



Secondary School Teachers' Ability to Understand Scoring Rubric and Practices

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to analyze the teachers' understanding of rubric and its applications. The researchers gave ten written compositions to 10th class students of Government High Schools. Ten secondary school teachers were purposively selected from various government schools of District Dir (L) and they were requested to mark the students' test. The selected examiners were those who frequently check the secondary board papers. The researcher interviewed the examiners personally. The school teachers are responsible for the assessment of their students and have long seen the value of assessment rubrics. But the rubrics have been largely ignored in higher secondary schools. Moreover, all the secondary school teachers had criteria in their mind to evaluate something. On the basis of analysis of interview recommendations were made.

KEYWORDS: Rubrics, assessment, composition

INTRODUCTION

There is a great competition among the individuals for the top position which definitely depends upon the individual performance. To check the performance of the individuals there should be some guidelines. A rubric is a guideline for rating student's performance. The guidelines specify what a performance is like at various levels (superior, excellent, good and poor). A rubric simply lists a set of criteria which is an easily applicable form of authentic assessment. Rubric gives clear guidelines to reviewer on how to evaluate or "grade". According to Marcus (1995)[1] Rubrics can improve student performance, as well as monitor it, by making teachers' expectations clear and by showing students how to meet these expectations. The result is often marked improvements in the quality of student work and in learning. Thus, the most common argument for using rubrics is they help define "quality."

Rubrics are scoring guidelines which spell out scoring criteria. According to Edutopia (2013)[2] Rubrics are multidimensional sets of scoring guidelines that can be used to provide consistency in evaluating student work. They spell out scoring criteria so that multiple teachers, using the same rubric for a student's essay, for example, would arrive at the same score or grade.

Apart from using to grade students' work rubrics can serve another role as well. Rubrics can teach as well as evaluate. Rubrics have the potential to help students develop understanding and skill, as well as make dependable judgments about the quality of their own work. Therefore, students must be able to know rubrics in many of the same ways as the teachers use them to set standards for quality performance and to guide ongoing feedback about progress towards those students. According to Bresciani et al. (2004)[3] When used as teaching tools, rubrics not only make the instructor's standards and resulting grading explicit, but they can give students a clear sense of what the expectations are for a high level of performance on a given assignment, and how they can be met. This use of rubrics can be most important when the students are novices with respect to a particular task or type of expression.

Rubrics are becoming increasingly popular with educators moving toward more authentic, performance-based assessments. Teacher has the responsibility of grading of the students' work/performance. Therefore, rubrics have become popular with teachers as a means of communicating expectation for an assessment, providing focused feedback on works in progress and grading final products. Therefore, the researcher tried his best to know how and what criteria the secondary school teachers have adopted for grading their students.

Objectives

Major objective was;

- To analyze the applications of rubrics in secondary schools

Other objectives of the study were;

- To know about the knowledge of teachers about rubrics

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- To ascertain the training required for marking of papers
- To know about the use of rubrics in oral presentation

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Goodrich (2000)[4] a rubric is usually a one- or two-page document that lists the criteria for a specific assignment and describes varying levels of quality, from excellent to poor. "Instructional rubrics" are rubrics that have been explicitly designed to support as well as to evaluate student learning.

Goodrich (2001)[5] is of the opinion that Instructional rubrics have several features that support learning: he has laid down the following criteria for rubrics;

- they are written in language that students can understand;
- they define and describe quality work;
- they refer to common weaknesses in students' work and indicate how such weaknesses can be avoided, and;
- they can be used by students to assess their works-in-progress and thereby guide revision and improvement

Although the format of an instructional rubric can vary, most rubrics have two features in common:

1. A list of criteria, or what counts in the evaluations of a project or assignment, and
2. Gradations of quality, or descriptions of strong, middling and problematic work.

Bresciani *et al*(2004) are of the opinion that when used as teaching tools, rubrics not only make the instructor's standards and resulting grading explicit, but they can give students a clear sense of what the expectations are for a high level of performance on a given assignment, and how they can be met. This use of rubrics can be most important when the students are novices with respect to a particular task or type of expression.

A study was conducted by J. Serrano Angulo and M. Cebrián de la Serna(2011)[6] on the study of the impact on student learning using the Rubric tool and peer Assessment. The study aimed to tackle the impact of self and peer assessment on learning at university, and the internalization of competences when students use Rubrics to assess class tasks and projects. The researcher concluded that students internalized quality criteria, and gradually gained more practice with the Rubric methodology. During the three years the Rubric and the teaching methodologies also improved, as did the instruments required for their analysis. Kenneth Wolf and Ellen Stevens (2007)[7] have conducted a study on The Role of Rubrics in Advancing and Assessing Student Learning. According to them "A rubric is a multi-purpose scoring guide for assessing student products and performances. This tool works in a number of different ways to advance student learning, and has great potential in particular for non-traditional, first generation, and minority students. The researchers further said that rubrics improve teaching, contribute to sound assessment, and are an important source of information for program improvement. David L. Wood (2007)[8] conducted a study on Assessment for Learning; conducting students to their learning. , the author's school did not produce satisfactory scores on the state's high-stakes testing scheme. The project used an action research model to study how elementary classroom teachers used assessment for learning strategies to help their students more directly connect to curriculum goals and objectives. Furthermore, the author examined his own practice in facilitating the learning of others. Four elementary teachers agreed to participate together in the study. Data was collected from the transcribed audio recordings of the group's meetings, observation notes, journal reflections and final interviews.

