# **Reflection essay, optional module 1, giving feedback**

The topic of module 1 was “giving feedback”, and so far I have read a research summary and watched a case video on the topic. The case video in this module showed a group interview where students answered questions about giving feedback, whereas the research summary presented a more detailed description of the different aspects of feedback. In this essay I am going to reflect on the statement "we judge too much and too powerfully, not realizing the extent to which students experience our power over them". I am going to base my reflections upon the content of module 1 and my personal experiences.

My immediate thought when reading the statement is that it is important to be aware of what role one has when working as a student assistant. When giving feedback it is important to remember that in a way, the student assistant is above the student in a learning hierarchy. This means that the student probably will trust you as a teaching person and believe that the content of your feedback is true. This is great thing as long as the quality of the feedback is good. On the other hand the “power” one has over the student can make the learning situation bad if the quality of the feedback is poor.

Especially for negative feedback, I think it is important that the feedback is presented in a good way. In the research summary and case video it is given several examples of bad feedback. Both mentions that a feedback that focuses on the negative can be bad. It is not motivating the student, and can make the student less confident in the subject, and this can lead to poorer learning for the student. I think that this effect is strengthened by the position one are in as a learning assistant, compared to if one for example is helping a friend, since the feedback will be received as true.

It can also be problematic for positive feedback. For example if a student has written a text that is good enough to achieve a high grade, but still has some possible improvements, the feedback in the form of a short comment “good” will not be helpful. Since the student trusts the student assistant and assumes that he/she would give a comment if there was anything to improve, the student would probably think that there wasn’t anything if the only comment is “good”. This can lead to less learning.

My work as a student assistant includes giving feedback to the students answers to mathematics exercises. I think that it is important for me to remember the role I have as a student assistant when giving feedback. Therefore, I try to balance positive and negative comments in the feedback. If the students have done something wrong I try to phrase my feedback in way that encourages the student to learn so they will get it right the next time, instead of just stating what is wrong. By only stating what is wrong and right, and not open up for improvements and changes, the feedback can be judging and the will be a misuse of the position as learning assistant.