

Students' Attitude Towards Teacher Feedback: A Case Study of Uzbekistan EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study investigates the attitudes of students towards teacher feedback as a means of enhancing their learning progress in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. In this case study, 28 students participated (N = 28; 20 female and 8 male; age = 21). The study methodology is quantitative and analyzed using a Likert scale. The author of the study conducted a questionnaire and interview to gather the data. The respondents have positive attitudes towards teacher feedback. The result of the survey shows the importance of providing 1) individual, 2) clear, 3) motivational, 4) written and oral (dialogue-driven), 5) corrective, and 6) constructive feedback for learners' future progress in their learning process. Besides, the effectiveness of giving feedback for productive skill tasks and activities was also identified from the collected data. While feedback is intended to be constructive and supportive, students' attitudes can often hinder its effectiveness and potentially hinder their learning outcomes. Conversation barriers, such as cultural obstacles or insufficient clarity in the feedback provided, have the potential to hinder students' comprehension and interpretation of feedback, leading to unfavorable attitudes towards the feedback process. Their attitudes toward teacher feedback can also have an impact on students' motivation and engagement in the learning process. The problem statement aims to address the issues mentioned above, such as communication barriers between a teacher and a student and learners' engagement and motivation towards teacher feedback. The outcome of this study provides teachers with the opportunity to explore the various alternatives to providing feedback and realize its significance for their learners' educational progress. In addition, further studies were also identified from the data obtained in this research.

Keywords: Teacher Feedback, Learning Progress, Attitudes, ELT, Learning Process

INTRODUCTION

Effective feedback is a vital component of the teaching-learning process in any educational setting, including the English language classroom. In language teaching, feedback is an essential tool that enables teachers to evaluate and assess learners' progress. Effective feedback is a crucial component of the learning process, enabling students to understand their strengths, identify areas for improvement, and enhance their overall academic performance. Teachers play a vital role in providing feedback to students, offering guidance, and helping them grow academically. Teacher feedback plays a crucial role in providing learners with guidance and support to improve their language proficiency in the field of English Language Teaching (Chen, 2021). Based on the research findings conducted by Khoiriya (2023), it has been observed that a majority of students exhibit a preference for having their errors rectified by their instructor. Students will be able to get information and guidance on what to do and

how they can improve their communicative competence. Teachers may provide feedback on students' language skills, helping them improve and monitor their own performance level. On the other hand, students identify their strengths and weaknesses and get support from their instructors through constructive feedback. Besides, feedback may facilitate learners' motivation and engagement with the course and materials. In addition, feedback can also extend beyond academic work to include personalized guidance on non-linguistic aspects of language learning. According to Brinko (1993), whenever an expert is sincere, courteous, encouraging, empathetic, compassionate, and capable of keeping conversations confidential, feedback is more helpful. However, the attitudes of students toward teacher feedback can significantly impact the effectiveness of educational tools. Based on the results of research carried out by Halim et al. (2021), it was recommended that learners should be inspired to embrace teacher's corrective feedback. Additionally, teachers should emphasize the target language's framework by illuminating its patterns and features in the feedback they give to their students. In alternative terms, it can be posited that the evaluation of students' performance should encompass more than mere numerical scores assigned to their assignments.

Understanding the factors influencing students' attitudes toward teacher feedback is critical for improving the feedback process and fostering a positive learning environment. Students' attitudes toward teacher feedback can influence their level of engagement and motivation in the learning process. If students view feedback as unhelpful or perceive it as irrelevant to their learning goals, they may become disengaged, reducing their motivation to make necessary improvements and hindering their academic progress. In terms of communication barriers, effective feedback relies on clear and concise communication between teachers and students. However, communication barriers, such as language barriers or a lack of clarity in the feedback provided, can impede students' understanding and interpretation of the feedback, resulting in negative attitudes toward the process. Therefore, teachers in ELT classrooms should strive to provide consistent and effective feedback that supports students' motivation and progress towards their language learning goals.

