Teachers' practices and perception on out-of-class teamwork evaluation in a Mexican Higher Education context

Las practicas educativas y percepciones de los docentes de educación superior en México acerca de la evaluación del trabajo en equipo fuera de clase

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Abstract:

Not much has been said about Mexican teachers' teaching practices regarding teamwork in higher education. Ruiz-Esparza Barajas et al. (2016) discussed university teachers' perceptions of out-of-class teamwork. As part of the second stage of a larger project which attempts to shed light on university teaching practices regarding out-of-class teamwork, this study examines teachers' practices of out-of-class teamwork from the assessment perspective. Teachers' approaches to the evaluation of the outcomes of teamwork are a relatively unexplored area, especially in the Latin-American context. This qualitative research study accounts for the teamwork assigned by education or subject-related teachers and their evaluation approaches. Data collected from recorded interviews of twelve teachers working with teachers-to-be in 8 Mexican universities were transcribed to identify their beliefs and practices regarding evaluating out-of-class teamwork. The outcome of the analysis reveals teachers use teamwork for varied reasons and purposes; their expected outcomes are also dissimilar. While some teachers feel satisfied with their approach to evaluating out-of-class teamwork, others feel there is still work to do in this area. It may be suggested that this could be related to their initial purpose in using out-of-class teamwork.

Keywords:

Out-of-class, teamwork, university, evaluation, approach

Resumen:

Poco se ha dicho de las prácticas educativas de los profesores mexicanos con respecto al trabajo en equipo en educación superior. Ruiz-Esparza Barajas et al. (2016) discutieron las percepciones de los profesores universitarios acerca del trabajo en equipo fuera de clase. Este estudio investiga las prácticas docentes del trabajo en equipo fuera de clase desde la perspectiva de la evaluación. Los métodos de los docentes para la evaluación de los resultados del trabajo en equipo son un área poco explorada, especialmente en el contexto Latinoamericano. La presente investigación da cuenta del tipo de trabajo en equipo y los métodos de evaluación que los profesores en el área pedagógica asignan y llevan a cabo. Los datos fueron recolectados a través de la transcripción de las entrevistas realizadas a 12 profesores formadores de docentes de 8 diferentes universidades del país con el fin de identificar sus creencias y prácticas relacionadas a la evaluación del trabajo en equipo fuera del aula. Los resultados muestran que los docentes usan el trabajo en equipo por una variedad de razones y propósitos; los resultados que esperan obtener también son diferentes. Mientas que algunos se sienten satisfechos con la forma en que evalúan el trabajo en equipo fuera del aula, otros creen que hace falta investigar más del tema como los propósitos iniciales en el uso del trabajo en equipo fuera de clase.

Palabras Clave:

Fuera de clase, trabajo en equipo, universidad, evaluación, método

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Introduction

This study is part of the second phase of a larger project on university teachers' perceptions about using out-of-class groupwork reported by Ruiz-Esparza Barajas et al. (2016). This paper examines teachers' practices of out-of-class groupwork from an evaluation perspective, conceptualising groupwork as an instructional setting where students cooperate to achieve a common goal (D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 2014; 2018). For this research, the terms teamwork and groupwork are used interchangeably as both can be used to refer to several people working together towards achieving a shared goal. This way of working, i.e., teamwork, emerged in organisations because it brought more benefits than individual work (Rousseau et al., 2006). However, the relevance and benefits of groupwork at all levels of education have been widely discussed (Delors, 1966; González et al., 2004; D. Johnson & Johnson, 2018). Students working together and learning from each other "is an integral, and sometimes compulsory, part of higher education qualifications" (Donelan & Kear, 2023, p. 1). Nevertheless, not much has been told about the teaching practices of Mexican teachers concerning groupwork in higher education. EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers' approaches to evaluating out-of-class groupwork are relatively unexplored, particularly in the Latin American context. Through a qualitative approach, this research project aims to examine the answer to the question, "What are the current practices and beliefs of university teachers regarding the evaluation of out-of-class groupwork in México?" Twelve teachers of education (or related subject) working at eight Mexican state universities were interviewed. The eleven-question interviews were recorded and transcribed to conduct a thematic analysis to identify patterns related to how out-of-class groupwork is conducted and assessed. The results and conclusions of this study attempt to shed light on university teaching practices concerning out-of-class teamwork.

