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Undergraduates' perceptions of an online training to integrate conflicting sources in writing

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Introduction

Integrating conflicting information from multiple sources is an essential skill in today's society. This ability can be developed through tasks such as writing a synthesis after reading sources that present contradictory views about a topic. Elaborating an argumentative text is a demanding task in which undergraduate students have difficulties in expressing their own voice about a topic of discussion (Hyytinen et al., 2016; Mateos et al., 2018).

There is previous research focused on design and apply instructions in virtual environments with university students (Luna et al., 2020; 2023). We have already tested two virtual programs focused on improving synthesis writing skills from reading two sources with contradictory information. One was focused mainly on linguistic aspects of the product while the other was more focused on the processes involved in writing itself. Students in this second condition improved more in their integrative competence. Despite of these results, most of the students were not able to produce highly integrating products. For this reason, in the present study, we developed further into the teaching of the integration process, in order to promote a more significant improvement in the argumentative skills. Specifically, we compared two interventions: one with the help of a guide on the processes involved in writing and another with the guide and also with explicit instruction and modeling. Here, we focus on exploring students' satisfaction with and their perception of usefulness of this last enriched intervention.

Method

Participants

44 students of the Degrees of Psychology and Education of a distance university, who received the guide + explicit instruction and modeling.

Materials and procedure

Pre	Intervention	Post
- Survey on:	MOODLE platform	- Survey on:
▪ Perceived competence regarding argumentation	Instructional video: video lecture with modeling by a teacher and a student	▪ Degree of change in perceived competence regarding argumentation
	Guide with questions on the process argumentation	▪ Evaluation of the aids provided
- PRE Task: write an argumentative synthesis from two contradictory texts on an educational issue (nursery education)	Four short videos-modeling by a teacher and a student about: (1) graphic organizer (2) argumentation (3) conclusion and (4) revision	▪ What they liked and what they wanted to improve
	A graphic organizer (Padlet)	- POST Task: write an argumentative synthesis from two contradictory texts on another educational issue (homework)
	- INTERMEDIATE task: write an argumentative synthesis from two contradictory texts on another educational issue (students' evaluation)	

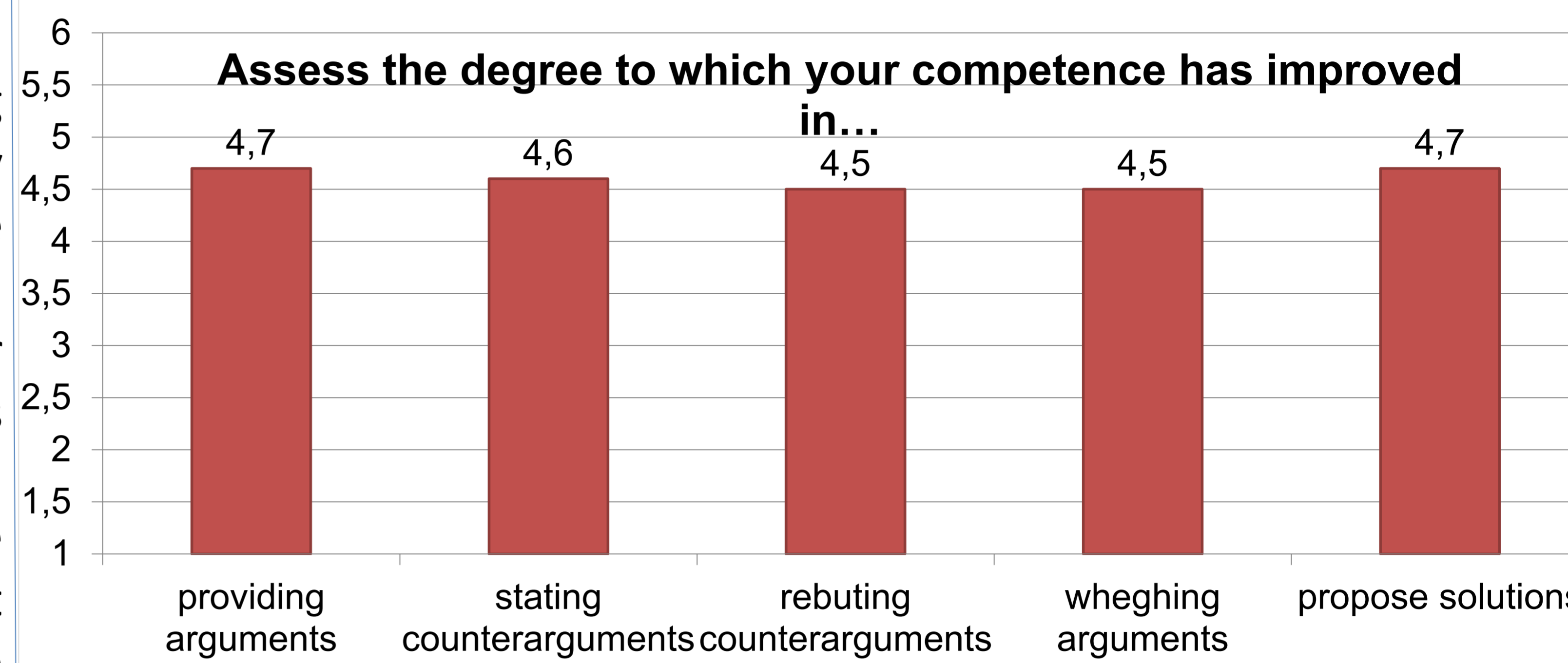
Results

After the intervention, these are the perceptions of the participants in terms of:

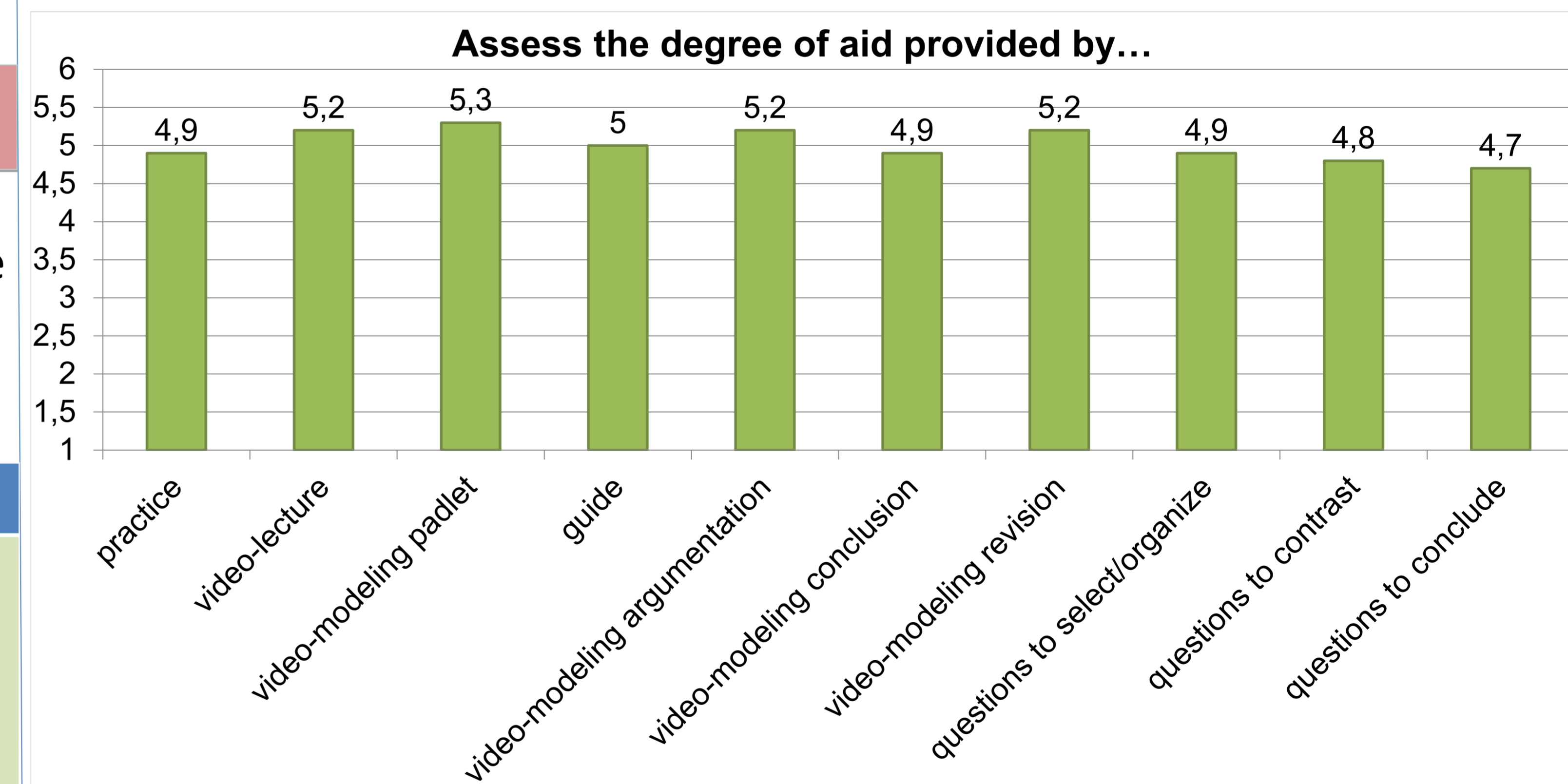
1. Satisfaction (range: 1-10):



2. Skills improvement (range: 1-6)



3. Usefulness of aid (range 1-6):



Conclusions

Participants found the intervention useful and they were very satisfied with it.

Additionally, students assessed positively the aids offered during the intervention, especially the videos- modeling.

The results confirmed, as in Luna et al. (2020; 2023), that this type of intervention in an online context is feasible and useful. Furthermore, these new findings point into the direction that the guide plus the videos modeling may promote improvement on synthesis integration.

As a future line of research, we are already analyzing the impact of this intervention on the quality of the students' argumentative syntheses.

References

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