

USE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT, SELF- AND PEER-ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOMS: SOME INSIGHTS FROM RECENT LANGUAGE TESTING AND ASSESSMENT (LTA) RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

A considerable number of studies on formative teacher assessment and feedback, learner self- and peer-assessment have been carried out in the field of Language Testing and Assessment (LTA) research over the last two decades. These studies investigated the above mentioned concepts from different perspectives (impact of assessment on learning, attitudes towards assessment, comparison between teacher and learner assessment practices, types and quality of formative teacher feedback), in a number of different contexts (English as second language classrooms, mainstream classrooms, immersion classrooms, i.e. for mainstream classrooms, teaching and learning is done through the medium of a second or additional language) and in a number of different ways (experimental studies, observational studies, surveys, research review studies). This paper systematically reviews most recent research on formative teacher assessment and feedback, learner self- and peer-assessment, and reveals gaps which have not yet been addressed by research.

Keywords: Formative Assessment, Self-Assessment, Peer-Assessment, Formative Teacher Feedback, Language Learning.

INTRODUCTION

It is a common practice in many mainstream classrooms that teachers assess their learners' development not only by means of summative assessment but also, by means of formative assessment, also known as assessment for learning. Over the last decade or so, this practice has become common not only in the context of mainstream classrooms but also in the context of L2 classrooms, immersion and mainstream classrooms with English as an additional language (EAL) or as a second language (ESL). In the UK specifically, this shift has largely been determined by the requirements of official policy, which has stated that all teachers, both mainstream class teachers and language support teachers, in all lessons should not only provide EAL/ESL learners i.e learners who are in the process of learning English on their entry to school [10, 11, 14-16, 28, 30, 34, 42,46]. But should also be responsible for formatively assessing learners' linguistic knowledge [1,12,13,15, 29, 33, 34] in order to inform their own teaching on the one hand and also support their learners' progression in EAL, on the other.

Class teachers, regardless of their teaching context, typically formatively assess learners in similar ways: they use specific teacher questioning and feedback techniques which have formative potential for the learners and train learners in self- and peer-assessment so that they eventually can use these strategies to support and facilitate their own learning.

In this paper, three theoretical concepts related to the construct of classroom formative assessment are discussed: formative teacher assessment, (including formative teacher feedback), self- and peer-assessment. A systematic account of research evidence to date on the role and effectiveness of these components in supporting and promoting learners' L2 development in immersion, mainstream with EAL/ESL support (limited research to date), and second language classrooms are provided. In this way, the recent developments in official L2 learning policies are reviewed and the extent to which these developments have been fulfilled is explored.

Formative Assessment

According to Bachman and Palmer [3] formative

assessment-also known as instruction embedded assessment [36]; assessment for learning [21]; informal assessment [18]; learner-centred assessment [20]; routine formative or achievement assessment (Cumming, 2004: 7); incidental ongoing assessment [20]; and short-term assessment [10] - is the assessment that may help students guide their own subsequent learning, and teachers modify their teaching methods and materials so as to make them more appropriate for students' needs, interests, and capabilities'. Formative assessment may be seen as distinct from summative assessment in a number of ways.

Firstly, formative assessment may be characterised as assessment which is an integral part of instruction that informs and guides teachers as they make instructional decisions (<http://www.mmrwsjr.com/assessment.htm>). It is an assessment done for students to guide and enhance their learning (ibid). Summative assessment, on the other hand, is usually realised by means of tests at the end of larger units of instruction in order to see how students perform under special conditions. This type of assessment is often considered as assessment done to students (ibid). Secondly, formative assessment may be also seen as ongoing assessment which aims to improve learning [20,37]. Its different features may occur regularly throughout the lessons, allowing the evaluation of students' development and progress and providing feedback on students' strengths and weaknesses. Summative assessment, however, often aims merely to measure students' achievements or performance. Thirdly, formative assessment may be beneficial for both teachers and students. It may allow teachers to make decisions about their students' progress and may help them to determine what is taught next and how the material is taught [36]. Formative assessment may also allow learners to self-evaluate and self-monitor their progress and performance. Summative assessment, on the other hand, to a considerable extent, may be seen as beneficial only for teachers in that it allows them to see how well their students perform on a particular task under particular conditions. Finally, formative assessment may be characterised as providing opportunities for 'active interaction between teacher and students, and between students and students (ibid: 437), which can rarely be found when summative

assessment takes place. Summative assessment is usually associated with quantitative feedback (grades) to teachers and students, whereas formative assessment is likely to be associated with qualitative feedback. Such qualitative feedback strategies as clarifications, explanations, suggestions, and discussions seem to be providing opportunities for adjusting teaching methods and meeting the students' needs better. Figure 1 summarises core characteristics of formative assessment.

