



Self-assessment and its Influence on Writing Skill

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The location of the educational institution is in a rural area; most of the population is engaged in fishing activities. Young individuals decide early on whether they want to work to support their families or become independent, and these decisions have an impact on how interested they are in continuing their education. When they neglect their academic responsibilities, their performance is affected. Given these realities, it is not intended to reflect on their qualifications or quantitative evaluations. Instead, it seeks to raise awareness of the intellectual skills they have been able to develop.

Students show problems in the fundamental subjects, Spanish and foreign languages. When language skills are evaluated (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), deficiencies can be observed, especially when applying the rules of the language.

In a general sense, it has been possible to verify the arbitrary way in which people carry out communication processes through technological tools. Therefore, they do not respect the linguistic rules. Perhaps the communicative modality in which friends and family form relationships is permissible; however, in an educational context, it is unacceptable to exclude critical writing processes.

Writing involves some stages: planning, writing, revising, and publishing. In the first phase, the issuer must try to take into account the communicative situation, in the second stage, the sender must write and generate pertinent and coherent ideas which must be analyzed, prioritized, and evaluated; in the next phase, the issuer must carry out an exhaustive review of the textual production carried out; finally, in the last phase, the writer will be able to present, share, or publish the written text.

The main goal of this action research is to improve writing skills by guiding students towards autonomy, using a self-assessment rubric that is easy to understand, and increasing their confidence in evaluating their own work to improve their writing ability while having fun and leaning English. As Rolheiser and Ross (2000) explained, “Teachers today are experimenting with alternatives to traditional tests. Performance assessment, portfolio collections, classroom observation, peer assessment, and self-evaluation are joining the unit test and the final exam in the repertoire of the skillful teacher” (p. 1).

Literature Review

According to Cambridge University (2001) written expression and comprehension demand important methodological processes, especially when using digital resources. The foundations of writing are based on the use of grammatical rules and elements of the written language, such as spelling, syntax, linguistic morphology, and pragmatics. Teachers must promote coherent techniques that are aimed at strengthening written communication skills, knowing how to recognize the expectations and interests of students. On the other hand, they must have some background knowledge about the ability to recognize textual typologies, superstructure, and macrostructure of the text. From the first years of schooling, foreign language teachers must facilitate self-assessment strategies and thinking routines that promote the improvement of students' written communication skills.

The linguistic ability to write must be developed through processes be it in any type that is used in communication. In this way, students will be encouraged to be orderly and carefully in the production of a text. Planning as a first step will allow them to know what they are going to write, who they are going to address and will also allow them to define what the

communicative purpose will be. In writing, they will spontaneously generate ideas, learn to organize and structure them. In the revision, students will try to identify all kinds of errors, this stage is substantial because it will help them to correct and edit their written production. The publication will show a very well-done job, according to the academic level at which the students are at.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment “is the involvement of students in identifying standards and/ or criteria to apply their work, and making judgments about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards.... [it] means more than grading their own work; it means involving them in the process of determining what is ‘good work’...” (Boud, 1995, p. 12).

Alternative Ways to Apply Self-assessment

An alternative form of self-evaluation is through teachers’ experiences; writing stories of different genres according to the students’ preferences, through the cognitive knowledge that rests in the minds of the students. The teacher will give technical feedback on the content of the grammar of writing. “the teacher might provide the students with a written sample opening of a horror story. This stage is like a “trial run”; a chance to try out the rubric before using it on their own work for the purposes of self-evaluation.” (Rolheiser & Ross, 2000, p. 12).

According to Boud (1995), it is necessary for the teacher to establish goals that students can achieve, so that students can evaluate themselves if they are making progress in the learning process. The standards A2 for ninth graders determine that they “can engage in basic social communication online e.g., writing a simple message on a virtual card for a special occasion, sharing news and making/confirming arrangements to meet” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 97).

Benefits and Problems of Self-assessment.

