

PEER FEEDBACK FOR FOSTERING STUDENTS' METACOGNITIVE SKILLS OF THINKING ABOUT LEARNING IN A COURSE OF ENGLISH FOR LAW

Nijolė Burkšaitienė

Mykolas Romeris University, Institute of Humanities,
Department of Foreign Languages
Ateities 20, LT-08303 Vilnius, Lithuania
Telephone (+370 5) 2714 613
E-mail: n.burksaitiene@mruni.eu

Received on 27 August, 2012; accepted on 8 October, 2012

Abstract. *Although research literature that examines the impact of external feedback provided to students by teachers and peers on student learning is extensive abroad, in Lithuania, little known research has focused specifically on peer feedback for fostering students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning. This study aims to provide insight into the use of peer feedback for fostering students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning in the course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The study involved 70 undergraduate students in the first year of their Bachelor of Laws study programme in the Faculty of Law at Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius. Peer feedback was provided on the basis of four criteria for project presentations in the course of English for Law. Results confirm that peer feedback reveals strengths and gaps in the performance students produce when measured against the performance criteria that are agreed upon. This enables students to concentrate on the areas in their performance that need to be worked on and gives them direction for further action to perform better in the future.*

Keywords: *external feedback, peer feedback, metacognitive skills of thinking, student learning, higher education.*

Introduction

Relevance of the study and research problem. The role of feedback and its impact on learning, which occurs on all levels of education, including higher education, has been widely analysed by researchers abroad. Research into feedback in higher education demonstrates that effective feedback to students is a key strategy in learning and teaching¹. Effective feedback has been defined as clear and understandable, purposeful, motivating, compatible with student prior knowledge, providing links to the gaps in their learning that have to be closed, as well as be compatible with modes of receiving feedback²).

Much research has focused on the impact of feedback on student learning and provided evidence that feedback raises student learning standards, enhances their engagement in the learning process, fosters deep understanding of what has been achieved in terms of performance as compared against what is considered to be desirable performance, maintains the dialogue between the teacher and learners, as well as provides learners with strategies necessary to strengthen their capacity of improving performance³. According to Hattie and Timperley, feedback has the most powerful impact on learning when learners answer three questions asked by a teacher: “Where am I going?” (“Feed up”), “How am I going?” (“Feed back”) and “Where to next?” (“Feed forward”) on the level of the task, process, self-regulation and self level. Answering the question “Where to next?” is crucial as information leading to greater learning opportunities, including more self-regulation over one’s learning process, deeper understanding, more strategies and processes to work on the task, etc. may be provided to students⁴.

Studies also present evidence that feedback enhances the development of students’ metacognitive skills of reflecting on and self-assessing of one’s own learning, which has a positive effect on student achievement⁵.

-
- 1 Poulos, A.; Mahony, M. J. Effectiveness of Feedback: The Students’ Perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. 2008, 33(2): 143–154, p. 143.
 - 2 Tummons, J. *Assessing Learning in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. London: Cromwell Press Limited, 2007; Brown, G. *Assessment: A Guide for Lecturers*. York: Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre, 2001; Hattie, J.; Timperley, H. The Power of Feedback [interactive]. *Review of Educational Research*. 2007, 77(1): 81–112 [accessed on 01-02-2011]. <<http://rer.sagepub.com/content/77/1/81>>; Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D. Formative Assessment: A Theoretical Model and Seven Principles of Good Feedback Practice [interactive]. *Studies in Higher Education*. 2006, 31(2): 199–218 [accessed on 08-02-2012]. <http://tltt.strath.ac.uk/REAP/public/Resources/DN_SHE_Final.pdf>.
 - 3 Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *ibid.*; Knight, P. *A Briefing on Key Concepts. Formative and Summative, Criterion and Norm-referenced Assessment*. York: Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre, 2001; Tummons, J., *supra* note 2; Brown, G., *supra* note 2.
 - 4 Hattie, J.; Timperley, H., *supra* note 2.
 - 5 Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D. Peer Feedback: The Learning Element of Peer Assessment. *Teaching in Higher Education*. 2006, 11(3, July): 279–290. Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *supra* note 2, p. 207; Taras, M. To Feedback or not to Feedback in Student Self-Assessment [interactive]. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. 2003, 28(5): 549–565 [accessed on 21-08-2012]. <<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02602930301678>>.