Formative Teacher Feedback

Feedback is defined as information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way [35]. To put it differently, feedback provided during classroom based assessment may serve as a supportive bridge which allows learners to move from where they are at the particular moment of their learning to where they are expected to be by their teacher or programme. As stated in online URL source (<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=8&n=9>) and also supported by [35] and [40], the feedback given as part of formative assessment may help learners become aware of any gaps that exist between their desired goal and their current knowledge, understanding, or skill and guide them through actions necessary to obtain the goal. Thus, feedback may be seen as - one of the elements in formative assessment. In addition to the fact that feedback may be formative for the learners, it may also be formative for the teachers. In another online URL source (http://captain.park.edu/faculty_development/formative_assessment.htm), it is stated that: feedback may allow learners to correct errors and may encourage teachers to modify activities in light of their effectiveness'. Feedback per se is not formative but, it is what is done with the feedback that contributes to whether it is effective in promoting processes of teaching and learning (ibid, 2001: 457) and adds that it is actually uptake of the feedback (i.e., different types of student responses immediately following the teacher's feedback) that may contribute to whether feedback is effective in promoting processes of teaching or learning' [36, 38]. Further on, the author suggests that teachers can make feedback formative by encouraging learners to self-monitor their work or [by

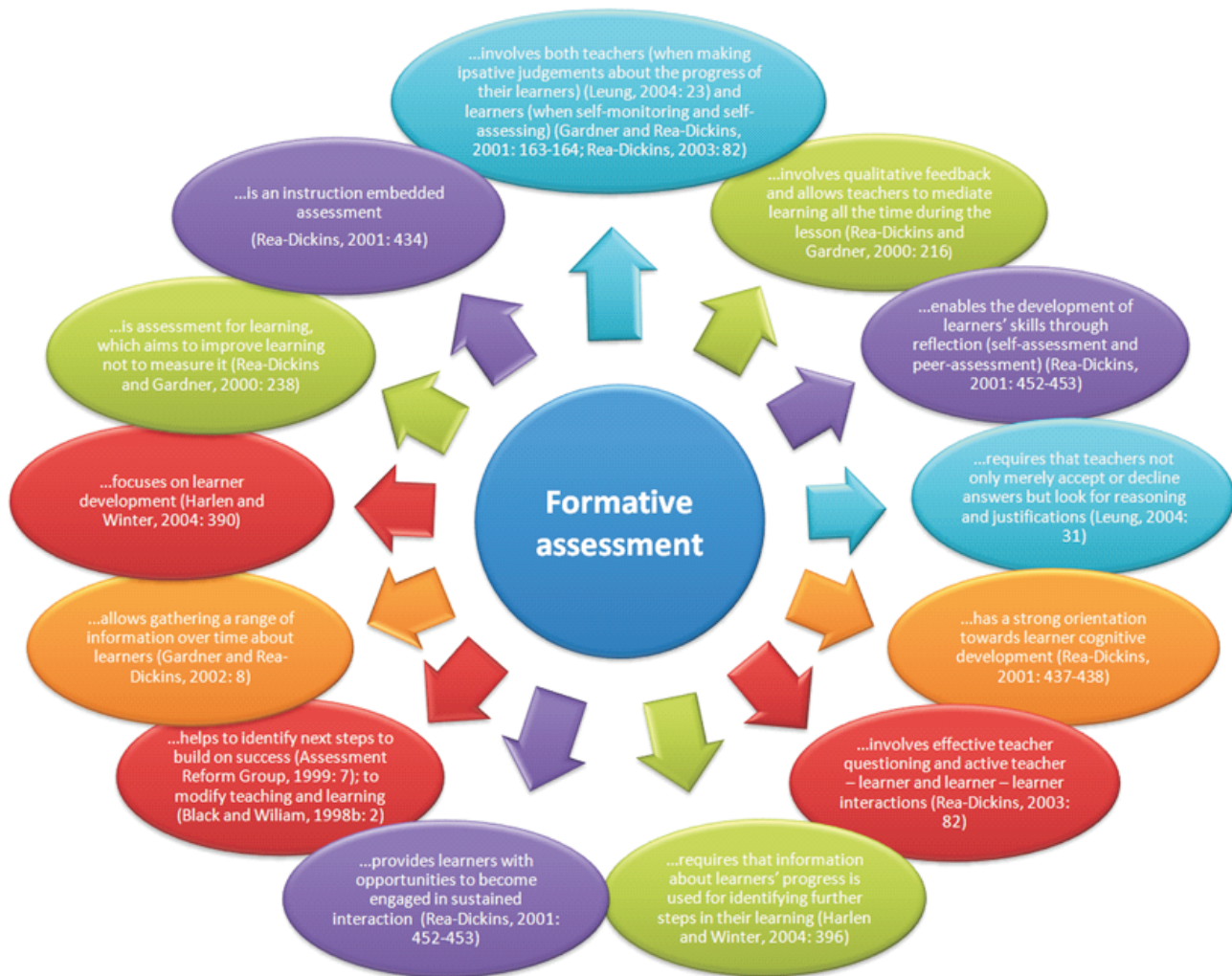


Figure 1. Core characteristics of formative assessment

providing them with strategies for the “next steps” in an activity (ibid: 89). In such a way it becomes clear that formative assessment may provide two types of feedback; the first is feedback itself as broadly known, which reveals to pupils, what they should be aiming for: the standard against which [they] can compare their own work [2], and the second is feed forward, that is, feedback which aims to provide pupils with the skills and strategies for taking the next steps in their learning (ibid: 3, 8).

