

Role of Rubric in Assessment of Language Learning in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

The mixed-method study aims at exploring the effectiveness of rubrics towards authentic assessment of language learning in higher education by understanding the role of the rubric. In the recent trend and style of language teaching-learning, the rubric is one of the important tools that design the set standards and criteria which teachers use to assess students' performance, assignment or behavior. In educational technology, a rubric is the performance standard for a student population typically having four essential components: task description, the scale of achievement, dimensions and description of dimensions. The type of rubric is chosen from the range of holistic rubrics, analytic rubrics, generic rubrics or specific rubrics for assessment depending on the task being evaluated and the needs of the assessor. Research says that the rubric helps to define "quality performance" and promote awareness on critical components in a performance not only acting as an evaluation tool for instructors but also acting as a feedback proforma for students. According to the rubric experts, rubrics are vital tools that can be utilized to solve the problem of subjectivity in the evaluation as they provide consistency in evaluation, reduce subjectivity and enhance objectivity. To explore the real scenario, the researcher collected data through the analysis of students' performance in two classes where the teachers used the rubric and in two classes where the teachers did not use it. Besides, a semi open-ended questionnaire was administered among four teachers, two of each category to see their perspectives about the impact of rubrics in reducing subjectivity. Alongside, four FGD were conducted to put light on students' perceptions. The result shows a significant impact of rubrics on students' performance along with a strong positive attitude of both students and teachers towards the use of rubrics. A wide scope of further research is open in this area.

Key Words: Language Learning, Rubric, Higher Education, Assessment

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Introduction

To achieve the target competency of a particular area of education teaching-learning process requires a series of actions. On the other hand, whether the target competency has been achieved or not has to be identified which is mostly done through assessment, be it formative or summative. To assess students' performance objectively, purposefully and successfully, the assessors and assessment experts are now realizing the need for authentic tools like rubrics. Following the insight of Pickett & Dodge, 2007 it can be synthesized that while developing rubrics the assessors or planners basically aim at coming up with a planning with which student are inspired towards creativity and discovery. (Pickett & Dodge, 2007).

In language education, assessment is very important as it measures not only the content but also the skills of the language. Again, it becomes more complex in higher education since the learners have already learned quite a lot and giving incentives might require "unlearning" before learning. Rubrics play a vital role in preparing students with the skill and content of a language. By reducing grading time, increasing objectivity and thus reducing subjectivity, rubrics convey timely feedback to students and they improve students' ability to include required elements of the task (Stevens & Levi, 2005).

A very important aspect of the rubric is that it, throughout the formative assessment, keeps on aiding the teachers as well as learners to improvise facilitation and learning at the same time. According to Dodge and Picket, 2007 rubrics play more important role while assessing students' performance when there is possibility of subjectivity hampering the reliability and validity of the assessment. Rubrics also aids ensure objectivity and consistency from both teacher and students end. Again, as both parties are aware of the total norms and procedure there is better room for feedback and development as a result.

Moreover, following the understanding of Lazear, 1998 it can be stated that rubrics help assessment being more constant, advantageous and determinative. Many Experts and researchers like Wiggins and McTighe (2005) and Howard Gardner (2000) have also advocated more formative and impartial process of valuation of teaching-learning practices. Thus, exploring the pros and cons of rubric is very important in the field of language at higher education and so perceived and promoted by many scholars.

To begin with, the researcher, working in the higher education of Bangladesh and in particular facilitating language learning in both public and private universities felt the necessity of studying the need for authentic assessment. In addition to that by using rubrics, the researcher could realize its necessity and utility. According to the researcher, rubrics help assess objectively, save time, increase efficiency, and most importantly aid students maximize continuous development in the respective task. To develop the language practice skills of the higher education learners, the rubric can be of great use, experts say. Even though there are barriers like the development of appropriate rubrics, disseminating rubrics, motivating students towards the use of rubrics and others, once done with adequate understanding, will help achieve the competencies set by ensuring objective assessment.

