Reflection portfolio

Introduction

As part of Language development and Language Teaching, you are required to compile a reflection portfolio. The purpose of the reflection portfolio is to give you a tool to help you organise your studies, but it also provides a means of communicating and showing your knowledge development to you and your teachers on the course. Above all, the portfolio encourages you to reflect on the course contents and self-assess your developing competence in teaching English in years 7–9 or in English 5, 6 and 7. Your work on the reflection portfolio corresponds to the following intended learning outcomes:

- explain key concepts, theories and educational movements in connection to learning and language development as well as describe the role of interaction and social exchange for language development and the development of good learning environments
- discuss and appraise what social, linguistic and gender-related factors may mean in relation to language and knowledge development
- analyse and critically appraise the steering documents that concern the teaching of English in the school years 7–9 or upper secondary education
- account for how learners’ understanding of concepts and language ability may develop in functional contexts and exemplify how different types of texts and aesthetic forms of expression can be used to support language and knowledge development
- assess and analyse learner texts based on different aspects of learners’ knowledge development in order to provide response that feeds forward
- Write a reflective text that is coherent, cohesive, clearly structured and mostly correct.

Reflecting on course contents means capturing thoughts and meanings as they occur along the way. Therefore you need to keep notes in connection to each seminar, capturing thoughts and attempting to identify what you believe that you are learning. As you write your notes, you should bear in mind that your reflections should highlight different dimensions of reflective ability (Zwozdia-Myers 2012, pp. 4–5), e.g.:

- linking theory to your own learning and teaching experiences
- questioning your personal theories and beliefs
• considering alternative perspectives and possibilities
• trying out new strategies and ideas

Reflective writing can be described along a continuum from writing that merely describes and summarises to writing that considers “multiple perspectives, engagement with prior experiences, the broader context, surrounding issues, and meta-cognition” (Ibid., p. 20). The latter refers to the ability to reflect on the thinking process itself (see also The Allyn & Bacon guide to writing, ch. 25).

It follows that as you write the reflection portfolio, you should attempt to move beyond mere answers to questions. You should try to justify your responses in a reasoned and principled way, e.g. by making connections to theories or to your own experiences. Special attention needs to be paid to how you use concepts related to language teaching and learning.

The reflective portfolio will ask you to show your understanding of

• learning and language development theories
• learner variation: individual and social factors
• literacies and language development
• the National curriculum and the syllabus for English for years 7–9 or the syllabuses for English 5 and 6
• assessment

Your writing will focus on the following aspects of learning:

a) Your understanding of the course contents
b) Your self-awareness of your learning and understanding

In addition, it is important that you experience an increase in your ability to understand and use English. You show your increasing language ability by writing ongoing reflections, and the reflection portfolio must therefore involve a considerable amount of editing, redrafting, working on finding the right words and achieving a high level of accuracy. Your portfolio should show that you have reached the following intended learning outcome: “… write a reflective text that is coherent, cohesive, clearly structured and mostly correct”.

A dictionary or thesaurus should be consulted on a regular basis, and you should make sure to set the word processor to British or American English. Formal guidelines for the writing of the reflection portfolio are found below.

The reflection portfolio and its sections

You will be given additional guidelines in connections to seminars. These guidelines will ask you to process your notes for each given content area (2–6 below) for inclusion in your reflection portfolio. This means that you will have to edit your notes carefully so that your reflections can be made part of a text which is coherent and cohesive. You need to pay attention to both content and language and make sure that your reflections really deserve to be
The reflection portfolio must comprise the following parts (please note that your texts must not exceed the word counts mentioned in brackets):

1. **Aims and goals** (400–600 words)
   A brief description of your own personal aims and goals as they relate to the course aims and goals (or 3–4 course aims and goals). Please include one personal goal per course goal. Your goals must be specific enough for you to be able to self-assess them. You must also include a brief explanation of what your plans are for achieving each goal.

2. **Learning and language development theories** (see instructions below) (1000–1200 words)

3. **Learner variation** (700–800 words)

4. **The National curriculum and the syllabuses for English** (see instructions below) (800 words)

5. **Literacies and language development** (see instructions below) (1000–1200 words)

6. **Assessment** (see instructions below) (1000–1400 words)

7. **Self-assessment** (see instructions below) (500–600 words)
   The intended learning outcomes for the course and your personal goals are used as starting points for a final self-assessment. You need to be convincing in your argumentation as to whether the goals have been met or not. Sections 2–6 in your portfolio should be referred to as evidence.

8. **Conclusion** (300–400 words)
   Here you conclude the text by saying a few words about the process of participating in the course and what you have gained from it. You also include brief responses to the following questions: What do you feel that you now can build on in your ability to teach English in years 7–9 or in English 5, 6 or 7? What do you feel that you need to work on developing? How do you intend to achieve this?

