What happens when we use live (real time) feedback in the classroom?

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Rationale

Margaret Heritage draws on the work of Black and Williams who argue that student progression as a result of formative assessment were amongst the largest ever reported for educational interventions. The most prominent difference being noted amongst low achievers (Black and Williams, as cited by Heritage, 2010) Sadler (1989) points to feedback as the core of formative assessment, indicating the information provided is only deemed to be feedback when it is utilised in order to bridge the gap between current ability and the desired outcome. The quality and constancy of such feedback is imperative to the progression of the learner, as comments such as 'good work' do not provide children with the information they need to take their learning forward. Thoughtful and meaningful feedback according to Shepherd makes the completion of a task more likely to occur as children have a deeper understanding of how to progress (Shepherd,2009).

According to Bryce, high-quality feedback includes 'positive reinforcement' as well as clarified goals, as this allows the student to self regulate as they have an understanding of the criteria they are aiming to meet (Byrce, 2013). Our enquiry group were interested in exploring the impact of live verbal feedback in the classroom to determine its effect on learning and learner progression.

Aims

The aim of this enquiry was to assess and evaluate the impact of live verbal feedback in the classroom, by identifying how the provision of individual feedback throughout the lesson impacted the children's attainment and attitudes towards their learning.

Methodology

The enquiry took place over a four week period in a mixed ability Primary 2 class of 29 pupils. The evidence was gathered during literacy lessons, specifically during written tasks. Whilst all children were involved in receiving verbal feedback within the daily teaching and

learning, a group of 7 children across varying abilities were chosen to be the lead focus for the enquiry. Five data collection methods were utilised for sources of evidence; four of these were routinely occurring and one method was specifically undertaken (Pollard and Collins, 2002).

Throughout the enquiry the forms of evidence gathered included; observation notes, questionnaires, pupil voice, children's jotters and exit passes.

Observation Notes

During each literacy lesson observations were carried out to evaluate the impact of providing instant feedback on the children's engagement within the learning and motivation to meet their success criteria. Observation skills are imperative as a teacher and children were observed completing a task after receiving live feedback from myself.

Questionnaire

Pupil questionnaires were utilised prior to the enquiry beginning and after to explore pupil preference and attitudes towards feedback. The questions were centred on exploring which form of feedback they preferred, which supported their learning best and which form of feedback led to increased confidence. The questionnaires were compared to examine the impact and effectiveness of live verbal feedback on a child's learning.

Pupil Voice

Pupil voice as a form of evidence allows for opportunities for the teacher to generate focused, in-depth information about learning and teaching (Hopkins 2008; Roberts and Copping 2008). Pupil voice was gathered as a form of evidence, using their opinions on live feedback to reflect on its impact on their learning and confidence in completing their tasks.

Children's Jotters

Children's jotters were monitored over the course of the enquiry, specifically noting a lesson where the children who were part of the focus group received live feedback, whereas the other children received little/ none. Comparisons were drawn between motivation through

exploring children's willingness to correct errors, completion of tasks and achieving the success criteria. This was identified through examination of jotters belonging to the children who were part of the focus group and were receiving more live feedback input in comparison to children who were given little live feedback whilst on task.

Exit Passes

Exit passes were used to monitor pupil confidence when receiving live feedback. The children were asked demonstrate how they felt after a lesson by placing their post it on a smiley face or sad face. The children were asked to complete this after lessons at the outset of the enquiry where little to no live feedback was provided. They were then asked to do so again towards the end of the four week period after a lesson where they were given a significant amount of live feedback input.

 Findings

Observations

Through observation of the children I noticed that children who I had provided with live feedback were more engaged and focused on their task which in turn allowed them to complete their tasks. These children were engaged in the feedback process and this was evident through questions asked by the learners and responses to questions that they were asked. These children were able to identify their mistakes and next steps and share their solutions to correcting these mistakes.

Questionnaires

Through examination of the results of both questionnaires it was evident that children's opinion of liking verbal feedback increased over the four week period. It also highlighted that there was a greater confidence amongst learners. When asked if live feedback during a lesson helps to improve their learning 89% of children answered yes they felt that it did, rising from 44%. Therefore, increased live feedback seen this figure double over a period of six weeks demonstrating the impact children felt it was having on their attainment. Confidence also grew over the course of the enquiry as pupil confidence in completing tasks after receiving

live feedback rose from 35% to 93%. This highlights a significant difference in how confident learners felt towards meeting their success criteria. There was also a considerable increase in the number of children who would like to receive more live feedback during lessons with the number of children rising from 56% to 89%. The use of the questionnaire was therefore beneficial in determining the difference in pupil's engagement and attitudes towards their learning.

Pupil voice

Listening to pupils' opinions on receiving feedback clarified, on the whole, that children preferred live verbal feedback as they did not always read the feedback provided in their jotters and felt that live verbal feedback increased their confidence in completing their tasks to achieve their learning. This information was gathered during discussion with the children during their questionnaires.

