University of Stirling 2016

Workshop
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Aspects of reflective practice
A reflective approach to:

peer-interaction (CD)
self-evaluation of classroom talk (SETT)
innovation, tools and technologies (V4A)
Definitions

Dewey (1933: 15): widely credited for turning attention to the importance of experiential learning and reflective thought as the ‘sole method of escape from the purely impulsive or purely routine action’ and is concerned principally with the relationship between experience, interaction and reflection.
The current place of RP (1)

RP has achieved the status of orthodoxy. E.g:

‘the best thing any education can bequeath is the habit of reflection and questioning’ (Grayling 2003: 179).

Moseley et al. (2005) see the highest level of thinking and learning in education as ‘strategic and reflective thinking’
The current place of RP (2)

BUT....

There is little in the way of data-led research on RP
A need for more evidence from the perspectives of both research and professional development.

AND...

RP needs to be *taught* for teachers to acquire skills and practices for their own self-development.
Understandings of context (up-close and ecological understandings) are best fostered through RP.
Reflective Practice: criticisms

- RP is described in elusive, general, and vague ways.
- There is a lack of concrete, data-led and linguistic detail of RP.
- There is a heavy dependence on written forms rather than dialogic ones.
- RP has not, in most cases, been operationalized in systematic ways.
Reflective Practice: future directions

• We need to know more about the processes and impact of RP.
• This will need data-led accounts in a range of contexts.
• We need to see how RP ‘gets done’.
• We also need to rebalance RP towards accounts of spoken, collaborative forms of reflection.
‘Something to watch later...’
‘New in context’ (Mann and Edge 2013)

- A new idea or tool is not an innovation. Innovation demands concentration on process; it demands that we pay as much attention to how we teach or train as to which topics get covered along the way, or the tools that we employ.
Reflective practice

- An evidence based approach to developing appropriate methodology
- At its best works towards the understanding of tools and methodologies in specific contexts
- A detailed, up-close, ‘ecological’ (c.f. van Lier, 2000) professional understanding (see Mann and Walsh 2013).
‘feedback’ and reflection
About

In the late 1980s Julian Edge started working on a discourse framework to facilitate the professional development of teachers (and professionals generally) engaged in reflective practice or action research. He named it Cooperative Development (Edge 1992, 2002). The approach is grounded in the non-judgmental philosophy of Carl Rogers (Rogers 1969, 1980; Rogers and Freiberg 1994), and in further elaboration of this approach by Curran (e.g., 1972; 1976).

Join the Community!

If you have experience working with Cooperative Development or any other form of non-judgmental discourse, or if you are simply interested in this area, why not join our online community? For more details, please click here.
"Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."

- Stephen Covey

Non-judgmental discourse 1

Non-defensive speaking:

An articulation that brings together experiential and intellectual learning in an exploration that can lead to discovery and consequent action
Non-judgmental discourse 2

Non-judgmental understanding, based on a cooperative attitude that features:

- respect
- empathy
- sincerity
Understanding moves

• Attending
• Reflecting
• Focusing
• Thematising
• Challenging
• Goal-setting
• Trialing
Sue in Italy

- University students of microbiology and agriculture with ‘multinational’ perspectives
- During the 2003 war in Iraq
- A desire to clarify the ‘political’ aspects of her work and to clarify their implications for action
Sue’s Discovery

The distinction between ‘huge episodes’ such as the war in Iraq and an ‘even bigger picture’ of on-going ideological perspective that relates to her students’ language learning and education.
The development ‘moment’

- ‘actually’
- ‘come to think of it’
- ‘maybe’
- hesitations, facial expressions
- perhaps as close as we will get to seeing and hearing development take place
Discovery
More linguistic signals

- ‘I hadn’t realised this before …’
- ‘What I’ve come to realise just through talking now …’
- ‘What I’ve seen this morning is …’
- ‘Talking through this morning has helped me see …’
The relationship between reflection and interaction

Reflection is an essential feature of engagement.
It mediates ‘expert’ knowledge and more
‘experiential’ or ‘constructed’ knowledge.
It can be supported by co-operative talk (Edge 2002).
Creating opportunities for collaboration can foster
interaction and reflection.
There is a danger that reflection and continual
development become just another slice of
declarative knowledge (rather than a ‘practice’).
Final thoughts

There is little doubt that teachers in their first year(s) of teaching need support and this can help keep teachers in the profession (e.g. Stanulis et al. 2002).

The teacher education process needs to consider how it promotes constructivist views of knowledge.

It needs to highlight how peer relationships can be valuable (in addition to ‘expert’ relationships).

It also needs to consider how ongoing teacher development can be supported.