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The Impact Of The Calibration Judgements On Approach To Learning In Virtual Environments

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Abstract

E-learning gives students challenges inherent to the system which are reflected in the way these equate learning tasks. In this system, students need greater self-orientation and self-regulation to achieve their academic goals. Calibration is a measure of the relationship between the degree of confidence in the performance and accuracy in the same. This study aims to identify the association between the degree of calibration and a real grade in a evaluative task and analyse the causes given by students to their real grade and implications for their learning future. The participation of 62 undergraduate distance learning students of both sexes, with continuous evaluation, occurred in three specific times. After they know their results, they indicated the implications of this exercise according to how close, or not, they were from the real grade.The results point to a positive correlation between the ratings given by the students after completion of the test and its real grade. The content analysis revealed the existence of two categories - Causality and Consequences. Self-orientation for general or specific objectives, by students, is extremely important. This importance is increased when we are in online contexts where the emphasis is on students as they are responsible for their own learning process. To lead students to reflect on their learning strategy and to adequate their metacognitive strategies to achieve success in the task takes on great relevance.

Keywords: Learning, calibration, metacognition, e-learning; adult learners;

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1. Main text

E-learning has inherent pedagogical and didactic changes, not only in the form of presenting the content, but also in how teachers position themselves according to their group / class. These changes also occur on the side of the student. The flexibility of time and space preconized by an online learning system requires structuring the contents to learn in a way that allows students to be autonomous in their learning. This autonomy implies self-control of learners' time and self-awareness of their way to position themselves in relation to learning tasks so they can achieve success. In the work presented, the focus will be on the side of the learner. We will seek to understand how the calibration task can help students to understand their learning process in a very particular system, as is the case of virtual learning spaces.

1.1. The e-learning: new learning scenarios

E-learning took form with the development of information and communication technologies. These have enabled new learning scenarios to earn their space - the virtual learning environments. This development and adherence to these scenarios was due to the successive changes in societies and the implications that this brings to grow the need for rapid and constant updating of knowledge and competencies.

E-learning allows students anywhere and anytime in the world to access the contents of their education and develop their work and their learning independently. These environments allow the adoption of different formats as a support to learning. For these virtual learning environments become real learning spaces is necessary that the strategies and proposed tasks are designed according to the different styles and approaches to learning of students who recourse to it. Teachers in this education system should have a role of facilitator of learning and of the interactions with the various participants in a particular virtual class. This facilitator role may be, for example, in how the teacher conceives formative tasks to enable the student to find the way that is most "comfortable" for the acquisition of underlying content [1]..

In all this transformation three key concepts to these virtual environments arise: adaptability, mobility and cooperation [2]. The student finds in this format a bigger flexibility, which allows them to reach goals that they couldn't reach in another way. The acquisitions are placed in different levels: At formal knowledge level and at personal level, in the last case, with the development of autonomy, of critical sense and of collaborative work.

The research work of Azevedo & Cromley (2004) [3] points to the implications the design of virtual learning environments has for the acquisition of knowledge. It follows, on one hand, the need of teachers being aware of this situation and look to train their students so they regulate their learning. On the other hand, at the environments' designers level so they conceive structures that allow students to proceed to their learning self-regulation. These capacities correspond to the development of metacognitive activities [4].

1.2. Brief review of the concept of calibration

The self-knowledge, the ability to reflect on your learning process, defining learning objectives, as well as the ability to develop a plan of self-regulation to achieve them are extremely important to achieve academic success. [5]. The understanding of learning activities and processes associated promotes understanding, retention and transfer of learning. The concept of metacognition, points to two poles: The knowledge about cognition and products of cognition and, also, metacognitive skills. Thus, the definition of metacognition not only covers the awareness of the processes of the learner, as well as the deliberate and conscious control of them.

Through the monitoring, the learner can check how their plans become actions and through introspection, which make to their achievements, learners can perceive discrepancies between what were their goals and objectives and what actually exists. The dynamics brought into play between monitoring and control can be illustrated by what is called *calibration*. This can be defined as a measure of the relationship between the degree of confidence in the performance and accuracy of the same [6].

The calibration plays an important role in the educational context. However, there are some factors that affect this meta-understanding. These include over-confidence or lack of confidence of the learner. While in the first case there may be a disinvestment by the student in the learning task, because they assume that they already know and so they do not need to pay much attention. In the second situation, the student may invest excessive time in the analysis of certain subjects / texts, without helping to understand the content and, therefore, to contribute to a better