Benefits

The cognitive part is one of the benefits that self-assessment offers. “Students become better writers by learning how to evaluate their prose” (Rolheiser & Ross, 2000, p. 13). The motivation and attitude of the students at the time of learning define the achievements that they can achieve through self-assessment. “Students who are taught self-evaluation skills are more likely to persist on difficult tasks, be more confident about their ability, and take greater responsibility for their work. Students' attitudes toward evaluation become more positive when they participate in the process.” (Rolheiser & Ross, 2000, p. 13).

Problems

One of the problems that can arise within the self-evaluation process is the incorrect explanation of the rubric and the goals to be achieved within a study unit. The participation of the teacher is critically important in the self-evaluation stage; the students cannot be left completely alone even if they are evaluating themselves.

The problem is that without teachers' involvement in student self-evaluation, teachers have no direct knowledge about whether individual students are on an upward or downward path. The choice for teachers is not whether students evaluate their own work (they will regardless of teacher input) but whether teachers will attempt to teach them how to do so effectively. (Rolheiser & Ross, 2000, p. 6).

Making Self-Assessment Effective in Writing Skills

Another way to make writing skills effective is to attach examples to the self-assessment rubric. When teachers give examples, the students have a better cognitive perspective to understand what teachers provide and what he has to do. The evaluation rubric must have

qualitative, quantitative standards with punctuation identifiers and the levels that it will reach according to the content of the piece writing. "The teacher defines a rubric for the students and shows them different samples to illustrate the concept. This definition will need to be adapted to the grade level, but it should convey the following, "A set of scoring guidelines for evaluating students 'work. The rubric or scoring tool contains a set of criteria used to discriminate effectively between performances of different quality." (Rolheiser & Ross, 2000, p.10).

To understand the previous paragraph, it is specified that students need a pattern which guides them in the exercise of evaluating critically, responsibly, and reflexively. The rubric must contain not only criteria or categories that describe the evaluation parameters but also a model that has been carried out and evidenced the concretion of the evaluation processes.

Evaluation rubrics become measurement instruments, where criteria are established by levels through the provision of scales that allow determination of the quality of the execution by students in specific tasks (Vera, 2008). Therefore, they allow teachers to specify which competencies are to be achieved and what criteria they will be graded by them. In this way students can regulate their own learning and participate in their own evaluation. It also provides a model that facilitates the evaluation process.

Innovation

After sharing the ideas about the rubric and the purposes of the self-assessment, a space was created to analyze the main competencies and skills that the students were going to develop during its implementation. The importance of grammar, spelling and vocabulary was stated, and questions were also raised for reflection: Why is it important to know how to write? How does self-assessment contribute to writing?

On the other hand, the use of textual properties was encouraged: coherence, cohesion,

and adequacy in the production of short and long paragraphs. In each one, reference is made to interactions where the topics addressed are concise, mainly alluding to situations typical of the locality; trade, fishing, education and tourism.

On the first week, the topic was addressed: “Dolphins which is Posorja's main tourist attraction”, presented in a 30-minute session, through the Zoom application. The objective of this teaching and learning period was to create a short conversation using the present perfect on the topic with a partner. During the second week, through videos and educational dialogues on the Zoom platform, the topic was addressed, “How to get to the Puerto de Aguas Profundas, located in the town of Posorja?” The following week, conversations were created about how to get to the tourist destination known as "Playa el Delfin"? As explained initially, the students were able to participate in dialogues with highly relevant topics.

The application of the innovation procedures was carried out in four weeks. After the design of the unit plan, it was socialized with the students. It should be noted that they were encouraged to understand the categories, parameters, and evaluation criteria considered basic and essential skills.

The innovation began in December, in the first place, a work plan was carried out, with the respective period of time, in addition, the selection of resources and supplies for the implementation of the innovative plan was made. On the other hand, a group of young people were motivated to participate in this educational experience, whose names were chosen by the tutor in charge of the course.

The main purpose of the innovation is for students to learn interrogative words, vocabulary related to transport and tourist activities in Posorja, demonstrate a perfect and correct pronunciation so that, in the long run, and on their own, they can interact online on everyday

matters with simple key details. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 97).

Firstly, to achieve the stated innovation objective, it was attempted, to publicize the thematic unit of innovation and the variables of this subject of studies, such as the rubric as an evaluation and self-evaluation instrument, as well as the relevance of the writing processes and their effectiveness in interactions through the WhatsApp application.

