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Motivational dispositions shape feedback-seeking behaviors: a regulatory mode perspective

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ABSTRACT

Grounded in Regulatory Mode Theory and Proactive Language Learning Theory, this study examined how learners' general and second language (L2)-specific regulatory modes predict different dimensions of feedback-seeking behaviour (FSB) in foreign language learning. Participants were 212 university-level L2 learners in the United States who completed measures of general regulatory modes, L2-specific regulatory modes, and FSB. Confirmatory factor analyses supported a three-factor model of FSB consisting of Feedback Elicitation, Feedback Monitoring, and Feedback Use, which demonstrated superior fit to competing one- and two-factor models. Multiple regression analyses revealed that general locomotion positively predicted feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use, whereas general assessment did not significantly predict any FSB dimension. In contrast, both L2 locomotion and L2 assessment positively predicted all three FSB dimensions and explained substantially more variance than their general counterparts. These findings suggest that action-oriented self-regulatory tendencies facilitate proactive engagement with feedback and that L2-specific regulatory modes are more closely associated with feedback-related behaviours than domain-general regulatory dispositions. The results also raise questions about the conceptual distinctiveness of L2-specific regulatory modes, which may reflect learners' engagement in classroom activities rather than the motivational principles underlying regulatory mode theory. Theoretical and practical implications, as well as future research directions, are discussed.

چکیده

این پژوهش، با اتکا بر نظریه سبک‌های خودتنظیمی و نظریه یادگیری پیش‌فعال زبان، بررسی کرد که چگونه سبک‌های خودتنظیمی عمومی و اختصاصی زبان دوم ابعاد مختلف رفتار بازخوردجویی را در یادگیری زبان خارجی پیش‌بینی می‌کنند. شرکت‌کنندگان این پژوهش ۲۱۲ دانشجوی دانشگاه و زبان‌آموز زبان دوم در ایالات متحده آمریکا بودند که پرسشنامه‌های مربوط به سبک‌های خودتنظیمی عمومی، سبک‌های خودتنظیمی اختصاصی زبان دوم، و رفتار بازخوردجویی را تکمیل کردند. نتایج تحلیل عاملی تأییدی از مدل سه‌عاملی رفتار بازخوردجویی، شامل بازخوردخواهی، پیش‌بازخورد، و به‌کارگیری بازخورد، حمایت کرد؛ مدلی که در مقایسه با مدل‌های رقیب تک‌عاملی و دوعاملی، برازش بهتری نشان داد. نتایج تحلیل‌های رگرسیون چندگانه نشان داد که سبک حرکت‌محور عمومی، بازخوردخواهی، پیش‌بازخورد، و به‌کارگیری بازخورد را به‌طور مثبت پیش‌بینی می‌کند، در حالی که سبک ارزیابی‌محور عمومی هیچ‌یک از ابعاد رفتار بازخوردجویی را به‌طور معنادار پیش‌بینی نکرد. در مقابل، هر دو سبک حرکت‌محور و ارزیابی‌محور اختصاصی زبان دوم، هر سه بُعد رفتار بازخوردجویی را به‌طور مثبت پیش‌بینی کردند و نسبت به هم‌تابان عمومی خود، بخش قابل‌توجهی از واریانس بیشتری را تبیین نمودند. این یافته‌ها نشان می‌دهد که گرایش‌های خودتنظیمی عمل‌محور، مشارکت فعال و پیش‌دستانه در فرایند دریافت و استفاده از بازخورد را تسهیل می‌کنند و اینکه سبک‌های خودتنظیمی اختصاصی زبان دوم، نسبت به گرایش‌های عمومی خودتنظیمی، ارتباط نزدیک‌تری با رفتارهای مرتبط

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واژگان کلیدی

یادگیری زبان دوم
نظریه سبک‌های خودتنظیمی
گرایش‌های انگیزشی
یادگیری پیش‌فعالانه ی زبان
رفتار بازخوردجویی

