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Thesis

THE IMPORTANCE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracoval/a samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

V Plzni dne X. měsíc 20XX …….

Jméno Příjmení

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the importance of formative assessment in English language classes. The theoretical chapter presents the history of formative assessment and how it evolved, what formative assessment is and describes the key aspects, or strategies, of formative assessment. The chapter ends with a summary of other relevant research studies done on this topic. The method of action research was carried out in order to conclude whether formative assessment impacts English language students. During the course of six lessons students tried several formative assessment techniques which focused mainly on gathering evidence of learning and peer and self-assessment. The research was finished by a short questionnaire which allowed students to evaluate the formative assessment techniques they had tried. The results of the research indicate that formative assessment does have an impact on students and their learning.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The topic of this thesis is formative assessment, specifically the use of formative assessment in English second language classes. Assessment is integral to teaching; one cannot go without the other. Teachers assess their students every day, either consciously or subconsciously. Along with preparing lessons, it is the most important and time-consuming aspect of teaching. Regarding what assessment entails, most people usually think of exams or tests, grades and report cards. That is, however, only a small part of what day-to-day assessment in education looks like.

Assessment is a necessary process which takes place in the classroom every day. It significantly impacts students and their perception of themselves and their potential to learn. Teachers should be able to assess their students in a way which is effective in helping students develop new skills and successfully advance the learning process. They should assess not only information on students' learning but also be able to use that information to improve their teaching further to achieve the maximum of the students' learning potential. All this cannot be done with grades alone. That is when formative assessment, or assessment for learning, as it is sometimes called, comes into the picture.

Formative assessment has been around for decades, yet it is still not used on the same scale as summative assessment. Summative assessment is still taken as the norm by most teachers. This thesis summarizes the advantages of formative assessment for both students and teachers. The theoretical background describes the history of formative assessment, how it evolved into its current shape and, what formative assessment is, its essential elements or, as they are called, strategies. Each strategy is described in detail, providing information about how formative assessment can benefit learners' knowledge, understanding, the ability to assess themselves and their peers and become more independent and motivated. It also highlights the benefits formative assessment has for teachers, who can gather more information about their students' needs and the progress they are making. The theoretical part also offers an overview of some research studies on using formative assessment strategies in English second language classes before moving on to the research part of this thesis.

The research then explores the use of various formative assessment techniques in English lessons. The participants were two groups of 9th grade students. One group continued their

usual English lessons, involving mainly summative assessment, and one group implemented at least two pre-planned formative assessment techniques into each lesson. This research aims to determine how the students in the second group were affected by formative assessment and how it affected the lessons and the planning of lessons. At the end of the research, the students who participated in the formative assessment techniques also filled in a questionnaire focusing on their evaluation of those techniques.

I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter will summarize the essential ideas of formative assessment. First, the history and evolvement of formative assessment will be presented as well as several definitions of what formative assessment is and what it should entail. Then, five key strategies of formative assessment defined by Wiliam (2011) and supported by other authors will be presented. The strategies focus on students' self and peer assessment, learning objectives, eliciting evidence of learning and students becoming owners of their learning. At the end of the chapter, results of research studies done on the topic of formative assessment in English language classes will be discussed.

History of formative assessment

Although it may seem that formative assessment is a newer concept, Wiliam (2011) states that:

The term *formative evaluation* was first used in 1967 by Michael Scriven in 1967 to describe the role that evaluation could play "in the ongoing improvement of the curriculum" (p. 41). He contrasted this with summative evaluation, which was designed "to enable administrators to decide whether the entire finished curriculum, refined by the use of the evaluation process in its first role, represents a sufficiently significant advance on the available alternatives to justify the expense of adoption by the school system" (Scriven, 1967, as cited in Wiliam, 2011, p.33).

Bloom (1969) also used the term *formative evaluation.* He used it mainly in relation to classroom tests. Bloom states that:

> By formative evaluation, we mean evaluation by brief tests used by teachers and students as aids in the learning process. While such tests may be graded and used as part of the judging and classificatory function of evaluation, we see a much more effective use of formative evaluation if it is separated from the grading process and used primarily as an aid to teaching (p. 48).

Bloom continued by saying that "evaluation which is directly related to the teaching-learning process as it unfolds, can have highly beneficial effects on the learning of students, the instructional process of teachers, and the use of instructional materials by teachers and

learners" (1969, p. 50). Even though these two authors mention the term *formative evaluation* frequently, Wiliam (2011) goes on to say that the term was seldom used in the next twenty years. However, that does not mean that educators have lost interest in the concept of formative assessment. Multiple studies examined ways of integrating assessment and instruction, for example, cognitively guided instruction (CGI):

> In the original CGI project, a group of twenty-one elementary school teachers participated, over the period of four years, in a series of workshops in which the teachers were shown extracts of videotapes selected to illustrate critical aspects of children's thinking. The teachers were then prompted to reflect on what they had seen, by, for example, being challenged to relate the way a child had solved to how she had solved or might solve other problems (Fennema et al., 1996, as cited in Wiliam, 2011, p. 34).

Wiliam (2011) then explains that throughout the whole project, the teachers were encouraged to use the evidence they had collected about their students' performance to adjust their instruction so that they would be able to meet their students' learning needs better. He states that the students taught by teachers participating in the CGI project improved in understanding, problem-solving and confidence. He also adds that even four years after the experiment ended, the teachers still used the program's principles (p. 34).

He also mentions several other projects, including the measurement and planning system (MAPS), which focused on kindergarten students tested in math and reading. Their teachers were then trained to interpret the test results so they could use them to individualise instruction. The performances of these students were then compared with those of other students whom other teachers taught. Students of the teachers participating in the MAPS project were more successful and had a much lower percentage of learners being placed in special education programs (Wiliam, 2011, pp. 34-35).

Wiliam, Lee, Harrison & Black (2004) worked with thirty-six secondary school teachers in England. The project had two parts; in the first part, the teachers attended workshops in which they were introduced to research findings about how assessment can support learning, developed their own plans on implementing formative assessment into their lessons and could discuss their progress with colleagues. The second part consisted of a series of visits from

researchers to the teachers' classes, so they could observe how the teachers implemented the ideas from the first part into their lessons. The researchers then compared the test scores of the classes of teachers participating in this study with similar classes of teachers who did not and found out that the students with whom their teachers used formative assessment made almost double the progress over a year (Wiliam, Lee, Harrison & Black, 2004, as cited in Wiliam, 2011, pp. 36–37).

Susan M. Brookhart (2007) also takes into consideration several formative assessment definitions and states that if taken together, they demonstrate how the definition of formative assessment has evolved. She offers a visual representation of this using a figure that "oversimplifies in order to illustrate this development" (p. 43). This shows how the term formative assessment has evolved from simply informing about the learning process to include the fact that teachers can use the information to improve their instruction, which in turn leads to students improving their performance, leading to student motivation.

Figure 1 *Expanding Concepts in the Definition of Formative Assessment*

Information About the Learning Process (Scriven, 1967)			
Information About the Learning Process (Bloom et al., 1971)	That Teachers Can Use for Instructional Decisions		
Information About the Learning Process (Sadler, 1983, 1989)	That Teachers Can Use for Instructional Decisions	And Students can Use for Improving Their Own Performance	
Information About the Learning Process (Black & Wiliam, 1998a, 1998b; Brookhart, 1997a, 1997b; Crooks, 1988; Natriello, 1987)	That Teachers Can Use for Instructional Decisions	And Students can Use for Improving Their Own Performance	Which Motivates Students

Note. This figure demonstrates how the definitions of the term formative assessment evolved. Susan M. Brookhart (2007, p. 44)

Formative assessment has been proven useful many times over the course of the last fifty-six years since Scriven (1967) first used the term. The term itself has also evolved during this time, from formative assessment only providing information to what teachers and students can do with this information. However, for many teachers, it may still be a new concept or something they do not consider crucial in their lessons, or they do not know how to implement it effectively. Many teachers may already be using formative assessment in their classes without knowing that there is a specific term for it. That is why the next part of this thesis will explore precisely what formative assessment is, what it entails and why it is so important.

Formative assessment

There is a significant number of definitions considering *formative assessment*. For example, Black & Wiliam (1998) defined it "as encompassing all those activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by students which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged" (p. 7). Cowie & Bell (1999) have adapted it by adding that the information gained from the assessment should be used while learning was still in process, as they state that formative assessment is "the process used by teachers and students to recognise and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during the learning" (p. 32). Shepard et al. (2005) have also highlighted the aspect of taking action during the instruction process by defying formative assessment as "assessment carried out during the instructional process for the purpose of improving teaching or learning" (p. 275).

Wiliam (2011) adds that what these definitions have in common is that they regard formative assessment as a process. Others, for instance, Kahl (2005), define *formative assessment* as "a tool that teachers use to measure the student grasp of specific topics and skills they are teaching. It is a 'midstream' tool to identify specific student misconceptions and mistakes while the material is being taught" (p. 11). Wiliam (2011) adds that the term formative assessment nowadays refers more to an assessment instrument rather than a process used to improve instruction (p. 38). Wiliam (2011) goes on to say that "The difficulty with trying to

make the term formative assessment apply to a thing (the assessment itself) is that it just does not work." (p. 38). He continues by stating an example of using tests designed for summative purposes being used formatively, meaning that the same test or an exam can be either summative or formative. In this sense, the term formative or summative assessment describes more the function that assessment data serve rather than the assessment itself (p. 39).

According to some experts, the term formative assessment is too broad and insufficient in describing what it is meant to - an assessment which leads to improving student learning. Broadfoot et al. (1999) state that "the term 'formative' itself is open to a variety of interpretations and often means no more than that the assessment is carried out frequently and is and is planned at the same time as teaching" (p. 7). They instead suggested using the term ‘assessment for learning’, which was first used by Harry Black in 1986. Rick Stiggins (2005) has popularised the use of this term in North America, and he claims that it is very different from what is usually regarded as "formative assessment":

> If formative assessment is about more frequent, assessment FOR learning is about continuous. If formative assessment is about providing teachers with evidence, assessment FOR learning is about informing the students themselves. If formative assessment tells users who is and who is not meeting state standards, assessment FOR learning tells them what progress each student is making toward meeting each standard while the learning is happening – when there's still time to be helpful (pp. 1-2).

The terms ‘formative assessment’ and ‘assessment for learning’ are usually regarded as synonyms in literature or are very closely intertwined. For the purpose of this thesis, there is no need to make significant distinctions between these two terms as both are used to convey the same meaning, a type of assessment meant to improve students' learning. As Wiliam (2011) states, "What really matters is the kind of processes we value, not what we call them" (p. 41). However, he goes on to say that there is still a need for a complex definition that can express all the ways assessment can shape instruction, and he offers this one:

> An assessment functions formatively to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted and used by teachers, learners, or their peers to make decisions about the next step in instruction that are likely to be better, or better

> founded, than the decisions they would have made in the absence of the evidence. (Wiliam, 2011, p. 43)

In this definition, the term ‘formative’ is used to describe the use of the evidence of assessment, not the assessment itself, because, as stated before, according to Wiliam (2011), even a test can count as a formative assessment if the teacher uses it to improve student learning. The definition includes the students and their peers as the ones also actively doing the assessment, not just the teachers. It also relies more on decisions rather than intentions, as only the intention of using the collected evidence to improve student learning is not helpful; it actually needs to be used in this way (pp. 43-44).

Boyle and Charles (2013) present another approach to formative assessment. They view it as more of an awareness that teachers have of students' understanding and thought processes rather than the teachers' actions. They state, "The core of formative assessment lies not in what teachers do but in what they see" (p. 10). The teacher should not only consider the student's thinking in connection with the curriculum but also in connection with the student's participation in class. It should be considered whether the student accepts some information or solution to a problem solely because the teacher has said or he read it in a textbook or because the student had the chance to experience the problem and solve it himself. In the first case, the student becomes only "a passive recipient of the transmission of knowledge" (Boyle & Charles, 2013, p. 10). Coffey et al. (2011) state, "Therefore it is essential that formative assessment – and account of it in literature – consider more than the "gap" between pupil thinking and the correct concepts" (p. 1129).

Boyle and Charles (2013) continue by saying that recognising student thinking will make the teacher change his original lesson plan and focus on the current issues. Formative assessment creates 'learning objectives' that the teacher could not foresee and therefore were not part of the original lesson plan. The learning objectives have two levels: conceptualisation – how the learner understands a particular concept, and how the learner approaches the concept. The teacher needs to be aware and work with both of these objectives, encouraging the students to engage with the concept in their own way instead of saying what they think the teacher wants to hear. When approaching assessment as 'learner behavioural analysis,' the teacher is formatively assessing student thinking by observing and paying attention to how that thinking is demonstrated through the student's actions. The teacher's goal is to understand what the

student is thinking and why and use it to improve instruction in the class further. Formative assessment should involve discussing and exchanging ideas between the teacher and the students. The teacher also needs to constantly consider whether his/her ideas align with what he/she wants the students to learn – the learning objectives. For the formative assessment to be effective, the process must be ongoing, as students and their ideas and thought processes develop all the time. The formative assessment activities also need to emerge naturally from what is currently being discussed in the classroom as it needs to respond to learners' current thinking and experience. Formative assessment should be an integrated part of the teaching and learning process (pp. 11-13).

Formative assessment needs to arise from the classroom context, it should not be preplanned, and it should be part of teaching and learning. Formative assessment is, therefore, an informal type of assessment, as opposed to summative assessment, which is traditionally formal. Ruiz-Primo and Furtak (2006) define informal assessment as largely improvised interaction between the teacher and the whole class, a smaller group of students or just one student. Informal assessment can emerge out of any instructional or learning activity during the class, and the information gathered by this type of assessment is temporal and is often unrecorded. It can also include non-verbal responses, which the teacher collects by observing the students while they work. The teacher needs to react to this information immediately, and any comment, question or reaction from the student can prompt an assessment event as the teacher becomes aware of the student's misconception. The teacher's response is usually quick, spontaneous and flexible. It can take different forms according to the situation, e.g., responding with a question, asking about the points of view of other students, making a demonstration or repeating the activity. Mertler (2017) also comments that informal assessment methods are much more spontaneous than formal assessment methods, which are also much less obvious to students. They are unaware that they are being assessed, which also helps to decrease the stress that students often feel while they are being assessed. Informal assessment is not usually graded. It can be in the form of a simple observation of students' work or an oral presentation. It provides teachers with immediate feedback on students' learning progress (pp. 5-7).

Another difference we can observe between the two approaches is that formal assessment requires that the teacher pauses the instructional process, meaning they cannot continue

teaching while students are writing a test. In contrast, informal assessment can be embedded into the instructional process, a key feature of formative assessment. It is also used far more frequently; however, formal assessment collects less but more controlled information about students' learning that can be measured. Each teacher should be able to find a balanced approach between using formal and informal assessment methods (Mertler, 2017, pp. 5-7).