In Lithuania, the interest in the role of feedback and its impact on student learning in higher education has emerged only recently and needs to be investigated⁶. To date, no studies have been identified in which the research focus is specifically on feedback aimed at fostering student thinking about learning. The research study reported here contributes to extending the higher education literature in this area and *is aimed* at providing an insight into the use of peer feedback for fostering students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning. *Research objectives* include: 1) to define the role of feedback provided to students at the university; 2) to analyse feedback provided to students by their peers in a course of English for Law. *The purpose of the present article* is to report on the results of the research on feedback provided to students by their peers on project presentations carried out at Mykolas Romeris University in a course of English for Law.

The research methods employed in the present study include: 1) *literature analysis* was used to define the role of feedback at the university; 2) *quantitative analysis* was used to investigate feedback provided to students by their peers on project presentations in the course of English for Law; and 3) *systemic analysis* was used to make generalizations and conclusions.

1. Methodology

The conceptual rationale for using feedback at the university is that it enables learners to get actively engaged in the management of their own learning and is based on the theories of self-directed and transformative learning.

The theory of self-directed learning puts the learner at the centre of the process of teaching and learning and stresses that the main goal of teaching and learning is to enhance learners' ability to become lifelong learners and self-directed in their learning. To attain this goal it is required that, firstly, the goal should be taken into consideration on all levels of education, i.e. from primary education through university and professional training; secondly, that learners should have acquired specific skills and personal characteristics, i.e. learners should be able to plan, carry out and evaluate their learning. According to Brookfield, "the most complete form of self-directed learning occurs when process and reflection are married in the adult's pursuit of meaning." This may be achieved by participating in a dialogue through which learners can modify their learning goals, which brings about the internal change in the learner's consciousness⁷. Providing feedback to learners in the process of teaching and learning will provide them with a possibility of entering into such a dialogue, the participants of which may be either teachers and learners or learners and other learners. Through the communication process the learners will gain information about how and what they understand and

6 Darginavičienė, I.; Kavaliauskienė, G. Feedback at university level studies. *Socialinis darbas*. 2010, 9(1): 132–140; Burkšaitienė, N. Promoting student learning through feedback in higher education. *Socialinių mokslų studijos / Societal Studies*. 2012, 4(1): 33–46.

7 Merriam, S. B.; Caffarella, R. S.; Baumgartner, L. M. *Learning in Adulthood: a Comprehensive Guide*. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007, p. 108.

misunderstand, find directions and strategies that they must take to improve, and seek assistance to understand the goals of learning. Thus, the information presented through the dialogue will allow comparison between an actual outcome and a desirable outcome⁸.

The theory of transformative learning established through the research of J. Mezirow focuses on the idea that learning should transform "...problematic frames of reference – sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets) – to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change"⁹. Central in transformative learning is metacognitive reasoning, which means "the process of advancing and assessing reasons, especially those that provide arguments supporting beliefs resulting in decisions to act," which is crucial for transformation in learning to occur. Metacognitive reasoning enables learners to fully and freely participate in the process of teaching and learning through reflecting critically on their own learning (i.e. becoming critically self-reflective) and fosters their capacity to make reflective judgements (i.e. becoming capable to engage in critical-dialectical discourse involving the assessment of assumptions and expectations supporting beliefs, values, and feelings). Research suggests that the learners' age and education are critical factors in the process of developing their capability of critical judgement. This means that the older and the more educated learners are, the higher the level of critical judgement they are likely to demonstrate, whereas the highest stage of learners' capability to make reflective judgements is described by J. Mezirow, as their capability to offer "a perspective about their own perspective," which the researcher calls the essential condition for transformative learning¹⁰.