با بازخورد دارند. افزون بر این، نتایج پرسش‌هایی را درباره تمایز مفهومی سبک‌های خودتنظیمی اختصاصی زبان دوم مطرح می‌کند؛ زیرا این سبک‌ها ممکن است بیش از آنکه بازتاب‌دهنده اصول انگیزشی زیربنایی نظریه سبک‌های خودتنظیمی باشند، منعکس‌کننده میزان مشارکت زبان‌آموزان در فعالیت‌های کلاسی باشند. در پایان، دلالت‌های نظری و کاربردی یافته‌ها و نیز پیشنهادهایی برای پژوهش‌های آینده ارائه شده است.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Learning a new language involves more than receiving feedback from teachers or classmates. Learners also need to take an active role by asking for feedback, monitoring, and using it to improve their language skills. However, some learners do this more actively than others. This study explored whether these differences can be explained by learners' motivational tendencies. We compared Locomotors' tendency to take action against Assessors' tendency to carefully evaluate and improve their performance. We surveyed 212 university students in the United States who were learning a foreign language. Participants completed questionnaires about their motivational tendencies and how often they sought, monitored, and used feedback during language learning. The results showed that Locomotors were more likely to actively seek, monitor, and use feedback. In addition, learners who were more engaged in using the target language were more likely to elicit and engage with feedback. These findings suggest that students' motivational characteristics play an important role in how they seek and engage with feedback. Rather than viewing feedback as something that teachers simply provide, educators may encourage learners to become active participants in the feedback process by engaging them in interactional activities and developing the confidence and skills to seek, understand, and apply feedback.

Introduction

Feedback-seeking behaviour (FSB) is a relatively new area of research in language learning, gaining recognition in recent years as an important dimension of second language (L2) learning. As a response to the limitations of the psycholinguistic research tradition, which views learners as passive recipients of corrective feedback (CF), Papi and his colleagues (Papi et al. 2019, 2020) introduced the notion of FSB to the field of SLA, characterised by individuals proactively seeking and using feedback rather than passively waiting for it to be provided. These researchers argue that without the learner seeking and engaging with feedback, the provision of various types of CF by the teacher, peers, or software applications may not contribute to L2 development (Papi & Hiver, 2025). Recent research has likewise emphasised that the effectiveness of CF depends not only on the feedback itself but also on learners' cognitive and affective engagement with that feedback (Papi et al., 2024; Suzuki & Saito, 2026).

Previous studies have shown that factors such as learners' language learning mindsets (Papi, et al., 2019; Waller & Papi, 2017; Yao & Zhu, 2024), future selves (Xu & Wang, 2023), self-regulation (Xu, 2021), intellectual humility (Karimi & Ramezanzadeh, 2026), and learners' relationship with the source of feedback (Choi et al., 2014; Mahbodi et al., 2025), are associated with learners' FSB. While these motivational constructs have been identified as predictors of FSB, little is known about how learners' motivational dispositions influence their FSB.

Such dispositional differences have been argued to result in qualitative differences in their L2 learning behaviours (Papi, 2018).

To address this gap, the present study employs the regulatory mode theory (RMT; Kruglanski et al., 2000), which outlines chronic differences in how individuals pursue their goals. RMT proposes two underlying mechanisms in any self-regulation. Assessment mode involves a chronic tendency to critically evaluate alternatives, compare options, and determine the best course of action before proceeding. Individuals high in assessment are concerned with doing things correctly and selecting optimal means to achieve their goals. In contrast, locomotion mode involves the initiation and maintenance of movement from one's current state towards desired end states. Individuals high in locomotion prioritise action and progress, seeking to move forward efficiently rather than becoming stalled by prolonged deliberation (Kruglanski et al., 2000). These mechanisms exist on a continuum, and individuals may exhibit varying strengths in each. This perspective emphasises the unique motivational orientations of learners in how they approach and regulate their learning, including how they engage with feedback (Papi et al., 2024).

The present study draws on both Proactive Language Learning Theory (PLLT; Papi & Hiver, 2025) and Regulatory Mode Theory (RMT; Kruglanski et al., 2000). PLLT conceptualises language learners as proactive agents who actively shape their learning environments by seeking opportunities, resources, and feedback that support their language development. Within PLLT, FSB is viewed as a proactive learning behaviour through which learners intentionally elicit, monitor, and use corrective information about their L2 performance to facilitate learning.

Whereas PLLT explains what learners do to proactively influence their language learning environments, RMT helps explain how learners regulate those actions through their locomotion and assessment orientations. In this sense, PLLT provides a broad framework for understanding proactive language learning, while FSB represents one specific manifestation of such proactive engagement. Regulatory modes, in turn, represent dispositional mechanisms that may help explain why some learners engage in FSB more actively than others. Examining the relationships between regulatory modes and FSB can therefore contribute to a better understanding of the motivational processes that support proactive language learning.

