# The Integration of "Floop" Platform for Enhancing Effectiveness of Feedback in Postsecondary Education Context

https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v17i15.30711

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**Abstract—**During the pandemic period, teaching has become increasingly challenging. One of the hardest parts of educating is considered providing effective feedback which will enhance students' comprehension and lead them to learner autonomy. Firstly, while studying online there is less teacher-student interaction and secondly, students are not sure how to use provided feedback. The "FLOOP" feedback platform was found very helpful for solving both of these issues. It was used for OPEN (Online Professional English Network Program) teacher development sessions and was integrated into online teacher training that was called "Teaching process writing with the integration of technologies for online lessons in postsecondary education." The basic reason for it is that it saves the teacher's time by saving ready templates for the same tasks and it can be replied to on spot. There is a possibility of providing peer feedback for students which would be helpful for student feedback literacy and assist them to develop their self-study skills. This platform is extremely efficient to facilitate one of the most challenging teaching contexts, specifically large multilevel classes. Therefore, it might contribute to the professional expertise in providing constructive feedback for all the teachers around the world.

**Key words—**process writing, product writing, self-development, teaching, technology

## 1 Introduction

According to [24] "the integration of technology with classroom environment has also changed the ways we experience learning and teaching". It is believed by many educators that the current technology helps us to teach old stuff in a new way and "gives us an opportunity to present a new stuff in a new way" [15]. [24] also states that if educators only stick with traditional classroom materials "learning still happens, but there would be a huge gap between what students learn in their classrooms" and how the world outside perceive socializing and accomplishments. Some research indicated that alongside all technological tools facilitate learning and teaching experience, they enhance students' motivation [21, 22]. As technology is accompanied with entertainment might be one of the key factors behind student motivation. [15] also highlights

that technology plays a significant role in transformation of traditional teacher-centered classrooms to more student-centered ones [23]. However, not all teachers are enthusiastic about technology, especially in providing feedback for writing. Some studies showed that writing is one of the most challenging skills to improve among second language learners. However, studies also highlighted the importance of writing. According to the survey by [15] 86% of interviewees chose writing as the most important skill. The research conducted by [12] revealed that more than 90% of college students found college English writing as the most needed competence. In terms of difficulty, the survey done by Sun indicated as this skill is the most challenging and requires more practice to improve. Most EFL/ESL teachers consider writing difficult to teach. According to [17], writing is the last stage of language acquisition process.

The individual achievement of the learner can be influenced mostly with the help of feedback; however, the impact of feedback might vary depending on the condition which represents the complexity of the feedback provision process [10]. This complex process is more challenging in the higher education context as in some cases it might be difficult to understand and the level of student feedback satisfaction can be not high enough [4]. An additional issue that might make it even more complicated is giving feedback online. During the period of COVID-19 teachers all over the world faced one of the most difficult situations when they had to shift from traditional face-to-face classes to unusual to the context of Uzbekistan online classes. 21$^{st}$-century high education establishments "had to revamp their existing delivery mechanisms" and reconsider their assessment system and student engagement approaches to the learning process [1]. An online social platform Telegram played a significant role and helpful contribution to language teaching as it did not require fast-paced internet and was very user-friendly both for students and teachers in most parts of the world [20]. However, it was very difficult to give feedback to the student as work submission was not properly organized and students could not get positive washback from the assignment as well as task [19].

One more platform that was used during the learning process was the LMS platform Moodle. However, usage of this platform for the teacher training was almost impossible and required the service department to open one more course that will collaborate both trainees and trainers. According to [9], "students are aware of the benefits e-learning carries and are therefore welcoming further implementations of eLearning into our teaching practice. However, there are still some technical problems when using Moodle mostly caused by hardware and software limitations of the employed servers". The same issue was observed with our teachers and learners and it was decided to change into Floop for assessment submission and feedback.

