МУТАХАССИСЛИК УЧУН ИНГЛИЗ ТИЛИ (ESP)

USING RUBRICS IN EFFECTIVELY ASSESSING AND IMPROVING STUDENTS' ESP WRITING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The article describes the primary research study about rubrics which are an established practice for effective writing instruction and assessment practice, through understanding exactly what the research says and how findings may be applied in a classroom setting are important for maximum effectiveness. This article discusses recent findings, and then provides information of research-based activities in terms of data collection, research sampling, and instruments.

Keywords: data collection; assessment for learning; writing skill; assessment; primary research; sampling; rubrics.

НОФИЛОЛОГИК ЙЎНАЛИШДАГИ ТАЛАБАЛАР ЁЗМА НУТҚИНИ РИВОЖЛАНТИРИШ ВА САМАРАЛИ БАҲОЛАШДА РУКНДАН ФОЙДАЛАНИШ

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Аннотация

Мақола илмий ишни рукнлар орқали ёритишда ёзма нутқни самарали ўстириш, ҳамда баҳолаш мезонларини қўллашни куриб чиқади. Шунингдек, уларнинг аҳамиятини шу кунгача олиб борилган илмий иш топилмалари орқали тушунтириб берилади. Илмий иш жараёнида бажарилган ишлар (маълумот тўплаш, илмий иш иштирокчилари ва илмий иш инструментлари) ҳақида кенг мулоҳаза юритилади.

Калит сўзлар: маълумотлар тўплаш; ўрганиш мақсадида баҳолаш; ёзма кўникма; баҳолаш; илмий тадқиқот; иштирокчилар; рукн.

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ РУБРИКИ В ЭФФЕКТИВНОМ ОЦЕНИВАНИИ И РАЗВИТИИ ПИСЬМЕННОЙ РЕЧИ СТУДЕНТОВ НЕФИЛОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ НАПРАВЛЕНИЙ

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Аннотация

В статье описывается первичное научное исследование по рубрикам, широко признанных в практике как эффективной инстукции по письменности, так и практике оценивания знаний обучаемых. Это достигается путем понимания того, что говорится в исследовании, а также как результаты могут быть применены в аудитории и что важно для максимальной эффективности. В статье обсуждаются недавние результаты исследований, даётся информация о научно-обоснованных мероприятиях с точки зрения сбора данных, выборки исследования и его инструментов.

Ключевые слова: сбор данных; оценивание в целях обучения; навыки письма; оценка; первичные исследования; выборка; рубрики.

Improving L2 writing through use of rubrics has become a widespread practice in ELT. Understanding research findings and making classroom-based applications of such findings is important for helping teachers use rubrics for effective and efficient writing instruction. Some findings regarding effective rubric use include providing students with clear guidance on their use in peer feedback (Wang, 2014), improving learners' accuracy after receiving both form-focused corrective feedback and use of rubrics (Ene & Kosobucki, 2016), and use of rubrics to help students plan how to approach an assignment (Becker, 2016). This article will firstly provide evidence that rubrics have a wide range of effective uses for different educational, instructional purposes, then describe how rubrics have been successfully implemented into the classroom. Lastly, the article will offer recommendations for L2 writing teachers, including the development of rubrics within the classroom by students themselves, peer editing techniques using rubrics, and writing feedback by teachers based on the rubrics. I will also describe the data collection process, research sampling, and research tools.

The research process begins with inquiry, where you identify a research question, and then ensure it is actually testable. The "testable" aspect refers to operational definitions and constructs, explicit stating what you will measure (how you can "prove it"). My research question studies the effects of: (1) scoring rubrics when assessing students' writing performance, (2) participating in the development of a scoring rubric on writing scores of learners? The following constructs: L2 writing, writing assessment, rubrics, ESP classes are crucial to my research question. My study is a replica study of Anthony Becker "Student-generated scoring rubrics: Examining their formative value ESL students' writing performance", 2016. The study of Becker (2016) defines rubrics as a tool used to score or measure students' performance. Rubrics are valued for their potential to clarify teachers' expectations, identify strengths and weaknesses and eventually direct learners to self-evaluation. He also

states that rubrics can also serve as a formative assessment which enables students understand tasks and improve their writing performance when for example, they are involved in the development of rubrics and use them when peer-editing each other' work.

Other researchers of rubrics such as Li and Lindsey (2015) similarly define rubrics that they can clarify teacher expectations; provide more information about the strengths and weaknesses. However, they discuss the differences of teacher and student interpretation of rubrics. Further, they state that rubrics can help teachers as instructional and assessment tools. Moreover, rubrics can be used in the writing classes to give feedback (direct, indirect and corrective feedback). The case study by Ene and Kosobucki (2016) talk about institutionally mandated rubrics and form-focused corrective feedback. They define rubrics as grading rubrics used in the L2 writing classroom routine.

According to Deborah Crusan (2015) a rubric is a rating scale or scoring guide, defined as a guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring academic papers, projects, or tests, and an instrument that describes a specific level of performance within a scale. A rubric provides feedback to teachers regarding instructional effectiveness and supply benchmarks upon which to measure and document progress, and provides all students with an opportunity to succeed at some level and allow students to show areas of strength. The study by East and Cushing (2016) similarly praise rubrics as efficient and effective means of providing information about writers' performance and proficiency in writing.

I think rubric can be measured as a tool used in the classroom to give feedback, instruct learners, help them develop their writing performance. There are analytic and holistic rubrics. Both of them are in the form of tables that contain assessment criteria with different descriptors describing students' performance on a variety of items such as language accuracy, organization, content, etc.

