

# The Effects of Learning Journals on Reflective Ability and Metacognitive Learning: the Attitudes of Graduate Students in an English Language Teaching Methodology Course

Servet Çelik

Department of Foreign Language Education, Karadeniz Technical University

## Abstract

*The efficacy of reflective writing in stimulating critical thinking and developing metacognitive awareness has been widely recognized; yet, in spite of the clear benefits provided by reflective tools such as learning journals, the ultimate success of such activities largely depends on whether or not learners are receptive to their use. In the Turkish educational system, where a student-centred, constructivist approach to learning is still a novel practice, it may be especially difficult to implement reflective writing successfully. Thus, in this action research project, the investigator decided to explore the attitudes of Turkish graduate students in an English Language Teaching Methodology course towards the use of learning journals as a reflective tool. The findings indicate that, after some initial resistance, most of the participants found reflective writing to be an effective learning strategy. In light of the participants' views, some suggestions are offered concerning the implementation of reflective writing in contexts where students may not be familiar with the process of reflection.*

**Key words:** *action research; constructivism; critical thinking; learning diaries; metacognitive skills; reflective writing.*

## Introduction

According to current educational research, successful learning demands the capacity to think critically, to analyze problems and to draw on past experience in the course

of exploring new material (McCombs, 2000). Thus, as Acat, Anılan, and Anagün (2010) note, the traditional teacher-centred approach to instruction, which requires students to passively absorb and digest information, is no longer viewed as sufficient for meeting learners' needs. In order to address this critical issue, educators worldwide have advocated the adoption of a constructivist, student-centred approach to teaching, by nature of which students are encouraged to actively engage in learning and to construct meaning through the synthesis of existing knowledge with new experiences (Fer, 2009). Reflective thinking, which was described by Dewey (1933) as "the active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it leads" (p. 7), is held to be an underpinning of the constructivist learning process (Holly, 1998; Langer, 2002). Through reflection, learners develop the ability to think critically about problems and to formulate new knowledge based on evidence and logic, upheld by prior understanding (Harris, 2005).

### ***Learning Journals and the Development of Reflective Thinking***

Among the educational tools that have been designed in view of the constructivist paradigm, the efficacy of learning journals as a structured method for promoting reflective thinking has been extensively documented (Adler, 2002; Harris, 2005; Radloff & de la Harpe, 2001; Van Aswegen, 1998). Also known as reflective journals or learning diaries, learning journals provide a means for students to record their learning experiences, note their observations, document their approaches to problem-solving, and reflect critically on the process of learning itself (Langer, 2002). The metacognitive benefits of reflective writing have been particularly stressed by Holly (1989), who notes that through the process of reflection, the writer becomes "conscious of consciousness" (p. 76), bringing into awareness ideas and concepts that, although perhaps understood on an intuitive level, have not previously been articulated or consciously grasped. In the course of this experience, learners begin to attribute meaning to the information they have assimilated, attaining both a deeper understanding of the material (Roberts & Yoell, 2009) and the ability to apply their newly-acquired knowledge in practice.

### ***Learner Attitudes Towards the Use of Reflective Journal Writing***

While the advantages of reflective writing have been clearly established, they can only be realized if students are receptive to its use. Yet, as Adler (2002) points out, "reflection is not an automatic process" (p. 28), so individuals who are unaccustomed to such an activity often express a sense of awkwardness and annoyance when asked to record their ideas and observations (Ling, 2005). On the other hand, researchers such as Langer (2002), assert that many learners embrace the idea of reflective writing easily; and in some cases, even those who initially resist the concept of journal writing or express discouragement at the amount of work it entails eventually come to perceive its positive effects on their learning (Akar, 2003).

In terms of these diverse viewpoints, Roberts and Yoell (2009) have identified three categories of learner attitudes concerning the use of reflective journals in an academic context: (1) The “natural” attitude typifies those learners who readily accept the concept of keeping a learning journal, understand its benefits and feel comfortable in using it as a reflective tool; (2) the “convert” attitude is characterized by students who are initially reluctant to engage in reflective writing, but come to realize that it is beneficial and helps to improve their critical thinking skills; (3) the “disengaged” attitude is demonstrated by those learners who either misunderstand or outright reject the idea of keeping a learning journal and who do not find it to be a worthwhile activity (p. 74).

### ***Constructivism and Critical Thinking in the Turkish Context***

In accordance with the current international standards for teaching and learning, the Turkish educational system has placed a great deal of emphasis on the implementation of a constructivist curricular design (Acat et al., 2010; Akar, 2003; Alper, 2008; Fer, 2009). However, researchers such as İrfaner (2006) and Kök (2009) point to the ongoing adherence of both teachers and students to traditional methods of instruction as a serious obstacle in achieving the goals of learner-centred education. İrfaner (2006), in particular, criticizes the reality of the Turkish educational system as a “read and repeat model” (p. 29) in which learners are required only to recycle the information they have been taught for the purpose of passing exams; as he argues, “students do not attempt to show any evidence of thinking, as they are not expected to do so” (p. 29).

Furthermore, as Acat et al. (2010) and Alper (2008) point out, even when students and teachers do express a positive attitude towards constructivist techniques, the intended learning goals are not always reached. To illustrate, in a study conducted by Alper (2008) with first- and second-year students in a teacher education program, the participants were taught in a course based on a constructivist design. At the conclusion of the study, it was determined that, although the majority of the participants had initially expressed their willingness to engage in active, problem-based learning, a significant number of them were unable to apply their existing knowledge to formulating solutions to new problems, and more than one half of the respondents expressed that they would prefer not to participate in such a course in the future. Similarly, Akar (2003) found that, although students in a constructivist-based teacher education course achieved positive results in terms of their grades, their perceptions concerning the amount of work involved in activities such as cooperative learning, active problem-solving and reflective writing negatively affected their attitudes towards the course curriculum.

The net effect of these issues is that Turkish students, particularly at the graduate level, often lack the critical thinking ability that is needed to conduct research or to have a significant impact in their future professions (İrfaner, 2006; Kök, 2009). This concern has led to an urgent need to determine the reasons for the failure of many Turkish students to adopt reflective learning strategies and to develop metacognitive skills.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Considerable attention has been focused on the apparent shortcomings in the implementation of constructivist curricula in the Turkish educational system; lack of teacher competence in fostering critical thinking, inadequacies in the learning environment, and an overall preference of both teachers and students for more traditional teaching methods have been cited as impediments in achieving the goals of constructivist learning (Acat, 2010; İrfaner, 2006; Kök, 2009). However, little has been done to investigate the perceptions of the students themselves concerning reflective activities such as journal writing and the impact these instructional tools have on their critical thinking skills. Proceeding from the belief that learners are in a position to provide insights into their reasons for accepting or rejecting a particular learning strategy, the researcher opted to explore the attitudes of graduate students towards reflective journal writing and how they perceived its impact on their critical thinking ability. It is his hope that the results of this study will serve as a guide for practitioners in the creation of reflective learning tools that can promote the development of metacognitive awareness. Thus, in accordance with Roberts and Yoell's (2009) characterization of students' attitudes towards maintaining a learning journal as "natural," "convert" or "disengaged," the current study was designed in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What were the attitudes of graduate students at a Turkish university towards keeping a reflective learning journal?
2. How did they perceive its impact on their critical thinking skills?

