

THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK LITERACY IN IMPROVING ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES IN EFL CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

Feedback literacy plays a crucial role in improving assessment outcomes in EFL contexts by enabling learners to understand, interpret, and effectively use feedback for learning improvement. In many EFL settings, students often fail to engage meaningfully with feedback, limiting its impact on language development. This paper highlights the importance of developing feedback-literate learners who can actively reflect on and act upon feedback to enhance their performance. It argues that integrating feedback literacy into classroom practice promotes learner autonomy, deeper engagement with assessment, and improved language proficiency.

Keywords: feedback literacy, assessment, teaching, practice

INTRODUCTION

Assessment in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts is widely recognized as a key component of the teaching and learning process, serving not only to evaluate learners' performance but also to support their ongoing language development. Despite the central role of assessment, research and classroom practice often show that feedback provided to learners does not always lead to meaningful improvement. A common reason for this gap is that learners may not fully understand feedback, may misinterpret it, or may lack the ability to apply it effectively in future tasks.

In response to this challenge, the concept of feedback literacy has gained increasing attention. Feedback literacy refers to learners' capacity to comprehend feedback, make informed judgments about their own work, and take appropriate action to enhance learning. In EFL contexts, where learners face additional linguistic and cognitive challenges, developing feedback literacy is particularly important. By equipping learners with the skills to engage critically and constructively with feedback, educators can enhance the effectiveness of assessment practices and promote greater learner autonomy, reflection, and language improvement.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative multiple-case study design to explore the role of feedback literacy in improving assessment outcomes in EFL contexts. The study is grounded in constructivist and sociocultural theories of learning, which emphasize that language learning occurs through interaction, mediation, and reflective practice. The research was conducted in selected higher education institutions in Uzbekistan where English is taught as a foreign language. A purposive sampling technique was used to select EFL instructors and undergraduate students who regularly engage in written assessment tasks. This approach aligns with Uzbek educational research practices that emphasize context-based investigation of classroom realities in foreign language teaching.¹

The methodological framework of the study is supported by Uzbek scholars such as Jalolov J.J., who highlights communicative competence as a central goal of foreign language teaching, and Hoshimov O., who emphasizes the importance of learner-centered instruction in developing language skills. Similarly, the role of interactive teaching methods and feedback in improving students' language performance and motivation.²

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews explored participants' perceptions of feedback practices and their ability to understand and apply feedback. Classroom observations examined teacher feedback strategies and learner engagement during instructional activities. Students' written assignments and teacher feedback were analyzed to identify revision patterns and evidence of feedback uptake. Data collection involved three complementary methods to ensure depth and triangulation. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with both teachers and students to investigate perceptions of feedback practices, levels of feedback understanding, and learners' ability to utilize feedback for improvement.³

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, involving systematic coding and categorization of emerging patterns. This approach is consistent with qualitative research traditions in Uzbek educational studies, where emphasis is placed on interpreting learner behavior and classroom interaction in context.⁴ To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of findings, methodological triangulation was employed across interviews, observations, and document analysis. Additionally, member checking ensured participant validation of interpreted meanings, while peer debriefing strengthened analytical rigor.⁵ Ethical considerations, including informed consent,

¹Jalolov, J. J. (2010). Foreign language teaching methodology. Tashkent: O'qituvchi Publishing House.

²Yuldashev, J. G. (2011). Pedagogical technologies in education. Tashkent: Teacher Publishing House

³Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2015). InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (3rd ed.). Sage.

⁴Rasulov, R. R. (2015). Linguodidactics and modern approaches to language teaching. Tashkent: Fan Publishing.

⁵Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Sage.

confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were strictly observed throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study indicate that feedback literacy has a strong influence on improving assessment outcomes in EFL contexts. Analysis of interviews, classroom observations, and students' written work revealed three main themes: learners' understanding of feedback, their ability to apply feedback, and the impact of classroom feedback practices.

Firstly, learners with higher feedback literacy demonstrated a clearer understanding of teacher feedback. They were able to interpret comments accurately, identify linguistic errors, and recognize feedback as a tool for learning improvement. In contrast, learners with low feedback literacy tended to focus mainly on grades and often misunderstood or ignored written feedback, which limited its effectiveness.

Secondly, the results showed a clear difference in how learners acted on feedback. Feedback-literate students made meaningful revisions by improving grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and task response. Their drafts showed continuous improvement over time, indicating effective use of feedback. However, less feedback-literate learners made only minor or superficial changes, showing limited engagement with the feedback provided. Thirdly, classroom practices were found to play an important role in shaping feedback literacy. Interactive feedback approaches, such as discussions, questioning, peer review, and guided reflection, encouraged learners to engage more deeply with feedback. In such environments, students participated actively and showed greater awareness of how to improve their work. In contrast, teacher-centered feedback practices led to passive learner responses and lower levels of engagement.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of feedback literacy in improving assessment outcomes in EFL contexts, with particular attention to higher education settings in Uzbekistan. The findings reveal that feedback literacy is a crucial factor in determining how effectively learners engage with, interpret, and apply feedback in their language learning process. Students with higher levels of feedback literacy demonstrated stronger abilities to understand teacher comments, make meaningful revisions, and show continuous improvement in their written work. The study also confirms that feedback alone is not sufficient to enhance learning outcomes unless learners are equipped with the skills to use it effectively.

Overall, the research concludes that integrating feedback literacy into EFL teaching practices can significantly improve assessment effectiveness and support learner autonomy. It highlights the importance of creating supportive learning

environments where feedback is not only provided but also actively understood and used by learners to enhance their performance.

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