Literature review

C.S. Lewis once said, "Two heads are better than one, not because either is infallible but because they are unlikely to go wrong in the same direction". It has been found that more can be accomplished by working together than individually (Burgess, 1994).

Learning does not take place in isolation. Learning occurs when people interact with each other in a social context (Hassanien, 2006). Ferdous and Karim state that "Group work is a common strategy of collaborative learning, practised both inside and outside the classroom" (2019. p.1). Working in pairs or small groups in language

teaching has been recommended by methodologists for the pedagogical and psycholinguistic advantages that these interaction patterns offer (Long & Porter, 1985). Race pointed out that "the most meaningful learning in higher education happens when students work outside lectures, in small groups" (2014, p. 165). Furthermore, working with others in a group has been identified as one of the generic interpersonal competences that every graduate should possess (Bienzobas & Barderas, 2010; González et al., 2004). Working together does not only benefit those who seek clarification or understanding, but also benefits help givers. Helpers need to clear up ideas in their minds before being able to help others clarify their understanding; by doing so, helpers "develop clearer and more elaborate understandings than they held previously" (Gillies, 2016, p. 41). Delors (1966) contends that very little attention is paid to groupwork in contemporary education; however, Meijer et al. (2020) argue that the incorporation of students working in groups in higher education has increased during the last two decades. Race claims that "group learning has never been as important as it is now" (2014, p. 166) since learning from others and working together are considered life skills (Delors, 1966).

Teachers are always looking for ways to enhance and maximize learning opportunities, whether inside or outside the classroom walls. One of the reasons teachers choose groupwork as a pedagogical learning technique is that it encourages experiential learning (Mcgraw & Tidwell, 2001), deep (Entwistle & Waterson, 1988), and active (Kremer & McGuinness, 1998) learning as opposed to surface and passive learning, respectively. Moreover, Hammar Chiriac (2014) argues that groupwork facilitates the acquisition of academic knowledge.

However, educators are more likely to be prepared to become trainers rather than facilitators (Race, 2014), though the role of teachers has evolved from being a source of information to being the creators of learning experiences that engage students (D. Johnson & Johnson, 2018). Hansen (2006) argues that preparation for placing students in teams is fundamental to avoid ineffectiveness, unclear goals, mismanagement, conflicts, and unequal participation, among other things.

Putting students together in small groups does not guarantee cooperation (Gillies, 2016) or learning, as students are not born with the abilities and skills required to collaborate with their peers in a school assignment (Oakley et al., 2004). Working in groups requires learners to develop small-group skills. These include listening to others sympathetically but critically, thinking creatively and originally, managing time and process effectively,

managing regular interactions between individuals (Race, 2014), individual responsibility and solidarity, openness to discussion, and decision-making (Koontz & Weihrich, 1998).

Many students find it challenging to do out-of-class groupwork. The groupwork dynamics are frequently reduced to unequal distribution of work where there is no constructive exchange between group members (Díaz Barriga Arceo, 2006). Teachers are often discouraged from using groupwork as a pedagogical technique because of the problems involved. Among the problems identified, Johnson et al. (1999) identified "non-cooperative groups": pseudo-learning and traditional learning groups. In the former, students are asked to work together, and they do so, but they compete with each other and hide information from one another. In the latter group, students agree to work together but swap or split up the work and have little genuine willingness to share and help others learn. In this last group, we find several types of problems caused by the behavior of group members, such as the free-rider and sucker effect problems. The free-rider is the group member who does very little or nothing to get the job done but reaps the benefits of the work of others at little or no cost. Free-riders do not share the same level of commitment (Prichard et al., 2011). The sucker effect is the natural response to the free-riders. When competent group members realise that there is no equal contribution among group members, they may prefer to become free-riders. More productive team members may decrease their effort in response to other free-riders rather than becoming suckers (D. W. Johnson et al., 1999). Other problems arise from students' lack of communication skills to discuss ideas and make agreements (Prichard et al., 2011). Group member motivation can be one of the most severe problems in groupwork (Kerr & Bruun, 1983). Differing levels of commitment or different expectations of achievement can affect the efforts of group members, even among the more committed.