## **Methodology**

As the researcher's goal was to investigate the beliefs and opinions of the participants, as well as the meaning they attached to their experiences, a qualitative approach to inquiry was employed (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007), using an action research model as a means of reporting the perceptions and attitudes of a group of students within an existing instructional framework (Gregson & Jeffrey, 2004; Stremmel, 2007). Action research, or teacher research, has been defined by Corey (1953) as "the process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct and evaluate their decisions and actions" (p. 6) in a real-life classroom environment. When appropriately carried out, action research may provide valuable insights into practical teaching issues, thus contributing significantly to the field of education (Stremmel, 2007).

### ***Setting and Participants***

The participants in the study were 16 graduate-level students in an Applied Linguistics programme at a major university located in the eastern Black Sea region of Turkey. All of the students were employed as English teachers at the primary, secondary or tertiary school level, and were enrolled in an English Language Teaching

(ELT) Methodology course in the academic year of 2011-2012. Their ages ranged from 21 to 30 years, and both males and females were included.

As described in the syllabus, the course was designed to provide future ELT practitioners with a fundamental understanding of both traditional and modern methods of foreign language teaching. The course requirements included leading in-class discussions; conducting individual micro-teaching activities and presenting them to the class; and participating in an online discussion forum which had been designed to facilitate collaborative learning. In addition, each student was asked to keep a reflective learning journal over the course of the semester, in which they were to write a minimum of one full page each week, touching on the topics covered in the readings, lecture and discussion for that week in a critical and reflective manner. The journal entries were evaluated on a weekly basis in terms of the degree of reflectivity and critical analysis demonstrated by each student. The quality and clarity of the writing was also assessed, as the students were required to write their journal entries in English.

### ***Data Collection***

According to researchers such as Creswell (2007), and Fraenkel and Wallen (2008), detailed information about individual perceptions and experiences is best obtained through interviews; therefore, the researcher elected to collect the data for this study via a series of open-ended questions. In order to encourage the respondents to answer as unequivocally as possible, the interviews were carried out following the conclusion of the semester, thus minimizing the possibility that the students would take their course grades into account when formulating their answers. For purposes of scheduling, as well as to allow the participants enough time and privacy to reflect carefully before answering each question, data collection was carried out in the form of self-interviews (Allett, Keightly, & Pickering, 2011; Jones, 2003). All of the participants were given the same list of questions to ensure the comparability of their answers. The students were asked to create audio or video recordings of their responses and send digital copies to the instructor. The participants were informed that the interviews would be used for research purposes, and their written consent was obtained. The interview questions administered for the purposes of the study have been provided below:

1. Do you feel that keeping a learning journal is an effective way to develop critical thinking and reflective ability? Please explain your answer.
2. Evaluate your own progress in writing journal entries over the course of the semester. Do you think that your reflective skills have improved? Why or why not?
3. As you gained more experience in writing your journal entries, did you find that reflective writing came more naturally, or not? Please elaborate on your response.
4. Based on your experience in this course, do you think that you will use reflective writing as part of your own professional development in the future? Why or why not?

### ***Data Analysis and Credibility Measures***

As noted by Hatch (2002), qualitative data analysis involves “organizing and interrogating data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns [and] identify themes” (p. 148) to generate meaningful interpretations. In this case, a constant comparison approach (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007) was employed. Accordingly, the recorded interviews were transcribed and read several times by the researcher, when several recurring themes were identified; the data were then grouped according to the themes, and assessed in terms of the research questions. Based on the results of this process, initial conclusions were developed and then refined.

Member checks (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998), in which the participants were asked to review the researcher’s evaluations of the interviews and confirm or refute his understanding of their meaning, were employed. In addition, throughout data analysis phase, the researcher relied on peer debriefing (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008) in order to establish the reliability of the results, calling on an external auditor whose task was to verify whether or not his interpretations and conclusions accurately reflected the ideas expressed in the interview transcripts.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Issues in Adapting to Reflective Writing Practice***

According to the interview results, many of the students encountered difficulties at the beginning of the course, reflecting the conclusions of Akar (2003) and Ling (2005) who expressed that they were anxious about writing down their thoughts and ideas, or unsure of how to proceed even after clear instructions had been given. To illustrate, RA (initials have been used to maintain the anonymity of the participants) revealed that “writing learning journals and recording our personal views and criticisms about a method were ... new to me. At the beginning, I was anxious, since I did not know what to write.” Likewise, SB explained that, initially, writing the journal entries was very difficult for her:

As it was my first experience, I could not determine whether reflecting upon my learning is a natural process, or not. I felt ashamed of writing everything that passed through my mind. I was not sure whether to write everything, or [what was] worth writing about ... The first weeks were like a nightmare. I used to sit and think a lot about what to write. I used to write many things and delete them, because they did not seem to be reflective at all.

ÇT also noted her anxiety about reflective writing, further remarking that Turkish students, in general, would be likely to resist such an activity unless it was explicitly required:

Actually, I am a bit, you know, uncomfortable about learning journals ... Truth be told, if writing journal entries was just a [suggestion] of our instructor, instead of being an assessment tool, most of my friends, including me, would not do it appropriately. You know how students are in Turkey. If something is a

requirement, they do it, but if it is a suggestion or something like that, they are more likely to ignore it or do it randomly.

While her statement echoed the observations of İrfaner (2006) and Kök (2009) concerning the resistance of Turkish students towards new approaches to learning, a number of the participants expressed that writing the journal entries was a comfortable and natural experience for them. In support of Langer's (2002) views, they understood what was expected and had little difficulty putting their thoughts and ideas into words. OD, for instance, wrote that:

My instructor said "Be as personal as you wish," so I didn't use formal structures or words very much, and I was comfortable while writing them. It was all easy. I mean, there was a topic to be discussed, and it was easy because it was discussed both in the classroom, as well as on the [discussion board]. Then, writing was not difficult. I brought together what I thought, what I read, and what we discussed.

In addition, ŞE demonstrated a favourable view towards reflective activities in general. As she explained, "I felt it quite easy to express myself [through journal writing] ... and, in fact, I have been reading about reflective practice.... I have quite a positive attitude towards this tool."

