



The use of rubrics for the assessment of digital products in language learning

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Many language teachers incorporate the use of digital technology into their classrooms in various forms such as videos, blogs and slideshares. However, both teachers and students need a new level of awareness in assessing such web-authored products. A possible way for both teachers and students to learn to assess such digital products is for both parties to get involved in the process of assessment, specifically in rubric construction. This poster presentation will investigate the process in which English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and students in a Japanese university collaboratively negotiate the process of rubric construction and the use of such an assessment tool throughout one academic semester. The collaborative process highlights two challenges that the teachers and students face: 1) how to assess the combination of language use and digital products; and, 2) how to empower teachers and students in the digital age.

Keywords: language learning, digital products, assessment, rubrics, action research

Introduction and description

Rubrics are tools showing what criteria are expected at different levels of achievement along a continuum. There are a number of reasons why rubrics are useful for assessment: they give structure to assessment tasks, enable teachers to give clear feedback, and encourage consistency and fairness (Atkinson & Lim, 2013; Jeong, 2015); they can also be used to assess class participation and collaboration (University of New South Wales, 2015). For these reasons rubrics may be particularly appropriate for language learners carrying out project based work using Web 2.0 tools.

This poster presentation will describe an action research project in a national university in western Japan. EFL teachers at the school developed a 16-week blended e-learning course during which the students created four digital presentations that included voice, photographs, video, and animation. Rubrics made collaboratively by the teachers and the students were used to guide this process and as a method of assessment. Data was collected through lesson observations, surveys, and interviews with the teachers and students. Key lessons concerning the creation and use of rubrics, issues of teacher role and identity, and future suggestions for further research and teacher development will be shown.

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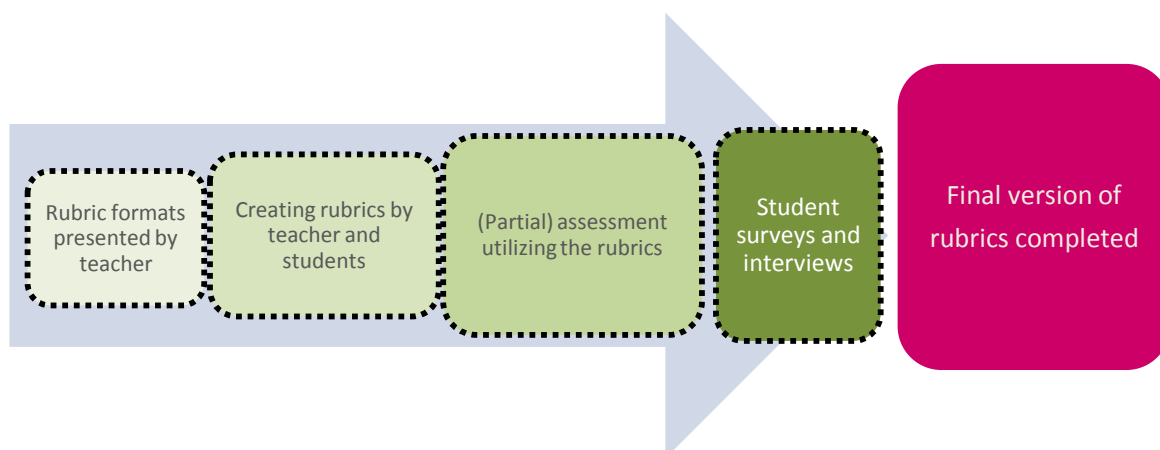
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Background: Approaches and features of language learning and digital technology

CH FEATURE	Out-of-class	Blended language practice	Blended Web 2.0 projects	Online
Need for an LMS	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes	Vital
Software tools	Web 2.0 e-books (language skills)	Web 2.0 (language skills)	Web 2.0 (collaborative tools)	Virtual classrooms
Teaching approach	Traditional	Audiolingual Task-based	Project-based	Online
In or out of class	Out	Both	Both	Out
Challenges	Choice of e-books and websites	Choice of software tools	Project design and tool choices	Materials Development

Problem: How to guide and assess Web 2.0 digital projects? **Solution:** Action research with rubrics



1. Teachers survey rubrics and 'can-do' statements in order to show students rubric rationale, concepts and basic framework.	2. Students understand the purpose of rubrics and create their own which define learning goals.	3. Teachers and students conduct ongoing assessment using the rubrics completed in Step 2.	4. Surveys and interviews about experience in creating rubrics and assessment process.	5. Teachers reflect on 1 to 4. Create final versions of rubrics and clear guidelines for process of using them.
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Issues and Future Research Points

● Principles of rubrics and 'can do' statements	● Assessment of technological products and/or language?
● Principles of student involvement	● Language teacher and/or technology teacher?
● Principles of teacher involvement	● Future online materials development roles

Cowie, N. 2015). The use of rubrics for the assessment of digital products in language learning. In T. Reiners, B.R. von Kinsky, D. Gibson, V. Chang, L. Irving, & K. Clarke (Eds.), *Globally connected, digitally enabled*. Proceedings ascilite 2015 in Perth (pp. 626-628).

<https://doi.org/10.14742/apubs.2015.1008>

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