To explore the students' previous knowledge, in the first session a dialogue was promoted between a group of students and English teacher. Through this activity, it was possible to verify the fluency and correct writing of basic words which are originated through greetings, for example, in a chat group, and in Q&A exercises. They reflected on the essential contents that would be addressed in the study unit: The use of the present perfect, most common questions and answers in English, vocabulary, and expressions used in transportations in English. Use of action verbs and adjectives to share activities carried out on a tourist visit to a new place, common expressions that will be useful in different situations.

Through WhatsApp, dialogues were promoted where students wrote conversations, they had to ask at least five questions per person. To carry out the conversations, chat formats were used. The issues addressed were typical of everyday life and the main activities carried out at the fishing port. The students issued their work through email, in such a way that they received comments, observations, and feedback through WhatsApp.

Research Methodology

For Abreu (2014):

The term method originates from the roots: meth, which means goal, and odos, which means via. That is, the method is the path that leads to the goal. The Research Method seeks to answer the question: How will the research be developed? (p. 195).

For the present study, a type of quantitative research has been considered, in addition, the descriptive aspects have been implemented, in order to analyze, synthesize, record, and interpret specific data that have been obtained through collection techniques and instruments of information. It is important to highlight that the data has allowed the evaluation of the academic reality that students perform in the classrooms.

Action Research

Burns (2015) defines action research, on the other hand, is described as a collection of research techniques or strategies that simultaneously investigates a particular social issue in-depth, supports democratic change, and promotes cooperative engagement from all participants (p. 188)

Participants

The field investigation was carried out in a Public Educational Institution in Posorja, Guayaquil canton, Guayas province. The aforementioned educational institution currently has 43 parallels and a population of 1,800 students, which, due to population growth, increases every year.

The 72 teachers hold three different shifts at the educational establishment: morning, afternoon and evening; in addition, there are 5 members who belong to the Student Counseling Department (SCD) and 2 service people as part of the staff.

Regarding to the most important characteristics of the students who participated in this research, a sample of 41 students was considered. About students' age, 14 are between 14 to 16 years, which represents 47%; while the other 16 students are between 12 and 13 years, representing 53% of the total sample. The average age of students is 15 years old.

In regard to the gender of the participants, 28 of them are male, representing 68%; and,

13 are women, whose percentage corresponds to 32%. In respect of the socio-economic level of the students, in general, they are middle class; they have access to the main public services; among them: electricity, drinking water, internet access and access to electronic devices (laptop, tablet and smartphone).

Regarding the research questions, these are the following:

Research question 1:

Does student self-assessment improve written production?

Research question 2:

What are the main results obtained with the application of educational innovation?

Hypothesis

There are significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores of ninth-grade students.

Instruments

Pre-test

The Pre-test was applied before the application of the teaching innovation. At the end of the innovation process, a Post-test was applied.

Content – vocabulary for giving directions and question words.

Watch the assigned video, take notes on directions to Puerto Morro from Guayaquil and chat with your classmates about:

- How to get to Puerto Morro from Guayaquil
- What to do at Puerto Morro (bird watching and see dolphins). Practice 1

Post-test

Content – vocabulary for giving directions and question words.

Watch the assigned video, take notes on directions to Puerto Morro from Guayaquil and chat with your partner about:

- How to get to Puerto Morro from Guayaquil
- What to do at Puerto Morro (bird watching and see dolphins). Practice 1

Data Analysis

In this quantitative approach research, the test technique was applied, through a pre-test and post-test; for the analysis and interpretation of the results, the grades obtained in the were systematized, the latter being obtained once the educational innovation was carried out during the 4 weeks.

To test the hypothesis, a *t*-test was calculated, since it corresponds to an intervention study where the pre-test and post-test scores of the 41 students who participated in the research could be compared.

Ethical Considerations

Regarding ethical considerations, in this research, the corresponding informed consent letter was provided to the students. On the other hand, this research did not have a pure experimental design, did not generate actions or behaviors that compromised the personal integrity of the students.