The researchers have attempted to draw the applicability of the rubric by viewing the distinction between using it and not using it from other higher education language facilitators. Again, it was the researchers' concern to put light on the teachers' as well as students' perspectives of the rubric. The researchers believe that only by triangulating the data, the researchers can decide to promote the regular use of the rubric and advocate for its further development for language learning in higher education.

Theoretical Foundation and What Literature Say about the Rubric

In the recent past rubric has become a familiar tool used to aid assessment. It is used because of a range of ins and outs. According to Dodge and Picket, 2007 the teachers' motif is to avail the skill to evaluate the student's capability and learning in real life context. A good number of education experts had a clean doubt about the objectivity, validity and reliability of the regular assessment procedure in practice (Gardner, 2000; Wiggins and McTighe, 1998). On the other hand, a bunch of educationists were in thought of having a shared planned tool for assessment used by both teacher and learner which helps both parties be careful of the necessary steps, components and criteria of an assignment (Dodge and Picket, 2007). Educationist like Marzano, Pickering and Pollock opt for formative assessment and showed concern for the lack of use of such assessment. A good number of facilitators developed a thought of using rubric to produce smart citizens as it enlightens the democratic procedure by giving the common understanding of an assignment to both the facilitator and learner. (Green & Johnson, 2011). Now the universe evolves with newer thoughts and of them a very important one in education sector is the ideology of inclusion. As a result, it is perceived and highly recommended by many educators to practice objective evaluation of students performance regardless of the physical, psychological, social and cultural differences. Again many education experts would like to promote assessment ensuring transparency, objectivity, useful feedback (Cleveland, 2011). According to Reddy & Andrade, in a properly developed rubric both parties, namely the facilitator and the learners, have three areas to assess and to be assessed:

- Expertise or Skills to achieve,
- Clarifications for achievable milestones, and
- Tactics of marking.

Mentionable that according to Reddy and Andrade if the rubric is developed keeping in mind what expertise or skill to achieve and is available in the learners hand it is expected that they will be more focused to develop or achieve the skill. As a result, the learners' performance will be better and positive results will be more attainable. In addition to that, it is to be noted that the attitude of higher education facilitators goes to diverse directions regarding the use of rubric in their respective teaching-learning process. Some are in favor and on the contrary, some do not want to use this even though the former group is larger. However, the college teachers show less interest towards using rubrics in their classroom (Reddy & Andrade, 2010). Besides, to meet the demand of higher education the respective facilitators expose the students to higher order learning environment (Caine, Caine, McClintic, & Klimek, 2011) and language

education at higher level requires skill and content to be achieved in such complex situation. On the other hand, it is difficult to develop an objective and reliable assessment tool to diagnose the progress and evaluate students' performance at higher education level (Drake, 2012). To pleat effective and dependable data to keep learners' progress recorded and thus enrich their performance, creating suitable rubrics can help mentors as a catalyst.

Rubrics

Latin word "Ruber" meaning Red is the root of the word rubrics. The principle or instructions set by a body, be it an organization or institute, which the concerned people need to follow or stick to were generally referred by the word rubrics. In the field of education rubric is "a scoring guide used to evaluate the quality of students' constructed responses" (Popham, James, 1997). Popham and James also explains that, it is a set of criteria for grading assignments and Rubrics usually contain evaluative criteria, quality definitions for those criteria at particular levels of achievement, and a scoring strategy. Rubrics is a popular tool used by the educationists, mostly in the higher education level, for assessment. Mentionable that it is not an assignment tool itself rather it is an aid for assessment of the students' performance. Rubric is a detailed well-planned blueprint to keep track of students' performance.

According to Dodge and Pickett, rubric used in educational technology has some specific characteristics to put lights on and of them they enlighten on the criteria below:

- rubric focus on measuring a stated objective namely: performance, behavior, or quality.
- a range to rate performance is used in rubric.
- rubrics contain specific performance characteristics arranged in levels indicating either the developmental sophistication of the strategy used or the degree to which a standard has been met. (Dodge, & Pickett, 2007)

Extracting the understanding shared by many experts it can be said that there are four essential components of a rubric (Burghart & Panettieri, 2009; Boateng, Bass, Blaszak, & Farrar, 2009) and they are:

- One or more traits that serve as the basis for judging the student response: dimension
- Definitions and examples to clarify the meaning of each trait or dimension: task description
- A scale of values on which to rate each dimension: the scale of achievement
- Standards of excellence for specified performance levels accompanied by models or examples of each level: the scale of achievement. (Herman, J, 1992)

Varieties of Rubrics

There is a range of rubric varieties from which according to the targeted competency, task design and the need of the assessor and performers, the type is usually chosen.

