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Using the Video to Promote Peer and Self-Assessment in the English Class

Utilizando el video para promover la evaluación de pares y la autoevaluación en la clase de inglés

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RESUMEN: El propósito de este artículo es presentar los resultados de implementar el uso del video para promover la evaluación de pares y la autoevaluación en los dos primeros cursos orales de inglés en el Bachillerato en la Enseñanza del Inglés del Recinto de Paraíso de la Universidad de Costa Rica. Durante 2017 y 2018 el estudiantado grabó tres videos en cada curso en los que se referían a alguno de los temas sugeridos por la instructora. La temática estaba relacionada con los contenidos del curso. En clase, en grupo, utilizaron una guía preparada por la docente para revisar los videos de sus pares. Se enfocaron en el desempeño, la gramática y la pronunciación del presentador, así como en el contenido de la grabación. Durante la evaluación de pares, las y los estudiantes recibieron retroalimentación oral y escrita de parte de sus iguales. En la etapa de la autoevaluación, contestaron un cuestionario sobre el número de veces que grabaron su video antes de entregarlo a la docente, así como su percepción sobre su propio desempeño y sobre lo que consideraban que debían mejorar. Se les solicito que indicaran el número de veces que grabaron su video para saber si se habían autoevaluado o no. El cuarto video en cada curso solicitó al estudiantado valorar la evolución de su manejo del idioma durante el primer semestre y a lo largo del año, respectivamente. Los resultados muestran la efectividad de la incorporación del video como estrategia para promover la evaluación de pares y de autoevaluación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: enseñanza del inglés, autoevaluación, video, comunicación oral, desempeño.

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this article is to present the results of using the video to promote peer and self – assessment in the first two oral English courses at University of Costa Rica, Paraiso Campus, Bachelor in English Teaching. In 2017 and 2018 students recorded three videos for each course in which they talked about some of the topics that were suggested by the instructor and were closely related to the course contents. In class, as group work, they used a guideline prepared by the instructor to review their peers' videos. They focused on the presenter's delivery, grammar, and pronunciation as well as in the content of the recording. During the peer evaluation activity, learners received written as well as oral responses from their partners. In the self – evaluation stage of the activity, they answered a questionnaire in which they indicated the number of times they recorded their videos before handing them to the instructor as well as their perception of their own performance as well as what they considered they needed to improve about it. The idea behind asking them to write the number of times they had to record the video was to know if they had self – evaluated. The fourth video in each course asked pupils to value how their language competence had evolved, during the first semester and during the whole year respectively. Results show that incorporating the video in the language class was an effective strategy to promote peer and self-assessment.

KEYWORDS: language teaching; language learning; performance; evaluation; recording; feedback

Introduction

During their practice, instructors must appeal to different strategies to determine if their students are learning. As part of all the classroom activities, assessment is fundamental to promote learning and finally achievement. Brown & Glasner (2003; in Li & Chen, 2016) explain that evaluation can be either formative or summative. It is summative when it is carried out after the teaching has taken place and the results are used to grade students at the end of a unit or program; therefore, it is largely numerical. On the other hand, assessment is formative if results are used for feedback at some point in the process of learning. Formative assessment involves constructive feedback through which students improve their learning skills. This beneficial response may come from the instructor, from peers, and from the same learners. Feedback and formative assessment have vast consequences on teaching and learning. Some researchers as Darling-Hammond (2008, in Owen 2016) and Gallen, & McCloughry (2007, in Li & Chen 2016) explain that while providing and receiving feedback to their peers, learners stretch beyond a simple demonstration of their capabilities and improve upon their own work, and teachers benefit from crafting adequate formative assessment measures and becoming more reflective and intentional about their own practices. Therefore, formative assessment not only benefits learners while performing the tasks but also instructors when they are preparing the guidelines for the activities and evaluating their effectiveness.

