

IMPACT OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT ON STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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Abstract. The article focuses on introducing formative assessment to the educational process of professionally oriented English communication and the impact of assessment on students' motivation to learn English. In the article, various types of motivation are discussed; high and low levels of formative assessment are presented; the relationship between motivation and assessment in learning English is studied. The model of high and low levels of formative assessment implementation in learning English for professional communication is tested. The levels of students' motivation to English acquisition in the conditions of low and high levels of formative assessment are compared. Special attention is paid to specific pedagogical conditions under which formative assessment has a greater impact on students' motivation. Experimental training was conducted among students of the pedagogical university who study English for professional communication. The authors compare and analyze the results of the motivation tests and diagnostic tests of language proficiency at the pre- and post- stages of experimental training. The study supports the idea about the relationship between students' motivation and their English language proficiency assessment. The results show that a high level of formative assessment can be beneficial for overcoming students' low motivation if students receive immediate feedback, evaluation of their work, teachers' recommendations and support. It is observed that the reasonable integration of

students' self-assessment into teachers' formative assessment plays a vital role in increasing students' motivation to English acquisition. According to the study, regular practical implementation of high-level formative assessment methods in English acquisition increases the level of students' motivation and, consequently, the level of students' achievements in mastering professionally oriented English communication.

Keywords: *English language acquisition, motivation, English language proficiency, high level of formative assessment, low level of formative assessment, feedback, self-assessment.*

Дмітренко Наталя, Будас Юлія, Колядич Юлія, Поляруш Ніна. Вплив формуючого оцінювання на мотивацію студентів у процесі оволодіння англійською мовою.

Анотація. Стаття присвячена проблемі застосування формуючого оцінювання у процесі навчання професійно орієнтованого англійського спілкування і впливу оцінювання на мотивацію студентів до вивчення англійської мови. У статті розглядається різні види мотивації, високий і низький рівні формуючого оцінювання та взаємозв'язок між мотивацією і оцінюванням у процесі вивчення англійської мови. Авторами перевіряється модель застосування високого і низького рівня формуючого оцінювання у процесі вивчення англійської мови для професійного спілкування і порівнюються рівні мотивації до вивчення англійської мови у студентів, які навчалися за низьким і високим рівнем формуючого оцінювання. Особлива увага звертається на конкретні педагогічні умови, за яких формуюче оцінювання має більший вплив на мотивацію студентів. Експериментальне навчання проводилося серед студентів педагогічного університету, які вивчають англійську мову для професійного спілкування. У статті порівняно і проаналізовано результати мотиваційного тесту і зрізу знань студентів з професійно орієнтованого англійського спілкування, які проводилися на початку і в кінці експериментального навчання. Дослідження підтвердило взаємозв'язок між мотивацією студентів та оцінкою рівня їх знань англійської мови. Доведено, що високий рівень формуючого оцінювання може бути корисним для подолання низької мотивації студентів, якщо студенти отримують своєчасний зворотний зв'язок, оцінку своєї роботи, рекомендації і підтримку викладачів. Поступова інтеграція самооцінки студентів в формуюче оцінювання викладачів також відіграє важливу роль у підвищенні рівня мотивації студентів до вивчення англійської мови. Згідно з опитуванням, регулярне практичне застосування методів високого рівня формуючого оцінювання у процесі вивчення англійської мови підвищують мотивацію студентів, в результаті чого підвищується рівень досягнень студентів в оволодінні професійно орієнтованим англійським спілкуванням.

Ключові слова: *оволодіння англійською мовою, мотивація, англійська компетентність, високий рівень формуючого оцінювання, низький рівень формуючого оцінювання, зворотний зв'язок, самооцінювання.*

Introduction

Learning habits of students are explained by a complex of motives. Multiple strategies are used for increasing students' motivation while learning foreign languages. Assessment is among those which are the most powerful tools. It is viewed as a significant trigger of motivation for learning. Being widely discussed, it is still an ambiguous issue for those who are involved in the process. Investigating obvious and hidden challenges of assessment is important for understanding the processes which influence students' motivation. It helps address the problems a teacher may experience while introducing formative assessment in class. So, no wonder that formative assessment is viewed as the top priority nowadays.