Role of feedback in formative assessment

Hattie (2019) says "Feedback is information about the task that fills the gap between what is understood and what is aimed to be understood" (p. 3). According to Hattie (2019), feedback is an essential part of formative assessment. This argument is supported by Wiliam (2011), who identified five critical components of formative assessment:

- Students must be provided with effective feedback,
- Students must be active agents in their own learning,
- Teachers must adjust their teaching according to assessment results,
- Teachers must recognise the role assessment has in student motivation and self-esteem, as these are factors that have a significant influence on their learning,
- Students must be able to assess themselves in order to understand how to improve further (p. 39).

Without feedback, students would not know where they have made mistakes and how they can improve moving forward, which is the goal of formative assessment – guiding learners and helping them understand how to improve in the future. However, Gedye (2010) adds that providing students with quality feedback is insufficient; the students also need to be encouraged to use the feedback. Without the students using the feedback to improve, the feedback only has the potential of being formative but does not guarantee to improve student learning. Several factors need to be considered to make formative feedback as influential as possible (p. 41).

First, students need to be able to self-assess. Usually, the teacher is the primary assessor, which can lead to students being too dependent and unable to reflect on their work. Students

can take more control over their learning and achievements by learning to assess themselves. The second factor is stating clear goals, criteria and standards for teachers so that students can fully understand and utilise the feedback given to them. Teachers need to adjust the language they use to accommodate their students. Formal or academic language may not always be the best option when formulating feedback. The student's language skills and level need to be taken into consideration. The third factor is teacher-student discussions and student-peer discussions about learning, which improve the quality of feedback and instruction and can also help clear up some misunderstandings around assessment. The fourth-factor deals with closing the 'feedback loop', which means that for the feedback to fulfil its purpose and be effective, students should have the opportunity to re-do the work already commented on by their teacher. If they were able to submit an improved piece of work, the feedback would be effective. This can also be achieved by giving students sub-tasks which build toward the final assignment. The feedback is given on each sub-task which should, in turn, improve the quality of the final assignment. The fifth factor is the quality of the feedback information, which can be improved by students receiving the feedback as soon as possible. The feedback should be relevant to the task and the before-given assessment criteria. It should also help the student understand how to improve instead of only identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Students should not receive too much feedback as it can be overwhelming and discouraging. The last factor is that good formative feedback should motivate students and improve their self-esteem. Grades lower the effectiveness of feedback, as students tend to pay less attention to feedback when they are also provided with grades. Grades can also adversely affect the self-esteem of weaker learners (Gedye, 2010, pp. 42-45).

Strategies of formative assessment

This section will discuss the five key strategies of formative assessment which were first presented by William (2011). He states that to understand these strategies, we must first establish three key teaching processes: ‘Finding out where learners are in their learning’, second one ‘Finding out where they are going’, and the third ‘Finding out how to get there’. We must also be aware of the three key roles: teacher, learner and peer. When we combine the processes and the roles, they may be grouped into the five key strategies of formative assessment, which are:

1. Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success

2. Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning
3. Providing feedback that moves learning forward
4. Activating learners as instructional resources for one another
5. Activating learners as the owners of their own learning (pp. 45-46)

Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success

Wiliam (2011) states that although it seems natural that in order to improve students should know what they are meant to be learning, sharing learning goals with students is a relatively recent and not so common phenomenon in many classes. He continues to say that teachers often presume that their students have the same idea as them about what they are meant to be doing in the classroom. Nevertheless, many students will have a different way of thinking and viewing the world than the teacher, which can lead to them not fully understanding their tasks or the essential information to remember, even though the teacher may think that the lesson's goal must be evident to everyone. That is why sharing learning goals with students is so important, to ensure that the teacher and all the students are on the same page about what is asked of them. Wiliam (2011) states that research shows that in classes where students were aware of the learning intentions and also the assessment criteria – it was discussed with them in depth, the students not only reached better results than in the control class but there was also a lower difference between the highest and the lowest-achieving student. Also, the most significant improvement compared to prior tasks had those students who would be considered weaker learners. Those students are the ones with the most significant disadvantage when the learning goals and assessment criteria are not shared with them because the higher achieving students have some idea of what successful work looks like based on their previous experience, while lower achieving students are continuously set up for failure by not knowing why they were unsuccessful previously and continuing the same mistakes. By sharing learning intentions and assessment criteria, the teacher ensures that all students know what is expected of them and what quality work looks like (pp. 54-55).

However, Fletcher-Wood (2018) argues that simply sharing learning objectives with students is insufficient. It relies too much on descriptive words that can have entirely different meanings to the teacher than the student, leading to misunderstandings. He states that when

sharing learning objectives, teachers often use words such as ‘be methodical’ or ‘be persuasive’ without advising students on how to do that. He encourages using examples to demonstrate learning intentions to students better, as they will be able to see what excellent work looks like rather than hear about it. He also emphasizes that students should not be shown only great examples but also mediocre ones. This will ensure they can see the difference and identify the factors that separate great work from ordinary one (paras. 2-5). Brookhart (2009) suggests giving students examples of work and making them sort them into three categories, good, medium and not good. Students then explain their choices and provide descriptions – what characteristics make specific work fall into one of the categories (p. 27).

Wiliam (2011) also adds that sharing learning objectives with students may not always be effective or necessary. An ineffective way of sharing learning objectives is when the teacher simply writes the learning objective on the board, students copy it to their notebooks and then forget about it. Formally, the learning objective has been shared, but in an entirely insufficient way; the author calls it the "wallpaper objective" (p. 56). In some cases, sharing the learning objective with students is not considered a good idea, as it can spoil how students should solve a particular problem or deem the task too simple if students know how to approach it. Finding out the learning objective can be part of the lesson. Some students have even said that learning the objective immediately demotivates them.

Wiliam (2011) adds that it can be valuable to develop the learning intentions or assessment criteria with the students; this is called "co-construction". However, the teacher should remember that he or she still has the leading role and is in a privileged position compared to the students, as he or she has more knowledge about the subject and still has a main say in what will be assessed. Still, the advantage of this process is that by helping to develop the learning goals or assessment criteria, the students can discuss them and come up with their own, which raises the probability of them being able to apply the learning intentions and success criteria to their work (p. 59).

Learning intentions vs learning contexts

Clarke (2005) talks about the problem of teachers mixing learning intentions with learning contexts. Learning contexts are traditionally far more specific. They apply only to a particular situation while learning intentions are broader, and they should allow students to apply them to several different learning contexts. When the teacher presents students with a specific

learning context instead of a learning intention, the students will learn and understand the one learning context; they will not be able to apply what they have learned to any other situation or context. Therefore, the knowledge will be virtually useless (pp. 29-30). Wiliam (2011) adds that teachers should not be interested in students' ability to do what they were taught, but in the ability to apply that knowledge to a relevant but different context. Differentiating learning intentions from learning contexts also allows for better success criteria. The teacher can assess students based on how they can transfer what they have learnt to new contexts (p. 60).

Construction of learning intentions and success criteria

Wiliam (2011) states three possible issues in developing learning intentions and success criteria teachers should consider: "1. Task-specific versus generic scoring rubrics, 2. Product-focused versus process-focused criteria, 3. Official versus student-friendly language" (p. 62).

Task-specific versus generic scoring rubrics

Wiliam (2011) discusses the pros and cons of using task-specific or generic scoring rubrics. Scoring rubrics are a way of presenting success criteria. As the name suggests, task-specific scoring rubrics apply to just one task, their strength is that they are very clear and easy to understand for students, as the criteria can be very specific, but that may also cause problems. As was established before, giving students precise instructions and criteria can lead to them only focusing on one context rather than being able to apply their knowledge to broader contexts. The disadvantage is that students must get used to a new rubric with each task. Generic scoring rubrics can be applied to a plethora of different tasks, and thus they allow the transfer of knowledge from task to task. That is why during learning, it is best to gradually build the degree of generality in scoring rubrics, while task-specific scoring rubrics may be more suited to summative assessment at the end of learning (p. 62).

Product-focused versus process-focused criteria

Product-focused criteria concentrate on the outcome of learning. They state what students should be able to do at the end of a specific learning period. Essentially, they tell students where they are meant to get in their learning, their destination. That is useful, as we have established that students generally learn better when they are aware of their learning intentions. However, this may not be enough for some students as they may feel overwhelmed

by the journey before them and unsure of how to move forward. These students will benefit from the use of process-focused criteria, which are mid-point steps that should help guide them along the way. Process-focused criteria split the learning process into smaller parts that work as checkpoints so students can make sure they are headed in the right direction and they make the process more manageable. However, they must be used carefully as if there are too many of them or they are too specific, they may constrain students too much and stand in the way of creative and inventive solutions and ways of thinking (Wiliam, 2011, pp. 62-64).

Official versus student-friendly language

Wiliam (2011) talks about the official language of state standards, which are comparable to RVP in our context. He states that some argue that these standards are written too formally and should be presented to students in a more straightforward language that will be easier to understand. However, there is a specific terminology relating to different fields of study or subjects, with which students should become gradually familiar as knowing the terminology is a part of knowing the discipline (p. 64-65).

Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning

After establishing what students are meant to accomplish in their learning, the next step for the teacher is to find out where students are in their learning currently. The most natural way for teachers to gain this evidence is to ask the students questions. If they answer in the way the teacher wants them to, the teacher will assume that learning is progressing as planned and that no adjustments are needed. However, it depends on what kind of questions the teacher asks, as it should not be too easy, and it should test if students can correctly transfer their knowledge to a different context. Suppose the question is too easy and relies on the same context presented to students by the teacher. Then the teacher cannot know if students truly understood the topic and may incorrectly assume that the learning was successful. To elicit evidence of learning, the teacher must be aware of the learners' way of thinking and the possible misconceptions arising from that. Student misconceptions are often not the teacher's fault but simply a product of how people think. Overgeneralization is one of the essential features of human thinking. However, it can often lead to misconceptions that will be corrected as the person ages and learn, so teachers should not be blamed or blame themselves

for every misconception their students may have. Another aspect to consider is that children naturally try to understand the things around them, including what they are taught. Sometimes the understanding they arrive at is different from what the teacher intended. That is why eliciting evidence of learning is so important because even if the teacher's instructions and methods were correct, the variety of learners' ways of thinking and their own experiences would likely lead to some errors that must be corrected before moving on to another learning topic (Wiliam, 2011, pp. 73-75).

Margaret Heritage (2010) adds that strategies for eliciting evidence should be pre-planned before the lesson; however, they can also arise spontaneously during the lesson. The teacher may ask prepared questions at specific points during the lesson, and when the answers are different than expected, the teacher will need to adjust instruction. A "teachable moment" can also occur when the teacher gains insight into learners' thinking through something the students say or do during an instructional activity. Based on that, the teacher may also need to reconsider the instructional process. Teachers examine the evidence of learning based on their success criteria and determine what the students understand, identify common misconceptions and what knowledge and skills the students acquired. Sometimes the teacher may find that there is not enough evidence to determine these things, and eliciting more evidence is necessary or finding that the learning is progressing as needed and making any adjustments is unnecessary. Students themselves can use the success criteria to monitor their learning and make certain adjustments to their learning process, they can also partake in peer assessment to elicit evidence of learning from each other and provide feedback to their peers. For this, they must understand the success criteria, the importance of which was already discussed (p. 12).

Author Harry Fletcher-Wood (2019) writes about the power of exit tickets as a tool for discovering what students learnt during the lesson. He argues that exit tickets help the teacher see what students understood and, therefore, better respond to any issues in the next lesson, but they also help plan better lessons in the first place. Formulating an exit ticket will help the teacher realise the lesson's most crucial points and narrow the lesson objectives accordingly. If a teacher needs help formulating simple questions for an exit ticket, it may be a sign that the lesson objectives are too broad, there are too many of them or that they are too ambitious. Exit tickets also encourage the teacher to think about what is going to be happening in the class and consider whether the activities planned are the right ones to help students with the lesson objectives. Besides their aid in planning the lesson, exit tickets also serve as markers of how

effective the lesson was, as teachers can sometimes feel their lesson was very successful, but the reality can be different. The teacher can sort the exit tickets into three piles – yes, no and maybe based on how well students answered and then try to look for patterns in the no and maybe piles, seeing if students have any common misconceptions or misunderstandings regarding the topic and plan response for the next lesson based on the findings (paras. 1–5).

Providing feedback that moves learning forward

Although feedback was touched upon in the previous section, it is a topic that requires much more attention, as it is one of the crucial components of formative assessment. The previous section established what feedback is and its importance in the formative assessment process. Now it will be discussed more in-depth, especially what to do and what not to do when formulating feedback and which kind of feedback is proven to be the most effective.

Wiliam (2011) states that even though it seems evident that feedback should improve students' learning, in reality, it is often not the case, as providing effective feedback is far more complex than it seems and, than many teachers think it is. He adds that in many cases, feedback given to students has little to no effect on their learning, and in the worst cases, it can even move students back and be counterproductive (p. 107).

Hattie and Timperley (2007) state that any effective feedback must answer these three questions, asked either by the teacher or student:

> *"Where am I going?* (What are the goals?)
>
> *How am I going?* (What progress is being made toward the goal?)
>
> *Where to next?* (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress?)" (p. 86).

The quality of feedback has a significant influence on students' learning. Wiliam (2011) summarizes a research study by Elawar and Corno (1985). According to this study, students who receive constructive written feedback learn twice as fast as students who receive grades or scores. This type of feedback also positively influences students' attitudes toward the subject in which they received the feedback. It lessens the gap between the highest-achieving and lowest-achieving students (pp. 107-108).

Wiliam (2011) also adds another study by Ruth Butler (1988), which examined the influence of different kinds of feedback on learning. In this study, students were split into three groups,

each receiving a different type of feedback. One group received only scores, one group only comments, and the final group received both scores and comments. It is perhaps not surprising that the group with only scores as feedback made no progress in their work and that the group who received comments as feedback improved by about 30 %. What may be unexpected is that the group who received both scores and comments also did not improve. This shows that the presence of scores or grades diminishes any effects that the comments might have had. Students who received good scores did not need to read the comments as they were already satisfied with the grade, and students who received poor scores did not want to read them because they were already disappointed.

When students participating in this study were asked if they would like to continue doing similar work to the one they received feedback on, only high-achieving students were interested in continuing in the group that received scores. However, in the group which received comments, all students said they would like to continue doing similar work. This shows that grading or scoring only benefits students who constantly achieve high scores. In contrast, the formative approach that written comments represent benefits all students across the achievement scale (pp. 108-109).

Wiliam (2011) adds that another important aspect of feedback is timing. He says that it is less effective if students are given feedback too early before they can properly examine the problem. Students who receive too much support need to do very little critical thinking and learn less. Often it is best only to provide students with a scaffolded response, meaning the minimal amount of advice they need to get unstuck and be able to continue with the task. This promotes better learning, and students also retain the learning longer (pp. 111-112).