Two relevant components of formative evaluation are peer and self-assessment which enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Both help students develop their reflective and critical thinking skills as well as their self – confidence (Logan 2009 in Ndoye 2017). On one side, peer evaluation has been defined as the process or group of actions through which learners evaluate others' work (Fautley and Savage, 2008 in Li & Chen, 2016; Reinholz, 2015 in Ndoye 2017). On the other hand, self – assessment is the process in which the individuals consider their own capacity. According to research, it helps raise academic performance if it is a directed process in which students assess their performance against pre- determined criteria that involves learners in goal setting and self- regulations and self- reflection (Bourke & Mentis

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

229

2011, in Ndoye (2017). Consequently, instructors must prepare these activities carefully to make sure students are going to benefit from them. Besides, for Jones (2005), self-assessments must be promoted in the educational environment to help learners recognize what aspects of their own work need to improve. After intensive review of literature on the positive effects self- assessment has in the students' learning process, Brown & Harris (2014) concluded that even though more research should be done on the topic, evidence demonstrates its effectiveness. Learners set targets, evaluate progress relative to target criteria, and improve the quality of their learning outcomes.

This article describes a teaching experience in which the author used the video to promote peer and self-evaluation in two English courses in the Paraiso Campus, University of Costa Rica. The activity took place in the first two courses of the English teaching mayor for two years. Students' answers demonstrated that the implementation of the video did help them to evaluate other´s performance as well as theirs.

Review of Literature

Assessment

To promote learning, instructors need to be aware not only of what students are supposed to learn, but also of what they are really learning. To achieve this, during their practice, they have to develop different strategies of assessment. The American Federation of Teachers, National Council on Measurement in Education, & National Education Association (1990, in Qu & Zhang, 2013), identifies assessment as a process that helps obtain information for making decisions about "students; curricula, programs, and – schools and educational policy". For Anthony and Susan, (2005, in Qu & Zhang, 2013), those decisions linked to effectiveness are summative and the ones associated to ways to improve them are formative. Teachers are constantly assessing learners´ performance through summative and formative strategies to decide if they have acquired the necessary skills to pass the course and to establish what steps they can take to promote progress in the same course. In the educational context, all types of evaluation are re-

levant if they allow teachers to know the effect of their practice on students´ learning. For Janeth (2002, in Qu & Zhang, 2013) assessment provides guidelines for instructors, so they are able to make decisions on what aspects of their practice to change or continue in accordance to the learning objectives. It is also helpful to identify those individual pupils who may have special problems and make the proper adjustments.

Assessment to promote reflective skills

The purpose behind the evaluation activity determines how the instructor is going to implement it in the teaching practice. Jones (2005) differentiates assessment of learning from assessment for learning. The first one is closely related to summative evaluation; it can inhibit the possibility of providing feedback that would affect learners' decisions on their performance with the purpose of improving their work. On the other hand, assessment for learning, like formative evaluation, includes not only telling students about their progress but also to empower them to do what is necessary to improve their performance. There are different steps teachers must take to promote effective assessment as well as reflective skills. One of them is the development of self-assessment, so students can identify those aspects of their work they need to improve; another one is the possibility of providing peer assessment opportunities, so they will be more likely to be more objective when evaluating their own work (Jones, 2005). Research has shown the importance of involving students in their own learning through self and peer evaluation, and they should be implemented as formative types of assessment (Ndoye, 2017). Harrison et al (2015, in Li & Chen, 2016) consider that self and peer assessment is a sustainable lifelong learning methodology. "Introducing peer and self-assessment approaches into English teaching may be beneficial to strengthening the relationship between teacher feedback and student learning, encouraging student to change the way of student´s learning" (Li & Chen, 2016, p.781). In the same line, Sober (2009), identified such benefits of peer and self – evaluation as the opportunity for students to learn from each other and share their skills and strengths and the active role learners play in their education.

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

231

The video in the language classroom

The use of videos in the second language class is a well – known practice; instructors can innovate using it in their practice to promote peer and self-evaluations. Audio visual material enhances the learning experience because it attracts learners´ attention and increases their motivation. The digital revolution and the availability of mobile devices have made it possible for videos to become an integral part in students´ life. Therefore, it is not strange to bring them to the language classroom (Mhamdi, 2017). Videos allow students to pay attention to the context of the discourse and to the speaker´s body language and other visual aids to comprehension. For instance, "one interesting use of the video is to document and assess students' productive performance of a second language. Video naturally lends itself to the assessment of presentations and public speaking, but it can also be applied to pairwork and group discussions tasks" (Shrosbree, 2008, pp 82-83).