It is presumed that high-level formative assessment can influence students' motivation and subsequently their foreign language proficiency. So, our primary objectives are to trace the influence of high-level formative assessment on students' motivation while learning a foreign language and to suggest the most beneficial high-level formative assessment characteristics used during the study for increasing students' motivation to achieve foreign language proficiency.

Theoretical Analysis

Motivation is defined in psychology as a process “that initiates, directs, and sustains behaviour to satisfy physiological or psychological needs” (Wood & Wood, 1999, p. 358). As a complex phenomenon, motivation involves a number of entities, such as interest, confidence, self-esteem, effort, efficacy, and others. Geen (1995) pointed out activation (determination to start doing something), persistence (the decision not to give up and continue doing what you have begun), and intensity (the focused energy and attention to complete the thing) as the most relevant characteristics of motivation, though some scientists (Crowl, 1997) consider persistence and focused behaviour as its most important features.

Intrinsic motivation happens when activities are pursued as “ends in itself, simply because they are enjoyable, not because any external reward is attached. On the other hand, when we act in order to gain some external reward or to avoid some undesirable consequence, we are pulled by extrinsic motivation” (Wood, 1999, p. 359). Reasons for mastering a foreign language vary greatly and may include the desire to integrate into a new community, love or a passionate interest, self-development, career opportunities or others. If students consider learning the language important and it coincides with their personal goals, they will treat learning the language as worth the effort. Thus, motivation for learning is viewed as a form of “energy which is experienced by learners and which drives their capacity to learn, adapt and change in response to internal and external stimuli” (A systematic review of the impact of summative assessment, 2002).

Researchers also point out the need for achievement as another social motive that influences learning habits even more powerfully and efficiently. Achievement motivation (McClelland et al., 1958) can be interpreted as a person's desire to achieve some goals, experience a sense of accomplishment. Students low in achievement motivation slack or cease learning a foreign language when they meet any serious obstacles but they consider their failure as a result of their inability. Weiner (1972) describes people low in achievement motivation as those who do not realize that effort influences outcome, whereas people with high achievement motivation, according to Kukla (1972), regard their abilities, determination and hard work as the factors which influence their outcomes and success. Moreover, students high in achievement motivation will not give up easily. They will continue working to learn a language, and enjoy testing their abilities.

Cauley and McMillan (2010) differentiate achievement goals as performance goals and mastery goals. Public evaluations of individual abilities and rewarding the

best performance are stressed in a performance-goal orientation, while the assessment of students' progress, improvement, developing new skills is emphasized when mastery goals are supported.

Many researchers, who concentrate on the impact of assessment on the motivation for learning, have different ideas as for its value. Though they subscribe to the "central role assessment plays in promoting intrinsic or extrinsic motivation" (A systematic review of the impact of summative assessment and tests on students' motivation for learning, 2002, p. 14), their opinions differ greatly concerning the effect of tests and exams on learners' motivation to master the language. Whereas adherents of the unfavourable role of exams on motivation to learning express their negativity, naming exam anxiety (Crooks, 1988), inability to demonstrate the students' on-going growth (Tzagari, 2004), narrowing the curriculum (Gipps, 1994) and others, their opponents contradict the harmful role of assessment, and give their proofs.

Assessment begins with teachers' educational values, and the target of the language learning surely affects the assessment. What is more, the personality of the evaluator, learners' age, reasons for assessing, types of assessment and time chosen for it correlate and influence both the assessment and the motivation. "Assessment practices have increasingly moved away from objective mastery testing of instructional syllabus content to on-going assessment of effort and contribution learners make to the process of learning." (Ross, 2005, p. 318).