From a PLLT perspective, proactive learners engage in gathering and using feedback information because they are motivated to develop a sense of competence, evaluate their progress, and reduce uncertainty about the accuracy and appropriateness of their L2 performance (Papi et al., 2019; Papi & Hiver, 2025). These conceptualizations closely correspond to the assessment and locomotion self-regulatory modes as underlying motivational principles described in RMT (Kruglanski et al., 2000), making it a suitable framework for understanding individual differences in learners' proactive engagement in FSB. To empirically examine these relationships, the present study investigates how both general and L2-specific regulatory modes (Teimouri et al., 2022) predict individual differences in learners' feedback-seeking behaviour. While general regulatory modes reflect broad self-regulatory tendencies that operate across life domains, L2-specific regulatory modes capture how these tendencies are manifested within the L2 learning context. Examining both constructs can therefore help determine whether proactive engagement in FSB is better explained by domain-general self-regulatory dispositions or by specific regulatory orientations in L2 learning.

Feedback-seeking behavior in SLA

CF refers to the information that L2 learners receive on their non-target-like use of the target language (Ellis et al., 2006). To front-and-center the learner's role in the feedback process, Papi et al. (2019) argued that learners are proactive agents who actively seek, attend to, and selectively learn from feedback to pursue their language goals. Drawing on Ashford's (1986) work, they introduced FSB and defined it as learners' strategic attempts to gather and use CF to enhance their L2 knowledge and skills. They also classified FSB into two types: feedback inquiry, which refers to directly eliciting CF from sources such as teachers or peers, and feedback monitoring, which involves paying attention to, understanding, and learning from CF. Their findings revealed that learners make deliberate decisions about whether to seek feedback, how to seek it, and from whom, based on their personal perceptions of the advantages and drawbacks associated with various feedback-seeking approaches.

A growing number of studies have examined the individual antecedents of FSB. In a study of foreign language learners in the United States, Papi et al. (2019; see also Papi et al., 2020) showed that learners' decisions throughout their FSB are influenced by their language mindsets, underlying motivational dispositions, and achievement goals. More specifically, a growth mindset and mastery goals were associated with more adaptive FSB than a fixed mindset and performance goals. Similar results were reported by Yao and Zhu (2024) in the English-learning context in China. Xu (2021) found that self-regulatory capacities and learning strategies were associated with learners' FSB. Other studies have found ideal L2 selves and academic buoyancy (Xu & Wang, 2023), and self-efficacy (Bondarenko, 2020), and intellectual humility (Karimi & Ramezanzadeh, 2026) to predict FSB. Specifically, Karimi and Ramezanzadeh (2026) found that intellectually humble learners were more likely to engage in feedback monitoring and feedback inquiry, highlighting the role of learner dispositions in shaping proactive engagement with feedback. Beyond individual motivational dispositions, contextual and relational factors may also influence learners' engagement in FSB. For instance, Choi et al. (2014) showed that trust in feedback providers shapes individuals' willingness to seek feedback by influencing their perceptions of the value and cost of feedback-seeking. In another study, Mahbodi et al. (2025) found that learners' trust in their teachers, both competence-based and affect-based, positively predicted feedback monitoring; however, affect-based trust positively predicted feedback inquiry, and competence-based trust negatively predicted inquiry. These effects were largely mediated by learners' cost-value appraisals.

Building on recent findings and to address discrepancies in results related to CF Monitoring and Inquiry, Papi et al. (in press) have conceptualised FSB as a multidimensional construct encompassing elicitation, monitoring, and use. The inclusion of the use dimension as a behavioural component of FSB makes this mode particularly relevant to RMT, where both assessment and locomotion regulatory modes may contribute to different dimensions of the new FSB model. It is anticipated that locomotion mode might be more closely associated with the elicitation and use dimensions, whereas assessment mode might be more predictive of the monitoring dimension (Teimouri et al., 2022). To test these hypotheses, the present study examines how learners' general and L2-specific RMs (i.e., assessment and locomotion) help explain individual differences in learners' feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use. This

study can help us understand the dispositional factors that may underlie differences in learners' FSB and the instructional approaches that can be used to optimise learners' benefit from it.