Johnson et al. (2014) distinguished four types of cooperative learning groups. Teachers use formal cooperative learning to teach specific content. This learning format can take place in one or more sessions. Problem-solving, learning a course unit, writing a report, and conducting an experiment are specific activity types in formal cooperative learning. Informal cooperative learning is a shorter type of activity done in the classroom that is used to help students focus their attention on the lesson content or to summarise the material covered. Cooperative base groups go beyond the classroom setting, are long-term, and have stable membership. Participants provide each other support on academic and

non-academic matters. Finally, constructive controversy occurs when two students of opposite opinions try to reach an agreement. Discussion and exchange of ideas take place in this type of learning group. The authors argue that these are combined to "provide an overall structure for school learning" (p. 842).

Herrity (2022) states that differences are inevitable when people work together to achieve a common goal. Implementing groupwork can effectively motivate students and encourage them to learn, but it can be discouraging if not guided and oriented accordingly. Given the complexities of groupwork briefly discussed above, the present study explores university teachers' practices when assigning and evaluating out-of-class groupwork.

Despite the many benefits of groupwork, some teachers may be reluctant to use this learning technique because of the challenges groupwork evaluation presents (Forsell et al., 2020). Forsell et al. 2021) contend that it is difficult for teachers to give reliable and fair marks, making groupwork assessments demanding and complicated. Groupwork assessment may be challenging when teachers are not fully prepared for the task (Meijer et al., 2020). Khuzwayo (2018) argues that research findings reveal that when assessment is carried out as a group; rather than by individual group members, results cannot be fully trusted to reflect students' knowledge or abilities truly. The challenges teachers face in groupwork assessment reported by Forsell et al. (2021) are discerning between students' individual knowledge and contribution. This situation may result in marks awarded to undeserving students (Buck, 2021; Khuzwayo, 2018). When groupwork is assigned, teachers may assess the product (the activity or task assigned), the process (individual teamwork skills and interaction), or both (Carnegie Mellon University, 2023). Research shows peer-assessment is frequently used. In contrast, teacher assessment is relatively absent in the literature (Forsell et al., 2020).

Materials and methods

This study explored teachers' ideas of out-of-class teamwork evaluation they usually conduct in the teaching or pedagogy-related classes as part of their regular teaching practices. Hence, a qualitative method was adopted in both the data collection and analysis process.

Twelve content teachers participated in this part of the project; they belonged to 8 different public universities in Mexico. Content classes were related to pedagogy and/or language teaching. Some participants may have provided more than one answer in the type of activities they usually

set for out-of-class groupwork because they may be teaching more than one subject. The years of experience of these teachers range between nine and more than thirty, and they majored or obtained higher degrees in areas such as Language Teaching, Management in Higher Education, and English Language Teaching as an FL, among others.

To learn about participants' usual practices from the teaching perspective, they were interviewed individually and recorded as they responded. This interview, which was previously piloted, consisted of eleven questions, as shown in Table 1 below. Interview data were analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA). TA analyses qualitative data applied to texts, such as interview transcripts. TA allows researchers to "identif(y), analyz(e), and report patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 77).

1.	What kind of teamwork do you assign outside of your class time?
2.	What competences do you expect your students to develop?
3.	How do you encourage students' individual responsibility when doing groupwork?
4.	What strategies do you use to follow up on students' groupwork and prevent difficulties?
5.	What instruments and criteria do you use to evaluate groupwork?
6.	What is a rubric?
7.	How do you grade the out-of-class groupwork process?
8.	Do you give an overall or an individual grade?
9.	What challenges have you faced in evaluating groupwork, and how have you responded to them?
10.	Are you satisfied with the way you evaluate out-of-class groupwork? Why?
11.	Do you think the evaluation strategies you use positively affect students?