The definition of assessment largely depends on the researcher's vision of the matter. The overwhelming majority share the common view of assessment as an on-going process with a variety of participants and techniques used. This process is considered to be crucial in effective instruction. Assessment is a term that "covers any activity in which evidence of learning is collected in a planned and systematic way, and is used to make a judgment about learning" (Assessment and Learning Research Synthesis Group, 2002, p. 1).

However, scholars have various perceptions of what assessment involves. It is a wide-spread vision of assessment nowadays as "a combination of all formal and informal judgments and findings that occur inside and outside the classroom" (Florin, 2010, p. 24).

Bachman (1990) wrote about measurement, test, and evaluation as three main concepts of the assessment process. Considering measurement to be synonymous with assessment, he presented it as the process of "quantifying the characteristics of persons according to explicit procedures and rules" (Bachman, 1990, p. 18). For Bachman, test is a measurement instrument that presents "a specific sample of an individual behaviour" (Bachman, 1990, p. 20). And evaluation is viewed as an amount of "reliable and relevant information" (Bachman, 1990, p. 22).

Witt, Elliotte, Kramer, and Gresham presume that the activities and decisions occurring "during assessment can be thought of as a process components, while the information collected represents content components" (Witt et al., 1994, p. 8).

Florin shares Herrera's opinion of assessment as a wide range of procedures to get the information about students' knowledge and performance. He also points out

that assessment is “a combination of all formal and informal judgments and findings that occur inside and outside a classroom” (Florin, 2010, p. 24). The researcher indicates that assessment is a sum of testing points and a variety of other measurements.

Simultaneously, many opponents (Gipps, 1994; Tsagari, 2004; Hosseini & Ghonsooly, 2017) feel rather sceptical about standardised language tests. They doubt the validity of these tests, their effects, and reasoning. Tests are criticized for evaluating foreign language proficiency at a certain point of time ignoring students’ attitudes, interests, goals, and involvement. This scepticism has resulted in new approaches to assessment. Scientists believe assessment can be a tool that helps solve learners’ problems. Its practices “can and should vary according to the type of problem that precipitated assessment” (Witt et al., 1994, p. 6). Dylan (2017) talks about assessment as a bridge between learning and teaching. He states that assessment makes it possible for a teacher to see whether the methods achieved the target of learning, and help learners overcome their problems.

Among the most significant recommended principles to assessment National Committee on Science Education Standards and Assessment (1996) names the fairness, the consistency of assessment with its purpose, equity of assessment with students’ opportunities and its soundness, the definite correspondence between the data collected and the consequences of assessment results.

Though Bachman (1990) connected measurement with assessment, he put forward the idea of the reasoning behind the information about learner’s level of knowledge. “Evaluation does not have to rely exclusively on test scores, and test scores are not always evaluative. Tests should be used to motivate students to study more or to help identify gaps in their knowledge base” (Bachman, 1990 as cited in Florin, 2010).

Formative assessment can be interpreted as a data accumulating process of collecting information about students’ learning and adjusting the instruction to improve their learning. Ideally, it is “a planned process to the extent that the teacher consciously and constantly absorbs evidence of student performance and then uses this information productively, resulting in increased student motivation and engagement” (Cauley & McMillan, 2010). It is reported that “formative assessment shows students that underperformance is not innate and that improvements can be made through targeted changes” (Hanover Research, 2014).

Cauley and McMillan (2010) list several possible formative assessment characteristics. Firstly, they differentiate low-level and high-level formative assessment. Low-level formative assessment (LFA) is mostly standardized, formal, with teachers who are decision-makers. Feedback is usually delayed in time, after instruction and assessment. Instructional tasks are chosen only by a teacher, and they are created on formal base. Students’ self-assessment is not taken into account. Motivation is mostly extrinsic. Students consider their success or failure as attributable to external factors. In contrast, high-level formative assessment (HFA), characterized by these scholars, is spontaneous, informal, with varied assessment conducted by teachers and students. Mostly immediate feedback is specific for low

achieving students and delayed for higher achieving ones. Tasks are settled by students too and adjustments may be flexible. Interactions between teachers and students are more extensive. Much attention is given to students' self-assessment and it is an integral part of the evaluation. Intrinsic motivation is a typical type. Students consider internal factors, their efforts as responsible for their results.