The pandemic lockdown urged all the teachers around the globe to be trained to improve their digital literacy skills, as the majority have limited experience in online teaching [18]. During this challenging period, OPEN PROGRAMM gave us a fantastic opportunity for creating teacher training for our colleagues at the institute. The teacher training was organized for EFL teachers of Yeoju Technical Institute in Tashkent. Collaborating and supporting teachers in their further professional development might be the reason for increasing their professional development [18]. After conducting a needs analysis, the research showed that the most vulnerable point of online teaching was

providing feedback for writing. Having scrutinized the results of the preliminary survey, it was decided to organize teacher training on the topic "Teaching Process Writing Online through Technologies in Postsecondary Education Context". Thus, the scope of the teacher training was to teach participants how to use technologies and integrate them into the process of writing. This training was the initial step in raising EFL teachers' awareness of the efficiency of e-learning.

According to [19], the digital transformation has generated a new "eco-system of learning", which is called e-learning. E-leaning is defined as the implementation of virtual learning platforms containing instructional materials and a student-centered environment. Incorporating technology into the learning process serves as a cognitive tool that enhances the cognitive powers of human beings during thinking, problem-solving, and learning. Cognitive tools help second language learners to organize, restructure and represent what they might know [2].

The significance of feedback lies in stimulating learners' focus on noticing the discrepancies between their current performance and the desired result they want to achieve. Therefore, learners need individually approached, detailed feedback on their output. In search of providing feedback for every learner, most research studies [7;8] have been suggesting Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL). CALL has gained popularity and shown a significant contribution to students' language learning outcomes in tertiary education. The conducted research described in this paper revealed that the feedback is given on the FLOOP platform enhanced teacher and student feedback literacy skills. According to [6] "the emergent concept of teacher feedback literacy mainly involves the design and management of assessment environments that enable students to develop feedback literacy capabilities". [23] points out that becoming feedback literate requires more than understanding why a learner gained a certain grade. He suggests the concept of "feedback on knowing", which is the summative dimension of feedback. "Feedback on knowing has a confidence-boosting role and shown students how much they know" [23].

FLOOP provides more opportunities for teachers to facilitate the feedback-giving process, helping teacher deploy their skills and capacities to set up the conditions for language learners to utilize provided feedback. Furthermore, it might serve as a "feedback on knowing" tool, which signifies learners' educational identity, increases learning autonomy, and improves the washback effect after getting the feedback. The research showed that utilizing the platform help learners understand the function of feedback.

[11] referenced the model that defines the principles of feedback. According to it, the purpose of feedback is to achieve changes in student learning and let them understand and meet the identified learning goals. Giving feedback on the FLOOP platform produce two outcomes suggested by [3]:

- Teachers adopt effective teaching strategies to help learners to make progress in areas that need attention
- Learners alter what they do to address the learning objectives more effectively

The platform provides written feedback, and this type of feedback is one of the most effective ways as it tends to be more structured and easier to retain [13].

The "FLOOP" platform might be an excellent solution to one of the most problematic burdens that teachers might face - giving feedback and peer-reviewing. This digital tool not only provides a student-centered environment but also assists teachers to provide meaningful feedback faster, enhancing and supporting the learning process. It developed student autonomy and critical thinking, affected the task reflection and washback effect. As a result, it was expected to enhance the quality of the submitted task and the attitude of learners towards the learning process. According to [5] technology-enabled approaches to provide feedback are appreciated and welcomed by students "through facilitating timely and convenient sharing of comments". After some investigations, it was decided to try "FLOOP" as it was user-friendly and contained elements of peer review which was the core concept of the teacher training program.

## 2 Method

One of the main requirements of the OPEN PROGRAM was cascading and sustainability of the gained knowledge. To complete the whole course and receive a certificate it was compulsory to organize teacher training for other in-service teachers. The target group for training was selected from Yeoju technical institute in Tashkent. The institute had all the required facilities, the administration was approachable and teachers were eager to learn. It was decided to choose 20 dedicated EFL teachers of the institute as they volunteered and were ready for professional development. While designing the Teacher Training program for in-service teachers at Yeoju Technical Institute in Tashkent, "FLOOP" was used in the sessions for task submission. Initially, it was asked to use Moodle the official LMS platform of the institute. However, it was found challenging to join the platform and provide on-spot feedback to the learners.

