



Self-Assessment to Increase the Students' Writing Through a Blog Site

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SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

Self-Assessment to Increase the Student's Writing Through a Blog Site

English is one of the most used languages to communicate around the world. But, as with all languages, different skills must be learned, like Writing, because it is part of writing communication. Developing this ability is a challenge for students because, in public high schools, students' writing skills are weak and deficient; note in mind that the majority of students do not learn English in elementary schools, and in high schools, they are not exposed to English beyond the classroom; therefore, students do not practice it regularly.

This action research includes collecting quantitative and qualitative data and focuses on exploring the effect of applying self-assessment on students' English writing skills.

Durga, (2018, as cited in Menéndez, 2022), said, "Writing can be perceived not only as a means to communicate but also as a means to learn a second language. As a result, students demand efficient writing abilities suit their academic and occupational needs." p. 2).

Literature Review

This section describes the theoretical concepts of the Self-Assessment strategy and writing skills as the central part of the investigation and the elements that structure innovation design. The dependent variable is writing ability and the independent variable is self-assessment. There are too many positive and negative aspects of implementing the proposed strategy with students.

Self-Assessment

According to Dunning et al. (2016), students benefit from self-assessment. They will decide where to apply their learning since students will know their strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment enables students to become more autonomous in education and take responsibility for acquiring and improving knowledge and skills.

McMillan and Hearn (2008, as cited in Carlos Menéndez, 2022) said, "Student self-assessment can promote intrinsic motivation, internally controlled effort, a mastery goal

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

orientation, and more meaningful learning. Moreover, its powerful impact on student performance empowers students to guide their own learning and internalize the criteria for judging success." (p. 3).

However, Tan and Keat (cited in Zayed, 2017) said that self-assessment can be subjective and not trustful because students tend to over-mark answers when compared with tutor assessments.

Writing

According to Brown (2007), Writing is a mental process that can be prepared and granted an infinite number of revisions before publication. It is a system of written symbols representing a language's sounds, syllables, and words. Using structures of statements, capitalization, and correct punctuation clarifies the meaning of written sentences and the different texts.

Huy (2015, as cited in Cruz, 2022) said that Writing is "a complex metacognitive activity that draws on an individual's knowledge, basic skill, strategies, and ability to coordinate multiple processes" (p. 6). Writing involves several components, such as word choice, the use of appropriate grammar, syntax, and the organization of ideas in a coherent manner.

Grammar

Harmer (2018) stated that "the grammar of a language is the description of how words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language" (p. 12); In that sense, grammar rules exist to give a sense in language structure, so its presence.

Mohr (2013) defined "grammar as a natural structure of a language where different roles are found, especially with regard to the rules of communication. It is the code that humans use to communicate in other ways that are not speaking."

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

Vocabulary.

"Vocabulary is a resource for second language learners if a student presents a lack of vocabulary, she will not be able to communicate effectively. So, there is not any message. This means that there is no communication," (Minalla, 2018, as cited in Pino, 2021, p. 4)

Teaching vocabulary is a source; it involves lexical phrases and language knowledge to communicate within the class. Also, to quickly recognize words and phrases, readers must have a rich vocabulary to achieve that writing goal.

Innovation

This innovation was to create a blog where the students have to write to improve their writing skills. In the first lesson, I gave them instructions on how we would work; the students studied the past simple, the second conditional, conjunctions to join words, and feeling adjectives to write about tales, stories, fables, and morals.

In the first week, I explained to students how to apply the self-assessment and rate each component of the rubric created as a self-assessment tool to check their progress. Next, students learned to use a blog where they practiced Writing, using all the elements learned; finally, they could write complete sentences and paragraphs about the stories and fables and their morals.

Research Methodology

The main goal of action research is to provoke teachers' reflection and critical self-reflection of their daily development, all for the benefit of the students and their learning; this research focuses on specific problems that often occur in the natural classroom environment.

Teachers have to look for a problem presented in any context, act on it, try to determine a possible solution, and work again to see if there are changes. According to Burns (as cited in Quezada, 2022), "the main point of action research is to find out more about what is going

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

on in your own local context in order to change or improve current practice in that situation" (p. 8).

Research question:

Does self-assessment influence students to improve writing skills in level A2?