Methods

Participants

Eighty students of Vinnytsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University (VSPU), majoring in Mathematics, Psychology, and the Ukrainian Language were involved in the research process. The participants were heterogeneous in terms of their foreign language proficiency, age, and gender. The study took place during 2018–2019, they had been learning English (discipline “Foreign Language for Specific Purposes”) for 1.5 years as a foreign language in this particular university. Lessons were conducted twice a week (first year of study) and once a week (second year of study) for 4 terms. Both groups consisted of 40 students, who were randomly assigned. But the high-level formative assessment was applied in the experimental group (high-level formative assessment group or HFA group), whereas the control group (low-level formative assessment group or LFA group) was taught with the same intake of concepts using the low-level formative assessment.

The participants of the experimental study were informed about the purpose and the structure of research and assured that their names would not be used in the study result reports.

Instruments

To gauge the motivation towards ESP learning, 30 statements about students' preferences and habits of learning English were offered. They were modified from the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery (Gardner, 1985). The original version of the questionnaire includes 6 sections with 12 sub-tests (104 items). We have chosen the shortened form of the test which includes only the “Motivation” section (motivation tendency to foreign learning) with 3 sub-tests which consider motivational intensity (11 items), desire to learn English (9 items), and attitudes toward learning English (10 items).

The validity and reliability of Gardner's test is widely established (Hashwani, 2008; Kristmanson, 2000; Williams et al., 2002). According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) the validity of the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery has been supported. The internal consistence reliability was reported to be .91 (Gardner, 2005). The mean reliability of the section ‘Motivation’ was calculated as .92 (motivational intensity: .80, attitude toward learning the target language: .91, desire to learn the target language: 0.84) (Masgoret & Gardner, 1994). In our study the reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) value for the test “Motivation” was also computed to

estimate the internal consistency. It was found to be quite high: 0.88. The minimum and maximum possible score on this test range from 30 to 150.

In the instruction, the students of both groups were asked to estimate the degree of their agreement with the test statements, assessing them from one to five points (a five-point Likert scale): 5 – means completely true (strongly agree); 4 – means usually true (agree); 3 – means sometimes true (uncertain/neutral); 2 – means not usually true (disagree); 1 – means never true (strongly disagree). The score range of the questionnaire is the following: 5.00-4.51 means that the level of motivation is very high, 4.50-3.51 – high, 3.50-2.51 – average, 2.50-1.51 – low, 1.50-1.00 – very low.

In the study, the preliminary and final English tests of reading comprehension, taken from Preliminary English Test (PET) (reading comprehension online prepared tests by Cambridge), were given to the students to witness the initial and final level of students' reading comprehension skill. The total maximum practice test score is 30 (30-20 – high level, 19-13 – average level, 12-1 – low level).

The self-assessment scales from Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as a source for students' self-assessment of English skills were used as well as the following learning materials: “Educational Psychology”, “English for Mathematics” (Dmitrenko, 2011; 2018).

Research Design

To better tackle the issue, the test of English proficiency, the pre- and post-“Motivation” survey, the self-assessment scales, the observation, interviewing, and the experimental study were conducted.

The process of the study can be presented as the following scheme: *Two-part Questionnaire* (Part 1 – Personal Data, Self-Assessment of English Skills, Interview; Part 2 – The Attitude / Motivation Test Battery) → *Preliminary English Test* (PET Reading Comprehension) → *Sandwich Model* → *Final Test* (PET Reading Comprehension) → *The Attitude / Motivation Test Battery*.