The aim of this study is to investigate and understand students' attitudes towards teacher feedback at the National University of Uzbekistan. This research aims to provide valuable insights into how students perceive and respond to feedback from their teachers, with the overarching goal of improving the feedback process for enhanced learning outcomes. The objectives of the study: 1) to determine how students perceive the feedback they receive from their teachers, including its clarity, relevance, and usefulness in their learning process. 2) to assess whether a positive attitude towards feedback correlates with improved learning outcomes. 3) to investigate the impact of different feedback delivery methods (e.g., written comments or oral feedback) on students' attitudes and receptivity to feedback. 4) to contribute valuable insights to educational practitioners, administrators, and policymakers on how to optimize feedback practices to foster a positive and productive learning environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feedback refers to the transmission of information to a user with the purpose of informing them about the outcomes of their actions and encouraging them to continue engaging with the language. It is an essential component in any field of study. Feedback may be provided for a variety of reasons. What educators think and feel about the feedback process may have an impact on how they deliver feedback. Providing feedback was recognized as an immensely influential factor for students' success in most of the educational publications (Hattie and Timperley, 2007).

Yorke (2003) investigated the "clean feedback" model, which Walsh et al. (2015) developed, and its impact on the educational experiences of a purposive sample of eleven inexperienced physical education teachers enrolled in a one-year postgraduate program. The results suggest that the model has enhanced the students' capacity to provide and receive constructive feedback, encompassing both affirmative and critical aspects. Additionally, the model has fostered greater self-awareness among students, enabling them to comprehend their own learning and teaching styles more effectively.

Carvalho et al. (2021) examined the intermediary nature of learners' school identities in their study of the relationship between teacher feedback and pupil participation. Carvalho et al. (2021) encountered both the direct and indirect impacts of teacher feedback on promoting pupil involvement through students' viewed school verification as well as some moderating effects from students'

secondary course, using a comparatively large number encompassing pupils ($n = 2534$) from the sixth to the twelfth grade. The research emphasizes the role of student identification with their school as a key mediator of the benefits of teacher feedback.

Efficient feedback provides students with an understanding of their current standing, their areas of strength and weakness, the specific language or skill sets that require development, and actionable steps to enhance their performance in future endeavors. According to Hattie and Clarke (2019), there are significant differences between learners' and instructors' opinions of the amount and standard of teacher feedback. If the feedback provided to learners exceeds their level of understanding, it may not be effective. Effective learners can make rapid progress by engaging in revision and consistent practice. The effectiveness of feedback can be attributed to its powerful and motivational nature. It is imperative for educators to possess proficient skills in providing feedback. It is imperative for individuals to recognize the significance of the learning process for students. In the context of formative assessment, feedback is considered an integral component.

According to Poulos and Mahony's (2008) assertion, although feedback is often recognized as a crucial approach in education, there is limited research on students' perspectives regarding feedback. According to Hattie and Gan (2011), there is a significant amount of knowledge regarding the potential impact of feedback, but there is a lack of understanding on how to effectively utilize this power within the classroom setting.

The provision of written feedback to EFL learners can facilitate the revision of their written work and enable them to enhance and improve their writing. Apart from written feedback, oral corrective feedback can also be an effective tool for ELT teachers in prompting the communicative competence of EFL learners. Moreover, teachers conducting written feedback have the opportunity to evaluate students' grammatical and linguistic accuracy as well as their communicative effectiveness. All types of feedback are significant. The process of controlling one's perspective is called self-regulation. Based on the opinions of Butler and Winnie (1995), there is a positive effect and impact on student language and attitude when they have internal and external feedback. They meant teacher feedback for external feedback and self-evaluation for internal feedback. Furthermore, feedback in ELT classrooms is not limited to academic work. It can also include personalized feedback on how students should conduct themselves in an English-speaking environment, such as their pronunciation and intonation during conversations. This type of feedback can help students achieve their communication goals and succeed in various social situations. Oral, written, and visual/demonstrative feedback is also important. Teachers should consider the best mode for the message: interactive, written, or demonstrative. Besides talking with the students and giving written feedback on written work assignments, the use of demonstrations is also vital when students need a sample to demonstrate how to do something (Brookhart, 2008).

