Implementing Peer Feedback in Collaborative Writing Assignment

Xiaowen Xu, Instructor, The Department of Asian Studies

Bosung Kim, Educational Consultant, Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology

Trish Varao-Sousa, SoTL Specialist, Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology

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Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. List several benefits and challenges in using peer feedback and group work;
2. Consider some strategies in using peer feedback and group work;
3. Describe how peer feedback can be integrated into collaborative group work; and
4. Consider how peer feedback can be integrated into the collaborative assignment of their own course

Course Background

- Course: CHIN 461 2019W1 Early Classical Chinese Poetry I

- Students: 59 undergraduates from across disciplines

- Course delivery mode: Face-to-face + online components

- Class meetings: twice a week, 1.5 hours/session, 13 weeks

- Course/Assignment goals:

Develop and articulate arguments in standard Chinese in a research paper about the impact of specific poets/poems/poetic styles from the beginning to the 3rd century on the pre-modern Chinese poetry tradition.

Why did we decide to use a peer feedback integrated group writing assignment?

- decrease the workload for instructors while still reaching the learning goals

- transform classroom from instruction-centered to learning-centered

  "....the chief agent in the process is the learner." (Barr and Tagg, 1995)

- multiply sources of feedback to students

  "…students are not just learning by constructing meaning from feedback provided by others, rather they are learning by constructing feedback 'meanings' themselves ."(Nicol 2011)

- encourage peer communication in a class of high enrolments

  "....a reflective process, where they use the feedback they generate for others to update their thinking about their own assignment." (Nicol, Thomson and Breslin, 2013)

Discussion: Some challenges with the use of peer feedback and group work

To Session Participants:

- What challenges have you faced when considering a group project?
- What challenges have you faced when considering peer feedback

Challenges with the use of peer feedback integrated group work

- What are realistic and effective timelines for the assignment?
- What steps are involved in peer feedback integrated assignment?
- How to communicate this complex assignment to students?
- How to prepare students for peer feedback activity?
- How to ensure individual accountability?

Instructional Strategies

Skills that students need to develop:

Academic writing skills, Library skills, Teamwork skills, Peer review skills

Instructional (Teaching/Learning) Activities:

- Modeling critical reading/analysis/research skills throughout term
- In-class small group discussions
- In class (initial) group meetings → (Team) work plan document
- Modeling/guiding feedback giving/receiving → Instructor's feedback on short analysis paper, Reviewer's worksheet, Rubrics, Peer feedback guidelines

Peer-review integrated group writing project

5. Inter-group Reviews, 5%, Wednesday, November 27

Each Group will form a peer-review partnership with another group and review each other's group draft using Review Worksheet. The students will have in-class review sessions of each other's group project draft under the instructor's supervision. This is to help the students practice critical analysis skills through reviewing peers' work. You must come to the class on November 28 for the inter-group review session to get the full mark on this assignment.

Addressing LO2 and LO3.

6. Group Project, 40%, multiple submissions

The students will be divided into 10 groups on Thursday, October 17. Each group has 6 members. Together they will work on a final project on a topic given by the instructor or a topic they choose with the instructor's approval.

The project includes 4 major parts and below is the submission schedule:

- Work plan due 11 PM, Thursday, October 24.
- First draft due 11 PM, Thursday, November 14.
- Final draft due 11 PM, Friday, December 6.
- Self and peer evaluation of group work contribution due 11 PM, Friday, December 6.

Addressing LO2 and LO3.

