

# PERCEPTION OF GRADE 7 STUDENTS OF MANILA CATHEDRAL SCHOOL ON INTERACTIVE REFLECTIVE JOURNAL IN INSTILLING MEANINGFUL LEARNING IN HISTORY

---

DURIEN L. GERONCA



STUDENT OUTPUTS

# **Perception of Grade 7 Students of Manila Cathedral School on Interactive Reflective Journal in Instilling Meaningful Learning in History**

Durien L. Geronca  
[duriengeronca@mcstayuman.edu.ph](mailto:duriengeronca@mcstayuman.edu.ph)

## **ABSTRACT**

The study aims to show on how is the effect is IRJ for the students, in assisting them to construct their learning in History meaningful. This descriptive statistics use Likert Scale Survey in describing the findings of the research questions in this study. Participants were selected using a stratified random sampling method. It can be resolved in this subject that most of the grade 7 students, agreed that writing entries in their IRJ make them use of their rote memory, they likewise agreed upon that in this action they were capable to see links between what had precipitated out in the past to what is taking place in the present, in improver to that, it helped them to understand History topics better. They strongly agreed that *IRJ* activity enhance their critical thinking skills and abilities to apply History concepts in their everyday life. With the effects of the data analysis, it gained positive results that “*IRJ*” is supposed to have helped grade 7 students a lot in making their learning in History meaningful. The research further recommended conducting comprehensive study related in *IRJ* that uses technology as well as other techniques and strategies that will aid students in making their learning in History more meaningful.

## **INTRODUCTION**

History is all that has ever transpired since the inscription began; before the script began it was pre – history. It is the most captivating subject that subsists because it encompasses every other discipline. It is only thru the study of history we can make correction of what wrong has happened in the past. Upon learning about it we would be able to avoid making the same mistakes again. So History is as important as the future. But the problem students are facing regarding the study of the said subject is getting more

serious. Students of this generation cannot get the significance of studying History. Many are claiming that it doesn't have anything to do with their lives.

The recent study we conducted in our school entitled "Social Studies in Grade 7 and 8: A Rest in Peace or a Living Subject among Students of Manila Cathedral School", shows that some students find History as a difficult subject because it is mere rote learning (memorizations and repetitions). It is difficult for them to memorize many names, dates and events. On the other hand, there are some students who find the subject interesting and meaningful. But how can we make such learning interesting and meaningful?

### **Meaningful Learning Model**

In order for meaningful learning to take place, one must be able to transmit new information (rules, ideas, propositions, schemes, concepts) to what they already know. This learning model is based on David Ausubel's view, a psychologist who in his theory compared meaningful learning from rote learning. Constructivists strongly influenced this theory. The subject has an active role in meaningful learning because it needs restructuring and organization of information. According to (Ausubel, 1966) "The most important factor of influencing learning is what the learner already knows." His theory consists of three principles: (1) When students envisioned concepts and incorporate them within a cognitive structure, it is said to be meaningful. (2) Constantly advance from the most broad concepts to the most definite ones and (3) the student's readiness. This study is conducted to be able to transform History concepts learned in the classroom into meaningful ones thru the use of *Interactive Reflective Journal*, in order for students to relate such concepts in their personal lives. When information made sense and meaningful to the learners, they were able to retain it to their minds a lot better. They could also transfer the facts lot more easily in their long term memory.

