

PROVIDING CONSTRUCTIVE, DESCRIPTIVE, AND DATED FEEDBACK, RELATED TO THE STUDENT'S SPECIFIC ACTIVITY

Valdeta ZENUNI-IDRIZI¹

¹University in Tetova, Faculty of Pedagogy, Tetovo, Republic of North Macedonia, valdeta.zenuni@unite.edu.mk

Abstract

A critical moment during the assessment of student achievements is feedback information. In the whole process of teaching that follows the evaluation of that work, which turns out to be as complicated as it is sensitive, there is a way that facilitates this and gives a new approach to assessment in contemporary teaching. Precise feedback information is a formative assessment strategy used by the teacher to inform the students what they did well or what they should do to work better. It also includes mechanisms that allow students to know if they are on the right track, and as such, they provide feedback on the results of a process or activity. Providing feedback is so important to student learning. Moreover, being strategic about how the teacher does it can help students in different ways and aspects. How feedback information is given is a great help for the student to overcome the problems he faces during learning. Constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback about concrete student activity is a key component in the process of effective teaching and student development. This affects the student to raise his level of knowledge and deliver desirable results. Therefore, the purpose of the research has been to prove how much importance is given to feedback information and how much teachers try to give students constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback information regarding the concrete activity of the student. Starting from this goal, we decided to apply the descriptive, inductive, deductive, comparative, and statistical methods. The technique we used was the survey, and the questionnaire for teachers and the questionnaire for students were used as instruments. By the research, 210 teachers and 210 primary school students were surveyed. As a common conclusion, the findings emerge that both students and teachers have declared that constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback information regarding the concrete activity of the student and given at the right time finds application in teaching practice. From the obtained results, it is expected that the teachers will be motivated and encouraged during the implementation of the learning process, even more, to check and evaluate the knowledge and achievements of the students continuously and systematically and more and more often to give feedback to the students quality and additional clarifications regarding the answers received by the students.

Keywords: formative assessment, feedback, success, teacher, student.

1. Introduction

According to experts in the field of docimology, the assessment itself includes not only a grade and judgment but should be seen as a guide to the entire learning process because a positive approach necessarily brings positive results. By evaluating numerous learning activities, timely feedback is provided on the results achieved by the student and the teacher in their work. Feedback provided through continuous and timely assessment confirms the quality of the learning work and the results that students achieve, through which the efficiency and functioning of the knowledge assessment system will be ensured. The teacher, through continuous monitoring, namely formative assessment, confirms how and to what extent educational, educational, and functional tasks in learning are accomplished. Meanwhile, for the successful follow-up of the student through the learning process, constructive feedback is of particular importance, because it gives the student clear access to what he has achieved, what he has done successfully, and to what extent he has done it, but also to what he has not completed and why it is like that.

Constructive and effective feedback is that which occurs during learning, while there is still time and space to act on it. It helps the student to orient further learning. Precisely for this

reason, we conclude that constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback, about the student's concrete activity, can positively affect motivation, the development of critical thinking and attitudes, and the improvement of student results in general and at the same time help students to clearly understand their strengths and areas that require improvement, creating a basis for more individualized educational interventions.

All of the above-mentioned reasons have been an incentive to orient ourselves to research in the field of formative assessment of student achievements, in particular feedback as a main characteristic of this type of assessment and as a very sensitive aspect of the learning process.

The purpose of this research has been to influence the awareness of teachers to use feedback as much as possible and thus influence the increase in the success of their students and to understand its role and importance in the assessment of student achievements in general.

The paper presents the situation of primary schools about how much teachers try to provide students with qualitative, constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback, regarding the specific activity of the student during the learning process. Respectively, through the research conducted, we have tried to analyze the real situation in primary schools, regarding how much importance teachers give to formative assessment, specifically to providing feedback during the learning process, based on testing the research hypothesis H-1 that: *„The largest number of teachers provide students with constructive, descriptive and detailed feedback, regarding the specific activity of the student“*.

The hypothesis presented was verified based on the responses received from 210 teachers and 210 students from seven primary schools from Tetovo, Gostivar, and Kiçevo.

2. Literature review

2.1. Feedback overview

***„The basis of feedback is its informative value“
(Z.R.Ilić, 2003)***

Formative assessment is an imperative of the new era, but at the same time, it is a process that largely depends on the support and motivation of the teacher to accept and implement it more often, and to treat the provision of feedback as a key factor in success in learning, which would affect the creative presentation of what has been learned by students. Timely treatment of learning progress and detection of setbacks along the way through feedback shows that everything intended can be achieved. As such, it is not by chance that feedback has been described as a revolution in the assessment process. Also, this type of assessment of student achievements can be understood as a type of dialogue between the teacher and the student about the quality of learning, teaching, and achievements in general. And, precisely this two-way communication provides feedback information, which enables the identification of the difficulties that students face during the learning process, but at the same time, this information ensures the discovery of the causes that bring about those difficulties. (USAID, 2008: 37) From this, let it be understood that qualitative communication directly affects successful feedback information, which then affects the overall success of students or their achievements, which is also the final goal that is predetermined from the beginning by many determinants, where qualitative communication between the teacher and the student has a leading role.

