

**Spinning Concept and Practice:
Rethinking the Implementation of Reflective Journal
Writing (RJW) in the Mongolian Study Tour**

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A little background

- Experimental Learning Courses and Positive and Values Education (PAVE) Courses at EdUHK
- Life and values education projects (UNESCO HK association, Non-Profit Making Veterinary Services Society, Suicide Prevention Services etc.) at CRSE
- Fieldwork practicum for pre-service kindergarten teachers at VTC



In this seminar

1. Overview of the discussion on RJW
2. RJW: an example of the Mongolia study tour
3. Rethinking the implementation of RJW



Overview of the discussion on RJW

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

About reflection...

- Act of searching for a way out of hesitation, which is aimed at bringing more facts to light, so that reflective review and synthesis of ideas and activities can help us to derive meaning and intelligence when they encounter future experiences (Dewey, 1910)
- Not concerned with instrumental and technical problems, but goes beyond rules and functions to the art of one's own professional practice, both daily and in future actions (Schön, 1987)
- Analysis and criticism of experience - the quantity or length of experience does not reflect its richness and is not an objectively neutral phenomenon (Brookfield, 1996)



Conceptual lens

Reflecting process

- Boud's triangular representation (1985)

- Experience (What is the event?)
- Reflection (What is the purpose of the event?)
- Learning (What was learned during the event?)

- Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (2014)

- Concrete experience (getting hands-on experience in the learning activities)
- Reflective observation (reflecting through observation in the process of learning activities)
- Abstract conceptualisation (generalising knowledge and theory from previous experience based on reflection)
- Active experimentation (modifying existing concepts and applying them to future situations)

- Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988)

- Experiences (What happened?)
- Emotions (What did you feel?)
- Evaluation (How did you evaluate the situation?)
- Analysis (How did the situation make sense to you?)
- Conclusion (What else could you have done?)
- Action plan (What will you do next time?)



RJW as a mean of reflection

- A teaching strategy in which students write openly about their experiences and feelings for further reflection and analysis (Heath, 1998, p. 593).
- Written material based on reflection and relatively free writing, although it may be written within a given structure... Except for the initial recording experience, it aims to improve students' practice by taking different actions in the real world after their reflections. (Moon, 2010, pp.187-191).

