

SECȚIUNEA VIII: LIMBA ENGLEZĂ

THE EFFECT OF TEACHER AND PEER FEEDBACK TECHNIQUES ON STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION: A DIDACTIC EXPERIMENT

IMPACTUL TEHNICILOR DE FEEDBACK OFERITE DE PROFESOR ȘI COLEGI ASUPRA ÎNCREDERII ȘI MOTIVAȚIEI ELEVILOR: UN STUDIU EXPERIMENTAL

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Abstract: *This study examines how feedback from teachers and peers influences students' confidence and motivation in learning English as a foreign language. The research was conducted as a classroom-based teaching experiment involving 27 students in the VIth and IXth at the “Ioan Vodă” Theoretical High School in Cahul and followed a mixed-methods approach, based on pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, classroom observations, reflective journals, and semi-structured interviews. The results show that feedback should not be viewed merely as a form of correction, but as a broader process of guidance and support that influences how students understand their performance and engage in classroom activities. In this regard, techniques such as providing cues, rephrasing, delayed correction, written feedback using symbols, and guided peer feedback contributed to increased participation by encouraging self-correction, reflection, and reduced anxiety. Teacher feedback was consistently associated with clarity and a sense of security, while peer feedback proved more effective when it was well-structured and supported by the teacher's validation. Overall, the effectiveness of feedback is not determined by the use of isolated techniques, but by how they are combined in teaching practice. To foster students' confidence and motivation, teachers are encouraged to incorporate both teacher feedback and peer feedback, using complementary techniques to ensure clarity, support, and responsiveness to students' needs.*

Keywords: *feedback techniques, teacher feedback, peer feedback, learner confidence, learner motivation*

Rezumat: *Acest studiu analizează modul în care tehnicile de feedback oferite de profesor și de colegi influențează încrederea și motivația elevilor în procesul de învățare a limbii engleze ca limbă străină. Cercetarea a fost realizată sub forma unui experiment didactic desfășurat în clasă, cu participarea a 27 de elevi din clasele a VI-a și a IX-a de la Liceul Teoretic „Ioan Vodă” din Cahul și a urmat o abordare mixtă, bazată pe chestionare aplicate înainte și după intervenție, observații la clasă, jurnale reflexive și interviuri semi-structurate. Rezultatele arată că feedbackul nu trebuie privit doar ca o formă de corectare, ci ca un proces mai amplu de ghidare și sprijin, care influențează modul în care elevii își înțeleg performanța și se implică în activitățile din clasă. În acest sens, tehnici precum oferirea de indicii, reformularea, corectarea întârziată, feedbackul scris cu simboluri și*

feedbackul între colegi, realizat într-un mod ghidat, au contribuit la creșterea participării, încurajând autocorectarea, reflecția și reducerea anxietății. Feedbackul profesorului a fost asociat în mod constant cu claritatea și un sentiment de siguranță, în timp ce feedbackul colegilor s-a dovedit mai eficient atunci când a fost bine structurat și susținut prin validarea profesorului. În ansamblu, eficiența feedbackului nu este determinată de utilizarea unor tehnici izolate, ci de modul în care acestea sunt combinate în practica didactică. Pentru a sprijini încrederea și motivația elevilor, profesorii sunt încurajați să integreze atât feedbackul profesorului, cât și feedbackul între colegi, prin utilizarea unor tehnici complementare, astfel încât să asigure claritate, sprijin și adaptare la nevoile elevilor.

Cuvinte-cheie: *tehnici de feedback, feedbackul profesorului, feedbackul între colegi, încrederea elevilor, motivația elevilor*

Foreign language learning requires not only the development of linguistic competence, but also sustained confidence, motivation, and active classroom participation. In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, learners are expected to speak, write, and respond in a language they are still developing, which makes mistakes, revision, and continuous adjustment a natural part of learning. Under these conditions, feedback becomes particularly significant, since teacher and peer responses may either support progress or create hesitation, avoidance, and reduced motivation. For many learners, especially during speaking and writing activities, the emotional response to feedback influences participation as strongly as linguistic difficulty itself.