A conceptual framework of types of feedback is given based on their thorough empirical study where they differentiated between evaluative (or judgemental) and descriptive (or task-related) feedback [47]. The researchers suggest that evaluative feedback may be either positive or negative where judgements are made according to

explicit or implicit norms (ibid: 393); descriptive feedback, on the other hand, may be either achievement or improvement focused and ‘relates to actual competence’ (ibid). Further, identified two types of descriptive feedback: type C – ‘specifying attainment and improvement’ and type D – ‘constructing achievement and the way forward’ (ibid). It may be observed from the last two sentences that evaluative (or judgemental) feedback is one that may be associated with summative assessment and descriptive (or task-related) feedback is a feedback that may be more associated with formative assessment. Further on, in their book on formative assessment, [20], state that feedback may be ‘the key to [...] promoting learning goals rather than performance goals’. They suggest that feedback [has the potential to] explain what is wrong and what is good about pupils work (ibid: 52); that it may suggest ways forward and

ways of correcting [learners' work] that make sense to the learners (not just to the teacher) (ibid: 53). The feedback, however detailed, will not lead to improvement until a pupil understands both the feedback and how to use it in the context of their own work [20, 41]. Feedback may direct teacher attention to what needs to be taught and pupil attention to what needs to be learned (ibid: 53) and what is even more important, and is another crucial characteristic of formative feedback, is that it needs to be integrated into teaching and learning (ibid) [20]. Moreover, after reviewing 580 articles and chapters from over 160 journals on language assessment, the notion of feedback is expanded even further, stating that good feedback may imply training pupils in self-assessment, and providing them with opportunities to express their understanding and thus initiate the interaction [5]. The authors suggest that interaction which appears during formative assessment and which involves good feedback may facilitate learning, as learning is what formative assessment primarily aids for. In summary, feedback may be seen as potentially formative when:

- It aims to lead to *ptake* [36]
- It is *descriptive* by nature [47]
- It is *integrated* into teaching and learning [20]
- It promotes *learning goals* [20]
- It trains pupils in *self-assessment* [5]
- It *provides* opportunities for *interaction* which aims to lead to learning [5].