Regulatory mode theory in SLA

RMT (Kruglanski et al., 2000) explains how individuals differ in how they pursue goals, emphasising the functional aspects of self-regulation rather than the outcomes of goal pursuit. The theory proposes two independent self-regulatory modes: assessment and locomotion, which guide how individuals regulate their actions and decisions. Assessment is the evaluative component of self-regulation, in which individuals critically compare alternatives, analyse their performance, and determine whether they are pursuing the most appropriate goals or using the most effective means to achieve them. In contrast, locomotion is the action-oriented component of self-regulation and involves initiating and maintaining movement from one state to another to progress towards a goal. Importantly, these two modes are considered independent orientations, meaning that individuals may rely more on one than the other, or exhibit strong or weak tendencies in both (Higgins, 2011; Kruglanski et al., 2010).

Research in social psychology suggests that individuals high in locomotion tend to prioritise action and progress towards goals, demonstrating decisiveness, persistence, and lower levels of procrastination (Pierro et al., 2011). They are also inclined to focus narrowly on goal-relevant actions and prefer immediate rewards over delayed ones (Guo & Feng, 2015). In contrast, individuals high in assessment tend to scrutinise their performance, evaluate alternative strategies, and maintain higher standards for accuracy (Pierro et al., 2008, 2011). Although this evaluative orientation may lead them to take longer to complete tasks, it often results in greater precision and careful decision-making (Kruglanski et al., 2000). Assessors are also more likely to reflect on past experiences and critically evaluate their actions before moving forward (Pierro et al., 2008, 2013). These contrasting motivational tendencies suggest that assessment-oriented learners may engage more deeply with evaluative information such as feedback, whereas locomotion-oriented learners may prioritise action and progress, potentially leading them to seek and use feedback in ways that support movement towards learning goals (Papi et al., 2023).

RMT was initially applied to SLA through studies that used the general assessment and locomotion scales (Kruglanski et al., 2000; see [Supplementary File](#)) to examine target L2 variables. For instance, Papi et al. (2023) found that learners' assessment mode positively predicted syntactic and lexical complexity of their L2 task performance and was associated with fewer dysfluencies and higher English proficiency. On the other hand, the locomotion mode positively predicted their L2 fluency and the number of errors. Similar results were found by Tabari and Farahanynia (2026) in the context of L2 writing, with assessment predicting higher L2 writing complexity and locomotion predicting higher L2 writing fluency and lower accuracy. In another study, Eom and Papi (2022) found that learners' assessment mode positively affected the complexity and accuracy of their L2 production, whereas locomotion mode had no significant effects.

While the original regulatory mode scales (Kruglanski et al., 2000) assess assessment and locomotion as general self-regulatory orientations across domains, Teimouri et al. (2022)

argued that learners may regulate their actions differently in language learning contexts than in other areas of life. Consequently, they developed L2-specific assessment and locomotion scales that capture how learners evaluate and pursue goals specifically within L2 learning environments. This distinction allows researchers to examine whether domain-specific self-regulatory tendencies provide greater explanatory power for L2-related outcomes than their domain-general counterparts.

Teimouri et al. (2022) marked a major advancement by introducing the first L2-specific version of the RM scale and examined how L2 learners' RMs were associated with their emotional experiences, motivation, and language proficiency. Specifically, across two studies, participants completed a newly developed questionnaire that included L2-specific regulatory modes (L2 assessment and locomotion), as well as measures of L2 emotions, motivation, and self-reported proficiency. Their findings showed that L2 locomotion negatively predicted L2 anxiety and positively predicted willingness to communicate and L2 proficiency, results which aligned with the action-oriented tendency of L2 locomotion. Conversely, L2 assessment was positively linked to L2 anxiety and attention, which align with the evaluative function of L2 assessment. Finally, by combining the full sample ($n = 918$), a cluster analysis revealed that learners with strong scores in both locomotion and assessment exhibited the most adaptive emotional and motivational patterns, that is, the highest levels of joy, attention, willingness to communicate, and intended effort.

Despite the growing body of research applying RMT to SLA, all existing studies have focused on performance- or emotion-related outcomes, such as L2 emotions, motivation, and willingness to communicate (Teimouri et al., 2022) and task performance and proficiency (Eom & Papi, 2022; Papi et al., 2023). However, RMT, in principle, concerns how learners pursue goals, making it more appropriate for the study of behaviour, a topic that has not been explored in previous studies. This absence represents a significant gap in both the RMT and FSB literatures, and addressing it offers an opportunity to understand how RMT can shape proactive L2 learning behaviours (Papi & Hiver, 2025). This study extends Teimouri et al.'s (2022) work by examining both general and L2RMs in relation to a behavioural outcome, FSB.