To foster transformative learning it is necessary to help learners by creating conditions for and developing the skills of effective metacognitive reasoning that will enable them to become self-reflective and capable of making reflective judgements. Therefore, the professional goal of the educator is to foster "the learner's skills, habit of mind, disposition, and will to become a more active and rational learner"¹¹. This is supported by research which reveals that the level of students' engagement in the process of learning is one of the crucial factors determining students' attainment of the desirable performance¹².

2. The Role of Feedback at the University

Literature overview shows that at the university feedback can be used by different agents and for multiple purposes. Depending on who it is generated by, feedback falls into two main types — internal feedback and external feedback, the former being generated

8 Hattie, J.; Timperley, H., *supra* note 2; Poulos, A.; Mahony, M. J., *supra* note 1.

9 Mezirow, J. Transformative Learning as Discourse. *Journal of Transformative Education*. 2003, 1(1): 58–63.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

11 Mezirow, J., *supra* note 9, p. 62.

12 Biggs, J. What the Student Does: Teaching for Enhanced Learning. *Higher Education Research and Development*. 1999, 18(1): 57–75.

by learners themselves at a variety of levels (cognitive, motivational and behavioural) through the process of reflecting on and assessing their own learning, whereas the latter is being produced by teachers, peers, placement officials, computers, etc. More specifically, the term external feedback means information provided by an agent (e.g. teacher, peer, book, parent) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. Feedback provided by teachers occurs typically after instruction that seeks to provide knowledge and skills or to develop particular attitudes and becomes a source against which students can evaluate progress, and check out their own internal goals, criteria and standards¹³. Peer feedback is information provided to students by other students and relates to the communication process through which learners enter into dialogues related to performance and standards¹⁴.

At the university, both types of feedback serve different purposes, e. g. in the process of learning internal feedback acts as an effective way to develop self-regulation as students can monitor gaps between the internally set goals and the outcomes that they generate and to judge their progression to goals. In this way it fosters the capability to self-assess one's own learning and self-direct it on the grounds of established gaps in it. It is particularly important as the more learning becomes self-regulated, the more students take control over their learning and the less dependent they are on external teacher support¹⁵.

External feedback provided to learners by teachers as well as peer feedback can be used as a means to improve student learning, maintain sustainable learning and for both formative and summative assessment. There is considerable research evidence proving the effects of teacher provided, self and peer provided feedback on learning and achievement¹⁶. In their model of formative assessment and self-regulated learning, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick defined seven principles of good feedback practice among which five principles are related to promoting learning, mainly good feedback practice helps clarify what good performance is, facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning, delivers high quality information to students about their learning, encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem, as well as provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance. On the other hand, to benefit from feedback, students have to understand and internalise it. Sadler identified three conditions necessary to benefit most from feedback: students have to know what good performance (towards which they are aiming at) is, be able to compare their current performance to good performance, and know what to do to close the gap between one's present and good performance¹⁷.

Research also shows that both types of external feedback can be used for formative and summative assessment. However, it has been established that peer feedback has greater potential when it is used as an end in itself rather than a means of assessment

13 Hattie, J.; Timperley, H., *supra* note 2; Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *supra* note 2, p. 208.

14 Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D., *supra* note 5, p. 281.

15 Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *supra* note 2, p. 205.

16 Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D., *supra* note 5; Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *supra* note 2.

17 Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *ibid.*, p. 204.

as it leads to enhanced understandings and improved learning when it contains detailed comments, but no formal grades. This is due to the fact that while producing feedback students engage in the process of articulating their understanding of what they are learning. The information provided to students whose performance they made comments on can be later used in the form of reflection for self-assessment of one's own learning, which may lead to its improvement. Thus, peer feedback fosters student thinking about learning and may be beneficial not only for the students whose performance is given feedback on, but also for the students who give feedback to their peers as it may (1) result in developing objectivity in relation to standards which can be later transferred to their own work, (2) lead to enhanced understandings of the subject matter, which has the potential for improved performance in summative assessment, and (3) extend learning from the private domain to a more public domain, i.e. students learn through expressing and articulating to others what they know and understand¹⁸.

