TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF A CYCLICAL SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Dos caras de la misma moneda: Percepción del profesorado en formación inicial sobre un proceso continuo de auto-evaluación

Dois lados da mesma moeda: a percepção dos professores em formação inicial em um processo contínuo de auto-avaliação

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Abstract

By promoting self-assessment and feedback, pre-service teachers have been shown to develop their critical thinking skills, resulting in higher quality learning outcomes and a deeper approach to learning. Nevertheless, pre-service teachers' responses to self-assessment vary widely. The students (n=61) from one intact class of the Bachellor of Science in Physical Education were required to follow an adaptation of the cyclical self-assessment process: (1) requirement to self-assess; (2) determine the criteria;(3) first submission; (4) general feedback; (5) self-reflection and self-assessment; (6) second submission; (7) specific feedback and grade; (8) final self-reflection, self-assessment and self-grade. Data were collected from students' learning blogs (n=61), and video blogs (n=13) and were coded by the first author. Categories were identified inductively as they emerged naturally from the data. Results conveyed two main insights that aligned with an assessment for learning appreciation and summative assessment as a surface learning respectively.

Palabras clave: *Self-assessment; initial teacher education; pre-service teachers*

Resumen

El fomento de la autoevaluación y el feedback, permite desarrollar en el profesorado en formación inicial, habilidades de pensamiento crítico, lo que resulta en una mayor

calidad de los resultados de aprendizaje y en el estimulo de enfoques de aprendizaje profundo. Sin embargo, la percepción del alumnado en formación inicial tras su participación en estos procesos es variada. Un total de 61 estudiantes (n = 61) de una clase completa del Grado en Ciencias de la Educación Física, experimentaron una adaptación del proceso de autoevaluación cíclica propuesto por: (1) inicio del proceso de auto-evaluación; (2) consenso de los criterios de evaluación; (3) primer envío; (4) feedback general; (5) autorreflexión y autoevaluación; (6) segundo envío; (7) feedback específico y calificación; (8) auto-reflexión final, autoevaluación y auto-calificación. Los datos se recogieron de los blogs (n=61) y video blogs (n=13) del alumnado y fueron codificados por el primer autor. Las categorías se identificaron de forma natural e inductiva. Se encontraron dos categorías principales alineadas con una evaluación formativa y sumativa y enfoques de aprendizaje profundo y superficial respectivamente.

Keywords: *Auto-evaluación; formación inicial del profesorado; profesorado en formación*

Resumo

A promoção de autoavaliação e feedback, permite desenvolver professores em formação inicial, habilidades de pensamento crítico, resultando em uma maior qualidade dos resultados da aprendizagem e o encorajamento das abordagens de aprendizagem profunda (Lynch, McNamara, Seery, 2012). No entanto, a percepção dos alunos em formação inicial, após sua participação nestes processos é variada. Um total de 61 alunos (n = 61) classe intacta, foi submetido a uma adaptação do processo cíclico de auto-avaliação proposto por Yan e testa (2016): (1) o início do processo de auto-avaliação; (2) o consenso dos critérios de avaliação; (3) primeira remessa; (4) comentários geral; (5) a auto-reflexão e auto-avaliação; (6) segundo carregamento; (7) feedback específico e grau; (8) final auto-reflexão, auto-avaliação e auto-grado. Os dados foram coletados de blogs (n = 61) e vídeo blogs (n = 13) dos alunos e foram codificadas pelo primeiro autor. As categorias foram identificadas de forma natural e indutiva. Havia duas categorias principais, alinhadas com uma avaliação formativa e sumativa e aprendizagem profunda e de superfície se aproxima respectivamente.

Palavras-chave: *Autoavaliação; formação inicial de professores; professores em formação*

1. Introduction

Although student self-assessment is considered a critical component of assessment for learning, its use and related research are rare in higher education (Walser, 2009). Results indicate that self-assessment exercises provided students the opportunity to reflect on the course and their performance, helped them monitor their own progress, motivated them to do well in the course, and provided them the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor (Taras, 2010). By promoting self-assessment and feedback, student teachers have also been shown to develop their critical thinking skills, resulting in higher quality learning outcomes and a deeper approach to learning (Lynch, McNamara, & Seery, 2012). Nevertheless, student teachers' responses to self-assessment vary widely. Some perceive the process as positive for learning and engagement (Yan & Brown, 2016). Others perceive stress, uncertainty about capability, and anxiety about failure (Struyven, Dochy, & Janssens, 2005).To the uninitiated, self-assessment often appears as an amorphous, unique process (Taras, 2010). Hence, the purpose of this paper is to explore a sample of student teachers' perception of a cyclical self-assessment process.

2. Method

The students (n=61) from one intact class of the Bachellor of Science in Physical Education were required to follow an adaptation of the cyclical self-assessment process (Yan and Brown, 2016): (1) requirement to self-assess; (2) determine the criteria;(3) first submission; (4) general feedback; (5) self-reflection and self-assessment; (6) second submission; (7) specific feedback and grade; (8) final self-reflection, self-assessment and self-grade. Data were collected from students' learning blogs (n=61), and video blogs (n=13) and were coded by the first author. Categories were identified inductively as they emerged naturally from the data. Both authors through a reflective dialogue, which included discussed interpretations of the transcripts, then critically examined those that were generated in the first independent analysis. To guarantee the quality of this process, credibility and confirmability (Zitomer & Goodwin, 2014) were upheld through member checking with five random pre-services teachers that were asked to give feedback regarding the data under analysis.

3. Results and discussion

For this study the self-directed feedback seeking of the Yan and Brown (2016) proposal, was oriented by an in-class general feedback, to support the pre-service teachers in their first self-assessment experience. Overall, results conveyed two main insights: (1) students who were involved in self-assessment as a process of self-reflection that provoked a deep content learning approach, high engagement and high final grades: *"by doing this when we went to self-assess ourselves it gave ourselves another opportunity to critically analyze our project and ensure we had all aspects of the criteria included"* (student blog1, post 2), or *"we had great discussions together over how self-assessment works and how it helps our understanding and learning"*(student blog 9, post 2); and (2) students who were involved in self-assessment as a means of ticking off a check list, focused on the related rubric criteria and the feedback of the lecturer to get a high grade too: "self-assessing the group project was like 'ticking off a checklist' and seeing if we had included all the necessary characteristics" (surface learning approach)(student blog 34, post 2).The study of Yan & Brown (2016), also demonstrated that both feedback and reflection are indispensable elements to self-assessment. As highlighted by Dinsmore and Wilson (2016), students who were not engaged in meaningful reflective thinking were less likely to make strategic adjustments to their learning strategies since they were unaware of their strengths and weaknesses: "When I see the self-assessing sheet I do not strive for passing, I look to see what the A level grade is. I look to see if I have everything that is expected of me of an A level result, but I am not pretty sure sometimes" (student blog 9, post 2).

4. Conclusions

The pre-services teachers' responses to self-assessment varied widely. On the one hand, some pre-services teachers perceived the cyclical self-assessment as a process of assessment for learning and involved them in a deep approach to learning; on the other hand, most of the students perceived it as a summative assessment that involved them ina surface approach to learning. Some of the limitations of this research are due to the fact that the students' blog posts were not anonymously written and they were graded, so their level of honesty could be affected, leading to more positivistic perceptions of the blended approach. Future research should explore the impact of these two different approaches to cyclical self-reflection and self-assessment process on the students'

retention level, to evidence the relationships between long-term learning and deep approaches to learning. To involve the pre-services in this process could facilitate a change of their learning approach.

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