Reflection Leads To Better Academic Achievements

Nowadays, the role of reflection has created a surge of interest in various areas of general, social, pedagogical and engineering psychology. Reflection has a positive impact on students' self-determination. Furthermore, it fosters students to think critically and extends personal and professional skills (Lew & Schmidt, 2011). Talking about the reflection we cannot escape to mention John Dewey, who made a unique impact on education. In 1933 he 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". Referring to his word's reflection is a complicated mental process of self-knowledge and the ability to evaluate your actions, make decisions, draw inferences. It allows people to succeed in their further work and insures the progress of the individual or society (Dewey, 1933).

Reflection is an integral part of learning. It is necessary for students to learn from their personal experiences in order to improve their skills (Lew & Schmidt, 2011). It helps to analyze the results obtained, redefine the goals of further work, and adjust their educational path. According to Chang (2019), reflection leads to better academic achievements, enables students to question their values, expectations, it allows to strengthens already gained knowledge. He found that reflection was beneficial for learners because they reinforced their knowledge, reflection forced students to look at what they did and what they have accomplished. In addition, reflection helped to understand the assignment and see how to apply this knowledge to a real-life situation.

According to Gilbert and Trudel (2001) learning model, there are three forms of reflection: reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action and retrospective reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action involves reacting to the events decisively, effectively, and without prior thought (Henderson & Watkinson, 2011). From a student perspective, pupils employ reflection-in-action during the lecture, when they are asked by a professor. In that situation they must decide how to answer and give a response quickly. Reflection on action refers to the thinking back to the events that occurred (Lu, 2016). For instance, after class students can take into consideration new information provided by teachers (their thoughts, opinion) in conjunction with their own experience, feelings. It is also believed that such reflection expands knowledge and challenges other persons theories and beliefs. Retrospective reflection-on-action is described as "which occurs outside the action-present" and it is a process of thinking back to the event (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001).

Within education it is important to employ not only reflection but reflexivity as well. Reflexivity has deep roots in sociology and involves introspection (Elster, 2017). It refers to circular, bidirectional relationships between cause and effect. To be reflexive can help students to improve their academic achievements, as introspection leads to heightened awareness, change and growth (Beers & Mierlo, 2017). Gibs (1988) reflective cycle is a good example of reflexivity. The model focuses on learning from experiences and provides a structure that guides the process of reflection. The Framework covers six stages:

1. Description of the event or experience
2. Feeling or thoughts that were in your head during the event

3. Evaluation of the situation, what worked and what did not work (both positive and negative)
4. Analysis to make a sense of the situation
5. Conclusion about the event, what happened, what you learned and what you could do differently in order to improve the outcome.
6. Action plan for the future, which will help to deal with the similar situations and act differently.

Reflection

Description

I will reflect on the academic writing assignment where I had to choose one topic and write about 300 words (see feedback, appendix 1). I started doing this assignment at the beginning of October, about four weeks before the deadline. Firstly, I read journal articles that were written by members of Brunel staff and then I have chosen the topic I was interested in. After that I started to read different academic journals since I needed to find two more reliable sources and build the structure of my essay. I wrote it by myself, but when I finished it, I asked my friend to read it, in order to check the grammar and make some comments about the structure. My essay was finished three days before the deadline and in three weeks I have got the grade and feedback. For my work I got 60% and the feedback was both positive and negative.

Feelings

When I started writing the assignment, I felt a little bit anxious, as I was confused about the structure of the essay. I was not sure what kind of facts should I include and in which direction I must continue writing. Once I finally completed the assignment, I felt liberated, I was very happy that I do not have to sit for hours worrying about the essay. In three weeks, I have got the grade and the feedback. I felt upset about the outcome, since I worked hard on the assignment and I expected my grade not to be excellent although, I was hoping the grade would be better. Provided feedback was understandable and it will help me to make future improvements.

Evaluation

On the positive side, I learned a lot of new information regarding my topic area and it was a good experience. However, on the negative side, it was challenging and took a lot of time. I am glad that I did a good research before the start of essay and found reliable and relevant literature. Also, a little disappointed that the APA formatting and the introduction part did not go well

Analysis

I would say that overall the work went well, because I put a lot of effort into writing it and planned my time. Trueman and Hartley (1996), claimed that time management skill is an important part in education that can lead to the better academic achievements. On the other hand, the essay did not go very well because I do not have a lot of experience on writing it. I was mostly criticized by the use of academic writing and the content of the essay. Borglin (2012) argued that academic writing is challenging but nevertheless, it is an integral part and

successful element of university studies.

Conclusion

It was my first essay writing at university and I think it was a useful experience for me. I learned where to look for the information and how to structure the essay. However, I should have looked more closely to APA formatting Guide, as it was the part where I lost some points. I think it would be better for me to book an appointment with the academic writing support staff, in order to consult about the essay formatting part. Making this work helped me to expand my knowledge in my chosen topic area, as I read a lot of academic articles.