There are different types of videos in the language teaching environment such as assessment, teacher – made, and student – made films; furthermore, the instructor may use the videos to introduce information to the students. The benefits of using videos in the language class, depends on the way this tool is implemented in the actual practice. For Mhamdi (2017) there are three different possibilities to use the video for assessment purposes. Students may work in pairs and record themselves; they may individually present about a specific topic; furthermore, they may record to practice for an oral test. All of them are recorded in the classroom and the instructor is responsible of the activity. Furthermore, about the student–made videos, the author recommends their use in group projects that may require a large amount of time for the filming and editing work. The instructor may also design an activity that allows students to record the videos in a context different from the classroom individually or in pairs for further evaluation. "Perhaps the most valuable pedagogical application of video is 'video pairwork assessment', which allows students to be assessed through the familiar communicative activity of pair work with a classmate, and also permits self – evaluation" (Shrosbree, 2008, pp 83). It is expected that while working together in the recording activity, learners will be implementing peer and self – evaluation strategies.

This article describes a teaching experience that incorporated

232

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

the video to promote peer and self – evaluation in the second language class; participants' responses indicate that the use of the video was helpful for these two purposes, so instructors should take advantage of this technology and implement it in their practice.

Methodology

The study that originated this article is descriptive and non - experimental because it describes a teaching experience and the participants' perception on its effectiveness (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014). The activity incorporated the use of the video in the English language class to promote students' ability to peer and self – evaluate.

Context

Currently, the University of Costa Rica has two different bachelor programs in English Teaching. One is offered in its main campus and is under the responsibility of the School of Teaching and the School of Modern Languages. The other is administered by the Western Branch and is taught in some regional campuses as the Atlantic Branch which has three campuses: Turrialba, Guápiles, and Paraíso. The Bachelor in English Teaching has been offered in Paraíso, Cartago, since 1998 (Barquero & Ureña, 2015). The curriculum includes six oral courses and their corresponding laboratory. For the oral communication courses placed in the freshmen year, students meet for six hours a week. In these courses, students must participate in such different activities as individual and group oral presentations as well as pair conversations. The evaluation activities include two oral exams which are evaluated by two university instructors. The teaching experience that included the video to promote peer and self-evaluation was implemented during 2017 and 2018 in the two oral communication courses that belong to the first year of the curriculum: IO 5400 Oral Communication I and IO 5410 Oral Communication II.

Participants

Recording a video was included as a class activity in the two courses during 2017 and 2018; therefore, all enrolled students had

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

233

to comply with the task. The number of participants in each course varied because some learners had the possibility to enroll in a different campus for the second course, while some others could not enroll because they had failed the previous course. Besides, there were some other students that came from another campus and enrolled in the second course. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the instructor analyzed the answers provided by those students who participated in both courses during the two years of study; 21 students completed the tasks in 2017 and 16 in 2018. In class, during the oral explanation of the activity, the instructor made sure all students knew that she was carrying out a study on the implementation of the video as a teaching experience to promote peer and self-evaluation.

The Videos

During 2017 and 2018, the teaching activities organized for the Oral Communication I and II courses, included the recording of four videos of two minutes each. Since the first day of class, the instructor explained that to the learners. She also explained that the videos were going to be watched by their peers and that they would get oral and written feedback from them. To motivate students' participation and to comply with University of Costa Rica's Evaluation Regulation, the instructor gave a value of 2,5% to each video and of 5 % to the content of each oral presentation recorded in the same piece. Furthermore, by doing so, the instructor recognized students' effort during the activity.

The topics of the first three videos in each course were closely related to the ones discussed in class. Once the recording was ready, they could either send their videos through email to the professor or bring them to class in an USB for her to organize the groups that will carry out the peer-evaluation activity.

Moreover, for the last video, students had to self – assess their performance and refer to their improvement in the course. They also had the chance to refer to those class activities they considered helped them the most, as well as the usefulness of using the video for their own language learning. This last video was only watched by the instructor.