Holistic Rubrics

According to Depaul Teaching Commons “a holistic rubric consists of a single scale with all criteria to be included in the evaluation being considered together” where the criteria are clarity, organization, and mechanics. Jennifar Gonzalez says that A holistic rubric is the most general kind. She also adds that, it lists three to five levels of performance, along with a broad description of the characteristics that define each level. Either numbers or words can be used to label the levels (Gonzales, G, 2014). In language education such rubrics help assess end products within short time spent.

Analytic Rubric

According to Depaul Teaching Commons “An analytic rubric resembles a grid with the criteria for a student product listed in the leftmost column and with levels of performance listed across the top row often using numbers and/or descriptive tags”. An analytic rubric breaks down the characteristics of an assignment into parts, allowing the scorer to itemize and define exactly what aspects are strong, and which ones need improvement (Gonzales, G, 2014). In language education such rubrics evaluate end product like final assignment, presentation etc.

Developmental Rubrics

According to Depaul Teaching Commons “Developmental rubrics are a subset of analytic trait rubrics”. Developmental rubrics are usually based on developmental theories and are planned or prepared to record the progress of the learners. Such rubrics do not assess summative rather keeps the track of formative growth. In language education such rubrics evaluate the level of skill achieved by the involved learners.

Checklists

According to Depaul Teaching Commons “Checklists are a distinct type of rubric – where there are only two performance levels possible.” This is usually a list of the skills or performance the assessors want to evaluate their students for. Checklist is the most commonly used easiest version of a rubric.

Rubrics in Language Education

Both the parties engaged in teaching and learning in higher education may enjoy the benefits of using rubrics in language education. According to Suskie (2009, p. 139), rubrics:

- help clarify vague, fuzzy goals;
- help students understand expectations;
- help students self-improve;
- inspire better student performance;
- make scoring easier and faster;
- make scoring more accurate, unbiased, and consistent;
- improve feedback to students;
- reduce arguments with students;
- improve feedback to faculty and staff.

Rubrics also come with some disadvantages. Rubrics can be time-consuming to create and time is not something that most teachers have the excess to. It also can be difficult for teachers to come up with the appropriate language for the rubric so that the expectations are very clear.

Probable Disadvantages of Rubrics:

- The development of rubrics can be complex and time-consuming;
- Using the correct language to express performance expectations can be difficult;
- Defining the correct set of criteria to define performance can be complex;
- Rubrics might need to be continuously revised before they can be useful in an easy fashion. (Advantages and Disadvantages of Rubrics, 2005)

Research Questions

- How does the rubric affect the writing grades of university students' Language Learning?
- What is the teachers' perception towards using rubrics?
- What do students think of the effects of rubrics on their work while being assessed?

Methodology of the Study

This study intends at discovering the role of rubrics in the assessment of language education in higher education of Bangladesh keeping in mind that the regular practice of assessment of language performance tends to be frequently subjective. The study tried to explore the effect of using rubrics to assess students' writing where both the assessors and assessed group had the rubrics in hand. The study has attempted to go beyond the performance index by seeing the teachers' perspective towards 'using' and 'not using' the rubric and students' perception on the road to the rubric. Since discovering the role of the rubric by focusing on students' performance and teachers' and students' views towards the rubric have been attempted, the study is mixed in nature to arrive at a level of understanding of the role of rubric in the assessment of language learning in higher education.