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**Content-area instructions**

a) **Aims and goals**

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Anna for feedback: April 10

b) **Learning and language development theories**

This section of your portfolio will draw on the following texts: *How Languages Are Learned* and *Engelsk språkidaktik. Texter, kommunikation, språkutveckling*.

In this section, ensure you address the following intended learning outcome, paying particular attention to the concepts underlined:
• … explain key concepts, theories and educational movements in connection to learning and language development as well as describe the role of interaction and social exchange for language development and the development of good learning environments

Separate instructions for this will be given a few weeks into the course.

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Bo and Shannon for feedback: April 29 and May 23

c) Learner variation

This section is based on the following texts: How Languages are learned ch. 3; Kön och skolframgång, tolkningar och perspektiv; Elever med utländsk bakgrund. En sammanfattande bild; and Vad påverkar resultaten i svensk grundskola? Kunskapsöversikt om betydelsen av olika faktorer.

As you reflect in writing on the oral presentation of your materials evaluation, you need to bear in mind the following intended learning outcome:

- discuss and appraise what social, linguistic and gender-related factors may mean in relation to language and knowledge development

Detailed instructions for writing about learner variation will be given later.

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Malin for feedback: April 22

d) The National curriculum and the syllabuses for English

This section is based on the following texts: The National curriculum for the compulsory school, including the syllabus for English or the National curriculum for upper secondary education, including the syllabuses for English 5 and 6; the comments to the syllabuses. When you refer to them in your text, you may refer to them as (Skolverket, 2011a, b etc.). You will also find some usefull background to the syllabuses in Engelsk språkdidaktik.

As you show your understanding of the steering documents, you should consider the following learning outcome:

- … analyse and critically appraise the steering documents that concern the teaching of English in the school years 7–9 or upper secondary education

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Bo for feedback: April 17

e) Literacies and language development

In this section you should show your reflective ability in accordance with the following learning outcome:
• … account for how learners’ understanding of concepts and language ability may develop in functional contexts and exemplify how different types of texts and aesthetic forms of expression can be used to support language and knowledge development

The texts that you study are Harmer (2007) and Lundahl (2012).

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Anna for feedback: May 6

f) Assessment

In this section the following learning outcome should be borne in mind:

• … assess and analyse learner texts based on different aspects of learners’ knowledge development in order to provide response that feeds forward

The following texts must be studied very carefully: Kunskapsbedömning i skolan - praxis, begrepp, problem och möjligheter; Engelsk språkidaktik chapter 15; Lgr 11 or Lgy 11; the comments to the syllabuses.

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text to Bo for feedback: May 15

g) Assessment and self-assessment

Deadline for submitting a carefully written text for feedback: May 22

The time line for the portfolio work

Week 14  The reflection portfolio and its purpose are introduced; you start your note taking

Weeks 15–22  Your note taking continues. You are provided with detailed instructions for the reflection portfolio.

May 29  Peer review

June 4  Deadline for submitting your reflection portfolio. You upload the text to It's learning no later than 6 pm. At the same time, you submit your portfolio to bo.lundahl.mah@analys.urkund.se
Formal guidelines

The degree project will comprise approximately 15 pages of text (Times New Roman 12 points – or another font with seriffs – 1.5 spacing). You should save your text as an electronic portfolio which you make available to the examiner. All pages need to be properly paginated at the bottom centre. However, the front page should not be paginated. Use the page break to indicate new pages for new sections. The table of contents should appear on page 3 and the text proper should start on page 5. Be consistent in your use of headings and abbreviations. You must use the Harvard referencing system. You find a good summary of the key points at http://www.hb.se/wps/portal/blr/harvard.

Please note that new paragraphs must be indicated by either indentation or blank lines, however not after headings or extended quotes.

Use the following format styles (with blank lines):

- **18 bold lettering followed by three blank lines** (in size 12, no bold lettering) – section headings (including the table of contents and the list of references)
- **14 bold lettering followed by one blank line and preceded by two blank lines** – sub-heading one (1.1, 1.2, 1.3 etc) (the blank lines should be in size 12 with no bold lettering).
- **12 bold lettering with no blank line** (preceded by one blank line)

But please note that numbers are not important as long as your text is clearly structured. The structure and its logic should be made transparent in the table of contents.

Do not use any underlining anywhere. From the above guidelines, it also follows that you should not use the headings suggested by the word processor.

