STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE PEER FEEDBACK AND SELF ASSESSMENT IN EXTENDED SPEAKING COURSE

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Abstract

This study explores ways to engage students in peer feedback and self-assessment on different aspects of their work, from in-class activities to essays, problem sets and presentations in extended speaking course, English education, faculty of teacher training and education, The University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, Indonesia. Sharing the process of giving and receiving feedback with students is beneficial for the learning process as it enables students to take greater ownership of their learning and develop their critical thinking and feedback skills. A crucial factor in the effective use of self-assessment and peer feedback is to ensure that you introduce the idea to students early on in their course. In addition, it is useful to discuss, and revisit regularly, the purpose of the self-assessment or peer feedback activity, to encourage students to view it as an integral part of their learning

Keywords

Peer Feedback, Self-Assessment, and Extended Speaking Course

1. Introduction

A key purpose of Assessment for Learning is to foster student development in taking responsibility for evaluating, judging and improving their own performance. These capabilities are at the heart of autonomous learning and of the graduate qualities valued by employers and in professional practice. Peer feedback, its mean a communication process through which learners enter into dialogues related to performance and standards(Liu & Carless, 2006).

Both in class and out of class there are many opportunities to engage students in peer feedback. Note that peer feedback is about students providing constructive comments on a peer's work; it does not involve awarding of marks but is a formative step prior to submission of a piece of work. There are ten principles of good feedback practice, they are: 1) should be for learning, not just of learning; 2) should be a continous process; 3) should be timely; 4) should relate to clear criteria; 5) should be constructive; 6) should be legible and clear; 7) should be provided on exams; 8) should include self-assessment and peer-to-peer feedback; 9) should be accessible to all students; and 10) should be flexible and suitable to students' needs (The Great NUS Feedback Amnesty, 2006).

A crucial factor in the effective use of self-assessment and peer feedback is to ensure that you introduce the idea to students early on in their course. In addition, it is useful to discuss, and revisit regularly, the purpose of the self-assessment or peer feedback activity, to encourage students to view it as an integral part of their learning.

2. Research Design

In this special issue on some strategies to enhance peer feedback and self assessment in Extended Speaking Course, it presents a selection of strategies that are in some way relevant, directly or indirectly, to enhance peer feedback and self assessment. It is take place in Extended Speaking class in English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty at The University of Muhammadiyah Purwokerto, Indonesia.

Some strategies are particularly suited to younger students, where often the names that teachers have for these strategies provide a 'shorthand' way of communicating to students that they wish them to provide peer feedback, they are: a) Two Stars and a Wish; b) Plus, Minus and What's next?; c) Warm and Cool Feedback; d) Traffic Lights; e) Using Models or Exemplars; f) De Bono's Thinking hats; and g) Using a Rubric

3. Result and or Findings

Some strategies are particularly suited to younger students, where often the names that teachers have for these strategies provide a 'shorthand' way of communicating to students that they wish them to provide peer feedback. For Examples: 1) two stars and a wish; 2) plus, minus, and what's next?; 3) warm and cool feedback; and 4) traffic lights. In addition, teachers of all levels can also use the following strategies: 1) using models or exemplars; 2) De Bono's Thinking hats; and 3) using a rubric.

For younger students, it is easier and more effective to encourage oral rather than written feedback.

3.1 Two Stars and a Wish

Students identify two positive aspects of the work of a peer and then express a wish about what the peer might do next time in order to improve another aspect of the work. 'I want to give you a star for the start of your story and a star for the way you described the house. I wish that you will tell us more about Billy.'

Teachers model this strategy several times, using samples of student work, before asking the students to use the strategy in pairs on their own. They check the process and ask pairs who have implemented the strategy successfully to demonstrate it to the whole group.

3.2 Plus, Minus and what's next?

Students comment on what was done well in relation to the success criteria, and also on what could be done better. This strategy may be better used after the students have become adept at using two stars and a wish. This strategy can also be used as part of self-assessment, where students use 'What's next?' to set a personal learning target.

3.3 Warm and Cool Feedback

When students comment on the positive aspects of a peer's work, they are said to be giving warm feedback, and when they identify areas that need improvement, they are providing cool feedback. They provide hints on 'how to raise the temperature' when they give advice about how their peer could improve their work.

3.4 Traffic Lights

Students green-light (using a green highlighter on the margin of the work) the work of their peer to indicate where the success criteria have been achieved, or amber-light where improvement is needed.

This strategy is best used on a work-in-progress, although it could also be used, with coloured sticky notes, to provide feedback on a final piece of work. The suggestions for improvement would then relate to the next occasion on which the students undertook work which required similar skills - writing or number skills, for example

3.5 Using Models or Exemplars

Teachers demonstrate for students how they can match the work of a peer to an exemplar which most closely resembles its qualities. For example, for young students exemplars of handwriting which reflect a range of qualities (letters on/off line, no spaces/spaces between words, straight/crooked letters, mixture of upper- and lower-case letters etc.) can be displayed in the classroom and students asked to match the handwriting of the peer with the appropriate exemplar.