The research study reported here attempts to contribute to building a richer picture of peer feedback used to foster students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning in the course of English for Law at Mykolas Romeris University. The rationale for using peer feedback while studying English for Law is that during the process of communication through which students produce comments on their peers' performance, no formal grades are awarded because the emphasis is placed on the comparison of performance against the criteria and on identification of gaps in performance as well as on the development of skills needed to make objective judgements against criteria, skills which are transformed when students produce and regulate their own work¹⁹.

3. The Context of the Study

The study was carried out at the Faculty of Law, Mykolas Romeris University (Vilnius), the participants being first year law majors of the three-and-a-half-year Bachelor of Laws (LLB) study program. The average age of the participants was 20 and none of them had had any background in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) before they entered the university.

Project work is an integrated part of the course of English for Law and is to be carried out in the second semester. At the beginning of the second semester, the requirements for project preparation, delivery and the final product were introduced and samples of project files containing project reports were presented to students. The product of each group work was a multimedia/video/audio supported oral presentation made to their peers, with each group member participating equally, along with the project file comprising individual reports on the project to be presented to the teacher.

To enhance student motivation in project participation, they were free to form project groups of 4-5 students as well as to choose the topic for their project on the basis

18 Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D., *supra* note 5, p. 281.

19 Nicol, D.; Macfarlane-Dick, D., *supra* note 2.

of their group decision, the only limitation to their choice was the requirement for the topic to be related to legal issues, problems or real-life situations involving some legal aspects. To ensure that students are aware of the criteria according to which their project work was to be assessed by the teacher, the following assessment criteria were decided upon before groups started preparing for the project: 1) problem identification and presentation, 2) project structure/organisation of the presentation, 3) language accuracy/use of terminology, 4) mode of project presentation/project presentation format.

To gain an in-depth understanding of student thinking about their peers' performance on project presentations, a quantitative methodology was used. Peer feedback was provided in the form of Feedback Questionnaire. The data were analysed with descriptive statistics and correlational statistics (Pearson correlation coefficient r) using Statistical package for social sciences software (version 18).

4. Results

Students participated in their colleagues' project presentations and were asked to think about their performance and produce feedback without formal grades on it on the basis of the four criteria agreed upon before project work started. Feedback Questionnaires, including 15 close-ended items, were completed by 76 students; 70 questionnaires were used for the study. Results of peer feedback analysis are presented below.

Criterion 1. Problem identification and presentation. To establish whether presenters identified the main problem set by the project and presented it to the audience, students were asked to answer two questions. Peer feedback results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Student feedback on project problem identification and its presentation

Did the speaker really answer the question set?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	55	78,6	78,6	78,6
	No	3	4,3	4,3	82,9
	No answer	12	17,1	17,1	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Did the speaker develop an argument and make his position clear throughout the presentation?					
Valid	Yes	28	41,4	41,4	41,4
	No	19	40,0	40,0	81,4
	No answer	13	18,6	18,6	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	

Table 1 illustrates that although the majority of students (78,6%) considered that presenters did answer the main question set by the project, 40 % said that the argument was not well developed and the presenters' own position was not made clear throughout the presentation. It was also found that 17,1% and 18,6% of students respectively gave no answer to these questions, which might mean that they were not sure what exactly it meant to answer the problem question and develop an argument in a project presentation. This may be due to the fact that it was the first time that students had to carry out project work in the course of English for Law at the university. The latter findings clearly indicate that peer feedback revealed a gap in student performance in relation to one of the most important criteria for project work.

To establish the relationship between the requirements for presenters to answer the main question set by the project, develop an argument, and make one's own position clear throughout the presentation, correlational statistics (Pearson correlation coefficient r) for student feedback were used (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlational statistics for student feedback on problem identification and presentation

Variable	Did the speaker really answer the question set?	Did the speaker develop an argument & make his position clear throughout the presentation?
Did the speaker really answer the question set?	1 70	
Did the speaker develop an argument & make his position clear throughout the presentation?	,613** ,000 70	
Did the speaker develop an argument & make his position clear throughout the presentation?		1 70

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlational statistics revealed that there was a strong relationship between the requirements of answering the main question set by the project and developing an argument and making the presenter's own position clear ($r=0.613^{**}$, $p=0.000$), indicating that in order to improve student performance in this area, one should concentrate more on the issue of what exactly the main question of the project is, finding relevant arguments to support it and developing the argument throughout the presentation.

