

Ychwanegwch eich targedau o'ch aseiniad diwethaf (Ond yn berthnasol os yr ydych wedi cwblhau aseiniad) / Please add your targets from the previous assignment (Only relevant if you have completed an assignment)

Targedau / Targets	Sut rydych wedi gweithio ar hwn / How you have worked on this	Ceir enghraifft ar / An example can be found on
Targed/Target 1 Make synthesis and critical analysis and evaluation a frequent and consistent feature of your writing.		Within the 'literature review' and 'methodology' sections of this assignment
Targed/Target 2 Try to ensure that you are engaging critically with sources that you are discussing, rather than being descriptive.		Within the 'methodology' section of this assignment.

Design and conduct a small-scale research study, and critically evaluate the impact of chosen research tools and data/findings on the learner and on your professional practice.

Total wordcount (excluding subheadings): 3,845

Introduction

This study specifically examines the perceptions of the learner with regard to Assessment for Learning (AfL). AfL is a teaching and learning approach that generates feedback that is then used to improve instruction and promote pupil progression (Cambridge, 2019). The learner's current education, their future learning goals, the teacher and student collaboration tactics that can be used to support these goals are all considered in AfL (Structural Learning, 2018). The use of questioning, feedback, peer and self-assessment, and the use of sharing criteria with others are all considered elements of AfL (Flórez and Sammons, 2013, p.2). Each learner's ability to advance at an acceptable rate and be appropriately encouraged and challenged depends critically on assessment. Pupils are viewed as active participants in such an environment and "should be able to evaluate their learning and mistakes, identifying areas for development" (Welsh Government, 2022).

The Welsh Government agree that assessment is an important component of the Curriculum for Wales. Assessment is critical to high-quality teaching and learning (Welsh Government, 2021, p.2). AfL gives several stages of qualitative data of learners, and by developing additional measurements for each participant, it delivers developmental solutions that are critical for pupils, parents, and teachers alike. According to the Curriculum for Wales and Professor Graham Donaldson (2015) document for 'Successful Futures', learners must be self-sufficient, assess where they are in their learning, grasp where their learning is heading, and comprehend the actions that they must take.

The four characteristics of AfL are the focus for teachers; thus, the origin focus of this assignment paying close attention to feedback. The rationale behind this study evaluates whether a specific tool of AfL is affective in the classroom. Subsequently, the AfL strand examined is in the form of the research question, titled: *"How effective do Year 5 pupils find feedback as an Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategy in the classroom?"*.

Prior to this study, it was presumed that feedback was given to pupils informally and not as a difficult idea to act upon or a goal to better. This perspective was arisen as an outcome of prior learning experiences. This research aims to better understand how pupils perceive verbal and written feedback as well as their attitudes towards the AfL tool. It also explores if the premise about how learners feel toward feedback is correct or has changed. The research strategy, which used questionnaires and interviews as the research methods for data gathering, is presented by "interpretivist" Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2005) during this assignment.

Literature Review

Assessment for learning encompasses pupils by making their learning more participatory. They start 'thinking like the teacher' as they start to assess where they are in their learning and what measures they need to take to go forward. Years of study have demonstrated that AfL tactics help low-achieving pupils improve their individual learning while also becoming confident and autonomous learners.

The psychology of professors Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam is where AfL first originates. Black and Wiliam (1988) observed that the way teachers and pupils perform in the classroom is complex with little knowledge of what happens there. The professors produced their study "Inside the Black Box", emphasising that the classroom remains an observation tactic, meaning inputs and outputs of results are seen but knowledge of how this happens is unexplainable, and both set out to determine what happens within the classroom. Black and Wiliam both observed that children who learn in a formative manner acquire more and progress higher. From their psychology, AfL is at the foundation of good pedagogy; it has a substantial positive influence on achievement whilst enhancing standards of pupil progression.

Social constructivist theories are at the heart of AfL. The learner's outlook on understanding subjects is complicated and built on prior experiences held from encounters and interactions with others. Constructivism theories expand on higher interaction of understanding between teachers and pupils, which proves vital during the learning process.