Feedback information is a formative assessment strategy, which is used by the teacher in order to inform students about what they have done well or what they need to do to work better. The conditions for successful learning are optimal when the student has a completely clear learning goal and when he constantly receives feedback information about the progress made.

Feedback is any verbal or nonverbal reaction of the teacher regarding the student's learning outcome: comment, grade, praise, criticism, gesture... When it supports and improves learning, it becomes formative. It is good for feedback, to begin with, praise and emphasis on what has been done well, then move on to the analysis of errors and end with suggestions from the teacher or proposals of ideas from the student on how the student can correct the errors in the following steps. Accuracy is also more than necessary for feedback because during its transmission, the student either understands the learning content and is oriented towards the learning goal, or does not understand it and deviates from the goal predetermined by the teacher. Precision includes the culmination of accuracy, which orients the student to correct any errors and general omissions. (Zenuni-Idrizi, V., 2023: 623-627).

For the student to receive good and qualitative feedback, the form of the feedback and its interpretation by the teacher plays an important role. To fulfill its basic function, to contribute to the improvement of learning and teaching, feedback, in addition to being constructive, valid, complete, and timely, must also be interpreted objectively. It should highlight gaps in understanding on all issues, in particular by informing students how they can improve their learning rather than listing their mistakes, thus facilitating the learning process.

Constructive feedback informs the student about how close they have come to the goal and is used to improve teaching and learning to achieve the goal. So, it aims to modify the student's thinking or behavior to influence his success and learning, to improve learning.

Good feedback should be accurate, detailed, and focused, respectively, about the student's specific task, and provide good clarification and explanation regarding the student's specific activity and task. Good feedback, which is specific and analytical, guides and instructs students in the teaching process and helps everyone reach the level of achievement that suits their abilities. To achieve this, the grade, as feedback, should be given to the student appropriately. For this, the teacher's strategy is very important. (Зенуни-Идризи, В., 2020: 159). Feedback focused on ongoing learning or a specific task or activity can help students identify their progress and be satisfied with their achievements, identify the challenges they face, and decide what the next steps in their work will be. This level of involvement in shaping their learning can increase students' awareness of themselves as learners, and encourage them to take greater personal responsibility and take pride in their learning. (Conner, 1999: 23) Also, feedback should be: specific, individual, specific, effective, understandable, simple, instructive, clarifying, thoughtful, and evaluative of strengths and achievements.

When providing feedback, the teacher needs to be as brief and clear as possible. The most qualitative feedback is considered to be that which is given continuously, as often, and at the right time. It must be in harmony with the predetermined learning objectives. From this, we understand that the teacher is obliged, before providing feedback, to respect the individuality of the student, to promote self-confidence and a sense of progress, to verify any shortcomings, and above all to enable the student to learn, make independent judgments, and self-assessment. Providing constructive feedback in teaching affects the development of thinking, increases self-confidence, and motivates students to learn. Therefore, we say that feedback that is provided through continuous and timely assessment, confirms the quality of the teaching work and the results that students achieve in it, through which the efficiency and functioning of the knowledge assessment system will be ensured.

So, in short, constructive feedback monitors progress during the learning process and provides feedback to facilitate learning and correct teaching errors. So, ***feedback does not leave you alone on the learning journey, but it guides you on how to overcome difficulties and achieve the desired goal.***

3. Research methodology and data

According to its character, the research is empirical, monodisciplinary, and quantitative-qualitative research.

Based on the goals and tasks of the research, and the complexity of the problem, we decided to apply the inductive, deductive, comparative, and statistical methods. For the needs of the research, the survey was used as a technique for collecting empirical data and the questionnaire for teachers and the questionnaire for students were used as an instrument. According to the needs of the research, 210 teachers and 210 students from seven primary schools in Tetovo, Gostivar, and Kiçevo were surveyed.

4. Results and discussion

The results obtained regarding teachers' opinions on the way they try to provide feedback, respectively on the strategy they practice when providing feedback, are presented in the table below.