Fletcher-Wood (2017) highlights the importance of identifying what the teacher wants students to change. Depending on the nature of the mistake the students made, the nature of the feedback should also be different. For feedback to be effective, it needs to be targeted at a specific problem. If a student makes a slip, or an error out of carelessness rather than a misunderstanding, the teacher can aim for the student to improve the current task. This kind of feedback is task-specific and often offers information on whether an answer is right or wrong. The problem with this kind of feedback is that students will likely be unable to transfer what they learn from it to other tasks, so it will not be beneficial to them in the future. That is why a teacher may consider giving more general feedback to help students deepen their

understanding of the subject. This kind of feedback focuses on more general approaches, meaning it allows the transfer of knowledge from one task to another and helps deepen students' understanding of the subject and the features of success in the subject. However, learners may have problems applying this kind of feedback to their current task and may need more specific prompts to use these features.

If a student has persistent problems with learning new concepts and often struggles, the teacher may want to address the student's problems with self-regulation. This will help the student to understand better how he learns. First, the students should self-monitor to assess how well he is doing, which strategies are working for them and plan future action based on this self-monitoring. This will help students better assess their current knowledge and learning gaps, leading to performance improvement. The authors warn that feedback should not be focused on students but rather on the task, subject or self-regulation. Even if the feedback focused on the student is positive, some sort of praise, it will have no positive effects on learning and can even distract students from learning, as they will be more focused on themselves and less on improving their work. Students can get too used to praise, and removing it can have negative consequences, as students who will suddenly not receive praise will feel that they must have done something wrong. Praise should not serve as a motivation for students; learning and improving should.

The author adds that linking the different levels of feedback – task-oriented, subject-oriented or self-regulating can be the most effective, as linking task-oriented with subject-oriented feedback can help students improve immediately while simultaneously showing them how to transfer the strategy to other tasks and linking it with self-regulation can help students gain a deeper understanding about the subject and their learning (paras. 1-9).

Can feedback lower performance

Wiliam (2011) examines research done by Kluger and DeNisi (1996), where they collected several studies done on feedback and found out that in two out of five cases, the participants would have been better off if they had not been given any feedback. They tried to determine when feedback does and does not improve student performance. When the feedback draws attention to the gap between where the student is and the learning goal, the student's response depends on whether his or her current performance is higher or lower than the learning goal (p. 114). The possible responses to feedback are summarized in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. *Possible responses to feedback*

Response type	Feedback indicates performance exceeds goal	Feedback indicates performance falls short of goal
Change behaviour	Exert less effort	*Increase effort*
Change goal	*Increase aspiration*	Reduce aspiration
Abandon goal	Decide goal is too easy	Decide goal is too hard
Reject feedback	Ignore feedback	Ignore feedback

Wiliam (2011, p. 115)

When the feedback indicates that the student's performance has already surpassed the goal, there are four possible responses the student can give. The ideal response would be to change the goal to something more demanding, keeping the student engaged and motivated. Often it, unfortunately, leads to students exerting less effort as they see that it will still be enough to meet the goal. They may also consider the goal too easy and abandon it altogether, as it may seem not worth their time, or they may ignore the feedback and deem it irrelevant.

On the other hand, when a student finds out that his or her performance falls short of the goal, as is more often the case in real life, he or she will also have four possible responses to the feedback. Again, the ideal response would be to increase effort to meet the goal or come closer to it. However, the students might also change their goal; for example, they start aiming for grade 2 instead of 1, as 1 requires too much work. The third possible response is to abandon the goal and decide that it will always be too hard. The last response is to reject the feedback and continue just as before. Only two italicized responses out of the eight can improve performance, and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to predict which responses the student will give. However, it may be connected to whether the student thinks his or her success is determined by him/herself or by outside factors. This is either internal or external attribution. It is common for students to attribute their success to themselves but their failure to someone else, for example, the teacher (Wiliam, 2011, pp. 114-116).

Providing effective feedback

As it was previously established, effective feedback is feedback that moves learning forward and feedback functions formatively only if the student uses the information given to the

student to improve his or her performance. The feedback also needs to be not only accurate but also helpful. In other words, it is not enough to inform the student of the mistakes, but also how to improve to avoid them in the future. As Wiliam (2011) says, feedback must provide a "recipe for future action". The future action must also be designed to progress learning; it is not enough to simply identify the current state and the goal. The teacher must also devise a series of activities that will help move students from their current level to the learning goal (p. 121).

McMillan (2007) supports this and states that effective feedback must be both diagnostic and prescriptive. Diagnostic feedback identifies the mistakes and successes of a piece of work, while prescriptive provides advice on how to improve and move forward. Nevertheless, he adds that feedback alone is not enough to improve student learning. Significant improvement can be achieved only by pairing good feedback with correctives. Correctives are activities that provide students with advice and instruction to help fix their learning problems. Correctives need to be varied to accommodate individual students' learning needs. They also need to provide a different approach from the one initially presented in the lesson and offer more time to complete the activity for students who need it. They need to consider different learning styles, modalities and types of intelligence. For students who do not need them because they mastered the topic from the initial instruction, correctives should also offer enrichment and broadening activities on the discussed topic to further develop their knowledge of the subject (pp. 71-72).

Teachers must always be mindful of the kind of feedback they give, the amount and timing, and how their students receive it. Feedback is one of the essential tools of formative assessment. It should be regarded as such by teachers and students, who, if the feedback is constructive and helpful, can use it to navigate and improve their future learning and achieve the expected learning goals.

Activating learners as instructional resources for one another

This strategy is about the effects of cooperative learning. Johnson and Johnson (1998) define 'cooperative learning' as "The instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p. 14). They also summarize five elements which are crucial for successful cooperative learning:

1. Positive interdependence – Group members rely on one another and realize that if one fails to do his part, they all bear the consequences, and if one wants to succeed, they must all succeed. Each member's effort does not only benefit him but the entire group.

2. Individual and group accountability – Each group member is accountable for his or her work, and the group is accountable for achieving the learning goal.

3. Face-to-face promotive interaction – Group members must work together to encourage, support, and help each other.

4. Teaching students needed interpersonal skills – Students must be taught how to communicate, provide effective leadership or manage conflicts.

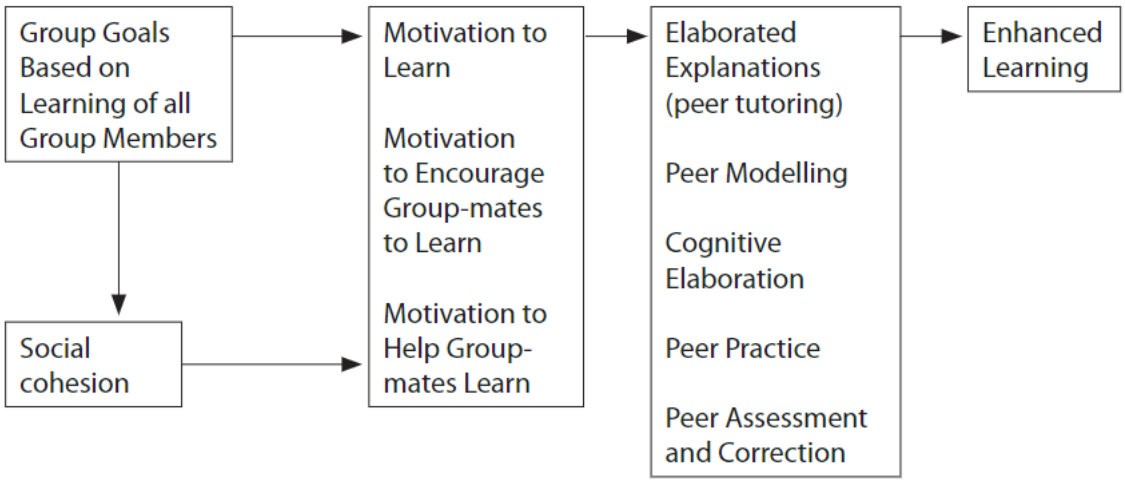
5. Group processing – Group members need to assess how well they are achieving their goals and make decisions about their future progress. They must be able to recognize which kind of behaviour is effective and which is not in order to improve continuously (pp. 20-22).

Slavin (2010) also highlights the importance of individual accountability, but he also mentions two other vital elements – team rewards and equal opportunities for success. Equal opportunities for success mean that each team member works hard to improve their previous performance and is rewarded for it. This ensures that all students across the achievement scale can equally contribute to their team's success by trying their best and improving their learning. Team rewards serve as motivation to students, and they give them a reason to want to work together and do better. Students are more motivated if they are rewarded for doing better than before rather than being compared to other student's performance (p. 163).

He adds that cooperative learning methods are almost guaranteed to improve affective outcomes, meaning that students like working in groups and feel more successful in subjects taught cooperatively. Cooperative learning makes students more social and more accepting of students who have different ethnicity or are in some other way different from themselves. Regarding achievement, the success of cooperative learning depends on how it is used. There always needs to be present at least two key elements – individual accountability and group goals. Students must be interested in ensuring all group members learn something rather than just do something. Simply competing for a task should not be enough; students also need to gain some knowledge in the process (p. 170).

The figure below demonstrates the different factors that influence how effective cooperative learning is. Group goals that are based on the learning of all members of the group positively influence social relationships and also motivation to learn. In turn, group members are motivated to help their group mates, providing peer tutoring and practice, which leads to enhanced learning.

Figure 3 *Different factors that influence the effectiveness of cooperative learning*



Slavin (2010, p. 172)

Wiliam (2011) also highlights the advantages of cooperative learning. He summarizes four main factors that clarify why cooperative learning has such positive effects. The first one is the increase in motivation. As was established above, students in cooperative settings know that one's success benefits the entire group, so they are motivated to help others. The second factor is social cohesion, meaning students care about the group and increase their effort. The third factor is personalization; students learn more because their higher-achieving classmates can focus on what is causing difficulties. And the fourth factor is cognitive elaboration, meaning that those who help others are also forced to think more in-depth about the problem, and they learn while teaching someone else (pp. 133-134).

Wiliam (2011) continues to add that cooperative learning may be even more effective than one-on-one tutorial instruction from a teacher because while students may be too hesitant to interrupt their teacher or ask for more clarification, they do not have the same problems with their peers, as they feel that they may speak with them more freely and admit to them if they still do not understand something even after their classmate already explained it. While often,

when a teacher explains something, students will pretend they understand even if they do not. Many students feel more comfortable being tutored by their classmates one-on-one than by their teacher due to the imbalance in power in the relationship. He also adds that cooperative learning benefits all students across achievement levels.

Activating learners as the owners of their own learning

This strategy is connected with the previous one, as students who are part of a group become responsible for the part they do in the group effort and are accountable for their work. This can bring students closer towards becoming owners of their learning. Wiliam (2011) states that teachers are often blamed for students' failures rather than the students themselves in a classroom context. He argues that teachers do not create the learning; students do. Teachers can help students learn, but they cannot learn for them. He adds that helping students become aware that they are the owners of their learning can significantly improve their achievement (p. 145).

Wiliam (2011) considers student self-assessment an essential factor in activating them as owners of their learning. He presents a research study by Fontana and Fernandez (1994), where students were gradually taught to self-assess. They began with assessing their performance in structured tasks offered by the teacher. Then they designed their own tasks based on the patterns from previous tasks. Gradually over ten weeks, students were allowed to set their own learning goals, construct their own tasks based on them, select appropriate tools for completing them and self-assess their progress. Compared with a control group who did not self-assess, it showed that the students participating in the study learnt almost twice as fast as the control group (pp. 146-147).

The ability to self-assess is connected to self-regulated learning, another important part of students becoming owners of their learning. Wiliam (2011) says that self-regulated learning relies on two aspects, first, the cognitive aspect – whether the learner has the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to reach the learning goal and then the second aspect – whether the student has enough motivation to use those cognitive skills in the classroom (p. 147). He then says that the cognitive and motivational aspects of self-regulated learning can be assembled in the dual-processing model developed by Monique Boekaerts (1993). This model indicates that the most important aspect is creating optimal learning environments which

promote the focus on student growth rather than well-being. When students focus too much on well-being, they do not progress in their learning, as they care too much about maintaining their self-image, which they feel is threatened by their failure, so they instead do not try at all, which prevents learning. Some factor that may help to promote student growth is sharing learning goals with students, which helps them monitor their progress towards those goals. Help students realize that ability is not fixed and that they can become smarter and improve. Teachers should also make it harder for students to compare themselves to others, provide feedback that functions as a recipe for future action and take every opportunity to surrender control over the learning from the teacher to the students so that they can become autonomous learners (Wiliam, 2011, pp. 151-152).

Boud (1995) adds that the ability to self-assess is a crucial skill for lifelong learning. Learners who can self-assess form the ability to be objective judges of their performance, which is essential not only in the classroom context but also in future careers and future learning outside of formal education. He also agrees that student self-assessment is a crucial part of being an autonomous student and that learners must be able to monitor and modify their learning strategies. He adds that students need to be able to influence their own learning without constantly waiting for help from teachers; otherwise, they are being limited in their learning (pp. 13-15).

This section summarized the five key formative assessment strategies, as defined by Wiliam (2011) and supported by other authors. It highlighted the importance of sharing learning goals, eliciting the evidence of learning, effective feedback, cooperation and autonomy of students, which are the pillars of formative assessment. These strategies define the most important aspects of formative assessment and help better understand the nature of formative assessment. They provide theoretical background for practical techniques which can be used in the classroom to carry out these formative strategies. These practical techniques will be discussed in the methodology part of this thesis.

Assessment in English language classes

This chapter will focus on the possible uses of formative assessment in the English language classroom. It examines three studies on this topic and summarizes their findings. The first study regarding formative assessment in English classes was conducted by Kiren Kaur (2021)

in Singapore. Its focus was on the enactment practices of formative assessment by teachers in three primary schools. In the context of this study, enactment of formative assessment is defined as "interpretation and practice within the teachers' school environment and classroom setting" (p. 696). Six teachers, two from each school, participated in the study, and the research questions were: How do primary teachers enact formative assessment in their classrooms? and What influences teachers' enactment of formative assessment? Data for this study was collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The results of the study showed that regarding the enactment of formative assessment practices, there were two different categories to consider - Prescribed procedure oriented vs Teacher empowered orientation and Task or grade vs Child oriented perspectives. As for the first category, four of the six English teachers carried out formative assessments because their schools required them. They had a number of prescribed formative assessment strategies which they used in their lessons. Only two teachers enacted formative assessment based on their judgement and their students' current needs, they had a wide range of formative assessment strategies prepared, and they integrated them into their lessons based on what was currently needed to move forward (p. 702).

In the second category, four teachers (the same four as before) were more task or grade oriented in using formative assessment strategies. They carried them out as a task that needed to be completed, as their school prescribed them to do so, or as a means of quick comparison between scores and grades. They provided no feedback or correct answers to the students who were wrong, and there was no effort to right misconceptions or close the gaps in students' learning. They also presented students with 'formal formative assessment', which was meant to replace summative tests, but held basically the same function. This was an example of 'formative' strategies being used as summative tools and thus failing their original function.

