



Educational Innovation through Assessment: Peer Observation for Competency Self- Management

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Abstract

This study addresses the implementation of peer observation in initial teacher training in Physical Education using a formative and shared assessment approach that promotes the development of key competencies. The methodology is divided into three phases: self-assessment, implementation, and reflection. In the self-assessment phase, students evaluate their competencies and create an assessment instrument. Then, in the implementation phase, they apply this instrument to observe and provide feedback on their peers' classes. The final phase involves personal reflection and meta-evaluation of the educational process. A self-perception questionnaire aligned with the graduation profile is included, validated by external experts and planned for future implementations to enrich formative assessment. The results show that peer observation is essential for developing skills such as teamwork, effective communication, and critical thinking, improving students' ability to plan and evaluate learning. However, they face challenges such as difficulties in correction, feedback, and creating appropriate assessment instruments. In conclusion, peer observation stands out as a valuable tool for promoting reflection and self-awareness in teacher training.

KEYWORDS: PEER OBSERVATION, FORMATIVE AND SHARED ASSESSMENT, COMPETENCY SELF-MANAGEMENT, SELF-ASSESSMENT, TEACHER TRAINING

Introduction

This study explores the implementation of peer observation in university educational contexts, presenting an innovative alternative to traditional memorization-based assessment methodologies (Bizarro, 2021; Lira, 2022; Graça da Costa & Santos, 2022; Hernán & Anguita, 2023). Through formative and shared assessment (López Pastor, 2006), a participatory approach is promoted where students not only receive feedback from their peers (Cañadas, 2020; Cruzado, 2022; De las Heras, 2022) but also actively reflect on their performance and the development of their competencies (García et al., 2022; Zelenska et al., 2022). This process is designed to closely align the educational experience with the graduation profile of the students, ensuring that assessment contributes significantly to their professional and personal preparation.

The adoption of peer observation has been evidenced as a tool for formative and shared assessment in different contexts (Espejo et al., 2020; Gallardo et al., 2018; Fernandez et al., 2020; Jiménez et al., 2022). In this research, it was applied in the Talca and Temuco campuses of the university, allowing this approach to be implemented in parallel, providing a comparative and enriching basis on the effectiveness of this methodology in different environments. This system not only evaluates academic knowledge but also fosters a reflective process in which students critically evaluate their skills and competencies (González, 2022; Morales, 2021), a practice that strengthens their self-management of learning and prepares them for professional and personal challenges.

Methodology

The study utilizes a peer observation methodology in teacher training for Physical Education at the Talca and Temuco campuses, focusing on formative and shared assessment for 60 students (Kolb, 1984). This process is structured into three main stages: preparation, implementation, and reflection, oriented towards competency self-management.

Preparation Stage (Jaramillo, 2021; Mendoza, 2021; Muñoz, 2020): Students perform self-assessments to design an assessment instrument aligned with the graduation profile and educational reality. This instrument is reviewed by the teacher to ensure its coherence with the principles of formative assessment.

Implementation Stage (Botella, 2020; Deci & Ryan, 1991; Granados, 2016): Peer classroom observations are facilitated using the developed instrument. The feedback obtained allows for the improvement and development of competencies.

Reflection and Meta-evaluation Stage (Alastair, 2008; Espinoza, 2021; Fraile et al., 2020; León, 2021; Valdivia, 2014): Students write a reflective report and perform a meta-evaluation of the process and the instrument used.

The study complies with the ethical principles of the Singapore Declaration, guaranteeing confidentiality and voluntary participation. At the end, 81% of students participated in an anonymous questionnaire that helped evaluate the effectiveness of peer observation as a pedagogical tool, highlighting its ability to foster critical reflection and continuous professional development (López Pastor, 2006). Based on the final reflections of the students' peer observation, open and axial coding was carried out using the ATLAS.ti.23 © software to organize, analyze, and extract meanings and dimensions of analysis.

Results

The results highlight the development of critical competencies such as communication and teamwork, as well as the identification of personal strengths and weaknesses. However, challenges such as difficulty in providing effective feedback and group management were encountered. Data collected from 60 reflections in the final stage demonstrate a positive perception of the experience, highlighting improvement in planning and self-assessment of competencies. This approach not only enhances academic and professional skills but also promotes reflective and adaptive learning, crucial for the continuous development of future educators. The successful implementation of peer observation requires time and adequate professional support to maximize its potential. An element emphasized by participating students is the importance of honesty as a key factor in the self-assessment of competencies.

Figure 1. Perception map



Source: Own elaboration through Atlas ti. 23 with research background.

The conceptual map reflects how students in Physical Education perceive peer observation as a key resource for self-reflection, needs detection, and critical learning. Through this process, they consolidate their professional and personal identity, using the experience to make critical judgments and validate their training. The experience also fosters co-learning among peers, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and honesty in self-assessment. Together, these perceptions underline the value of reflective observation for the continuous development of teaching competencies.

Discussion

Peer observation in initial teacher training offers significant advantages such as fostering reflection and developing crucial competencies like communication and teamwork (Granados López & García Zuluaga, 2016; Martínez Rizo, 2012). This methodology includes self-assessment and co-assessment, improving the identification of strengths, weaknesses, and student motivation through dialogue and continuous improvement (Santos-Guerra, 1993; Morales, 2019; Gallardo et al., 2018). However, it presents challenges such as the difficulty of providing constructive feedback and group management, requiring effective communication skills (Huamaní & Esquivel, 2021) and overcoming cultural resistance to traditional evaluative methods (López Pastor, 2006). For its effectiveness, it is essential to have adequate time and professional support (León-Warthon, 2021).

Furthermore, the competency model integrated with formative assessment implies a precise alignment between objectives, content, and evaluation, requiring active teacher participation (Sánchez Carracedo et al., 2018; Bizarro Flores et al., 2021; Cañadas & Teórico, 2020).

Conclusion

This study highlights peer observation (PO) as an effective strategy for formative and shared assessment in higher education, significantly impacting the development and self-management of students' competencies. PO not only enhances skills such as teamwork, communication, and planning but also promotes deep reflection and greater selfawareness, enabling students to identify their strengths and weaknesses. However, it faces challenges such as difficulty in providing effective feedback, group management, and creating appropriate instruments. To optimize its implementation and foster professional development, it is essential to have sufficient time and professional support. Additionally, students highlight honesty as a key factor in self-managing competencies. It is recommended to complement PO with quantitative instruments to collect information and analyze its effectiveness.

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