Teacher Feedback in the Classroom

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Background Research

• Weiner (1986) – attributional framework
  – Attributing success to ability increases motivation, affect, esteem; increases expectations for success in future
  – Attributing failure to ability decreases motivation, affect, esteem; decreases expectations for success in future

• Sandra Graham (1990) – praise and blame
  – over-praising success on easy tasks sends low ability message
  – anger/blame in failure conditions sends high ability message
  – developmental shift at about age 8 (Barker and Graham, 1978)
Descriptive Statistics

N = 26
Elementary – 10
Middle – 6
High – 9

- Since no elementary school teacher participating taught student >age 8, I grouped all elementary results and middle/high results to obtain >8 and <8 categories
Self-Report

-Teacher self-reports about feedback frequencies did not differ significantly across student age groups or achievement levels.

**Frequency Scale:**
1 = rarely (1-2 times a semester or less)
2 = once in a while (more than rarely, less than once per five hours of class)
3 = often (about once every five hours of class)
4 = very frequently (more than once per five hours of class)
- There was a significant interaction between student achievement level and age in teachers’ beliefs about the average teacher giving positive feedback; among high-achieving students, average elementary teacher more frequent positive feedback than average middle/high school teacher
Ideally, how often should a teacher give positive feedback?

![Graph showing frequency of positive feedback across achievement levels for elementary and middle/high school students.]

Ideally, how often should a teacher give negative feedback?

![Graph showing frequency of negative feedback across achievement levels for elementary and middle/high school students.]

- Teacher beliefs about ideal feedback frequencies did not differ significantly across student age groups or achievement levels.

Frequency scale:
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Positive vs. Negative

Across grade levels, teachers said:
- they themselves gave more positive feedback than negative feedback, $p < .01$,
- ideally teachers should give more positive feedback than negative feedback, $p < .01$,

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- the average elementary school teacher does give significantly more positive feedback than negative feedback, $p<.05$.

- the average middle/high school teacher does not give more significantly more positive feedback than negative feedback, $p = .16$, ns.
Benefits of Feedback

Do you think positive feedback benefits students?

- across student age and achievement levels, teachers rated positive feedback more beneficial than negative

- significant differences between type of benefit, type of feedback, and student age

Do you think negative feedback benefits students?

benefit scale:
1 = not at all
2 = not very much
3 = somewhat
4 = very much
# Ratings of Reactions and Types of Feedback in Different Achievement Situations

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<th>succeed</th>
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References