Learner Self- and Peer-Assessment

The distinction between feedback and self-monitoring may be made according to the source of the evaluative information. That is, if the learner generates the relevant information [by him/herself], the procedure may be seen as part of 'self-monitoring' but 'if the source of information is external to the learner [for example, the teacher], [then] it may be associated with feedback [40]. Further, the author suggests that the goal of many instructional systems should be seen not only in making sure that feedback is provided during formative assessment but also in facilitating the transition from feedback to self-monitoring (ibid). When pupils are trained in self-monitoring or self-assessment they

may be more likely to understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to do to achieve [the stated goals] [4]. Supporting [4] and [21], suggest that knowing the criteria for assessing their work may be essential for involving learner's in assessing their own work'. They emphasise that a learner ability to self-assess may be a key aspect of assessment for learning because it puts the pupils in a position to manage their learning by ensuring that they know where they are without the need for the teacher to tell them what they need to improve. Self- and peer assessment may empower learners to take control and assume ownership of their learning and recognize that the themselves may ultimately be responsible for their own learning [20]. However, here the authors also caution that learners may not necessary possess the skills for engaging in self- and peer assessment automatically and it is the teacher's role to equip pupils with the skills and strategies for taking the next steps in their learning'(ibid). It is suggested in literature that learners trained in self- and peer-assessment may gain from it in a number of ways. Firstly, peer-assessment may allow learners accepting from one another criticism of their work, which they would not take seriously if made by their teacher (Sadler, 1998 cited in Harlen and Winter, 2004: 405. Secondly, peer-assessment may provide opportunities for interchange in a language that pupils themselves would naturally use (ibid). Thirdly, peer-assessment may allow pupils to learn by taking the roles of teachers and examiners of others (ibid) and finally, peer-assessment may help learners recognize each others' strengths and set up situations where they can help each other' [21]. Summarising the arguments presented in this section, the author suggests that self-and peer-assessment similar to feedback discussed in previous section may be used formatively in the classrooms. In other words, it may be used to support and promote learning. In the following sections, summary of recent research on formative assessment is provided in relation to the following areas: impact on learning, use in the classrooms: attitudes; self- and peer-assessment compared to teacher assessment and teacher feedback.

Impact of Formative Assessment on Learning

An experimental study which tested the effects of regular use of pupil self-assessment techniques upon their

academic (mathematical) performance was conducted [17]. The study revealed that children in experimental group (i.e. those who were trained in self-assessment) manifested significant improvements in scores on purpose-built mathematics test when compared to a control group of children. Furthermore, an extensive survey of the research literature on formative assessment is conducted. This survey revealed that (1) innovations which included strengthening the practice of formative assessment seemed to produce significant and often substantial learning gains, and (2) improved formative assessment seemed to help low achieving learners the most. Pinter (2007) [32] provides further evidence that reinforces Black and William' (1998b) [5] findings observing that, (1) both learners (lower and higher achieving) assisted each other across the repetitions during peer-peer interactions, and that, (2) the more competent learner in particular assisted the weaker one in many different ways. Positive impact from formative assessment on learning seems to be revealed in [39] as well. The study investigated the issue of differential language learning growth from the use of formative assessment in direct comparison with more conventional summative assessment procedures. The researcher found that, formative assessment practices yield substantive skill-specific effects on learners' language proficiency growth. Moreover, investigating the merits of pair work by comparing pair and individual work on an editing task and by analysing the nature of pair interaction, pair work is found providing learners with opportunities to use the second language for a range of functions, and that this in turn promoted language learning. Similarly, different identities of classroom assessment in relation to examples from EAL teachers' professional practice, also provided the evidence in favour of formative assessment [36]. The study revealed that assessment activities contributed to a child's language learning in a way in which an outcomes oriented formal test could not.

Further on, the achievement of secondary school students who worked in classrooms where teachers made time to develop formative assessment strategies. This revealed that improvements equivalent to approximately one-half of a GCSE grade per student per subject were achievable by learners involved in improved formative assessment

procedures [48]. Two more studies which suggested that formative assessment may have beneficial effects on learning are those of [6] and [24]. McDonald and Bouds' (2003) experimental study examined the effects of formal self-assessment training on student's performance in internal examinations. It revealed that students with self-assessment training significantly outperformed their peers who did not receive such training in all curriculum areas. Similarly, an observational research which analysed two elements of Hong Kong school curriculum reform (change in assessment and professional development) revealed that peer assessment seemed to have a positive impact on pupils' learning: learners became more sensitive to grammatical errors and knew how to correct them [26]. Similarly, many positive changes occurred in learners' performance after they completed a number of peer-peer interactive repetition tasks (for example, their performance became more fluent) and that learners were aware of these changes [32]. Finally, the issues of motivating revision of drafts through feedback were studied, which revealed that addressing developing writers' communicative purposes through an inquiring stance (that is, formative feedback in this case) to early drafts motivated revision and thus created opportunities for learners' to develop their writing skills.