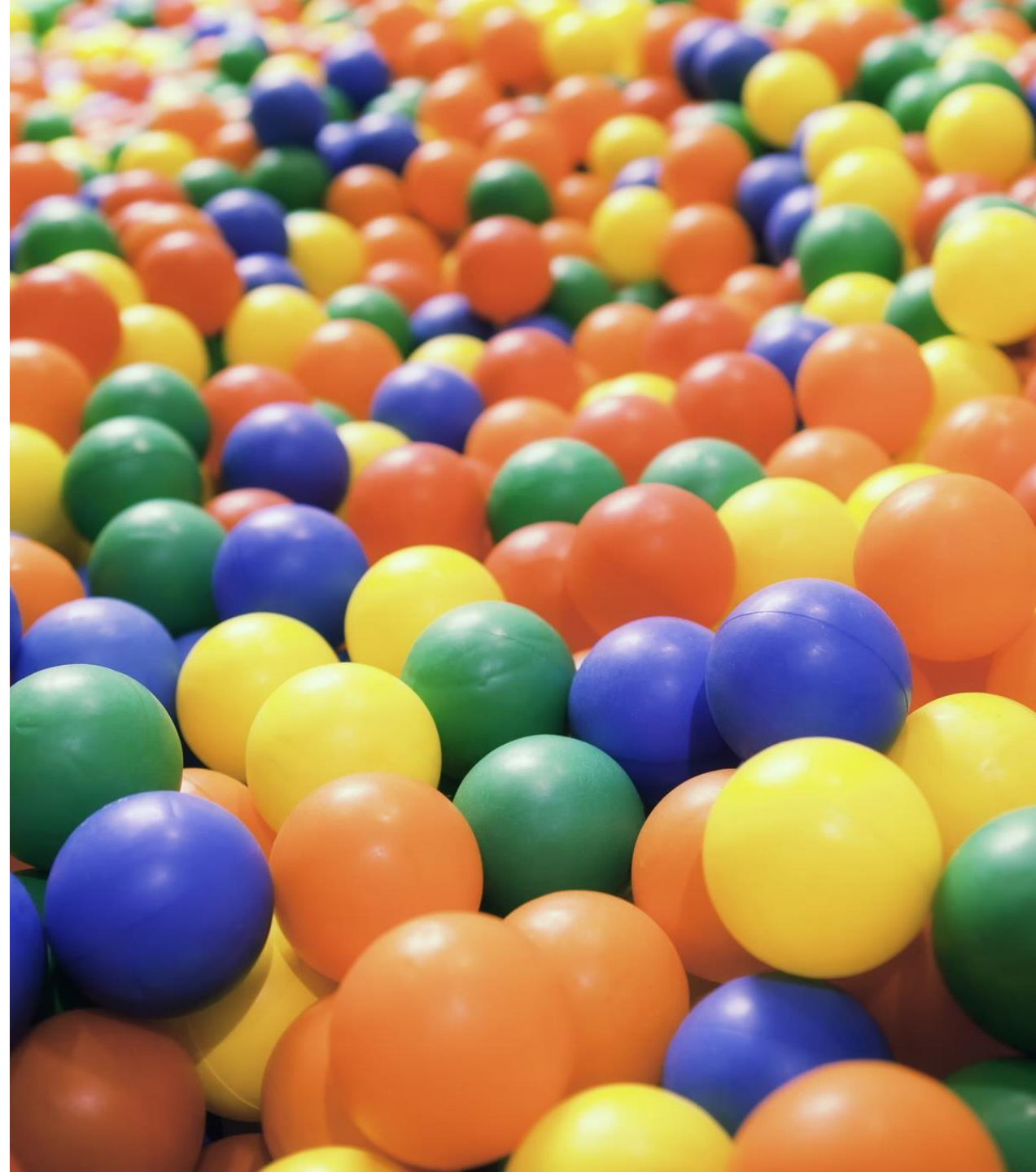
Examples from higher education

- Medical Education (Rozental et al., 2021)
- ELT Student Teacher Training (Saadet & Galip, 2019)
- English Writing Course (Abdelhamid, 2020)
- Kindergarten Teacher Education Placement (Cheng, 2020)
- Sex Education Course (Or, 2018)
- Communication Course (Ahmed & Zaky, 2021)
- Business and Social Work (Szenes & Tilakaratna, 2021)



Purpose of RJW (Moon, 2006)

- Record experiences
- Increase active participation in learning
- Support comprehension and understanding
- Increase the ability to reflect and think
- As a means of assessment in formal education
- For personal development





Types of RJW

(Hatton & Smith, 1995)

- **Descriptive writing** is not reflective at all, but reports on events or literature at a superficial level.
- **Descriptive reflection**, individual practitioners may try to justify issues based on their personal judgement or reading of the literature.
- **Dialogical reflection** is a type of discourse that explores possible reasons.
- **Critical reflection**, which focuses on reasons for decisions that take into account broader situational contexts.

