Chapter 1
Insights Into an Interdisciplinary Project on Critical Reflection in Nursing:
Using SFL and LCT to Enhance SoTL Research and Practice

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ABSTRACT

The chapter provides a description of the first stage of an SoTL project consisting of an interdisciplinary research collaboration between nursing disciplinary experts from the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies (ALCNS) and academic literacy experts from the Centre for English Language Communication (CELC) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). This stage includes the creation of appropriate lesson material for teaching critical reflection drawing on Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with nursing lecturers and the use of 'model' reflective writing texts from high-scoring students in past cohorts analysed using Systemic Functional linguistic frameworks such as genre pedagogy, appraisal, The Legitimation Code Theory tool of semantic waves. The intervention was designed to improve the highly valued skill of 'critical reflection' in nursing undergraduate clinical modules drawing on the use of rigorous theoretical frameworks that make visible salient linguistics resources and knowledge practices drawing on SFL and LCT.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of the first stage of a SoTL project titled *Reflecting in Undergraduate Nursing: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Embedding Critical Reflection in Undergraduate Nursing Practice*. The project is an interdisciplinary research collaboration between nursing disciplinary experts from the Alice Lee Centre for Nursing Studies (ALCNS) and academic literacy experts from the Centre for English Language Communication (CELC) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) that is supported by a Teaching Enhancement Grant from the university's Centre for Development of Teaching and Learning.

In order to address the SoTL objective to show "how learning is made possible" (Trigwell et al., 2000) through reflection, the project aims to move beyond purely disciplinary understandings of teaching and learning to incorporating a "cross-disciplinary" (Kreber, 2013) description of how nursing students reflect on clinical practice in a manner that is valued by their subject lecturers. The cross-disciplinary collaboration was achieved by drawing on the insight of nursing lecturers in a FGD and the expertise of academic literacy experts through the analysis of student assignments for linguistic features and knowledge practices.

The two FGDs with nursing lecturers aimed to understand critical reflection in the discipline of nursing from the perspective of disciplinary experts. Questions were designed to uncover why nursing staff chose critical reflection as a type of assessment, what they thought the value of such reflections was for undergraduate nursing students, and finally, to understand what counts as "deep" reflection in the discipline. The FGDs were complemented by the analysis of the reflective writing texts from students. The text analysis addresses Shulman's (2005) call for a "comparative study of signature pedagogies across professions" in order to "offer alternative approaches for improving professional education that might not otherwise be considered" (p. 58). To enhance the understanding of critical reflection in nursing clinical practice, texts were analysed through the use of rigorous theoretical frameworks of Genre (Martin & Rose, 2008) and Appraisal (Martin & White, 2005) (Systemic Functional Linguistic theory - SFL) to make visible salient linguistics resources in texts and semantic waves (Maton, 2014; Szenes, Tilakaratna, & Maton, 2015), and to make visible knowledge practices (Legitimation Code Theory - LCT) relevant to nursing reflective practice. SFL and LCT frameworks were employed to uncover deep critical reflection in undergraduate nursing because these two theoretical fields operate "side by side as analytical frameworks providing complementary analyses that are then integrated" (Maton & Doran, 2017, p. 613). The frameworks draw on the academic literacy experts' knowledge of linguistics and knowledge practices and the analysis aims to provide nursing disciplinary experts an "alternative approach" to understanding critical reflection in nursing clinical practice.

The results from the first stage of the project are intended to inform an intervention to improve the highly valued skill of "critical reflection" in nursing undergraduate clinical modules.

A more detailed description of the phases of the ongoing project is outlined in Table 1.

In sharing the results from the first stage of the project, this chapter aims to address one of the concerns in SoTL literature: for disciplinary research to be made transparent for public scrutiny to show how learning is made possible (Trigwell et al., 2000). We begin our article with a brief exploration of how reflective practice in nursing is valued in the context of professional nursing and how it is conceptualised from a disciplinary perspective. This is followed by an introduction to the SFL and LCT frameworks used in this study and a description of the two data sets comprising the focus group discussions and critical reflection assignments. The remainder of the chapter will focus on explaining how the detailed thematic

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