Use of Formative Assessment in the Classrooms: Attitudes

Formative classroom assessment practices and their changes in primary schools were investigated [45]. The researchers found that, overall, teachers seemed to be very positive about the use of formative assessments in their classrooms. Previously, both teachers and pupils could approach assessment without prejudice and could put it to positive use [22]. Similarly, the introduction of self-assessment practices seemed to be well accepted by teachers and students [24]. Reliability and the potential benefits of incorporating peer assessment into English language programs supports some of these findings are examined [8]. The researchers found that both teachers and students reported, finding peer-assessment exercises beneficial in terms of students' higher level cognitive thinking and facilitating a deep approach to language learning. This finding suggests a positive attitude to

formative assessment. However, the research also revealed that students seemed to have a low level of comfort and a low degree of confidence in their ability to assess their peers' language proficiency fairly and responsibly. This finding shows quite a restrained learners' attitude to peer-assessment. In the same year, his research pupils seemed not to mind being assessed by their peers [6]. This finding again suggests that learners possibly had positive attitudes to formative assessment. However, sometimes peer-feedback/ assessment seems to be interpreted by students as a criticism, and not help [27]. This may particularly be the case when learners have negative feelings about their conversation partners. Finally, most recently, peer-peer interactions of children using a spot-the-difference task in an EFL context were explored in Hungary [32]. The researcher found that, children seemed not only to enjoy the experience of speaking English with each other but they also were able to see the benefits of peer-peer interaction during the task repetition exercises and were aware of positive changes that occurred in their performance.

Self- and Peer- Assessment Compared to Teacher Assessment

The effects of a trial of formative assessment material was developed for assessing English ability of primary school pupils [22]. The research findings suggest that most pupils were almost disconcertingly realistic about what they could and could not do in English. In other words, they could assess their abilities in ways similar to the teacher. Similarly, when investigating how students react to the power and responsibility of being decision makers in their own learning, it was suggested that once learners are given the opportunity to set goals, understand their needs, they try out different ways of learning and select suitable strategies according to their own areas of strength, they may also become capable of deciding what makes the quality of their learning better [9]. The agreement amongst teacher-, self- and peer-assessments of students in the presence of peer feedback, revealed that students had been unable to judge themselves in a manner similar to the teacher [31]. A similar picture of contradictory findings emerges when the quality of peer-assessment in comparison with teacher assessment is investigated. When assessment criteria were

firmly set, peer-feedback enabled students to judge the performance of their peers in a manner comparable to those of the teachers [31]. However, the students and teachers seemed to be different in their interpretations of oral and written language proficiency of assessed students [8]. In other words, learners seemed to be assessing their peers differently from their teacher. Based on the research findings presented above, it maybe suggested that even though self-and peer assessment may be seen as having a positive impact on learning sometimes, learner assessment may be not as good in quality as teacher assessment.

Formative Teacher Feedback

The giving of marks and the grading functions are over-emphasised, while the provision of useful advice and the learning function are under-emphasised [5]. In other words, the researchers suggest that the provision of feedback for summative purposes may often overlap with that for formative purposes. Similarly, when conducting an interview study on a range of ESL/EFL teachers' classroom assessment practices at the tertiary level in Canada, Hong Kong, and China, the study revealed that even though teachers did provide feedback to the learners in all examined settings, either individually or as a whole class, only few of them made an effort to make the assessment results of practical value to the students by providing more than just a score only [8]. Some Canadian teachers added a sub-skill score or feedback to their students' main score. In their study which investigated the types of feedback given to children of 6 and 7 years of age, [47], identified two types of descriptive feedback which were clearly associated with formative assessment, namely: 'specifying attainment and improvement' and 'constructing achievement and the way forward'. It is suggested that the best way to provide this sort of feedback may be through giving detailed and explicit comments on learners' work. Research revealed below compares the effectiveness of different types of feedback—grades, grades and comments, and comments only—in order to see whether either type of feedback may be seen as more beneficial for learners' cognitive development than others. In 1988, Butler conducted research which tested the effects of task-involving and ego-involving evaluation on interest and performance. The

