Pedagogy Matters: Episode 3 Transcript

Good afternoon and welcome to the third episode of the

Pedagogy Matters podcast. The purpose of this podcast is to

bring the force of key topics of conversation in relation to

learning teaching to discuss the breakdown into reiterate some

snippets, advice, guidance as to how we can integrate these into

daily practice. Today, I'm delighted to be joined by

Susanna Wilson, an English teacher, so

that how are you? Hello, I'm good. Thank you. Yeah how are

you? Yeah, thanks. How are you finding the third lock down so

far? Challenger um, I think it's

been. Easier in some ways to get into a rhythm because we've

done it before and I think that's true. I think that's

true for me. I think it feels like it's true for my students

and and perhaps most importantly for me it's it's

true for my kids as well. So I feel like this is something

where we were getting used to and we're getting a handle on

how to how to organize ourselves, yeah.

Still getting used to this way of working. I'm not sure if you

are just in with the surviving or adaptive, but in those. But

yeah, it's really interesting. Sound really challenging as well

and yeah, so it's interesting to start with. I guess maybe your

background as a lecturer that's OK with you. So domain cartels

are very brief. Overview is to continue or what you've done

about where you work. Yep, Yep, Yep, I started teaching at

secondary level. I started teaching in secondary schools

around Manchester. I'm an

English teacher. Uh, and then I moved both up to Scotland and

into further education. Fe and Higher education an I've been

here now for maybe six years and teaching all sorts of different

things that normally mostly to do with communications or

English and a bit of teacher education as well.

And I guess what have you found difficult? Fe compared to

secondary? No, it's a it's a real different landscape and I

think you're one of.

I wanna see the minority who's going from one to the

other. So guess what your views on that control the

differences in one of what's going really great about Fe.

That's a dozen interesting question. I think my move from

secondary into FYII think it happened at the same time as my

move from face to face, classroom teaching all the time

to an online Anna blended way of delivery. Argo College is part

of the University of the Highlands and Islands an and

it's made up of a number of different smaller local learning

centers we call them so their their spread across Argyll.

An under normal normal conditions, students and

teachers come to one of the local learning centers, and so

you might have. You might have a cohort of students all in the

same Learning Center and the teacher might be there face to

face. But the tutor might be in another local Learning Center,

or there might be a mix. You might have a mix of face to face

and sort of online students. An in normal conditions, we'll go

into those local learning centers and then basically use

video conferencing software and the virtual learning

environment. To deliver the teaching an now obviously with

the pandemic with with lock down, we're all that's changed

again into our own homes and the like, but for me that moved UEFI

coincided with that move away from face to face. So I think I

think it's difficult to say what I find. What I find particularly

special about EFI.

It shows that you know this approach to delivery or

learning. You know, depending on the different perspectives, no,

it isn't necessarily new, but it it? It's a very different

concept right now of.

Over the fast, forced upon everybody feeling this way yeah

yeah for me the the difference was moving from face to face to

sort of more technology aided if you like was the was the

spontaneousness of maybe maybe it's 'cause I was in secondary

or maybe it's 'cause it's face to face I don't know but of

getting people to write things down on post it notes and stick

them on walls around them that kind of thing which I'm going to

say was done more spontaneously

had to be. Planned in advance that had to be altered to meet

that sort of dispersed dispersed

delivery. Now they have to race and talking to priest podcaster

relationships and how to build those relationships, and you're

not really good aggressive math today, but yeah, that's really

fascinating. The the real differences between true face to

face up your face to face teaching and then the hybrid

approach of way may have half and half alone now. So it's

really messing up. Today. We're going to focus on feedback

feedback to a real interest of yours. It is rightly so. I think

yes, after we look at this

table. Different types of feedback or or aspects of

innovations at that you may be. Other colleagues have really

looked at in terms of feedback.

And I I kinda wanna start, here is another my own experience

that you know feedback. It can

be amazing. But we've got to find a way of students really

engaging with that and really find it useful as opposed to

just looking what the outcome and off when. I was kinda

looking again in previous podcast I better researcher came

across was that you understand the feedbacks evolved from just

information given to students.

Talk to be integral part of their teacher and learner like

countries. Their overarching students, period. It's not some

doors in there now. So yeah, So what are your thoughts on what

you are? So what are your views around feedback in different

methods? And yeah, So what deal?