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) hypothesis of Vygotsky's social constructivism emphasises the importance of the teacher in a pupil's learning (Vygotsky, 1962). The ZPD distinguishes between tasks that a pupil can perform alone and those that require the assistance of their teacher. According to the ZPD, with the assistance of a teacher, pupils may comprehend knowledge and abilities that they would not be able to do on their own (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Once pupils have mastered a skill, they can complete it on their own. In this theory, the teacher, rather than being a passive figure, plays an active role in the pupils' knowledge acquisition (Chen, 2012; Schreiber & Valle, 2013).

The Questioning AfL aspect focuses on asking pertinent questions throughout a class or during the school day. Effective questioning is a key tool in AFL and should be planned in such a way that a variety of responses are anticipated. Good questions guide every pupil on a journey that balances context (who, what, when) and process (how, why) (West Lothian Council Educational Psychology Service, 2021, p.1). Bloom's Taxonomy hypothesis addresses the hierarchy of learning techniques in the classroom. The model contains a rank that is used to categorise learning goals based on their degree of complexity. Bloom (1956)

studies that both open-ended and closed-ended questioning tactics are beneficial to pupils and teachers as they promote learning through interactive discourse while increasing pupils' conceptual understanding.

Peer assessment is a mechanism that allows pupils to evaluate and specify the quality, value, or level of another pupil's work or performance who is on a level playing field with them (Topping, K. J. 1998). The major focus of peer assessments is how learners feel on others learning and work in relation to success criteria, learning objectives, and What Matters Statements.

When learning intentions and success criteria are explicit and understood, learners with lower ability levels can gain strength through sharing criteria with others, thus, learners with a higher ability level. When a pupil understands the lesson's objectives and how to achieve them, they may take command of their own learning. This instils a sense of shared accountability with their teacher and them (Jones, 2005, p.5).

The tactic of feedback is the core of this assignment. When learners are aware of their next developmental stages, they can pinpoint techniques for analysing their own growth, and can locate ways to reach these developmental milestones, they can take control of their learning (Jeffrey and Woods, 2009). Effective feedback also aids in pupil confidence-building since it demonstrates to each child where they started out, their developmental progress, and how far they have come. They feel a sense of accomplishment as a result throughout their education.

Feedback and evaluation are essential components of both teaching and learning. Giving students feedback on their schoolwork is a crucial educational practise in education (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). According to Kerr (2017, p.445), "verbal feedback involves interaction between learners and teachers with potential for questions and exploration in order to provide learning gains". This expands on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory, which states that through verbal feedback, pupils can be "scaffolded" by a "knowledgeable other" and thus understand exactly what is being asked and how they can improve (Pound, 2005, p.39). With this theory in mind, feedback could be expressed through B.F Skinner's reinforcement theory and operant conditioning. Behaviour is enhanced by rewards in positive reinforcement, resulting in the recurrence of desirable behaviour. The reward serves as a motivating incentive (Simply Psychology, 2018).

Positive reinforcement enhances a behaviour by offering a rewarding result, feedback is essential for the best result for progression. For example, if the teacher provides appropriate feedback on a pupil's work in class, the child is more likely to repeat the praise or corrections, which improves the child's progressive conduct (Skinner, B.F, 1953).

Methodology

The purpose of the investigation was to examine pupil perceptions of feedback in the classroom. Taking this into account, the research instruments employed in this study were an interview and a questionnaire for purely the pupils. Both research tools comply to components of the Mosaic Approach, a "multi method" educational framework that analyses the importance of "listening to and acknowledging" the child's voice (Clark and Moss, p.1). The importance of listening to pupils is said to be an important component of the holistic approach, and by using the Mosaic Approach, these methods of investigation are used to develop children's abilities and confidence, as well as to provide teachers with insight into children's viewpoints, while the obstacles include analysing and displaying the diverse data collected (The Open University, 2020).