Table 1. Questions for the interview.

Interviews were labelled using a T and a number according to the order in which they were collected (e.g., T3 refers to the third interview that took place). Interview transcriptions allowed the researchers to familiarise themselves with the data collected by other researchers.

The data set was uploaded to NVivo, a software for analysing qualitative data. With NVivo, it is possible to organise and identify the most salient themes and relationships in participants' responses.

Each question constituted a theme, organising all the responses to each question in one theme. Data was then read several times for further familiarisation with the data. Each theme was then reread, looking for commonalities among responses. Child nodes were created within themes, i.e., for Q1, Types of activities, two child nodes were created and defined: technology dependent and technology independent. The former was described as activities that are technology-mediated; they require the use of technology, like producing a video. The latter was defined as activities that could or could not use technology, like making a class presentation. This presentation could be aided by technology, like the use of a power-point or could take place without this technological aid.

The data were left unseen for a few weeks. When data was revisited, themes, child nodes, and descriptions were reviewed. Some modifications were made.

Results and discussion

The answers to the questions in Table 1 above will be discussed below, providing relevant excerpts that exemplify or represent participants' responses.

Q1. Types of activities
Within the responses to the first question, it was possible to identify that some of the activities set by teachers for out-of-class groupwork require using technology (a computer with or without the internet). However, technology is an aid in most of the activities teachers mentioned. Even though none of the four teachers who set technology-dependent activities made specific reference to it, the names of the activities indicate their nature. Among the activities mentioned are: the analysis of a website, developing a digital magazine, creating a web quest, producing a video, an electronic portfolio, or a blog. Each activity was mentioned once. Among the non-technology exclusive activities, an oral presentation was the most frequently mentioned (7), followed by microteaching (4) and problem-solving (2). The technology could have supported any of these, such as a PowerPoint presentation or electronic images. Some teachers mentioned that students' presentations resulted from a topic research activity or a reading summary. One of the teachers interviewed during the pandemic mentioned she asked students to analyse a topic, answer some questions and send a report.

Q2. Competences to be developed
The second question aimed to learn about the competences expected to be developed by students while engaged in out-of-class groupwork.

Competences related to groupwork, such as collaboration, flexibility, problem-solving (within group members), information sharing, learning from peers, negotiation, leadership, co-responsibility, tolerance, organising themselves, and respect for others' ideas were some of the groupwork related competences mentioned by eleven teachers as part of their purpose when setting out-of-class groupwork. Some teachers aimed to promote the development of groupwork related competences, as they consider these very important for students to work collaboratively successfully. The following excerpt from T11 exemplifies some of the teachers' comments:

> "…many students say, no, I prefer to work alone... it's because they are not used to, they do not have this ease of working in groups…within the work in a group they have to develop competences, well, for example, empathy, this is an important competence, solidarity, responsibility, which is fundamental in groupwork…(T11)

Some teachers set groupwork activities expecting groupwork-related competences to develop naturally due to the interaction. However, T15 considers that the benefits of working in groups go beyond the mere development of groupwork related competences, as the following excerpt reveals:

> "…collaboration, for example, that they learn to argue, to suggest, learn to contribute to a richer activity outcome than if it is done individually…they have to develop those competences because they complement their personal development." (T15).

This comment suggests that when a task is done in teams, the outcome is better than when students do it on their own, supporting the above idea by Burgess (1994) that more is accomplished when more than one person does the task.

One teacher (T1) said she organised groups taking into account students' abilities so they would complement each other. Four teachers were also interested in the development of competences related to the subject they were teaching. Other teachers also mentioned they were interested in developing non-teacher-dependent competences, such as looking independently for information, being critical about the material they are looking at, and selecting the most appropriate one for a particular situation. These teachers were interested in promoting student autonomy. Finally, one teacher considered that this learning arrangement could contribute to developing students' creativity, something she's interested in enhancing.

