

Chapter 16

Pedagogical Potential and Didactic Limitations of Assessment Rubrics: An Example From Medical Education

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ABSTRACT

High-level cognitive skills are often demonstrated at the performance level. For this reason, performance assessment has become an important element of educational assessment. One of the biggest problems in open-ended questions, oral exams, and performance evaluation is to develop a scoring method that will ensure consistency between raters. At this point, the rubric emerges as a functional scoring tool. Rubrics have many known advantages such as defining the elements and qualities of performance that should be exhibited in educational assessment, consistency between raters, and supporting teaching. On the other hand, there are situations that create barriers in use, such as difficulty in preparation, time consuming to prepare, requiring expertise, and defining the qualifications by distributing them in a balanced way. However, it cannot be said that these are the only obstacles in the use of rubrics. At the same time, educator typology in lesson process and trainer profiles, educational beliefs, and educator roles can be counted among the important barriers in using rubric.

INTRODUCTION: RUBRIC

When a performance assessment is made, evaluators are faced with a structured outcome or responses created by the learner instead of responses of students chosen from among the options. Although it is more complex than scoring student answers selected from these options as in multiple-choice exams, the outcome or structured answers that emerge as a result of performance must be scored. In scoring a created outcome or response, the evaluation criteria used in demonstrating the adequacy of this outcome

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or created response gain significant importance. Therefore, criteria take the focus in performance evaluation. The scoring procedures used to evaluate students' responses to performance tasks are generally referred to as rubrics (Popham, 2017).

Rubric definitions have been made in various ways. According to Haladyna (1997), who defines observations as a tool that allows scoring by categorizing, only experts should do the scoring. Rubrics should be used to evaluate more abstract concepts such as subject integrity and quality rather than concrete behaviors such as size and length that anyone can easily do. Moscal (2000) made another definition of rubrics and stated that it is a scoring key developed by the trainer or evaluator to analyze the students' and their outcomes. They can evaluate the qualifications expected from the learner in a broad framework and present a judgment and a frame of reference. Miller, Linn, and Gronlund (2009) defined rubrics as a measurement tool that clearly determines whether a performance is accepted by students and educators.

A rubric is a set of clear expectations or criteria to help instructors and students focus on what is valuable in a topic or activity. Rubrics are often similar to checklists in that they list multiple criteria for a performance. However, unlike a checklist that simply lists the criteria, a rubric describes the expected performance level for each criterion. Rubrics set benchmarks for different performance levels, often descriptive rather than numerical. Descriptions help educators focus their teaching and student work on key aspects of the rubric. Explanations also help students better understand what trainers expect from them for a particular performance or outcome (Russell & Airasian, 2012).

In line with all these definitions, it can be said that the rubric;

- Determines the performance-related situation
- Determines if the performance is acceptable or not
- Is a reference
- Functions as a key for scoring
- Is a set of criteria that can grade performance from strong to weak/good to bad
- Can make the expectations of the trainer very clear
- Provides more informative feedback about the learners' strengths and aspects that need improvement
- Supports learning, the development of skills, understanding, and good thinking

A rubric used to score students' responses to a performance assessment has at least three important features (Popham, 2017):

- **Evaluative Criteria:** Factors used to determine the quality of the learner's response.
- **Descriptions of Qualitative Differences for all Evaluative Criteria:** An explanation for making qualitative distinctions in the learner's response for each assessment criterion included in the rubric.
- **Determining Which Scoring (holistic or analytical scoring) Approach to Use:** In rubrics, the evaluation criteria can be in the form of holistic or criterion-based analytical scoring. The type of scoring to be used should be specified.

There are two types of rubrics: analytical and holistic. Analytical rubrics show important dimensions, features, and elements of learners' responses, enabling them to be scored. Holistic rubrics aim to evaluate the quality of learners' responses in general (Nitko & Brookhart, 2014). Based on the decision, a holistic rubric can be used to make broad decisions about student performances or an analytical rubric can be

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