The training consisted of two sessions which required the submission of 2 evaluated tasks: a process-oriented writing lesson plan and technology integrated activity that would be used in the same lesson. Having submitted their works, the participants were asked to fill out a feedback form that was oriented to the usage of the "FLOOP" platform and included five questions.

Regarding the process-oriented writing lesson plan, it consisted of 3 steps and the teachers found it quite straightforward and precise. Firstly, teachers submitted a lesson plan and by using the special characteristic of the tool where students might be assigned for peer review, they checked each other's work with the help of the checklist. The peer-review stage was really fast and after work submission, the instructor could see the main pitfalls of the work. Teachers found the peer feedback option very practical and easy to use. As a result, after reflecting on the lesson, most teachers commented that this characteristic was useful for students as it teaches them to develop not only peer review but also enhance their self-assessment skills and promote learner autonomy.

The next step required teacher checking and the last stage was oriented on the final paper submission. After having a thorough analysis of the lesson plan, teachers could easily apply all changes in the paper. The next assignment was a technology-integrated activity, which was included in the presented lesson. It was also checked and submitted in the "FLOOP". Teachers showed the task and wrote a short rationale for the activity.

The task could be written manually and a photo of it could be attached to the platform. Most teachers found it easy to submit the task and the instructor found it easy to assess.

One more aspect that helped to reflect on the platform was a feedback form used for the evaluation of the platform. It consisted of the following 5 questions:

1. How easy was it to register to the platform?
2. Is the platform user friendly?
3. Was it easy to evaluate your partner in the peer review section?
4. Would you suggest this platform from the teacher's perspective? Why?
5. Would you suggest this platform from the student's perspective? Why?

All the questions were included in one Google feedback form and the first 3 questions included 5 options such as "strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree, disagree". The rest of the 2 questions were open and needed just a short comment to the question. In order to provide the reliability of the data and show the real potential of the platform trained teachers were asked to use this Floop with their distance students. The distance learners were selected as they had a less face-to-face interaction with instructors. As a result, provided feedback might increase their motivation and wish to study more.

Overall, the feedback form was filled by teachers and their 726 distance learning students to provide more reliable data both from the teacher and the student perspectives. To provide the reliability of the survey it was decided to choose students' non-technological faculties such as "Primary education", "Korean philology" and "Tourism faculty". Although students studied online all of them were active and ready to cooperate. They realized the importance of feedback as it was the most important communication opportunity to gain their knowledge.

## 3 Result

The experience of the usage of the "FLOOP" platform was positive. The first task was submitted by 20 participants. All teachers could take a photo of the lesson plan and submit it to the platform without any difficulties. The instructor could assign peers easily for the peer review of the first draft. After peer review, students were asked to revise their work and submit it to their teachers for the second time. This time all the papers were organized, facilitating the teacher checking process. As it was in order, within the framework and timed. Another factor that helped much is a ready template for the feedback form. The form was created once, and could be used for all participants as most of them had the same mistakes and there was no need to write everything the same way repeatedly. Before it was time-consuming or confusing (if teachers tried to use copy-paste option). Therefore, templates helped to save a lot of time. The second task was checked in a similar way and was found even much easier to gauge due to already having a ready picture of the task. This facilitated the process, as the teachers should not go via the link and observe the task online. Hence, this economized teachers' time by almost 5 minutes per task which means 100 minutes for 20 students. Furthermore, the ready templates also made the whole providing feedback process time-saving.

The next stage of data collection was survey. It was expected that there won't be difficulties with teachers' survey as they knew about the research and were really co-operative. However, we were really surprised when we saw the willingness of students to support our investigation. Although. They were distance learners. All of them responded within 10 days. Having obtained the survey results that were related to the "FLOOP" program, it was found that most teachers were satisfied and found the program helpful and productive. The first question revealed that it was easy to register as it consisted of just a few steps.