METHODS

The design of this research is a case study. Case studies suggest focusing on specific instances (Blaxter, 2006). According to Cohen et al. (2000), case study data is collected from people's experiences and activities, and as a result, it is perceived to be powerful in reality. The instruments of the study are a questionnaire and an interview. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed quantitatively. Quantitative concepts are characterized by a focus on outcomes and a reliance on numerical data (Blaxter, 2006). The author of this article faced a case in terms of teacher feedback during their teaching practices, lecturing, and observing others' lessons. The researcher decided to conduct a small case study with 28 respondents on students' perspectives to identify whether they have a positive or negative attitude towards teacher feedback. In this study, the authors distributed questionnaires to the respondents to learn their perspectives. The participants were chosen randomly. The questionnaire was organized based on a Likert scale. The researchers considered reducing the categories to manage simplicity. It was reconstructed without the "not sure" category. There were 4 categories out of 5: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The total number of participants was 28; 20 of them were female and 8 were male.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A recent study on feedback in the ELT classroom has revealed that students highly value feedback from their teachers, as it provides them with valuable insights into their progress and areas for improvement. The study indicated that having supportive and encouraging teacher feedback can be a valuable asset in language teaching. As learners progress in their language studies, feedback is an essential component of their learning journey. The results are presented in Table 1. The responses of the participants were subjected to percentage analysis.

Table 1. The findings of the study and participants' responses analysed in percentages

N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1	I want my teacher to provide individual feedback.	86.3	13.7	0.0	0.0
2	I want my teacher to give me group or class feedback.	20.6	15.3	64.4	0.0
3	I understand my teacher's feedback.	20.9	13.4	55.5	10.2
4	I want my teacher to provide motivational feedback.	91.3	8.7	0.0	0.0
5	I prefer my teacher's written feedback.	41.2	47	2.3	3.5
6	I prefer my teacher's oral feedback.	55.2	35.8	9.0	0.0
7	I revise my performance after getting constructive feedback.	70.3	20.5	9.2	0.0
8	Feedback facilitates my learning progress.	80.7	19.3	0.0	0.0
9	Feedback helps me improve my writing skills.	88.1	10.2	1.7	0.0
10	Feedback helps me improve my speaking skills.	78.5	15.7	5.8	0.0
11	Feedback helps me improve my reading skills.	11.8	7.8	59.1	21.3
12	Feedback helps me improve my listening skills.	15.8	20.4	45.6	18.2

Table 1 provides a total of twelve statements. The first item pertains to personalized feedback, while the second item pertains to feedback provided to the entire class. The objective is to ascertain students' preferences between individualized feedback and feedback given to the entire class. The third proposition involves determining the comprehensibility of the feedback provided to learners. The fourth statement pertains to the inquiry of whether or not learners express a desire to receive motivational feedback. The fifth and sixth instances of feedback were administered to ascertain the preference of the students with regard to receiving written or oral feedback. The seventh proposition entails assessing whether the students perceive the advantages of reviewing the feedback provided. The following statement pertains to the provision of feedback for the purpose of assessing one's progress in learning. The final four statements aim to ascertain whether the learners perceived the feedback as beneficial in enhancing their proficiency across the four skill domains. The aforementioned categories are Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The data has been presented in percentage values for the purpose of analysis.

According to the survey results, a significant majority of respondents (86.3%) strongly agreed that their teachers provide individual feedback. Additionally, 13.7% of respondents agreed with this statement, while none of the respondents selected the option of disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement. The second statement elicited a response of strong agreement from 20.6 % of the respondents, while 15 % expressed agreement with the statement. The majority of respondents, specifically 64.4%, expressed disagreement with regard to providing feedback to a group or class, while none of them strongly agreed with this practice. The comparison of statements 1 and 2 in the current study demonstrates that a greater proportion of students express a preference for receiving personalized feedback from their instructors. According to the survey results, a significant majority of 86.3% of students strongly agree with the notion that they desire individual feedback from their teacher. Brookhart (2008) posits that students perceive their teachers' appreciation for their learning when they receive personalized feedback.

The interview data revealed that the participants expressed a preference for receiving personalized feedback. Researcher who observed the lesson found that the students showed resistance to receiving feedback in front of their peers. Following the instructional session, the researcher inquired about the participants' rationale behind their disinclination to receive feedback intended for the entire class. The respondents articulated that they perceive no utility in such feedback. Due to their reluctance to seek feedback in a group setting, which may make them feel hesitant or shy, some people prefer to receive individual feedback from teachers.

