

Picture This! Using Images to Stimulate Nonlinguistic Reflection in Undergraduate Agriculture Courses

Carley Calico – Mississippi State University

Dr. Catherine W. Shoulders – University of Arkansas

Dr. Laura Lemons – Mississippi State University



Introduction

- Reflection is an essential part of the learning process (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 2013).
- Reflection strategies can be applied to all disciplines, and allow students to connect course concepts to their own lives and future goals (Grossman, 2009).
- Students may prefer different forms of reflection, whether it be written individually or verbally in a classroom setting (Lamm, Cannon, et al., 2011).

Introduction

- In nonlinguistic representation, the knowledge is stored in two forms, linguistic and visual. The more students use both forms in the classroom, the more opportunity they have to achieve. The use of nonlinguistic representation stimulates and increases brain activity (Bamalli, 2014, p. 52).

How it Works

1. Select an image that represents how they feel about a specific topic related to course objectives.
2. Provide a written response to questions connecting their classroom experiences to real-world situations.
3. Participate in a class discussion about how they feel about the reflection topic.
4. At the conclusion of the semester, students complete a satisfaction instrument on the nonlinguistic reflection experience in relation to the traditional written reflection model commonly used in classrooms.

****MAKE SURE YOU READ ALL OF THE DIRECTIONS****

According to the DEAL Model for Critical Reflection your goals for this section of the semester were to:

1. Learn how to develop a résumé, cover, letter, and thank you note.
2. Learn the importance of researching the job position and company you are applying for.
3. Learn how to conduct yourself and prepare for an online and skype interview.

Search the internet or the camera roll on your phone for an image (it can be any image) that visually describes the way you feel about preparing for a job interview, it can be positive or negative.

Paste your image into a word document and provide a written reflection describing your thoughts on preparing for a job interview, what the preparation process is like, how it can be applied in your life, how you applied it to your 3R's presentation delivered in class, and why you chose the image you did (provide specific examples from your experiences in AIS 3333 and the PrepNote lectures). Please indicate which reflection guide you used to complete the reflection assignment (Deal Model or Maroon and Write). **Your reflection needs to be at least one-half page, 12pt., New Times Roman font.**

If you do not answer every question thoughtfully and completely or fail to meet the formatting requirements you will receive a zero on this reflection.

Save your document as a word file and upload it to myCourses.

“Since we have been learning about preparing for a job interview in AIS 3333, I chose the movie poster for “The Boss”. In this movie poster, the hilarious and talented Melissa McCarthy is portraying a successful, well-dressed employer sitting with her feet propped on her desk. I like to imagine myself like this when I think about my upcoming mock job interview and future interviews. Melissa looks confident and professional in this photo, and I want to envision myself as a “boss” for this portion of the class.

Overall, the job interview preparation process is probably the most applicable thing we have learned in AIS 3333. Most of us are juniors or seniors and will be entering the “real world” soon. We can take the things we have learned from this class and start using them in actual situations, such as potential careers. By polishing our cover letters and résumés, investing in professional attire, and practicing possible interview questions, we will be ready for a real job interview.

As far as our Three R's Presentation goes, I feel like I could have prepared more. However, having done that presentation, I feel more prepared for my mock interview. That presentation gave me the opportunity to really consider my strengths from my résumé and formulate possible interview questions. I can better “sell myself” to a future employer now.”





“Informative presentations to me are an opportunity to explain something without having to worry about convincing someone to believe something. Developing and delivering an informative presentation means someone has demonstrations, details, or definitions to provide clarity on a subject. The presentation makes the subject more easily understood by the audience. We tried to stay with the concept that we weren’t trying to convince the audience, but we were only trying to convey the information to the audience.

I planned on using emphasis and providing information in the informative presentation delivery. Developing and delivering informative presentations can be applied in my life in various situations. These situations might include; informing colleges on old or new policies, informing an audience on a specific topic, or teaching effectively in certain situations.

I choose Windex as my picture, the reason I choose Windex is because it cleans windows. When Windex cleans windows it provides clarity. When a presenter gives a presentation it should provide clarity on the subject like Windex does to windows.

I used the Maroon and Write handout to help write my reflection.”

"I chose this picture to describe group development because I believe cowboys showing up to a branding is a great example. I have been fortunate enough to have taken part in several of these groups. Many of us show up not knowing anyone else in the group, but all with the common goal of helping out a friend brand calves. We must come together and devise a plan as to how to work efficiently. These groups primarily follow the project development perspective in that the group changes and adjusts based on the task. In other words, everyone at the branding pen comes from all walks of life and bring different skills to the table, yet in order to work efficiently, everyone adjusts in order to accomplish the task. Sometimes we get frustrated with others who do things differently than we would have, but we eventually get used to their way of doing things and learn to work efficiently together. At the end of the day, we have all worked together to accomplish the task and have even made new friendships in the process. Forming: Showing up and meeting the other people. Storming: Not agreeing with others way of doing things. Norming: Starting to work more efficiently together and learning each others style of work. Performing: Working efficiently together with no problems. Adjourning: Task is accomplished and everyone relaxes at the end of the day."