Additionally, the site provided an official video that helped all potential users of the platform to register without difficulties. The possibility to be registered using e-mail or a Google account provides instant access to the platform. A teacher should complete the following stages to create a profile:

1. Browse floopedu.com and click on the sign up button.
2. Click on "I am a teacher" and signup with Google.
3. Create your profile (you need to write your name and surname).
4. Set up your first class.
5. Add students to the class (you are provided with a special code).

Creating a student profile is more straightforward, as they need to register with their Google account, write their names and date of birth, enter the class code, and submit the task. No extra steps and complicated submission processes are needed. 16 out of 20 participants admitted the simplicity of the registration process of this online tool and 3 participants decided to be neutral to the question. As it possible to see only one candidate find it difficult to register. Figure 1 illustrates the answers of the students regarding the simplicity of the platform usage among teachers.

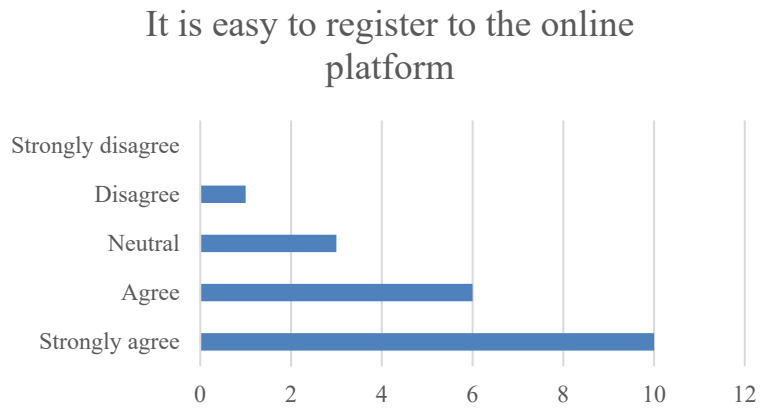


**Fig. 1.** The simplicity of the platform usage among teachers

Looking to the same question from the student's perspective made the picture of the same question clearer. Most part of the students thought that registration process was

easy and did not find any difficulties. Regarding neutral results just above hundred students were neutral and less than 50 students decided that registration in the Floop is complicated. Figure 2 shows the result regarding the registration process to the platform among students.

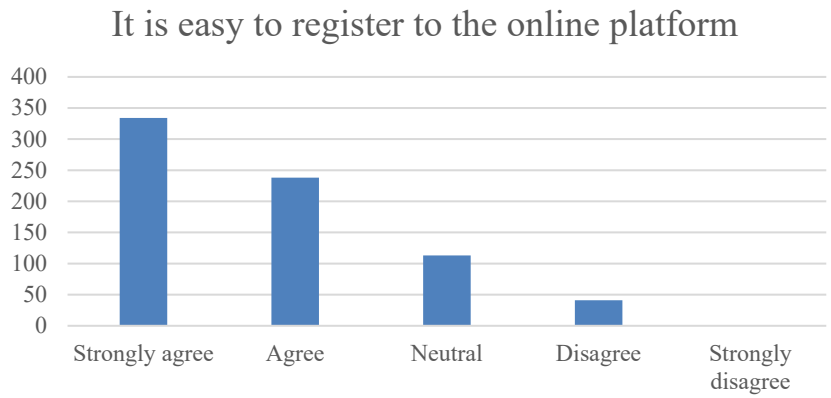


**Fig. 2.** The process of registration to the platform among students

The next question to be analyzed was checking how user-friendly the platform was. The findings revealed that it did not require any special computer literacy skills and even one of the technophobe teachers who participated in the training could upload her document and replied to the peer-review of the colleague. Out of 20 teachers, 11 found it extremely easy, 7 found it easy and 2 were neutral. Figure 3 presents the information about the degree of user-friendliness of the platform among teachers.