The majority of research (Becker, A., 2016, Ene, Kosobuscki, 2016, Li, Lindsey, 2015) indicate rubrics have many instructional benefits such as they help learners better understand their teachers' expectations, course objects (Becker, 2016), students improve their accuracy (Ene, Kosobucki, 2016), and facilitate self and peer-assessment in the writing classroom (Li and Lindsey, 2015). Other studies have also confirmed the instructional purpose of rubrics, for instance, in the study By Wang (2014) rubrics had a positive role on students' peer feedback practice. However, another study by Aldulkhayel (2017) indicates that the information in the rubrics was not clear to them. In other words, rubrics mostly represent as a positive instructional tool to promote

learning, but it can cause negative impact on students when they are designed inattentively.

Another theme of the literature review indicates that rubrics have been used for administrative purposes, as well. For example, in the study by Wiseman (2012) rubrics namely holistic and analytic rubrics were used for diagnostic and placement tests. Analytic rubrics were preferred to be used to get more information about students.

Last theme of the literature review identified similar findings in most studies. Most research state that rubrics were not effective to help students understand the information given. According Ene and Kosobucki (2016) form-focused rubrics were not effective since learners were left unsatisfied. Approximate 55 % of students confirmed that rubrics about their writing helped them to see what they are good and students as a group don't have a strong agreement on the clarity of the rubrics (Aldukhayel, 2017). Another research done by Bacha (2002) indicates that there is a discrepancy between students' and teachers' understanding of assessment criteria of a good essay. However, the research by Anthony Becker state that including students in the assessment process resulted in improved writing performance. Further, he claims that the presence of rubrics had a great impact on students' improvement of writing skills. In other words, rubrics can be good when they are well prepared to meet students' needs, course objective and rather simplified to understand. If not, they can cause difficulties to understand.

The above mentioned themes are relevant to my research questions because the main topic of my study is related to rubrics, their use, effectiveness, purposes and their relation to assessment and writing performance.

This replica study is based on the article by Becker (2016) "Student-generated scoring rubrics: Examining their formative value for improving ESL students' writing performance". The aim of this study is to see whether the same results can be achieved when identical methods are applied in Uzbekistan context. The study aimed at finding out which type of students' involvement was effective in improving students' writing performance. With the types of students I mean four classes which will be involved with different tasks during 4-week period. For example, the first type of student involvement is developing a rubric. In this class students (class A) were trained how to develop a rubric. The second type of student involvement is using a rubric to evaluate pretest motivation letters and so on. This class (class B) used the rubric which was developed by class A to evaluate the pre-tests (motivation letters). Class C, however, only saw the rubric of class A to read the information in the rubric and ask questions about it. Class D (control group) did not do anything. The research study is expected to identify which involvement is more effective to improve students' writing.

The study was conducted at one of the state universities in Tashkent (Uzbekistan), where English for specific purposes (Business English) is taught in all 5-year period. This particular university is chosen because the researcher is currently employed at the university and it is convenient to reach this target population because the three groups are his classes. Another reason for choosing this university for the study is that students should be studying Business English, which is not very common with other state universities. The project used a convenience sample of about 50 second-year business English students in state university. A great number of the students are native Uzbek who come from different regions of Uzbekistan, but there are also students who represent other nationalities (Kazakh, Tatar, etc.) who were born and live in Uzbekistan. The native language of most students is Uzbek and Russian. The university lessons primarily focus on business studies which means subjects such as mathematics, logic, algebra are taught and therefore, males largely prevail female students. Almost one fifths of students were female participants. All students who participated in the research study had the intermediate level English. In other words, the level of English of all students is more or less the same. Students have good knowledge of reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of English. Prior to be a student of this university, all students took English language lessons in different settings (school, lyceum, college, or study centers). After being a student of the university, they were taught General English in their first year.

There are four groups and the number of students vary in each group (class A - 11 students, class B - 14 students, Class C - 13 students, class D - 14). All of the participants were aged between 19 and 21 during the data collection process. The data collection process lasted 4 weeks. The first half of the semester was chosen to collect data. The first semester in the university consists of 18 weeks. Students write midterm and final in the first semester. The final exam is not included in the data collection. The midterm test (post-test) was written in the 9th week. The data collection process started in the sixth week. In this week students of all four classes were introduced to a motivation letter. They were taught all about motivation letter (layout, style, originality, the purpose, why and when it is written, etc). The next week (week 7) all groups wrote a pre-test motivation letter. In the 8th week, class A developed a rubric, class B evaluated students' work using the rubric, class C only saw the rubric and class D did not do anything with the rubric. In the week 9, all students wrote a posttest motivation letter.

The following tools were used to collect data: pre-test and post-tests, and satisfaction questionnaire. Satisfaction questionnaire is one of the most commonly used methods for measuring students' opinions about effectiveness of rubrics. The design

of the lesson for class A was based on the steps from Andrade (2000). To understand better how rubrics are created, students of class A were shown some sample model analytic rubrics to examine the components and features of good and poor rubrics. The participants were divided into four classes based on the study by Becker (2016).

Through this analysis, I have noticed that rubric is a crucial tool that should be used appropriately in order to achieve fair assessment of writing skill, support our students expectations, and create a learning environment where diverse students feel being a part of learning. It is really important to understand what assessment really is, which helps to understand the purpose we want to target on. We may want our students learn something, pass an exam, or have fun in the classroom. In developing assessment rubrics we should design our lessons taking different them into consideration, which are key to students' achievement. Through reflections on my own teaching, I came to conclusion that assessment is something that I have a limited knowledge and I need to research more.

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