

ANASTASIYA LIPNEVICH

An interview with Amina Akif



Lost and Found: Navigating the Maze of Instructional Feedback...

In this rich conversation, Dr. Anastasiya Lipnevich delves into the multifaceted world of feedback, its implications in education, and its broader significance in everyday life.

Dr. Anastasiya Lipnevich began her academic journey in Belarus and today describes herself as a global citizen.

She holds four master's degrees (in Education, Clinical Psychology, Italian language and Literature, and Counselling Psychology) and a PhD in Educational Psychology with the concentration in Learning, Cognition, and Development. During her postdoctoral work at the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in the USA, she collaborated with international scientists on projects like PISA, which got her interested in topics that relate to large-scale assessment, measurement, and country-specific trends. Passionate about languages and psychology, she acknowledges how her work never feels like a chore as it involves understanding and helping people.

A significant milestone in her professional journey was an 18-month sabbatical leave after getting tenured at the City University of New York in the USA, during which she visited universities and schools in 24 countries, from Ecuador and Spain to Australia and Singapore. This experience was transformative, allowing her to witness firsthand the diverse educational landscapes across the globe. She observed that educational findings from one context, like the USA, might not necessarily apply to another. This realization fuelled her drive to replicate studies in multiple countries, appreciating the unique dynamics of each. Her fascination for praise was what led her into a deeper understanding of the intricacies of instructional feedback in the educational context.

While studying in Belarus and Italy, she observed a clear distance between instructors and students. However, upon moving to the USA, she was struck by the exuberance of the professors, particularly their liberal use of praise. Initially, she found this approach somewhat artificial, but soon recognized its potential to capture student attention and create a positive, motivating atmosphere.

Her research delves deep into different forms of feedback and cognitive, affective, social, and contextual factors that contribute to its effective processing. She emphasizes the multidimensional nature of feedback, describing it as a "force" that can only be understood through rigorous, well-conducted research. Her team strives for high methodological quality, often preregistering their research and ensuring adequate sample sizes. They also aim to replicate their studies across different countries to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of feedback. Dr. Lipnevich considers working with her extensive network of international collaborators one of her favourite parts of her job.

Dr. Lipnevich focuses on emotional response to feedback and explores strategies for effective emotion regulation, especially in situations perceived as failure. She is also currently exploring cognitive processing of feedback, examining conditions in which it can trigger cognitive biases or increase individuals' cognitive load. She notes how feedback is significant beyond performance in academic settings, and can be used to cultivate growth, understanding, and personal development.

Her work examines the effects of feedback patterns across various domains, from counselling to parenting to education and her research findings suggest that feedback, both externally delivered and internally generated, has the potential to considerably impact performance, learning, and well-being. Feedback can however sometimes have no effect or even be counterproductive, a finding which is notable in well-being in education, and is as crucial as academic performance. While students might prefer certain types of feedback, it does not necessarily mean that it is the most beneficial for them. For instance, while students in performance-oriented settings might prefer numerical grades, they often engage more deeply with feedback when it is presented without a score. This paradox, where students prefer certain feedback types that might not be the most beneficial for them, is a recurring theme in her research.

Dr. Lipnevich's work also includes equipping students (in the USA, Singapore, New Zealand, Spain, Brazil, and Italy) with tools for effective self-feedback generation. Her findings consistently show that these tools may reduce time load from teachers and can empower learners. She emphasizes the importance of explicit instruction in education, suggesting that educators need to be clear about their intentions and teach students how to study and process feedback effectively in order to improve teaching and learning. Dr. Lipnevich also explores nuances of feedback in diverse settings, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), social peer networks, and the emerging realm of AI-generated feedback.

She highlights the differences in feedback mechanisms across these contexts. She also mentions her ongoing research in countries like Iran and Ecuador, emphasizing the strikingly varied feedback dynamics in different cultural and educational contexts. Broader implications of feedback can be observed in everyday life. Assignments from her PhD classes include students applying feedback theories to non-educational contexts, such as purchasing a wedding gown, driving, or interacting with family members. She emphasizes that feedback is everywhere and has the power to influence performance, well-being, and mood. A single comment can shape a person's day, highlighting the profound impact of feedback.

Discover more about the true power of instructional feedback with Dr. Anastasiya Lipnevich at AEA-Europe's annual conference in Malta in November. Learn how feedback can shape our day, influence learning, and bridge cultural gaps. Drawing from extensive and rigorous studies, spanning cultures, contexts and developmental levels and combining them with rich personal experiences, Dr. Lipnevich will guide us in harnessing the potential of effective feedback in learning and will enrich our understanding of the role of feedback in our lives.