At the initial phase of the study the students were given a two-part questionnaire, which included personal information, scales of English skills self-assessment, and the section “Motivation” from the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery. To obtain some information about students' English learning background, they were also interviewed about any opportunities to speak English in their everyday life outside the classroom, possibilities to use English in their future workplace, the reasons that forced them to study English or supported them in learning, the influence of teachers' attitude over their desire to learn English, the necessity to get more feedback from their teacher of English. The next step was to do the reading comprehension part of PET.

The mediation (experimental) phase of the study was designed as *the Sandwich model* originally introduced by Sternberg and Grigorenko (as cited in Poehner, 2008). It was intended to allocate 30 minutes of the HFA group's time to reading

comprehension using the high-level formative assessment during the mediation phase. The following stages were used:

- 1: after reading the text the students did various grammar and vocabulary tasks to test their reading comprehension. In LFA groups it was the tutor who checked and scored the test results, giving individual comments of errors and recommendations in written form after a prolonged period. He returned the papers to the learners during the next lesson, whereas in the HFA groups the immediate post-test discussion on students' doubts was welcomed. The tutor gave a chance to the students to find the correct answer by themselves. For this purpose, the teacher shared a blank response sheet and grouped students to discuss the test and present the agreed paper. Any person, interested in the subsequent to the test feedback, received it. The mediator's task was to offer immediate feedback; to brainstorm the problem points, give explanations, hints, prompts, suggestions; to ask for students' arguments over their choice; to provide different learning methods mostly with critical thinking aloud. The students' self-assessment was taken into account while marking the papers. The students were encouraged to contribute their individual tasks and write similar tests at home.
- 2: in a week the learners were given a reading comprehension test at the lesson and the mediator checked and scored the test results, but the discussion of results and errors was omitted during that lesson.

The procedure was rerun 5 times in the HFA group. The students of the LFA group were also given reading comprehension tests but only some elements, such as delayed feedback, of the low-level formative assessment were observed. Students' self-assessment was not taken into account.

At the final phase of the study, the students were given the final test (PET Reading Comprehension) and the same 30 items from the section "Motivation" of the Attitude / Motivation Test Battery.

Results

The results of students' self-assessment scales (CEFR) showed that 55 students consider themselves as basic users of language (A1, A2) and 25 of students estimate themselves as independent users (B1, B2).

The informal interview results demonstrated that students had never used English as a means of communication outside the classroom and disregarded the benefits of its learning. The majority (65 students) also indicated that they had never been abroad. For 30 students, the possibilities of using English in their future workplace were rather obscure, though all participants agreed that in the modern society a person without working knowledge of at least one foreign language is at a disadvantage. Only the threat of a final test or exam failure encouraged 67 students to learn a foreign language continuously during the course. Interviews with the students demonstrated that constant teachers' support influenced their desire to learn English greatly (20 students) and 72 students wanted to get more feedback from their teacher of English.

A comparison of the preliminary and final test (PET reading comprehension) results in two groups showed that at the initial phase the results of two groups differ insignificantly but at the final phase the students of the experimental HFA group obtained higher scores (Table 1).

Table 1
Results of Preliminary and Final English Tests

<i>Test</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Control LFA Group</i> <i>N (40)</i>		<i>Experimental HFA Group</i> <i>N (40)</i>	
<i>Preliminary English Test</i>	High level	4		3	
	Average level	22		21	
	Low level	14		16	
		<i>M=14.8</i>		<i>M=14.25</i>	
		<i>SD=8.33</i>		<i>SD=8.15</i>	
<i>Final English Test</i>	High level	3		5	
	Average level	22		25	
	Low level	15		10	
		<i>M=14.32</i>		<i>M=16.78</i>	
		<i>SD=8.45</i>		<i>SD=9.84</i>	

Also, the students were asked to respond to the questionnaire (The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) once again to juxtapose changes in the level of their motivation toward ESL learning if there were any. The data of the questionnaire were quantified by coding the answers into data in a scale of 1 – 5 and downloaded into the statistical programme package (Table 2).

