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# Collaboration with students: Listening to the student voice to develop assessment feedback practice.

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Learning & Teaching Fest 2019  
Wednesday July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019

# Post Concussion Syndrome

Initial

Introduction

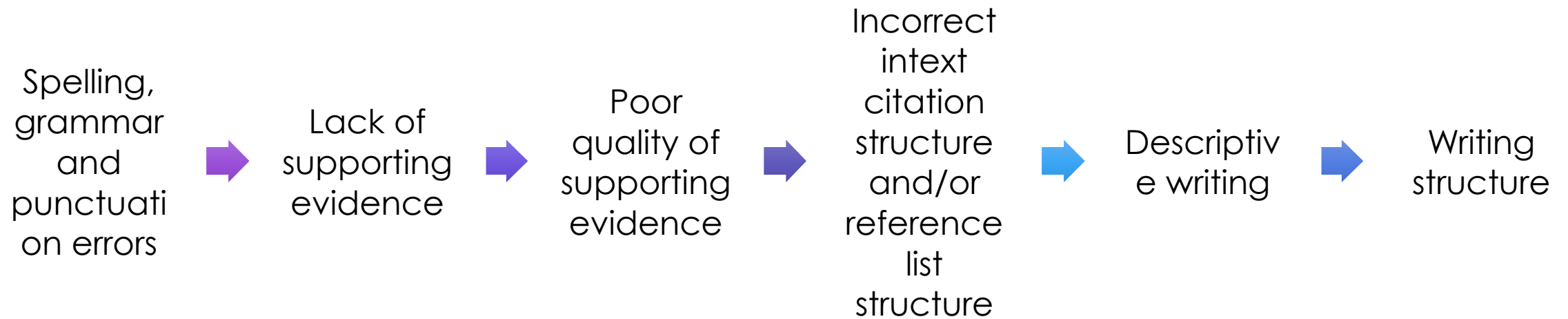
Reduced  
cognitive  
ability

Forgetting my train  
of  
thought

Unable to  
find the  
correct  
word

Please be  
patient with  
me  
😊

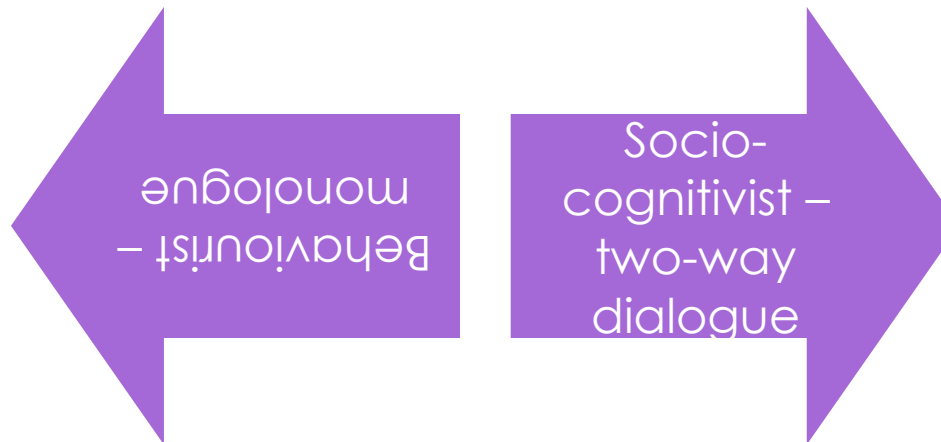
# Background context: Examples of academic writing errors



# Feedback Mode of Delivery

"...approaches to feedback focused on monologue and transmission appear to dominate practice and are challenging to disturb."

Reinmann, Sadler & Sambell (2019:1)



"A dialogic understanding of feedback helps to redress this juncture [monologic pedagogical practices], enabling us to reconceptualise feedback according to socio-constructivist principals.

Price et al (2013:43)

## Researcher aim

- By providing assessment feedback early in the semester, students could apply the advice to improve engagement with feedback to develop future academic skills.