The third statement pertains to the level of clarity in the feedback provided. According to the data, 55.5% of the participants have a limited understanding of the feedback that their instructors have given them. Brookhart (2008) asserts that it is crucial to furnish students with unambiguous feedback that employs familiar vocabulary and concepts. According to Alghazo et al. (2009), it is crucial for feedback to be targeted to prevent students from being inundated with excessive information. According to Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1996), the current study supports a combination of direct and indirect feedback. The approach specifically entails giving learners explicit corrective feedback on errors at first, then gradually transitioning to more implicit forms of feedback once they have developed a solid understanding of the types and characteristics of their errors.

During the interview, the author of the study examined the notion that a greater number of learners expressed disagreement with regard to comprehending teacher feedback. The individuals expressed that the feedback provided was excessively lengthy and contained complex terminology that may be unfamiliar to learners on occasion. The students expressed a desire to receive concise and easily understandable feedback. Through the discourse, the authors of the study discerned additional investigations to undertake regarding teacher feedback and strategies for enhancing the comprehensibility of teacher feedback for students.

The findings indicate that a significant proportion of learners (91.3%) express a desire to receive feedback that is motivational in nature. Piccinin (2003) emphasizes the importance of feedback that fosters a positive affective response in students. This may be considered a methodology designed to incentivize students to utilize the feedback that has been furnished to them. It is imperative that feedback provided to learners does not have a discouraging or demotivating effect.

The overwhelming majority of participants in the interview expressed a strong preference for feedback that is motivational. The individual indicated that the activity facilitates their acquisition of knowledge and advancement. The participants expressed a desire to receive motivational feedback following each instance of corrective or constructive feedback in order to foster a sense of encouragement and support for their ongoing learning process.

The sum of 41.2 and 47, the total score for the SA and A categories of the fifth statement pertaining to written feedback, amounts to 88.2%. The data suggests that an increasing number of students express a preference for receiving written feedback from their instructors. The sum of 55.2 and 35.8 is 90.1%. Simultaneously, students express a desire to receive verbal feedback. The individuals in question hold the belief that both written and oral forms of feedback are advantageous to their learning and development. The statistical data in both the fifth and sixth statements indicate identical outcomes. The majority of students exhibited a tendency towards the categories of "strongly agree" and "agree" for both statements presented in a tabular format. The students were deemed to have received both written and oral feedback. Facilitating dialogue to enable learners to comprehend feedback is imperative. Nicole and Dick (2006) propose that conceptualizing feedback as a form of dialogue rather than transmission can enhance its value and efficacy and improve students' comprehension. Furthermore, the concept of feedback pertains to the individual, relational, and communal aspects of how individuals engage in communication through providing feedback to learners (Carless, 2013; Pitt & Norton, 2017).

During the interview, certain students expressed that they find oral feedback advantageous, as they tend to retain information better when it is presented verbally. However, some people have noted that they prefer written feedback because it uses visual aids to help them retain information. They have the ability to accurately identify the location of errors and other related issues.

According to the seventh statement result, a majority of participants (70.3%) engage in performance revision subsequent to receiving constructive feedback. However, there exists a subset of individuals who maintain the belief that the process of revising is not of significant value. As per Hyland's (1990, p. 285) assertion, the receipt of feedback from instructors does not signify the culmination of the process. For feedback to be efficacious, it is imperative that it prompts the learner to make modifications to their comprehension, linguistic aptitude, or learning methodologies.

During the interview that the study's researcher conducted with the students, the majority of them expressed their gratitude for the feedback that their instructors had given them and noted how useful it had been in facilitating their revision process. Additionally, the author found the process of revising to be more enjoyable following the receipt of feedback. The act of revising feedback was deemed highly beneficial in facilitating goal attainment.

