

Characteristics for feedback in online education

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Abstract

Nowadays many universities in Mexico offer education on line, in order to satisfy higher education demands, giving the chance to students of getting a degree in some programs: the Universidad Tecnológica Fidel Velázquez offers bachelor's degree on line, providing good study options for students so they can organize their time without attending classes in a school. The adviser has to generate the tools which could allow the student to have elements for developing skills and competences in each subject through proper feedback.

Online Education, Adviser, Skills, Feedback

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Introduction

The correct skills that the online advisor uses within a course are vital to its success. Because the student does not interact directly with the advisor, he / she must generate different communication techniques so that the student feels accompanied during the course facilitating the teaching-learning process.

One of the main problems of online education is the desertion of students, since the responsibility falls on the student's abilities and discipline. However, desertion is also a problem in traditional education. The feedback has a formative function where both teacher and student can know the level of understanding of knowledge and the level of development of skills, competencies and achievements of the content seen. With it the student can reflect on their performance and learning, as well as implement the improvement actions suggested in it.

Feedback is essential to promote learning and achievement of goals, and from this, the student makes decisions and exercises actions to improve these processes, so the teacher should guide and provide strategies for this purpose. The purpose of this article is to serve as a starting point to review the teaching practice and specifically how to provide feedback in an online course.

Definition of Feedback

The feedback is a moment of evaluation where the advisor from a previous rubric tells the student the skills he was able to obtain from what he knows, does and how he acts, allowing him to finally know his performance in order to improve his learning process. According to Ávila (2009), feedback is a process in which concerns and suggestions are shared to learn about performance and improve in the future, as well as encouraging and inviting reflection.

Feedback of a learning activity is the action in which the counselor provides the student with information focused on improving a product or academic process, whereas when only one grade is awarded it is called summative evaluation, and it does not improve the student's learning. The feedback should be focused on providing information about the process carried out by the student in the accomplishment of a task, either to clarify a knowledge or to acquire a skill.

The feedback or feedback is an essential element in the learning process in students, since it allows to provide information and observation of their academic performance, progress and process in their professional training. From the feedback to the student integrates previous knowledge with the new ones that it develops, strengthening the teaching-learning process and building a meaningful learning. For a feedback to be complete it must include three concepts: "feedup" that refers to which direction the student is taking, if it is realizing where it is going, it is basically keeping track of the objective of the activity being reviewed and make reference, in summary, of the previous activity to link previous knowledge with the current one; the "feedforward" that must answer the student the questions about what is next? How can you improve for the next activity? And the "feedback" that helps the student to realize how he is performing.

Methodology

A documentary research of qualitative type was carried out. Qualitative research focuses on the collection, analysis and interpretation of data, not numerical, visual and narrative in order to obtain reflections of a particular phenomenon. In this research, bibliographic material of various authors was reviewed that address the issue of feedback and, above all, define and interpret the characteristics that effective feedback should have.

From the analysis of the contents that were reviewed, the characteristics of a correct feedback were identified. We find it pertinent to classify the characteristics of the feedback:

- Defining the concept of feedback is undoubtedly very important in the online teaching-learning process, but in order to achieve satisfactory results in this feedback process, the pedagogical skills of the advisor, high level of student activity and a shared effort between both parties (Jackson and Graesser, 2006).
- The advisor's performance is summarized in commitment and discipline, since his entrance to the course must be daily and the feedback given to the students according to the policies of response times of the institution.
- The advisor must also maintain intellectual leadership, motivate the student and remain in constant evaluation during the socialization of knowledge.
- From the above variables, some aspects to be considered arise: The advisor must:
 1. Possess communication skills. Communicate with clarity, veracity, relevance, quality, adequate quantity and structure.
 2. Master the thematic content and didactic technique that will support.
 3. Inform the student of the policies and guidelines of the course and of each activity at the beginning (even if in some section of the course they were).
 4. Ensure clarity in the task.
 5. Have essential technical knowledge about the platform and other technologies used in the process.
 6. Be self-regulated, participatory and generate critical and reflective thinking.

7. Promote autonomy in the student because he will be the protagonist of his learning and that his self-regulation, self-direction, attitude and level of participation will determine the quality of the same. It is very important to mention that all the above must take place in a climate in which values and ethics prevail.