researcher has found that, (1) when working on tasks requiring divergent thinking, both high and low achieving learners achieved more when given comments-only than either grades or grades-and-comments, (2) that the interest in further work (motivation) of high achievers was the same for all feedback conditions and, (3) that low achieving learners seemed to express most interest after comments-only. This study suggests that, overall there seemed to be a preference in favour of formative or descriptive feedback types. Another study, however, revealed different results [43]. The research investigated the impacts of formative assessment strategies on the progress of students in one comprehensive secondary school, year 7. It revealed that, (1) progress in the treatment group (formative feedback only) appeared to be substantially inferior to that of the other three groups, (2) that feedback provided to students in the treatment group was often poorly understood by the students and did little to enhance the learning process, and (3) that overall, students in a treatment group reported that they would prefer getting marks and comments, but not comments alone. Table 1 summarises key findings from the research reviewed in the last four sections.

Discussion

From review of research it is clearly evident that the use of formative assessment has its advantages in language and mainstream classrooms. However research also gives us evidence that formative assessment procedures may not always go as smoothly and effectively as teachers might wish. In this section, the author reveals some problems and discusses ways in which quality of formative assessment may be further improved.

Enhancing the quality of learning through improved formative feedback may take classroom time, and therefore may be in conflict where teachers feel under the pressure to "cover" a statutory curriculum [5]. The researchers also add that 'for primary school teachers particularly, there seem to be a tendency to emphasise quantity and presentation of work and to neglect its quality in relation to learning' (ibid: 6). Thus, the first problem with the use of formative assessment may be seen in that it may take a considerable amount of classroom time. This problem can be resolved if, assessment procedures are

well planned [37]. Confirmation of this is, an experimental study which revealed that teachers [who had spent time on developing formative assessment strategies] did not [...] have to choose between teaching well and getting good results [48]. In other words, it was suggested that teachers could do both – follow the curriculum and pay attention to the quality of learning – without sacrificing one for the sake of the other. The second problem with formative assessment may lie in the fact that it is a relatively new strategy for the teachers and quite often they seem not to know how to make productive use of this assessment type, or of the data they collected for the purposes of assessment. Assessment implementation processes are described by EFL teachers in the final years of primary schools and to identify different dimensions of formative assessment, provides evidence for this statement [19]. The study revealed that teachers were often not able to make productive use of information they collected for formative assessment. Related to the above is a problem addressed in [8]. The researchers found that even though teachers in Canada and Hong Kong and China informed their students of the scoring criteria before they assessed them, many of them they did not involve students in preparing the scoring criteria, therefore they did 'assessment *to* students rather than *with* them' [26, 8]. In contrast to Gattullo's [19] (ibid) study, which revealed that assessment data influenced the planning of teaching by the class teacher [37]. To put it differently, this means that the teacher was able and knew how to make productive use of assessment data she collected for improving teaching and enhancing learning.

In order to develop effective formative assessment skills teachers, first of all, need to develop their pedagogical self-awareness [45]. The third problem with formative assessment may be seen in that teachers often seem not to know how to provide effective feedback formatively. Gattullo's (2000) [19] and Leung and Mohan's (2004) [23] studies provides evidence to confirm this statement. Gattullo's (2000) study revealed that teachers seemed not to be asking for clarification about what individual pupils have said or done, neither did they seem to be questioning why and how pupils approached or achieved a task in the way they did. Instead, the teachers mostly asked questions to