Participants

For this innovation, 30 students from the first high school course were chosen. Their ages ranged from fifteen to sixteen years old; they were students in a school. This course had 30 students (17 girls and 13 men). They were A1 level, but 80% percent of students were pre-A1.

Instruments

The elements or parameters considered in the rubrics were grammar, vocabulary, and organization. The rubric was used to grade the pre-and post-test. This quantitative data was entered and tabulated in an Excel spreadsheet. The results corresponded to the pre-test and the post-test.

First, in the grammar pre-test and post-test, students had to use simple past tense verbs and second conditional. Next, in the vocabulary section pre-test and post-test, students had to use feeling adjectives and conjunction words to write about tales and stories. Finally, in the organization of the post-test, students had to use the correct order of the words to be accurate when writing in the following order: subject plus verb plus complement.

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, "you need to be respectful -especially in regard to their areas of professional or expert knowledge- but at the same time confident of the worth of what you are doing and of your expertise" (King, 1994, p. 19). For that reason, authorization was required to take photographs, share the screen, record the classes, the parent approval for

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

extra homework, and virtual student attendance as evidence of their performance during the process. All students participated in the entire process.

Results

This innovation motivated them to write since, for the first time, they used a blog as a strategy to develop Writing; the chosen topics matched students' preferences, such as stories, legends, and fables that also hooked students' interest and motivated them to write.

The participants completed their self-assessments. Although this was not graded with points, the scores are reported here to explore their self-assessment; it is worth mentioning that students initially commented that they were not very honest with this self-assessment. However, on average, students rated their grammar a 6, vocabulary a 6, and organization a five, and the pre-test and the self-assessment correlation showed a weak positive association.

Student pre-test scores on the writing rubric resulted in over 50% of students having difficulty in this skill, with the majority below 70% in grammar, vocabulary, and organization. This score corresponded to the student's average pre-assessment in writing skills.

After taking the pre-test, there was an evident struggle to write. The students did not want to do writing activities for fear of not doing them correctly. On the other hand, the post-test results showed that the students were more capable of making complete sentences using vocabulary and grammar according to the proposed topic in a better range.

At the end of this innovation, it was confirmed that Writing is a fundamental part of learning a new language since Writing also 'forces' you to think before transmitting information when choosing the best way to do it.

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL



Discussion

The data collected on students' self-assessments are significantly similar to the analysis obtained by Dunning et al. (2016). In addition, the results from the post-test showed that applying self-assessment in Writing helps students recognize their weaknesses and strengths to enhance their writing skills and be more autonomous in their education.

According to Durga and Rao (2018, as cited in Menéndez, 2022, p. 2), Writing can be perceived not only as a means to communicate but also as a means to learn a second language. So, students, through Writing, give meaning to the communication process. For example, during the innovation, the experimental group improved their writing skills, self-assessment, and the support of a digital tool, so they feel confident when writing.

Conclusions

Initially, it was anticipated that self-assessment would boost students' writing ability, was able to confirm the efficacy of using self-assessment in the innovation. In this case, it is applied for the improvement of writing for A1-level students.

In the pre-test, there was an evident struggle to write. The students did not want to do writing activities for fear of not doing them correctly. Moreover, the students did not have enough knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and the organization of sentences. On the other hand, the post-test results showed that the students were more capable of making complete sentences using vocabulary and grammar according to the proposed topic in a better range

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

than before. In addition, using a blog to improve their writing skill was adequate; the students felt the confidence to write about the given topic on the blog. Likewise, the self-assessment helped to know their lack of writing ability.

Limitations

A significant limitation was internet connectivity since most students did not have it to carry out the innovation activities. Another significant limitation was the knowledge deficit that the students brought from school years, for which it was necessary to reinforce essential knowledge to achieve the proposed objectives.

The students had access to the asynchronous class by WhatsApp; this meant I could not work with all the students in the same form. Still, the students who could connect in a synchronous class enjoyed, paid attention, and followed the course instructions.

Recommendations

As a suggestion, if someone wants to carry out this innovation, they must ensure that all students have the internet to create equal learning opportunities to obtain better results.

SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

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SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

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SELF-ASSESSMENT IN WRITING SKILL

Appendix 1

Lesson Plan

Available upon request.

Appendix 2

Rubric Writing

Available upon request.

Appendix 3

Checklist

Available upon request.

Appendix 4

E-portfolio link

Available upon request.