

Pigeonhole Questions and Comments

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Q: Were students instructed specifically on HOW TO PROVIDE peer feedback in a constructive manner?

You raise an important issue that has implications for classroom practices and future research (Topping, 2010). We recognize the importance of giving students examples of effective peer feedback before they provide comments on classmates' work. Since this was a new iteration of the class project we were not able to provide examples of students' constructive feedback for them to review prior to commenting on the drafts of the essay and oral presentation as well as the first of the two interviews. However, the instructor explained to students that their feedback must help their peers to improve the content of the final essay, second interview, and oral presentation.

Q: What is your view on the immediacy of peer feedback? Should written peer feedback be done on the spot or as part of out-of-class activities?

Overall, findings from previous research on the influence of immediate and delayed feedback on learning outcomes are inconclusive (Shute, 2008). As such, this issue still needs to be addressed (Turner & Purpura, forthcoming). We plan to continue to examine the role of the timing of peer feedback and other factors on students' intercultural learning in future work.

For intercultural learning, Scarino (2009) recommended that teachers should understand how students' interpretation and meaning making develop over time. Blogs and other web tools can archive students' interpretations and analyses of cultural themes longitudinally, and we believe that these tools could be effective for promoting intercultural learning. Students need time to reflect on cultural topics discussed in peers' assignments (see Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013, Ch. 4 for a discussion of the processes involved in students' intercultural learning), and then they can provide feedback instead of providing immediate feedback during class activities. Teachers also can incorporate peer feedback from web tools (e.g. blogs, wikis, discussion forums) into classroom (face-to-face) activities (see Van Deusen-Scholl, Frei, & Dixon, 2005).

References

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