

Lesson Study: An Approach to Overcome the Challenges of Using Rubrics to Improve Student's Understanding of Success Criteria

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Recent research has shown that rubrics have been widely used as a formative assessment tool with the purpose of improving teaching, learning, and performance. In a formative setting, the use of rubrics can increase student's understanding of the learning goals and success criteria, which can help them, feed forward any given feedback provided by teachers/ peers to improve their learning. When both teachers and students share a common understanding of the success criteria using rubrics, teaching and learning can become more effective. This is because students can self-assess their own learning, and seek help from their teacher/ peers to close their learning gaps and reach a deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. As student's level of motivation and confidence increased, the possibility of them becoming more self-regulated in their learning could also be enhanced. Meanwhile, teachers can assist their students in learning by scaffolding the success criteria and modifying classroom instructions to focus on what teacher intends students to learn instead of what teacher intends to teach ' thus focusing on criteria, not tasks. The paper focuses on how the lesson study approach was utilised to overcome the challenges of using rubrics in a series of Social Studies lessons. A few of these challenges are ' designing a rubric that could empower students to self-assess their learning; addressing teachers' misconceptions and understanding about rubrics; and seeking consensus in view of teacher's preferences in choosing the types of rubrics used in Social Studies lessons. Using the lesson study approach, rubrics were designed and used in three Social Studies lessons. Four teachers were involved in designing and using the rubrics in four Secondary Three Social Studies classes. During the post-lesson observations, the teacher observers made further refinements to the rubrics. These modified rubrics were used and observations were made to ascertain whether the aims of the lessons have been achieved and the students have understood the success criteria. Data collected to test the hypotheses includes teachers and students' reflections and test scores. Despite the initial challenges, both teachers and students found that using rubrics have empowered the students to take charge of their learning as they referred to the success criteria to chart their learning progress to complete their assignments. In addition, the results seem to indicate that students' were able to attain a higher level of achievement when they understood the performance criteria. Another positive effect discovered by the teachers was an improvement in the inter-rater and rater reliability when the teachers' scored the assignment, which has led to a more solid educational evaluation of learning. The teachers also appreciated how using lesson study has eliminated teachers' isolation as they collaborated to help build a strong knowledge base to make meaning of their learning and improve their teaching.

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The Use of Creating Video to Activate Students Self Learning and to Enhance Grammar Performance for ELT Students

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This research tries to analyze how creating video task given to students can activate students' self-learning and enhance students' grammar performance. This idea inspired by the fact that almost all off students have cell phone camera and face book account. They prefer to take picture themselves and uploaded in order to get 'like' from their friends. Students in team consist of three students create video on assigned grammar topic and uploaded into face book every week. The design of this research is using a mix-method of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The data for quantitative is gained from questionnaire, rubric, and grammar test, while the qualitative is from classroom observation. The subject of this study is students of the second semester at English Language Education department of University of Muhammadiyah Gresik who join subject of Intermediate English Grammar. The results show that creating video task had stimulated students in learning new technology, readiness for self direction, collaborative work in learning, being involved in learning activities, selecting the content, determining the objective, and implementing knowledge in real context. The result of weekly grammar test shows the increase of students' grammar performance.

Keywords : Video, Students self-learning, Grammar performance

Developing Teaching for Students with Special Needs

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A study on how to develop the ability to write a message in English as a second/foreign language, in 13-16 year old Swedish students with dyslexia

Swedish teachers often find teaching English to students with dyslexia difficult. Within the English subject, writing is considered being the most difficult. To develop ways of teaching these students, teachers need an enhanced understanding of what might be difficult, as well as what aspects that are important to learn in order to develop the ability to write in English. This includes aspects of the writing ability, and also the students' understanding of the task and the learning situation.

A Learning Study was performed by English teachers on a school for children with dyslexia. The study is based on the assumptions that the preconceptions of a learning situation can either facilitate or impede learning, and will most likely affect the actions and the results of the students' efforts. Hence the students experiencing of writing in English was first explored in interviews, in order to find problems and misconceptions that may impede learning as well as aspects that develop the ability. Results of interviews show that the students see writing as assessment rather than a communicative activity. The teacher is the perceived receiver and the students believe that accuracy in spelling is the teacher's main focus, which causes the students to focus the spelling rather than communicative aspects of writing.

Based on the results of the interviews, a hypothesis was that the students' understanding of writing as assessment springs from the writing instruction they have met, where spelling has been emphasized. Hence spelling is in focus rather than content and the ability that the students have most problems with is what they spend time and effort on. In a Learning Study the research group, explored whether a focus on content above form could change the students' understanding of the writing task and the learning situation, and if this would change their writing. The lessons were carried out with groups of 5-8 students, all diagnosed with dyslexia. The lessons, including pair work, were recorded, to enable a close analysis of the students' understanding of the tasks and the situation, which then lead to further development of the lesson designs. The preliminary results of the learning study implicate that the students' focus can be changed from spelling towards aspects of the of the content, by comparing texts through different patterns of variation.

In the Learning Study, aspects of writing were exemplified or explicitmade, to create knowledge about impediments teachers need to be aware of, as well as what aspects teachers need to make discernable to the students to enhance the writing ability. The study aims at producing knowledge about writing in relation to students with special needs, in order to improve teachers' possibilities to cater for individual differences.