Research questions

Based on the literature review outlined above, the following research questions will be explored:

RQ1: What is the relationship between learners' chronic regulatory modes (assessment and locomotion) and their feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use?

RQ2: What is the relationship between learners' L2-specific regulatory modes (L2 assessment and L2 locomotion) and their feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use?

Methods

Participants

The participants included 212 learners of foreign languages (122 females, 85 males, and 5 others) at a university in the United States. The participants' average age was 23.90 years ($SD = 6.30$). They were enrolled in different foreign language classes, including French

($n=62$), Japanese ($n=55$), Italian ($n=34$), Spanish ($n=23$), Arabic ($n=15$), German ($n=13$), Chinese ($n=7$), and Russian ($n=3$). Participants were enrolled in first- and second-year foreign language courses (1000- and 2000-level courses), representing beginning to intermediate stages of language study. All participants had completed at least one semester of language study. Most participants' ($n=172$) first language was English, along with Spanish ($n=40$). The sample included freshmen ($n=44$), sophomores ($n=36$), juniors ($n=41$), seniors ($n=52$), and graduate students ($n=39$).

Instruments

The general RM questionnaire (RMQ; Kruglanski et al., 2000) and L2RM questionnaire (Teimouri et al., 2022) were administered to measure participants' L2-specific and general RMs. The full items of the RMQ, L2RM, and FSB questionnaires are provided in the [Supplementary Materials](#). The RMQ scale consisted of 24 items, with 12 assessing locomotion and 12 assessing assessment. The L2-specific RM scale included 9 items (5 locomotion and 4 assessment). The FSB questionnaire, developed by Papi et al. ([in press](#)), was used to measure three dimensions of FSB: feedback elicitation (4 items), feedback monitoring (4 items), and feedback use (4 items). All items across the three instruments used a six-point Likert scale with 1 denoting *never or rarely* and 6 denoting *constantly* for FSB items. For regulatory mode items, 1 denotes *strongly disagree*, and 6 denotes *strongly agree*. Demographic information, including age, gender, first language, target language, university status, and year of study, was collected *via* a separate questionnaire.

Procedures

After obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the heads of the foreign language programs (e.g., Italian, French, Japanese) were contacted to explain the purpose and procedures of the study. Next, the instructors of the relevant language classes were invited to collaborate and grant access to their classes. With their approval, the researcher conducted scheduled in-person classroom visits to administer the questionnaire. During each visit, students were briefed on the purpose of the study, research expectations and procedures involved, their rights to voluntary participation, confidentiality protections, and their ability to withdraw at any time without penalty. Of the 212 participants, 56 completed a paper version, while 156 completed an online version on Qualtrics. Completion of the questionnaire took approximately 10–15 min.

Data analysis

Before analysis, all data were screened for potential inaccuracies, missing values, and outliers. Examination of the retained cases did not reveal any problematic outliers warranting exclusion. A small amount of missing data led to slightly different sample sizes across analyses because participants with missing responses on variables included in a given analysis were excluded *via* listwise deletion. Consequently, the effective sample size was 208 for the general RM CFA and 206 for the L2RM and FSB CFAs. Next, Confirmatory Factor Analyses (CFAs) were conducted in Mplus 8 using the WLSMV estimator to test the original 3-factor model (Papi et al., [in press](#)) and competing models of FSB. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices,

including the chi-square statistic (χ^2), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), and Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The models were re-estimated using the MLR estimator to obtain AIC and BIC for model comparison. Model comparison criteria included parsimony, theoretical interpretability, and statistical adequacy. Additionally, CFAs were conducted for the L2RM and RM questionnaire scales to validate their two-factor structures (Locomotion and Assessment) before proceeding to subsequent analyses.

Following the factor analyses, reliability analyses were conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess internal consistency for each construct and subscale. Descriptive statistics were also computed to provide an overview of participants' responses across variables and scales.

