

Please note! This is a self-archived version of the original article.

Huom! Tämä on rinnakkaistalenne.

To cite this Article / Käytä viittauksessa alkuperäistä lähdettä:

Leikomaa, M. & Saarinen, K. (2022) New methods for assessment, evaluation and feedback. TAMK-konferenssi – TAMK Conference 2022. Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulun julkaisuja, Erillisjulkaisuja, s. 44-48.

URL: <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-7266-66-3>

Marianna Leikomaa, lehtori, Pedagogiset ratkaisut ja kulttuuri, Kielet ja viestintä, Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu

Kirsi Saarinen, lehtori, Pedagogiset ratkaisut ja kulttuuri, Kielet ja viestintä, Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu

Keywords: Assessment, feedback, language teaching, TAMK conference

New methods for assessment, evaluation and feedback

TAMK language teachers chose assessment, evaluation, and feedback as their development topics for the year 2021. The teachers were first offered videos and articles on various assessment, evaluation and feedback methods, and then encouraged to try them in practice. At the same time, a small-scale survey was sent to all language teachers where they could mention the kinds of assessment, evaluation, and feedback methods they would be interested in learning more about and what kinds of methods they might be interested in trying. The results were used when planning the materials to be shared. The teachers were also asked to share their experiences with each other, which resulted in a large collection of new feedback and evaluation methods for others to try as well.

Background

For the year 2021 TAMK language and communication teachers were asked to come up with a topic to work on together in a team. Teachers chose to focus on assessment and feedback. This development work became one of the performance objectives (TASO) to be concentrated on during 2021.

TAMK language and communication teachers are interested in the development of their own work. In addition to participating in national projects e.g., Recognition of prior learning (Mällinen & Piirainen 2013); Digijoujou (2017–2019) and KiVAKO (2018–2021), teachers themselves have been active in the development of language education. They have, for example, created learning material together and promoted co-teaching

successfully as an educational method that involves two or more language and communication teachers working together. Focusing on assessment and feedback was a natural continuum in the language and communication teachers' cooperation concerning the development of language teaching at the same time providing teachers an opportunity to learn.

The process

In practice, two teachers in charge of the process started by gathering resources about assessment and new ways of feedback. The resources were shared on a weekly basis to the entire team through a dedicated Teams channel. This enabled everybody to study the materials in their own time, and to focus on the aspects they found the most relevant to their own work. The materials consisted of both articles and videos and included both Finnish and English sources. Language and communication teachers, for example, reviewed their knowledge on assessment literacy (e.g., Atjonen 2020a). They also familiarized themselves with the changes to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (e.g., Council of Europe 2020; Opetushallitus 2018). Teachers also concentrated on the core concepts of assessment and evaluation (e.g., Atjonen 2020b) as well as on the characteristics of good student feedback (e.g., Watson 2013; Riih , Mankki & Samppala 2019).

In addition, the development work was tied to a Master's thesis done in the Master's Degree of Educational Development where the thesis writer, Niina Kovalainen, studied the language assessment feedback process at TAMK and created a Toolkit for the language teachers to utilize. Due to time constraints, there has not yet been a possibility to test the Toolkit, but it will be offered to all language teachers in 2022. Despite its focus on language learning, the Toolkit created by Kovalainen could be applied in other subjects as well.

After the summer break in 2021, language and communication teachers had a team meeting. Teachers were given three separate presentations related to assessment and feedback by other team members. The topics were as follows: A few approaches to assessment, Facilitating assessment and feedback through digital tools, and Podcasts in assessment. The purpose of these presentations was to act as impetus for their assessment and feedback experiments.

Examples of methods

The teachers tried many different feedback and assessment methods during 2021. Due to space constraints, only a few will be described here.