234

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

The Peer-evaluation activity

For the peer evaluation activity, the instructor divided the class into groups. Each group had access to the videos produced by each of its members. Students followed these steps: (a) all the group members watched the video of one of the students; (b) immediately after that, the student that had recorded the video left the room while the others analyzed his / her performance according to a guideline prepared by the instructor for this purpose. This instrument will be fully explained in the in a separate paragraph. (c) once they were ready, they called their partner and orally gave him / her their comments and gave the instrument to the student. The above steps were repeated until all the members had gotten their feedback. The instructor´s role at this stage was to make sure all of them were carrying out the tasks accordingly. This was the process followed for the first three videos that were graded as short tests.

The worksheet used to evaluate their peers asked students to write what they liked the most about their partners´ delivery, content, and accuracy. They also had to refer to what they needed to improve about the same aspects. Learners also had to describe what they learned from the presentation and answer the following questions:

> What did you learn about this presentation?
> What suggestions do you have for this speaker for the next presentation?

This instrument was not collected by the instructor because she was going to grade students' performance in the video and wanted to avoid students to feel she would be biased by those comments.

The Self–evaluation activity

Self- assessment was promoted in two stages of the activity. The first one was the recording of the video itself. Students had the possibility of choosing the topic from at least three options presented. It was expected that before sending the piece to the instructor, learners had reviewed their performance. The second phase of self-evaluation was in class, immediately after the peer evaluation task. Learners answered a questionnaire containing the following five open-ended questions:

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

235

> What things did you like the most about the video?
> How many times did you record the video?
> How would you evaluate your performance?
> What things would you improve about your performance?
> Did you like the activity? Explain

In total, each learner answered six questionnaires, three per course. Their answers were collected by the instructor. The corresponding analysis of this information is the core of this article. The instructor used open – ended questions because according to Cresswell (2009), they are used in qualitative research and are helpful to deepen in the reasons of a behavior.

Self-assessment was also promoted through the recording of the fourth video in each course; for Oral Communication I, they recorded themselves talking about their experience using videos in the course, the peer and self – evaluation activities, as well as their perception on the usefulness of the videos for their language learning. For the last video in Oral Communication II, students had to watch the first video they had recorded for the Oral Communication I. They recorded themselves referring to how their delivery, content, and accuracy had improved along the two terms, and referred to how the videos helped them in their learning process. These two videos were crucial for the purpose of developing students' self- assessment skills.

The instructor´s role

During the whole process, the instructor had different roles. She oversaw explaining the different steps of the activity. She elaborated the instructions for each video and collected the recording before the class in which peer evaluation was going to be implemented. She also assigned the students to each group and the corresponding videos. Once in class, she distributed the peer – evaluation questionnaire, and made sure that students were carrying out activity accordingly. Finally, she distributed the self – evaluation questionnaires and collected them for further analysis. She also analyzed the answers provided in the fourth video in each course.

236

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

Analysis of the Information

The information that is shared through this article is the result of the analysis of student´s answers in the questionnaires that referred to the first three videos, as well as the provided in the fourth video in each course. Each questionnaire used open – ended questions. The units of analysis of this teaching experience were:

(a) the number of times students recorded the video before handing it in to the instructor, and

(b) students' evaluation of their performance and their considerations regarding what they needed to improve

To analyze the information, the instructor coded the information in the questionnaires and the videos through words and phrases that specifically referred to those units of analysis. Then, she counted the number of times these expressions were present in each questionnaire and video to be able to visualize the importance given to each by the participants. To illustrate the contestants 'opinion, this article also includes some sentences and phrases used to explain their answers.

Results

Peer evaluation was promoted directly by the instructor through the implementation of the specific class activity in which students worked in groups and provided oral and written feedback about each other´s video. From the instructor's perspective, self – evaluation took place when students were recording the video because they had the possibility of repeating the task until they felt satisfied with the results. The second moment in which learners self-evaluated was immediately after the peer – evaluation since they answered the questionnaire.

The information provided in this text results from the analysis of the answers provided to those questionnaires by the students that were enrolled in both: Oral Communication I and Oral Communication II in the English Teaching major at Paraiso Campus, University of Costa Rica during 2017 and 2018. Their fourth video in each course was also taken into consideration for this purpose.