Finally, to address the research questions, multiple regression analyses were performed in SPSS 31 to examine the predictive relationships between regulatory modes and the three dimensions of FSB (elicitation, monitoring, and use). Prior to conducting the regressions, all relevant assumptions were examined. Normality of residuals was evaluated through inspection of skewness and kurtosis indices (all within ± 1) and supported by a Q–Q plot. Linearity and homoscedasticity were verified by plotting standardised residuals against predicted values, which showed no systematic patterns. Multicollinearity diagnostics indicated acceptable tolerance values ($> .40$) and low VIF scores (< 2.50), confirming independence among predictors.

To evaluate the adequacy of the sample size, we conducted an a priori power analysis using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009). Assuming a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$), $\alpha = .05$, power = .80, and four predictors, the analysis indicated that a minimum sample size of 85 participants was required. Our sample of 212 participants substantially exceeded this requirement, indicating adequate statistical power for the regression analyses conducted in the study.

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine how general and L2RMs predict L2 learners' FSB. Before testing the hypothesised relationships, CFAs were conducted to validate the measurement models of the general and L2RM questionnaires. Considering that the FSB scales were newly developed and validated by Papi et al. (in press), a CFA was conducted to examine the latent structure of the FSB scales, followed by multiple regression analyses to test the predictive relationships among the validated constructs.

Confirmatory factor analysis

A CFA was conducted on the general RM questionnaire to evaluate its hypothesised two-factor structure consisting of locomotion and assessment. The original 24-item model (Kruglanski et al., 2000; see [Supplementary File](#)) demonstrated inadequate fit. Following examination of factor loadings and modification indices, eight poorly performing items were removed. The resulting 16-item two-factor model demonstrated acceptable fit to the data, $\chi^2(103) = 159.36$, RMSEA = .051 [.035, .067], CFI = .921, TLI = .908, and SRMR = .069. [Table 1](#) presents the standardised factor loadings and model fit indices for the revised general RM questionnaire. All retained items loaded significantly on their intended factors, and the revised general RM questionnaire was retained for subsequent analyses.

Additionally, because the L2RM scales were newly developed, a CFA was performed to confirm the hypothesised two-factor structure. Table 2 presents the standardised factor loadings and model fit indices for the L2RM CFA, which supported a two-factor model comprising locomotion and assessment ($r = .44$). The model demonstrated acceptable fit ($\chi^2(26) = 76.92$, RMSEA = .098 [.073–.124], CFI = .960, TLI = .945, SRMR = .044), validating the measurement model used in subsequent regression analyses. Overall, the CFA results confirmed

Table 1. Standardised factor loadings and model fit indices for the general RM CFA.

Factor	β
<i>Locomotion</i>	
1. I don't mind doing things even if they involve extra effort.	.460
3. I am a "workaholic."	.627
5. I feel excited just before I am about to reach a goal.	.417
7. I enjoy actively doing things more than just watching and observing.	.452
9. I am a "doer."	.702
13. When I decide to do something, I can't wait to get started.	.567
15. By the time I accomplish a task, I already have the next one in mind.	.546
21. When I get started on something, I usually persevere until I finish it.	.640
23. I am a "go-getter."	.771
<i>Assessment</i>	
4. I spend a great deal of time taking inventory of my positive and negative characteristics.	.439
6. I like evaluating other people's plans.	.489
8. I often compare myself with other people.	.564
12. I often critique work done by myself and others.	.562
14. I often feel that I am being evaluated by others.	.758
16. I am a critical person.	.593
18. I am very self-critical and self-conscious about what I am saying.	.715

Note. $N = 208$ after listwise deletion of cases with missing data. All loadings are significant at $p < .001$.

Table 2. Standardised factor loadings and model fit indices for the L2RM CFA.

Factor	β
<i>Locomotion</i>	
1. I often look for any chance to speak the target language in my class.	.88
3. I speak the target language a lot in my class.	.68
5. Whenever I have an idea in my language class, I express it immediately.	.60
7. I often actively and energetically participate in my target language learning activities in my class.	.80
9. I'd like to speak in my language class rather than watch others speaking.	.60
<i>Assessment</i>	
2. I often analyse the structure of my sentences before speaking the target language.	.79
4. I often think about what I am going to say before I speak in the target language.	.62
6. When someone is speaking the target language, I often analyse the structures of their sentences.	.59
8. I often pay close attention to my choice of vocabulary and grammatical structures while I am speaking the target language.	.82

Note. $N = 206$ after listwise deletion of cases with missing data. All loadings are significant at $p < .001$.

the multidimensional structure of the FSB construct and supported the reliability and validity of the measurement models used in this study. As shown in Table 3, the mean scores for the variables indicated that participants reported moderately high levels on all the scales, with standard deviations indicating adequate variability across measures. For the regulatory mode scales, Cronbach's alpha ranged from .75 to .82, indicating adequate reliability. Finally, skewness and kurtosis values for all the scales fell within acceptable limits (± 2), supporting the normality of the data.