Students explain to the peer why they have selected this particular exemplar and, using other exemplars, explain what the peer needs to do in order to improve his/her handwriting.

Exemplars of various products (written and 3-D) can be displayed in the classroom for use both by individuals to self-assess and also by peers to provide feedback. If there is concern that providing a model will lead to copying or stifle imagination and creativity, the teacher might consider providing exemplars of parts of the product - for example, an effective introduction or an interesting use of media in an artwork.

When employing exemplars as a self-assessment strategy, students use the exemplars to help them articulate what changes they need to make to their own work in order to achieve the success criteria.

3.6 De Bono's thinking hats

Because the Thinking hats encourage thinking from different perspectives, they can be used to focus students' feedback to their peers. Again, teachers model the use of the Thinking hats and train students in their use before asking them to use the hats as one of the peer feedback strategies.

The Yellow hat, for instance, encourages students to think about the 'good points' and to ask themselves questions such as 'Why will this work?' The Black hat urges caution and evaluation: 'Is this true? What are the weaknesses?' while the Green hat encourages creative thinking: 'Is there another way of doing this?' 'What would be better?' 'How else can this be done?'

Giving different students different hats can make peer feedback more focused and manageable for younger students. That way, each individual doesn't have to consider every aspect of the peer feedback but can concentrate on just one.

3.7 Using a Rubric

For larger assessment activities conducted over a period of time, the rubric, which has been negotiated with students at the beginning of the task, can be used as the basis for paired discussions about progress. If students are very clear about the qualities of work implied by the various levels of performance described on a rubric, they can provide useful feedback to their peers.

If rubrics are to be (a) designed so they do capture the difference between levels of performance and (b) used effectively by students not only as a peer feedback tool but also as a self-assessment tool, then students need explicit teaching so they understand the differences between, for example, work which lists benefits as opposed to work which describes those benefits or explains them or evaluates them. An understanding of the language used by the rubric is essential.

Helping students to decide how this rubric would be applied to a model letter would be a valuable learning activity. The teacher: a) shows students a model of a letter written in response to this task; b) goes through the language of the rubric with the students, unpacking any terms that they do not understand; and c) involves students in the process of using the rubric to provide feedback on the model letter.

4. Discussions

4.1 Engaging Students in Self-Assessment

(Boud, 1995) said that Whenever we learn we question ourselves. How am I doing? Is this enough? Is this right? How can I tell? Should I go further? In the act of questioning is the act of judging ourselves and making decisions about the next step. This is self-assessment. And how does self-assessment support students' learning?

- It enables students to take responsibility for their learning and positions the assessment task as being for learning.
- It allows students to engage in critical self-reflection on their own learning, that is an essential aspect of their academic and personal development.

- It provides explicit opportunities for students to reflect on their presentations, essays and problem sets, and allows them to critically engage with their work, identifying strengths as well as areas for further development.

- It enhances students' ability to self-regulate their learning by allowing them to assess their own work and understand how to close the gap from current to desired performance. This is crucial in developing students as independent critical thinkers. Both in class and out of class there are many opportunities for engaging students in self- assessment. These include using checklists, cover sheets and feedback requests for self- assessment prior to submission.

Table 1.1: *Engaging Students' in Self-Assessments*

Numbers	Methods	Explanation
	Using Checklists	
	Process	Rationale
1.	Students are asked to check their own work against a checklist developed from the assignment guidelines and to submit it together with the assignment.	• A checklist requires the students to verify that they have met the basic criteria for the piece of work, whether a written assignment or presentation. • A student checking their own work prior to submission ensures engagement with the assignment guidelines. • A checklist encourages students to recognise the different elements of the assessment.
	Using Cover Sheets	
	Process	Rationale
2.	Students are asked to respond to a range of self-reflective questions on their assignment, identifying how and where in the assignment they have responded to the list of marking criteria.	• A range of self-reflective questions on the piece of work in question ensures the basic criteria are met. • It encourages students to identify where they believe their strengths and weaknesses lie and where they think they need to improve in the future. • Giving the students the opportunity
		to engage directly with the criteria allows them to focus on what they need to do to enhance the quality of their work and be more self-aware of the assessment process and their own learning.
	Feedback Requests	

	Process	Rationale
3.	Students are asked to identify one or two specific areas they would like feedback on. This can be added to the checklist and/or the cover sheet or used as a standalone activity.	• Students are encouraged to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their own piece of work prior to submission, • Students take responsibility for their learning by identifying the specific areas on which they require feedback. • Specific feedback requests from students enable the assessor to give targeted feedback to individual students as well as identify common strengths and areas of concern.