The pupils were the main focus of this assignment; thus, pupil voice is essential as the children are sole progressors from feedback. The importance of utilising pupil voice during the research is paramount, as this results in substantial change and improved academic achievements, as well as a sense of empowerment and participation among pupils (Mentally Healthy Schools, n.d). Acknowledging this, ESTYN agrees that pupil voice "shapes" the Successful Futures Framework by being an integral component of this assignment, by allowing each child to state their own opinion whilst creating a structural learning environment (Estyn, 2018).

The justification behind using questionnaires and interviews were obvious, as they both provide "qualitative and quantitative" data which in term allows the researcher to gain a deeper "holistic overview of their research" (Punch, 2014, p,119).

Interviews are discussions with people to acquire their attitudes, facts, and opinions on a topic (Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. and Chadwick, B., 2008). There are three types of interviewing methods: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured (Statistics Solutions, 2019). The interview was conducted in-person using a synchronous, semi-structured technique. Semi-structured interviews are advantageous. Given that the questions are scheduled ahead of time for the participant, the interviewee has time to reflect before responding. Throughout the interview, open-ended questions were given, allowing the interviewee to express their own thoughts and prejudices at their own time (Reja, 2003). The qualitative data obtained from the interview is dependent on the participant and the dependability of their replies. As a result, validity may be a misunderstanding of interviewing since the interviewee may not grasp what is being requested of them (Opendenakker, 2006).

Online questionnaires are a type of asking that includes both open-ended and closed-ended questions (D A De Vaus, 1995). Concerning "closed questions," pupils offer unambiguous

responses to brief but specific inquiries, giving special emphasis to "yes/no, agree/disagree, and fill in the blank answers." (T.E. Team, 2022). The asynchronous questionnaire was designed and administered using Microsoft Forms. Questionnaires are confidential, anonymous, quick to complete whilst assessing quantitative data using charts and graphs (Macfarlane, 2014). Questionnaires have advantages; nonetheless, there are disadvantages. Over or under simplifying questions to assist children comprehend will lack sociological significance, implying that the interviewer may not acquire the necessary feedback they require (Get Revising, 2022).

For ethics purposes, the school mentioned in this extract will be referred to as School A. It is an English-speaking primary school with 479 pupils enrolled with a 94.2% attendance rate. School A has 17.4% of their pupils receiving free school meals, which is less than Wales' average of 20% (Feeding Our Future Wales, 2022, p. 1). This research was conducted based upon thirty pupils in a Year 5 class, aged between nine and ten years old. Of these children, 25% of the children have Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and receive one to one tuition during their schoolwork. There were eleven participants during the research day, which took a total of four hours to complete with all the children individually; three pupils participated in the interviews and eleven pupils completed the questionnaires.

Prior to this research investigation, ethics were of the utmost importance. The British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines were strictly followed during this investigation. Initially, an Ethics form (See Appendix 1), a consent form (See Appendix 2b), and a permission letter (See Appendix 2a) were produced and issued on behalf of the researcher for the school to sign, obtaining "voluntary informed consent to be involved in a study" (BERA, 2018, p.9). It was made apparent to the pupils that they had the right to resign from the research processes at any moment during the course of the research (BERA, 2018, p.18).

In addition to the BERA guidelines, the General Data Protection Act (2018) functioned in tandem, ensuring that each pupil's confidentiality and anonymity remained visible and constant throughout this research (BERA, 2018, p.21). The research project comprised pupils under the age of eighteen, which meant that as the researcher, consent documents had to be completed by the participants' parents in order for them to participate in the research. In relation to assent, while children may be unable to provide legally valid permission on their own, it was critical to engage them as much as possible in the choice of whether or not to participate in the research. This was consistent across the surveys and interviews conducted during the investigation (Piercy and Hargate, 2004).