Criterion 2. Project structure/organisation of the presentation. To establish whether the presenters' projects met the criterion, students were asked to answer 4 questions. Peer feedback results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Student feedback on project structure / organisation of the presentation

Was there a clear introduction, including an indication of the structure of the talk?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	61	87,1	87,1	87,1
	No	9	12,9	12,9	100,0
Total		70	100,0	100,0	
Were the main points clearly signalled?					
Valid	Yes	55	78,6	78,6	78,6
	No	14	20,0	20,0	98,6
	No answer	1	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Were they presented in a logical order and relevant?					
Valid	Yes	65	92,9	92,9	92,9
	No	5	7,1	7,1	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Was there a clear and effective conclusion?					
Valid	Yes	30	42,9	42,9	42,9
	No	34	48,6	48,6	91,4
	No answer	6	8,6	8,6	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	

Results in Table 3 illustrate that peer feedback information revealed both strengths and weaknesses in students' performance. On the one hand, the majority of students (92,9%) answered that in presentations the main points were logically arranged and relevant as well as clearly signalled (reported by 78,6% of students). On the other hand, although the majority (87,1%) of students stated that presentations had a clear introduction which included an indication of the structure of the talk, almost half of them (48,6 %) noted that presentations did not have a clear and effective conclusion. This leads to the conclusion that student performance needs improvement in respect to the requirement which ensures effectiveness of presentations.

Criterion 3. Language accuracy/use of terminology. As has already been mentioned, students were free to choose the topics for their projects, which in some cases meant that the ones they chose were not part of the curriculum, therefore, specific legal terms were

not discussed in class during the course of English for Law. In such cases presenters had to take the responsibility of explaining a big number of unknown legal terms and phrases to the audience. Results from peer feedback on specific language requirements for project presentations, including feedback on language accuracy and the adequacy of the use of legal terms and phrases, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Student feedback on language accuracy/use of terminology

Was the language clear and concise so that you could understand the content easily?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	56	80,0	80,0	80,0
	No	14	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Were legal terms explained properly?					
Valid	Yes	44	62,9	62,9	62,9
	No	26	37,1	37,1	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Were the words pronounced correctly?					
Valid	Yes	43	61,4	61,4	61,4
	No	27	38,6	38,6	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Was the language formal enough?					
Valid	Yes	67	95,7	95,7	95,7
	No	3	4,3	4,3	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	

Table 4 illustrates that language requirements for the presentation style, clarity and conciseness were met in most cases, i.e. 95,7% of students stated that the presentation style was formal enough, 80,0% said they could understand the contents of presentations because the language was clear and concise; however, the analysis of peer feedback information also disclosed a gap between the current performance and the desired one, mainly, 37,1% of students reported that legal terms and phrases were not explained properly and 38,6% said that presenters made pronunciation mistakes. These findings are particularly important, owing to the fact that acquisition of legal terms and accuracy of their use in the context of legal profession is one of the main goals of the course of English for Law at the university.

Criterion 4. The mode of project presentation/project presentation format. To establish if presenter performance met the requirements for the mode of presentations made in academic learning environments, students were asked to produce feedback on 5 questions. Results from peer feedback analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Student feedback on the mode of project presentation

Did the speaker make effective use of their notes and any visuals?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	44	62,9	62,9	62,9
	No	25	35,7	35,7	98,6
	No answer	1	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Did the speaker use eye contact effectively?					
Valid	Yes	28	40,0	40,0	40,0
	No	41	58,6	58,6	98,6
	No answer	1	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Did the speaker use highlighting for emphasis?					
Valid	Yes	32	45,7	45,7	45,7
	No	38	54,3	54,3	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Did the speaker keep to the time limit?					
	Yes	55	78,6	78,6	78,6
	No	12	17,1	17,1	95,7
	No answer	3	4,3	4,3	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	
Did the speaker sound interested/interesting?					
Valid	Yes	43	61,4	61,4	61,4
	No	25	35,7	35,7	97,1
	No answer	2	2,9	2,9	100,0
	Total	70	100,0	100,0	

