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Exploring feedback practices and perceptions of English teachers to second language learners.

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Abstract

Feedback is the main component in formative assessment. It provides the teacher with critical and clear information to scaffold learning. The effective use of formative feedback can play a vital role in the development of language acquisition for second language English learners in the Intermediate and Senior phases. The purpose of this study is to explore English teachers' feedback perceptions and practices to second language learners. This study used a qualitative approach and multiple case study as its methodology. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The findings of this study revealed that teachers mainly provide feedback on the development of students writing skills such as English usage, presentation, grammar and writing structure. Feedback mostly focused on incorrect use of grammar, spelling and presentation without an explanation of why the correction should be made. Moreover, findings from the semi structured interviews indicated that learners have had negative experiences of receiving written formative feedback in grade 4 English second language, specifically- timing of feedback, amount of feedback, specificity of feedback. Notably, English proficiency of learners, parental involvement and dialogic feedback influenced the usability of assessment feedback. Teachers' disclosures about their perceptions and practice of formative assessment feedback provided a preview on the types of challenges they face in their assessment practices. This study suggests that if classroom teachers are to become effective 'mediators' of assessing they must be provided with a better theoretical grounding of assessment feedback. The Department of Education needs to provide more guidelines, practical demonstrations and workshops to assist teachers to understand and implement formative assessment feedback to English second language learners effectively.