Assessment Timeline

Course Topics ▶	Module 1: Shijing			Module 2: Chu Ci			Module 3: Han Yuefu			Module 4: Nineteen Ancient Poems				
Assessment for Learning ▼	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14
In-class Exams for Modules using Lock Down Browser (the first Tuesday of the Module)				Module 1 Exam			Module 2 Exam			Module 3 Exam			Module 4 Exam	
Short Analysis 1. Draft submission 2. Final submission					draft submission		final submission							
Group Essay 1. Work plan submission 2. Draft submission 3. In-class peer review session 4. Final submission 5. Self & Peer evaluation of group work contribution							Group project begins	1. Work plan submission (due:)			2. Draft submission (due:)		3. inter group peer review (Due:) In-class peer review session ( )	4. Final submission (Due:) 5. Self & Peer evaluation (Due:)

9

Transparent Assignment Design

Refer to making learning process more explicit for students by clearly communicating the **purpose**, **task** and **criteria for success**

Here are how we did it:

- Highlighted what are expected, and how those will benefit students' learning
- Described all of the tasks involved in each step clearly
- Provided criteria for success in advance
- Debriefed how the students did assignments in class

Inter-Group Peer Reviews

→ Currently no feature that support this arrangement

This is how we did:

Submission Guidelines

The group should work together and the member in charge of submission should submit the draft TWO locations in Canvas:

- Canvas assignment submission tool (for instructor grading)
- Group essay draft sharing space (for inter-group peer reviews)

Intra-Group Peer Reviews

Peer Reviews

☑ Require Peer Reviews

How to Assign Peer Reviews

○ Manually Assign Peer Reviews

◉ Automatically Assign Peer Reviews

Reviews Per User

> 0

Assign Reviews

> [   ] 📅

Must come after due date. If blank, uses due date.

☐ Allow intra-group peer reviews

Anonymity

☑ Peer Reviews Appear Anonymously

In group assignments, if you wish to filter out members of the same group when automatically assigning the peer review to an **individual** → check 'Require Peer Reviews'

Intra-group peer reviews → will disregard student group association when automatically assigning the peer review

12

iPeer

iPeer is an application which can be used to have students to evaluate own (self) and peer's **contribution** on the group work.

- Use of rubric
- Anonymous evaluation within groups
- These anonymized evaluations can then be shared with the evaluated student or kept confidential between the evaluator and instructor.

Evaluation reports (student feedback)

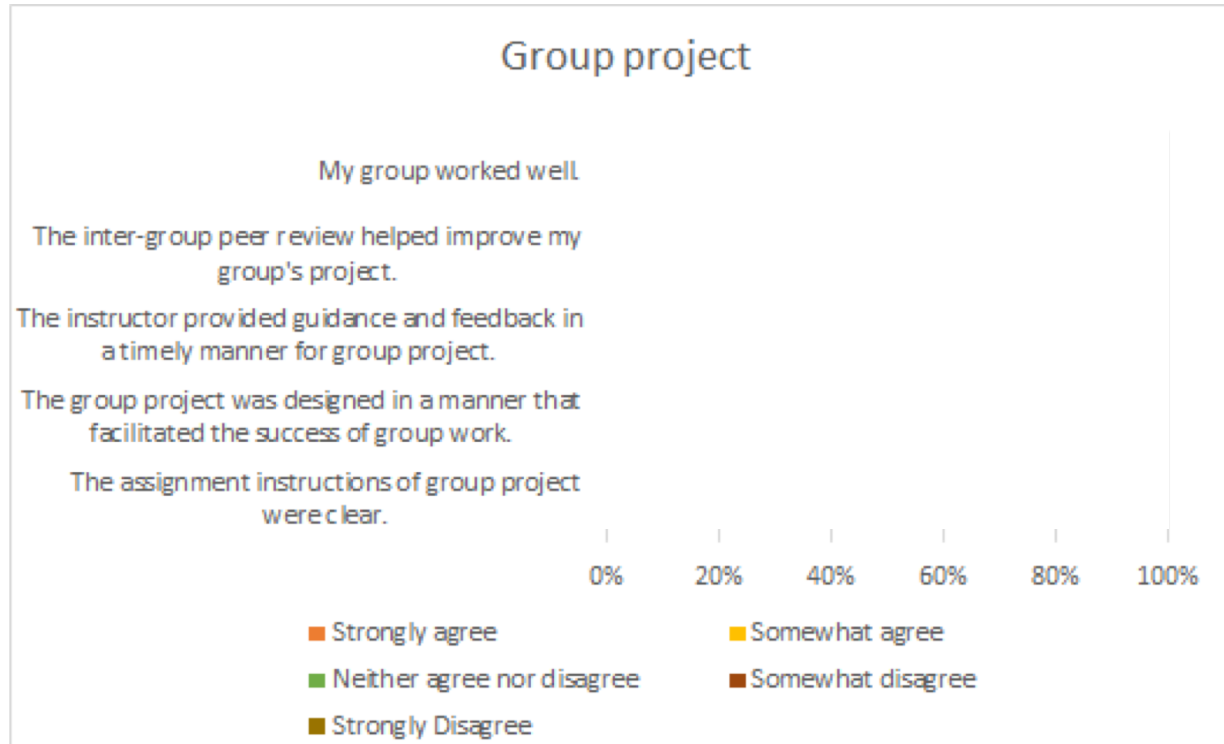Student perceptions and experience with the peer-feedback and collaborative paper were evaluated in two ways:

1. An online survey

1. Brief in-person interviews

Evaluation reports (Survey)

Group project

- My group worked well.
- The inter-group peer review helped improve my group's project.
- The instructor provided guidance and feedback in a timely manner for group project.
- The group project was designed in a manner that facilitated the success of group work.
- The assignment instructions of group project were clear.

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Evaluation reports (Survey - Qualitative Feedback)

- The group project was reported as one of the most liked aspects of the course.
- Students appreciated:
  - getting good comments
  - making friends
  - having group discussions
  - improvement of teamwork skills
- Students reported issues with:
  - working with teammates

Evaluation reports (Interviews)

✓

- Teams worked well
- It was less work than writing an individual essay
- Peer-feedback helped with missed ideas
- Peer-reviewing helped with ideas for own paper

✗

- Difficult to encourage participation from all members
- Hard finding time to meet
- Work was not always equally allocated
- Different paper topics made it hard to provide/receive feedback

UBC

Lesson Learned (Instructor Reflection)

Difficult to encourage participation from all members

   instructor's presence and intervention in the group project

Hard finding time to meet

   reserved class meeting time for group meetings

occasionally

Work was not always equally allocated

   instructor's presence and intervention in the group project

Different paper topics made it hard to provide/receive feedback

   intentionally designed by the instructor

Evaluation reports (Action Plan)

Plan of action based on feedback

- Frame the purpose of the writing assignment: explain why working as a group is better than individually (*is there research literature to support this?*)

- More information on the benefit of the peer feedback assignment: explain why a different perspective could strengthen the paper (*is there research literature to support this?*)

- Provide guidelines on group roles: not only having a group leader, but different ways to consider splitting the work (e.g., one struggled because only one person was in charge of all writing)

- Strategies for effective communication within team

- Consider smaller groups to allow for easier idea integration and time management

Evaluation reports (student feedback)

How did the evaluation address concerns of peer-feedback?
- Concern 1: Free-riding
  - only a few students indicated issues with group cohesion
- Concern 2: Lack of skill to provide appropriate feedback
  - instructor modelled good feedback with short analysis paper
  - having students work in groups to provide feedback meant that between 4-6 people had to agree on the provided feedback (prioritize items)
  - students stated that the feedback from the other group gave them new perspectives on their paper
- Concern 3: Careful planning required
  - students unanimously agreed that the instructions provided by the instructor were clear
  - provide guidelines for how to split the work among group members

Small group activity

- Discuss major challenges in using peer feedback and group work
- Discuss possible solutions for the challenge

In a few minutes, we will ask you to report out 1 or 2 challenges and solutions that stood out from your conversation. Please nominate a spokesperson.