In an English course for nursing students, the teachers asked students to carry out online consultations in pairs. The students took on the roles of a nurse and a patient, and instructed each other in a video session about a home care related topic. The sessions were not recorded, but instead the students wrote down their experiences in a form which was given to the teachers. The form included both peer and self-assessment. The students enjoyed this type of work a lot, and some even expanded their tasks outside their own study group and instructed their friends and family.

In the Degree Programme in Business Information Systems, two English teachers tried peer evaluation with the focus on participation and group work. The students were given a longer text to read at home, and in the classroom they worked in small groups to create a small poster and presentation about the topic. After the group work, the students evaluated each others' teamwork effort on the scale of 1–5 using small survey papers (one for each of the team members to be evaluated). The evaluation topics were: preparation, collaboration, ideas, language use (i.e., not using Finnish), effort and overall grade. The students gave the evaluation papers directly to the person they evaluated, so the aim was to both learn peer evaluation and also to receive peer evaluation. The experiment was very small, due to time constraints, but the students seemed to enjoy having to think a little about both their own work in a team as well as others'.

In a Finnish communication course, a teacher gave students well-written essays to read and to compare with the evaluation criteria of the course. The students focused on what was required to reach different grades and how the essays matched the grades given. After this, the students wrote their own essays, as part of the course evaluation. The teacher noticed that the number of mistakes in the final essays was noticeably lower than in previous years, and thus required far less work from the teacher in the correction and feedback part of the assessment process.

Conclusion

Despite not being able to meet in person, due to the pandemic, many teachers collaborated on their feedback and assessment experiments. The sharing of knowledge, both in Teams and in team meetings, felt important and useful, and many mentioned their interest in trying the methods others had tried and introduced to the team. It was also nice to see that most of the team members tried something new, despite being very busy and having to deal with the pandemic and all the troubles it caused.

The work will continue in the future as well. The language teachers have now at their disposal many new methods, which have already been tried by their colleagues as well as a wide-ranging theoretical material bank in Teams. The teachers have also expressed interest in developing the methods they tried themselves further. Sharing both what works as well as what does not work were also seen as important parts of developing assessment, evaluation and feedback.

As the size of the student groups continues to grow while simultaneously the resources are being cut, new ways of assessment and giving feedback must be found, in order to lessen the teachers' already large workload. While no peer-assessment or feedback method can replace the expertise of the teachers, they can be used to supplement the students' learning experience.

Sources

Atjonen, P. 2020a. "Opettajien arviointiosaaminen." YouTube video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubCKCYKPIX8>

Atjonen, P. 2020b. "Arvioinnin ydinkäsitteiden äärellä." YouTube video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-XuNJ2FG5I>

Council of Europe. 2020. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion volume. PDF document.

Digijoujou-hanke. Digiä ja joustoa suomen ja ruotsin opiskeluun. <http://digijoujou.blogspot.com/>

KiVAKO-hanke. Kielivarannon vahvistaminen korkeakoulussa. <http://www.kivako.fi/>

Kovalainen, N. 2022. Developing the Evaluation of Language Courses: Towards Student-Centredness. Educational Leadership. Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

Mällinen, S. & Piirainen, E. 2013. AHOT korkeakoulussa. Kielet ja viestintä. Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulun julkaisuja. Sarja B. Raportteja 56. Available: <http://julkaisut.tamk.fi/PDF-tiedostot-web/B/56-AHOT-korkeakouluissa.pdf>

Opetushallitus. 2018. Kielten oppimisen, opettamisen ja arvioinnin yhteinen eurooppalainen viitekehys. Täydentävä osa ja lisäkuvaimet. Tiivistelmä. PDF document.

Räihä, P., Mankki, V. & Samppala, K. 2019. Kirjallisen palautteen merkitys yliopisto-opiskelijalle. Yliopistopedagogiikka. <https://lehti.yliopistopedagogiikka.fi/2019/08/12/kirjallisen-palautteen-merkitys/>

Watson, G. 2013. "Characteristics of Good Student Feedback." YouTube video. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=HujuoxwNFKU>