### ***Realization that Reflective Writing Contributed to the Stimulation of Critical Thinking***

With respect to the participants who initially found the task to be difficult, the interviews revealed that the majority of them eventually realized what was expected in terms of keeping a learning journal and began to see it as a positive experience that contributed to a deeper understanding of the course material, in accordance with the claims of Akar (2003). For instance, SB articulated the following view concerning her experience with keeping a learning journal:

The journal entries were like a bridge between what we read, what we discussed, what we wrote and [what we] experienced in our learning life. We made connections between all these and came up with our own ideas about the topic ... I used to think that, OK, this is a book, and it was written by many scholars, so they should all be right. And maybe they are right, but I can question [their ideas] in the Turkish context.

HS expressed a similar attitude towards the effects of journal writing on his reflective thinking. As he put it, "It gave me a chance to see what I am doing, what I value and how I have overcome obstacles; how I am dealing with matters ... It means I am putting a lot of things together."

On the other hand, OD articulated the view that, although he understood that keeping a learning journal was said to be helpful, he did not feel that he had become more reflective as a result of recording his thoughts:

I don't know how it really contributed to [my learning]. Perhaps I will understand the true value of keeping learning journals a few weeks later, when I look back

on what I've done critically, after some time has passed ... but I don't think it was very helpful. Maybe my ideas will change, but for now, I don't understand the value of keeping journals.

EK expressed a similar attitude, reflecting the "disengaged" attitude of Roberts and Yoell (2009) with her assertion that she often lacked motivation for writing entries in the journal, and at times she felt the activity to be a burden, rather than a means for enhancing reflection. In her words:

I can say that when I did not want to write ... the journals happened to be there as a requirement of the course. I became repetitive throughout my writing at those times, and rather than being reflective, I was in a way summarizing the methods, and this was not at all beneficial for me.

### ***Plans to Continue Keeping a Reflective Journal for Personal Use or Professional Development***

As most of the participants became aware that journal writing was helping to increase their understanding of the material and developing their ability to think critically about the issues (Akar, 2003; Harris, 2005), several of the students expressed the intention of keeping a journal for their own personal and professional development. One student, SB, considered that reflective journals would be especially helpful in her academic endeavours:

I am thinking of using this reflective writing as a part of my own professional experience. I learn better when I consider a topic from different perspectives, and I believe that if I consider them from different perspectives, I will be able to broaden my own ideas to write articles or research papers in the future.

Similarly, RA explained that, after her experience with writing a reflective journal during the course, "I now keep a personal journal. I know how keeping a journal helps me to clarify my ideas and how it makes me feel comfortable." AS also expressed the intention of keeping a journal for private use; as she revealed, "I don't think I will give up keeping journals, but now they can be much more personal, as you [the instructor] won't see them."

A few of the participants, however, revealed that they were unlikely to continue writing journal entries after the end of the semester. OD, for instance, explained that "I don't think that I will use reflective writing in the future, because, as I said, I cannot see the true value of it now." Another student, SK, admitted that although she did see the benefits of critical reflection, she did not feel motivated enough to continue writing journal entries. As she noted,

I don't think that I can use learning journals in the future. This doesn't mean that I don't want to do this; I would like to continue doing this, but to be honest, we are all lazy people, and I don't believe that any of us will go on doing this. We like doing simple and easy things, and as this is a kind of challenging thing, I don't think that we will go on.



Her view closely resembled the assertions of Acat et al. (2010) and Alper (2008), who stated that even when students understood the advantages of reflective writing, they lacked motivation to put it into practice for their own benefit.

### ***Misconceptions Concerning the Purpose of Reflective Writing***

The results of the study made it clear that, in a few cases, the participants were mainly concerned with whether they were writing “correctly” and with their grades, denoting a misconception of the purpose of the exercise. As AS expressed:

I knew that you [the course instructor] would grade what I wrote, so it wasn't easy to write everything I thought. Whatever you say, we all know that grades are important ... So while I was keeping the journal, I had to think of the grade.

Her argument echoed İrfaner's (2009) description of Turkish students' preoccupation with grades and examination scores, which was also reflected in MA's overall focus on the assessment methods used, not only with respect to the learning journals, but to the course in general:

Actually, I want to say that the most important thing that I learned from this course is not related to methods or techniques. I mean that our instructor's evaluation style, rubrics, standards and all the requirements gave me an idea about how perfect evaluation should be. I really liked them; I really plan to use these techniques [in his future teaching].

### **Characterization of the Students' Attitudes: “Natural,” “Convert,” or “Disengaged”**

Taken as a whole, the results of the study indicated that the individual attitudes to reflective journal writing very closely mirrored the three classifications suggested by Roberts and Yoell (2009). In terms of the “natural” attitude, students such as SB expressed that reflective writing came naturally and that the process was effective and enjoyable, as was the case with the participants in Langer's (2002) investigation. Furthermore, like the participants in Akar's (2003) study, many of the students who were unfamiliar with the process and felt unsure of how to proceed in recording their thoughts, or found expressing their ideas in writing to be awkward, eventually began to realize the positive effects of reflection on their learning; thus, they exhibited the “convert” attitude described by Roberts and Yoell (2009). On the other hand, the “disengaged” attitude was clearly demonstrated by those students who either failed to see the benefit of reflective writing, in accordance with Ling (2005), or they viewed it primarily in terms of its use as an evaluation instrument.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the overall results, it can be concluded that while many of the participants initially resisted the idea of reflective writing, most of them came to realize that it was beneficial to their learning, as it stimulated critical thinking and helped them

to develop a more meaningful understanding of the course material. Several of the students indicated that they truly enjoyed the process and expressed the intention of continuing to keep a journal, either for personal use or for professional development purposes. Furthermore, although one student overtly stated that the process of reflective writing had not contributed to his analytical ability, the manner in which his objection was formulated was itself an indication of metacognitive thinking. Therefore, the researcher concludes that ultimately reflective journals were successful in terms of stimulating critical thinking and contributing to metacognitive learning.

While the present study is limited by the small sample size and the individuality of the participants, it is expected that the attitudes they expressed may offer instructors useful insights into the implementation of reflective writing in a similar learning context. Thus, the following recommendations are offered as a means for providing learner support throughout the process of maintaining a reflective journal:

As Paterson (1995) suggests, the nature of reflective writing should be made clear from the beginning. Detailing exactly what is expected, including how much to write and how often, as well as how the writing will be evaluated, may be useful in engaging learners in the activity.

Stressing that the focus of the activity is on building cognitive skills, rather than on their writing ability or the quality of their ideas, may decrease students' anxiety about their grades and encourage them to become more reflective and analytical (Harris, 2005).

Taking into consideration that journal writing may be perceived as burdensome, especially by individuals who are unfamiliar with the activity, accounting for students' workload in assigning writing activities can help to promote a more positive attitude (Akar, 2003).