In educational research, feedback is understood as information provided in response to learner performance with the purpose of supporting improvement and regulating further learning. Its role extends beyond the correction of errors, as it also encourages reflection, self-assessment, and the regulation of subsequent learning actions. In classroom practice, feedback appears in different forms, including oral and written feedback, immediate and delayed responses, as well as teacher and peer feedback. It is also expressed through techniques such as hinting, reformulation, correction codes, and guided peer responses. For this reason, feedback must be understood not only as a corrective practice but also as an important factor influencing learners' confidence, motivation, and willingness to participate.

A didactic experiment was conducted at the Theoretical High School “Ioan Vodă” in Cahul and involved 27 learners from the 6th and 9th forms. The study examined how teacher and peer feedback techniques influenced learners' confidence and motivation during English lessons, with particular attention to speaking and writing activities. The analysis was based on questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, peer observations and reflective journals, which allowed both quantitative and qualitative interpretation of learners' responses.

The data revealed that feedback was perceived primarily as a source of guidance, confidence, and support rather than merely as error correction. Across both 6th and 9th forms, 100% of 6th form pupils and 94.12% of 9th form pupils stated that feedback increased their confidence in learning English, and 100% of 6th form pupils with 88.24% of 9th form pupils agreed that it helped them recognise progress and continue learning after mistakes. Moreover, clear differences appeared between speaking and writing activities. During oral tasks, delayed correction and private feedback were consistently preferred, as immediate public correction often caused hesitation, embarrassment, and interruption of fluency. In contrast, writing activities showed a clear preference for detailed written comments instead of simple grades, particularly when feedback addressed both mistakes and ideas rather than isolated grammatical errors. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of feedback depends not only on correction itself, but also on clarity, timing, and emotional safety. They confirm that

learners respond more positively to formative feedback that protects participation and supports self-correction than to evaluative feedback centred only on error identification.

A particularly important distinction emerged between teacher and peer feedback, as learners responded differently to these two sources of guidance and evaluation. Teacher feedback remained the most reliable source of support, with almost all pupils reporting that it helped them understand what needed improvement and increased their confidence during learning tasks. In contrast, peer feedback was accepted mainly when it was supported by clear criteria and teacher confirmation. In the pre-questionnaire, 100% of 6th form boys and 9th form boys were unsure about trusting checklist-based peer feedback, while 71.43% of 9th form girls also expressed uncertainty. After guided peer-feedback activities supported by checklists and clear assessment rubrics, agreement increased to 100% in most groups. Interview responses reflected the same tendency: “Sometimes my classmate says the correct answer, but I am not sure if it is right, so I wait for the teacher”. These findings show that peer feedback supported participation and reflection, but teacher feedback remained the principal source of trust, security, and final validation in the learning process.

Among specific feedback techniques, hinting, reformulation, and coded written feedback produced the strongest results. Reformulation generated the highest agreement, reaching full agreement in the 6th form and 88.24% in the 9th form, while hinting also showed consistently high acceptance across both classes. Correction codes were well received, reaching 80% in the 6th form and 85.72% in the 9th form after learners became familiar with the correction symbols and their functions. In contrast, echoing and repetition as corrective feedback showed the lowest acceptance, particularly echoing, which received no positive responses in the 6th form and only 5.88% in the 9th form. Reflective journals and peer observations confirmed the same pattern, showing stronger learner engagement when feedback encouraged self-correction and clear guidance rather than repetition or indirect signalling. These findings suggest that feedback techniques were most effective when they combined clarity, structure, and active learner involvement.

To address these findings, feedback practices in EFL classrooms should be organised in ways that strengthen confidence and reduce the fear of failure. A supportive and predictable classroom atmosphere is essential, since learners respond more positively when mistakes are treated as part of learning rather than as signs of failure. During speaking activities, delayed correction, private feedback, and reformulation help preserve fluency and encourage continued participation. In writing tasks, detailed comments, correction codes, and guided revision are more effective than simple grades because they provide learners with clear direction for improvement. Similarly, peer feedback becomes more productive when it is supported by clear criteria, structured checklists, and teacher confirmation, as trust increases when learners perceive correction as fair and reliable. In this way, feedback functions not only as a corrective tool but also as an important condition for motivation, autonomy, and long-term engagement in language learning.

In conclusion, feedback represents a central element of effective EFL teaching, as it shapes not only language development but also learners’ confidence and willingness to participate. Its value lies in transforming mistakes into opportunities for reflection and progress rather than sources of anxiety or withdrawal. When feedback is organised as guidance rather than judgement, it supports both learner autonomy and long-term engagement in the learning process.

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