The feedback questionnaire (See Appendix *) was produced ahead of time and distributed to the students on the day of the research. The pupils used their classroom computers to answer the questionnaire, which was distributed to them via Microsoft Teams via a link provided by the teachers at School A. Similarly, on the day of the research, I sat down with every pupil and asked them a few questions based on feedback. Pupil voice and subject description adhere to the Mosaic Approach, as does Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that pupils "have the right to express their views" in matters that affect their learning, such as feedback (UNICEF United Kingdom, 1989.).

Both the questionnaire and the interviews were conducted in a quiet area around the classroom. The qualitative data from the interviews has been transcribed (See Appendix 4b), and the quantitative data from the questionnaire has been presented in the form of graphs and tables (See Appendix 3b, q.1-6).

This study had significant limitations, since only eleven of the thirty pupils returned their permission slips from their parents. As a result, I was only able to gather responses from less than half of the class. Some of the questionnaire replies were undeveloped since some questions were repetitious and the talents of each pupil differed, implying that some pupils provided more sophisticated answers than others. If more children had agreed to participate, I would have reached a larger audience and had more diverse reactions from pupils.

The limits of the interviews were clearly obvious. Again, I only received three permission forms from the whole class, leaving me with only an insignificant majority of answers. Aside from that, I lacked sufficient statistics to compare other children's viewpoints on feedback. Teachers were not included in my research, which would have been a more valuable element of my research. Children can only respond based on their own observations of what they see, but the modalities of delivery in which AfL is provided are exclusively the responsibility of the teacher. To avoid future limitations, a bigger sample from a diverse set of people is required. If observations of feedback in the classroom had been included, the data would have been greater. If this occurs, a new permission form for observation would be created for parents to sign, and pupils have the option to "opt- in or opt- out" as needed (BERA, 2018, p15).

Findings and Discussions

In order to finalise my research, and to conclude the hypothesis of the assignment, a discussion of the research must be made. Going into detail about each area of the research day will be made apparent in this extract. The baseline of this activity involves eleven

participants, which remained a barrier throughout. I was unable to conduct a thorough search as I only had responses for under half

Question one of the questionnaire (See Appendix 3, q.1) shows that pupils at School A feel that that feedback is "important to them," implying that 45.5% of the pupils receive written feedback from their class teacher every day. Similarly, question 2 (See Appendix 3, q.2) reveals that 36.4% of the pupils agreed they receive verbal feedback from their teacher every lesson, indicating that the class teacher provides consistent feedback to the pupils, compared to 27.3% implying that their teacher marks their work every week. Although positively, this has significant links to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, emphasising that if a teacher is positive with their pupils and encourages them regularly, this vitality and enthusiastic encouragement helps foster self-efficacy, which is the belief in one's ability to achieve in a variety of settings, thus, supporting pupil progression (Bandura, 1991). However, Spencer (2017) agrees with the 36% of pupils who say their teacher marks their work weekly, believes that the teacher may find marking "time consuming" and struggle to "discuss work with every child per task". This also conveys with the transcript of the interview question E (See Appendix 4E, Pupil A), which states that Pupil A agrees that "██████████ has a lot of children's books to mark, it is hard for ██████ to talk to everyone in maths or language lessons".

Question three of the questionnaire (See Appendix 3, q.3) reveals that 81.8% of the pupils in class believe that they appreciate it when their teacher converses to them about their schoolwork. Although this relates to questions one and two, in that they believe their teacher communicates clearly and concisely when marking or discussing their work with them, 18.2% argued that they do not like it when their teacher talks to them about their work. Montessori's psychology agrees that children are always learning about the world around them, and that by being independent and not receiving feedback, the children are able to gain autonomy by learning about what occurs in the classroom and not by what their teacher says about their work (Montessori, 1965).