An example of the guidelines for the advisor regarding the correct feedback established by the executive engineering program of the Fidel Velázquez Technological University are:

- Review the general and / or specific competence of the subject or unit.
- Recognize the purpose of the activity.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Identify if there is an evaluation instrument (rubric, evaluation scale or checklist).
- Review the activity or task in viada to the virtual classroom, to identify each one the criteria to evaluate.
- Build feedback, considering all the information of the subject, joining it with their teaching experience.

In order, for there to be continuity within the learning process and the student to find a reciprocity that completes the communication process, it is important that the feedback be done in a period no longer than 48 hours after the activity is placed on the platform.

Criteria for the construction of feedback

In order for the feedback to be effective and fulfill its function that is to improve the learning process of the students, it must meet the following elements:

1. Personalize the greeting addressed to the student, referring to his name.

2. Stick to the purposes of the activity or rubric.
3. Highlight the skills achieved in the development of the activity.
4. Complement the feedback orienting the student to the achievement of the missing competences.
5. Mention with clarity and punctuality the observations of the areas of improvement of the activity for its correction.
6. If necessary, send instructions, explanations or additional materials (tutorials, electronic pages, articles, among others) for the correction of the activity.
7. The comment boxes provide the opportunity to transmit to students greater knowledge, by sharing the applications of the subject in turn that are useful for the career, or personal or professional, as a specialist of the subject can provide them by placing a more personalized contribution in this regard.
8. Do not give feedback with short phrases (Very good, Excellent work, Perfect, Continues in the same way, or some other of this type). Even if the student has obtained the maximum grade, it will always be necessary to give him a little more knowledge, to reinforce his learning.
9. Avoid the use of the same text to feed several students, each task has particular characteristics, so it is necessary to identify them and based on these elaborate the appropriate feedback.
10. Use the Rubric as a reference to qualify the activity, not to provide it as feedback. Ejemplo de retroalimentación según los criterios anteriores:

Personalized greeting

Dear Luis. I recognize the dedication and effort for the development of the activity,

Mention the competence(s) achieved

Reviewing each of the exercises, the procedures performed and results obtained are satisfactory to those corresponding to 1, 3 and 4, which allow to determine the limit of the functions.

Indicate with clarity and punctuality the observations for the improvement of the activity

Regarding exercises 2 and 5, I give you the following observations:

2. When the result of a 0/0 limit is initially presented, it is said to be INDETERMINATE, not Zero (0) as indicated in the result, so it is important to avoid this indeterminacy to find a Real Value as a limit. I recommend you to support yourself from the examples given on pages 18 and 19 of the didactic contents of the subject for its adaptation.

5. The same inconsistency as exercise 2 is presented. For this case, it is advisable to apply the con played of the square roots to avoid their indeterminacy. I recommend you review the videos and tutorials of the electronic addresses provided in the BLOG to guide you of the explanation given for the correction in the procedure.

Discuss the importance of the resolution of the activity as consolidation of their learning for other topics, or daily activities.

The complete resolution of the activity will help you use it as a tool for subsequent topics, such as the Derivative

Farewell

I am at your orders through the platform messenger or via email for any questions that may arise.

Conclusions

Online education offers a possibility without territorial limits and study times for the student and has broken traditional models, generating new perspectives for teachers and integrating to this new academic model, having a commitment to renew the skills and competences of the teacher, in order to increase educational quality.

Hence the importance of the advisor's ability in the feedback to carry out the teaching-learning process with satisfactory results, however this requires "the pedagogical skills of the tutor, the level of activity of the students and a shared effort between both parties "(Jackson and Graesser, 2006).

Likewise, communication is paramount in the feedback as mentioned in the criteria for feedback, for example, providing personalized advice to students, motivating them, giving them public and private recommendations about the work and about their progress in the studies, and above all , to do it at the moment that the student requires of his attention respecting the time of evaluation according to the rules of the institution.

Being the quality what is being looked for and the feedback the backbone of the advice, this last one is the one that "... allows to verify the students' achievements and to promote the learning with information of return, constituting itself in a tool of control of quality" (Mogollón, 2004, p.44).

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