Well, I think starting starting from what you've just said, I

think there is this or for lots of people student staff alike. I

think there's a there can be a fundamental sort of

misunderstanding that the act of giving feedback or the act of

receiving feedback is itself a really useful thing. And I'm I'm

not totally sure it is, I think.

Feedback only becomes useful when you do something

interesting with it or you do something useful with it. I

think me having given feedback to my students that in itself is

useless an I think my students having downloaded from the

virtual learning environment downloaded my feedback. That in

itself doesn't really doesn't really help. It doesn't help the

learning and what what is really important? I think about

feedback is that you then do something with it.

And that that's where the magic happens. If my students

were listening to this, which I don't think they will, but

if they were, they would have said it out loud and not just

to you guys, it's it's actually what I believe you've

got to. You've got to actually do something with the feedback

that you receive.

I know. But from my experience of teaching many, many

learners and my old World of sports where they may have had

crazy 25 assignments a year, each assignment had individual

better feedback.

I was a teacher told her to grow up for ridiculousness. Students

take it up in the feedback. They looked at it when the file

didn't really do anything with the small proportion. Did they

interrogate the feedback and that was that was on them as

opposed to the the process? So yes, that's really interesting.

So in terms of your periods, how I guess, how is shaped your

practice or what strategies or methods of you tried to develop

to really put feedback at the heart of this process?

Well, I think I think first of all you have to make sure that.

The feedback that you give is useful and that.

That means all sorts of things, doesn't it? Maybe it means that

the way that I have planned my delivery of whatever it is I'm

teaching, there needs to be. There needs to be a progression

in terms of the sort of assessment that most people

asking people to do, and there needs to be that that

progression so that the feedback that I give from assessment

number one can be clearly incorporated into assessment

number 2 and then assessment #3 and there needs to be that sort

of. That really obvious progression from task to task.

In order for students to make use of the feedback so. So

that's that's one thing that I will try and do. I'll try and

make it, and I suppose in English in some ways you could

say that's easy, because even just in terms of looking at

writing style or something like that, you can say, well, that's

that's clearly relevant. But maybe it needs to be more than

that. Maybe it needs to be that the actual skills, or the

capacities or whatever. Whatever it is that you're developing,

there needs to be a really clear progression so that you can say.

Where you got the feedback for this point in assessment one.

This is how it's useful for assessment 2, and you can you

can build on that. So I think I think that's the first

thing. Another thing that I've started doing recently.

I've started giving time within my lesson time for learners to

use the feedback.

And my question is how you do it. You know, I think we all

agree that it's really important to to make feedback link from

assessment assessment from task to task from week to week. But

that's the high window in the methods of doing it. So yeah,

tells them all that. Well, well that yeah I. I think I would

previously have thought that the working with the feedback should

be done in the students own time, maybe or I think I'm mad.

I think I thought it just

magically happened. Actually, before I started thinking about

this but now.

I don't think it's a waste of

class time. And maybe people would disagree with me, I don't

know. But I don't think it's a waste of class time for me to

say right for the next half an hour. 20 minutes, 45 minutes,

whatever it is, I would like you to take out that feedback an I

would like you to change your answer based on the feedback

that I've given an sometimes I might do that when I've given

some individual feedback, so I've asked, you know, fast

learners to do 10 questions, let's say, and I've given them

all individual feedback on those 10 questions. And then I might

say. What I would like you to do is go and use that feedback to

improve two of those questions and then I would like you to

resubmit them to me.

I'm fairly clear that I'm not going to necessarily remark

those two questions an otherwise I could get myself

into a into a total spiral of never ending marking, but I

will look over it. My students know that I will look over

that, and that allows me to then plan whatever we're doing

next. It allows me to see if the feedback makes sense and if

they've understood what I have actually meant in my feedback.

Can just jump back maybe 30 seconds. He said actually.

Well, it's it's perceived waste of class time of doing

this or not, absolutely not. So I think if you think of an

artist or a bricklayer, or or anybody with a skilled trade,

for example, if they had some corrections to do, they would

spend some time actively gone by exploring those corrections

and then they can set changes.

In terms of our learning with our students, you know that if

we identify some errors, we build up timing. We build up

that space and for the reflection for them to

understand. Firstly, become a break those down and then

Secondly it was amendments and like you're saying there,

whether the new models in the same level of detail or it's

just that process that they both fundamental. But again being

created myself, I'm not built that time into my practice

before because that perception of I haven't got enough time in

my day or my curriculum to do this. Yeah, yeah, I think so.

