<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Comparative study of holistic and analytical marking</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Lam, Peter Tit-Loong &amp; Foong, Yoke Yeen</td>
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There is much difference in opinion in the scoring of essays concerning the different aspects of an essay one should look for. In a review of studies in the area of scoring of essays, Purves (1984) mentioned three studies addressing to this issue. The holistic or Diederich approach involved a rating method whereby factors pertinent to an essay are rated on a 5-point scale. Five common factors emerged – the quality and development of ideas, organisation, style or flavour, wording and mechanics.

Carroll (1960) used a set of preestablished scales involving over 50 pairs of adjectives (also called the semantic differential) and 6 continua exist: good-bad, personal-impersonal, ornamental-plain, abstract-concrete, serious-humorous and characterising-narrating.

The Purves-Rippere (1968) study advocated a content analytical approach whereby 3 general criteria are used: effect on the reader, formal qualities, and scope and significance of the author's vision.

This paper is an attempt to adapt and modify the holistic method of Diederich and the analytical method of Purves-Rippere in the Singapore context (see Appendix).

Subjects

The subjects involved a class of 21 teacher trainees of the Institute of Education, Singapore. The trainees were divided into
2 groups – A and B. Prior to the experiment, the trainees were already instructed on the techniques of using the holistic and analytical methods of scoring essays. The class was involved in adapting the two methods to the Singapore situation in the context of grading primary school children essays.

Method

The member of each group was required to mark 2 essays (1 and 2) in the following order:

Group A (10)
Order of Marking
Essay 1 Holistic
Essay 2 Holistic
Essay 1 Analytical
Essay 2 Analytical,

Group B (11)
Order of Marking
Essay 2 Analytical
Essay 1 Holistic
Essay 2 Holistic
Essay 1 Analytical

The title of the essays are:
Essay 1: An Unforgettable Day
Essay 2: An Unforgettable Evening

The essays were written by 2 different primary 5 pupils. The order of marking is such that each essay was marked alternately. This is to reduce the interfering effects of the 2 different types of marking.
Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay Type</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 (Analytical)</td>
<td>51.67</td>
<td>6.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1 (Holistic)</td>
<td>53.95</td>
<td>9.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 (Analytical)</td>
<td>40.76</td>
<td>10.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay 2 (Holistic)</td>
<td>45.24</td>
<td>8.51</td>
</tr>
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</table>

The mean scores and standard deviations of scores of 21 raters marking the same essays twice using different methods each time are shown above. It is found that Essay 1 is the better essay for both methods of marking. Judging by the narrower spread of scores, there is less disagreement among raters in marking Essay 1 compared to Essay 2 when using the analytical method. However, there is more disagreement in marking Essay 1 compared to Essay 2 when using the holistic method. On the whole, raters using the holistic method tended to give higher scores for the two essays compared to the use of the analytical method of scoring.

For each essay, the scores given by the 21 raters using the 2 different methods were correlated with one another. A correlation of 0.50 was obtained for the better essay (Essay 1) compared to 0.66 for the poorer essay. Correlations were significant at the 0.05 level. Agreement between the 2 different methods of scoring under the experimental conditions was reasonable in view of the fact that both methods of scoring have a high proportion of subjectivity.

Implications

The findings indicate a difference in the scores obtained using the 2 different methods. Marking essays appeared to be very subjective even though general guidelines were given. The correlation coefficients showed that the inter-rater reliability between the 2 methods was reasonable. Raters using the holistic method tended to be more generous in their marking. Therefore
in marking essays, only one method of scoring should be used for one set of essays.

Conclusion

Traditionally, the analytical method is commonly used. The findings show that the holistic method can be used too. This study indicates that there is much subjectivity in the scoring of essays for both the analytical and the holistic methods and that the raters are more generous in scoring when using the holistic method compared to the analytical method.

Bibliography,


Appendix

Analytical Method of Scoring Essays

Title of Essay: ____________________________
Level: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Max. possible</th>
<th>Score obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content relevance</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; syntax</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation &amp; spelling</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Holistic Method of Scoring Essays

Title of Essay: ____________________________
Level: __________

1 = Poor  2 = Weak  3 = Average  4 = Good  5 = Excellent

Criteria

Content
Relevance'  
1 2 3 4 5
Originality & creativity  
1 2 3 4 5

Presentation
Development of ideas  
1 2 3 4 5
Coherence  
1 2 3 4 5

Grammar
Sentence structure  
1 2 3 4 5
Vocabulary  
1 2 3 4 5

Others
Punctuation  
1 2 3 4 5
Spelling  
1 2 3 4 5

Total: __________