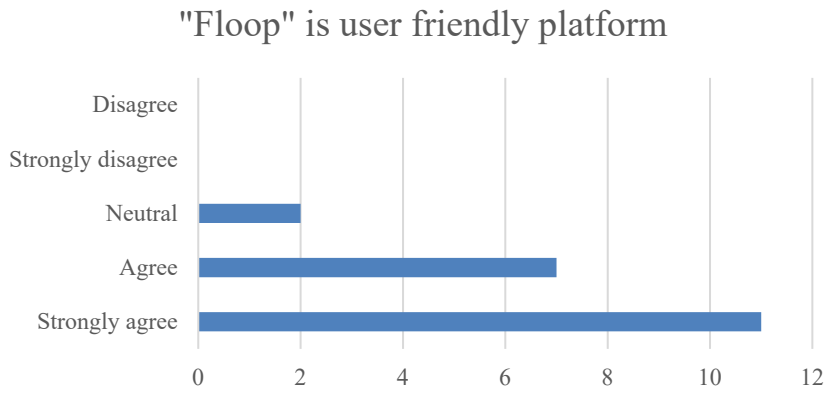


**Fig. 3.** The statistic of user-friendliness of the platform among teachers

The main reasons that the trainees found the feedback assistance tool easy to utilize are:

- It is only needed to click on the (+) button and fill in the information that is describing the assignment and present the due date.
- As soon as the class is chosen and the assignment is instantly published.
- Students are able to see given assignment and submit the task.
- The task might be presented in the form of pdf or as an image.
- Simultaneously the teacher might view the work on the dashboard and comment on it.

The same question was given to the students of the trainees and results created positive attitude to the platform once more. More than 550 students found the platform user friendly, around 150 students stayed neutral and less than 30 students did not have positive respond towards the topic. Reflecting the statements, it is possible to notice that the platform is easy to use and most students do not see it as technological obstacle for the work submission. Figure 4 presents information about how user friendly is the platform among students.

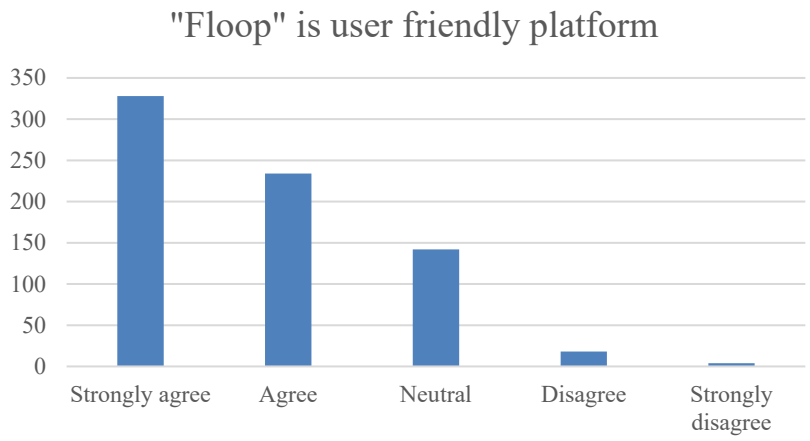


**Fig. 4.** The percentage of platform usage simplicity among students

In terms of providing feedback process, it is simple. As it is just needed to click on the place where a teacher needs to comment and write all the information, and feedback is automatically saved and students may immediately see it. Once the teacher writes a comment it might be added to the comment bank and can be used for the work of other students. One factor that makes the process interactive is that students can see that the work was reviewed by noticing the pink button next to the submitted task. This button even provides information on how many comments were given. Tracking comments, waiting for a response, and seeing that your work is checked make the whole process more engaging and interactive.

Regarding the peer review process, it is anonymous and students do not know whose work they have checked or who has reviewed their work. So, no one is offended and they may comment without being subjective. Simultaneously, peer-reviewing the work,

the student is reflecting on his own task. While evaluating others, learners realize their mistakes and start to make changes without bothering friends or teachers. This task reflection enhances critical thinking and affects positively the task comprehension. As a result, the objectives of the task are met with the higher grade.