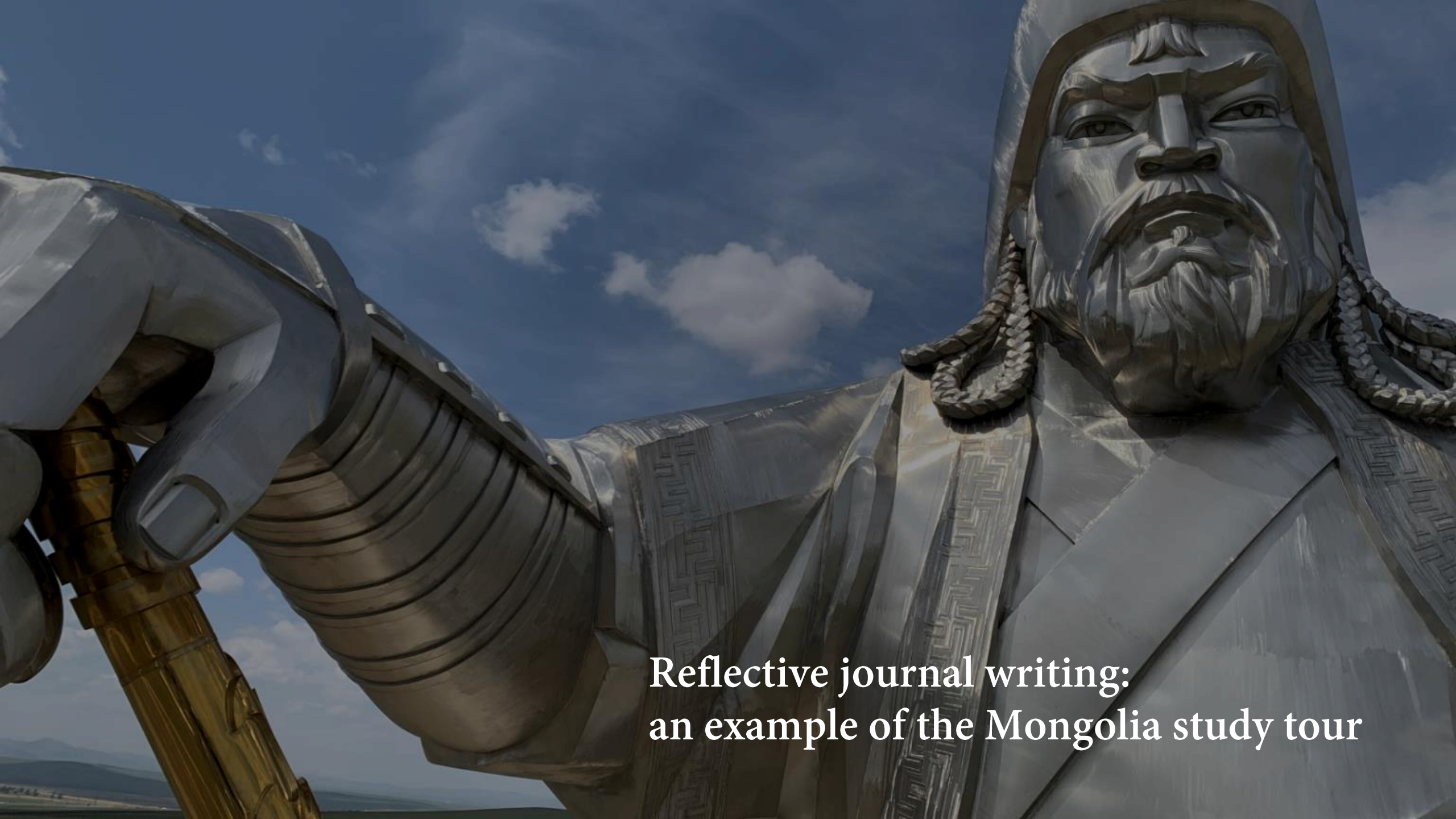




Contributions

(Boud et al., 1985, pp. 63-65)

- Distancing students from the experience and remove personal feelings that block their attention to the experience of what actually happened and is being learned.
- Recognise students' deeper feelings and reasons why certain affective responses occurred during the initial learning experience.
- Integrate students' new and old ideas in specific ways that become the basis for work and growth.



Reflective journal writing:
an example of the Mongolia study tour



'Nomadic Culture in a Globalized Era' Mongolia Study Tour

- Learning objectives: To recognise Mongolian culture and the importance of nomadic values
- Supported by EdUHK's GLEF
- Organised by IE Department 8-day study trip to Mongolia from 30 May to 6 June, 2023
- Visited Mongolian schools, Chinghis Khan Museum and Terej National Park.
- A total of 15 students participated in the tour



Designing the RJW

(Moon, 2006)

- Medium for journals
- Format and instruction
- Purpose
- Monitoring and feedback
- Length and frequency

Task

Items	Description
Medium for journals	Padlet - an integrated platform for students to upload their work (video and mix of written and digital photography work)
Format and instruction	Three unstructured journals with guiding questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2/6: An image that so far impressed them much with reflective writing• 5/6: V-log showing how they feel and what they have learned from Mongolian• 6/6: An image that so far impressed them much with reflective writing
Purpose	Cultivate students' personal develop by reflecting on nomadic culture and values
Monitoring and feedback	Verbal feedback during the trip
Length of a journal	No limit for writing, 1-2 min length for the V-log
Frequency of writing	3 times within 8 days



We should also have a look at this...

6

Students

have completed all tasks

26

Reflective Journals

Have been written

7

Videos

have been recorded

170

words

in average

Rethinking the implementation of RJW

Rethinking...

- A. Students' perception of RJW
- B. RJW as an assessment
- C. Feedback





A. Students' Perception of RJW

- Readiness for RJW (Or, 2018)
- Cognitive, psychological and linguistic issues (Alana Ramlal, 2019)
- Writing autonomy (Cheng, 2020)
- Teacher-pleasing, also known as “schmoozing” (Pruchnic et al., 2021)



B. RJW as an assessment

- Grading (Young, 2020)
- Associated ethical concern (Szenes & Tilakaratna, 2021)
- Relative freedom in writing (Claire, 2011)
- Teacher pedagogical perspective (Cecilia, et al., 2021)



C. Feedback

- Learning moments (Abdelhamid, 2020)
- Time pressure (Saadet & Galip, 2019)
- Impersonal feedback (Rozenal et al., 2021)
- Trusting (Ilin, 2020)

An abstract graphic on a dark blue background. It features a central vertical axis with a series of overlapping, slightly tilted rectangular outlines in teal and yellow. To the left and right of this axis are numerous small dots in teal and yellow, some of which are connected by thin, wavy lines. The overall composition is dynamic and suggests a network or a path of exploration.

Consideration for the future teaching and academic work



- Reflection is a very personal thing and different people will define it in different ways?
- Reflection has been extensively researched and theorized?
- Reflection has become a buzzword in learning and teaching?

Teachers as researchers - responsive evaluation to our reflective practice is needed?



Q & A

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