## References

- Acat, M. B., Anılan, H., & Anagün, Ş. (2010). The problems encountered in designing constructivist learning environments in science education and practical suggestions. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology (TOJET)*, 9(2), 212-220.
- Adler, R. (2002). Using learning diaries to enhance student learning. *Paper presented at the meeting of the Administrative Science Association of Canada (ASAC), Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, 28-36 /online/*. Retrieved on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 from <http://luxor.acadiau.ca/library/ASAC/v23/231004.pdf>
- Akar, A. (2003). *Impact of constructivist learning process on pre-service teacher education students' performance, retention, and attitudes* (Unpublished doctoral thesis). Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey.
- Allett, N., Keightly, E., & Pickering, M. (2011). *Using self-interviews to research memory*. Manchester, England: Realities at the Morgan Center.

- Alper, A. (2008). Attitudes toward problem-based learning in a new Turkish medicine curriculum. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 4(6), 830-836.
- Corey, S. M. (1953). *Action research to improve school practices*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 124-130.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *Experience and education*. New York, NY: MacMillan.
- Gregson, R., & Jeffrey, P. L. (2004). Teacher-research: The benefits and pitfalls. *Proceedings of the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia [online]*. Retrieved on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 from <http://handle.uws.edu.au:8081/1959.7/44735>
- Fer, S. (2009). Social constructivism and social constructivist curricula in Turkey to meet the needs of young people learning science: Overview in light of the PROMISE project. In T. Tajmel & K. Starl (Eds.), *Science Education Unlimited: Approaches to Equal Opportunities in Learning Science*, (pp. 179-200). Münster, Germany: Waxmann Verlag, GmbH.
- Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2008). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill, Inc.
- Harris, M. (2005). Is journaling empowering? Students' perceptions of their reflective writing experience. *Health SA Gesundheit*, 10(3), 47-60.
- Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Holly, M. (1989). Reflective writing and the spirit of inquiry. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 19(1), 71-80.
- İrfaner, S. (2006). Enhancing thinking skills in the classroom. *Humanity & Social Sciences Journal*, 1(1), 28-36.
- Jones, R. (2003). Survey data collection using audio computer assisted self-interview. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 25(3), 349-358.
- Kök, A. (2009). An online social constructivist tool: A secondary school experience in the developing world. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 9(3), 87-98.
- Langer, A. M. (2002). Reflecting on practice: Using learning journals in higher and continuing education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 7(3), 337-351. doi: 10.1080/13562510220144824
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2007). An array of qualitative analysis tools: A call for data analysis triangulation. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 22(4), 557-584. doi: 10.1037/1045-3830.22.4.557
- Ling, H. P. (2005). Reflective learning through learning journals: Can business students do it? *Proceedings of the 28th HERDSA Annual Conference, Sydney, Australia*, 267-275.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- McCombs, B. (2000). *Assessing the role of educational technology in the teaching and learning process: A learner-centered perspective*. Paper presented at the Secretary's Conference on Educational Technology, Alexandria, VA.

- Paterson, B. L. (1995). Developing and maintaining reflections in clinical journals. *Nursing Education Today*, 15(3), 211-220.
- Radloff, A., & de la Harpe, B. (2001). Expanding what and how we assess: Going beyond the content. In A. Herrmann & M. M. Kulski (Eds.), *Expanding Horizons in Teaching and Learning. Proceedings of the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Teaching Learning Forum*, Perth, Australia: Curtin University of Technology. n.p. /online/. Retrieved on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2012 from <http://lsn.curtin.edu.au/tlf/tlf2001/radloff.html>
- Roberts, A., & Yoell, H. (2009). Reflectors, converts and the disengaged: A study of undergraduate architecture students' perceptions of undertaking learning journals. *Journal for Education in the Built Environment*, 4(2), 74-93.
- Stremmel, A. J. (2007). The value of teacher research: Nurturing personal and professional growth through inquiry. *Voices of Practitioners*, 2(3), 1-9.
- Van Aswegen, E. (1998). *Critical reflective practice: Conceptual exploration and model construction*. Pretoria, South Africa: University of South Africa.

---

**Servet Celik**

Department of Foreign Language Education,  
Karadeniz Technical University  
Sogutlu, Akcaabat 61335, Trabzon, Turkey  
servet61@ktu.edu.tr

# Učinci portfolija na sposobnost refleksije i metakognitivno učenje: stavovi studenata diplomskog studija u sklopu kolegija Metodika nastave engleskog jezika

---

## Sažetak

Široko je priznata učinkovitost refleksivnog pisanja kada je riječ o poticanju kritičkog mišljenja i stvaranju metakognitivne svjesnosti; unatoč jasnim prednostima alata za refleksiju kao što su portfoliji, krajnji uspjeh tih aktivnosti ipak uvelike ovisi o tome jesu li učenici skloni njihovoj upotrebi ili nisu. U turskom obrazovnom sustavu, u kojemu je konstruktivistički pristup učenju s učenikom u središtu zanimanja još uvijek nova praksa, može biti osobito teško uspješno primijeniti refleksivno pisanje. Stoga je u ovom akcijskom istraživanju autor odlučio istražiti stavove turskih studenata diplomskog studija u sklopu kolegija Metodika nastave engleskog jezika o korištenju portfolija kao alata za refleksiju. Rezultati pokazuju da je, nakon početnog otpora, većina ispitanika otkrila refleksivno pisanje kao učinkovitu strategiju učenja. U svjetlu njihovih gledišta ponuđeni su neki prijedlozi u vezi s primjenom refleksivnog pisanja u kontekstima u kojima studenti možda nisu upoznati s procesom refleksije.

**Ključne riječi:** akcijsko istraživanje; konstruktivizam; kritičko mišljenje; metakognitivne vještine; portfoliji; refleksivno pisanje.

## Uvod

Prema aktualnim istraživanjima u području obrazovanja, uspješno usvajanje novog sadržaja zahtijeva sposobnost kritičkog mišljenja, analiziranja problema i oslanjanja na prethodno iskustvo (McCombs, 2000). Stoga Acat, Anılan i Anagün (2010) primjećuju kako se tradicionalni pristup nastavi s učiteljem u središtu zanimanja, koji od učenika zahtijeva pasivno upijanje i razumijevanje informacija, ne smatra više dovoljnim kada se govori o zadovoljenju učenikovih potreba. Da bi razmotrili

to kritično pitanje, pedagozi se širom svijeta zauzimaju za konstruktivistički pristup poučavanju u čijem je središtu zanimanja učenik potaknut na aktivnu ulogu u učenju i konstrukciji značenja s pomoću sinteze postojećeg znanja i novih iskustava (Fer, 2009). Refleksivno se razmišljanje, koje Dewey (1933) opisuje kao „aktivno, neprestano i pažljivo razmatranje svakog uvjerenja ili pretpostavljenog oblika znanja u svjetlu argumenata koji ga podržavaju i daljnjih razmatranja do kojih ono dovodi” (str. 7), smatra podlogom konstruktivističkog procesa učenja (Holly, 1998; Langer, 2002). Uz pomoć refleksije učenici razvijaju sposobnost kritičkog promišljanja problema i stvaraju novo znanje koje se temelji na dokazu i logici, a potvrđuje prethodnim razumijevanjem (Harris, 2005).

