Self-assessment as a Means for Formative Assessment and Constructive Feedback

Dr Huda M.N.Alkreathy

MBBS, PhD

Assistant Prof. Pharmacology Department

College of Medicine

KAU

Introduction

Feedback is considered the centerpiece of formative assessment

Where Am I Going?

Clear Learning Targets

Criteria for Success

Formative Assessment

How Do I Close the Gap?

Descriptive Feedback

Adjust Instruction

Collect and Document Evidence

Analyze Evidence

Where Am I Now?

Formative assessment is a process which drives students' learning forward while their learning is still in the process of developing

Learning outcomes and criteria of progress must be communicated to the students

The faculty members and students use them to measure the progress of learning
(Hattie and Timperley, 2007)

principles of good feedback practice

1. Facilitates self assessment
2. Encourages teacher and peer dialogue
3. Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, standards expected)
4. Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
5. Delivers high quality information to students
6. Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
7. Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape the teaching

(Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick ,2006)

Purpose of the Study

Studying the value of students' self-assessment in reflecting on their work understand what was expected from them and develop their skills in giving and receiving feedback.

Research Question

How can students' self-assessment be used to improve formative assessment and feedback?

Method

Context

The Quality and Academic Accreditation Unit (QAAU) , Faculty of Medicine, KAU
June 2012

comprehensive evaluation of the assessment practice

32% of courses practice **structured formative** followed by verbal feedback to all students in the following tutorial session

68% of courses practice **unstructured formative assessment** in the form of questions and answers or pop quizzes during sessions followed by immediate verbal feedback from the teacher.

Faculty members transmitted feedback information on how their current level of performance compares to the level of goals and standards expected of them.

- The feedback did not convey actions that were necessary to fill the gap and improve performance

- it was unidirectional from teacher to students.

In October (2013), the role of the students attending the Pharmacology course in the third year of the medical curriculum, in enhancing the formative feedback practice **were assessed**.

Students enrolled in the Pharmacology course in the third year of the medical curriculum were divided into small groups. Each group contains (25) students. The study was conducted on one of these groups

1-Students were required to submit an essay on drug interactions. They were asked to complete a self-assessment sheet

2-Students were oriented about the rationale behind introducing the practice of self-assessment

3-Students value the marks only when they have a clear understanding of the criteria in use

(Ferguson, 2011)

4-The tutor received the self-assessed essay

5-The students wrote their opinion on this method of double feedback from the student and tutor at the end of essay sheet

Results

Out of the 25 students, 18 (72%) assigned marks to themselves which equaled those given by the tutor

"This C+ isn't consistent with the vision I have of myself."

Most of the students' comments revolved around the dialogue between the student and tutor, the feedforward content, and the skills gained as an evaluator