And I think as well it's.

Crucial for me to know if the way I have expressed my feedback

actually makes sense, and if if my students have understood what

I meant by it or if they've understood something completely

different, which can happen, can't it? And I think I think

that's that's important. That's why I need them to then

resubmit, and I think as well.

Actually asking students to make changes to what they

did already.

It allows them to see if they've understood properly. It's easy

enough to read someone's feedback that they've given you

and think to yourself, Oh yeah, I'll do that next time, but it's

actually in actively making those changes that you know

whether or not that did actually make sense or, or if you

actually need to go and talk to the tutor again so I can. I can

say to them, you're going to spend half an hour working with

your feedback. I'm here. I've got your copy. My copy of your

work on the on the screen in front of me asked me if you got

questions and they do.

This wasn't planned. Actually. There's an actual link there

back to the first podcast retrieval practice of going back

and checking our knowledge understanding. Yeah gotta wrong.

Breakdown those initial links and make those new links and

informal dealings with them. You know which is exactly that

process that we're doing there, and I think that the second bit

just to really compliment what you're saying there in terms of

their research now Winston and Bold can. I can't promise the

feedback is 1. It's not a focus within course design. This is

exactly what we just talked with her and then Secondly and also

touch upon this. But the forms and methods of document in the

feedback cannon parents quality an offer from many institutions,

and this is not being cripple any institution. We always have

a feedback form or a method that we we complete and I said we as

lecturers should satisfy either the college or typically the war

normalization. But actually.

So we don't have to do in that way, but we need to

think a bit more.

Practically, about what the purpose and method of the

feedback is, which I know it's something you've been work on

as well as not in terms of different methods of feedback,

to engage students into to capture that. Yeah, yeah, I

have. I've done. I've done a little bit of.

Of trying out and trying to track the impact of video

feedback an we did a project at Argyle College which involved. I

think it involved 5 tutors all using video feedback at

different levels and on different courses an and the

idea was for all of the tutors. We marked the work as usual, so

we'll we'll give written

feedback. And then we use that written feedback and then we use

screen capture software to get a copy of that written feedback

onto our computer screens and then have our little cameras in

the top right hand corner of the screen. It was an and used that

video software to then talk through the key points of that

written feedback and the idea it wasn't it wasn't there to

replace the written feedback, it was there to supplement it and

to sort of.

To make sure that the the key messages really sort of got

through to learners gone yet question or anything else that I

think that's just to bring it to life, isn't it? It's really came

to to bring off that bit of

paper. I'm gonna see the passion, the information or

the kind of this Parker. I'm actually what's fantastic or

or what needs approval or work. That's the purpose of

the verbal element. Yep, Yep.

It's useful for a few reasons, and there's research that

suggests that to learners it feels like you're having a one

to one conversation with your tutor, and you're able to hear.

Hear their enthusiasm like you say.

Should really sort of understand exactly what your tutor thinks

about your work. And another thing about it is that it allows

you to point your mouse or to highlight something on just like

you would if you were sitting down next to somebody doing like

a one to one face to face meeting, and the other thing

that was dead interesting when we did it here.

Learners said that, or some of our learners said that

having the video feedback helped them to believe us

when we said that something was good and I hadn't

anticipated that all that was dead interesting like they

could hear the enthusiasm in our voices when we said this.

But it's really good and we were able to give reasons,

and they said because we were speaking, it changed the way

we said it. But it also changed what we said.

And that we perhaps we get more details about where things were

good and that gave them the motivation or whatever it is to

then carry on working with things that needed the

development. I think that's going to be useful and only talk

in a prize. Podcasts wrong, really. Chatroom feedback was

actually, it was not positive either. You know, doing some

methods or quite time intensive and she attends barriers. The

technology. Yeah, guess what? We're trying to get across

within here even when our conversation is not. It doesn't

say matter, but the method of.

Or providing her feet, but whatever works for you. Well,

I've seen some incredible.

Applications are of verbal or visual feedback, but actually

were a lot more efficient and sitting down and writing.

Don't tighten so you say I know listen different remote

differences who who found methods of doing that as in 90

seconds per bit of work. They were handwriting the country,

harvest more charter steel and like you said, there's other

benefits of detail. So really talk. Kind of what works for

individuals and for lectures. Trying get this across no sweat,

that's handwritten or whether that's verbal or whether it's a

video that that's that's that's in your gift. But I think that

the fundamentals here around how to make effective in helping

make a relevant and bring it to life in that process.