### **Rote Learning as a Cornerstone for Meaningful Learning**

Memorization of facts based on repetition is what we call "rote learning". The two best examples of rote learning are the alphabet and numbers, but in History context – it is memorization of the names, dates and events. Mere memorization and repetition is

being abandoned for newer technique use inside the classroom. It is said that this kind of learning technique is obsolete for the types of learners we have in this generation. When the main focus of learning is rote memorization, it does not reflect higher-order or critical thinking. Adversaries to rote memorization claim that creativeness in students is inhibited and blocked, and do not acquire how to think, scrutinize or unravel problems. But does it really have no place in 21<sup>st</sup> century education? Try to imagine if a student doesn't memorize the alphabet, can he/she recognize and spell words correctly? For the learners to get truly involved in higher order thinking, one must first learn basic knowledge and remember this so he/she can denote to it later along the path when dealing with more progressive teachings and learning. Rote Learning and critical / higher order thinking are not the same and should not substitute one for the other. Rote memorization, however, is the foundation of higher order thinking and should not be disregarded. This research will make use of History facts as a keynote of what the learners will have to write on their *Interactive Reflective Journal*. The students will make use of their meaningful understanding of History concepts learned in the classroom.

## **The Review of Related Literature**

### **IRJ as a Tool in Catering Meaningful Learning**

“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience.”

— John Dewey

Scholars sight reflective journals as an influential tool for alerting and guiding learners in the direction of improving their erudition. The first one to write about reflection in education was John Dewey (1933). He specified that reflective discerning is “the active, persistent, and careful consideration of belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it ends.” “By creating students’ thinking evident first to themselves through intended formations of accounts of learning, for instance in the form of inscribed reflections, note taking, or other exhibitions

of information and progressions, they can now better learn and reflect from their learning experiences” (Leslie & Borges, 2017). In a study conducted by (Lindroth, 2014), reflective journals are a beneficial learner - centered activity that offers chances for self-education. “Journals can deliver motivation and enthusiasm to students who use them decisively to redirect on previous experiences that were fruitful or significant to them” (Lindroth, 2014). One study stated “Reflection is a critical component in the experiential learning process and it should be explicitly incorporated into ‘hands-on’ classroom pedagogies” (Young, 2017). In the study conducted by (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010), numerous learners renowned that “learning about the concept of reflection actually enabled them to change their learning styles and processes”. In the research of (Kizilcik & Daloglu, 2018), confirmed Ayan’s study (2010) that the majority of the learners testified that insightful tasks were effective in aiding them supervise and administer their own learning. This was supported by participants who recorded profits of reflection tasks for them as developing their self-assurance, needing them to contemplate cautiously about their graft; aiding them to look at their work critically; boosting them to reexamine their work and be aware of their errors; and enhanced their performance, based on (Kizilcik & Daloglu, 2018) research. Although most studies and research about using reflective journals as a means of aiding students to produce meaningful and insightful learning were successful, I want to further conduct a study of my own due to some gaps I have found. Most scholars focused on subjects like nursing, music education, teacher – education and online based – learning. My study will focus on grade eight students learning about History Concepts and be able to make it meaningful in writing their own reflections. Another gap was that there were too many reflective activities and it lessen or lose students’ motivation and were time – consuming (Kizilcik & Daloglu, 2018). There should be certain alterations in the study to further proliferation of motivation and avoid its lost. Reducing the quantity of written reflection tasks and accumulating some variation can support surge of student enthusiasm.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This action research will adopt Descriptive Statistics in order to study the efficacy of reflection in fostering meaningful learning in History among the students. Descriptive statistics are brief descriptive coefficients that summarize a given data set, which can be either a representation of the entire or a sample of a population (KENTON, 2018). It should produce definitive results and stopping points which will facilitate further studies.

### Participants

The study involves the grade 7 students of the Manila Cathedral School during school year 2019 - 2020. The level consists of eight sections, composing of one cream section and the remaining seven were homogeneous in nature.

### Instruments

This action research main instrument is using a Likert scale survey. It is the survey scale that represents a set of answer options, either numeric or verbally with a range of opinions on a topic. It's always part of a closed-ended question which is a question that represents the respondents with pre-populated answer choices. On this study's survey questionnaire, the participants will rate their answer by 1 to 4, wherein 1 (Strongly Disagree) is the lowest and 4 (Strongly Agree) is the highest.

