Voice and Choice: Learning Expression Choice Boards for Learning Reflection

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Introduction/Need for innovation

Learning expression choice boards can be part of transformational learning experiences when employed as a vehicle for application following reflection, learning, and class discussion (Mezirow & Taylor, 2009; Schnepfleitner & Ferreira, 2021). The intention to implement learning expression choice boards was representative of two goals. Goal 1: provide an opportunity for post-secondary preservice teachers to engage in weekly reflection on their learning in a way that honors them as individuals while still meeting instructors' learning outcomes. Goal 2: expose preservice teachers to universal design for learning (UDL) methodology to promote implementation of UDL in their future classrooms. The innovative idea aligns with priority 4, meeting student needs and interests, of the *AAAE National Research Agenda* (Edgar et al., 2016).

Learner variability can be a barrier for designing and implementing meaningful learning experiences in coursework in post-secondary education (Ambrose et al., 2010). Roumell (2019) indicated learner variability can be accounted for through sources including individuals' unique experiences, preferences, and expectations of each individual**.** UDL can be viewed as a proactive approach to designing learning experiences with universal access for all learners (Fornauf & Erickson, 2020). Cook and Rao (2018) reported UDL guidelines provide a set of flexible options and scaffolds to ensure access for all learners.

Learning expression choice boards align with UDLs multiple means of engagement. Choice Boards complement learners' self-concept and consideration of learners' life experiences (Knowles et al., 2015), and are considered a universal design by CAST (2018). Choice Boards are representative of UDL checkpoint 7.1, as the expressions board allows students to identify the media they'd like to use to express their learning. Further, it provides learners the opportunity to connect what they've learned to their life, which is supportive of UDL Checkpoint 7.2. Because learners determine the way they'd like to express their learning, they get to determine what scaffolds or tools they'd need to support their success as suggested in UDL Checkpoint 8.2.

How it works

Instructors that are interested in implementing learning expression choice boards for students' reflection can do so by completing: *Step 1*: Instructors identify learning objectives, as well as desired prompts or reflection relating to the objective. *Step 2*: Students are provided with a list of options to choose from to express their learning based on the learning objectives. Examples of options might include, but are not limited to writing (RAFT writing, children's books, Q&A, newsletters), graphic design (infographics, brochures, vision boards with explanations), sketch notes, productions (video or audio recordings, public service announcements, TikToks), or propose another format to be approved by the instructor. *Step 3*: Students identify (or propose an option not listed) that allows them to express their learning in a way that aligns with the learning objective for the assignment. *Step 4*: Instructors provide feedback based on a rubric.

Learners were expected to answer two or more of the questions relating to their learning in the course topics for the week: 1) How do I connect the key points from this week? Why? 2) How can I apply what's been learned to my life now and/or my future career? Why? 3) What

resonated with you? Why? 4) What affirmed your thinking? Why? 5) What questions or challenges do you have to the topics covered? Why?

Results to date/Implications

Goal 1) In a face-to-face undergraduate course of preservice teachers (*N*=59), learners were expected to reflect each week by creating an artifact of their choosing based on the provided learning expression choice board. The artifact (or digital link) was uploaded to the learning management system for instructor review. Learning expression reflection assignments were scored on a single point rubric by the instructor; those assignments that did not meet the criteria for success, were returned to students with feedback for resubmission.

Student feedback on choice boards was positive. It was noted by the instructor that initially students choose narrative type reflections, but as the semester went on, students began to get more creative with how they expressed their learning, and many tested different ways. The expression boards provided insight into students' perceptions of course content and teaching methods. The data suggested adapting future lessons to best meet students' needs. Allowing students to express themselves in a method of their choosing provided opportunities to learn more about students as individuals which helped to develop a better teacher student relationship.

Goal 2) In anonymous Qualtrics survey, members of the class (*n*=56) were asked to indicate their level of agreement on a four-point Likert scale: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *agree*, and 4 = *strongly agree*. Given the statement "if I were to pursue teaching, I would try using learning expression choice boards in my classroom," 90% of the respondents reported that they agreed/strongly agreed with the statement. An ANOVA test was used to compare the intention to try choice boards and the demographic variables of class standing, transfer student status, high school dual enrollment, intended student teaching date, gender association, and GPA ($p > .05$).

Future plans/Advice

Instructors must have clear expectations of the content of the artifact, and should make the success criteria known through their rubric. Further, they must determine the types of artifacts which might be acceptable for the context of the course (see How it Works section for examples). While Canvas was used as a means of submission, alternatively Google Folders could serve as a means of sharing artifacts and creating portfolios shared between instructors and students (Ray & Strong, 2016). Finally, instructors should provide examples of different artifact types and provide opportunities for students to consider how their preferences and strengths might best be showcased. Given the participants' intention to try this innovation in their future classrooms, in combination with teachers' perceived usefulness of online networks for their professional learning (Ray et al., 2022), researchers and practitioners should consider leveraging online networks to diffuse and study the innovation with practicing and preservice teachers.

Costs/Resources

There are no direct costs associated with implementing the learning expression choice board in an existing course. Indirect costs relate to the time instructors would need to develop their acceptable formats, samples and corresponding prompts/learning questions; time to do so could be valued as a percentage of their daily rate based on hours to complete the task (varies by individual). It could be estimated as less than four hours of work.

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