On the other hand, the two other teachers were more child-oriented. They used formative assessment strategies to help individual students close the gaps in their learning and facilitate learning in general. They provided quality feedback, and their main focus was always on helping their students move forward in their learning (p. 703)

Regarding influence on the enactment of formative assessment, Kaur (2021) focused on the teachers' knowledge of formative assessment. She found out that four out of the six teachers had some knowledge about formative assessment. Two teachers lacked any knowledge about

formative assessment and misunderstood it completely. Only two teachers, again the same ones that were the best at the enactment of formative assessment, not only had some basic knowledge about formative assessment but were able to explain how it helps them gain information about their students' learning, their weaknesses and gaps in learning that need to be addressed. Their schools also heavily influenced the teachers' enactment of formative assessment. The two most successful teachers reported that teachers were involved in any teaching decisions at their school. The inclusion of formative assessment strategies into their classes was individual, based on what the teacher considered doable at their level or class. The teachers received support from the school leadership and were always part of the decision-making process. Contrarily, the school leadership told the other four teachers how and when they needed to include formative assessment in their classes. They had strict plans for each semester that needed to be carried out, and they were not involved in any decision-making regarding formative assessment. They were forced to implement formative assessment into their classes without support from the school or department leaders. This created pressure on the teachers' side as they were more concerned with fulfilling the plans than their students' needs. They had to start using formative assessment practices in their classes, which were very summative assessment oriented before, without going through any introductory courses that would help them with this transition. The fact that the teachers did not start practising formative assessment out of their own volition and that they had no or limited knowledge regarding it led to them not carrying out formative assessment strategies in a way that would be useful to them or their students (pp. 704-705).

This study implies that teachers' assessment knowledge should be enhanced by any means of professional development so they could have other options rather than just the summative approach that is still dominant in many schools and so that they could realize the potential benefits formative assessment could have for their students and themselves (p. 707).

Another study regarding the use of formative assessment in English language classes was published by Xiao and Yang (2019). It focuses on how formative assessment supports self-regulated learning. We have already established that self-regulated learning is an essential skill that students should learn during their school years, and it is essential for life-long learning and career success. This research examines how formative assessment and feedback in English language classes can support self-regulation in students, which is one of the critical strategies of formative assessment, as described in the previous chapter. The study aims to

answer two points – How formative assessment activities help students' self-regulation and How formative feedback helps students' self-regulation. While the previous study focused on the teachers, this one focused on the students' views. The study was conducted in a foreign language secondary school in China; two teachers and their 16 chosen students were involved. The authors conducted class observations and interviews with the teachers and students (pp. 42-43).

The students carried out several formative assessment activities, such as oral presentations and student-generated quizzes for peers, and received feedback from the teachers. The researchers then interviewed the students to see how they reacted to the feedback they received. It showed that the students were able to use the feedback and apply it to other tasks, and they were able to learn from the feedback going forward. The teachers also used examples of writing that had different problems, and the students could identify these problems and form general rules on good writing that they could use in their own work. This practice of giving learning objectives through examples was highlighted by Fletcher-Wood (2018) in the previous chapter. Students in this study reported that they could generate their own feedback on their work based on the issues identified in the examples. Upon seeing the errors in the examples, they recognized whether they had similar problems in their works. They identified the gaps between the expected standards and their writing, using the provided examples as their guides. The teachers also provided informal teacher-student dialogues outside school hours. During these, they addressed individual students' issues and advised which strategies the students should deploy to improve. These strategies were aimed at helping the students become more self-regulated and take control over their learning. Based on the interviews with students, it was evident that they could apply these strategies as they adapted follow-up actions which helped move their learning forward. The study supports the idea that formative assessment and feedback can help students become more efficient in self-regulation, as it helps them become more active agents in the learning process through setting learning goals, assessing their performance according to the learning goals and taking actions towards improvement (pp. 43-48).

Another study by Xie and Lei (2019) focused on using formative assessment in English language writing classes. The study focused on three teachers working at the same primary school, each with a different teaching experience. One had only one and a half years of teaching experience, the second twelve years and the third over twenty years. The authors of

this study conducted lesson observations and interviews with the teachers and inspected teacher-written feedback. The study aimed to see how the teachers implemented formative assessment strategies during the writing instruction cycle and what problems if any, they faced when adopting formative assessment strategies. The formative assessment strategies considered in this study were written by Wiliam (2011) and described in the previous chapter of this thesis.

The results showed that, perhaps surprisingly, the teacher with the longest teaching experience used formative assessment strategies the least. The other two teachers could use all five strategies but in limited quantity and quality. All the teachers had problems with their students' ability to conduct self and peer assessments. They expressed that some students do not have high enough English proficiency in using metalanguage and recognizing, for example, adjectives from verbs. They also said that this type of assessment is too challenging for students after they have completed the writing as they are too tired. However, the authors express that the teachers likely underestimate their students and that with support and training, all students can gain the ability to self-assess. The problem likely arose from the teachers having pre-planned worksheets containing self and peer-assessment tasks that did not consider students' individual levels and were not customizable. The authors observed that while all the teachers had positive attitudes towards formative assessment, they did not consider it a priority in L2 teaching. They also add that the teachers had minimal time to prepare for classes and had a hefty workload which probably led to some of the issues. The teachers also had very limited instructional and assessment time planted in their curriculum, which affected their ability to implement the formative assessment strategies, such as sharing learning objectives and criteria for success or providing effective written or oral feedback. Several writing tasks also needed to be completed in the term, which put even more pressure on the teachers time-wise and meant that, for example, re-writing the tasks based on feedback could not fit into the schedule. Overall, it seemed that while the teachers viewed the use of formative assessment positively, their time to implement them into their lessons successfully was severely limited by the school's demands (pp. 83-88).

This section summarized some examples of studies of implementing formative assessment into ESL classes worldwide. Although the studies operated with relatively small samples of teachers and students, their findings still hold merit. The result is that while teachers generally have positive attitudes towards formative assessment, there may be a number of obstacles

standing between them and successfully implementing it into their lessons. Some teachers' knowledge of formative assessment may prove insufficient, and therefore their efforts to adopt it remain unsuccessful, meaning that their students do not benefit from them. Some teachers may be too busy and pressured by their school management, and they do not have the time or energy to innovate. Doing formative assessment may seem too overwhelming or unrealistic to them. However, if the teacher has the knowledge, time and energy to conduct formative assessment effectively and meaningfully, the students greatly benefit from this effort. The next chapter will present how the theoretical knowledge gathered while writing this thesis was utilized in practical research.

II. METHODS

This chapter will cover the overview of the research methods used in this thesis and explain why those methods were chosen relating to the aims and research questions. It will also provide a detailed background of the research, its participants, the length of the study and other relevant aspects.

Research methodology

This thesis aims to examine the impact of formative assessment techniques on students' learning, specifically in lower secondary English classes. The theoretical part summarized five key formative assessment strategies, which are quite broad. In the research, several formative assessment techniques were chosen based on the qualities described in the theoretical part, and they were used during English lessons for two weeks to show their effect on students' learning as well as the practices of the teacher. This research aimed to establish whether those formative assessment techniques positively impact students' learning. The research questions are:

1. Do the formative assessment techniques chosen by the researcher impact students' learning?
2. How do students evaluate the implementation of formative assessment techniques into their English lessons?
3. Which techniques are deemed the most effective by the researcher and the students?

To answer these questions, the method of action research was chosen. A questionnaire (Appendix 16) was also administered to the students at the end of the research period. The research took two weeks, meaning 6 English lessons in each class. Two ninth-year classes were chosen for this research – 9.B and 9.C. In 9.B, classes continued as usual, and no major changes were made in the teaching process. In 9.C, several formative assessment techniques were implemented throughout the lessons, and the outcome of each lesson was carefully examined before planning the next lesson. Before the start of the research, both classes were more or less equal in ability and grades. Both groups started the same new topic at the same time. The point of the research was to show if 9.C will improve compared to 9.B and also how

will the students in 9.C react to the implementation of formative assessment into their lessons and whether they will consider it useful for their learning.

Participants

In 9.B, there are ten students, as the class is split into two groups for English lessons, and each group has a different teacher. The English classes are on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Lately, the students in this class have become very passive and bored during lessons. This is likely caused by the upcoming end of the school year and the fact that the students have already been accepted into high schools. This class was not chosen for implementing formative assessment techniques due to these factors and because two students from this class have individual education plans and would not be able to participate in the activities. There are also significant differences in ability among the students in this class.

In 9.C, there are eleven students, and the class is split into two halves same as 9.B. The English classes are also on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Generally, the students in this class are more active than in 9.B, although two students have a negative attitude towards the lessons throughout the year. None of the students here have individual educational plans, but there are some differences in ability between the students. This class was chosen to implement the formative assessment techniques because they are more likely to participate actively, and the students have good relationships with each other, making pair and group work more manageable. The students also have a good relationship with the teacher, making them more likely to cooperate well during the research period.

As stated, the research took two weeks to complete, containing six lessons in each class. After each lesson, the teacher filled in a written record of the lesson, including information about how many students were present, the topic and aim of the lesson, the time of the lesson, which formative assessment techniques were used, the description of the lesson and reflection. These records of lessons in 9.C can be found in Appendices 1-6. The teacher also took written notes about the thought process behind planning the lessons, her attitude towards the lessons in both groups and her opinion on how the formative assessment techniques benefited both her and the students. This information will be described in detail in the next chapter.

Formative assessment techniques

Now, each of the formative assessment techniques used during the lessons will be introduced in detail. These techniques were chosen because they are relatively easily explained to students who are not used to formative assessment, as they are not too complicated. The aim was also to choose techniques representing the five formative assessment strategies described in the previous chapter. They offer students the opportunity to self-assess, assist and assess their peers; they elicit evidence of learning and help students become responsible for their work.

Traffic light cards

This technique, first created by the teachers working with the King's-Medway-Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project in England, is based on three coloured cards – red, yellow and green, hence the name 'traffic light'. Students use this technique to self-assess their knowledge. The green card means that the student understands everything and does not require any immediate attention from the teacher; the student who puts up the green card can also help struggling classmates. The student who puts up the yellow card needs some help or additional explanation. A student who puts up a red card is confused and does not know what to do. When a teacher wants to gather information about students' current progress or understanding of a topic, they ask the students to put one of the cards on their desk or raise it. That way, the teacher can see which students need more individual attention and who can help some of their classmates (OECD, 2005, p. 3).

K-W-L chart

This technique is described by Brookhart (2006); the K-W-L chart (Appendix 7) contains three columns. In the first column, students write any information they already know about the presented topic. In the second column, they write what they want to learn about the topic; in the third column, they write what they learned after discussing it. This is valuable information for the teacher, who can see if the students have some common knowledge that can be built upon if they have any misconceptions that need to be corrected and which parts of the topic interest students the most. The teacher can also check if students' expectations of what they want to learn are fulfilled (p. 94).

Exit ticket

According to Fletcher-Wood (2016), the exit ticket is a simple, short task at the lesson's end. It can be written or spoken. It tells the teacher whether students understood the learning objectives of the lesson. The exit ticket should incorporate all essential aspects of the lesson but remain relatively brief. Students should be able to write short answers, making the exit tickets easy to mark or sort and the teacher can react to them quickly (paras. 8-16).

Think-pair-share

In this technique, described by Cullinane (2011), students are presented with a question or a task. They first must think about it independently; they can write their thoughts down if needed. Then they pair, or are paired by the teacher, and compare their ideas with their partner. This helps to shape and clarify their ideas before they are presented in front of a larger group or the whole class. The teacher can observe the students' work and gather information about their progress (p. 2).

I-YOU-WE checklist

As Wiliam (2011) states, this checklist (Appendix 15) is used at the end of group work. It has three columns; in the first column – I, students write how they contributed to the group and what part of the work they did. In the second - YOU column, students write what other group members contributed and how they worked. In the third WE column, students evaluate the group as a whole, how they worked, and if they successfully completed the task. This technique teaches students to self-assess and also to assess their peers. The teacher can gather information about how the students worked and cooperated and if any students did not participate during the group activity (p. 141).

C3B4ME (See three before me)

Wiliam (2011) explains that this technique promotes cooperation and peer tutoring. During any given task, students who have trouble with it, do not know the answer to a question or a solution to a problem, are not allowed to ask the teacher for help until they have asked three of their classmates. If none of the classmates they asked could help or give them the answer, they can ask the teacher. This helps the teacher gather information about the most problematic for the students (p. 137).

Sorting examples

According to Fletcher-Wood (2018), this technique helps students realize what successful work should look like using examples to demonstrate the success criteria. Students received some examples of completed tasks and needed to sort the examples based on how well they fulfilled the given criteria. They can sort them into two piles – yes or no or sort them into more piles based on the rating scale they are using; they can, for example, use the school marking system 1-5 or any other. By going through the examples, students notice mistakes they should avoid when competing the task themselves and also notice what their successful works have in common. Students can also sort their previous works to observe if they have improved since completing that work (paras. 2-5).

Examples and non-examples

Students provide evidence of their understanding of a particular topic by creating a list of examples that relate to it and non-examples which do not. Depending on the task, they can be parts of text, sentences or just words. This technique is described by Regier (2012), who also adds that students should add an explanation, of why they chose the specific examples and non-examples to prove that they understand the discussed topic (p. 10)

The trickiest point

This technique is a type of discussion focused on the trickiest point of the lesson, meaning the question, task, or topic discussed that students struggled with the most. It informs the teacher about which students had problems with a specific task and if there was something that all the students found hard to do. Students must also reflect on the lesson and realize what was hard and why it was so hard (Benešová, 2020, p. 42).

After each lesson, the teacher collected and analysed the materials written by students such as exit tickets or charts. The information collected from them was used as a ground for the preparation of the following lesson. The answers from the questionnaire were collected via Google Forms and then analysed using Microsoft Excel to sort them and create appropriate graphs. The written answers from students were individually read and sorted into groups based on how many students named which technique and what reasons they gave.

This chapter provided an overview of the methods used in this research – action research and questionnaire. It described the use of these methods in this research. It also defined the background and context of the research by describing the classes that participated in it, 9.B and 9.C. The research questions, which will be discussed in detail in the following chapters, were also stated. Further, this chapter described the formative assessment techniques used during the research period. The next chapter will describe the course of the research in detail and focus on using the chosen formative assessment techniques during the lessons. It will also offer a detailed analysis of the results of the questionnaire.

III. RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter will describe the individual lessons included in the action research and offer comments from the teacher regarding the effects that formative assessment classroom techniques had on students' learning, their motivation and ability to self-assess as well as the teacher's notes regarding the effect those techniques had on the planning of lessons and general attitude towards teaching them. Each lesson will be described in the same manner, stating the aim of the lesson, the formative assessment techniques used, a description of the use of the formative assessment classroom techniques and reflection, as well as notes from the teacher, which were written throughout the research. Each lesson containing the formative assessment techniques was immediately commented on via a written form by the teacher; these forms will be included in Appendices 1-6.

The use of formative assessment techniques in English lessons

Lesson 1

Aim of the lesson: Students are able to identify the present perfect in a text and differentiate it from other tenses using the 'the examples and non-examples' technique.

Formative assessment strategies used in this lesson: 'Traffic light cards', 'K-W-L' chart, 'examples and non-examples', 'think-pair-share'.

Lesson Description:

The 'traffic light cards' technique was introduced to the students. They were told to use the green, yellow and red cards throughout the lesson and all the following lessons to signal if they were having trouble completing given tasks.

