tries to understand it better.
- Making meaning - The student starts to ask questions and to connect ideas together
- Working with meaning - The student makes links with other ideas and events. They would probably refer to literature and other research. At this point, reflection on the learning is likely to be taking place.
- Transformative learning - The student has reached the point where they can formulate new ideas of their own. They know what they would do if a similar situation arose in the future.

In this dimension, the models showed that there many levels of reflection which the students have to achieve. The problem is whether they know what level they are and which activity to improve the level of reflection. Therefore, the teachers have to evaluate and suggest some activities for them to improve the competence of reflection.

IV. Stimulation The Reflection's Competence

Based on the literature review, using situations will trigger the students' reflective competence. From the Schon's model, the situations force student do and help them create their experiences. Thus, the teachers create the situations which help improve their reflection. There are 5 kinds of situations for students to improve their reflective competence [11]:

- Knowing-in-action situation – Situation has to stimulate the student present their knowledge that has already exist in their mind.
- Surprise situation – situation that has problems. These problems help the leaners link the previous knowledge and new knowledge – from their peer – to find the solution.
- Reflection-in-action situation – in this situation, the student can practice with some small problems and the student has to solve them immediately.
- Experimentation situation in which the student can do experiment and can find false and can approve the truth.
- Reflection-on-action situation – the situation can help the student think back to their action/ experience to find out the advantage and disadvantage.

V. Evaluation The Reflection's Level

A learning journal is 'essentially a vehicle for reflection' and is 'an accumulation of material that is mainly based on the writer's processes of reflection'[8]. Learning journals have also been shown to assist students in exploring their values, beliefs and assumptions , allow students to document, review and share their learning, help students account for and realize learning in professional placements and fieldwork, support career management, stimulate critical thinking as well as break habitual ways of thinking, enhance the development of reflective judgment, develop problem solving skills, encourage deep, rather than surface learning and make connections between old and new knowledge [5].

Therefore, at the end of each situation, the students have to write the learning journal. Based on the content of the learning journal, the teacher can evaluate reflection level. Based on the vertical dimension, Hatton and Smith's view was used to evaluate the reflection's level. There are 4 level of reflection [4]:

- Description – in this level, the learner can write about their knowing-in-action without any thinking related to their professional.
- Descriptive reflection - in this level, the learner can write about their experience or their knowing-in-action with thinking about their working in the future and explain about that.
- Dialogic reflection – in this level, the learner can discuss together and learn together and help to explain the problem of their peers.
- Critical reflection - in this level, the learner can think by themselves based on their experience and their peer's experience. As the result, they can get the new knowledge.

However, the teacher has to evaluate the student's writing to help the students get high level of reflection by using the following table which was built from the literature review:

Tableno 1. Relative of situation and level of reflection

Situations for students		Knowing in action	Surprise	Reflection in action	Experimentation	Reflection on action
The level of reflection	Description	x	x			
	Descriptive reflection	x	x	X	x	x

Dialogic Reflection		x	X	x	x
Critical Reflection			X	x	x

In this table showed that, the knowing-in-action situation and surprise situation will help student achieve reflection at descriptive level. Based on the level of reflection, the teacher should design the situations which help the students achieve the higher reflective level.

VI. Conclusion

In this paper, the nature of reflection was the analyzing the knowledge and experience with their feeling. The models of reflection were divided into two dimensions which help the educators apply in different professional areas. Kinds of situations were introduced for stimulating the Vietnamese students' reflection and levels of reflection was using by Vietnamese teacher to evaluate the Vietnamese students' reflection.

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