The researcher attempted to assess the students' performance by assigning them a task. The researcher selected two groups of students from a private university and two from a public university. The researcher, intentionally, opted to collect a varied range of data from both private and public universities to get a clearer view of the real situation. The strategy applied to collect data is as follows:

Table 1.*Methods and tools of the study*

Data Collection Technique	Source of Data	
	Public University	Private University
Analysis of Students' Performance	25 with rubrics	25 with rubrics
	25 without rubrics	25 without rubrics
Interviewing Teachers	1 using rubrics	1 using rubrics
	1 not using rubrics	1 not using rubrics
FGD with Students	1 with using rubrics	1 with using rubrics
	1 with not using rubrics	1 with not using rubrics

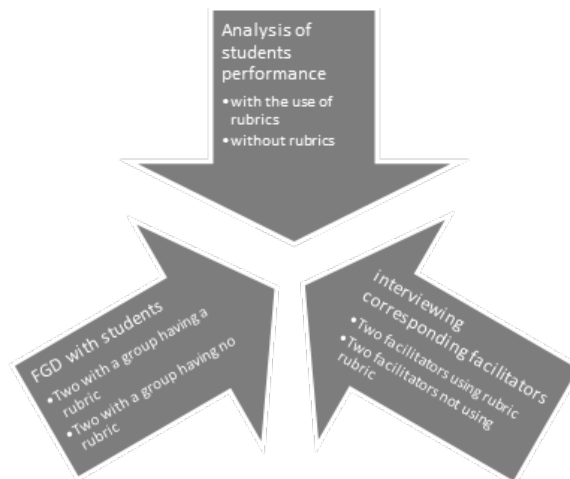
The same assignment was given to 4 classes in which students of two classes received a rubric beforehand and the other two classes did not. Similarly, teachers of the former two classes used the rubric while facilitating and in particular for assessing the performance. On the contrary, teachers of the two later classes conducted the facilitation and assessment without a rubric. The task designed to assess students' performance was:

- Writing a response essay on an article (provided by the researcher and same to all the students) (Appendix-1)

To collect data (both quantitative and qualitative) from the teachers and students, the researcher used the following tools:

- Semi open-ended questionnaire was administered among four teachers, two of each category to see their perspectives on rubrics;
- Four FGD were conducted to put light on students' perceptions.

The data collection procedure followed in the study is shown in the chart below:



After the collection of data, the researcher analyzed them thematically along with the help of analyzed quantitative data to support the findings.

Findings

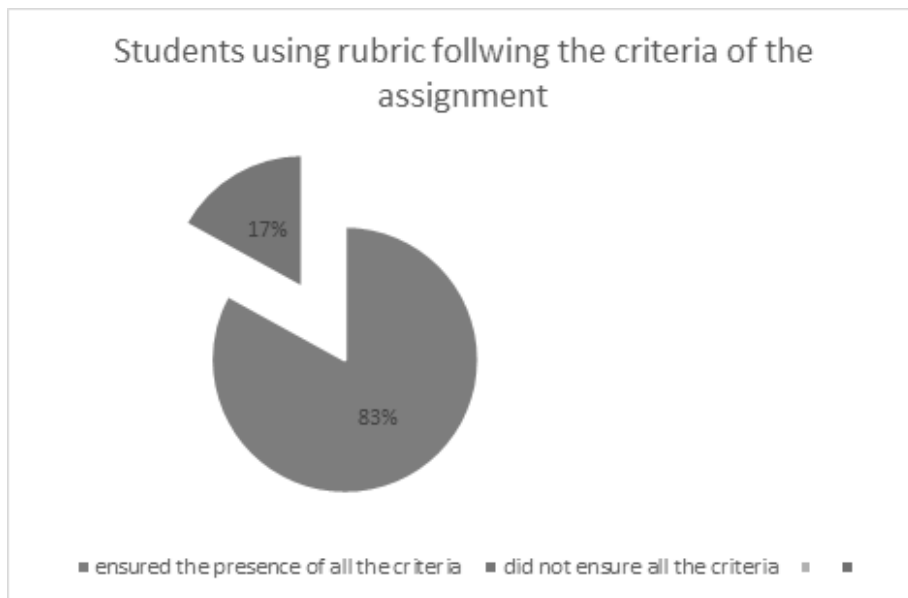
The findings of the study are presented in the light of the major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the entire process of data collection and analysis. The lens set to look upon the result is fundamentally the research question oriented. Primarily, to meet the need of the first research question, the collected and analyzed data can be presented in the following way:

