Developing staff & student feedback literacy

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Overview

- Conceptualizing feedback processes
- New paradigm thinking
- Teacher feedback literacy
- Self-reflections
Reflection points

Reflect on your experiences of giving feedback in family life or in the workplace.

Reflect on the challenges of acting upon feedback that you have received.
CONCEPTUALIZING FEEDBACK PROCESSES
Paradigm shift

From teachers delivering comments

To what learners do: feedback requests; self-generated feedback; taking action
The University of Hong Kong

Comments → uptake

OLD PARADIGM
Teachers produce comments
Focus on delivery

NEW PARADIGM
Students produce comments
Focus on uptake

(Carless, 2015; Winstone & Carless, 2019)
Internal feedback

What students produce for themselves by making comparisons with other work

(Nicol, 2020)
Feedback as telling is overrated

“Learners do not always learn much purely from being told, even when they are told repeatedly in the kindest possible way”
(Sadler, 2015, p. 16)
Limitations of teacher telling

Fails to engage with students’ needs & interests

It can be unpleasant or annoying

Often impractical in mass higher education
Yes, but …

Natural desire to show our enthusiasm, talk about our subject, advise & cajole
Theory vs practice

The literature has moved forward in how it understands feedback – but not clear those involved in feedback have been brought along with it (Dawson et al. 2019)
Definition of feedback

Processes through which learners generate performance-relevant information and use it to enhance their work or learning strategies

(After Boud & Molloy, 2013; Carless, 2015; Henderson et al. 2019)
Reflection point

This definition is different to conventional views of feedback as ‘comments on strengths, weaknesses & how to improve’
Key implementation strategies

1. Student peer review
(Harland et al. 2017; Nicol et al. 2014, Nicol 2020)

2. Comparing work-in-progress with exemplars of different quality
(Carless 2020; Sambell & Graham 2020)
Reflection points

How can I enhance implementation of peer feedback?

How can I use exemplars productively?

How can I exploit digital affordances?
TEACHER FEEDBACK
LITERACY
Breakout discussion

What are the capabilities that staff need in order to be effective at managing feedback processes?
Defining teacher feedback literacy

“Knowledge, expertise & dispositions to design feedback processes in ways which enable student uptake of feedback”

(Carless & Winstone, 2020, p. 4)
Teacher feedback literacy

Designing for uptake ➔ Relational sensitivities ➔ Managing practicalities

Developing student feedback literacy
Feedback designs

Teacher role: design learning environments for students to generate feedback
Reflection points

How can I design my courses to maximize student production of internal feedback?

How can I design for uptake?
Work in progress

Interview study with teachers recognized for their feedback practices

Science, Law, Accounting, Education, Engineering, Medicine
“The focus of feedback should be on the students . . . put ourselves into the students’ shoes so we know what they are struggling with & what sort of guidance they need”
(Law, female)
“Once students receive feedback, they need time to work with it … timing is critical … a few points to help them move on to the next iteration” (Engineering, female)
Design

“Teachers need to design the environment to maximize the chance that students learn from feedback … Students need to be taught how to give feedback and how to act on feedback” (Education, male)
Relational

“Students need to feel that you are like a coach, a mentor, someone who cares about their progress” (Accounting, female)
Care

“Care is like wrapping paper for a gift … If you are not showing care and it’s not what the student needs at that moment, the student would not accept the feedback”.

(Accounting)
Empathy

“Talk to them like a friend and try to understand them from their perspectives … They will feel you are respecting them and not judging them when they face failure” (Science, male)
Implications
Professional learning

How do staff become better at managing feedback processes?
Impact of students

• Change often stimulated by reflections on previous experiences

• Student response to feedback processes as informing change & development
Research niche

How & why do educators change their feedback practice?
(cf Wei & Xie, 2018)
Reflection point

What would encourage you to change your feedback practices?
Summary

• Feedback processes need to focus on what the student does
• Teachers need expertise in designing feedback sequences
• Feedback processes as partnerships of shared responsibilities
THANK YOU

QUESTIONS

&

COMMENTS
References


References (continued)


Student feedback literacy

Appreciating Feedback → Making Judgments ← Managing Affect

Taking Action

(Carless & Boud, 2018)
Teacher feedback literacy: design

Designing task sequences for uptake

Promoting peer feedback

Deploy technology to facilitate interaction

(Carless & Winstone, 2020)
Teacher feedback literacy: relational

Clarify purposes and processes

Evidence supportiveness / approachability

Show commitment to help students

(Carless & Winstone, 2020)
Teacher feedback literacy: pragmatic

Navigate different functions of feedback

Balance teacher-provided vs. student-generated feedback

Manage compromises in workload, staff & student satisfaction

(Carless & Winstone, 2020)
University teachers’ reflections on the reasons behind their changing feedback practice

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\textbf{ABSTRACT}
This study investigated the changing feedback practices of teachers in an elite university in China. Drawing on teacher cognition theory and recent research developments in effective feedback practices, fourteen teachers were invited to reflect and explain their feedback practices in semi-structured interviews. Which identified three trends: their use of feedback practices appear to change: (1) from addressing specific tasks with detailed comments to addressing a combination of issues within and beyond task level, (2) from providing feedback at the end of a learning cycle to instructing on common problems at the beginning, and (3) they appear to make their feedback more timely and interactive by using social networking software and new course formats. Teachers seem to be willing to experiment with a wide range of feedback. They constantly evaluate the effectiveness of these practices based on two criteria: improving student academic performance and teaching all the content from the curriculum as scheduled. Recommended or experimental feedback practices were unlikely to be sustainably adopted by teachers unless they were confirmed to be effective by the teachers’ own evaluations.