“I feel like this picture represents group decision very well. This would best depict a consultative approach of group decisions. Everyone in the group has to be at this meeting to make a decision, but they all know that Michael will make the final decision regardless of what they say. He will ultimately do the opposite of what they suggest and then make them be involved in the terrible plan.”



Purpose of this Study

To describe students' perceptions of nonlinguistic reflection assignments in face-to-face undergraduate courses.

Methodology

- Picture reflections were assigned in two undergraduate agriculture courses.
 - Professional Presentations in Agriculture and Life Sciences (N=47)
 - Team Leadership (N=26)
- Students submitted the picture reflection with written explanation prior to the discussion day.
- At the conclusion of the semester students completed a Qualtrics survey to describe their satisfaction with the picture reflection assignments.

Results

Attitude toward Picture Reflections (n = 56)

was a nice change of pace from lecture	4.03	.63
made the concepts discussed in class seem more "real world"	3.69	.71
was enjoyable	3.65	.76
helped prepare me for real world situations in the future	3.35	.76
was distracting	2.24	.63

“I would rather do a visual reflection over a written reflection because it was easier to relate back to the class.”

I prefer the visual reflections over written reflections because pictures can say a lot more than words, especially when expressing my feelings and thoughts.

“I do prefer visual reflections over written reflections. Have you ever hear the saying 'a picture is worth a thousand words?' I truly believe that saying and I feel that you can understand more about my feelings with a picture than you can if I just try to tell you.”

Do you prefer visual reflections over written reflections?

“Reflection is important because it helps you understand why what you're learning is important.”

“Yes, it is important to the learning process! It helps you apply what you have learned to real life scenarios!”

“Yes, because it helps us to apply it to real life.”

“I think that reflection is important to the learning process because it forces you to think back to the information you were presented and evaluate if you fully understand it or if you need more instruction.”

Please explain your thoughts about reflection. Is it important to the learning process?

“It made me question, not only what I learned, but how I felt about what I learned and how I could use it to an advantage in my career.”

“We went over them as a group so there were many different thoughts and inputs.”

“It made me realize how far I've come.”

“It bridged both being in the classroom and real world situations in a balanced way.”

“It connects the dots between the two. Thinking back on something always helps to put things in perspective. Hindsight is always 20/20.”

In what ways did the visual reflections help you make a connection between what we learned in class and real world situation?

“I didn't really think it would help at all. After doing a few of them, I actually think the information absorbed into my mind and I understood it a little better.”

“I have done reflections in other classes and I find this one to be more helpful and relevant to what we are doing in class.”

“Before this semester, the only reflections I had been required to do were strictly written. I had come to dread them. However, the thought and discussion associated with visual reflections were more enjoyable.”

“I figured they would be boring and more challenging but I actually prefer them now.”

In what ways have your perceptions about reflection changed since the beginning of the semester?

“Sure. I believe I prospered much more from these reflections than written reflections in the past.”

“I think that visual reflections are helpful to gather your thoughts and explain to others what you mean or feel, so yes I would like to see the reflections in more courses.”

“I would like to see visual reflections used in other classes. It makes for a nice change of pace in class.”

“Yes, they seem easier to do and easier to understand.”

Would you like to see visual reflections used in future classes you enroll in?

Conclusions

- The visual component with the written explanation gave students an opportunity to think critically and creatively about learned concepts.
- Students indicated they would like to see this assignment in other classes.
- Nonlinguistic reflections offered opportunities for the researchers to check understanding and provide individualized support to students throughout the semester.
- The assignment will be implemented in future undergraduate courses.
- Initially, students became overwhelmed with the expectations of the assignment and confused as to what type of image to provide.

Recommendations

- Instructors should encourage students to think critically about the topics covered in the classroom and creatively apply those concepts to the image they choose.

References

- Bamalli, H. S. (2014). Competencies and Strategies for the Teaching of 21st Century Learners in Vocational Home Economics Education. *International Letters of Social and Humanistic Sciences*, (08), 50-55.
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (2013). Promoting reflection in learning A model. *Boundaries of adult learning*, 1, 32.
- Grossman, R. (2009). Structures for facilitating student reflection. *College Teaching*, 57(1), 15-22.
- Lamm, A. J., Cannon, K. J., Roberts, T. G., Irani, T. A., Snyder, L. J. U., Brendemuhl, J., & Rodriguez, M. T. (2011). An Exploration of Reflection: Expression of Learning Style in an International Experiential Learning Context. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 52(3), 122-135.

Thank you!