BACKGROUND

Martin (2000) described journal writing as an activity that can:
- Capture the process of learning.
- Track the stages in a learner's development over time within a program or course.
- Enable students to make connections.

While journal writing has been used in a variety of academic and clinical areas, there is limited information on the use of journal writing in communication disorders courses (Chabon & Lee-Wilkerson, 2006; Trembath, Wales, & Baladdin, 2005).

Voices and voice production vary greatly amongst individuals, yet many students begin a graduate course in voice disorders with very little insight into their own voice. Understanding and appreciating the qualities that make voices pleasant or unpleasant, the types of vocal behaviors that can be harmful to the voice, and the challenges faced when attempting to change a habitual behavior are important precursors to becoming an effective voice clinician. Students in training typically have limited exposure to voice-related issues. They may lack the resources to instruct and motivate clients/patients with limited or no experience. Directed journal writing is one method of providing experience with voice-related principles before having contact with individuals requiring vocal rehabilitation.

METHODS

Students were provided with a series of hierarchically organized reflective journal activities distributed across the semester. The activities progressed from general impressions about their voice to implementation of a vocal rehabilitation strategy.

Examples of Journal Entry Assignments:
- Observe and comment on a voice in the media, then analyze your own voice.
- Complete a vocal misuse inventory on a person with whom you are familiar. Have them complete the same inventory. Similarities? Differences? What does this tell you about self-reporting of vocal misuse?

Analyzed Entry:
The final journal entry for the semester was used. It was predicted the greatest likelihood of reflection would occur with this entry.

Task:
- Choose any vocal rehabilitation technique or strategy they had been taught in class and implement it for no less than three days.
- Provide insights regarding the implementation of a vocal rehabilitation strategy.
- Tell the stages in a learner's development over time within a program or course.
- Provide insights regarding the implementation of a vocal rehabilitation strategy.

Journal entry without identifying information were obtained once the grading rubric had been completed.

RESULTS

Level of Reflection Description
Level 1: Descriptive The student provided evidence that new knowledge was obtained (what they learned) and how it affected their therapy. Student commented on their response (trust, beliefs) onto how future patients may feel or react to their therapy. Student empathizes with those around them, those using the technique currently or future patients.

Level 2: Empathic The student expressed thoughts or emotions about others and self. They reflected their experience (emotions, analysis, beliefs) onto how future patients may feel or react to their therapy. Student empathizes with those around them those using the technique currently or future patients.

Level 3: Analytic The student demonstrated evidence of linking new knowledge to a broader context of personal and professional life. Journal entry provided evidence of student's learning in order to contrast, compare or plan for new actions or responses. Student may have also indicated unexpected positive or negative outcomes related to the assignment.

Level 4: Metacognitive Student demonstrated examination of the learning process, showing what learning occurred, how learning occurred, and how newly acquired knowledge or learning altered existing knowledge. Student provides evidence of how the intervention impacted their life and its outcome on their life. Student also plans for future as a professional in using this as a possible future treatment of a patient.

REFERENCES