Table 2
Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Motivational Scales

<i>Scales</i>	<i>Control LFA Group</i>				<i>Experimental HFA Group</i>			
	Pre-Test		Post-Test		Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Motivational intensity	2.14	.72	2.15	.67	2.13	.73	2.38	.54
Desire to learn English	2.13	.69	2.14	.65	2.17	.70	2.56	.48
Attitudes toward learning English	2.41	.65	2.43	.56	2.39	.74	2.59	.46

Table 2 shows that in the control LFA group the mean scores and standard deviation of the motivational scales changed fairly in the observed period. The increasing results in the experimental HFA group could be attributed to the formative assessment scheme developed among students during the study.

The final results of descriptive statistics of the experimental HFA and control LFA groups are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
The Results of Descriptive Statistics

<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Control LFA</i>	40	2.24	.63
<i>Experimental HFA</i>	40	2.51	.49

The students of the experimental HFA group reported being more motivated to English acquisition in obtained the average level of motivation in comparison with the lower level of the students in the control LFA group. In the HFA group, the smaller standard deviation shows that the values are more concentrated around the mean.

To ascertain whether the obtained results in the HFA group are obvious statistically and how variables (grades of English test and scores of motivational test) are correlated, we applied Pearson's correlation coefficient: $r = .9780$. The positive correlation shows a strong relationship between the two variables. The p -value is .01494 that signifies a noticeable correlation between variables. The results suggest that high-level formative assessment procedure could be helpful in predicting motivation toward professionally oriented English communication.

Discussion

The survey results can be related to regular high-level formative assessment in the process of English learning. It helped students achieve better results in their language proficiency which subsequently affected their motivation to learn a foreign language. It has been found out that implemented high-level formative assessment practices such as immediate brainstorming of students' doubts about their mistakes, their self-assessment, extensive interactions with the tutor have increased students' level of English achievements and of their certitude that efforts are responsible for their outcomes. The same results of positive effects of formative assessment on students' proficiency were proved by other studies (Chauncey, 2009; Clark, 2013; Ross, 2005; Yin, 2005).

The findings of the study showed that after introducing high-level formative assessment the experimental (HFA) group students' desire to learn English increased to the average level; their attitudes toward learning English were on the increase; they got closer to the average level of motivational intensity. At the same time, the results

of three motivational subscales of the control group students didn't change significantly.

The students' good achievement in English is reported to have a significant correlation with the motivation shown by statistical data. The correlation value between two variables is considered rather strong and might be understood as motivated individuals would be goal-directed and persistent in their effort for achieving learning goals that gives support for the arguments of Gardner (2001). The relationship is significant and was at average level. The findings of empirical studies conducted by Cauley and McMillan (2010), Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcroft and Evers (1987), Gardner (2001) agree with the findings in this study that the variable of achievement was strongly related with motivation.

At the same time, the analysis of students' self-assessment scales results demonstrates that 54 second year students have not reached the B1 level of English proficiency. Some students have so poor knowledge of the language that they experience extreme difficulties even in reading. The majority of them come from rural areas of Ukraine where English is poorly taught or neglected. These students find learning English especially tedious, useless and difficult. Being in the same group with students, already possessing B1 or A2 level, is extremely discouraging for them. It is arduous for an educator to motivate these students and properly assess them as incorrect assessment can ruin even these students' weak desire to learn English. Inappropriate evaluation of such students' efforts makes them feel like failures.

The results of the informal interview indicated that students use English in their everyday life outside the classroom very rarely. Most of them have no plans to use English in their future workplace and the main motive to learn English is to pass an exam at the end of the course. It may be sorrowfully concluded that Ukrainian students are mostly pulled by extrinsic motivation. The determination of students to master the language immensely subsides if there is no high-level formative assessment in the educational process.