4.2 Peer Feedback

By peer feedback we mean a communication process through which learners enter into dialogues related to performance and standards. But how does peer feedback support students' learning?

- It enables the development of critical reflection skills and the ability to give constructive feedback to peers.

- It enables students to gain initial feedback on their work, and in a timely manner, that they can respond to in future assignments.

- It enables students to engage with assessment criteria and internalize them for application in their own work (Liu & Carless, 2006).

Table 1.2: *Engaging Students' in Peer Feedback*

Numbers	Methods	Explanation
	Cover Sheets	
	Process	Rationale
1.	• Students are asked to use an expanded cover sheet which includes a range of reflective questions on a piece of	• The peer discussion enables students to develop critical reflection skills as well as engaging them more fully

	work. • They discuss with each other the relative strengths and weaknesses of their submission, and where they need to improve in future. • They can also be asked to annotate their cover sheets with the comments they receive from their peers and even to suggest how they will respond.	with the marking criteria for assessed work. • The articulation of the feedback, be it written or verbal, provides an opportunity for students to evaluate their on-going learning process.
2.	**Feedback requests**	
	Process	Rationale
	Students are asked to identify one or two specific areas they would like feedback on for a particular piece of work from a peer or peer study group. This may include an essay, a presentation, a problem set and/or a research proposal.	• Students engage in a peer dialogue around specific aspects of their work that they would like feedback on. • The discussion develops students' ability to give constructive feedback to peers.
3.	**Feedback Requests**	
	Process	Rationale
	Students are asked to develop the criteria by which formative assignments (e.g. a presentation, a poster presentation or a blog or web-derived bibliography) are assessed, either by peer(s) and/or the teacher	This allows students to clarify expectations on a given assignment, encouraging students to take responsibility for their learning.

4.3 Benefits

According to Atay and Kurt, there are effects on adopting peer feedback in class. First, it provides diversity with teaching compared with the traditional way of giving teacher feedback. In peer feedback session, students do not just listen to teacher' instructions, but work with their peers to do more practices in writing. In this case, students' anxiety becomes lower and learning motivation can be higher.

Second, sharing opinions with peers is helpful in building and increasing one's confidence. Clearly expressing what one is trying to say requires confidence and sufficient knowledge; people need to self dress what to say with their own knowledge or experiences. Thus, giving useful feedback definitely strengthens one's confidence. Moreover, peer feedback helps student to take more responsibilities in learning process. Besides doing assignments,

students have to read others' work carefully as well so that one is not only responsible for his/her own work but also the others'.

When peer feedback is established it allows students to interact with their peers and creates high social skills while learning material more effectively. Interaction with other students allows students to have better social approaches when interacting. Learning by peer feedback gives students more of an opportunity to work as a unit instead of individuals working alone. Working in groups gives students more useful life skill that well help prepare them for the future. Peer feedback gives more control to the student, the student can decide if they want to use the criticism their peers are giving them or not. When given options more students are more likely to give and absorb more feedback. Peer feedback has confirmed an increase in affect; students that have increasing responsibilities have more drive towards their work and a spike in confidence.

In addition, peer feedback reduces writing anxiety especially in ESL students and in effect improves the quality of their writing. Student's awareness of their mistakes through their friend's opinions and the collaboration reduces anxiety. Peer feedback enlightens student's awareness of the similar difficulties and weaknesses in writing their peers encounter and eventually motivates and builds their self-confidence, reducing writing anxiety. Peer feedback effectively compliments teacher feedback for quality writing According to Jahin (2012) ESL students enjoy "social, cognitive, affective, and methodological benefits." Peer feedback thereby offers students a sense of audience, which increases their motivation and confidence in writing. The multiple reviews through peer feedback improve the quality of the ESL student's writing. Peer feedback can skill students into excellent writers as student's apprehension to write the first time, eventually melts away (Hussein & Al Ashri, 2013).

4.4 Limitations

However, there are some drawbacks of peer feedback, too. According to Connor and Asenavage's study in 1994, they found that teacher feedback has more influences on students' writing work. Only 5 percent of peer feedback influences the work. Students respect and respond more to their teacher's feedback rather than their peers' feedback, and they often take peer feedback for granted so that they do not make corrections based on it. Thus, the teachers' strict requirement on students to do revisions is crucial for how students treat either teacher feedback

or peer feedback.

In addition, some students actually lack ability to give peer feedback owing to insufficient knowledge. In this case, students hardly learn from others, so peer feedback loses track of its original rationale to help the other get improvement.

5. Conclusions

Many of the above suggestions for feedback can be supported online through Moodle. Examples of whole or sections of essays (strong, average and weaker ones) can be posted on Moodle for students to peer-mark or discuss using the forum options. Alternatively, students can post their essays on Moodle and other students can be asked to comment on them using a cover sheet to frame the feedback. Some class time can be spent reviewing the comments. Moodle allows students to continue the process' of active learning outside the classroom.

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