Teaching and Learning Reflective Writing Skills for Nursing Students Whose First Language is not English

Simon Boynton, Lecturer, and Laura Wakeland, Lecturer,
Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES)
The University of Hong Kong

1. Context:
• Reflective writing important skill for health care professionals.
• Rarely comes naturally, especially challenging for non-native speakers.
• At HKU, nursing students given specialized instruction from CAES.

2. Intervention:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>500 word diagnostic writing task</th>
<th>3 hours online tasks</th>
<th>1000 word assessment on an authentic incident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 hours in-class input</td>
<td>Feedback on draft- peers/teacher</td>
<td>12 Weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Observation:
Improvement in students’ quality of writing over 5 years due to:
2. Formal instruction on genre specific conventions.
3. Exposure to authentic exemplars of reflective writing in healthcare.
4. Feedback from peers and CAES teacher.

4. Conclusions:
Advice to non-language specialists:
✓ Refer students to models of reflection e.g. Gibbs (1988), Moon (2004).
✓ Engage in dialogue with students and tutors to establish the standards.
✓ Employ clear assessment rubrics to clarify expectations.
✓ Show exemplars (of varying quality) of past students’ reflective writing in your course.
✓ Encourage peer feedback on drafts.

Reference List:

Simon Boynton sboynton@hku.hk
Laura Wakeland wakeland@hku.hk