Question four (See Appendix 3, q.4) reveals that 73% of pupils believe their teacher marks their work both while they are doing it and after they have finished it. Again, communication is an obvious component for feedback, thus remembering Skinner's reinforcement theory from previously. Children are determined listeners who thrive on approbation, praise, and positive and negative reinforcement from their teachers and parents alike. Children are more likely to repeat and perform better by correcting mistakes independently from responses from instant verbal and written feedback if they receive great communication and feedback from their teachers (Skinner, 1953). Similarly, this validates Sadler's 1989 psychology that

good feedback allows both teachers and pupils to perceive the results of verbal and written feedback by closing the "gap" between present and future learning and allowing pupils to steadily improve their own academic performance.

In response to questions five (See Appendix 3, q.5) and 6 (See Appendix 3, q.6), all participants agreed that when their teacher states, "they're doing a good job," it gives them confidence in their education, and 90% of the pupils believe that when they receive correct feedback, they can be independent learners allowing them to change their work accordingly. Children benefit from feedback as it helps them recognise how well they are doing and which areas they require further growth. It also aids in the development of self-awareness and self-evaluation.

This relates to Deci and Ryan's Theory of Motivation. According to self-determination theory, all humans have three core psychological requirements that underpin growth and development: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 2012). The competence aspect is supported by providing the pupil with optimum obstacles and possibilities (specific goals that are challenging but not overwhelming), encouraging their sense of initiation, providing framework to motivate and demonstrate behaviour, and providing relevant feedback. As a result of obtaining great feedback at school, pupils are able to modify their work independently. However, the remaining pupils who believe that they cannot correct feedback independently may need further guidance within their schoolwork. Teachers must remain "sensitive" to each pupils' abilities, and feedback should be given at a timely manner suggesting all pupils analyse feedback at different paces (Reynolds, 2019).

Finally, the interview transcript must be discussed in order to acquire qualitative data. All of the pupils interviewed agreed that their teacher marks the children's work using the "tickled pink, green for growth" system. Please see Appendix 4b, question C, for data analysis. The pink colour is intended to highlight aspects of the work that has met the learning objectives, and the green colour is suggested areas of improvement for development (Laurel Avenue Primary School, 2014). Feedback should be paramount where possible. Staff should mark pupils' work whilst giving verbal feedback using green and pink pen where marking is quick. In this way, pupils can respond immediately during the lesson. Moreover, quality marking is to be completed prior to further lessons where possible so pupils can act upon feedback (██████████, 2023).

Written feedback is frequent and a more deliberate response to an activity. The "tickled pink and green for growth" method promotes dialogue between teacher and pupil, whilst most pupils prefer written feedback. When an individual receives feedback indicating that a goal

has not been met, their attention can be focused on one of three levels: 1) the details of how to do the task, 2) the task as a whole, or 3) the processes that the individual engages in while doing the task (meta-task processes). Kluger and DeNisi (1996) contended that while individuals normally processed feedback at the task level, the input might impact the level at which the feedback was received and addressed. Kluger and DeNisi, like many educational scholars, stated that if a task was apparent to the person, providing feedback with too many task-specific information might be harmful to performance, which is why the “tickled pink and green for growth” method is a simplistic method that teachers and pupils adhere to regularly and easily. Again, this argues with Spencer (2017), who feels that marking may be “time consuming” for the teacher and that they may struggle to “discuss work with each child per task.”

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate pupil's perceptions on feedback in the classroom. It was once assumed that feedback was only visible in textual form and was not seen as a step towards advancement. Without a doubt, the results of the literature study, questionnaire analysis (quantitative data), interviews (qualitative data), and research findings revealed otherwise. The findings emphasised verbal feedback, and I believe that written as well as oral feedback are vital parts of child development. Feedback allows every pupil to obtain a thorough awareness of their professors, and the pupil's responses from both interviews and questionnaires support this claim.

Professional learning has been developed throughout this study, and as such, feedback is depicted as an essential component of pupil's educational journey. Quality teaching and research skills are essential for providing pupils with the greatest learning experiences and possibilities. According to Kirsty Williams (Welsh Government, 2017), “teachers must support all learners in developing the skills they need to thrive in school and in their futures.” As a result, effective feedback and AFL are critical factors to consider for my future learning journey and as a practitioner.

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