



Designing Educational Experiences to Foster Creative Thinking: Implementation and Evaluation of the “Thirty-Five” Game

Saki Inoue¹, Kazutoshi Sumiya²

Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan

Abstract

This study examines the implementation of the “Thirty-Five” activity in Japanese higher education, evaluating its pedagogical effectiveness and potential refinements for fostering creative thinking. The activity aims to enhance students’ idea generation and evaluative skills through interactive peer assessment. Participants initially write down their own ideas and brief explanations. These ideas are then randomly exchanged among the group. Working in pairs, students explain the ideas they have received in their own words and jointly allocate a total of seven points between the two ideas (e.g., 6 and 1, or 5 and 2). This process is repeated five times, resulting in a maximum possible score of 35 points per idea. To improve the educational value of the activity, two key modifications were introduced: (1) prohibiting equal point allocations (e.g., 3 and 4) to encourage more decisive evaluative judgements, and (2) requiring students to incorporate their own opinions when explaining others’ ideas. The impact of these adjustments was analysed using performance scores and post-activity questionnaires. Findings indicate that the modifications elicited notable cognitive and emotional shifts in students’ evaluative and explanatory behaviours, promoting reflective judgement and active engagement. Open-ended responses revealed heightened awareness of evaluation criteria, peer perspectives, and justification practices. These outcomes suggest that “Thirty-Five” serves as a promising pedagogical tool for cultivating creative and dialogic thinking in higher education.

Keywords: Active learning; Dialogic learning; Educational information design; Educational technology; Peer assessment