Another study was conducted by Goodrich Andrade, H. (2001) on the effects of instructional rubrics on learning to write. This study examined the impact of instructional rubrics on eighth grade students' writing and on their knowledge of the qualities of effective writing. The researcher had worked on two groups i.e. the treatment and controlled group. The treatment group was given instructional rubrics that articulated the criteria and gradations of quality for three assigned essays. Students in the control group wrote the same three essays but did not receive the rubric. Students in the treatment group received, on average, higher scores on one of the three essays.

According to Edutopia(2013), Rubrics also help teachers authentically monitor a student's learning process, develop and revise a lesson plan. They provide a way for a student and a teacher to measure the quality of body of work. When a student's assessment of his or her work and a teacher's assessment don't agree, they can schedule a conference to let the student explain his or her understanding of the content and justify the method of presentation.

Types of Rubrics

There are two basic types of rubrics i.e. Holistic and Analytic Rubrics.

Holistic Rubric for Assessing Student Essay

Rating	Detail Description of performance at each level
Inadequate	The essay has at least one serious weakness. It may be confused, underdeveloped, or rambling. Problem with the use of language seriously interfere with readers ability to understand what is being communicated.
Developing competency	The essay may be somewhat unfocused, underdeveloped, or rambling, but it does have some coherence. . Problems with the use of language occasionally interfere with the reader's ability to understand what is being communicated
acceptable	The essay is generally focused and contains some development of ideas, but the discussion may be simplistic or repetitive. The language lacks syntactic complexity and may contain occasional grammatical errors, but the reader is able to understand what is being communicated.
sophisticated	The essay is focused and clearly organized, and it shows depth of development. The language is precise and shows syntactic variety, and ideas are clearly communicated to the reader

*Source: Allen (2004),[9] p. 139.

Analytic Rubrics

For assessing multiple outcomes simultaneously analytic rubrics are used. This can also be used for multidimensional outcomes and each dimension needs to be rated separately, resulting in multiple judgments about an object or performance.

Research Design

A qualitative research methodology was used for this research. This study is descriptive study because it investigates and describes the condition of rubrics used by secondary school teachers. Holistic type of rubrics has been used by the researcher

PARTICIPANTS

This was purposeful sampling method. In this research homogeneous sampling method was used. Ten secondary school teachers were purposively selected from various government schools of District Dir (L) for marking the test and then they were interviewed. All the interviewed teachers were male.

PROCEDURE / collecting data

The researcher wrote many topics of English on the black board. These topics are included in class 10 syllabus. The following topics were selected with the help of English teacher.

- Education
- My best teacher
- Favorite poet
- My hobby
- The mosquito
- The Holy Quran
- Terrorism in Pakistan
- My village
- Private school are better than state school
- Allama Iqbal

Ten students were randomly selected from grade ten. They were asked to write composition on one topic in one period of 40 minutes. The students completed the compositions in prescribed time. The English teacher collected the written materials and handed over to the researcher. The researcher personally visited many teachers and were requested to mark the set of compositions, afterward they were interviewed. For the oral presentation the researcher attended the annual sports week in District Dir (lower) and collected data in the form of interview from various teachers who were appointed as judges.

Marks of the composition according the rubric's rules

Education= 4 My best teacher =3 Favorite poet 3 My hobby= 4
 The mosquito=8 The Holy Quran=6 Terrorism in Pakistan =2 My village= 4
 Private school are better than state school =01 Allama Iqbal =6

Data analysis

The researcher has found some amazing and interesting answers. Each composition has ten marks. The detail of marking is given in table No, 1. The teachers are abbreviated as, A,B,C,D, E, F,G,H,I,J.

Table.1

Compositions	Teachers→	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Education		8	6	7	7	8	6	6	4	6	7
My best teacher		6	5	5	4	5	7	6	3	4	3
Favorite poet		6	6	8	5	7	5	5	7	5	5
My Hobby		8	6	5	5	5	8	6	2	4	6
The Mosquito		6	6	8	6	7	8	8	4	2	4
The Holy Quran		5	5	7	6	9	7	7	4	4	3
Terrorism in Pakistan		7	7	6	6	7	6	7	5	4	5
My Village		5	4	5	7	4	8	6	3	6	7
Private Schools are better than State Schools		8	6	7	8	9	7	8	6	6	4
Allama Iqbal		9	5	6	8	10	8	8	7	6	7

Table 1 Statistics						
		comp1	comp2	comp3	comp4	comp5
N	Valid	80	80	80	80	80
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		6.50	4.80	5.90	5.50	5.90
Median		6.50	5.00	5.50	5.50	6.00