### ***Portfoliji i razvoj refleksivnog mišljenja***

Među obrazovnim alatima koji su proizašli iz konstruktivističke paradigme, učinkovitost portfolija kao strukturirane metode za poticanje refleksivnog mišljenja dobrim je dijelom dokumentirana (Adler, 2002; Harris, 2005; Radloff i de la Harpe, 2001; Van Aswegen, 1998). Poznati također pod nazivom refleksivni dnevnicima ili dnevnicima učenja, portfoliji služe učenicima kao sredstvo za bilježenje vlastitih iskustava o učenju, evidentiranje vlastitih zapažanja, dokumentiranje vlastitih pristupa rješavanju problema i kritičko razmišljanje o procesu učenja (Langer, 2002). Metakognitivne prednosti refleksivnog pisanja posebno je isticao Holly (1989), koji primjećuje da onaj koji piše postaje „svjestan svjesnosti” (str. 76) u procesu učenja tako što osvješćuje ideje i koncepte koje prethodno nije artikulirao ili svjesno prihvatio, iako ih je možda intuitivno razumio. Zahvaljujući takvom iskustvu, učenici počinju davati značenje informacijama koje usvajaju, pripisujući sadržaju dublji smisao (Roberts i Yoell, 2009) i mogućnost primjene novog znanja u praksi.

### ***Stavovi učenika o upotrebi refleksivnog pisanja portfolija***

Iako su prednosti refleksivnog pisanja jasno definirane, moguće ih je ostvariti samo ako su učenici za to prijemljivi. Adler (2002) ipak ističe kako „refleksija nije automatski proces” (str. 28) tako da pojedinci koji nisu naviknuti na takvu aktivnost često pokazuju osjećaj neugodnosti i mrzovolje kada ih se zamoli da zabilježe svoje ideje i zapažanja (Ling, 2005). Autori kao što je Langer (2002) tvrde, međutim, kako mnogi učenici lako prihvaćaju ideju o refleksivnom pisanju, te u nekim slučajevima čak i oni koji u početku pružaju otpor konceptu pisanja portfolija ili pokazuju obeshrabrenost zbog količine posla koju on podrazumijeva na kraju počinju uočavati njegove pozitivne učinke na učenje (Akar, 2003).

S obzirom na različita stajališta, Roberts i Yoell (2009) izdvajaju tri kategorije učenikovih stavova prema upotrebi refleksivnih dnevnika u akademskom kontekstu: (1) „prirodni” stav karakterizira učenike koji spremno prihvaćaju koncept vođenja dnevnika učenja, shvaćaju njegove prednosti i osjećaju se dobro kada se njime koriste kao alatom za refleksiju; (2) „konvertitski” stav predstavlja učenike koji se u početku

nerado prihvaćaju refleksivnog pisanja, ali počinju shvaćati da je ono korisno i da im pomaže pri usavršavanju vještine kritičkog mišljenja; (3) „neangažirani” stav pokazuju oni učenici koji ili ne shvaćaju ili izravno odbacuju svaku pomisao na vođenje dnevnika učenja i koji to ne smatraju aktivnošću vrijednom truda (str. 74).

### ***Konstruktivizam i kritičko mišljenje u turskom kontekstu***

U skladu s aktualnim međunarodnim nastavnim standardima, obrazovni sustav u Turskoj itekako naglašava primjenu konstruktivistički koncipiranih programa (Acat i sur., 2010; Akar, 2003; Alper, 2008; Fer, 2009). Međutim, autori kao što su İrfaner (2006) i Kök (2009), navode trenutnu privrženost, podjednako nastavnika i učenika, tradicionalnim nastavnim metodama kao ozbiljnu prepreku realizaciji nastave usmjerene učeniku. Posebice İrfaner (2006) kritizira sadašnji obrazovni sustav u Turskoj kao „model pročitaj i ponovi” (str. 29), prema kojemu se od učenika traži da samo recikliraju informacije koje su prethodno usvojili da bi položili ispit; kao što autor tvrdi „učenici se ne trude pružiti bilo kakav dokaz o svojem razmišljanju jer se to od njih ne očekuje” (str. 29).

Štoviše, kao što Acat i sur. (2010) i Alper (2008) navode, čak i onda kada učenici i nastavnici doista izražavaju pozitivan stav o konstruktivističkim tehnikama, planirani se ciljevi učenja ne postižu baš uvijek. Kako bismo to pokazali, navodimo jedno istraživanje koje je proveo Alper (2008) sa studentima prve i druge godine učiteljskog studija, koje su na jednom kolegiju poučavali na konstruktivističkim načelima. Na kraju istraživanja, premda je većina ispitanika u početku bila spremna sudjelovati u tome aktivnom, problemski postavljenom učenju, značajan broj njih nije znao primijeniti postojeće znanje na oblikovanje rješenja za nove probleme te je njih više od pola navelo da radije ne bi ubuduće sudjelovali u nastavi toga kolegija. Akar (2003) je ustvrdio nešto slično unatoč tome što su studenti na konstruktivistički koncipiranom kolegiju u sklopu učiteljskog studija postigli pozitivne rezultate kada se pogledaju njihove ocjene. No, predodžbe koje su imali o stupnju uključenosti u aktivnosti kao što su suradničko učenje, aktivno rješavanje problema i refleksivno pisanje negativno su utjecale na njihove stavove o programu toga kolegija.

Konačni je ishod problema u tome da turskim studentima, osobito na diplomskoj razini, često nedostaje sposobnost kritičkog mišljenja koja im je potrebna za provedbu istraživanja ili znatniji učinak na buduće zanimanje (İrfaner, 2006; Kök, 2009). Takvo je razmišljanje ubrzo dovelo do potrebe za određivanjem razloga zbog kojih mnogi turski studenti ne uspijevaju prihvatiti strategije refleksivnog učenja i razviti metakognitivne vještine.

