

The Development of Written Production with Intensive Training

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of intensive student assessment in English writing class. The study was conducted to find the useful adoption of student assessment in class. 38 students were divided into two groups which are composed of a self-assessment group and a peer assessment group. One group assessed their written production by themselves, following the same assessment rubric as teachers'. The other group also assessed their peers' written production, using the same assessment sheet. This project was intensively conducted five times during one week. Results of the analysis revealed that the peer assessment group was evaluated higher by teachers than the self-assessment group at the end of the session. However, the fluency and complexity of written production did not present any differences between the two groups.

Keywords

Self-assessment Peer assessment Intensive training

Introduction

The efficacy of student assessment has been discussed in terms of long-term investigation. However, it is also a fact that a long-term survey is sometimes influenced by other educational environment and conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct an intensive survey to find the effect of student assessment more accurately.

1 Previous studies

Student assessment has been indicated its reliability. According to previous studies, high agreement between teacher and peer assessment is presented (Rolfe, 1990; Hughes & Large,

1993; Patri, 2002), but learners need to be trained to evaluate peers (Cheng, et al., 2005, p.110). Cheng suggests that students had a less positive attitude towards evaluating their peers' language proficiency similar to that of teachers' assessment criteria (2005). On the other hand, self-assessment is also correlated with teacher assessment, depending on learner's age and an assessment category (Oi, Y., 2013; Peirce, Swain & Hart, 1993).

2 Research questions

It is supposed that student assessment is effective to activate students' awareness on language use and organization of written production, but each feature of self-assessment and peer assessment have not been illuminated. Therefore, the following two research questions are proposed:

1. To what extent do student assessment develop writing proficiency in terms of teacher assessment?
2. To what extent do student awareness toward self and peer assessment change after the research?

3 Data collection

3.1 Procedure

38 second year high school students in Japan and two native English teachers participated in the study. The students were divided into two groups based on the English Proficiency Test. Background questionnaires (5-point Likert Scale) were distributed to ask ideas about student assessment pre- and post- research. In a regular English class, students were asked to write an English compositions without using a dictionary for 30 minutes, and then asked to evaluate their written production, following an assessment rubric. It is composed of five components and 5-point Likert Scale. The sum

becomes 20 points. Both students and teachers used the same rubric and practiced how to use the rubric using their English composition just before the research. Self-assessment group was asked to evaluate their compositions by themselves. On the other hand, the other group was asked to evaluate classmate's English compositions in pairs. All of the topics were related to the lessons of textbook or school events. Writing an English composition and assessing by students were conducted five times in one week. The inter-rater reliability between two teachers was calculated to see the reliability of assessment ($r = .843$ $**p < .01$).

3.2 Tools for measurement

The following measurements were used to analyze the development of writing English proficiency in terms of fluency, complexity, organization, and accuracy. The number of words and sentences were analyzed to see the fluency. The number of t-units and the ratio of t-units were also calculated to see the complexity. Organization and accuracy were analyzed in terms of the assessment of two teachers.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 The development of writing proficiency

Firstly, the development of writing proficiency of all of the students are presented. The results of t-test (Table 1) show that the number of words, t-units, and the ratio of t-unit/sentence developed significantly between the first and final written production. On the other hand, teacher assessment and the number of sentences did not present any change.

Table 1: The Results of t-test for the development of all of the students

	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>p</i>
Score of teacher assessment	38	1.73	1.59	.285
NO of words	38	9.03	22.30	.27*
NO of sentences	38	.697	3.13	.211
NO of t-units	38	1.87	.639	.006*
Ratio of t-units	38	.188	.288	.001*

Note: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

The differences of scores were analyzed to test the effect of student assessment mode and English writing proficiency, between the first writing and final writing, using a 2x2 independent ANOVA. The first factor was teacher assessment scores, the second factor was the number of words, the third factor was the

number of sentences, the fourth factor was the number of t-units, and the fifth factor was the ratio of t-units. The ANOVA showed no significant main effect of the number of, words, sentences, t-units, and the ratio of t-units, and a significant main effect of teacher assessment score, $F(2, 72) = 5.514$, $p < .05$.

4.2 The change of student awareness

Self-assessment group and peer assessment group were asked about the effect of student assessment before and after the research. The ratio of the replies of effectiveness about self-assessment was about 30 % in both pre- and post-questionnaires. On the other hand, the ratio of "effective a little" and "strongly effective" of the peer assessment group decreased. Therefore, self-assessment group did not change their awareness about self-assessment after the research. Whereas, peer assessment group did not statistically present positive attitudes toward peer assessment.

5 Conclusion

Both self and peer assessment groups did not show distinct development of fluency and complexity except teacher assessment scores in a short-term. Peer assessment group presented the development of teacher assessment scores, whereas self-assessment group did not show the development. However, the results of t-test of all the participants presented the increase of the number of words, t-units, and the ratio of t-units, so both student assessment types had some effect on the fluency and complexity of all of the participants' writing. As a further study, it is needed to analyze the effect of student assessment from the perspective of student English proficiency

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