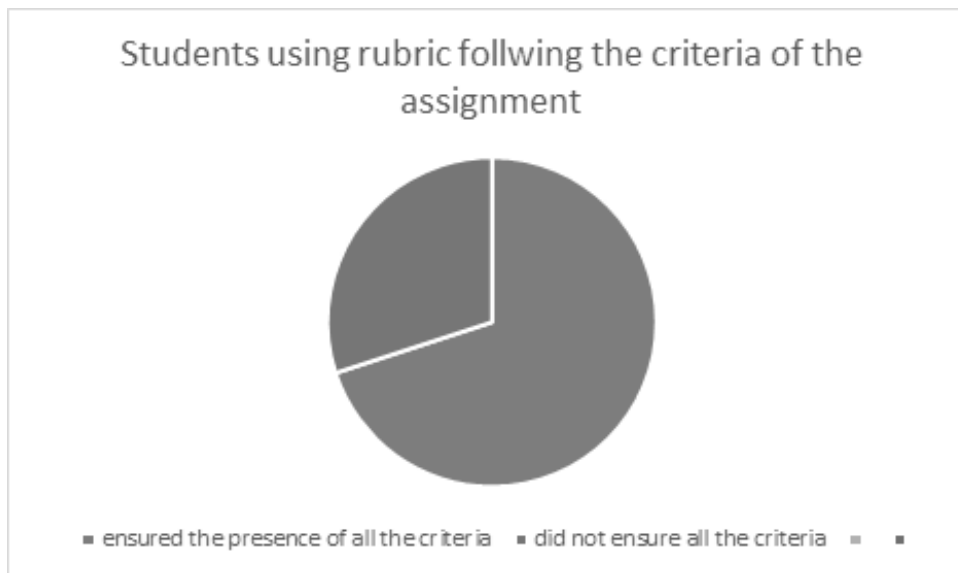
a) Analysis of Students' Performance

The total number of analyzed paper is 100 of which 50 papers are from students who had a rubric in their hand before performing and 50 is from students who did not have a rubric in their hand before or while performing.

The first groups' average score is 83.73% who had the rubrics and the second groups' average score is 74.38% who did not have the rubrics.

Regarding the performance of the learners, it has been found that the students using the rubric understood the task more clearly than those not using the rubric as they happened to complete the task following the criteria.





In addition, students of the former category (using a rubric), could submit the paper faster than those who did not have any rubric. They were given 1 week for submitting the paper and 28 students from the former 50 submitted in time, 10 on time and the rest delayed. On the other hand, students having no rubric had a different picture: 15 students submitted in time, 20 on time and 15 delayed.

Regarding the first criteria of the rubric, it is discovered that in writing the Introduction along with the grabber, summary and thesis statement, 90% of the students could succeed numerically, 7% of the students managed to come up with two elements required out of the three and 3% managed to deliver with one of the three required items. However, regarding the quality issue, the room is open yet for further study and discussion. On the contrary, 70% of students of the 'no rubric' group could manage coming up with all the three criteria, 10% with two, 15% with one and unfortunately the other 5% failed to provide any of the elements. In the case of writing the body paragraph, it is to be noted that there is no significant numeric distinction between the two groups. 80% of the 'rubric' group fulfilled the criteria and 78.50% of the 'no rubric' group could meet it.

Again, in the case of the target audience and purpose of the author, the 'rubric' group seemed to be way forward as nearly all of them could at least mention these in their paper and the percentage is 96%, whereas the 'no rubric' group managed to reach only 72%.

Nevertheless, regarding unity in the body paragraphs, it has been discovered that there is a similar situation. Even though the 'rubric' group seems to be performing better in the quantitative aspect with 80% of accuracy, the performance of the 'no rubric' group is not

highly deviated with 79% of accuracy.