Table 1. Teachers' attitudes on the way of providing feedback

When you provide feedback, do you try to make your feedback constructive, descriptive, detailed, and related to the specific activity?		Classroom teachers		Subject teachers		Total:	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
a)	Always	64	60,95	68	64,76	132	62,86
b)	Sometimes	25	23,81	26	24,76	51	24,29
c)	Never	0	0,00	2	1,90	2	0,95
d)	Rarely, as needed	16	15,24	9	8,57	25	11,90
Total:		105	100,00	105	99,99	210	100,00

$\chi^2=4,10$	$df = 3$	$p > 0,05$
---------------	----------	------------

From the analysis of the data presented in the previous table, it is observed that more than half, respectively 62,86 % of the surveyed teachers, declared that they always try to provide constructive, descriptive, detailed feedback related to the specific activity, and a smaller percentage, namely 24,29 %, sometimes or rarely try to provide such feedback. But the difference is not so great compared to those teachers who give students accurate and detailed feedback related to the student's specific activity or task, namely 11,90 % of the surveyed teachers, depending on how necessary or rarely as needed, try to give students constructive, descriptive, detailed feedback related to the specific activity, and a significantly lower percentage of the surveyed teachers, namely only 0,95 % declared that they never try to provide such feedback.

The obtained data, presented in *table no.1*, also show that there is no difference between the answers given by the classroom teachers and the subject teachers. This finding is supported by the value of the Chi-Square test (χ^2) which is 4,10 and has no statistical significance, and shows that there is no significant difference between the answers received by the classroom teachers and the subject teachers, regarding this question. Also, the obtained results show that

the teachers try to provide constructive, descriptive, detailed feedback information related to the concrete activity of the students, which fulfills one of the most significant standards of control and formative evaluation of the student's achievements. Meanwhile, respecting the standards, today, in the time of changes in education, becomes an urgent and immediate need and one of the important conditions, which will certainly contribute to the improvement of the quality of education.

To get a clearer picture of the results obtained, we present the data in the following graphic display.

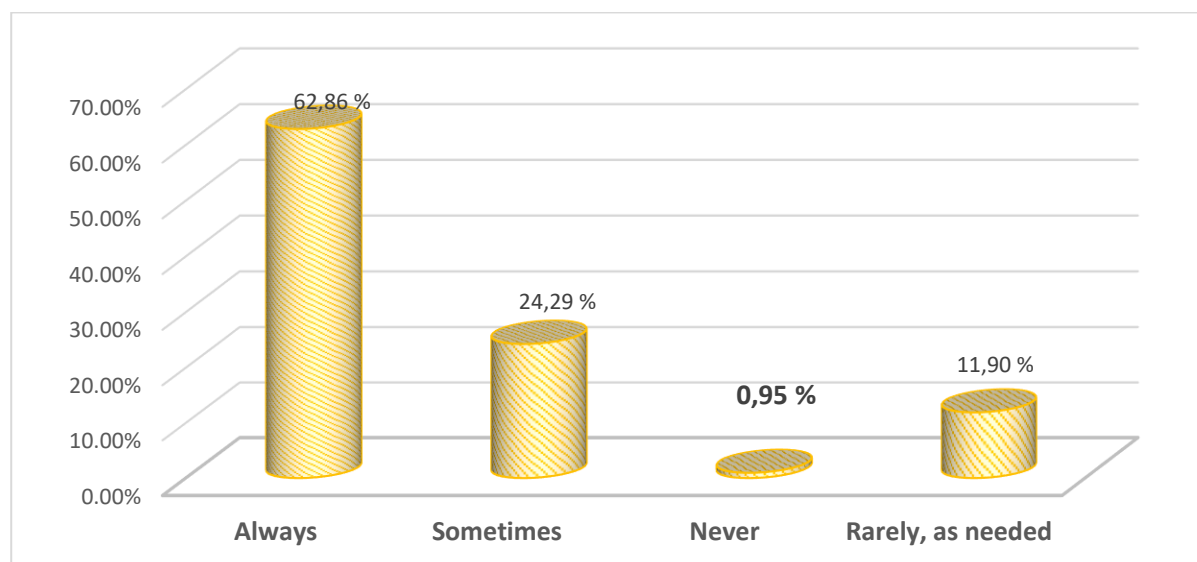


Chart 6. Teachers' attitudes regarding the method of providing feedback

In the interest of the research, it was important to also understand the students' perspective, to determine whether teachers make an effort to provide explanations, specifically whether they give constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback about the specific activity during the teaching process regarding the answers provided. Similar questions were posed to the students, such as: *“During the completion of activities and tasks, do teachers provide detailed explanations and feedback regarding your activity and work?”* The results obtained from the responses to this question are presented in *table no.2*.

Given that it is necessary to analyze the results from students' responses regarding how teachers provide feedback, the processed responses related to this question are presented in *table no.2*.