The degree project should be structured as follows:

- Front page (see the template in attachment 1)
- Table of contents
- Introduction: Aims and goals
- Learning and language development theories
- Learner variation
- The National curriculum and the syllabuses for English
- Literacies and language development
- Assessment
- Self-assessment
Conclusion

References

Your text needs to be your own and you have to show your ability to make a very clear distinction between your own thoughts and those of others. All portfolios have to be submitted to Urkund. Plagiarism will result in an immediate fail and a report to the Disciplinary Board.
### Matrix for assessing the reflection portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall impression</strong></td>
<td>Not complete; parts are not worked through sufficiently; the text does not show evidence of in-depth reflections or real understanding of the course contents; the structure within the sections is poor; the language is not fluent, the vocabulary and the sentences are not varied; there are many errors; the text does not follow the Harvard system of referencing.</td>
<td>Shows evidence of careful editing; the reflections are thoughtful and the background texts are used and referred to properly according to the Harvard system of referencing; the text is well structured and the text is fluent, coherent and mostly correct.</td>
<td>Reflections are thoughtful and in-depth throughout; the background texts are carefully integrated into the writer’s own reflections using consistent referencing; the text is very fluent; the sentences are varied and accurate; the text shows linguistic breadth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction and conclusion</strong></td>
<td>The instructions have not been followed; the text is incomplete or not properly worked through.</td>
<td>The text the student’s own goals; the conclusion refers back to the introduction and sums up some key impressions while pointing forward to the teaching of English in years 7–9 and upper secondary education.</td>
<td>The introduction and the conclusion function in complete harmony with one another. They provide a very clear frame for the rest of the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning and language development theories</strong></td>
<td>Shows limited understanding of key concepts, theories and educational movements in connection to learning and language development and/or fails to adequately address the role of interaction and social exchange for language development.</td>
<td>Good understanding demonstrated through summary of key concepts, theories and educational movements in connection to learning and language development and the role of interaction and social exchange for language development.</td>
<td>Mastery demonstrated by thorough summary and critical discussion of key concepts, theories and educational movements in connection to learning and language development and the role of interaction and social exchange for language development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learner variation</strong></td>
<td>Shows limited understanding of learner variation theories and key concepts; does not show any real ability to discuss and explain different dimensions of learner variation and impact on school results.</td>
<td>Shows understanding of learner variation theories and key concepts; shows ability to discuss and explain different dimensions of learner variation connected to school results.</td>
<td>Shows excellent understanding of learner variation theories and key concepts; shows in-depth and analytical ability to discuss and explain different dimensions of learner variation linked to school results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The National curriculum and the syllabuses for English</td>
<td>Shows limited understanding of the steering documents.</td>
<td>Shows understanding of key concepts related to the syllabus and ability to use these concepts to analyse and critically appraise the steering documents.</td>
<td>Shows ability to make clear, relevant and balanced connections between the steering documents and the language classroom in terms of consequences for teaching and learning.</td>
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<td>Literacies and language development</td>
<td>Shows limited understanding of how language development may be supported in functional contexts through reading, writing or working with vocabulary, and uses some key concepts pertaining to the relevant subject area.</td>
<td>Through informed argument, shows clear understanding of language development in the relevant area; shows the ability to use the key concepts pertaining to supporting language development in functional contexts through reading, writing or working with vocabulary.</td>
<td>Through clear and informed argument, shows excellent understanding of language development in the relevant area, uses key concepts, and is able to make connections between theory and practice of supporting language development in functional contexts, through reading, writing or working with vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Uses few key concepts and shows limited understanding of them; does not demonstrate any real ability to assess learners’ language ability with regard to constructs like listening, reading, speaking and writing.</td>
<td>Shows understanding of key concepts and demonstrates ability to assess, analyse different learners’ language ability based on different dimensions.</td>
<td>Uses key concepts in the analysis and assessment of different types of learner texts; shows an excellent ability to view teaching and assessment in accordance with constructive alignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Provides limited evidence of learning or understanding; does not include any real discussion of factors that have contributed to whether the goals have been met or not; there is limited discussion of strengths and weaknesses.</td>
<td>The student shows ability to self-assess his/her understanding of the course contents by providing evidence of the extent to which the goals of the course have been met. The student’s own participation and engagement in the course, contributions to group work and to seminars are included in the self-assessment.</td>
<td>The student demonstrates ability to assess his/her own learning by providing clear evidence in support of learning; the discussion of the evidence shows critical awareness of the fact that learning and understanding are developmental and often hard to concretize; the student’s own contributions are carefully weighed against the possibilities and limitations of group work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and structure</td>
<td>Uses spoken language; the linguistic breadth is limited and there are basic language errors.</td>
<td>The text is coherent, cohesive and clearly structured; it is mostly correct.</td>
<td>Demonstrates a very high level of fluency and a very good degree of accuracy and use of idioms.</td>
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References


Reflection Portfolio

Your own title in English

Your name

English Studies and Education
Language Development and Language Teaching
Spring 2013

Examiner: Bo Lundahl