The table illustrates that peer feedback established both strengths and weaknesses as to the way projects were presented to the audience. Mainly, 78,6% of students considered that presenters kept to the set time limit, 62,9% of students reported that

presenters made effective use of their notes and visuals, i.e. they did not try to memorise the texts, did not read the texts throughout the presentations, did not present too much textual information on the slides, used the visuals purposefully and with a grounded reason; and 61,4% stated that while making presentations presenters sounded interested/interesting and not monotonous.

On the other hand, the analysis of peer feedback results revealed that the most problematic area as to the mode of project presentations was lack of eye contact with the audience as well as lack of the use of highlighting for emphasis (stated by 58,6% and 54,3% of students respectively), which made it clear that this performance criterion was met the least in comparison to all four performance criteria. This leads to the conclusion that thinking about presentations, analysing and comparing them against performance criteria agreed upon before project preparation started, helped students to identify the areas that have to be improved the most, which is important as highlighting for emphasis and eye contact when (if) used effectively during presentations add to a better understanding of the topic of the project.

5. Discussion of Results

This study identified a number of strengths and gaps in student performance disclosed through peer feedback which was based on thinking about four performance criteria on project presentations in the course of English for Law. The appropriateness of the approach chosen for the study is supported by literature, which suggests that setting specific goals in the process of teaching and learning has more potential to reduce the gap between the actual performance and desired goal attainment than general or nonspecific ones because they focus students' attention and feedback can be more directed²⁰.

In using peer feedback in the process of learning English for Law we have made every effort to foster student thinking about learning. The findings that revealed strengths, and in particular those that revealed gaps in student performance, are important as they demonstrate what exactly in student current performance does not meet the requirements, which leads students to thinking about how to close the gap. This confirms the research literature suggesting that the main purpose of feedback is to reduce discrepancies between current understandings and performance and goal²¹.

Finally, the results of the present study are significant for future learning, as they give direction for further action to both the students whose performance was given feedback on and the students who produced feedback on their peers' performance, i.e. basing on what they already know about good performance and through thinking, analysing and comparing it with what has been achieved it would be appropriate to move on to the next stage by answering the feed forward question "Where to next?". This would result in benefiting from peer feedback the most and achieving better performance in the future.

20 Hattie, J.; Timperley, H., *supra* note 2, p. 87.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

This is in line with Boud's observation that peer feedback can result in developing objectivity in relation to standards which can be later transferred to their own work²² as well as to Black and William's generalisation that learners must be given the means and opportunities to work with evidence of their difficulties²³.

The present study did not aim at establishing how students acted after peer feedback was provided and gaps in performance were disclosed or how students who produced feedback benefited from their engagement in thinking about learning, analysing the performance criteria and producing feedback; therefore we consider this an area of further research.

Conclusions

The study focused on the use of peer feedback to foster students' metacognitive skills of thinking about learning. The results demonstrate that peer feedback used to foster students' thinking about learning in the course of English for Law revealed both the strengths and the gaps in their colleagues' performance on four levels, including the main question set by the project, project structure, language requirements, and the mode of project presentation as compared against the criteria agreed upon before project work started. These findings are important as they prove that students were engaged in thinking and analysing the criteria of performance and produced feedback on their peers' performance.

A significant finding of the study is that peer feedback, as used in the present study, not only enables students to think about what desirable performance is and to compare their current performance with the desirable one, but also provides them with the possibility of thinking about what to do next so that to perform better in the future, i.e. it gives direction for future action. What is more, direction is given not only to students whose performance was given feedback on, but also to students who provided feedback on their peers' performance.

References

-
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Biggs, J. What the Student Does: Teaching for Enhanced Learning. <i>Higher Education Research and Development</i>. 1999, 18(1): 57–75.</p> <p>Brown, G. <i>Assessment: A Guide for Lecturers</i>. York: Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre, 2001.</p> | <p>Burkšaitienė, N. Promoting student learning through feedback in higher education. <i>Socialinių mokslų studijos / Societal Studies</i>. 2012, 4(1): 33–46.</p> <p>Darginavičienė, I.; Kavaliauskienė, G. Feedback at university level studies. <i>Socialinis darbas</i>. 2010, 9(1): 132–140.</p> |
|--|--|

22 Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D., *supra* note 5.