Then, students were handed blank 'K-W-L' charts (Appendix 7) and were instructed to fill in the first two columns regarding their knowledge of the present perfect simple tense, if they had any, and their expectations of what they wanted to learn. The third column was left blank for the time being.

Next, students read a short text from their textbook containing the present perfect tense (Appendix 8). They were told to choose sentences from the text which they considered examples of the present perfect and then sentences which were non-examples, meaning other tenses were used. The 'examples and non-examples' technique was combined with 'think-pair-share' as students were put into pairs. The pairs were chosen randomly using cards with

the student's names on them. They were instructed to compare and discuss their examples and also to try and identify the grammar tenses of the non-examples. After that, they shared the sentences they chose with the rest of the class.

Reflection:

As expected, students disliked being put into pairs randomly, as they are usually used to forming groups or pairs as they like. At first, students would put up the red coloured cards as a joke after the teacher said something they disliked, for example, when they were told they could not pair up however they wanted. However, this stopped being funny to them after a while, and they started using them as was intended. The 'K-W-L' chart (Appendix 7) was not a good choice for this topic, as students did not have any prior knowledge of the present perfect and did not know how to formulate what they wanted to learn. This technique would be suitable for a different topic or for students who already know the present perfect but need to revise and extend their knowledge. Some of the students needed help during the 'examples and non-examples' activity, but most of them were able to choose correct examples on their own. Besides the fact that they could not pair up however they wanted, the 'think-pair-share' activity was without any problems. At the end of the lesson, students were asked to evaluate the lesson using the green, yellow and red cards. Most students put up the green cards, a few of them yellow or both green and yellow. Only one student put up the red card. This shows that the majority of the students enjoyed the new techniques introduced in this lesson and felt optimistic about the lesson as a whole.

Teacher's notes:

The 'K-W-L' chart (Appendix 7) technique was not very useful in showing what the students already knew since most of them did not know what to write in it and wrote mostly 'nothing' in the first column and 'I don't know' or 'Everything' in the second column. It confirmed to the teacher that the students had no prior knowledge of the present perfect tense. It also showed that students were unsure how to formulate what they wanted to learn since they were not used to being asked this question; they were usually just told what they would learn. With repetition and practice, this technique will probably become more and more useful in time.

The 'traffic light cards' were used in all the following lessons and proved helpful in many ways. It allowed the teacher to see right away how the students were doing without asking questions. They also helped students see which classmates were doing well and could help

them or, on the other hand, which were struggling and needed some help. They could also be used at the end of the lesson as quick feedback on students' attitudes toward it, or as will be shown in one of the following lessons; they could be used as a simple scale that students could use to sort examples of their work. Because it is clear to anyone what the meaning of the colours is, this technique could be used even with young learners, even those who cannot write yet.

The 'examples and non-examples' technique helped show if students could recognize the present perfect in a text and distinguish it from other tenses with which they were already familiar. It is a quick technique that can be used in various ways to check students' understanding of a topic. Students could look for examples and non-examples of certain tenses, types of words or vocabulary relating to a specific topic. By finding related examples and distinguishing them from the non-examples, students show that they understand the criteria of what they are looking for.

The 'think-pair-share' technique is similar to regular pair work but allows students to gather their ideas alone and then compare them with their partner. So students must do part of the work alone and cannot rely too much on their partner, which can be a problem, especially with pairs where one is a stronger learner. It also helps students who are uncertain check their ideas and gain more confidence to share them because they first checked them with their partner. In the context of this lesson, it helped students verify whether their examples and non-examples were correct, and they could fix them before sharing them with the class. With this technique, the teacher can observe the students' ideas and how they work in pairs and compromise or negotiate with their partners.

Lesson 2

Aim of the lesson: Students are able to explain basic grammar rules of the present perfect tense and form simple examples.

Formative assessment strategies used: 'Traffic light cards', 'think-pair-share', 'exit ticket'.

Lesson Description:

Students were instructed to use their lists of 'examples and non-examples' from the previous lesson and notice the patterns they could see in the example sentences. Their task was to use their examples and two pages in their textbooks (Appendix 9) to try and formulate the rules for making the present perfect simple tense. However, this proved too difficult for students to

do on their own. Students used the 'traffic light' cards to signal that they did not know what to do or how to do it. So, the 'think-pair-share' technique, initially planned for this task, was modified, and students did not pair up but made groups of three or four. This proved a good decision as students felt more confident working in small groups than independently. The groups were again chosen randomly using the name cards. In their groups, students wrote down rules for forming the present perfect simple tense and when it should be used.

Then they shared their ideas with the rest of the class and compared them with what the other groups presented. The teacher wrote notes on the board using the information the students gave and occasionally clarified or filled in any missing information. The students wrote the notes in their notebooks or filled in the notes they made during group work.

At the end of the lesson, students were given exit tickets (Appendix 10), where they needed to answer the question 'How do you form the present perfect?' and give one example of a sentence in the present perfect tense. They could not use their notes or the textbook, only lists of irregular verbs, which included their past participle form (Appendix 11), which were given to them by the teacher.

Students were also asked to raise their green, yellow or red cards to indicate how they would rate their work in the lesson. Most students raised the green or yellow cards; two students raised the red cards.

Reflection:

Students seemed overwhelmed when they were first tasked to formulate the rules of making the present perfect, but after they were put into groups, the task seemed manageable. Two of the groups required some help from the teacher, mostly a reassurance that when they wanted to write was correct and that they were on the right track. One group consisted of two of the strongest learners in the class, who already knew the rules only based on their examples from the previous lesson. They then explained the rules to the other two group members and helped them write down their notes. The other two members listened to them, asked questions, and dutifully wrote everything down. This was an excellent example of peer tutoring. This group required no help from the teacher.

The exit tickets that the students filled in were sorted by the teacher after the lesson. Five out of the eleven students gave complete and correct answers. A correct and complete answer is needed to contain the information that to form the present perfect simple tense, one needs

have or have and the verb in the past participle. Plus, an appropriate example sentence. Five students gave an incomplete answer as they forgot to mention the verb in past participle and only wrote down have or has and an example. One student only wrote that have or has is needed but could not form any example; this was considered an incorrect and incomplete answer.

Teacher's notes:

The 'think-pair-share' activity had to be modified as group work; this showed that even though it has 'pair' in the name of the activity, it can work just as well with more than two students. It also showed that when faced with a difficult task, students feel more confident in groups where they can discuss their ideas before saying them before the whole class or the teacher.

The 'exit ticket' (Appendix 10) helped the teacher to see how many students reached the aim of the lesson. It also helped verify if the students who previously worked in groups could summarize what they learned independently and if each student understood it. The 'exit ticket' is a quick tool which does not take much time for the students to complete or the teacher to check. It gives valuable information about the students' understanding and helps the teacher to determine what to focus on in the next lesson, whether they can move on or need to revise.

Lesson 3

Aim of the lesson: Students are able to form simple sentences about their experiences in the present perfect simple tense.

Formative assessment strategies used: 'Traffic light cards', 'sorting examples', 'C3B4ME (see three before me)', 'exit ticket'.

Lesson Description:

Students were split into three groups using the name cards, and each group was given pieces of paper with all the exit tickets from the previous lesson. The exit tickets were rewritten on the computer before the lesson so that students could not tell who wrote which and would not be uncomfortable pointing out the mistakes. Their task was to sort the exit tickets into three piles, using their green, yellow and red cards as a guide. It was up to the students to decide the criteria for each colour and sort the tickets accordingly. After finishing, each group counted how many were in each pile and stated their sorting criteria.

Then the students were handed tables containing a list of more or less common activities (Appendix 12). Each activity was written in Czech and English infinitives, and the students' task was to fill in the missing form of the verbs used in the activities, either the past simple form of the past participle form or both. Students were not permitted to use any materials and were encouraged to fill in as much as they knew first. After they wrote down all they knew, they were told to try the C3B4ME technique. They could go around the classroom and ask three classmates to help them fill in the missing verbs. If none of the three classmates knew the answer, they could ask the teacher. The students then used the activities to write true sentences about themselves in the present perfect.

Before the end of the lesson, students were given exit tickets (Appendix 13) which contained two questions 'How would you rate your work in today's lesson?' to which students answered by circling one of the five emojis on the exit ticket and 'Why? Give at least two reasons.' to explain why they circled that particular emoji.

Reflection:

This lesson was successful and achieved its aim. Students were able to write sentences about their experiences in the present perfect. When sorting the exit tickets, all groups used almost the same criteria as the other groups and the teacher; the number of tickets in each pile and why they were sorted that way aligned with how the teacher sorted them beforehand. The students could recognize mistakes or missing information when looking at the examples, even though they were the ones who previously made those mistakes. This shows progress in their learning. During the C3B4ME activity, none of the students had to ask the teacher for the answer; they could all complete their tables only with the help of their classmates. All students were able to help someone else, even those that are considered weaker learners. The answers from the exit tickets were pleasantly surprising as most of the students rated themselves high and gave good reasons. For example, one student wrote, 'I rate myself like this (with a smiley face) because I could write five sentences and I knew a lot of irregular verbs.' The students could write their answers in Czech if they wanted, as self-assessment is still very new, and using English would limit their ability to express themselves.

Teacher's notes:

The 'sorting examples' technique helped to see if students could identify the mistakes in their work and if they were able to recognize the criteria of a good example. It also helped them

revise the rules of making the present perfect simple tense, as they needed to remember them to sort the examples well. It showed the teacher if the students had made progress since writing those exit tickets. This technique could again serve many purposes, and students could work their way up from just sorting simple one-sentence examples to more complex texts.

The' C3B4ME' technique is an excellent way to encourage peer tutoring and student cooperation. It can also help boost the confidence of the weaker learners because they do not have to ask the teacher for help, and they can also help someone else. While the teacher observes this activity, he or she can see which students are the ones that help the others the most, therefore, the ones that have mastered the topic. If all or most students struggle and still have to keep asking the teacher because none of their classmates can help them, it is clear that the topic needs to be revised again.

In this case, the 'exit ticket' (Appendix 13) was used not to test knowledge but to encourage students to self-assess. The emoji scale was used as a support to help students express themselves in a simple, familiar way. Then they needed to consider why they rated themselves the way they did. This exit ticket offered the teacher information about the students' attitude toward the lesson, how well they could assess themselves, and whether they could give specific reasons for doing well. It also allowed students to think about the lesson as a whole and realize if their work during the lesson was, in their opinion, the best they could do.

Lesson 4

Aim of the lesson: Students can make questions in the present perfect and ask others about their experiences.

Formative assessment strategies used: 'Traffic light cards', 'the trickiest point', 'exit ticket'.

Lesson Description:

This lesson was focused on making questions; students were tasked to fill in blank bingo cards with activities from the previous lesson. Then they would go around the class asking other students the questions using ever, trying to get four affirmative answers in a row. Students were encouraged to correct their classmates if they made mistakes while asking the questions. After they got bingo, their task was to write down sentences about their classmates using the answers they got during the activity. Students were also asked to write one or two questions similar to the ones they were asked during the activity.

The biggest problem, later identified by the students during ‘the trickiest point’ discussion, was remembering to use the past participle of the irregular verbs and recall the correct form.

Students were again given exit tickets (Appendix 14) to fill in before the end of the lesson. In this exit ticket, they must complete written prompts about their learning. The first prompt was ‘Today I learned…’, the second was ‘I think I did…’, and the students circled one of the five emojis to complete it. The third prompt was ‘I need to work on…’.

Reflection:

External circumstances heavily influenced this lesson. The students were tired because of a sleepover they had in school the previous night, and this was their first lesson of the day, so they were barely awake. This affected their mood, which, in turn, affected the atmosphere in the classroom and the lesson. Also, one of the students felt ill and did not participate in the lesson and was later sent home. Still, the aim of the lesson was achieved as students could ask each other questions about their previous experiences. However, they were not as enthusiastic about it as expected, as they usually enjoy this practice.

The ‘trickiest point’ technique would be better suited for a day when the students would be livelier. Under normal circumstances, they would be more inclined to share their opinions. However, the ‘exit ticket’ (Appendix 14) revealed that the result of the ‘trickiest point’ discussion was valid because, in both instances, the students identified the past participle of irregular verbs as the biggest obstacle. All students correctly wrote down that they learned how to ask questions in the present perfect, and almost all wrote down that they needed to work on irregular verbs. Even though it did not seem that way during the lesson, many students still circled the smiley emojis; few students circled the middle, neutral emoji. None of them circled the frowning emojis.

Teacher’s notes:

Discussing ‘the trickiest point’ can help illuminate what students struggle with most. It can be done during the lesson, and the teacher can work with that information immediately, unlike the exit tickets, to which the teacher cannot react until the next lesson. However, ‘the trickiest point’ takes up more time of the actual lesson than the ‘exit ticket’. So, it is up to the teacher which technique seems more appropriate for which lesson. Both offer valuable information about the students’ learning and general attitude toward the given topic.

In this lesson, the ‘exit ticket’ (Appendix 14) was again used more for students’ self-assessment. Pre-written prompts and emoji scales were offered to help students express themselves better. Students had to think about what they learned during the lesson, rate themselves and what they needed to work on the most. The last part, ‘I need to work on…’ offers the teacher information on what the students need to practice the most, according to themselves. The teacher can then compare this information with his or her perception of the biggest issue for the students and use it to plan the next lesson accordingly.

Lesson 5

Aim of the lesson: Students search online and write facts about celebrities using the present perfect.

Formative assessment strategies used: ‘Traffic light cards’, ‘I-YOU-WE’ checklist, ‘the trickiest point’.

Lesson Description:

At the beginning of the lesson, students were randomly given pieces of paper with the written questions from the previous lesson, read them out loud, correcting any errors if necessary and chose one of their classmates to answer the question. After that, the students were randomly split into two groups; each chose a celebrity’s name. They were told not to reveal their celebrity to the other group. Their task was to search online for information about the celebrity’s accomplishments and write ten sentences about them, using the present perfect simple tense. After finishing, they read their sentences to the other group, who tried to guess the celebrity’s name. All students had Chrome books available and wrote into one shared Google document.

After their work was done, the students were handed empty ‘I-YOU-WE’ checklists Appendix 15), where they needed to fill in their contribution to the group work, what someone else contributed, and how they would assess the group as a whole.

Then the ‘trickiest point’ of the lesson was discussed. The students agreed it was hard to choose the information that could be written down using the present perfect simple tense. They could not write when the person was born, how many siblings they have and similar information.

Reflection:

Only seven students were present during this lesson, so only two groups were formed instead of the expected three. The students enjoyed searching online and finding out celebrity information. The two groups worked independently, and the teacher was barely needed during this activity. Both groups could form ten sentences as instructed, and there was only one mistake, which the students realized right after they read the sentence. They wrote, 'He has had three brothers.' but corrected themselves and realized that the present perfect could not be used in this example. The students were able to write down their contribution to the group work and what the others contributed, and all of them assessed their groups positively. 'The trickiest point' discussion was then related to one group's mistake and how they could not always include the information they wanted because they had to use the present perfect. The students and the teacher also discussed if any of the information could be formulated to allow the use of the present perfect.