Children commented:

"It makes me feel good, because I know what I need to work on"

"I feel happy when I know what to do next"

"It makes me feel great because I work hard to do my work well"

"It makes me feel confident about doing my work."

"Talking to you about it makes me feel more confident because I know how to do better."

"It makes me feel ok because it helps me to get on with my work."

Children's Jotters

Through the monitoring of jotters it was evident that the children who were part of the focus group receiving more live feedback input were more confident in completing their tasks and could make the necessary changes to meet their success criteria This was demonstrated through these children traffic lighting their work – for the most part with green- and they were also able to correct any errors highlighted during live feedback. In contrast children who received little and less live feedback, did not fully complete their tasks and meet their success criteria.

Exit Passes

Exit passes highlighted the impact that live feedback had on pupil confidence with more children initially placing themselves next to the sad face after a lesson in which they were asked to carry out their task without feedback. When asked to do so again after a lesson where the children recent lots of verbal feedback throughout the completion of the task, it was clear that learners felt more confident with all children placing themselves next to the happy face.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this enquiry demonstrated that the use of real time feedback had a very positive impact on attainment and learners' attitudes towards their learning. Children became more willing to discuss what they had done well and what they need to do to improve and this in turn led to increased confidence which was seen through the findings of the questionnaire. This is essential as if a child does not develop the ability to examine their own learning effectively then the information which is gained by this type of formative assessment may not be of great value (Sadler,2010). This also meant that children were more able to complete their tasks and reflect on whether or not they were meeting the success criteria they were working towards. That being said, this enquiry has provided scope for further more in depth enquiry, as some children did note that their preference was to receive written feedback in their jotters and felt that this also improved their learning.

Implications for Future Practice

Drawing on the findings of this enquiry will enhance my future practice as the significance of live feedback in improving learning has been clearly identified. I will continue to embed live feedback into my daily learning and teaching to further explore the impact that this has upon the learners within my class on longer basis.

As the enquiry took place over a four week period during literacy lessons, it may be beneficial to explore its impact across curricular areas and over a longer period of time to gain a more extensive and informed view of its impact upon learners.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the findings of this enquiry some children preferred feedback written in their jotters which they would see during the following lesson. Therefore, it is perhaps important to consider measuring various forms of quality feedback, to draw

comparisons on which children find to be most beneficial to their learning. It is also important to note that this enquiry explored learners attitudes within a Primary 2 class and these may differ through different ages and stages.

Appendix 1

Feedback Questionnaire

Question	Yes	No
I read what my teacher writes in my jotter.		
The feedback I get in my jotter after a lesson helps improve my learning.		
Verbal feedback during lessons helps improve my learning.		
I prefer when my teacher writes comments in my jotter.		
I am more confident completing a task if I receive verbal feedback from my teacher during the lesson.		
I am more confident when I read what my teacher has written in my jotter.		
I would like my teacher to write more comments in my jotter.		
I would like more verbal feedback from my teacher during lessons.		

Appendix 2
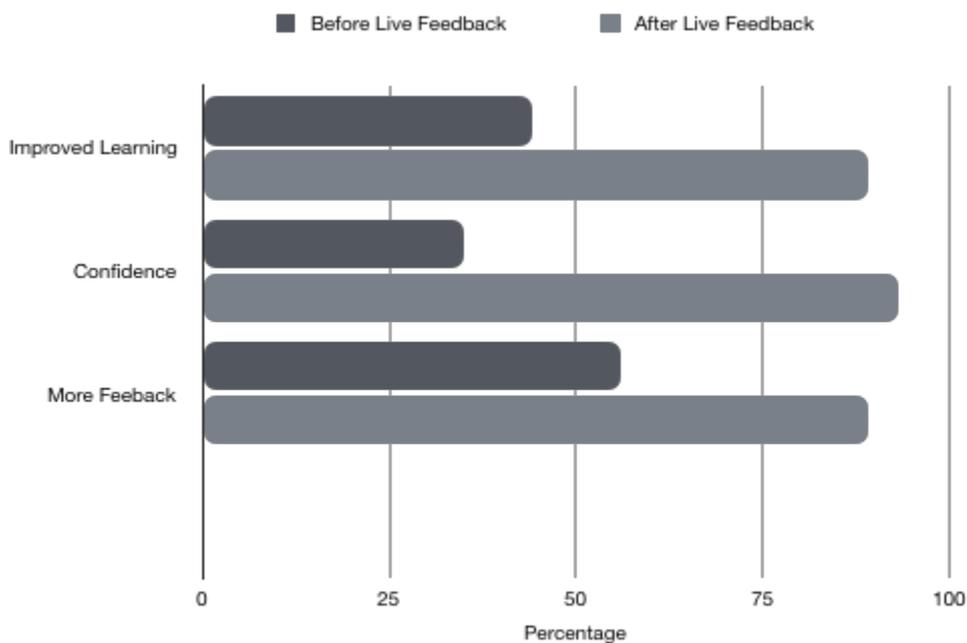
Appendix 3

Prior to receiving live feedback.   After receiving live feedback.

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