Title: The use of self and peer evaluation in a large university ELP

Abstract

The use of self and peer evaluation in university English language programs can offer many significant benefits, including the promotion of critical thinking and student autonomy, as well as helping to integrate a curriculum. Instructors who make use of self and peer evaluation in their classrooms, however, are also aware of potential problems, such as students over or under evaluating their own work, or giving bad or incorrect advice to their peers. This presentation looks at how self and peer evaluation are used in one large university ELP, and how these problems are addressed in the teaching methodology. The presenter explains and provides examples of the self and peer evaluation forms used in the program.

The English curriculum at Kwansei Gakuin's School of Policy Studies (SPS) is a required two year coordinated program, in which students take four koma of English courses each semester. Students learn basic principles of self and peer evaluation in their first year and utilize these skills to evaluate their written work, group discussions, homework, and presentations. In the second year, self and peer evaluation becomes more complex and requires students to assess their work over a broader range of criteria. Moreover, the quality of student's evaluations is often evaluated by instructors and factored into students' grades for the course, thus giving the evaluation assignments more weight and importance in the grading process.

Instructors at SPS have found that doing self and peer evaluation helps students think independently and become proficient at applying criteria to evaluate their work. These positive outcomes of self and peer assessment have broad support in the research literature. Bruffee (1999) and Faigley (1989), among others, argue that self and peer evaluation help students internalize criteria for evaluation and think independently.
Students in the SPS English program consistently demonstrate that they achieve this, and also consistently report on course evaluations that they learn from both giving and receiving peer evaluation. At the same time, it is also apparent that not all students put the same effort into self and peer evaluations, or profit from peer comments. By using methods that hold students more accountable for their work and that integrate self and peer evaluation more closely into the curriculum, many of these problems can be overcome.

References