“Feed-forward refers to feedback given by teachers that either impacts upon an upcoming assignment, or is given post-assignment with specific direction on how it can be applied to future assignments.”

(Hill & West, 2019:3)

# Research Intervention



# Methodological Approach



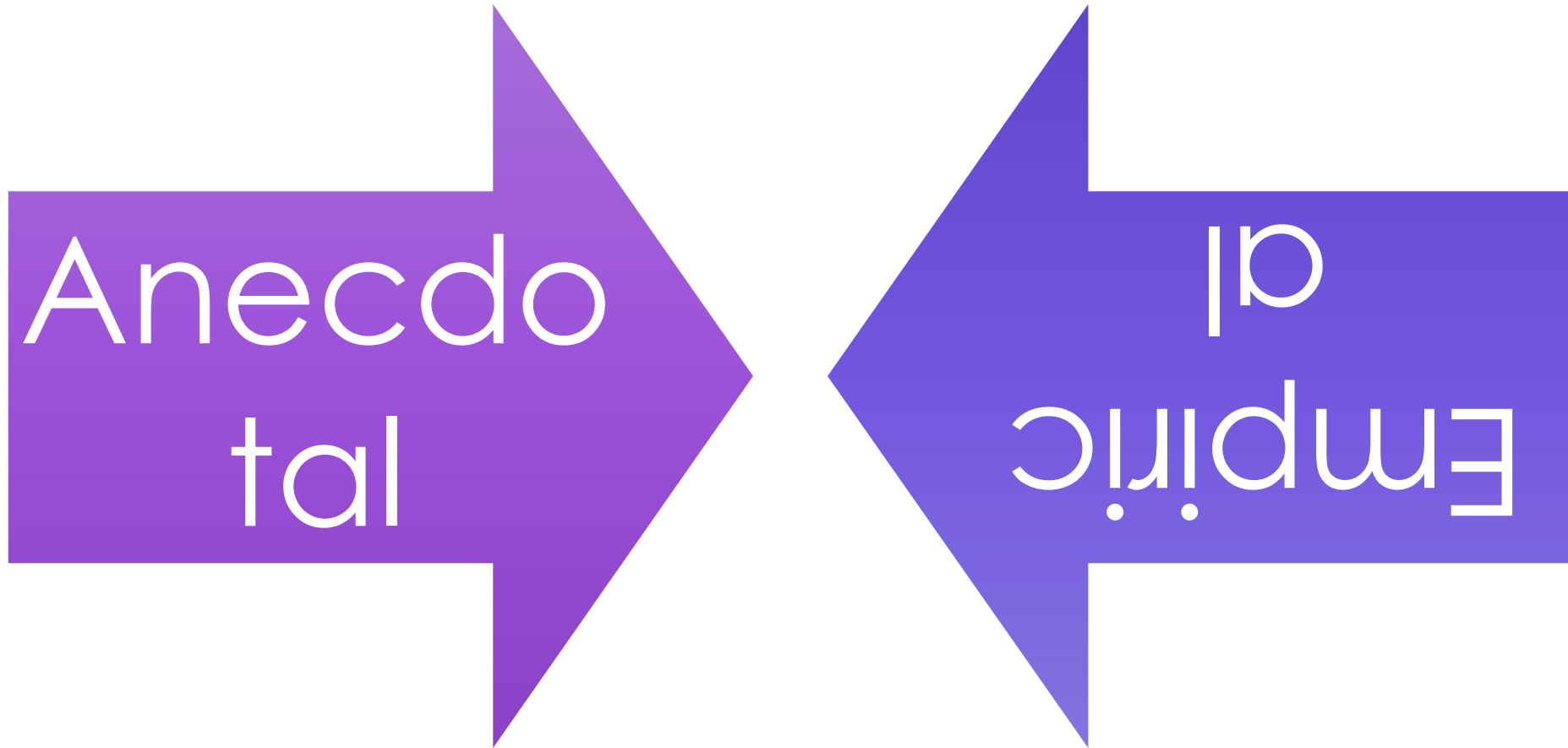


# Interim Findings

# The researcher perspective following face-to-face feedback with the students



The student perspective – a story of two halves!