Yeah yeah. Well, one thing we one thing we realized with the

video feedback is that and it it makes total sense. When you

think about it. Receiving feedback is an emotional issue

and it really if you think about. I don't know if you think

about the time that you've been waiting for feedback and you get

it and you feel like it's a judgment you feel like. It's a

judgment on your character sometimes, don't you. Specially

if it's super important or whatever it is you, so. So

having this this video with this

little tiny. Face at the top of the screen.

It's it somehow makes it.

It makes it more worthwhile and makes it more personal. In some

ways it takes away that feeling of a judgment and instead you're

having a conversation with a real person who's interested in

your work. In fact, that's another thing that ones one

student told us. The very fact that we'd spent the time as she

perceived it, making a video and made her feel that it was

worthwhile, comes back to again, and this really isn't planned,

but links back to 2nd secondary. Actually, where you create

teachers, you have relationship with. Fundamentally, you know

what? It's up to your professional relationship.

Doesn't mean later. Oh yeah, that relationship. And this is

just a different method of enhancing that relation.

Potentially current climate where you're not seeing your

students face to face or on your computer screen and get it. It's

a perceived effort and not.

That level of detail. Yeah, I know. We talked a little bit

about your your background and a big belief of you within

teaching is more identity then about how you try and still up

within your learners. And I guess the different method of.

I guess bringing through your passion for for their

education. Yeah within feedback which the more you

would pick it as a really fundamental part of the

process.

It's just it is. It's it's absolutely vital. I think

feedback and assessment I listened to your first podcast

in preparing to have this conversation with you and one of

the things that you were talking about was in the current in the

current lock down or with.

With all the restrictions you were talking about, that loss of

interaction that lots of engagement with with students

and you were talking about that on a personal level. You know

with teachers we probably have become teachers and tutors

because we like talking to people we like engaging with

people. We've got that personal connection with students and

stuff but, but with students, you know, hour after hour in our

working day. But there's also a lot of interaction.

On a on a teaching level on a pedagogical level, and.

And I think I think thinking about assessment and feedback

helps here as well, because in our usual delivery sort of

mechanisms we might.

We're always getting feedback from our learners about how

they're doing. We just don't necessarily notice it, so you

know, those those body language cues to put it. Basically, if

someone's got their head on the table in front of us, we know

they're not engaged, and we know we have to do something about

it, whereas in this way of learning we lose a lot of that

sort of instinctive, maybe.

Understanding of where our learners are, and I'm I call

that assessment as well. That's a form of assessment. We just

maybe don't notice it.

Yeah, I guess I'm reading some points, I guess yeah you're

right. And I used to think back to when I was Electra. My

contract back in England was 828 hours of delivery of teaching.

You know, anything that's you lonely by yourself speaking to

students credit turn infusion, engagement and taking a longer

journey. And I said now put dinner through a computer screen

or or different methods in backwards face to face for the

feedback is going to really important element of that. As

you said there in terms of the cube that you could have when

delivering. Be back shortly to learn after wasn't great, yeah

or or against Lisa students. Fantastic and really big

numbers. You know your learners intimately want to warn

professionally. That's gone, but again, it's it's it's

really interesting. Ponselle around actual feedback. Still

the same, it's just how the method and meeting which we do

that make well still the same as how we just need to build a

space for that to be fundamentally important.

Based on the learning last 10 months, how can we do

better? How can we do it in a? In a moment you would

have way to really express.

Successes and developments of our students was managing our

own workload and not breaking ourselves. Since the computer

was not was typing but actually called the screen in your mouse

in your hailing, you do whatever. Yeah, absolutely, I

think. I think in that way.

We I think in normal teaching times. If you like, we don't

acknowledge how much assessment we are doing in our usual

teaching ways, and I think I think in this way when we're

planning for teaching, using online or blended, or what

whatever the setup is during lockdown. I think if we can

think, well, alright, I'm going to deliver this bit of content

now. How will I know what? What are the week and?

Call it assessment water the assessment mechanisms that I'm

going to use to make sure that that was understood, ordered to

workout the extent to which that was understood and an it is a

form of assessment. I just don't think we ever really necessarily

called it assessment. Yeah, I think the feedback that you see

in a traditional face discussion is very much continuous.

