

60-Second SoTL

Episode 19 – Instructors’ Emotions Associated with Dialogic Feed-Forward

(Piano Music)

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Jessie L. Moore:

What emotions do instructors experience when giving feedback? That’s the focus of this week’s **60-second SoTL from Elon University’s Center for Engaged Learning**. I’m Jessie Moore.

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In “Emotions Experienced by Instructors Delivering Written Feedback and Dialogic Feed-Forward,” published in the open access journal, *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, Jennifer Hill, Kathy Berlin, Julia Choate, Lisa Cravens-Brown, Lisa McKendrick-Calder, and Susan Smith explore instructors’ emotional responses when they give assessment feedback.

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The research team reports on semi-structured interviews conducted with three members of their team who had engaged with dialogic feed-forward in their teaching. Dialogic feed-forward is the practice of delivering feedback during a face-to-face conversation with the learner, and the term *feed-forward* signals a focus on feedback that explicitly informs revisions of the same assignment or work on a future assignment. Dialogic feed-forward meetings often include co-constructed plans for how the student will act on the feedback.

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This study focuses on three instructors who used dialogic feed-forward in a year 1 health sciences unit at a U.S. institution, a year 2 geography unit at a U.K. institution, and a year 4 nursing unit at a Canadian institution.

The interviews were conducted by a single team member who had not implemented a dialogic intervention, and the interview transcripts were analyzed inductively using thematic analysis by three of the team’s non-intervention researchers.

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The researchers share 5 main themes from the interview data:

- First, instructors noted negative emotions associated with their use of summative *written* feedback because the instructors felt distanced from their students, not knowing how the students would respond to or act on the feedback.

- Second, dialogic feed-forward prompted a range of emotions for instructors as they anticipated students' own emotional responses to feedback. Nervous energy dissipated as instructors become more comfortable with the dialogic feed-forward process, and the participants noted that the dialogic meetings enabled them to work through students' emotional responses with the learners during the feed-forward conversations.
- Third, dialogic feed-forward was emotionally challenging for instructors, since meetings directly addressed students' reactions to feedback. Instructors sometimes masked their own emotions to minimize their impact on the students.
- Fourth, dialogic feed-forward fostered relationships and students' sense of belonging.
- Fifth, dialogic feed-forward was transformational for instructors, informing other parts of their teaching and assessment.

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While optimistic about the impact of dialogic feed-forward, the research team notes that it's time-intensive, so they encourage readers to consider how it might be embedded early in a curriculum to foster a feedback culture and to develop feedback literacies.

Finally, in addition to studying the outcomes of dialogic feed-forward, the research team provides a helpful synthesis of other recent scholarship on feedback.

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To learn more about this study, follow the link in our show notes to read the open access article and to review our supplemental resources for this episode.

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Join us next week for another snapshot of recent scholarship of teaching and learning on **60-second SoTL from Elon University's Center for Engaged Learning**. Learn more about the Center at www.CenterForEngagedLearning.org.

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