23 Hattie, J.; Timperley, H., *supra* note 2.

- Hattie, J.; Timperley, H. The Power of Feedback. *Review of Educational Research*. 2007, 77(1): 8–112.
- Knight, P. A. *Briefing on Key Concepts. Formative and Summative, Criterion and Norm-referenced Assessment*. York: Learning and Teaching Support Network Generic Centre, 2001.
- Liu, N.-F.; Carless, D. Peer Feedback: “The Learning Element of Peer Assessment.” *Teaching in Higher Education*. 2006, 11(3 July): 279–290.
- Merriam, S. B.; Caffarella, R. S.; Baumgartner, L. M. *Learning in Adulthood: a Comprehensive Guide*. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- Mezirow, J. Transformative Learning as Discourse. *Journal of Transformative Education*. 2003, 1(1): 58–63.
- Nicol, D. J.; Macfarlane-Dick, D. *Rethinking Formative Assessment: A Theoretical Model and Seven Principles of Good Feedback Practice. Enhancing Student Learning Through Effective Formative Feedback* [interactive]. York: The Higher Education Academy Generic Centre June 2004 [accessed on 24-07-2011]. <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/resources/resourcedatabase/id353_senlef_guide.pdf>.
- Poulos, A.; Mahony, M. J. Effectiveness of Feedback: The Students' Perspective. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. 2008, 33(2): 143–154.
- Taras, M. To Feedback or not to Feedback in Student Self-Assessment. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*. 2003, 28(5): 549–565.
- Tummons, J. *Assessing Learning in the Lifelong Learning Sector*. London: Cromwell Press Limited, 2007.

METAKOGNITYVINIŲ GEBĖJIMŲ UGDYMAS STUDENTŲ SUTEIKIAMU GRĮŽTAMUOJU RYŠIU STUDIJUOJANT TEISINĘ ANGLŲ KALBĄ

Nijolė Burkšaitienė

Mykolo Romerio universitetas, Lietuva

Santrauka. Grįžtamojo ryšio įtaka mokymuisi visais švietimo lygmenimis, įskaitant ir aukštąjį mokslą, sulaukė didelio užsienio mokslininkų dėmesio. Mokslinių tyrimų rezultatai aukštojo mokslo lygmeniu rodo, kad jeigu studentams suteikiamas grįžtamasis ryšys yra efektyvus, jis turi didelės įtakos studijavimui ir studentų pasiekimams, skatina dialogą tarp studentų ir dėstytojo ir suteikia studentams mokymosi strategijas, stiprinančias jų galimybes pasiekti geresnių rezultatų (Tummons, Brown, Hattie ir Timperly, Nicol ir Macfarlane-Dick). Užsienio mokslininkų tyrimai atskleidžia, kad grįžtamasis ryšys ugdo studentų metakognityvinius mąstymo apie mokymąsi gebėjimus, skatina reflektuoti bei įsivertinti tai, kas pasiekta, o tai turi įtakos studijų pasiekimams (Liu ir Carless, McDonald ir Boud, cituota Nicol ir Macfarlane-Dick, Taras).

Lietuvoje grįžtamojo ryšio įtaka studentų mokymuisi aukštajame moksle dar tik pradėdama analizuoti (Kavaliauskienė ir Darginavičienė, Burkšaitienė) ir, autorės žiniomis, dar nėra atlikta tyrimų studentų suteikiamo grįžtamojo ryšio kitiems studentams (angl. k. peer