Q3. Fostering responsibility

The third question implies that students (or some students) do not participate as equally as other group members; therefore, teachers need to foster student responsibility. Five teachers said their strategy is to create learner awareness by discussing the importance of honesty and responsibility or the advantages of working in groups. Other strategies teachers use to encourage learner awareness; talking about negotiation and its relevance in groupwork. They discuss the importance of exchanging opinions and listening to others, and the value of each group member, how everybody can collaborate for a better outcome.

Four teachers consider assigning roles an excellent way to promote student responsibility, and three consider providing rubrics, which allow students to know what is expected of them, to be helpful. Other things teachers do to foster responsibility are to ask for reports (2), to request evidence that all group members participated equally (2), and to do a teacher intervention (1).

However, not all teachers consider fostering responsibility to be necessary, as the excerpt from T5 exemplifies:

> "I don't consider it relevant to foster it explicitly, given that groupwork in itself implies a level of responsibility" (T1)

Two other teachers also consider students should take charge themselves, so they do not intervene in any way. A fourth teacher has a different reason; she says she does not have time to monitor or do anything to foster student responsibility when doing out-of-class groupwork.

Q4. Follow-up strategies

Teachers were also asked about the follow-up strategies or actions to ensure no problems within groups. Ten teachers said they liked to supervise students' work; they do this in plenary sessions, where doubts were clarified or aspects explained. This whole group feedback session allows the group to benefit from others' questions. Having fixed appointments with group members work better for six teachers, while five teachers prefer to check the group's progress. The difference between the former and the latter is that all group members must attend the session, while the teachers that check progress did not specify this. Three teachers mentioned that during follow-

up, they suggested how to proceed, and one said he assigned roles to ensure everybody had something to do. Three teachers consider asking for evidence of individual participation a good way to check students' contributions. Finally, individual teachers mentioned strategies they used to promote student responsibility: asking students if they had doubts, ensuring students knew the kind of work they were expected to deliver, and intervening if necessary. One teacher said she made sure students knew she could be reached by mail to solve their doubts. Finally, one teacher said his way of doing follow-up was to have students watch their peers' performance.

Q5. Instruments and marking criteria

The fifth question concerns the instruments and criteria for marking students' out-of-class groupwork. Answers address both elements in the question: instruments and criteria. Regarding the instruments used, rubrics were the most popular, as was mentioned by all the teachers participating in the study, followed in popularity by checklists, which were mentioned by 50% of the participants in the study. Autonomy-related instruments were also mentioned. The use of self and peer evaluation was mentioned by 16% of the participants. Concerning the criteria used, 25% of the teachers said they marked both the product and the procedure, and 16% said that for them, the content was as important as the form.

Q6. Meaning of a rubric

As a follow-up to question five, question six asked teachers what a rubric is for them. Two types of answers were identified; one referred to the users, and the other to respondents' understanding of the concept. Fifty per cent of the teachers consider rubrics for the use of teachers. Some of them said they helped them keep the focus on what they asked; otherwise, it could be easy to look for things that were not considered when the task was set. The comment from T4 exemplifies this:

> "That's why they are useful for me, to keep focus because it is very easy to get lost in many things when students are presenting their work. So, rubrics let me focus on the important aspects I previously selected." (T4)

The latter is aligned with Moskal & Leydens' (2000) definition of rubrics, who contended that rubrics are developed by teachers for their use. A smaller percentage (16%) of teachers agree with other scholars like Andrade (2000) and Dawson (2017), who argue rubrics are also helpful instruments for students. T3 stated:

> "It's a group of criteria that both the student and the teacher need to check that the task was fulfilled and it has the required level according to the activity's objective and requirements" (T3)

A third teacher's response (T12) seems to be emphasising that rubrics are for the use of students, as it is shown below:

> "For me, rubrics it's a…a list, a table with different aspects that they (the students) have to fulfil, that they have to fill, very specific aspects which they can use as a guide to complete something successfully" (T12)

These teachers' comments reveal the importance of having guidelines to follow when marking students' papers and how rubrics are helpful for students.
The other type of response refers to what teachers consider rubrics. Ten teachers said that rubrics are a scale evaluation matrix. Most of these teachers mentioned that rubrics allowed them to specify what the students should do and their performance level. T9 referred to the difference between checklists and rubrics.