This option was liked by most instructors. Out of 20 trainees, 8 found it extremely easy and 10 found it easy to implement. Figure 5 represents information about peer review option among teachers.

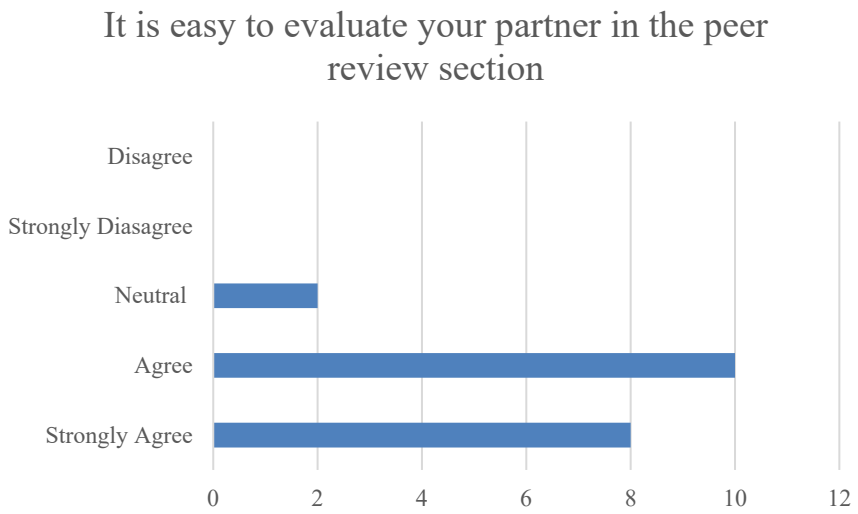


**Fig. 5.** The peer review option among teachers

Students found peer evaluation quite an easy process as well by replying that it was not complicated. According to the results 315 found peer review really simple, 295 students found it easy, 89 Students were neutral and less than 30 students found it difficult to evaluate their groupmates. Figure 6 illustrates the evaluation of the peer with the help of platform among students.

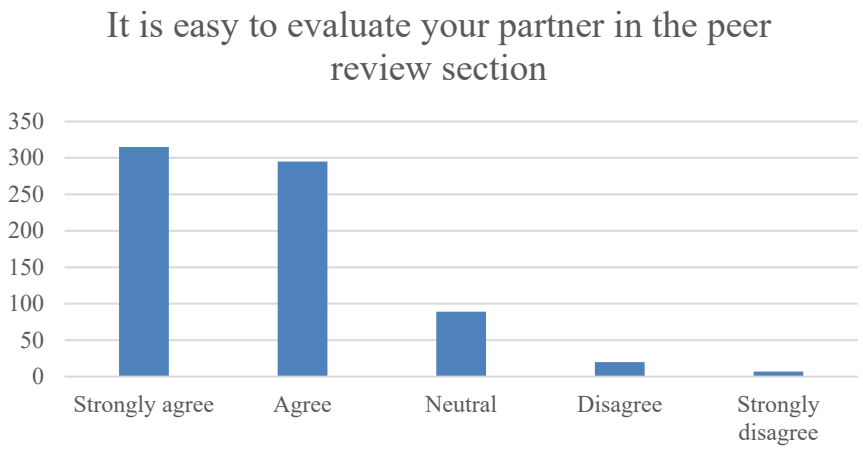


**Fig. 6.** The peer review option among students

The next question was focusing on the overall feedback to the platform from the teacher's perspective. It is noticed that most teachers found the tool extremely beneficial and continued utilizing it with their classes. It was stated by the participants that "the tool streamlines the process of giving feedback and lets the student collaborate to improve learning outcome", "this digital platform is focusing on the learning process and enhancing students' learning abilities, as a result, basic focus is not on the product but the process", "it increases learning motivation and encourages to submit tasks on time", " providing feedback and evaluation process is not a burden anymore", " most options are helpful and engage both instructor and learners into the process", "before while giving feedback to learners I felt like talking to no one. However, this platform showed the real teacher-student dialogue to me". Some teachers were neutral and wrote that to give a clear insight about the platform they need to test it for a bit longer period so they could not comment in a positive or negative way. However, one instructor replied that students were asking too many questions and it was preferable to him just comment on the work without giving an extra explanation.