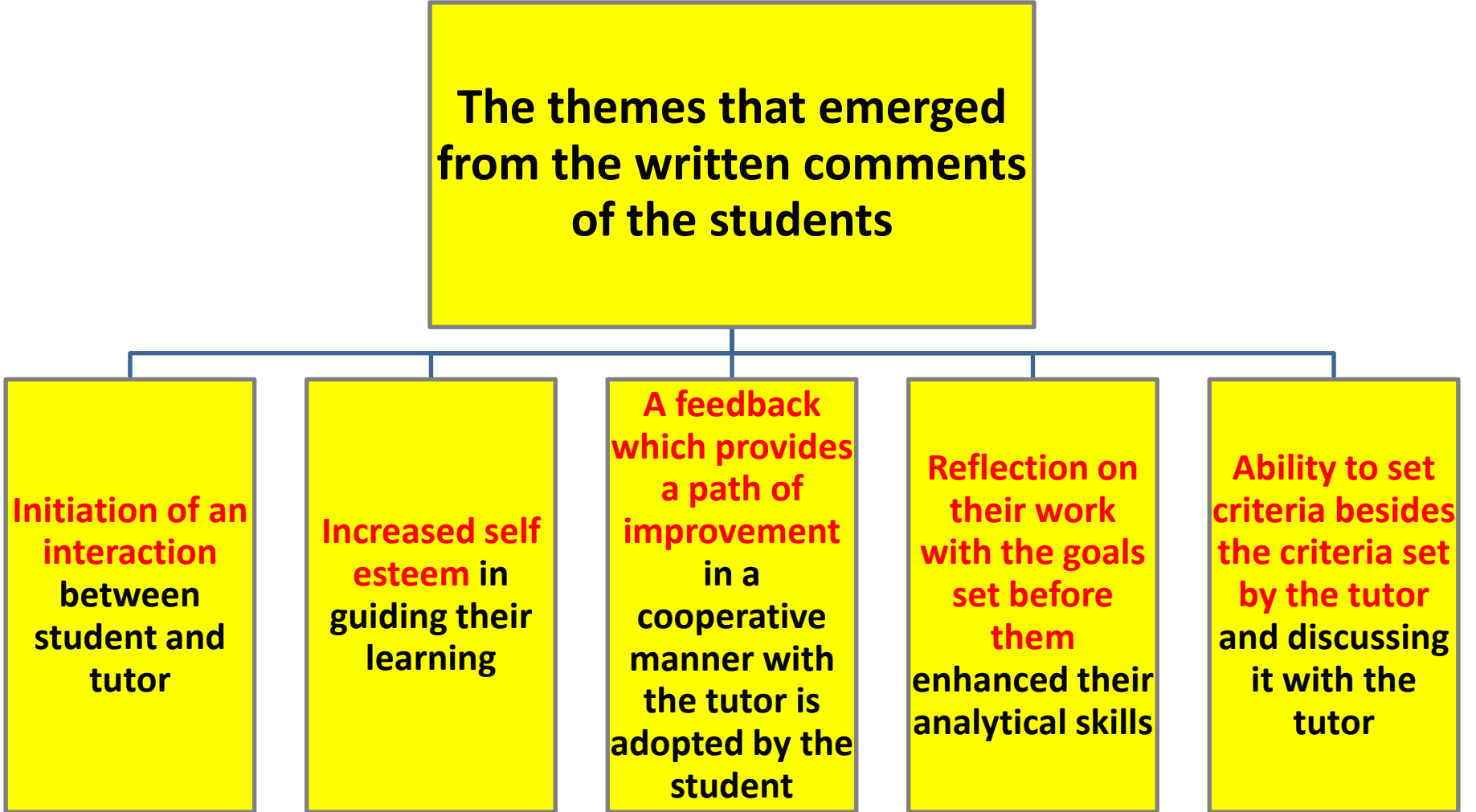*I was convinced of my grade when I knew the criteria set beforehand for marking.*

Knowing the goals and criteria guided my efforts towards the weak areas.

For the first time, there was a dialogue between me and the tutor. I can understand why I lost marks. What are the areas I need to work on and how to improve my studying

Having criteria in hand, I am able to critically analyze my assignment, I feel I can judge my assignments in a better way before submitting them

I think I can rewrite the essay in much better way now

The themes that emerged from the written comments of the students

Initiation of an interaction between student and tutor

Increased self esteem in guiding their learning

A feedback which provides a path of improvement in a cooperative manner with the tutor is adopted by the student

Reflection on their work with the goals set before them enhanced their analytical skills

Ability to set criteria besides the criteria set by the tutor and discussing it with the tutor

the practice used in this study enacted more than one loop of student-self and student-tutor feedback.

It provided the opportunity for students to

Develop self assessment skills (principle- 1)

Engage in a tutor student dialogue around learning (principle- 2)

Consider what good performance is (goals, criteria, and expected outcomes) (principle- 3

Close the gap between current and expected learning outcomes (principle- 4)

Nicol and Macfarlan-Dick (2006)

Conclusion

Self-assessment combined with tutor's feedback

➢ Initiates interaction between students and tutors

➢ Builds trust and increases self esteem

➢ Promotes the importance of feedback and

➢ Encourages students to take feedback seriously to plug the gaps between the current and desired expectations.

Limitations of the Study:

➤ The sample was small so the results could not be generalized.

Further studies are required on larger samples taking into consideration another aspect of peer to peer assessment on the effectiveness of formative feedback.

➤ Possible improvements may include appropriate coaching and training in devising criteria and in the practice of self-assessment and in giving feedback.