# The student perspective – empirical evidence: Main themes from the online survey

Improved communication – being able to ask questions

Increased understanding of problem areas

Preferred personalised feedback

Increased motivation & engagement

## Evidence from the grades



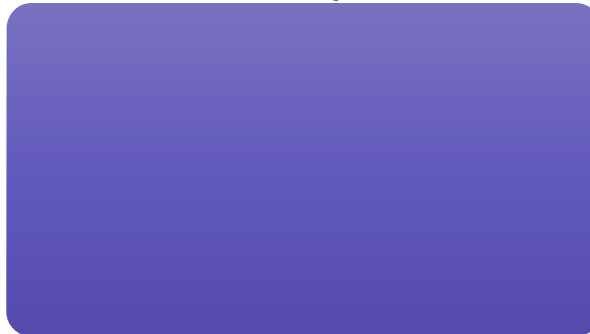
# Grade average

Initial Assessment

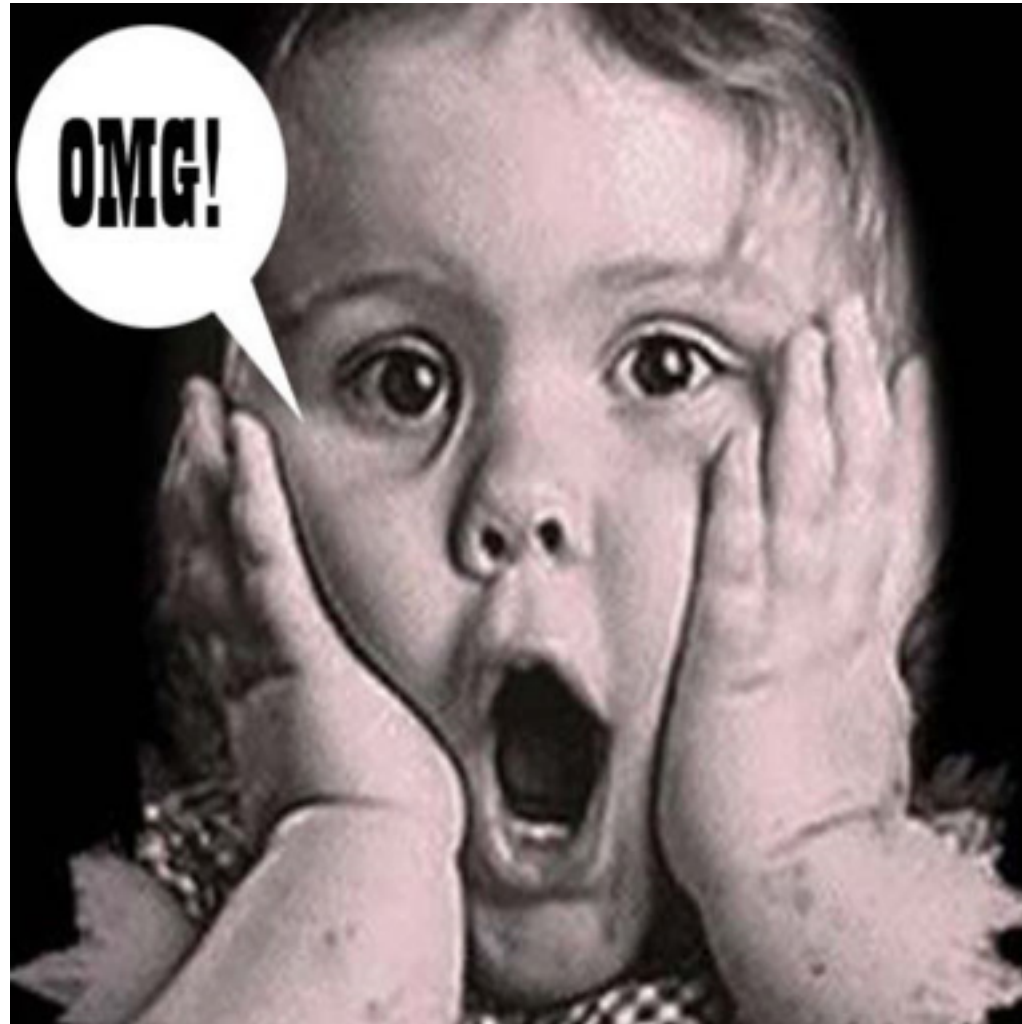
- 54.5%

Follow-up  
Assessment

- 41.4%
- 4 examples of



## Researcher response



## The student perspective – anecdotal evidence: informal in-class discussion





## Next steps – student suggestion from the online survey

Verbal rather than written:

Henderson et al, 2019; Hill & West, 2019

Optional for those who want it:

Jones & Gorra (2013)

Respect for privacy

Researcher response still had not changed



Back to the drawing board:  
What does the literature say?

# Developing a deeper understanding

**AN EXCELLENT POINT:** Feedback is “a dialogic process in which learners make sense of information from varied sources and use it to enhance the quality of their work or learning strategies.” **(I FULLY APPRECIATE THIS)**

(Carless, 2006:192)

**HOWEVER,** assumptions are made by tutors that students understand the comments written in their feedback and know how to act up on these. **(THIS IS THE MISTAKE I MADE)**

O'Donovan, Rust & Price (2016)

“...it is easy to take for granted that students know what to do with feedback.”

**(I KNOW THIS NOW!!!)**

(Nash & Winstone, 2017:4)

**FINALLY:** “...providing students with opportunities to engage in dialogue with feedback does not imply that students understand the feedback and consequently, use feedback to improve their work.” **(THE LIGHT BULB MOMENT)**

(Steen-Utheim & Hopenbeck, 2019:84)