Other students, all all throughout the sessions and all

throughout the day, whereas now it's suppose again on

reflection. We're providing feedback lesson if it's gonna

be even more impactful and relevant and built into our

delivery time to make a more permanent and and useful for

students. Yeah, yeah, definitely.

Listen conscious eye when you were talking about identity

before. I think if.

Unless we as's teaching staff, unless we, unless we think

consciously about how we are going to assess.

In that informal that formative

way. I think unless we start thinking about that, then

delivering in this way, it seems it seems really unsatisfying.

You know it's exactly, it's just. It's just me giving off

tons of information and that's that's that's depressing for me.

'cause I don't know what how it's being sort of received, but

it must be depressing for students as well. If you just

feel like you're just getting this information volleyed at you

like tennis balls, just sort of flying at you and you can't

possibly look at any of them or or return any 'cause it's just

too much. I think that's that's depressing, but if we can.

If you think about.

Your teaching and your style and how you can incorporate

assessment into that.

I think I think that makes it a much more positive experience.

No, nothing actually race and again, I purposely left this bit

of research towards the end. You know, because I really kind of

summarizes what we talked. You know, just from Beloit Al which

looks at feedback, needs necessary to be a Learning

Center process, such that the students ability to effectively

engage with you close all processes that need to be given

more attention. Yeah, read that

summarizes. More links have to be really highlighting

heightened by teaching and remote capacity. Normal world

because of as he said that he absolutely right in terms of our

big believer on online quizzes. Great self marking. Yet how does

that really help a learner developing, understand and and

look at how they've learned and developed less? We build some

time in to reflect on that. Yeah, so I think that's where

you listen again. Have been watching those research out

on feedback and it it's all very different, but.

Thread as well, that's too often is wonder what they got wrong

and we got it wrong, which is understandable. You know, we're

inefficient Millenial culture or spend less time do anything. But

again, it's about getting the wrong understanding how and why

I'm doing something with that. Build those links and learning

through all those things done well, it helps develop their

identity, helps develop. That report helps develop this June

experience in all those different elements there. Yeah,

absolutely. The research also

says. If you're thinking about it from that learner

centered approach to assessment, feedback, and.

The old way of thinking about it, if you like, was that the

teacher the tutor was there to give the feedback and the

learner was there to receive it and and that was that. Whereas

whereas I think there's there's been a reconceptualization of it

towards this idea of the learner, actively looking.

To see how they're doing to get feedback from multiple places,

and one of those places obviously, is the tutor and your

tutor is is a really important source of feedback, but they're

not the only one, and so as tutors, our job is to help

learners develop the sort of capacities for for comparing

their work against an exemplar, for example or or compare what

whatever The thing is, whatever The thing is that we can do to

help. Our learn is.

Judge their own judge their own work? Yeah. How are freezing

their passes help? Learners can have their label moments where

they get it clicks, but we wanted to do it in terms of

their own learning. Yeah, I got that wrong because of this.

Yeah, I get it and now I'm going to do XY zed. Great build space

for. Yeah I think it's how can we really empower learners and

power colleagues to really focus on feedback in which I like

guys? That is to have that desire impact you've really

talked and retail passion about.

Last 2530 minutes. Well yeah, to make it worthwhile. It's

something we spend extraordinary amounts of time planning for and

then doing as as teaching practitioners so you know it has

to have an impact. It has to have a positive impact, and I

suppose I suppose.

Given that we've changed all our working practices recently over

the past year, and

why not consider this one as well?

After you kind of right there, and it's really interesting

points to to to reflect on and

consider. In your own teaching practice, review any lesson is

how much time do you spend writing the feedback that helps

take the spend really happen for ensuring learners focus on this

and do something with it will be massive cooking myself and I'm

I'm going to reflect anything I spend far too much time writing

and not enough time really making important. Nothing else

really listen well so that thank you very much for your time.

It's been really fantastic at some really, really interesting

points and and reflections around. I'm specially feedback

more holistically, but didn't really go into too much detail

on. The process of appropriate verbal and

written but not really. But this was for it was around

the importance of feedback and how and why. So let me

show you time and hope it's been really useful. Well

yeah, thank you very much. It's always interesting to

have to think about it before you can talk about it.

Process where it becomes part in practice just to do with him.

Yeah, how's everything you can get in a routine where that is

routine in the wrong routine. But yeah, the conscious effort

and application of feedback is vital, not fantastic. Thank you

Suzanne case. Thank you.