Teacher's notes:

The 'I-YOU-WE' checklist (Appendix 15) is a good tool for students to assess group work. They need to think about their contribution, which allows them to realize how much work they did and either boost their confidence in their abilities or realize that they need to do better next time. The fact that they also need to assess someone else individually helps all the students to try harder, as they want to avoid someone else writing something negative about them, so they know they need to try their best. The 'I-YOU-WE' checklist (Appendix 15) allows the teacher to see if any students did not do their part in the group work, which can be reflected in their marks. It also helps to see how good students are at dividing work and cooperation.

Lesson 6

Aim of the lesson: Students revise their knowledge of the present perfect and assess the formative assessment techniques.

Formative assessment strategies used: K-W-L chart, discussion, questionnaire.

Lesson Description:

This lesson served as a closing point of the research. The students were asked to complete tests on the present perfect tense. They were told these tests would not be marked and used only for the research. After completing the tests, students were handed back their 'K-W-L'

charts (Appendix 7) and were asked to fill in the third column with information about what they learned.

After that, students and the teacher discussed all the formative assessment techniques done in the previous lessons. This served as a reminder for the students about which techniques they did and what they entailed. After the discussion concluded, students were asked to fill in a questionnaire. In the questionnaire, they assessed the formative assessment techniques based on how enjoyable they were for the students to do and how useful students found them. They were also asked to choose three out of the techniques they would like to do more often and comment why.

Reflection:

As stated, this lesson was the conclusion of the research. Students remained active and cooperative throughout the research, which was greatly appreciated. Compared to the first two columns of the 'KW-L' chart (Appendix 7), the third one seemed the easiest for students to fill in. All of them could give at least some information about what they learned. Most students wrote that they learned to form affirmative and negative sentences and ask questions in the present perfect. Some students added that they learned when to use the present perfect. Most students also added that they learned to use the past participle of irregular verbs.

Teacher's notes:

It is a shame that the research could not continue for longer. All the techniques used during the lesson benefited the students in improving their learning, ability to self-assess, or cooperation with classmates. The 'K-W-L' chart (Appendix 7) revealed that all the students learned more than they wanted or expected to. Although it is because most students did not write much about what they wanted to learn, it is still a good indication that they were then able to formulate what they learned.

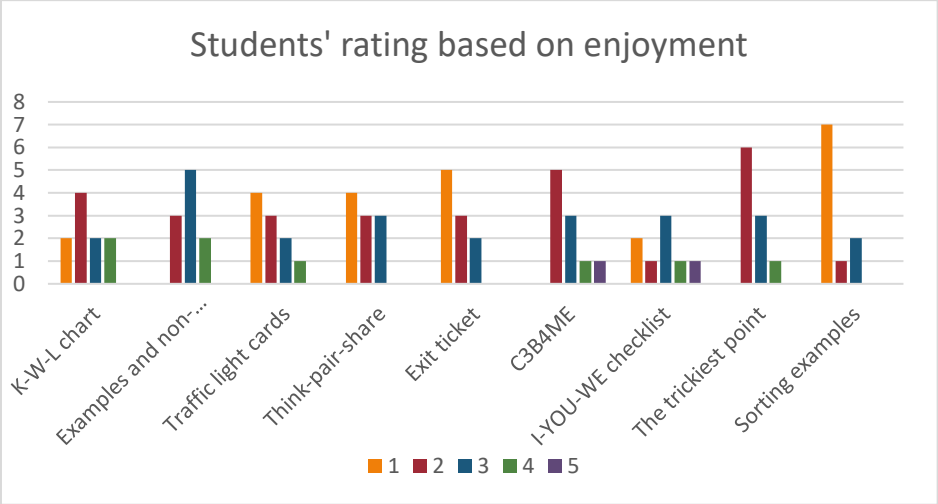
The results of the questionnaire will be discussed in detail in the rest of the chapter. It is also important to note that all the lessons described in class 9.C were happening parallelly in class 9.B, which performed the same tasks except for the formative assessment techniques. Due to this, they managed to get more done in each lesson, as the formative assessment techniques take up a significant portion of each lesson. The extra time was dedicated to the more routine practice of the present perfect tense via online exercises, exercises in the workbook or prepared worksheets.

All of the formative assessment techniques used during the lessons were effective. Although at first both the students and the teacher were unsure about the lessons' changes, from the teacher's point of view, the lessons were improved by formative assessment. The teacher was more informed about students' progress throughout the lesson and was able to verify their understanding at the end of the lesson using exit tickets. Implementing formative assessment made the teacher step out of her comfort zone and be forced to try new approaches and be more creative while planning the lessons, not relying on the textbook as much and preparing her own materials. It made the lessons more engaging for students whose motivation was, up to that point, decreasing dues to the incoming end of the school year. However, the formative assessment techniques forced them to be more active and focused during lessons; knowing they would have to answer an exit ticket or be assessed by their classmates, they tried harder than they would normally. The research also helped the teacher realize that formative assessment does not need to be elaborate and complicated to be effective, and even simple techniques such as an exit ticket can reveal substantial information about how the students are doing. Even though this research was relatively short, it provided the teacher with valuable experience that she will undoubtedly utilize in her future teaching practice.

The questionnaire

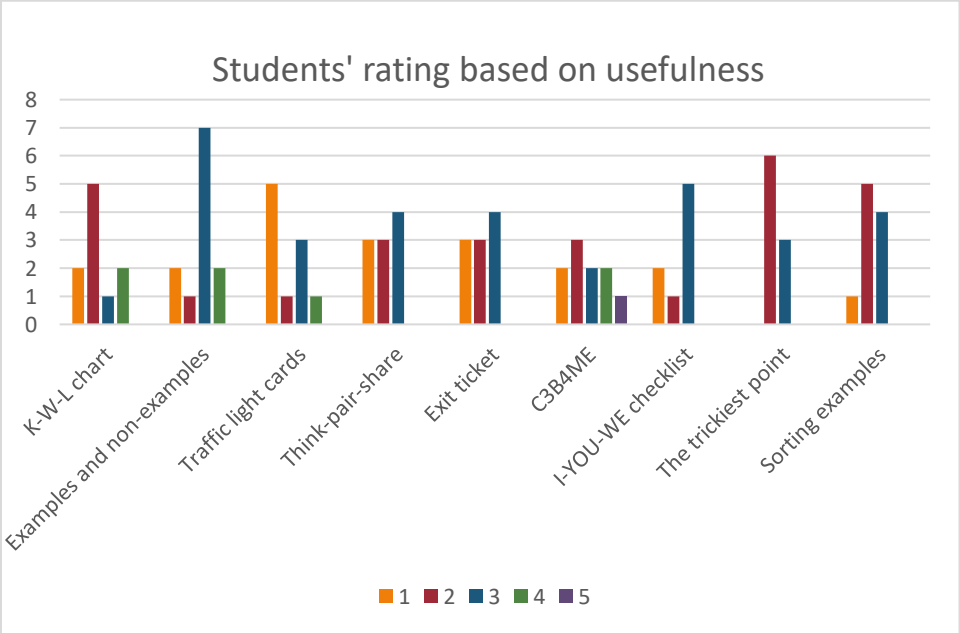
The questionnaire (Appendix 16) had three parts. In the first part, students were asked to rate each formative assessment technique done during lessons on a scale from 1 to 5 based on how they enjoyed the activity. The rating scale was the same as at school, meaning 1 was the best rating, and 5 was the worst. In the second part, students did the same rating but based on how useful they found the activity for their learning and if it helped them learn in any way. In the third part of the questionnaire, students had to choose three out of those techniques that they would like to continue doing or do more often and state why. The results of the questionnaire are described below.

Graph 1 *Student's rating based on enjoyment*



The most enjoyable activities, according to students, were the 'sorting examples', 'exit ticket' and 'traffic light cards' tied with 'think-pair-share'. 'The trickiest point' and 'C3B4ME' did not receive any 1 mark but received the majority of 2 marks, so they could also be counted as enjoyable according to the students. However, 'C3B4ME' also received a 5 rating from one student. The most mixed ratings were obtained on the 'K-W-L' chart, which got the same amount of 1,3 and 4 ratings, and the 'I-YOU-WE' checklist, which received the same number of 2, 4 and 5 ratings. Students felt most neutral about the 'examples and non-examples activity as it got the highest number of 3 ratings.

Graph 2 *Students' rating based on usefulness*



Interestingly, while most students found ‘sorting examples’ the most enjoyable activity, it did not receive the same high ratings regarding usefulness. ‘Traffic light cards’ was the most useful tool according to students, followed by ‘think-pair-share’ and ‘exit ticket’. On the other hand, ‘examples and non-examples’, ‘C3B4ME’ and ‘K-W-L’ charts received the highest numbers of low ratings. ‘Think-pair-share’ and ‘exit ticket’ also received the most consistent ratings in both categories; they scored almost the same.

As for the written answers, five of the ten students reported that they would like to continue using ‘traffic light cards’ during lessons. The reasons for it varied; one student wrote that ‘It is good to know who is doing well and who isn’t’ another student commented that ‘It is good because you don’t have to raise your hand, you just put a card up on the table’ one student also said ‘I like it because we had to rate ourselves’. Two students said they liked it.

Four students wrote that they would like to continue doing ‘exit tickets’; two students again only noted that it was because they liked it. One student wrote, ' It is good that the teacher can see how we did’; one added, ' It is good to revise at the end of the lesson’.

Two students wrote that they would like to do the ‘K-W-L’ chart again, but both only wrote that it was because they enjoyed it. Two students would like to do the ‘I-YOU-WE’ checklist again; one wrote ‘Because we have to express our opinion’ and the other only wrote ‘And I also enjoyed it’. Two students also chose ‘examples and non-examples’; one commented that ‘I learned the most while doing it’, and the other wrote ‘I liked it and I was good at it’. One student wrote that they would like to try ‘trickiest point’ again because ‘The lesson was fun and I enjoyed it’. One student chose ‘C3B4ME’ and wrote that it was because they ‘Has never done this before’; one picked ‘think-pair-share’ and wrote ‘I liked working with someone else’. And one student chose ‘sorting examples’ and commented, ‘I liked it’. The rest of the students either wrote that they liked everything or did not specify the name of the activity. One student wrote, ‘I liked working in groups and assessing myself’ but did not say which activities entailed this. One student wrote that they did not like anything.

Surprisingly, only one student chose ‘sorting examples’ in the third part because it had the highest enjoyment rating in the first part and good usefulness in the second part. Each technique done in lessons was chosen at least once in the third part of the questionnaire, so students have a wide variety of opinions. From the reasons in the third part, it is clear that when asked their opinion about something, students rely heavily on their emotions and will

choose activities that they enjoy doing rather than activities they find helpful, or it appears that way because students are not used to expressing their opinions in this way and have a hard time forming their reasonings so they write that they liked something so they do not have to think hard about it.

Summary of results

The questionnaire results (Appendix 16) revealed that students found the formative assessment techniques both enjoyable and valuable, as negative ratings were in the minority. No technique received only negative ratings; the worst mark, 5, was used only twice. As for the third part, which activities students would like to continue doing in lessons, all activities were chosen at least once. When all three parts of the questionnaire (Appendix 16) are taken into account, the most successful techniques overall are the 'traffic light cards' and 'exit ticket' as they received high marks in enjoyment and usefulness and were named as activities students would like to keep doing the most times.

All the formative assessment techniques used during the research were valuable in providing information about the students' learning progress, even though some, for example, the 'K-W-L' chart (Appendix 7), could be utilized better in the future, as their use, in this case, was not the most fitting, as was already discussed. The teacher will consider including all these formative assessment techniques in her future lessons, although not so frequently, as including multiple formative assessment techniques in every lesson is very challenging and takes up a lot of time during the lesson, before, and during preparation.
As for the research questions stated in the Methodology chapter, the first question was whether formative assessment techniques impact students' learning. Based on the observation of students during the lessons and their answers in exit tickets and the questionnaire (Appendix 16), it showed that formative assessment techniques do impact students' learning. The students in 9.C were far more engaged in lessons than students in 9.B, they were doing better at given tasks, and the teacher was also able to elicit evidence of their learning using 'exit tickets' and also the 'K-W-L' chart (Appendix 7). The second question considered how students evaluate the implementation of formative assessment techniques into their English lessons. Based on the questionnaire results summarized above, students had an overall positive attitude towards using formative assessment in their lessons and almost all students

listed some techniques they would like to do again. The third question asked which techniques are deemed most effective by the researcher and the students. As was stated, students considered the most effective techniques were the ‘traffic light cards’, ‘exit ticket’ and ‘examples and non-examples’. The teacher agrees with this as these techniques brought valuable insights considering the students’ learning and understanding. At the same time, they were easy to administer and evaluate.

This chapter described the course of the research and summarized the research results. The use of each formative assessment technique was detailed, along with commentaries from the researcher on its effectiveness. The questionnaire (Appendix 16) was given to students at the end of the research to evaluate their opinions about the formative assessment techniques, and their answers were analysed via Graphs 1 and 2. The next chapter will present the pedagogical implications of the research and determine its limitations and how it could be improved upon in the future.

IV. IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will offer some advice to teachers considering the implementation of formative assessment into their daily lessons. It will also address the limitations of this research and, therefore, its results, which were mainly affected by the short time period and the small number of students. Lastly, the chapter will suggest ways this research could be improved and built upon in the future.

Implications for Teaching

The main goal of the research was to show how implementing formative assessment techniques into English language lessons can impact the students' learning. Based on the work students performed during lessons, the evidence collected from them and the questionnaire results showed that formative assessment had a positive impact on the students.

Many formative assessment techniques used during lessons focused on students' self-assessment, which revealed that although most students welcome the opportunity to assess themselves, they are not used to it and do not know how to do it. Students appreciated using the 'traffic light' cards to assess their work during the lessons but struggled with self-assessment activities, which required using words. Teachers should include more opportunities for their students to assess themselves. If the students are not used to it, it is good to start small. Have them use coloured cards, emojis or any other non-verbal tools first. Then, students can explain why they chose the yellow card or the frowny emoji. Gradually, students will get used to assessing themselves and be able to use complex language.

Some teachers may be hesitant about incorporating formative assessment into their lessons, as they might fear it will only mean more work for them. But formative assessment techniques need not be complicated and elaborate to be effective. The use of 'traffic light' cards does not take up virtually any extra time in the lesson, and students can make them on their own out of coloured paper. Still, they provide the teacher with valuable information about the students' current level of understanding. The teacher does not need to ask how the students are doing repeatedly and if anyone requires help, only to be bombarded with raised hands and questions. They can ask students to put up one of the coloured cards and see right away which students need attention and which students can also help their classmates.

The ‘exit ticket’ is another example of an easy and effective technique that even the busiest teacher can use. It is not difficult to prepare or administer, it requires only about two to five minutes at the end of the lesson, and its use has many benefits. The teacher received information about whether or not the aim of the lesson was achieved based on the students’ answers and could use them to plan the next lesson accordingly. Students are also forced to pay more attention during lessons if they expect they will have to answer the exit ticket at the end. In conclusion, every teacher should try to incorporate at least some aspects of formative assessment into their lessons, as it can only benefit them and their students. It is essential not to be intimidated by formative assessment and, again, start small and gradually build up to more complex techniques and more frequent use.