Most participants found the tool very effective for alternative assessment the following comments were found "the burden of paperwork was diminished", "peer review made process writing so effective", "self-evaluation, as well as self-study skills improvement, was found", "teacher have more time for lesson preparation" "peer review option helped students to enhance critical thinking".

As regards students, they emphasized the features of obtaining immediate feedback and being able to continue improving their work until it is the way it should be. They liked that they were focusing on the process of task writing and had the opportunity to improve their work. Here is what was commented "it gives me chance to get higher marks", "I do not feel stuck anymore", "loved this platform. Commenting on other peer's work helps me to reflect on my own work."

Most students showed a positive attitude towards commenting section, which promotes effective interaction between a teacher and a learner.

## 4 Discussion

"FLOOP" was used effectively during the pandemic period by the participants of the teacher training who work at Yeoju Technical Institute. The focus of the training was the integration of technologies for online lessons at postsecondary education context that were coordinated by the online course of the US Embassy's OPEN program. The growing demand for organizing productive online classes for higher institution learners and the challenges of utilizing various online platforms which are not user-friendly and complex was the fundamental reasons to organize this teacher training. Another contributing factor is the poor readiness of teachers for online lessons which was the emergency and the only solution to continue the teaching process. The organized teacher training aimed to reveal the most challenging aspects of teaching and assessment and advance two main sub-domains for teachers' technological skills: technological and pedagogical [18]. Looking from this perspective, it can be told that in the territories of some countries where usage of LMS platforms is not widely used this platform can be a survival tool as it connects teacher and student without any difficulties, maintains learner autonomy, and teaches students to focus on the process of writing rather on the final product. [9] states that process writing "is not an easy option for students and teachers". He also states that teaching process writing takes up much time and takes place, especially if a teacher decides to use paper and "can be problematic for disorganized students". When responding to students' work, most teachers are concerned not only with accuracy, but also on content and design of writing. As [9] mentions while responding students' written work, teachers are entering into affective dialogue with their students. That is, teachers are "discussing their writing rather than judging it" [9]. Floop is an effective tool to share social emotional communication with students, support and guide them, as well as scaffold their learning.

This feedback tool is not complicated in usage and does not require any extra steps or complex registration that might make a learner or instructor feel agitated. Once it is tried, it makes learning engaging and interactive, resulting in positive washback. Moreover, it focuses on peer review which enhances students' critical thinking and activates their feedback literacy, one of the crucial aspects of the language acquisition process. It teaches students to be objectives while evaluating and avoid subjectivity while studying.

Although data were collected only from the 20 participants of the teacher training and their 726 students, considering that most teachers were above 40 years old and were not professionals in the usage of the technological tools, it is possible to state that the reliability of the data could be trusted. The absence of the negative respondents and significantly high number of positive answers tend to lead to positive washback.

## 5 Conclusion

In the paper, it was presented the analysis of a questionnaire and experiences gained through use of the Floop which studied the effectiveness of the platforms in terms of giving feedback and enhancement of learners' autonomy. There were no difficulties in data collection both from the students and teachers' sides. Most teachers and students were comfortable with the usage of Floop. While we are still drawing exact conclusions about the platform, based on the positive results and successful outcomes of the teacher training program, it might be concluded that this platform benefits teachers and students where LMS is not used or where peer review is required. It is stated that the platform is saving teachers time and improves students' self-study, intrinsic motivation as well as feedback literacy. Further studies of the tool are to continue in the institutional context and going to be focused on the progress of peer evaluation and feedback literacy. Overall, both learners and educators are satisfied with the feedback platform. They found it user-friendly, and helpful for education.

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Article submitted 2022-03-29. Resubmitted 2022-06-29. Final acceptance 2022-06-29. Final version published as submitted by the authors.