On the other hand, while writing the conclusion, the students were expected to provide a restatement, suggestion and a clincher, and it has been found that 78% of students of the 'rubric' group provided all the elements, 5% of them provided 2 of them, 10% provided 1, and rest of them failed to provide any. Talking about the 'no rubric' group, 67% of the students managed to provide all the elements, 13% of them provided 2 of them, 11% provided 1, and the rest of them, i.e., 9% failed to provide any.

Surprisingly, in the case of transitions and mechanics both the groups seem to be on the same verge. Only 58% of students of the 'rubric' group could use transitional phrases and the rest of them could not and 55% of students of the 'no rubric' group attempted to use transitional phrases and others did not seem to bother. Regarding mechanics, only a few students of both categories seemed to be practicing expected mechanics efficiently, 22% and 20% respectively, and others are found in this regard either inefficient or carefree. However, the researcher did not intend to focus much on that as it might raise the question to talk about the entire education system.

b) Teachers' Perspectives towards Rubrics

The researchers used the teachers' interview as one of the very important sources of data. The researchers developed questions for the semi-structured interview keeping the following themes in mind:

- Functionality of rubrics
- Professional Standards and rubrics
- Usefulness of rubrics

Five questions were developed under each criterion. Keeping the questions in mind the collected data have been analyzed and presented thematically.

- When the teachers are equipped with a rubric for a particular task for the students, they can assign the work easily and thus they feel the necessity of a rubric. Even though one of the teachers felt less necessity for the rubric, the majority supported the use of it.
- One teacher mentioned that the rubric helps their work and another one thinks that it is helpful but he can work equivalently without it.
- One teacher shared that he prefers to do the assessment without a rubric so that his independence is intact and he can shape his thoughts without any interference.
- One organizes his work without any assistance of rubric.
- Two of the teachers intends to use rubrics regularly with their students.

The following criteria-based data were gathered concerning teachers' thoughts about the work or professional standards and rubrics:

- One teacher claims that the standard of his work goes down with the use of rubric.
- One acknowledges increase of professional standards with the help of rubric.
- According to one teacher, his room of originality and imaginary skill is narrowed

down by a rubric.

- One teacher remarked that in that particular class rubric did not play any conspicuous role in his assessment skill and professionalism.
- One teacher opined that rubric helped him in fair, reliable and valid assessment by reducing subjectivity.

However, three of the teachers think that they can assess objectively without a rubric and thus they claim to have no subjectivity in their assessment. On the contrary, one teacher believes that without a properly developed rubric, it is difficult to assess without subjectivity.

Regarding the rubric being an aid, the teachers were asked open-ended questions and their response enabled the researcher to present the findings below:

- A rubric helps to organize their work, states one teacher. Two of them say, it is good to have a standard set but they are okay and so is their assessment without it. However, one believes that having a rubric rather increases the workload.
- One teacher believes that rubric aided him evaluate his own assessment before assigning the work to the students and two of them does not mind using one. However, one teacher opts for no use of rubric as the practice of assessment enables him to assess perfectly without a rubric and he also claims that this is usually too general to be used in his assessment.
- One teacher, using the rubric, thinks that the teaching-learning process and evaluation went better with the rubric. Another teacher using the rubric thinks that it is pretty similar to the other assessments he does. On the other hand, one teacher, not using the rubric, understands the necessity of it and another does not want rubrics to be used.

c) **Students' Perspectives towards Rubrics**

From the four FGD conducted, the findings which the researcher arrived at are presented below:

- Most of the students, 80% in particular, would prefer having a rubric for every work they do.
- 90% of the students using rubrics want it to be available for an assignment, and to others, the use of rubrics seems difficult.
- 20% of the students think that without a rubric they can better utilize their “free handwriting skill” and have the freedom to design their ideas.
- 10% of the students shared that they would never use a rubric while organizing their work.
- Some students shared that if they become teachers, they will use rubrics regularly with their students.
- The majority of the students think that using a rubric increases the standard of their work whereas a few of them think that it might rather decrease the standards.
- Most of the students said that the rubric does not have anything to do with creativity

whereas some think that it reduces the room for creativity.