## Researcher Reflections - Ingrained Assumption

The ingrained assumption that students enter higher education already having academic literacy skills and understand how to apply feedback/feedforward advice is damaging student development and growth.



Ingrained assumption is disempowering many students, in particular, widening participation students.



**Ingrained assumption = Inequality and Exclusion**

***WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THIS INSTITUTIONAL INGRAINED ASSUMPTION?***

## Further research is required

- Starting with the researcher's self-awareness to removing one's own ingrained assumptions.
- Interviews with participants of the online survey.
- Devote more time to developing a shared understanding of how effective two-way dialogue can be for all involved.
  - > Students should be feedback literate from the beginning of their studies (Pitt & Norton, 2017).
- Begin the process of developing a responsibility-sharing learning environment (Nash & Winstone, 2017).

## Next steps: Developing feedback literacy skills

“Developing the requisite skills for engaging proactively with feedback is crucial for academic success.”

(Winstone, Mathlin & Nash, 2019:1)

"Understanding how students think about and respond to their feedback is critically important because it empowers us as academics to create positive experiences for our students."

(Forsythe & Johnson, 2017:858)

Development of assessment literacy skills is needed and changes need to be introduced on an institutional-wide level if significant benefits are to be seen.

O'Donovan, Rust & Price (2016)

## Next steps: Improved two-way dialogue

“...as with every other act of communication, feedback events depend on shared communication.”

(Green, 2019:84)

“...creating a culture of responsibility-sharing will involve even further investment from educators.”

(Nash & Winstone, 2019:7)

“...dialogue occupies an important place within a reflective and future-orientated assessment pedagogy.”