> "Well rubrics…I think they are more precise than to work with a… what's its name? hum... a checklist." (T9)

Four teachers described rubrics as an evaluation instrument. One of them, T11, mentioned they were useful for evaluating individuals as well as groups; T11 said:

> "Yes, well, as I said, it is an instrument that allows us to appreciate more or less in different types, different forms, or different aspects that allows us to assess students individually or in groups; in this case, it's an instrument that helps us." (T11)

T11 considers a rubric is a flexible tool that allows for assessing different features of individual students and groupwork. Even though not explicitly referring to groupwork, Andrade (2005) discussed how rubrics could be used for different purposes, not only for assessment as participants in this study referred.

Q7. Marking out-of-class groupwork process.

The seventh question assumed teachers marked the process of out-of-class groupwork and asked them how this was done. Seven teachers said they did not mark the

process; they only marked the product. The other half of the teachers said they asked for evidence that they got together (T5) or worked together (T7). T5 asks for progress evidence:

> "Through the progress when they submit and a self-evaluation where they report their collaboration and participation" (T5)

T7's response was related to online work. T7 said:

> "…if it's online, like Google Drive, I check their log history. Check what they did, comments, how often they did it" (T7)

Another way teachers mark the process is through individual reflection (6). Two teachers gave points for attending the session appointed to check on their progress, and one said she monitored students' work but did not specify how this was done.

Q8. Individual or group marking

The next question, question 8, aimed to determine if marking was done individually or if all the group members got the same mark for their work. Three types of responses were identified: both, individual and joint. Nine teachers (75%) said they marked both, said they gave a mark for the group and another to each student, such as T1 exemplifies:

> "The individual process and the general product. If there is a student that got negative feedback in the Google Forms, he will not have the same mark." (T1)

T1 seems to do peer feedback using Google Forms, which he takes into account to assign individual marks to students. If a student receives negative feedback from peers, he will have a lower mark than the rest of the group members. Eight teachers said they marked out-of-class groupwork individually. T15 is an example of why teachers decide to do individual marking:

> "I try to mark it for each student, so it is more objective." (T15)

Some teachers said their way of marking depends on the kind of work delivered. T1's comment below exemplifies the teachers who give a joint mark:

> "In other words, like a video, well, the product does not have names of who did what." (T1)

As T1 cannot know who participated in the elaboration of the video, the same grade, a joint mark, is assigned to all the group members.

Q9. Challenges faced

Question nine asked teachers about the challenges encountered when marking out-of-class groupwork and how they solved them. Ten teachers mentioned they found the level of student responsibility a challenge, as they consider that not all have the same level of commitment, and some students work more than others. There are several ways in which teachers have addressed this issue; they have integrated verbal explanations into the presentations, so the student must demonstrate knowledge about the work they are presenting. Among the teachers who did this, some also mentioned they asked all group members to have an equal amount of time during the verbal explanation and randomly assigned the order of presentation just before the presentation. Another strategy was creating awareness of the importance of their involvement in the activity and their individual presentation. Another teacher mentioned she is still looking for (other) ways to monitor, and T2 said she would like to increase monitoring. Another challenge mentioned by teachers (3) is that sometimes task requirements are not being met. The solution has been to monitor their progress or to give students another opportunity to present their work with a penalty for the mark they can obtain. Three teachers mentioned the lack of groupwork skills. They find that the challenges are that students do not possess the skills to work in groups. They do not have a solution for this; in fact, they are looking for ways to address this issue. A final challenge mentioned by one teacher is grade dissatisfaction. Some students have questioned their team members' marks, arguing they did not work equally as other team members. The solution for this was to change the marking approach.

