

UDC 159.9

FEEDBACK AS ESSENTIAL PART OF COMMUNICATION

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In the article the author analyzes the importance and necessity of feedbacks, their kinds and some suggestions in giving effective feedback to be taken into consideration.

Key words: feedback, communication, assessment, positive, constructive, praising, motivation, improving.

Feedback is an essential part of communication. In its absence, communication can't possibly be effective. It is the only way to appraise whether the message has been decoded correctly or not. Feedback in education helps both students and teachers strengthen the learning process and can help students to improve the chances of their success. Feedback can also be very motivating and energizing. People like to feel involved and identified with their organization. The term 'feedback' is used to describe the helpful information or criticism about some definite action or behavior of an individual, communicated to another individual or a group who can use that information to improve current and future actions and behavior. Giving students feedback in the classroom during the learning process has been proven to increase learning and improve student outcomes. There are different types of feedback: positive, constructive (corrective). Positive feedback tells us that everything is going well. Constructive (corrective) feedback tells that we something is not done as it is expected. Correctly given feedback guides students in their learning process and gives them the direction they need to reach the aim of the lesson. Feedback shows students that the instructor cares about the learning taking place. It also helps student to become more engaged in the classroom.

The feedback is appropriate for where students currently are in their learning. Effective feedback need to be:

1. Clear. Effective feedback is possible if the recipient understands the message communicated to him/her properly. The message should be simple. When giving feedback one must focus on behavior not person.

2. Well-timed. Feedback should be given in proper time. But much delayed feedback may not be worthwhile or even may not serve any purpose at all. It should be made within a reasonable time.

3. Specific. Feedback, to be effective, should be particular or specific. A generalized opinion is of little value. To a specific question, specific answer should be given.

When giving feedback it is very important to start with something positive. Next should be some constructive (correcting) idea. The final sentences should be positive too. Feedbacks are given for development, not for hurting someone.

4. Informative. The sender of a message expects from the receiver some information in the form of feedback which the sender does not already know. So to make feedback effective, it should be informative.

There are several ideas that should be taken in consideration when dealing with feedback:

Timing. Students need to receive the feedback so there is still time for them to use it towards the target. Feedback can be immediate, during an activity, or delayed, at the end of an activity.

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Amount. Feedback should correct major issues. Feedback should provide students a guide on where to go next and what to focus on. When giving feedback teacher should comment on strong as well as weak sides of students.

Variations. Feedback can be given in oral, written, visual forms. Interactive feedback is preferable because it allows students to ask questions.

Audience. Feedback can be given to individual students, groups of students, or the whole class. Individual feedback makes students feel valued, usually such feedback is motivating.

Content. Feedback content may vary in focus, function, clarity, specificity, and tone. It is important that feedback is descriptive and specific enough to be valuable to students and provide them direction. Feedback should not be too detailed and correct every single error. Feedback should always be delivered in a positive way. Instructors should choose words to support and respect students. Feedback should be clear so that students can understand the feedback.

Effective feedback, both positive and negative, is very helpful. Feedback is valuable information that will be used to make important decisions.

Feedback is the cheapest, most powerful tool that we have at our disposal. Feedback serves as a guide to assist students to know how they and others perceive their performance.

Types of feedback can be different: **Written or verbal.** Verbal communication involves exchanging of ideas 'face-to-face', as well as telephone or Skype. Verbal feedback usually takes place during class activities.

Non-verbal types of feedback include body language and written communication. Body language is very important during verbal communication. In fact, it is generally accepted that over 50% of the message is conveyed through body language. Written communication includes e-mails; articles and information in books, magazines and journals; the Internet or other media. In educational systems, formal written feedback is given through progress reports of teachers and students.

Here are some most well spread forms of feedback:

Feedback sandwich (praise, criticism, praise) Feedback should always be introduced by praise in order to be polite to the students, some constructive criticism should be added in the middle so that the outcomes can be improved. Then feedback should be concluded with some more positive comments to raise the motivational level and encourage the student.

'Medal and Mission'

This is one of the most well-known types of feedback. 'Medals' in feedback refer to giving positive statements to the students so that they work with intrinsic motivation. These statements could include, for example, praise about the good sentence structure and proper use of punctuations and a good use of factual data for a written assignment. This would keep the student encouraged in work. However, the 'Mission' includes statements that would help him/her correct or improve the weaker areas of the work done by the student.

The goals given during any of these types of feedback should always be SMART, it means: specific, measurable, accurate, realistic and teachable. Feedback helps not only the teacher but also the student to have a clear idea of what has to be achieved. It is then easier for the student to know exactly what has to be done by them and for the teacher to measure the performance of the students according to the set criteria.

Feedbacks should never be judgmental. The teacher should try **to avoid** concepts such as good or bad and right or wrong and should avoid using words such as terrible, blame, fault, incorrect and mistake. Moreover, personal attacks and negative connotations should be completely avoided.

Face-to-face feedback works more effectively as compared to the written types of feedback. Verbal feedback involves tone of voice, body language and facial expressions. It is interactive in nature which can make the students question for any judgment made by the teacher. Also, it is easily for the teacher to soften their approach if they see that the students' facial expressions becoming intense. This type of feedback can refer to the whole group as well.

Self and Peer assessment. Peer assessment refers to individuals assessing each other according to the relevant assessment criteria and learning outcomes. It helps the

students to take responsibility for their learning. Moreover, it develops the analytical skills of the students. Additionally, when the peers are assessing each other, it is easier for them to understand what the other person is saying as the level of knowledge and interests of both the students would be the same.

However, self-assessment refers to evaluating one's own self according to the given criteria. This also helps the students to improve their own judgmental skills by assessing themselves and would help them come to better conclusions about their problems.

Here are some other effective types of feedback in classrooms:

1. **Appreciation.** Appreciation is the key to opening the "feedback door." It can be done in a very simple way: "thank you for sharing this interesting idea with us. "

2. **Sayback.** Sayback involves restating what learners said. This shows learners that you read their posts and lets them know that they are on the right track. Often, the best way to start a sayback comment is with an "I agree with you that....."

3. **Questions.** Asking a question is a good way to engage learners in conversations about their work. While answering questions, learners often reflect on the process of their work, which brings their comprehension into a deeper level. Questions can serve many purposes when providing feedback. They can be used to clarify the learners' thinking, to inspire students to think about their work in a different way, to encourage learners to make changes to their work.

4. **Sharing personal experiences.** Nothing supports students like shared experiences. Sharing personal experiences makes the feedback feel more authentic and meaningful. Students want to learn from real world experiences.

5. **Providing encouragement.** Sometimes learners just need a few positive words of encouragement (e.g., "You can do it!") that show them you are invested in and support their learning. Providing encouragement often rises learners' enthusiasm and motivates them to keep improving their work.

These types of feedback should be mixed and used in a variety of ways. For example, you might start with an appreciative comment and then ask a question to push the learner's thinking. Or, you could open with a personal experience encouraging them to help one another think about the content in different ways.

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