### **Cilj istraživanja**

Do sada se značajna pažnja pridavala vidljivim nedostacima primjene konstruktivističkih programa u turskom obrazovnom sustavu; nedovoljna nastavnikova kompetencija za poticanje snažnijeg kritičkog mišljenja, neodgovarajući

uvjeti u nastavnoj sredini te opće opredjeljenje nastavnika i njihovih učenika za tradicionalnije metode poučavanja uglavnom su spominjani kao zapreka postizanju ciljeva konstruktivističkog učenja (Acat, 2010; İrfaner, 2006; Kök, 2009). Malo je toga, međutim, učinjeno na istraživanju predodžbi samih učenika o vođenju dnevnika učenja i utjecaju što ga ti nastavni alati imaju na njihovu vještinu kritičkog mišljenja. Polazeći od uvjerenja da studenti mogu objasniti razloge zbog kojih prihvaćaju ili odbacuju neku strategiju učenja, autor se odlučio za istraživanje stavova diplomanata o pisanju dnevnika i o tome kako oni sami vide njegov utjecaj na njihovu sposobnost kritičkog mišljenja. Nada se da će rezultati ovog istraživanja poslužiti praktičarima kao vodič pri kreiranju alata za refleksivno učenje koji mogu pridonijeti razvoju metakognitivne svjesnosti. S obzirom na studentske stavove o vođenju dnevnika učenja, kao što su „prirodni”, „konvertitski” ili „neangažirani”, kako su ih nazvali Roberts i Yoell (2009), ovo je istraživanje provedeno s ciljem pronalazjenja odgovora na sljedeća istraživačka pitanja:

1. Kakvi su stavovi diplomanata na jednom turskom sveučilištu o vođenju refleksivnih dnevnika učenja?
2. Kako vide njihov utjecaj na svoju vještinu kritičkog mišljenja?

## **Metodologija**

Budući da je autorov cilj bio istražiti uvjerenja i mišljenja ispitanika, kao i značenje koje pripisuju vlastitim iskustvima, upotrijebljen je kvalitativni pristup (Leech i Onwuegbuzie, 2007) uz pomoć modela akcijskog istraživanja kao oblika izvještavanja o predodžbama i stavovima skupine studenata u postojećem nastavnom kontekstu (Gregson i Jeffrey, 2004; Stremmel, 2007). Corey (1953) je definirao akcijsko istraživanje ili nastavnikovo istraživanje kao „proces uz pomoć kojega praktičari nastoje znanstveno istražiti probleme koje imaju kako bi vodili, ispravljali i vrednovali svoje odluke i aktivnosti” (str. 6) u realnom učioničkom okruženju. Kada se pravilno provodi, akcijsko istraživanje može dati vrijedan uvid u praktična pitanja povezana s poučavanjem i tako znanstveno pridonijeti području obrazovanja (Stremmel, 2007).

### ***Kontekst i ispitanici***

Skupina ispitanika u ovom istraživanju sastojala se od 16 studenata diplomskog studija primijenjene lingvistike na jednom većem sveučilištu u crnomorskoj regiji na istoku Turske. Svi su studenti bili zaposleni, odnosno poučavali su engleski jezik na osnovnoškolskoj, srednjoškolskoj i sveučilišnoj razini. Akademske godine 2011./2012. bili su upisani na kolegij metodike nastave engleskog jezika. Starosna im se dob kretala od 21 do 30 godina i pripadali su i muškom i ženskom spolu.

Kao što je opisano u izvedbenom programu, kolegij je planiran tako da omogući budućim praktičarima temeljno razumijevanje tradicionalnih i suvremenih metoda poučavanja stranih (engleskog) jezika. Obveze u sklopu kolegija obuhvaćale su vođenje rasprava na satu, provedbu individualnih aktivnosti poučavanja na mikro



razini i njihovo predstavljanje ostalim članovima skupine, kao i angažiranost na internetskom forumu koji je pokrenut da bi se olakšalo suradničko učenje. Osim toga, studenti su zamoljeni da vode refleksivni dnevnik učenja tijekom semestra tako što će svakog tjedna zapisivati najmanje jednu cijelu stranicu, osvrćući se kritički i refleksivno na teme o kojima je toga tjedna bilo riječi u materijalima, na predavanjima i u raspravama. Svakog tjedna njihovi su individualni zapisi vrednovani u odnosu na stupanj refleksivnosti i kritičku analizu. Ocjenjivala se također kvaliteta i jasnoća njihova pisanja jer su studenti bili zamoljeni da pišu na engleskom jeziku.

### ***Prikupljanje podataka***

Prema mišljenju autora, npr. Creswella (2007) ili Fraenkela i Wallena (2008), detaljna informacija o predodžbama i iskustvima pojedinaca najbolje se prikuplja s pomoću intervjua; autor je stoga odlučio prikupljati podatke u ovom istraživanju koristeći se nizom otvorenih pitanja. Da bi se potaknulo ispitanike na što izravnije izražavanje, intervjui su provedeni na kraju semestra, pri čemu je moguć utjecaj ocjena na oblikovanje odgovora bio minimalan. Zbog rasporeda, kao i zbog toga da se ispitanicima omogućiti dovoljno vremena i privatnosti za pažljivu refleksiju prije nego što odgovore na svako pitanje, podaci su prikupljeni u formi samointervjua (Allett, Keightly, i Pickering, 2011; Jones, 2003). Svaki je ispitanik dobio isti popis pitanja kako bi njihovi odgovori bili usporedivi. Zamoljeni su da pripreme audio ili video snimak odgovora te da nositelju kolegija pošalju digitalnu kopiju. Dobili su informaciju da će se intervjui koristiti u istraživačke svrhe, pa je osiguran njihov pisani pristanak. Pitanja korištena za intervjuiranje bila su sljedeća:

1. Imate li osjećaj da pisanje portfolija predstavlja učinkovit način razvoja sposobnosti kritičnog mišljenja i refleksije? Molim vas objasnite svoj odgovor.
2. Vrednujte svoj napredak u pisanju portfolija tijekom semestra. Smatrate li da su vam se refleksivne vještine poboljšale? Zašto jesu ili zašto nisu?
3. Jeste li ustvrdili da refleksivno pisanje postaje prirodnije sve većim stjecanjem iskustva ili niste? Molim vas objasnite svoj odgovor.
4. Polazeći od iskustva na ovom kolegiju, smatrate li da ćete se koristiti refleksivnim pisanjem kao dijelom svoga budućeg profesionalnog razvoja? Zašto da ili zašto ne?

### ***Analiza podataka i mjere pouzdanosti***

Kao što primjećuje Hatch (2002), kvalitativna analiza podataka obuhvaća „organiziranje i preispitivanje podataka tako da omogućuju istraživačima uočiti obrasce [i] identificirati teme” (str. 148) kako bi dali smislena tumačenja. U tom je smislu korišten pristup konstantne usporedbe (Leech i Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Snimljeni su intervjui transkribirani, nakon čega ih je autor pročitao nekoliko puta i utvrdio više ponavljajućih tema; podaci su potom kategorizirani prema temama i vrednovani u odnosu na postavljena istraživačka pitanja. Polazeći od rezultata ovog procesa, došlo se do prvih zaključaka koji su zatim doručeni.