Q10. Level of satisfaction

Question number ten asked teachers how satisfied they were with the marking process of out-of-class groupwork. All the teachers (12) said they were satisfied, though not all shared their reasons. Among others, T1 mentioned there was less student dissatisfaction with the marks received, and T12 mentioned the time spent marking was reduced (by using rubrics) and felt she was fairer. T3 said using rubrics for groupwork helped see different levels of achievement, and T4 mentioned rubrics helped both she

and the students focus on what's important and identify the elements of the task. Finally, T9 said evidence helped him see who worked and each group member's participation. Some satisfied teachers also said there was still room for improvement. Five teachers said they were not completely satisfied. Their reasons are primarily related to students. However, one teacher said he felt he was the only one making an effort to promote the development of groupwork skills and felt it should be an institutional policy. Other teachers mentioned their dissatisfaction came from the feeling that students do not know how to work in groups and do not really work together. They said students split the task and then put the parts together, but there is not much collaboration or exchange of ideas. Another teacher said she was not satisfied that all students got the same mark because she thought students' contribution was not equal. Finally, another teacher also referred to the level of responsibility of students, mentioning that not all students checked the rubrics when preparing their work.

Q11. Positive effect on students

The last question, question number 11, asked teachers if they thought their evaluation strategies positively affected students. Almost all (11) teachers said they thought their evaluation strategies positively affected students. Only T10 had a different opinion; he stated:

> "I've had negative effects because they tell you, oh, I did the task with So and So, and you gave So and So a 10, and you gave me a 9" (T10)

T10 said he's faced student dissatisfaction, but this seems not frequent. Among the reasons teachers gave regarding the positive effect their evaluation strategies have on students, some mentioned students felt guided; and there was less student dissatisfaction. They also mentioned a rubric is a flexible tool they can use to mark different tasks, and they also help students understand expectations. Teachers also mentioned that responsible students took advantage of self-evaluation, and peer evaluation helped students become aware of peers' contributions to the task.

Conclusions

According to the types of cooperative groups described by Johnson et al. (2014), teachers use formal cooperative learning groups when assigning out-of-class groupwork. Some teachers' responses suggest that the purpose of using groupwork is to support learning, as formal groups do (D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 2014), while the intention

of others is also to contribute to the development of the generic interpersonal competences mentioned by Beinzobas and Barderas (2010) and González et al. (2004). Their purpose may also provide opportunities for more meaningful learning experiences, as mentioned by Entwistle and Waterson (1988), Kremer and McGuinness (1998), and Mcgraw and Tidwell (2001).

Some teachers also seem interested in fostering learner responsibility as they have found it necessary. They have different strategies, like letting students know what is expected of them or asking for evidence they have been working together. Moderating groupwork allows teachers to identify undeserving students, thus, allocating fairer marks to team members (Khuzwayo, 2018). Other teachers do not consider this something they should do. Student responsibility is one of the challenges teachers face when assigning out-of-class groupwork. Some teachers carry out follow-up strategies such as having appointments or checking the group's progress to foster responsibility. Some teachers ensure students know they can ask for help if they have doubts.

Most teachers use a rubric to mark out-of-class groupwork; they prefer it over checklists. These teachers think a rubric is a valuable tool for the teacher, but others think it is also helpful for the learner. Almost half of the participants are only interested in the product of out-of-class groupwork. The rest of the teachers did not expressly state their interest in the process of out-of-class groupwork, but they asked for evidence that they worked together.

The study found that when marking out-of-class groupwork, most teachers give an overall and an individual mark, and fewer teachers give only one mark (an individual or overall mark). According to Forsell et al. (2020), a group grade does not accurately represent each student's performance.

It was also found that, in general, teachers are satisfied with their practices and evaluation of out-of-class groupwork and feel they have a positive effect on students. However, a few consider there is room for improvement. Overall, teachers are interested in assigning reliable and fair marks to out-of-class groupwork (Forsell et al., 2020); they consider this to be achieved using rubrics.

This study explored the surface of teachers' practices when assigning and evaluating out-of-class groupwork. Groupwork assessment is "complex and challenging" (Chiriac et al., 2017a, p. 1); understanding it requires a closer look.

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