- Most of the students have the belief that having a rubric for both teachers and students reduces the chance of subjectivity and thus the assessment is fairer.
- Regarding the organization of work, more than 50% of the students think that a rubric helps organize the work. However, many of them claim the rubric as an added workload for them.
- The students discussed among them and as a whole concluded that the use of rubric is beneficial for them as it enables evaluation of the task all by themselves before submission. However, a few students found it an additional job of less use.

Discussion

The researcher, very interestingly, found dynamic data from this study and thus his view towards the use of the rubric has had a dimension. Analysis of students' performance gives the idea that rubric is of use positively as students performing with rubrics scored better, as well as, they had better command in completing the task. Again, they had less confusion compared to that of the students having no rubrics in hand. There was a little room for confusion and clarity between teachers and students in the former category whereas the students from the no rubric group were confused and kept on clarifying issues with the facilitators and fellows. The former group performed faster and with more efficiency than the no rubric group. The researcher kept an eye on the entire process throughout the whole week and found students from the latter group arriving on decisions later and with enough confusion. However, from the FGD of the students, it is decided that students are more into getting better grades rather than developing skills. They wanted the rubric to be used for their achievement of good grades than achieving competency. In addition, it should be taken as a serious note that the students who were not in favor of a rubric either got a poor grade or could not understand the rubric properly.

Putting light on the teachers' perception, the researcher came to acknowledge that teachers who believe in investing enough potential, time and skill in the assessment are more into using the rubric and those who believe in more facilitation and less effort in assessment felt rubric being of less use. The teachers were more worried about the complexity of a rubric and the students' reluctance of not even looking into it and the concern is valid as found from the students' FGD. According to most of the teachers, the rubric does not do much with subjectivity and here the researcher has an opposite viewpoint and the study result supports the researcher's opinion. The orientation of developing and using the rubric for higher education language facilitators can be a solution. However, the teachers could come to a state where they agree that the rubric reduces the room for confusion, helps clarify the instruction and increases the pace of work.

Moreover, as found from the students' discussions, rubrics help edit their work before final submission. Even though some students claim the complexity of a rubric lowers their performance and increases the intensity of work, most of the users opted for using the rubric.

They shared that the rubric helps turn the vague instructions into clear and specific ones and aids in fulfilling the criteria of a task. On the contrary, the major issue that emerged from both teachers and students is creativity. Many of them think that the rubric might decrease creativity as it sets the criteria and aspects beforehand and thus declines creativity.

Recommendations

Even though the study was conducted in a limited form with many constraints and cannot be generalized with further studies being conducted in the same area, the researcher came to some insights. Integrating researchers' understanding of the rubric, use of the rubric, teachers' view of using the rubric and students' perception on the same, the researcher brings forward the following suggestions:

- Use of rubrics according to the competency targeted and not only the task itself;
- Using simple and clear language in rubrics;
- Using rubrics maintain a higher standard for ensuring enough room to appreciate creativity;
- Organizing orientation and facilitation of rubric designing and implication for higher education language facilitators;
- Developing human resources as rubric experts;
- Promoting the use of rubrics for both teachers and students;
- Using the rubric for the continuous development of language production skills of the learners.

Conclusion

From the results of this study, it has already been perceived that the rubric is a useful tool for the students which aids self-evaluation and thus betterment of the assignment. Moreover, both process and product in language studies in higher education can get ease and more efficiency with the use of the rubric. We know that our education system is supposed to be learner-centered keeping in mind that we are to develop the learners as world citizens, and again, to fit in the competitive world, there is no alternative to having a good command of language skills. Keeping in mind the need of collaboration, critical thinking, communication and creativity, the learners should be ready as individuals who can take their responsibilities of the work individually and efficiently, fulfilling most of the criteria, and later connect them to the external needs. As charity begins at home, to help the learners to be skilled global citizens, we have to promote the use of tools like rubrics to introduce them to set standards and criteria. On the other hand, it will help both teachers and learners have ease of the work and save time.

