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Reflections on Reflection

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Reflections on Reflection

The capacity of humans to deliberate upon the activities and practices they undertake with an eye for improvement has been the essence of all human endeavor (Green & Bavelier, 2008). In simple terms, humans are genetically wired for introspection and it is human nature to want to learn through self-reflective judgment and to relate knowledge gained to everyday action. In fact, “[t]his capacity for first-personal reflection is what makes us human—it is what allows for the possibility of our knowing, reasoning, acting freely, and it is what makes us subject to norms” (Shah & Vanova, 2014, p. 632). Philosophically, reflection is, however, “a dense, multi-layered concept” (Roskos, Vukelich, & Risko, 2001, p. 596) that can take many forms and that can serve different purposes in different contexts for different individuals (Mamede & Schmidt, 2017; Marco, 2017; Schön, 1987; Zeichner, 1987). The articles in this issue of *Ubiquity Research Strand* embody such multi-perspectival conceptions of reflection as they look at reflective practice in action.

Specifically, Endacott, Goering, Pham, and Beason-Manes’s examination of pre-service teacher reflection relates it to field experience, a teacher preparation context, and the use of arts (of various forms) in content areas. Adams-Johnson’s piece makes reflection an object of study in a private voice studio setting and relates it to a single form of art, that of singing. The two studies employ different theoretical perspectives. A pedagogical and arts-oriented framework informs Endacott et al.’s research and an andragogic constructivist perspective underpins Adams-Johnson’s work. The studies also utilize different methodologies, which are the mixed methods design and a case study with elements of phenomenology and narrative inquiry, respectively, to inquire about the effects of reflection on their participants’ learning and performance.

As Endacott, Goering, Pham, and Beason-Manes indicate, discussion about arts and arts integration in teacher preparation has been rich (Knowles & Cole, 2008), but it has been less often focused on arts integration method courses and even less in connection to field experiences. Accordingly, their study qualitatively and quantitatively explores pre-service teachers' reflections in the traditional field experience in comparison with field experience in arts integration. Importantly, the findings from this study provide insight not only on the type of reflection and knowledge that the pre-service teachers were able to acquire, but also on the effect of the field experience (with and without arts integration) on the quality of their reflective thinking and learning about content areas and the future of teaching. As such, these findings bring to the forefront the consideration of the field experience context when evaluating the quality of pre-service teachers' reflective thinking and learning. Readers will be able to note the difference in the ways the participants conceptualize and enact reflection in the traditional field placement vs. the field experience with integrated arts.

Adams-Johnson's study, on the other hand, explores a post-menopausal voice student's reflective process in dialogue with the author, her voice teacher, to come to an understanding of her post-menopausal vocal identity. Adams-Johnson argues that engaging post-menopausal singers in ongoing self-analysis and reflection about menopausal aging and its impact on their voice condition and performance, in combination with appropriate vocal exercises, can help improve the musical sound of a singing voice in this population.

Together, these articles represent well Aristotle's (Becker & Becker, 2001) three types of knowledge gained through the various reflective practices in which the authors engaged: *Episteme* (Scientific Knowledge) about their respective subjects (e.g., arts integration or voice characteristics), *Techné* (Skill and Craft) or pedagogy, and *Phronesis* (Wisdom). Hopefully, all

three will help their participants get better at learning, teaching and reflection. We invite our readers to explore this scholarship and reflect upon the insight it offers for their practice and research and thereby help advance our reflection on reflection further.

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