The same ordeal is with the students who demonstrate higher level of the language proficiency. The educator should be very careful while assessing such learners because there is an ample possibility for these students to slack and be dissuaded. If the teacher follows the pattern of formative assessment and evaluates students' on-going progress, learners' achievement in mastering the language, it may cause misunderstanding in assessment. Some students may tend to juxtapose their level of knowledge with that of their peers. Misinterpreting tutors' evaluation, they may protest against its unfairness. The research study has made it clear that the main principles of formative assessment should be introduced to students at the beginning of the course, and clarified later again if it is necessary. Students should be explained that not their level of English proficiency is taken into account, but their achievements and improvement in mastering the language matter. Such kind of assessment gives hope to those students who lack the necessary knowledge and motivates to go on working harder those who are called independent users.

Thus, one more thing is of great importance for the beneficial use of formative assessment. The study supported the idea of creating a positive atmosphere for promoting formative assessment. A supportive, friendly atmosphere is essential for using high-level formative assessment for the sake of increasing students' motivation, and therefore their foreign language proficiency.

In our opinion, the high-level formative assessment of foreign language proficiency can stir learners' motivation if teachers make evident for students that their on-going growth is relevant and encouraged.

Teachers, creating a positive atmosphere of support in class, should explain the role of assessment for learning, promote students' interest in learning, and accentuate the importance of on-going progress instead of grade significance. The feedback is more beneficial if the information obtained during the assessment is used by the teacher to reschedule or re-teach the material, and if the student is willing to hear it and take into account. Teachers explain tricky grammar but the same should be done concerning the assessment. A lively discussion about using assessment for learning may diminish the impact of grades on students. If they know the exact rules, time and system of it, they are more likely to follow and respond to it. It is useful to emphasize students' achievement, stressing that it is impossible to master the language without making mistakes.

Comparing study results, it should be mentioned that students of the experimental groups, who had high-level formative assessment during the periods of English lessons, have manifested the higher level of motivation while being tested and interviewed. Our observation shows that some of students have become more hard-working, diligent, and responsible. They tend towards attending classes more regularly, being more inquisitive, doing their home assignments on time, and participating in discussions, regular reflection, and self-assessment. Students of control groups, who are faced with low-level formative assessment, might be more relaxed, unpunctual and irresponsible.

As a result, the implementation of interaction entailed hints, prompts, questions, suggestions, explanations, and elements of problem-based learning during the high-level formative assessment enhance students' motivation for English learning.

Study Limitations

As the size of the sample is rather small, the survey results cannot be generalized as the sample (n=80) selected cannot exemplify the entire population at large. Rather, this study should be considered as an exploratory investigation that has the goal of identifying possible issues and trends for further research.

Conclusions

Our survey focused on formative assessment aspects which we considered to be beneficial for increasing motivation and developing foreign language proficiency.

The principal findings of the present study have provided support for the idea that high-level formative assessment plays a meaningful role in developing students' achievement motivation which has a noticeable impact on improving their foreign language proficiency. Learners' foreign language proficiency and their motivation are interrelated and can be enhanced not only with efforts students are ready to invest in mastering the language but with tutor's assessment proceedings. Students' helplessness and demotivating feelings can be overcome with such characteristics of high-level formative assessment as namely teachers' support, immediate spontaneous feedback (whenever possible), appreciation of students' efforts, guidance about what should be done to achieve expected level of foreign language proficiency, the incorporation of students' self-assessment into the tutor's evaluation. To motivate students, assessment of foreign language proficiency should recognize the diversity of learners, direct them in their efforts to master the language, provide positive feedback and appreciation of work done. While assessing students' foreign language proficiency it is necessary to ponder over the positive and negative impact of it on their motivation, and modify its type. Though being beneficial such types as self-assessment and interactive feedback may sometimes embarrass students who are too sensitive to criticism.

Thus, according to the results of the study, the students, who underwent the high-level formative assessment procedure, showed the higher level of motivation toward ESL learning than the students who were not taught with the same procedure. The implementation of the high-level formative assessment demonstrates a significant difference in students' motivation and a positive interrelationship between having high-level formative assessment procedure and motivated learners.

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