Limitation of the Research

Although formative assessment as a topic has been explored many times and the studies concerning it are extensive, the results of this particular research should not be over-generalized. Still, it is not said that the information resulting from this research is without merit. However, the main limitation of this research is its length and number of participants.

The research was initially planned for three weeks but had to be shortened due to external circumstances. That is a shame as after two weeks, students were just getting used to the formative assessment techniques, and they were starting to become a regular part of the lesson. The effectiveness of the techniques would also be better proven with more repetition, as some of the techniques were done only once, meaning students only got to try them for the first time.

The students and the teacher would benefit if the research lasted longer. The results of the revision test and the questionnaire would be more valid, as students would have more time to practice the present perfect. They would have the opportunity to try the formative assessment techniques multiple times, meaning they could evaluate them better, especially from the point of usefulness for their learning.

The research also included only two small groups of students, twenty-one in total. Not all students were present in all the lessons, meaning that some students were not there for all the formative assessment techniques and did not have the opportunity to try them. Having more

students participate in the research would make some activities, such as group work, more accessible and provide a broader range of opinions on the formative assessment techniques.

Another limitation of the research was the timing, as the research fell on the first half of June, which is not ideal considering that the students participating in the research were 9th graders, who have already been accepted into high schools; therefore, their motivation to participate has been significantly lowered, compared to the first term. This affected mainly the work in class 9.B, where most students had already resigned from learning anything. Fortunately, that was not the case in 9.C; otherwise, this research would have probably been more difficult to complete.

A disadvantage resulting from the small number of students and the fact that the teacher is very well acquainted with them was the lack of anonymity. While the final questionnaire was entirely anonymous, students did not provide their names or email addresses, and they wrote on computers so their handwriting could not be recognised; that could not always be the case. When the students were self-assessing or assessing their classmates, they signed their papers so the teacher could recognize which students might struggle and need extra assistance. This, however, could have affected how students assessed themselves of their peers, as although they were reminded to remain honest and it was explained to them that no negative consequences would result from it, some students still might have been hesitant about evaluating themselves honestly if they felt they did poorly that day. They might not have wanted to give a wrong impression to the teacher or might have been hesitant about reporting that a classmate did not do the assigned work to not cause them to get into trouble with the teacher.

During the research, there were also some weaknesses regarding using the techniques in specific contexts, as not all techniques were utilized in the best way possible. Some of the techniques also had to be rushed, as students took more time doing them than anticipated beforehand, and therefore the time left of the lesson was insufficient. The research took place during regular school days, so the students' mood and willingness to cooperate could also not be estimated beforehand as many factors could be affecting it.

Suggestions for Further Research

Given the circumstances of this research, the methods and techniques chosen were probably the best options possible. However, as suggested in Limitations, the possible way this research could have been improved would be to expand the duration. To see how the implementation of formative assessment strategies affects students throughout a whole term or school year, as it is hard to deduce any results after such a short period. More time would allow the students to get used to formative assessment, as they still saw it as a novelty during this research. It would also allow testing the formative assessment techniques on various topics besides the present perfect simple tense.

It would also be interesting to involve different age groups of students and observe how they get used to formative assessment and which types of techniques are more suitable for which age groups. It would be compelling to compare how 1st graders react to formative assessment compared to 9th graders and which formative assessment techniques can be used with pupils who are just beginning to learn how to read and write.

That would also have to include the involvement of multiple teachers, whose attitudes towards formative assessment in their lessons could then be compared, as well as the repertoire of techniques they chose to include. It would also be beneficial to involve a more experienced teacher in the process. The observations of other teachers who regularly implement formative assessment in their classes could also provide valuable insight that would benefit the research.

The number of formative assessment techniques used could also be higher, and the teachers and students could choose the ones they found most fitting for their needs. Part of the research could also be students' portfolios, which were not included in the current research since such a short period would not be sufficient. Still, it would undoubtedly bring interesting insights into the research. More time could also be devoted to feedback, especially complex written feedback, for which there was unfortunately not enough space, as feedback is a crucial part of formative assessment.

V. CONCLUSION

As stated in the theoretical background of this thesis, formative assessment can have a profound positive impact not only on students' learning but also on their ability to self-assess, their independence, motivation and even their self-esteem. Even though formative assessment has been around for decades, it is still overshadowed by summative assessment. However, summative and formative assessment should not be viewed as opponents competing with each other. The ideal scenario is for each teacher to find a balance between the use of both types of assessment, which will suit them and their students. Nonetheless, it has been shown that in some instances, the presence of summative assessment, a grade, can negatively impact the usefulness of formative feedback given by the teacher, as students tend not to pay attention to the feedback itself, only the grade. It is also possible to combine the two types and approach even summative tests in a formative way, ensuring that students learn from their mistakes on the test and realize how to improve in the future.

Although definitions of formative assessment can differ, the primary purpose of formative assessment remains, and that is to promote students' learning and understanding. Along with that, formative assessment should also increase students' motivation and teach them how to assess their work in a way that will help them move forward and will not discourage them. They should not be encouraged to compare themselves to their peers but rather to track their own progress. Students should also learn to become the owners of their learning, realize that they need to put in the work as well, and not expect the teacher just to hand them information. They should also learn how to become instructional resources for each other, assess their peers and learn from one another. These factors are all considered in the five key strategies of formative assessment.

As for the teacher, they should be able to provide their students with effective and appropriate feedback to help them expand their learning. The teacher should also know when it is time to assess students' knowledge as is and when it is time to use assessment as support for students' further learning. That is why summative assessment is sometimes called 'assessment of learning' and formative assessment 'assessment for learning'.

Formative assessment, of course, has its use in English language classes, where it can help students bridge the gap between their current knowledge and the goal. All the formative

assessment strategies can be utilized during English lessons to improve students' understanding of the current topic and the teacher's knowledge of their students' progress. When used correctly, formative assessment techniques can make lessons more engaging and interesting for students and teachers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Lesson 1

Class: 9.C
Date: 31.5. 2023
Period: 1. (7:45 - 8:30)
Number of students present: 10
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect - introduction
Aim of the lesson: Students are able to identify the present perfect simple tense in a text and differentiate it from other tenses.
Formative assessment strategies used: Traffic light cards, K-W-L chart, examples and non-examples, think-pair-share.
Lesson description: I explained to the students what will be different about today's and a couple of future lessons, told them about formative assessment, and explained the strategies that will be used in every lesson - traffic lights card and random name calling using name cards. Then I introduced the lesson topic - present perfect and the learning objectives. Afterwards, each student received a blank K-W-L chart and was asked to fill in the first two columns. Then we read two short texts from the textbook, which contained the use of present perfect. After the reading, I asked students questions about the text, and they translated some unknown words. Then the students were asked to review the text again and find five examples of present perfect and five non-examples - other tenses. During this activity, students used the traffic light cards to signal if they needed help from me. After that, students were paired randomly for the Think-pair-share activity. They shared their examples and non-examples with their partner to see if they matched. Then I also asked them to try to identify the tenses of the non-examples, if they are in the present, past or future tense. After that, each pair shared their examples to see if the others agreed and their non-examples with the identified tenses. Before the lesson ended, I asked students if they felt like they knew more about the present perfect than in the beginning and to use the traffic lights cards to give feedback on the lesson as a whole.
Reflection:

This lesson turned out better than I expected. At first, students were unsure how to use the traffic light cards and constantly put up the red ones as a joke, but after a bit, they started to take it more seriously. They were not thrilled about the random pairing using the name cards because they are used to being paired up however they want in most of our lessons, but I expected that. I was a bit disappointed that most of them left the K-W-L charts mostly blank or wrote 'I don't know', but I understand that it was a bit difficult for them since it was their first time doing it. On the other hand, I didn't expect them to have much prior knowledge about the present perfect. I think that the K-W-L chart is something that students need to get used to and practice multiple times for it to be effective. Despite not being happy about the random pairing, most of them worked well with their partner, and there weren't any significant problems besides minor disruptions. I think they appreciated the novelty of the activities, and when I asked them to reflect on the lesson using the traffic lights cards, most were green or green/yellow, and only one student put up red. One of the students even commented that he liked the lesson and that they 'didn't have to do anything boring'.

Appendix 2: Lesson 2

Class: 9.C
Date: 1.6. 2023
Period: 5. (11:35-12:20)
Number of students present: 11
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect - grammar rules
Aim of the lesson: Students form grammar rules of the present perfect tense.
Formative assessment strategies used: Traffic light cards, think-pair-share and exit tickets.
Lesson description: I asked students to remember yesterday's lesson and what we discussed. After that, students were asked to return to their examples and non-examples and to open their textbooks on the page from the previous day. Their task was to try and formulate basic rules for making the present perfect tense and when they should use it. After a few minutes, I saw that this was too difficult for them to do individually, so I used the name cards to split them into three groups. This was better for them. Still, two of the groups requested my help using the traffic lights cards. With a bit of help, they were able to complete the rules. After that, it was time to share and take notes. I asked questions, and the students answered based on what they discovered during their group work. If one student or group did not know, others answered instead. I wrote what they said on the board with minor corrections, and the students wrote it in their notebooks. After the notes were completed, I gave the students exit tickets. Pieces of paper with two questions - How do you form the present perfect and give one example in a sentence. Students had to close their textbooks and notebooks but had a list of irregular verbs with the past participle on hand. Before the lesson ended, I asked students to use the traffic lights cards again to rate how they thought they did during this lesson.
Reflection: I was not that happy with this lesson because we did not have enough time to complete some exercises I wanted. The students had a problem formulating the rules of making the present perfect on their own, so I decided to put them into groups immediately. Originally I wanted to give them more time to work independently before moving on to group work. In one of the groups, there were two of the strongest students, and they helped the others in their group and explained the rules to them. The other two groups needed help from me but

after a few minutes every group had written down at least part of the answers I wanted. Afterwards, the groups shared what they had written down, and I wrote it on the board. The students were taking notes or filling in their notes from the group work. After the note-taking, I wanted to do some exercises in the workbook, but there was not enough time left, so we did the exit ticket activity. I went through the exit tickets, and half of the students completed them well - they both knew that they needed have/has and the past participle of the verb (although they did not always know to call it the past participle) and wrote a correct example. Another half only wrote they need to have/has to form the present perfect but did not mention the verb, but also wrote correct examples. One student was not able to think of an example.

Appendix 3: Lesson 3

Class: 9.C
Date: 5.6.
Period: 2. (8:40 - 9:25)
Number of students present: 11
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect, vocabulary topic Experiences.
Aim of the lesson: Students are able to form simple sentences about their experiences.
Formative assessment strategies used: Traffic light cards, sorting examples, C3B4ME (see three before me), exit ticket.
Lesson description: At the beginning of the lesson, we returned to the exit tickets from the previous lesson. Before that, I sorted them into three groups based on how successful students were in competing with them. I rewrote the exit tickets on the computer so students could not distinguish who wrote them. Then I printed them out and gave them to the students. The students were split into three random groups, and their task was to sort the exit tickets into three piles; they used their coloured traffic light cards for orientation. The green pile had tickets that were correct and complete; the yellow had ones that were correct but incomplete; the red pile had ones that were either only half filled out or incorrect. I did not instruct students before on which criteria to use for sorting, but they mostly followed the same rules as when I sorted them. Two groups did not put any tickets into the red pile, and one group put only one, which was the same as my sorting. After they sorted the tickets I asked each group what their process was and what criteria they set. All the groups were able to correctly identify mistakes of missing information in the exit tickets and even correct their own if they remembered what they wrote. After this, we did some practice in the textbook and workbook; we focused on vocabulary relating to experiences so students could later express which things they experienced and which did not. After that, students got a table with some more activities. The activities were written in Czech and English infinitives. The students' task was to fill in the past simple and past participle forms of the verb used; only one was missing with each example. Most of the verbs were irregular. Students could not use their textbooks or any other material. They were encouraged to work independently and fill in what they knew and after a few

minutes, I told them that they could go around the class and ask their classmates to complete what they did not know. This was the C3B4ME activity. Only if none of the students knew something would I tell them. This did not occur, and they could complete their tables only with help from others. Then they were tasked to write five true sentences about themselves using the present perfect. They could use the vocabulary from the textbook or not. We checked the sentences by reading a sample of them out loud. This table will also be used for another activity in the next lesson. Before this lesson ended, students received exit tickets again, and they already knew what to do. The question was to rate their work in this lesson using emojis and give two reasons why they rate themselves the way they do.

Reflection:

I think this lesson was good and achieved its aim. I think the first activity, where students sorted their exit tickets, showed that students could find mistakes in their past work and recognize the standard that it should have. Everyone could form their sentences; many did not use the verbs offered in the textbook and made their own sentences entirely. The C3B4ME activity was also successful, I was glad to see the students help one another, and I think they felt more comfortable asking for help from their classmates than from me. I thought everyone would automatically go to the two strongest students in this class and ask for answers, but they tried asking different people; even weaker students could help others. After revising the exit tickets, I was pleasantly surprised. Most of the students rated themselves quite highly and gave good reasons. For example, 'I rate myself like this because I was able to write five sentences, and I knew a lot of irregular verbs.' I gave students the option to answer in Czech because I did not want to limit them, as assessing themselves is still very new for them, and I do not think they would be able to properly express this in English, although some of the students tried. Many also added that they enjoyed this lesson, for which I am glad.

Appendix 4: Lesson 4

Class: 9.C
Date: 7.6. 2023
Period: 1. (7:45-8:30)
Number of students present: 10
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect - questions
Aim of the lesson: Students can make questions in the present perfect and ask others about their experiences.
Formative assessment strategies used: Traffic light cards, the trickiest point and exit ticket.
Lesson description: At the beginning of the lesson, students were told the lesson's learning objective, making questions in the present perfect. Then they were given blank bingo cards and told to fill them in with random activities from the previous exercises or make up their own. At this point, the students did not know the purpose of this, as I did not want them to choose too easy options. After that, we revised how to make a question in the present perfect with the addition of ever and how to make a short answer. Then I explained to the students that they would do 'Find someone who…' activity, which they are already familiar with and that they should try to get four yes answers in a row to get a bingo. I also told them to write down the names of students who answered yes. They were also told only to ask one question to each student to ensure that everyone would have to participate. Students were also instructed to correct their classmates if they made an error while asking the questions. After they were done, students made whole sentences about their classmates' experiences based on their bingo sheet. After that, they read the sentences out loud. Next, students were asked to write down two questions in the present perfect on a piece of paper. These questions will be used at the beginning of the next lesson. After that, we discussed what the trickiest point of the lesson was. Most students agreed that using irregular verbs in the past participle is still difficult for them. Then students received exit tickets where they should write what they learned in this lesson, rate themselves using an emoji scale and write one thing they need to work on.
Reflection:

This lesson was not the best. The students were tired because they had a sleepover at school the previous night and did not get enough sleep, so they were cranky and did not want to work. In addition, one student felt ill and did not participate in the lesson. So, the atmosphere was not the best. The 'Find someone who…' activity went fine, but they were not very enthusiastic about it, even though they usually liked this activity. I can see that the past participle of irregular verbs is still a problem for them, so I encouraged them to study them at home and will also focus on it in the next lesson. The students also identified this as the most difficult thing for them. They are so used to the past simple form of irregular verbs, and it is difficult for them to switch to the past participle form and to remember it all. It is almost the end of the school year, so making them study something and focus can be challenging. I will try and include some group work for the next lesson to keep them motivated.

