

## FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES FOR ENHANCING LEARNER AUTONOMY IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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**Annotation:** This article examines how formative assessment techniques contribute to the development of learner autonomy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. It analyzes theoretical foundations of formative assessment, its relationship with self-regulated learning, and the effectiveness of feedback, self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfolio assessment, and digital tools. Findings indicate that systematic formative assessment enhances metacognitive awareness, increases responsibility for learning, and significantly supports autonomous language development.

**Keywords:** formative assessment; learner autonomy; feedback; self-assessment; peer-assessment; self-regulated learning; metacognition; portfolio assessment; digital formative tools.

**Аннотация :** В статье рассматривается роль формативного оценивания в развитии учебной автономии учащихся на уроках английского языка как иностранного. Анализируются теоретические основы формативного оценивания, его связь с саморегулируемым обучением, а также эффективность обратной связи, самооценки, взаимооценки, портфолио и цифровых инструментов. Результаты показывают, что систематическое формативное оценивание повышает метакогнитивную осознанность учащихся и способствует развитию самостоятельного изучения языка.

**Ключевые слова:** формативное оценивание; учебная автономия; обратная связь; самооценка; взаимооценка; саморегулируемое обучение; метакогниция; портфолио; цифровые инструменты.

**Annotatsiya :** Ushbu maqola ingliz tili chet tili sifatida o‘qitiladigan auditoriyalarda formatived baholash texnikalarining o‘quvchi mustaqilligini rivojlantirishdagi o‘rnini

yoritadi. Tadqiqotda formatived baholashning nazariy asoslari, o‘z-o‘zini boshqarish bilan bog‘liqligi hamda feedback, self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfel baholash va raqamli vositalarning samaradorligi tahlil qilingan. Natijalar formatived baholash o‘quvchilarda metakognitiv ongni kuchaytirishini, o‘qishga mas’uliyatni oshirishini va mustaqil til o‘rganishni faol qo‘llab-quvvatlashini ko‘rsatadi.

**Kalit so‘zlar:** formatived baholash; o‘quvchi mustaqilligi; fikr-mulohaza; o‘z-o‘zini baholash; o‘zaro baholash; o‘z-o‘zini boshqarish; metakognitsiya; portfel baholash; raqamli vositalar.

The shift toward learner-centered pedagogy in modern education has elevated the importance of learner autonomy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. International frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), TESOL standards, Cambridge Assessment principles, and OECD learning models emphasize learner autonomy as a core learning objective. Autonomy enables learners to take responsibility for their progress, select appropriate learning strategies, and monitor their development—skills essential for successful language acquisition.

Formative assessment (assessment for learning) is considered one of the most effective mechanisms for cultivating learner autonomy. Unlike summative assessment, which measures achievement at the end of a learning cycle, formative assessment continuously guides and improves the learning process. Researchers such as Black and Wiliam argue that formative assessment supports learners in understanding learning goals, identifying gaps, and regulating their learning strategies.

This article explores the key formative assessment techniques—feedback, self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfolios, and digital tools—and examines how each contributes to the development of learner autonomy.

## 2. Theoretical Background of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is defined as a dynamic, interactive process that provides ongoing information about learner progress. Black and Wiliam describe formative assessment as “all activities undertaken by teachers and learners to generate feedback to modify teaching and learning.” According to the CEFR Companion Volume (2020), formative assessment facilitates self-regulation and promotes reflective learning practices.

Principles of Formative Assessment:

- a) Providing timely and constructive feedback
- b) Clarifying learning objectives
- c) Encouraging student involvement
- d) Using transparent evaluation criteria
- e) Promoting self-reflection and peer collaboration

These principles align with autonomous learning because they enable learners to make informed decisions about their learning processes.

### 3. Learner Autonomy: Concept and Importance

Learner autonomy is defined as the ability to take charge of one's own learning. This involves setting personal goals, selecting learning strategies, evaluating progress, and reflecting on outcomes.

Why autonomy matters in EFL classrooms:

- Increased motivation
- More effective use of strategies
- Deeper engagement in learning
- Long-term retention of language skills
- Improved communicative competence

Formative assessment supports these outcomes by requiring learners to actively evaluate and regulate their learning.

### 4. Formative Assessment Techniques Enhancing Autonomy

#### 4.1 Feedback as a Driver of Autonomy

Feedback is the foundation of formative assessment. Effective feedback tells learners what they did well, what needs improvement, and how to improve. Feedback can be provided at three levels: task-level, process-level, and self-regulation-level.

Characteristics of effective feedback:

- Timely
- Specific
- Constructive
- Forward-oriented

Digital platforms such as Write&Improve, Grammarly, and AI-based feedback tools support autonomous revision practices.

#### 4.2 Self-Assessment

Self-assessment encourages learners to evaluate their own work using checklists, rubrics, or reflection questions. CEFR self-assessment grids are commonly used to help students assess their communicative competence.

Benefits:

- Increases metacognitive awareness
- Encourages responsibility for learning
- Improves self-regulation
- Builds confidence in decision-making

Students who regularly use self-assessment demonstrate higher autonomy and improved performance.

#### 4.3 Peer-Assessment

Peer-assessment involves students evaluating each other's work based on agreed criteria. It promotes collaboration, critical thinking, and deeper understanding of assessment standards.

Advantages:

- Enhances communication skills
- Increases accountability
- Reduces teacher dependency
- Supports self-regulation through comparison
- Portfolio Assessment

Portfolios compile student work over time, allowing learners to track their growth. A portfolio may include essays, journals, audio recordings, project reports, checklists, and reflections.

How portfolios enhance autonomy:

- Encourage long-term goal-setting
- Promote continuous reflection
- Highlight improvement
- Allow learners to take ownership of progress

Technological tools support formative assessment through interactive tasks, instant feedback, and self-paced learning.

Popular tools:

- a) Google Classroom
- b) Kahoot, Quizizz, Socrative
- c) EdPuzzle
- d) LearningApps
- e) AI-based speaking and writing assessment tools
- f) Digital tools personalize learning pathways and enhance student autonomy.

Formative assessment significantly fosters learner autonomy by:

- Developing metacognitive skills
- Strengthening motivation
- Promoting self-regulation
- Encouraging reflection
- Providing continuous support

International and local studies demonstrate that consistent use of formative assessment improves both learner autonomy and language proficiency.

Formative assessment is a powerful pedagogical approach essential for cultivating learner autonomy in EFL classrooms. Techniques such as feedback, self-assessment, peer-assessment, portfolios, and digital tools help learners understand their progress, identify needs, develop responsibility, and regulate their learning. Therefore,

integrating formative assessment systematically into EFL instruction is crucial for developing independent, motivated, and successful language learners.

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