Korištene su dodatne provjere informanata (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998) kada su ispitanici zamoljeni da kritički pregledaju evaluacije intervjua istraživača i da potvrde ili opovrgnu njegovo razumijevanje njihova značenja. Pri analizi podataka autor je, također, primijenio dodatnu provjeru (Creswell, 2007; Creswell i Miller, 2000; Fraenkel i Wallen, 2008), pozivajući se na vanjskog ispitivača da bi utvrdio koliko su točno njegova tumačenja i zaključci reflektirali ideje izražene u transkriptima intervjua.

## **Rezultati i rasprava**

### *Pitanja u vezi s usvajanjem prakse reflektivnog pisanja*

Prema rezultatima intervjua, mnogi su se studenti suočili s poteškoćama na početku kolegija, što ukazuje na zaključke Akara (2003) i Linga (2005) o anksioznosti pri zapisivanju vlastitih misli i ideja ili nesigurnosti u pogledu nastavka, čak i kada su navedene jasne upute. Na primjer, RA (korišteni su inicijali zbog anonimnosti ispitanika) otkriva da „pisati dnevnik učenja i snimati vlastita stajališta i kritike o nekoj metodi bilo ... mi je novo. U početku sam osjećao anksioznost jer nisam znao što pisati.” SB slično objašnjava da joj je pisati dnevnik u početku bilo vrlo teško:

Budući da je to bilo moje prvo iskustvo, nisam mogla odrediti je li prirodan proces razmišljati o svojem učenju ili nije. Sramila sam se pisati sve ono što mi je padalo na pamet. Nisam bila sigurna da li da sve pišem ili [ono što je] vrijedno da se o tome piše ... Prvi su tjedni bili poput noćne more. Sjedila bih i mnogo razmišljala o čemu da pišem. Zapisala bih mnogo toga i izbrisala bih sve jer mi se to uopće nije činilo kao refleksija.

ÇT također je zabilježila svoju anksioznost u vezi s reflektivnim pisanjem, primjećujući nadalje da bi se turski studenti vjerojatno opirali takvoj aktivnosti osim ako to od njih ne bi bilo izravno zatraženo:

Zapravo, ja se malo, znate, osjećam nelagodno zbog pisanja dnevnika učenja ... Istinu govoreći, da je pisanje dnevnika samo [prijedlog] našeg nositelja kolegija, a ne tehnika vrednovanja, većina mojih prijatelja, uključujući i mene, ne bi to učinila kako treba. Znate kakvi su studenti u Turskoj. Ako se nešto traži od njih, oni to učine, ali ako je to samo prijedlog ili tako nešto, vjerojatnije je da će to zanemariti ili će učiniti nasumce.

Dok njezina rečenica odražava zapažanja İrfanera (2006) i Köka (2009) o otporu studenata u Turskoj prema novim pristupima učenju, jedan broj ispitanika tvrdi da su se osjećali ugodno dok su pisali portfolijo i da im je to bilo prirodno. Podupirući Langerovo (2002) stajalište, shvatili su što se od njih očekuje te su imali vrlo malih poteškoća da pretoče svoje misli i ideje u riječi. OD, na primjer, navodi:

Moj je nositelj kolegija rekao „Budi osoban koliko želiš” tako da nisam baš mnogo upotrebljavao formalne strukture ili riječi i osjećao sam se dobro dok sam pisao. Bilo je lako. Mislim, postojala je tema pa je bilo lako jer se o tome raspravljalo i u učionici i na [forumima]. Pisanje tada nije bilo teško. Povezao sam ono što mislim, što sam čitao i o čemu smo raspravljali.

ŠE je također pokazala pozitivan odnos prema refleksivnim aktivnostima općenito. Kao što je objasnila, „Osjećala sam da mi je sasvim jednostavno izraziti se [pišući dnevnik učenja] ... i, zapravo, čitam o refleksivnoj praksi . imam sasvim pozitivan stav o toj tehnici.”

### ***Shvaćanje o tome da refleksivno pisanje potiče bolje kritičko mišljenje***

S obzirom na ispitanike koji su u početku smatrali da je zadatak težak, intervjui su otkrili da je većina njih na kraju shvatila što se očekuje u smislu vođenja dnevnika pa su na to počeli gledati kao na pozitivno iskustvo koje je pridonijelo njihovu dubljem razumijevanju materijala korištenog za potrebe kolegija, kao što tvrdi Akar (2003). Naprimjer, SB oblikuje sljedeće stajalište o svom iskustvu pisanja:

Zapisi u dnevniku su kao most između onoga što smo čitali, o čemu smo raspravljali, što smo pisali i [onoga što smo] doživjeli u našem životu koji se odnosi na učenje. Sve smo to povezali i tako smo došli do ideja o nekoj temi ... Smatrala sam, OK, to je knjiga, napisali su je brojni studenti, pa bi svi oni trebali biti u pravu. Možda i jesu u pravu, ali mogu propitivati [njihove ideje] u turskom kontekstu.

HS izražava slično mišljenje o učincima pisanja portfolija o svojim refleksijama. Kao što navodi, „to mi je dalo mogućnost da vidim što radim, što vrednujem i kako svladavam prepreke; kako se bavim problemima ... to znači da puno stvari povezujem.”

No, OD piše da, iako je shvatio kako se vođenje dnevnika učenja smatra korisnim, on nije imao osjećaj da je poboljšao sposobnost refleksije zbog zapisivanja svojih misli:

Ne znam kako je to stvarno pridonijelo [mojemu učenju]. Možda ću pravu vrijednost vođenja dnevnika shvatiti poslije nekoliko tjedana, kada se kritički osvrnem na ono što sam učinio, nakon nekog vremena ... ali ne mislim da je bilo baš korisno. Možda će se moje mišljenje promijeniti, ali zasad ne shvaćam vrijednost vođenja dnevnika.

EK slično razmišlja te pokazuje „neangažiran” stav, prema Robertsu i Yoellu (2009), svojom tvrdnjom da joj je često nedostajalo motivacije za pisanje i da je tu aktivnost ponekad osjećala više kao teret, a manje kao način poboljšanja refleksije. Prema njezinim riječima:

Mogu reći da kada nisam željela pisati ... dnevnik je bio tu kao obveza u sklopu kolegija. Tada sam se počela ponavljati u pisanju pa sam, umjesto da budem refleksivna, na neki način sažimala metode, pa mi to uopće nije bilo korisno.

### ***Planovi za nastavak vođenja refleksivnog dnevnika za osobnu upotrebu ili profesionalni razvoj***

Budući da je većina ispitanika postala svjesna kako vođenje dnevnika pridonosi razumijevanju sadržaja i razvoju sposobnosti kritičkog mišljenja o mnogim temama (Akar, 2003; Harris, 2005), nekolicina njih je izrazila namjeru daljnjeg pisanja za

svoju osobnu uporabu i profesionalni razvoj. Jedna studentica, SB, smatra da će joj reflektivno pisanje biti posebno korisno u njezinim akademskim nastojanjima:

Razmišljam o korištenju reflektivnog pisanja kao dijela vlastitog profesionalnog iskustva. Brže učim kada razmatram neku temu s različitih gledišta i vjerujem da ću, kada tako postupam, moći proširiti svoje ideje da bih ubuduće pisala priloge ili znanstvene radove.