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Appendix-1

Rubrics for Response Essay (Total Marks – 10)

Dimension	Exemplary	Good	Needs Improvement	Not Satisfactory
Introduction (grabber, summary, thesis statement)	The introduction starts with a grabber, followed by a summary and thesis statement. (The thesis statement states the student's position and previews the two main agreement points and two main disagreement points). (2.5)	The summary does not include some of the key ideas of the text. The information that is included is correct. The thesis statement states the student's position; however, it does not preview all of the two main agreement points and two main disagreement points. (1.5)	The summary does not include the minimum key ideas of the text. The information included is incorrect. The thesis statement does not state the student's position. (0.75)	A proper summary is missing. The thesis statement does not state the student's position, and agreement and disagreement points are missing. (0)

Dimension	Exemplary	Good	Needs Improvement	Not Satisfactory
Body paragraphs	<p>Two of the body paragraphs have the following key points: Claim & Stated Reason (the position and the because statement to support the position). There are at least two specific claims for agreement and at least two specific claims for disagreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ds or proof with an appropriate elaboration of the grounds. • Some evidence from the text is used. • The paragraphs follow the points previewed in the thesis statement. (3) 	<p>One of the body paragraphs is missing one of the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim & Stated Reason (the position and the because statement to support the position). There are not two claims for agreement and two for disagreement. The claims are specific. • OR • The Grounds or proof are missing from either a point of agreement or disagreement. OR • Little evidence from the text is used. • OR • The paragraphs do not follow the points previewed in the thesis statement. (2) 	<p>One of the body paragraphs is missing two of the key points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim & Stated Reason (the position and the because statement to support the position). There are not two claims for agreement and two for disagreement. • OR • The Grounds or proof are missing from either a point of agreement or disagreement. • OR • Evidence from the text is not used. (1) 	<p>In both of the body paragraphs, more than two key points are missing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim & Stated Reason (the position and the because statement to support the position). There are not two claims for agreement and two for agreement. • OR • The Grounds or proof are missing from either a point of agreement or agreement. (0) • Evidence from the text is not used. (1)

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Target audience, the purpose of the author	The writer has an excellent understanding of the text and the author's arguments or point-of-view. The author informs about the target audience and the purpose of selecting so. (1)	The writer has a good understanding of the text and the author's arguments or point-of-view. The target audience and purpose of the author are not clearly stated. (0.50)	The writer has a fair understanding of the text and the author's arguments or point-of-view. Inadequate and irrelevant information about the Target audience and purpose of the author. (0.25)	The writer does not understand the text. Incorrect information about the Target audience and purpose of the author. (0)
Unity in body paragraphs	All paragraphs have a topic sentence and one idea per paragraph. All paragraphs follow the thesis statement. (0.50)	All paragraphs have a topic sentence, but there are two ideas in a paragraph. All paragraphs follow the thesis statement. (0.30)	All paragraphs have a topic sentence, but there are multiple ideas in the paragraphs; Not all paragraphs follow the thesis statement. (0.15)	Not all paragraphs have a topic sentence, and they do not follow the thesis statement. (0)
Transitions	There is a transition between every paragraph and transitions between ideas. (0.50)	There are some transitions but one or two are missing. (0.30)	The transitions are not correct for an academic essay. (0.15)	There are not any transitions. (0)

Dimension	Exemplary	Good	Needs Improvement	Not Satisfactory
Conclusion	There is a restatement, suggestions and a clincher. (1.5)	One of the three parts of the conclusion is missing. (1)	Two of the three parts of the conclusion are missing. (0.50)	None of the parts of the conclusion is included. (0)
Mechanics	There are a variety of sentence structures. There are a few minor errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar and capitalization. They do not detract from the meaning of the essay. (1)	There are a variety of sentence structures. There are some minor errors in punctuation, spelling, grammar and capitalization. They do not detract from the meaning of the essay. (0.50)	There may not be a variety of sentence structures. There are major and minor errors in punctuation, grammar, spelling and capitalization, but the meaning of the essay can still be understood. (0.25)	There is not a variety of sentence structures. There is a lack of proofreading and attention to detail in the essay. The essay does not represent academic writing. (0)