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

237

Number of Times to Record the Video

One of the open questions of the self- assessment questionnaire was: *How many times did you record the video?* Through this question the instructor wanted to know if students had self – evaluated. Since their performance was going to be evaluated by the instructor as a short test, she expected that they reviewed the video before handing it for evaluation. In total, there were 111 answers. They were classified in groups according to the number indicated in each questionnaire. Table 1 presents the number of times students recorded the video before giving it to the instructor.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ANSWERS RECEIVED ACCORDING TO TIMES
PARTICIPANTS RECORDED THE VIDEO

Number of times	Answers
One	10
Two	13
Three to five	52
Five to ten	22
More than ten	9
Does not indicate	5
Total	**111**

Source: Answers provided by participants in the questionnaires

While 5 answers did not indicate the number of times participants recorded the video before handing it to the instructor, 10 established that they did so only once. Most answers indicate that students reviewed their performance before showing the videos to the class. Therefore, the implementation of the video achieved the objective of promoting students' self – evaluation. These results substantiate what Shrosbree (2008) stated about the videos and one of the pedagogical uses of this resource which is the promotion of self – evaluation. Students have the possibility to pay attention to their language, their gestures, and the content of their presentation before handing it to the other members of their class; if they consider that they need to improve one of these aspects, they can repeat the task until they feel satisfied.

Self- Evaluation of Performance

Another question in the instrument, as well as in the fourth video in each course, was: *How would you evaluate your performance?* Some students used such adjectives like poor, fair, acceptable, good, and excellent; some others used number from 1 to 10, and from 1 to 100. The numerical equivalence was easy to get. To get an equivalent meaning to these two ways of evaluation, the instructor used the table included in Chapter VII, Article 25 of the University Regulation. Final grades at the University are reported in numeric scale, but the regulation allows the possibility to give a qualitative equivalence to those numbers. Table 2 explains those meanings.

TABLE 2

EQUIVALENCE OF NUMERIC AND QUALITATIVE EVALUATIONS ACCORDING TO UCR's REGULATION

Grade	Meaning
9,5 - 10	Excellent
8,5 - 9	Very Good
7,5 - 8	Good
7,0	Enough / Acceptable
6,0 – 6,5	Not enough / Poor

Source: Reglamento de Régimen Académico Estudiantil, UCR

Students produced a total of 111 answers when they evaluated their performance in the video. Most of them revealed satisfaction. Table 3 shows the distribution of the answers regarding how students evaluated their presentation.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF ANSWERS REGARDING SELF – PERFORMANCE

Criteria	Number of Answers
Very Good / Excellent	12
Good	48
Enough / Acceptable	25
Not enough / Poor	1
Does not indicate	25
Total Answers	**111**

Source: Answers provided by participants

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

239

Some participants included some sentences and phrases to explain their answers to the question *How would you evaluate your performance?* These expressions referred to the need to improve some specific areas. The following are some examples of students' answers:

> It was good, but I can improve it.
> My performance was good, but I need to practice more.
> I think I could do better.
> There is too much to be improved.
> I was well, but I know that I can do it better.

Implementing the video and asking learners to evaluate their performance was effective to develop self – evaluation. The results presented above as well as students' expressions demonstrate that learners could identify their weak areas. For Jones (2005) during the peer and self – assessment activities, it is relevant that students know what they need to focus on; this is achieved if the assessment criteria are clear for them. For this purpose, it is important to remember that the peer evaluation instrument used asked students to focus on their partner´s delivery, content, and accuracy. So, it was not strange that when they self-evaluated, they would focus on the same aspects. The answers provided the participants are also consistent with the results of the case study by Sober (2009).

Improving their Performance

In order to guide the self-evaluation activity, there was a question that specifically asked learners to answer the following question: *What things would you improve about your performance?* The answers provided by the learners referred to the criteria used by the instructor when grading their oral performance in the other assessment activities of the course. The teacher measured delivery, content, accuracy, and comprehension and fluency. To analyze the information, the instructor classified students' expressions according to the number of times these criteria were mentioned. Each expression was counted as one answer to be able to identify the area that worried the students the most. Some participants provided more than one reply; in total, students produced 137 responses. Most were related to pronunciation and fluency, as well as to delivery. Table 4 shows the distribution of the answers provided by students regarding what they would like to improve.

