## INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF ASSESSMENT FEEDBACK ON EFL LEARNERS' MOTIVATION AND SELF-EFFICACY

**Odinayeva Farida**

Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages

Faculty of Foreign Language and Literature 5th-year student, Group 2115.

***Email:*** *faridaodinayeva01@gmail.com*

***Abstract.*** *The article explores the relationship between assessment feedback and learners' motivation and self-efficacy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. The study aims to determine how various types of teacher feedback—formative, summative, and peer-based—affect students' confidence and learning persistence. Through a mixed-method approach involving questionnaires and interviews, the research reveals that timely, constructive, and supportive feedback increases motivation and strengthens self-efficacy. In contrast, delayed or overly critical feedback can reduce learners' confidence and engagement. The results emphasize the importance of reflective and student-centered assessment practices in language education to sustain long-term learning motivation.*

***Keywords:*** *assessment feedback, EFL learners, motivation, self-efficacy, formative assessment, language learning.*

### Introduction

In recent decades, assessment feedback has gained increasing attention in foreign language education as an essential component of student learning and motivation. Feedback serves not only as a tool for measuring performance but also as a pedagogical mechanism that guides learners toward self-improvement. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, who often face anxiety and low self-confidence, feedback plays a decisive role in shaping their learning attitudes and self-perception.

The effectiveness of feedback depends largely on how it is delivered. Constructive and formative feedback helps learners identify strengths and weaknesses and supports autonomous learning. In contrast, negative or overly critical feedback may discourage students, reducing their motivation and self-efficacy. This study seeks to investigate the relationship between assessment feedback and two psychological factors: motivation (students' willingness to engage in learning) and self-efficacy (their belief in their capacity to succeed).

### Literature Review

Assessment feedback has been widely studied in educational psychology and applied linguistics. Black and Wiliam define formative feedback as a process that informs learners about their current performance and provides guidance for improvement [2,139-148p]. Hyland and Hyland emphasize that effective feedback is dialogic—it involves a two-way interaction between teacher and student [5.83-101p].

Motivation, according to Dörnyei**,** is the driving force that initiates, directs, and sustains learning behavior. Positive feedback enhances intrinsic motivation by reinforcing a learner's sense of competence and achievement [4.107p].

Bandura introduced the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to one's belief in their own ability to accomplish specific tasks [1.59p]. Learners with high self-efficacy tend to persevere through difficulties, while those with low self-efficacy often give up easily.

Previous research suggests that feedback that is specific, actionable, and emotionally supportive leads to higher motivation and confidence. In EFL contexts, where communication barriers and cultural factors influence learning, feedback also contributes to building trust between teachers and students.

**Methodology**

The research applied a mixed-method design to provide both quantitative and qualitative insights into the impact of assessment feedback on EFL learners. The study was conducted at the Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages during the spring semester of 2024.

A total of 50 undergraduate students from the Faculty of Foreign Language and Literature participated in the study. They represented different proficiency levels and were taking English language courses as part of their academic program.

The quantitative phase involved a questionnaire that measured students' motivation and self-efficacy before and after receiving teacher feedback on written assignments. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale to evaluate aspects such as confidence, interest, and willingness to participate in class.

The qualitative phase included semi-structured interviews with 10 participants. These interviews explored emotional responses to feedback, preferred feedback types, and students' opinions on how teacher comments affected their motivation. Responses were transcribed and analyzed thematically.

All participants were informed about the purpose of the research and participated voluntarily. Ethical considerations, including anonymity and confidentiality, were strictly maintained.

**Findings**

The findings of the study revealed a strong relationship between constructive feedback and increased learner motivation. Students who received personalized comments expressed greater enthusiasm and engagement in language activities.

Quantitative results indicated that 84% of the respondents felt motivated when feedback included encouragement and specific guidance, while 76% reported increased confidence after receiving formative feedback. Students appreciated feedback that acknowledged their progress, even when pointing out areas for improvement. For instance, comments such as *"You have improved your pronunciation; try to focus more on intonation"* were perceived as motivating.

Qualitative data also showed that tone and delivery play an important role. Learners stated that when teachers gave feedback respectfully and privately, it reduced embarrassment and helped them accept criticism positively. However, feedback given publicly or in a harsh tone was viewed as discouraging.

Interestingly, peer feedback was also found to have motivational value. When students evaluated each other's work, they reported better understanding of assessment criteria and more responsibility for their learning outcomes. This peer interaction built a sense of community and collaboration among learners, which further enhanced self-efficacy.

### Discussion

The results confirm previous findings that assessment feedback has a dual role: it improves performance and shapes learners' psychological readiness for learning. The study supports Bandura's self-efficacy theory, demonstrating that belief in one's ability can be reinforced through constructive feedback.

One significant observation is that feedback timing influences its effectiveness.

Immediate or near-immediate feedback helps students connect comments with their performance, while delayed feedback weakens motivation. Teachers, therefore, need to manage feedback schedules carefully to maximize its impact.

Moreover, this study found that feedback style matters as much as content. Positive reinforcement—acknowledging small improvements—has a stronger motivational effect than focusing solely on mistakes. Instructors who combine praise with constructive advice create an emotionally supportive atmosphere that encourages risk-taking and active participation in language tasks.

Finally, the inclusion of peer and self-assessment encourages learners to think critically and develop autonomy. Such practices not only reduce dependence on the teacher but also help students internalize assessment criteria. Over time, this leads to higher self-efficacy and more sustainable motivation.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, assessment feedback plays a pivotal role in motivating EFL learners and strengthening their self-efficacy. The findings from this study suggest that feedback should be constructive, timely, and empathetic to maximize its positive effects. Teachers must view feedback not merely as correction but as dialogue—a shared process that guides students toward deeper learning.

The study also highlights the need for teacher training in effective feedback practices. EFL instructors should learn to design formative tasks, give targeted comments, and balance criticism with encouragement. When feedback is delivered with care, students become more self-confident, resilient, and engaged in language learning.

Future research could extend this study by examining digital feedback tools or comparing cross-cultural attitudes toward teacher comments in EFL contexts. Such exploration would help educators design feedback systems that are pedagogically sound and psychologically supportive.

By adopting reflective assessment strategies, educators can create a positive learning environment where motivation and self-efficacy thrive.

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