Composition 1					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	6	32	40.0	40.0	50.0
	7	24	30.0	30.0	80.0
	8	16	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Composition2					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	16	20.0	20.0	20.0
	4	16	20.0	20.0	40.0
	5	24	30.0	30.0	70.0
	6	16	20.0	20.0	90.0
	7	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Composition 3					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	40	50.0	50.0	50.0
	6	16	20.0	20.0	70.0
	7	16	20.0	20.0	90.0
	8	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Mode 6 5 5 5^a 6^a
 a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Composition 4					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	4	8	10.0	10.0	20.0
	5	24	30.0	30.0	50.0
	6	24	30.0	30.0	80.0
	8	16	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Composition 5					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	4	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
	6	24	30.0	30.0	60.0
	7	8	10.0	10.0	70.0
	8	24	30.0	30.0	100.0
Total		80	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 Statistics						
		comp6	comp7	comp8	comp9	comp10
N	Valid	80	80	80	80	80
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		5.70	6.00	5.50	6.90	7.40
Median		5.50	6.00	5.50	7.00	7.50
Mode		7	7	4 ^a	6 ^a	8

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

Composition 6					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	4	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
	5	16	20.0	20.0	50.0
	6	8	10.0	10.0	60.0
	7	24	30.0	30.0	90.0
	9	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Composition 7					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	5	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
	6	24	30.0	30.0	60.0
	7	32	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

comp8					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	3	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	4	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
	5	16	20.0	20.0	50.0
	6	16	20.0	20.0	70.0
	7	16	20.0	20.0	90.0
	8	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

Composition 9					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	6	24	30.0	30.0	40.0
	7	16	20.0	20.0	60.0
	8	24	30.0	30.0	90.0
	9	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

comp10					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	5	8	10.0	10.0	10.0
	6	16	20.0	20.0	30.0
	7	16	20.0	20.0	50.0
	8	24	30.0	30.0	80.0
	9	8	10.0	10.0	90.0
	10	8	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The main questions of the interview were.

- (1) In how much time you marked the items
- (2) Have you got proper training for marking of papers
- (3) What was your criteria for marking the compositions
- (4) Do you know rubrics?
- (5) If passing marks are 33/100 and a candidate obtained 25/100, will you give him 33/100, if yes, why?
- (6) Do you think that proper training is necessary for marking of papers, if, yes why?
- (7) If you are appointed as a head for centralize marking in SSC paper marking, what would you like to advise to your team members?
- (8) Do you know how to grade the students / candidates

(9) In oral presentation what things are in mind to grade the students / candidates

During interview some side question were also asked.

(a) Do you think that marking is a difficult job, if, yes why?

(b) During centralize marking your own son paper comes in your hand for marking and he gets 23/100 while passing marks are 33/100 what would you do?

Thanks for cooperation.

Response of teachers

Questions Q No, 1 and responses of the teachers

Different teachers have different time duration to mark the same set of composition papers. Fifteen minutes and 30 minutes were the minimum and maximum duration respectively taken by the secondary school teachers. However, it was astonished that one teacher told that he had marked the ten composition in seven minutes. He believed that a single glance was enough to check the paper.

Questions Q No, 2

None of the teachers has got proper training for marking of papers.

Questions Q No, 3

Every teacher had his own criteria for marking the paper. According to some teachers vocabulary was important while others believed that spelling and correct sentences were important. This was interesting to note that some teachers were of the opinion that the lengthiness was major factor. Some teachers were impressed by the calligraphy of the students. None of them had marked the thoroughly.

For the oral presentation the researcher attended the annual sports week in District Dir (lower) and collected data in the form of interview from various teachers who were appointed as judges. The competitions among the students were had under the following topics.

- National anthem competition
- National poem
- Debate competition
- Recitation from the Holy Quran competition

For gradation of the students no proper criteria was formulated. The judges graded the students according to their own idea and choice. It was interesting to note that their observation was not bad. However, the judges had made some mistakes. They did not know how many levels of performance were appropriate for the assessment to grade them. By grade the researcher means first, second, third position and so on. The researcher asked many questions from the concerned teachers about rubrics. No one knew about rubrics.

Findings/ conclusion

The finding of the tables 1 and 2, show that the mean, median and mode of the marks do not justify the marks awarded according to the rules of rubrics. The school teachers are responsible for the assessment of their students and have long seen the value of assessment rubrics. But the rubrics have been largely ignored in higher secondary schools.

All the secondary school teachers had criteria in their mind to evaluate something. They use them unconsciously. But don't know the rubrics. Rubrics are very important for student's performance. This can help them deepen and internalize their understanding of the criteria for a quality performance in that particular area.

Recommendations

- The Government should arrange proper training for the secondary school teachers as well as primary teachers as soon as possible to train them in Rubrics in order to remove this deficiency.
- All Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Examinations should be directed to follow the the rubrics.
- Those examiners should be appointed for paper marking whose know and follow the rubrics
- Rubrics should be included as a subject in teacher's professional examinations.
- Rubrics should be taught to students which help them to interpret their own level of performance, learn what must be done to improve performance and achieve higher standards of performance.

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