Appendix 5: Lesson 5

Class: 9.C
Date: 8.6. 2023
Period: 5. (11:25 - 12:20)
Number of students present: 7
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect - celebrity facts
Aim of the lesson: Students search online and write facts about celebrities using the present perfect.
Formative assessment strategies used: I-YOU-WE checklist, discussion - The trickiest point.
Lesson description: At the beginning of the lesson, students picked each paper with questions they wrote at the end of the previous lesson. They read the questions out loud, correcting any errors if they found them and chose one classmate to answer them. After that, the students were split into two groups. Each group chose a piece of paper with a celebrity's name written on it. Their task was to search online and write ten sentences about each celebrity, using the present perfect, together as a group. Each student had a Chromebook, and they wrote it into a shared Google document. I left it up to the students to divide work within the groups. The students were told not to say the name of their celebrity out loud, so the other group could later guess who it was. After each group had completed ten sentences, they read them out loud without saying the name, and the other group guessed. Both groups were able to guess the celebrity. After this, each student received an I-YOU-WE checklist to assess their and their group's work. Then we discussed the trickiest point of the lesson. The students agreed that choosing which information could be expressed using the present perfect was difficult. For example, they soon realised they could not include when the person was born or how many siblings they have. But in the end, they managed to include relevant information and use the present perfect, mostly correctly.
Reflection: Only seven students were present in this lesson, so I had only to do two groups instead of three as I had planned, but it was not a problem. For the group work, I tried to write down

the names of celebrities the students would be familiar with and interested in. One group had actor Tom Holland and the other actress Jenna Ortega and the opposing group was able to guess the name. I think this group activity went well. The students seemed to enjoy it and were focused on their work. It took much longer than I expected, so we did not have time to do the other activities I wanted, but we can save them for the next lesson. After the activity, we discussed the trickiest point. I think this activity helped students show when they can use present perfect and when not. They were also exposed to some authentic texts while searching the information on English-written websites. After students completed the I-YOU-WE checklists, I told them that the next lesson would be the last for my thesis research and that they would have to complete a questionnaire about the activities we did to prepare them for it a bit.

Appendix 6: Lesson 6

Class: 9.C
Date: 12.6. 2023
Period: 2. (8:40 - 9:25)
Number of students present: 10
Topic of the lesson: Present perfect – revision
Aim of the lesson: Students revise their knowledge of the present perfect
Formative assessment strategies used: K-W-L chart, discussion, questionnaire
Lesson description: Students were given revision tests on the present perfect tense for the research. Students were told these tests would not be marked unless they did well. After the completion of the tests, students received their K-W-L charts back. Their task was to fill in the third column with what they learned. Then we discussed all the previous lessons, reminding students of our formative assessment activities. This was a preparation for the questionnaire that students filled in right after. This questionnaire reflects on the formative assessment activities and allows students to evaluate them based on how they liked them and how useful they found them. After that, I closed the lesson by thanking the students for their participation.
Reflection: This lesson was the closing part of the research. I was pleasantly surprised by how well the students cooperated with me and each other during the research. Compared to class 9.B, they remained motivated and active in all the lessons. I am sad that I do not have the time to continue this research for longer, as I enjoy the lessons and think that for the most part, the students do as well. I will think about how to incorporate more formative assessment activities into all my lessons.

Appendix 7: K-W-L chart

K-W-L chart

Think about the topic we will study: **Present perfect**

What do I **K**now?	What do I **W**ant to learn?	What did I **L**earn?

Appendix 8: Ambitions text

2 3.2 Read and listen. Who are the people in the pictures?

Ambitions

1 My name's Tilda. I want to be an actress. I've been in some plays at the theatre. Last year, I was in our school play. I haven't been on TV or in a film, but I'd love to. My favourite actress is Keira Knightley. I've seen nearly all her films. She became famous when she was very young, but she hasn't done anything silly like taking drugs and things like that. When she was only seventeen, she starred in the film *Bend It Like Beckham*. Since then, she's been in lots of films. My favourites are the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films with Johnny Depp. (I like him, too!) She's also done a lot of work for charities, like Water Aid. This charity helps to bring clean water to poor people in Africa. She's given some of her own money to charities, too.

2 My name's Brett. I want to be a Formula One driver. I've driven a go-kart lots of times, and I'm pretty good at it. I've won several races. Last week, I was in the County Championship. I didn't win it, because my car broke down. My hero is Sebastian Vettel. He started go-karting when he was only eight years old. Then he moved up to bigger and bigger cars, and in 2007 he became a Formula One driver. Since then, he's won lots of races and in 2010, he became the youngest driver to win the Formula One World Championship. I haven't seen a real Grand Prix, because I don't live near a racetrack. I've only watched them on TV, but I'd love to go to one and meet Sebastian Vettel.

Project 3: Students' book, 4th edition, Hutchinson et al., 2014, p. 56

Appendix 9: Textbook pages

5 Experiences

5A They've been successful

Vocabulary

Experiences

1 a Complete phrases 1–7 with these verbs.

see visit be drive win do ride


1 ☐
a competition
a race


2 ☐
a UFO
a sports event


3 ☐
a place
friends


4 ☐
a bike
a horse


5 ☐
on TV
in a film


6 ☐
a bungee jump
karate


7 ☐
a go-kart
a racing car

b Make two more expressions with each verb.

Comprehension

2 1 3.2 Read and listen. Who are the people in the pictures?

Ambitions

1 My name's Tilda. I want to be an actress. I've been in some plays at the theatre. Last year, I was in our school play. I haven't been on TV or in a film, but I'd love to. My favourite actress is Keira Knightley. I've seen nearly all her films. She became famous when she was very young, but she hasn't done anything silly like taking drugs and things like that. When she was only seventeen, she starred in the film *Bend It Like Beckham*. Since then, she's been in lots of films. My favourites are the *Pirates of the Caribbean* films with Johnny Depp. (I like him, too!) She's also done a lot of work for charities, like Water Aid. This charity helps to bring clean water to poor people in Africa. She's given some of her own money to charities, too.

2 My name's Brett. I want to be a Formula One driver. I've driven a go-kart lots of times, and I'm pretty good at it. I've won several races. Last week, I was in the County Championship. I didn't win it, because my car broke down. My hero is Sebastian Vettel. He started go-karting when he was only eight years old. Then he moved up to bigger and bigger cars, and in 2007 he became a Formula One driver. Since then, he's won lots of races and in 2010, he became the youngest driver to win the Formula One World Championship. I haven't seen a real Grand Prix, because I don't live near a racetrack. I've only watched them on TV, but I'd love to go to one and meet Sebastian Vettel.

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3 Read the texts again. Complete the chart.

Name	*Tilda*	
Ambition	*to be an actress*	
Hero / Heroine		
Reason		

Grammar

Present perfect

4 a Complete the sentences from the texts in exercise 2.

1 I ____ nearly all her films.
2 She ____ anything silly.
3 He ____ lots of races.
4 I ____ a real Grand Prix.

b Read about the present perfect tense.

We use the present perfect to talk about experiences up to now. We aren't interested in when. When we say the actual time, we must use the past simple.

Present perfect: I've been in some plays at the theatre.
Past simple: Last year, I was in our school play.

c The present perfect tense has got two parts: *have / has* + a past participle. Look again at the sentences in exercise 4a. Find the two parts of the present perfect.

d Look at the examples. How do we make a regular past participle?

play – played live – lived
stop – stopped

e Some past participles are irregular (for example, *ride – ridden*). Find more irregular past participles in the texts in exercise 2.

win – won

5 a Look at the expressions in exercise 1. What are the past participles of the verbs?

b Have you done any of the things? Write down four things that you have done and four things that you haven't done.

I've won a class competition.
I haven't won a race.

Speaking and listening

6 Work in a group. Play the game. Use the expressions in exercise 1.

A *I've seen a UFO.*
B *He's seen a UFO and I've done a bungee jump.*
C *He's seen a UFO. She's done a bungee jump and I've played ....*

7 a 3.3 Listen. What have the people done? Tick (✓) the correct picture in each pair.

b Write about each person.

He's been on the radio. He hasn't been on TV.

Project 3: Students' book, 4th edition, Hutchinson et al., 2014, pp. 56-57.

Appendix 10: Exit ticket (lesson 2)

1. How do you form the present perfect?

2. Make one example of a sentence in the present perfect.

Appendix 11: List of irregular verbs

Český překlad	Infinitiv	Past simple	Past participle
být	be	was/were	been
stát se	become	became	become
zlomit, rozbít	break	broke	broken
přinést	bring	brought	brought
koupit	buy	bought	bought
přijít	come	came	come
dělat	do	did	done
pít	drink	drank	drunk
řídit	drive	drove	driven
jíst	eat	ate	eaten
padat	fall	fell	fallen
létat	fly	flew	flown
dostat, získat	get	got	got
dát, věnovat	give	gave	given
jít, jet	go	went	gone
mít	have	had	had
znát, vědět	know	knew	known
ležet	lie	lay	lain

dělat, vyrábět	make	made	made

jezdit na	ride	rode	ridden
běhat	run	ran	run
vidět	see	saw	seen
mluvit	speak	spoke	spoken
stát, postavit se	stand	stood	stood
krást	steal	stole	stolen
plavat	swim	swam	swum
vzít, brát	take	took	taken
trhat	tear	tore	torn
myslet	think	thought	thought
házet	throw	threw	thrown
rozumět	understand	understood	understood
vzbudit se	wake (up)	woke (up)	woken (up)
nosit, mít (oblečení)	wear	wore	worn
psát	write	wrote	written

Appendix 12: Activities table

7 **Complete the table with the correct form of the verbs. Then check your answers in Student's Book UNIT 2B.** / Doplň tabulku správnými tvary sloves. Poté si odpovědi zkontroluj v učebnici v části 2B.

Infinitive	Czech translation	Past simple	Past participle	Infinitive	Czech translation	Past simple	Past participle
be late for school	přijít pozdě do školy	was / were		have a pet	mít domácího mazlíčka		
break a bone	zlomit si kost		broken	meet someone famous	potkat někoho slavného		met
drive a car	řídit auto			read a book in English	číst knihu v angličtině	read	
fall asleep at school	usnout ve škole		fallen	ride a horse	jezdit na koni		
feel nervous	být nervózní		felt	run a marathon	běžet maraton		
fly in a balloon	letět balónem	flew		see a car accident	vidět automobilovou nehodu	saw	
get a letter	dostat dopis		got	win a trophy	vyhrát trofej		won

Bloggers 4: Workbook 1, Flámová, H., Dittrichová I., Cryer K., Macková A., Mašková A., & Červená D., 2021-2022, p. 55.

Appendix 13: Exit ticket (lesson 3)

How would you rate your work in today's lesson?

Why? Give at least two reasons.

Appendix 14: Exit ticket (lesson 4)

Today I learned…

I think I did…

I need to work on…

Appendix 15: I-YOU-WE checklist

I - write one thing you contributed to the group	**YOU** - write on thing someone else contributed	**WE** - how did your group do as a whole?

Appendix 16: The questionnaire

Dotazník formativní hodnocení

V posledních dvou týdnech jsme v hodinách dělali několik nových aktivit. Teď je čas je ohodnotit. Hodnocení je, jak jsme zvyklí ze školy, tedy **1 je nejlepší** a **5 nejhorší známka**.

Oznámkuj každou aktivitu podle toho, jak se ti líbila, bavilo tě ji dělat:

Traffic lights cards	1	2	3	4	5
K-W-L chart	1	2	3	4	5
Examples and non-examples	1	2	3	4	5
Think-pair-share	1	2	3	4	5
Exit ticket	1	2	3	4	5
C3B4ME (See three before me)	1	2	3	4	5
I-You-We checklist	1	2	3	4	5
Trickiest point	1	2	3	4	5

Oznámkuj každou aktivitu podle toho, jak si myslíš že byla užitečná pro tvé učení, zda ti pomohla se zlepšit:

Traffic lights cards	1	2	3	4	5
K-W-L chart	1	2	3	4	5
Examples and non-examples	1	2	3	4	5
Think-pair-share	1	2	3	4	5
Exit ticket	1	2	3	4	5
C3B4ME (See three before me)	1	2	3	4	5
I-You-We checklist	1	2	3	4	5
Trickiest point	1	2	3	4	5

Z aktivit, které jsme dělali v hodinách vyber tři, které bys chtěl/a dělat častěji a vysvětli krátce proč:

Formative assessment questionnaire

In the last two weeks we did some new activities in our lessons. Now it is time to mark them. The marks are as you are used to from school, so **1 is the best and 5 is the worst**.

Mark each activity based on how much you liked it and enjoyed doing it:

Traffic lights cards	1	2	3	4	5
K-W-L chart	1	2	3	4	5
Examples and non-examples	1	2	3	4	5
Think-pair-share	1	2	3	4	5
Exit ticket	1	2	3	4	5
C3B4ME (See three before me)	1	2	3	4	5
I-You-We checklist	1	2	3	4	5
Trickiest point	2	2	3	4	5

Mark each activity based on how useful you think it was for your learning, if it helped you improve:

Traffic lights cards	1	2	3	4	5
K-W-L chart	1	2	3	4	5
Examples and non-examples	1	2	3	4	5
Think-pair-share	1	2	3	4	5
Exit ticket	1	2	3	4	5
C3B4ME (See three before me)	1	2	3	4	5
I-You-We checklist	1	2	3	4	5
Trickiest point	2	2	3	4	5

From the activities we did, choose three that you would like to do more often and explain why:

SHRNUTÍ

Tato práce zkoumá význam formativního hodnocení v hodinách anglického jazyka.
V teoretické části práce je představena historie a vývoj formativního hodnocení, co je to formativní hodnocení a co by mělo obsahovat – jeho klíčové strategie. Tato kapitola je zakončena přehledem dalších relevantních studií, které byly na toto téma vykonány. Pro praktickou část práce byla zvolena metoda akčního výzkumu, za pomoci níž bylo zkoumáno, zda má formativní hodnocení v hodinách anglického jazyka na žáky vliv. Během šesti hodin si žáci vyzkoušeli několik technik formativního hodnocení, které se soustředily především na získáni důkazů o učení, sebehodnocení a žákovské hodnocení. Výzkum byl zakončen krátkým dotazníkem, ve kterém měli žáci možnost ohodnotit techniky, které si v hodinách vyzkoušeli. Výsledky výzkumu značí, že formativní hodnocení má vliv na žáky a na jejich učení.