**Table 1. The Essential Questions of the Participants**

Survey Questions:

1. Does writing entries in interactive reflective journal make you use your rote learning?
2. Does journal writing help you to enhance your critical thinking skills?
3. Are you able to find connections between what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present?
4. Are you able to integrate History concepts in the events of your daily life?
5. Does this activity help them to understand History topics better?

## Data Collection

The compiled data were organized, added up and tabulated for proper analysis and rendering. The arithmetic mean was used to identify and render the results of the simple random grade seven students of Manila Cathedral School SY 2018 – 2019, the respondents in each question regarding their perception of the usefulness of IRJ – activity in fostering meaningful learning in History.

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N} \quad \text{Where;}$$

$\bar{X}$  = arithmetic mean

$\sum X$  = sum of all the scores

$N$  = total number of cases

## ANALYSIS

The upshots of this study or the analysis and interpretation of the determinations of the accumulated information are as follows:

**Table 3. The “Mean” interpretation on students' perception in the efficacy of IRJ – activity in fostering meaningful learning in History.**

| Survey Questions                                                                                             | Weighted Mean | Interpretation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Does writing entries in interactive reflective journal make you use your rote learning?                      | 3.4           | Agree          |
| Does journal writing help you to enhance your critical thinking skills?                                      | 3.5           | Strongly Agree |
| Are you able to find connections between what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present? | 3.3           | Agree          |

|                                                                              |     |                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------|
| Are you able to integrate History concepts in the events of your daily life? | 4.2 | Strongly Agree |
| Does this activity help them to understand History topics better?            | 3.4 | Agree          |

**Table 4. Legend for Interpretation**

| <b>Equivalent Scale</b> | <b>Survey Scale</b> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 3.5 – 4.0               | Strongly Agree      |
| 2.5 – 3.49              | Agree               |
| 1.5 – 2.49              | Disagree            |
| 1.0 – 1.49              | Strongly Disagree   |

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded in this study that most of the grade 7 students, agreed that writing entries in their *IRJ* make them use of their rote memory, they also agreed upon that in this activity they were able to find connections between what had happened in the past to what is happening in the present, in addition to that, it helped them to understand History topics better. They strongly agreed that IRJ activity enhance their critical thinking skills and able to apply History concepts in their daily life. With the results of the data analysis, “IRJ” is said to have helped grade 7 students a lot in making their learning in History meaningful.

### **RECCOMENDATION**

As an educationalist, I would like to recommend further studies related to reflective journaling that integrates technology and as well, other strategies and techniques that would deepen learning of students in History and making it meaningful to them.

## REFERENCES

- Ausubel, D. P. (1963). *The Psychology of Meaningful Verbal Learning*. New York: Grane and Stratton.
- Ausubel, D. P. (1966). *Meaningful Reception Learning and Acquisition of Concepts in Analysis of Concept Learning*. New York: Academic Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational Research (Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research) Fourth Edition*. Nebraska, Lincoln: Library of the Congress Publication.
- Dewey, J. (1933). *How We Think*. Boston: DC Health and Company.
- Guthrie, K. L., & McCracken, J. H. (2010). Reflective Pedagogy: Making Meaning in Experiential Based Online Courses. *The Journal of Educators Online*, 1-21.
- Kizilcik, H., & Daloglu, A. (2018). Implementing an Interactive Reflection Model in EAP: Optimizing Student and Teacher Learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 1-27.
- Leslie, P., & Borges, C. C. (2017). Narratives of Learning: The Personal Portfolio in the Portfolio Approach to Teaching and Learning. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 200 - 212.
- Lindroth, J. T. (2014). Reflective Journals: A Review of the Literature. *National Association of Music Education*, 1-7.
- O'Connell, T. S., Dymont, J. E., & Smith, H. A. (2015). Students' Appropriation, Rejection and Perceptions of Creativity in Reflective Journals. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 1-13.
- Young, M. R. (2017). Reflection fosters deep learning: The 'reflection page & relevant to you' intervention. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, 1 - 17.