Concerning this topic, Inguillay et al. (2020) stated that:

Ethics must be applied at all stages of research, from planning and conducting to an evaluation of the research project. The ethics of research is completely different in the types of educational communities. Each community has its own set of moral values. (p.44).

Results

The statistical check procedure is described below:

1. Hypothesis approach

H1: There are significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores of ninth-grade students.

H0: There are no significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores of ninth-grade students.

2. Significance level

A significance level of 5%, ie 0.05, was used.

3. Statistical test

The SPSS program was used, applying an independent samples test.

4. Calculation of the p-value

The results obtained in the application of the formula were the following:

Figure 1.

Prueba de muestras independientes											
Prueba de Levene de igualdad de varianzas				prueba t para la igualdad de medias							
		F	Sig.	t	gl	Significación		Diferencia de medias	Diferencia de error estándar	95% de intervalo de confianza de la diferencia	
						P de un factor	P de dos factores			Inferior	Superior
POSTTEST	Se asumen varianzas iguales	1,396	,323	-,696	3	,268	,537	-,83333	1,19799	-4,64588	2,97921
	No se asumen varianzas iguales			-,822	2,894	,237	,473	-,83333	1,01379	-4,12738	2,46071

Table of independent samples

In the descriptive statistical analysis, the result was that the pre-test had an arithmetic mean of 5.23 and a standard deviation of 1.88; in addition, on a scale of 1 to 10, the minimum score was 1 and the maximum score obtained was 8. On the other hand, the Post-test had an arithmetic mean of 8.27; and a standard deviation of 1.05; the minimum score obtained was 6 and the maximum score obtained was 10.

5. Decision making

The alternate hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected, that is if there are significant differences in the mean scores of the students, obtained in the application of the pre-test and post-test.

Discussion

One of the main principles of education is that children and young people are capable of developing and enhancing their linguistic abilities, with which they can be coherent social actors; also, that they strengthen their discursive skills in a holistic way; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Through the foreign language, students will be able to perform in a pertinent way, not only in what refers to society but also in the workplace.

According to the results obtained in the Hypothesis Test, it is verified that the intervention developed in the classroom, which consisted of the application of self-assessment processes, in the writing of essays, had a positive effect. The results show that the grades improved in the post-test, that is, a better academic performance was obtained since the grade of the arithmetic means was improved and the dispersion of the data decreased.

Conclusions

1. It was found in this research that student self-assessment improves written production because it facilitates the concatenation of previous knowledge with new ones. In this interaction was possible to evaluate the coherence and cohesion of the ideas indicated, as well as the correct use of the writing standards.
2. The main results obtained with the application of educational innovation were the following: a. creation of texts and dialogues through digital tools (WhatsApp), b. generating

an interesting and creative way of giving instructions, being able to form sentences using adverbs of frequency to detail routine activities, c. use the present tense of the most frequent verbs, d. being able to use contractions in a paragraph.

3. Concerning the formulated hypothesis, the application of the T-student test showed that if there are significant differences in the mean scores of the students, between the Pre-test and the Post-test, that is, due to the effect of Pedagogical innovation improved student scores on the second test.

Limitations

In relation to this aspect, it is stated that the research carried out did not have any type of limitation in terms of the application of the pre-test and post-test tests because students were monitored and controlled at all times since strict compliance was given to the schedules established for carrying out the pedagogical intervention.

Recommendations

1. It is suggested that teachers in the English area may apply student self-assessment to generate continuous improvement processes in the production of written texts carried out by students, be they: narratives, descriptions, essays, among others.
2. It is recommended that students continue writing texts and apply self-assessment at the same time. Teachers should use technological applications and social networks in the teaching-learning process; among them: are Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, and Tik-Tok, among others.
3. It is also suggested that teachers continue applying pedagogical innovations in the classroom. And that in the end, they evaluate their results by applying statistical hypothesis tests.

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Appendix 1
Lesson plan.

Available upon request.

Appendix 2
Rubric

Available upon request.

Appendix 3
Checklist

Available upon request.

Appendix 4
Grades

Available upon request.

Appendix 5

Link to my eportfolio:

Available upon request.