feedback) srityje. Šio tyrimo objektas – studentų suteikiamas grįžtamasis ryšys kitiems studentams aukštojo mokslo institucijoje. Tyrimo tikslas – išanalizuoti studentų suteiktą grįžtamąjį ryšį kitiems studentams, panaudotą ugdant jų metakognityvinius mąstymo apie mokymąsi gebėjimus. Tyrimo uždaviniai – remiantis savireguliacine ir transformacine mokymosi teorijomis apibrėžti studentų suteikiamo grįžtamojo ryšio kitiems studentams vaidmenį universitete ir išanalizuoti studentų suteiktą grįžtamąjį ryšį kitiems studentams studijuojant teisinę anglų kalbą. Šio straipsnio tikslas – pateikti Mykolo Romerio universitete atlikto tyrimo, skirto ugdyti studentų metakognityvinius mąstymo apie mokymąsi gebėjimus ir pateikti grįžtamąjį ryšį mokantis teisinės anglų kalbos, rezultatus. Tyrimui atlikti buvo pasitelkti mokslinės literatūros analizės, statistinės analizės ir sisteminės analizės metodai.

Remiantis savireguliacine ir transformacine mokymosi teorijomis, studijų procese būtina ugdyti studentų gebėjimą tapti nepriklausomu studijuojančiuoju, t. y. tokiu, kuris turi savivados savo mokymuisi gebėjimą ir tampa mažiau priklausomas nuo išorinės, t. y. dėstytojo suteikiamos, pagalbos. Iš kitos pusės, būtina sukurti tam palankias sąlygas. Viena iš jų – ugdyti studentų metakognityvinius mąstymo apie mokymąsi gebėjimus suteikiant grįžtamąjį ryšį kitiems studentams. Tai ne tik įgalina juos priimti sprendimus dėl to, kas pasiekta ir ką reikia pasiekti, bet ir nurodo kryptį, galinčią transformuoti mokymąsi.

Tyrimo metu nustatyta, kad studijuojant teisinę anglų kalbą studentų suteiktas grįžtamasis ryšys kitiems studentams apie teisine tematika (anglų kalba) parengtų projektų pateiktis (angl. k. project presentations) pagal iš anksto nustatytus pateikties kriterijus atskleidė stipriąsias projektų pateikčių puses ir trūkumus. Tyrimo rezultatai rodo, kad jame dalyvavę studentai išanalizavo projektų pateikčių kriterijus, apsvarstė ir palygino, kaip kolegų pateiktys atitinka iš anksto numatytus kriterijus bei suteikė grįžtamąjį ryšį.

Svarbus tyrimo rezultatas yra tas, kad studentų suteiktas grįžtamasis ryšys kitiems studentams taip, kaip jis buvo panaudotas šiame tyrime, ne tik įgalina juos suprasti, koks užduoties atlikimas yra pageidaujamas, išanalizuoti projektų pateikties kriterijus ir palyginti juos su savo kolegų atlikimu bei nustatyti skirtumus tarp pageidaujamo pristatymo ir faktinio atlikimo, bet ir sudaro galimybę mąstyti apie tai, ką reikia daryti toliau, norint tokią užduotį atlikti geriau, t. y. nurodo kryptį tolesnei veiklai. Ypač svarbu yra tai, kad kryptis tolesnei veiklai nurodoma ne tik tiems studentams, apie kurių užduoties atlikimą (projektų pateiktis) buvo suteiktas grįžtamasis ryšys, bet ir tiems studentams, kurie jį suteikė, kadangi jie galės pasinaudoti šia patirtimi ir įgūdžiais ruošdamiesi pristatyti savo parengtus projektus.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: grįžtamasis ryšys, studentų kitiems studentams suteikiamas grįžtamasis ryšys, metakognityviniai mąstymo apie mokymąsi gebėjimai, teisinė anglų kalba, aukštasis mokslas.

Nijolė Burkšaitienė, Mykolo Romerio universiteto Humanitarinių mokslų instituto Užsienio kalbų katedros profesorė. Mokslinių tyrimų kryptys: specialybės anglų kalbos studijos aukštajame moksle, inovaciniai studijų metodai, suaugusiųjų mokymasis.

Nijolė Burkšaitienė, Mykolas Romeris University, Institute of Humanities, Department of Foreign Languages, Professor. Research interests: ESP studies in higher education, innovative teaching and study methods, adult learning.