(Hill & West, 2019:12)

## Follow-up study: Grading exemplars

“Students need to experience the value of feedback so that its benefits are appreciated”

(Carless & Boud, 2018:1322)





## Next steps for 2019-20

Discuss the marking rubric alongside an exemplar



Provide students an exemplar to provide feedback on and grade

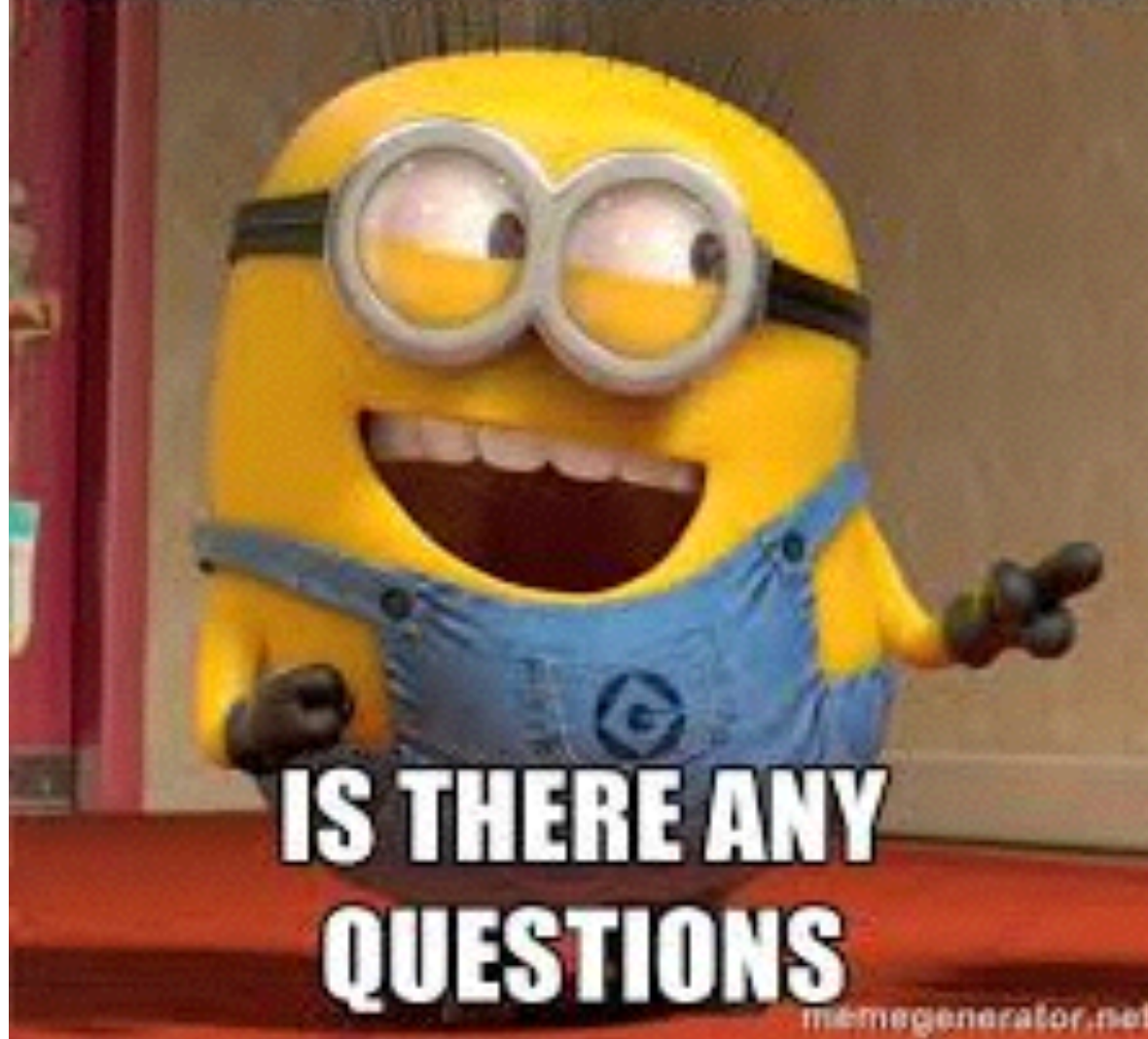


Open class discussion of student feedback and grade



Repeat throughout the semester

**THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!!!**



**IS THERE ANY  
QUESTIONS**

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