The preceding four statements (9, 10, 11, and 12) have posited that students exhibit a preference for receiving feedback on their productive skills. According to their perspective, it is deemed more effective in enhancing their writing and oral communication proficiencies. Nevertheless, there are individuals who maintain the viewpoint that feedback can also prove advantageous for the development of receptive skills. However, the percentage is significantly low. It can be inferred that feedback plays a crucial role in enhancing students' academic performance. According to Ferguson's (2011) findings, students perceive their teachers' feedback in EFL classes as a way to improve writing accuracy. However, the students express a preference for teacher feedback that incorporates an assessment of the content of their written output. Electronic mail is a straightforward yet efficient method of delivering feedback to students. Various types of email feedback may exist. In certain instances, emails may furnish general feedback to a cohort of pupils, particularly when an instructor is instructing a sizable assembly.

Feedback refers to the provision of information to students regarding ways in which their writing abilities can be enhanced. According to Borup et al. (2015), providing feedback from teachers is a prevalent method of assisting students during the crucial phase of applying newly acquired knowledge. This is a time when students may not possess sufficient comprehension to determine if they are correctly implementing the knowledge. As per the findings of McGarrell and Verbeem (2007), feedback provided on writing should prioritize content over form in order to enable students to concentrate on the communicative purpose of writing, thereby enhancing its meaningfulness. The third characteristic, namely timeliness, pertains to the expeditiousness of feedback provision. Specifically, the promptness with which a text is evaluated and rectified is deemed advantageous. The fourth characteristic, namely constancy, acknowledges the fundamental role of education; failure to adhere to it may result in the loss of knowledge, thereby impeding progress in writing (Leki, 1990).

During the interview, the students expressed that feedback pertaining to their productive skills, specifically speaking and writing, was very useful. The respondents reported an enhancement in their essay compositions subsequent to receiving feedback from their instructor and subsequently revising it based on the received feedback. The provision of such training proved advantageous for the enhancement of their oral communication abilities. Effective progress could be achieved by incorporating feedback to revise speech errors. According to Hartshorn (2008), effective feedback should be both manageable and timely while also providing meaningful insights. This requires a sustained commitment from both the teacher and the student, in terms of the volume of papers to be reviewed and corrected, as well as the implementation of an organizational system that enables the teacher to monitor student progress and provide tailored feedback to meet individual needs.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, students' attitudes toward teacher feedback play a crucial role in their academic development and growth. The research in this field has highlighted several key findings. Firstly, students generally perceive feedback as valuable and recognize its importance in improving their learning outcomes. Positive feedback, especially when specific and constructive, has been found to enhance motivation, self-efficacy, and engagement. Secondly, individual differences exist in how students respond to teacher feedback. Factors such as prior knowledge, self-regulation skills, and cultural background can influence students' interpretations and reactions to feedback. Some students may be more receptive and open to feedback, while others may perceive it as a threat to their self-

esteem or competence. Well-designed feedback that is timely, specific, and aligned with individual learning goals tends to be more effective in fostering positive attitudes and promoting learning. Feedback is an indispensable component of the learning process in ELT classrooms. As the literature suggests, feedback can enhance students' learning by informing them of their progress, identifying areas that require improvement, and providing motivation. Moreover, teachers should tailor feedback to individual students and employ various strategies to effectively deliver feedback. The current study was conducted to identify whether students' have a positive or negative attitude towards teacher feedback. In this article, based on the questionnaire and interview data analysis, it is shown that learners have a positive attitude towards teacher feedback. The paper discusses how important it is to provide feedback for learners in ELT classrooms by analyzing students' perspectives on teacher feedback. They appreciate individual, oral-written, corrective, constructive, clear, and motivational feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it was identified that learners faced challenges when they received feedback from instructors in terms of vocabulary and concepts. The researcher took into consideration having further case studies to explore more of the strategies and techniques of giving feedback and internal feedback. Teachers should be aware of the techniques and strategies in order to be able to give clear and effective feedback to learners and promote their learning process. The first study will be devoted to those issues in the future to help teachers level their language and give efficient feedback. The second future study will explore personalized feedback and how students conduct self-evaluation for themselves except for external feedback. Further studies will investigate evidence-based recommendations for educators and educational institutions on how to enhance the feedback process to align with students' attitudes and needs and suggest strategies for improving the feedback culture within educational institutions.

Good feedback practice is an important tool in higher education. It requires teacher-student interaction to achieve goals and succeed in the language teaching and learning process. Overall, incorporating feedback into ELT classrooms can greatly benefit students and improve learning outcomes.

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