RA slično objašnjava da nakon iskustva s vođenjem reflektivnog dnevnika u sklopu kolegija „sada pišem svoj osobni dnevnik. Znam kako mi to pomaže da si pojasnim ideje i kako mi to daje dobar osjećaj.” I AS izražava namjeru pisanja dnevnika u privatne svrhe; kao što otkriva „ne mislim da ću odustati od pisanja portfolija, ali sada oni mogu biti mnogo osobniji jer ih vi [nositelj kolegija] nećete vidjeti.”

Samo je nekolicina ispitanika, međutim, otkrila da vjerojatno neće nastaviti pisati nakon završetka semestra. OD, naprimjer, objašnjava da „ne mislim da ću ubuduće primjenjivati reflektivno pisanje zato što, kao što sam rekao, sada ne vidim u tome pravu vrijednost.” Jedna studentica, SK, priznaje da se, iako shvaća prednosti kritičke refleksije, ne osjeća dovoljno motiviranom za daljnje pisanje. Kao što ističe,

Ne mislim da ubuduće mogu primjenjivati dnevničke učenja. To ne znači da ne želim; voljela bih to i dalje raditi, ali – iskreno – svi smo mi lijenčine pa ne vjerujem da će itko od nas to nastaviti. Mi volimo obavljati jednostavne i lake zadatke, a kako je ovo neka vrsta izazova, ne mislim da ćemo nastaviti.

Njezino stajalište slično je tvrdnji Acata i sur. (2010) i Alpera (2008), koji navode da čak i onda kada vide prednosti reflektivnog pisanja, učenicima nedostaje motivacije da bi to praktično primijenili u vlastitu korist.

### ***Pogrešne predodžbe o svrsi reflektivnog pisanja***

Rezultati ovog istraživanja u malom broju slučajeva jasno otkrivaju da su ispitanici bili uglavnom zabrinuti pišu li „točno” i za svoje ocjene, što ukazuje na nerazumijevanje cilja ove vježbe. Prema riječima studentice AS:

Znala sam da ćete vi [nositelj kolegija] ocijeniti ono što pišem, pa nije bilo lako pisati sve što mislim. Ma što vi rekli, svi znamo da su ocjene važne ... Dok sam vodila dnevnik, morala sam misliti na ocjenu.

U njezinu argumentu nalazimo tragove İrfanerova (2009) opisa prevelike brige turskih studenata za ocjene i rezultate ispita, što se također odražava na potpunu usmjerenost MA prema korištenim metodama vrednovanja, ne samo dnevnika učenja već i kolegija općenito:

Zapravo želim reći da se najvažnija stvar koju sam naučila na ovom kolegiju ne odnosi na metode ili tehnike. Hoću reći da su mi stil vrednovanja našeg nastavnika, standardi i svi ti zahtjevi dali ideju kako bi trebalo izgledati savršeno vrednovanje. Doista su mi se sviđjeli; stvarno planiram primjenjivati te tehnike [u budućem poučavanju].

## **Kategorizacija učeničkih stavova: „prirodni“, „konvertitski“ ili „neangažiran“**

Uzimajući sve u obzir, rezultati ovog istraživanja pokazuju da su individualni stavovi o pisanju portfolija prilično jasno zrcalili klasifikaciju što su je predložili Roberts i Yoell (2009). U smislu „prirodnog“ stava studenti kao što je SB tvrdili su kako im refleksivno pisanje dolazi prirodno, da je taj proces učinkovit i da u njemu uživaju, kao što je bio slučaj s ispitanicima u Langerovu (2002) istraživanju. Štoviše, kao ispitanici u Akarovu (2003) istraživanju, mnogi studenti koji nisu bili upoznati s tim procesom te su osjećali nesigurnost u pogledu daljnjeg bilježenja misli ili su zapisivanje vlastitih ideja smatrali čudnim, na kraju su počeli shvaćati pozitivne učinke refleksije na vlastito učenje; pokazali su, dakle, „konvertitski“ stav, kako ga opisuju Roberts i Yoell (2009). S druge strane, „neangažiran“ stav jasno su pokazali oni studenti koji ili nisu vidjeli prednost refleksivnog pisanja, što je u skladu s Harris (2005), ili su ga prije svega vidjeli kao instrument vrednovanja.

### **Zaključak**

Polazeći od sveukupnih rezultata, može se utvrditi da je, iako su mnogi ispitanici u početku odbijali ideju o refleksivnom pisanju, većina shvatila kako im je to korisno pri učenju jer im potiče kritičko mišljenje i pomaže im da razviju smislenije razumijevanje sadržaja kolegija. Nekolicina je studenata pokazala kako je doista uživala u opisanom procesu i izrazila namjeru daljnjeg vođenja dnevnika za osobnu upotrebu ili profesionalni razvoj. Štoviše, iako je jedan student otvoreno naveo kako proces refleksivnog pisanja nije pridonio njegovoj analitičkoj sposobnosti, način na koji je oblikovao protivljenje pokazatelj je metakognitivnog mišljenja. Autorov zaključak je, dakle, da su portfoliji ipak uspješni zbog poticanja kritičnog mišljenja i doprinosa metakognitivnom učenju.

Iako je ovo istraživanje ograničeno na malen uzorak ispitanika i njihov profil, očekuje se da stavovi koje oni izražavaju mogu dati nastavnicima koristan uvid u poticanje na primjenu refleksivnog pisanja u sličnom kontekstu. Stoga se navode sljedeće preporuke kao način pružanja potpore studentima u procesu pisanja portfolija:

1. Prema Patersonovu (1995) prijedlogu, od samoga početka treba pojasniti prirodu refleksivnog pisanja. Detaljno navođenje onoga što se očekuje, uključujući količinu i učestalost unosa novih podataka, kao i način vrednovanja, može pomoći studentima da se angažiraju u toj aktivnosti.
2. Naglašavanje kako je ta aktivnost usmjerena više prema izgradnji njihovih kognitivnih vještina, a manje prema njihovoj sposobnosti pisanja ili kvaliteti njihovih ideja. Može ublažiti anksioznost studenata zbog ocjena i motivirati ih da budu refleksivniji i skloniji analizi (Harris, 2005).
3. S obzirom na to da pisanje dnevnika može predstavljati teret, osobito pojedincima koji nisu upoznati s tom aktivnošću, pojašnjavanje opterećenja studenata može pridonijeti stvaranju pozitivnijeg stava (Akar, 2003).