240

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

TABLE 4

ASPECTS STUDENTS WOULD LIKE TO IMPROVE IN THEIR PERFORMANCE

Criteria	Number of Answers
Delivery	40
Content	27
Accuracy	15
Comprehension and Fluency	55
Total Answers	**137**

Source: Answers provided by participants

Students' answers indicate that participants identified those areas of improvement. They gave more value to comprehension and fluency and to delivery. As stated before, one reason for this situation could be that the instruments used by the instructor to evaluate them in the course included the same aspects, as well as the peer evaluation guideline which as designed in accordance with Jones (2005), who indicates that the criteria must be clear for participants. As happened with the previous questions, participant also provided sentences and phrases to clarify their answers. The following are some of these literal expressions:

> May be talking a little bit more fluently.
> To provide more details
> Fluency, vocabulary, and more confidence
> Posture and eye contact
> Being less worried and nervous
> I would try to organize better my ideas.
> Naturally body language
> Fluency, enthusiasm
> Being less worry and nervous
> I can improve my pronunciation and grammar.

The answers provided to the question related to what they need to improve are consistent with the answers about their performance. In both situations learners were able to identify those areas they need to improve. Consequently, implementing the video in

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

241

the language class was helpful to promote self-evaluation. These answers reinforce what Jones (2005) and Sober (2009) indicated about peer and self – evaluation.

The last question of the instrument was: *Did you like the activity?* It is important to take into consideration that the activity itself included these steps: the recording of the video, the peer – evaluation, and the self – evaluation. All the participants answered that they did like it. Some even explained their answers. These are some of their answers; they are presented the way students wrote them:

> Yes, it helps a lot according to confidence.
> Yes, it´s really good and help us.
> Yes, it´s a way to share opinions, knowledge and advices.
> For sure is one of the challenging activities but its doable.
> Yes, I loved it.
> Yes, I had a lot of fun.
> I really liked it because I felt freedom when I did it.
> Yes, I loved the part of the "feedback" because my classmates told me the truth.
> Yes, I think these activities help my pronunciation and vocabulary.
> Pronunciation, confidence, give more ideas and examples

These responses show that students reacted positively to the implementation of the video to promote peer and self – evaluation in their English class; they could also identify some of the advantages of this learning experience. These results are consistent with what research says about student engagement: "Students who are actively engaged in their learning through formative assessment tasks are more likely to become aware of learning gaps and the need to find and use more resources to address these gaps" (Ndoye, 2017). Students' answers regarding the effectiveness of implementing peer and self- assessment activities should motivate more language instructors to use the video in the language class as described above.

Conclusions

Peer assessment was achieved through clear instructions and the provision of a specific class time in the language course. Lear-

242

InterSedes, ISSN 2215-2458, Volumen 23, Número 48, Julio-Diciembre, 2022, pp. 228–245 (Artículo).

ners could provide oral and written feedback to their equals using the videos recorded and the guide prepared by the instructor. Participants knew these comments were not going to be taken into consideration by the instructor when grading their performance in each video. This was relevant because they would feel their classmates 'comments would not bias the teacher. They would feel more at ease when giving and receiving feedback.

Even though some participants did not answer all the questions in the instrument, self – assessment was achieved through the instructions for the recording of the video and the indication that the instructor was going to grade them and that their partners were going to watch them too. For the instructor, students did practice self – evaluation because most of them reported to have recorded the video more than once before sending it for evaluation; however, more research should have been done to confirm if the number of times they recorded the video was strictly related to their evaluation of language performance.

The use of the video has been recognized as a useful strategy in the language class. The main contribution of this article is that the video was implemented to promote peer and self – evaluation and results show that students benefited from it, since they could identify some areas that they needed to improve in their language competence. Even though the results of this study relate to a specific activity implemented in two university language courses, it is expected to motivate instructors of other subjects to use the video to promote such critical thinking skills as peer and self – assessment. Furthermore, more comparative research should be done to determine if those peer and self-evaluation activities besides helping learners to develop critical skills will also influence in their language performance.

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244

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245