Focus	Finding	Source
Impact of formative assessment on learning	-Formative assessment seems to be having positive impact on learning	Fontana and Fernandes (1994), Black and William, (1998b), Rea-Dickins (2001), McDonald and Boud (2003), William et al (2004), Carless (2005), Ross (2005), Pinter (2007), Storch (2007), McGarrell and Verbeem (2007)
Use of formative assessment in the classrooms: attitudes	-Teachers and learners seem to have quite positive attitude towards use of formative assessment in their classrooms	Hasselgren (2000), Torrance and Pryor (2001), McDonald and Boud (2003), Carless (2005), Pinter (2007)
	-However some of formative assessment procedures seem to be accepted by learners with less enthusiasm (peer-assessment)	Morris and Tarone (2003), Cheng and Warren (2005)
Self- and peer-assessment compared to teacher assessment	-Research findings suggest that sometimes quality of learner assessment may be not as good quality of teacher assessment	Patri (2002) -- in relation to self-assessment, Cheng and Warren (2005)
	-though it may not always be so	Hasselgren (2000), Patri, (2002) - in relation to peer-assessment, Chu (2007)
Teacher formative feedback	-Research suggests that provision of feedback for summative purposes may overlap provision of feedback for formative purposes	Black and William (1998b), Cheng and Wang (2007)
	-'descriptive feedback' in the form of comments seems to be more beneficial for promoting learning than 'evaluative feedback' provided by means of grades	Butler (1988)
	-teacher feedback provided by means of comments may be ineffective if learners poorly understand it	Smith and Gorard (2005)

Table 1. Key findings from research on formative assessment over the last 20 years

rehearse knowledge and/or enhance motivation. Gattullo also found that some feedback and assessment strategies were more common than others (for example; questioning, correcting, judging), at the expense of those that could be considered more beneficial for learning (for example; observing process, examining product, doing metacognitive questioning). Similar findings were revealed [23]. In their observational study, which investigated teaching-assessment interactions between teachers and students, the researchers found that the pattern of student interaction showed low frequency of reason-giving and the lack of overall participation. This finding suggests that instead of asking open-ended elicitation questions teachers were probably asking closed questions which did not allow much participation from and between the learners. A variety of questions, intended to be perceived by students as "helping" questions, should be used to elicit understanding and guide progress" [45]. The researchers further clarify that "particularly useful forms of such questions are elicitation which invite students to clarify and to reflect on their own thinking" (ibid).

Conclusion

Based on this review of research conducted in L2

classrooms, immersion and mainstream classrooms, there appears to be support for the requirements of the UK's EAL/ESL policy, that all teachers should not only support learners' linguistic development but should also *formatively* assess learners' linguistic knowledge – in effect, through provision of formative teacher feedback and opportunities for learner self- and peer-assessment. The research has demonstrated that formative teacher feedback may have positive impact on learners' learning, however it has also revealed that many teachers are still not fully aware of formative assessment procedures either due to lack of preparation time or training. The research has also suggested that both learner self- and peer-assessment can be seen as effective and valid instruments in supporting and facilitating learning, however learners still need further training in use and understanding of these techniques in order to employ them effectively in the classrooms.

Previous research has already suggested several ways of improving current formative assessment practices in the classrooms (extended teacher training in implementation of formative assessment in the classrooms with specific focus on teacher questioning techniques, development of teachers pedagogical self-awareness, etc.), however to

date effectiveness of many of these recommendations has not yet been probed, suggesting that further empirical, classroom-based research, is still needed in this field.

Finally, several contexts seem to have been largely neglected by researchers working in the LTA field. Namely, almost all of the reviewed studies were carried out in the contexts of either second language or foreign language classrooms, with only a few in the context of immersion and mainstream classrooms with EAL/ESL learners. The majority concerned adult participants, with only a few focusing on younger learners. Many studies of formative assessment take the form of an experimental design in highly controlled conditions. This fact suggests that findings from experimental and observational formative assessment studies may need to be interpreted and compared with caution, as conditions in laboratory studies may be very different from those in natural settings. There is therefore a clear need for further studies which investigate the use of formative assessment (including formative teacher assessment, self- and peer-assessment) in authentic classroom contexts, and in a greater variety of contexts. Investigations of immersion and mainstream classrooms in the UK where learners learn English not as a second or foreign language, but as an additional language, and where the focus is on young learners, typically between 8- and 10-years-old, are few and far between, and yet, provide a classroom context where emphasis is authentically on communication and meaning, and where recent policy has encouraged focus on both language and subject knowledge development through focus on form and formative assessment practices.

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