Table2. Students' attitudes towards teachers' feedback

Do teachers provide detailed explanations and feedback about your activity and work during the completion of activities and tasks?		Students	
		f	%
a)	They always act like that	119	56,67
b)	Sometimes they act like that	90	42,86
c)	They never act like that	1	0,47
Total:		210	100,00

The analysis of the data in *table no.2*, also indicates that a larger percentage of surveyed students (56,67 %) stated that teachers always provide detailed and accurate feedback regarding their activities and tasks. Meanwhile, 42,86 % reported that teachers sometimes practice giving detailed and accurate explanations during feedback sessions. A very small percentage, only 0,47 %, declared that teachers never provide clarifications regarding the feedback they give. All the data presented above, along with their analysis, essentially represent empirical findings that confirm our hypothesis: „*The majority of teachers provide students with constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback regarding their specific activities*”.

5. Conclusion and suggestion

From numerous studies conducted regarding the importance of providing feedback, it can be concluded that constructive, descriptive, and detailed feedback related to a student's specific activity is a key factor in driving changes and significant improvements in learning and student achievement.

Constructive and high-quality feedback is undoubtedly practical and encourages student engagement and motivation to achieve even higher results. It provides students with concrete guidance regarding the activities they need to undertake to improve. Offering descriptive and detailed feedback about a student's specific activity is a fundamental approach in the educational process, as it helps develop skills and facilitates continuous improvement in student performance.

This type of feedback is not merely general or summarizing but provides detailed and clear comments on how the student has performed a specific task and their progress at a given point. Such feedback helps bridge the „gap” between teaching and students and enhances trust between teachers and students before the feedback is delivered. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers strive to provide quality feedback tailored to the student's response, delivered at the right time, and that it be constructive, descriptive, and detailed, focusing on the student's specific activity.

In conclusion, regarding feedback, it can be said that it should highlight shortcomings in understanding all topics and, most importantly, inform students about how they can improve their learning rather than simply listing their mistakes. This facilitates a reciprocal learning process between teachers and students.

All the points emphasized above, if adhered to correctly, will result in a pedagogical framework that gives the assessment and grading process a modern and contemporary character.

References

- [1] Black, P., Harrison, C., Lee, C., Marshall, B., & Wiliam, D. (2003). *Assessment for Learning: Putting it into practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press
- [2] Conner, C. (1999). *Assesment in Action in the Primary School*, Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Group, London
- [3] McManus, S. (2008). *Attributes of Effective Formative Assessment*. Washington: CCSSO Formative Assessment Advisory Group, NC Department of Public Instruction (pp.1-6) (<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/accountability/educators/fastattributes04081.pdf>)
- [4] Mickovska, G, Tasevska, A. (2015). *Notimi formativ në mësimin klasor* (Doracak për arsimtarë), Shkup: Byroja per Zhvillimin e Arsimit
- [5] Murchan, D, Shiel G, Vula, E. (2015). *Vlerësimi formativ*. Prishtinë: USAID
- [6] USAID. (2008). *Zbatimi i standardeve të notimit të nxënësve*, Shkup: Qendra maqedonase për edukim qytetar
- [7] Зенуни-Идризи, В. (2020). *Имплементација на формативното оценување на постигањата на учениците во основното училиште*, Тетово: Лума График

- [8] Zenuni-Idrizi, V. (2019). *The planning of formative assessment in the elementary school*. Journal of Educational Research „EDUCATION“, Vol.1, No.1-2, University of Tetova, Faculty of Pedagogy, Tetovo, Republic of North Macedonia, pp.9-12, ISSN 2671-3268 (Print)
- [9] Zenuni-Idrizi, V.; Ajdari, R.; Abdullau, A. (2023). *Checking and assessing students' achievements in the modern school*. PROCEEDING BOOK OF 7TH INTERNATIONAL „NEW YORK“ ACADEMIC RESEARCH CONGRESS ON HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES on February 18-20, 2023, New York, Albany–United States, ISBN: 978-975-00544-6-4, pp.603-607
- [10] Zenuni-Idrizi, V. (2023). *The impact of formative assessment on the final success of students*. PROCEEDING BOOK OF 7TH INTERNATIONAL „NEW YORK“ ACADEMIC RESEARCH CONGRESS ON HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES on February 18-20, 2023, New York, Albany–United States, , ISBN: 978-975-00544-6-4
- [11] Zenuni-Idrizi, V. (2023). *Providing quality feedback in the learning process*. PROCEEDING BOOK of 7TH INTERNATIONAL „NEW YORK“ ACADEMIC RESEARCH CONGRESS ON HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, 18-20 February, 2023, New York, Albany–United States, BZT ACADEMY PUBLISHING HOUSE 2021, TURKEY, USA, ISBN: 978-975-00544-6-4, pp.623-627
- [12] Omeri, E., Zenuni-idrizi, V. (2023). *The importance of feedback and it's impact on student success*. CONGRES PROCEEDINGS BOOK OF 3rd INTERNATIONAL „ACHARAKA“ CONGRESSES ON HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES on March 11-13, 2023, BZT ACADEMY, İZMİR, TÜRKİYE, ISBN: 978-975-00544-9-5, pp.517-521