Three CFAs were conducted to evaluate the latent structure of the 12-item FSB scale. Three competing measurement models were tested: a one-factor, a two-factor, and a three-factor model. Following Papi et al. (in press), the two-factor model represented elicitation as a separate factor and combined monitoring and use into a single factor. The fit indices for the competing FSB CFA models are summarised in Table 4. The one-factor model demonstrated poor fit to the data, $\chi^2(65) = 573.73$, RMSEA = .192 [.178, .207], CFI = .942, TLI = .931, SRMR = .067, indicating that a unidimensional representation of FSB was not tenable. The two-factor model showed an improved fit, $\chi^2(64) = 330.36$, RMSEA = .140 [.125, .155], CFI = .970, TLI = .963, SRMR = .041, but the inadequate RMSEA value suggested that combining monitoring and use into a single factor did not fully capture the construct's multidimensionality.

In contrast, the three-factor model representing elicitation, monitoring, and use provided a very good fit to the data, $\chi^2(62) = 122.89$, RMSEA = .068 [.050, .086], CFI = .993, TLI = .991, SRMR = .019. This model also yielded the lowest AIC and BIC values among the competing models, indicating model parsimony. Taken together, these results support the theorised three-factor structure of FSB (Papi et al. in press). Accordingly, the three-factor model was retained as the final measurement model for subsequent analyses. All factor loadings were substantial and statistically significant, ranging from .82 to .94 (Table 5). The latent factors were strongly correlated (Elicitation–Monitoring $r = .77$; Elicitation–Use $r = .75$; Monitoring–Use $r = .84$, all $p < .001$), supporting the interpretation of FSB as a multidimensional but coherent construct.

Descriptive statistics and reliability indices were then computed for the three FSB subscales derived from the final measurement model. Table 6 presents the means, standard deviations, and reliability estimates for the elicitation, monitoring, and use dimensions. All three subscales demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha = .91$ –.93) and strong composite

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and reliability of study variables.

Variable	M	SD	α	N of items
Locomotion	4.45	0.74	.82	9
Assessment	4.25	0.90	.79	7
L2 Locomotion	3.95	1.00	.75	5
L2 Assessment	4.55	0.85	.81	4

Table 4. Fit indices for feedback-seeking behavior CFA models.

Model	$\chi^2(df)$	RMSEA [90% CI]	CFI	TLI	SRMR	AIC	BIC
Model 1	573.73 (65)	.192 [.178, .207]	.942	.931	.067	7145.49	7276.39
Model 2	330.36 (64)	.140 [.125, .155]	.970	.963	.041	6922.35	7056.62
Model 3	122.89 (62)	.068 [.050, .086]	.993	.991	.019	6706.72	6847.70

Note. Fit indices (χ^2 , RMSEA, CFI, TLI, SRMR) were obtained using the WLSMV estimator in Mplus 8. Information criteria (AIC, BIC) were obtained by re-estimating each model using the MLR estimator. Model 1 = 1-factor (Elicitation + Monitoring + Use); Model 2 = 2-factor (Elicitation vs Monitoring + Use); Model 3 = 3-factor (Elicitation, Monitoring, Use).

Table 5. Standardised CFA factor loadings for the three-factor FSB mode.

Latent constructs	β
<i>Feedback Elicitation</i>	
1. When I think I might have made an error in my spoken target language, I try to get corrections by asking others (teachers, peers, etc.), using AI tools (such as ChatGPT), or checking other resources (the internet, dictionaries, etc.).	.82
4. When I'm not sure about my target language pronunciation, I try to get corrections by asking others (teachers, peers, etc.), using AI tools (such as ChatGPT), or checking dictionaries.	.86
7. When I think I might have made a grammar error while speaking the target language, I ask others (teachers, peers, etc.), use AI tools (such as ChatGPT) or check dictionaries to find the correct form.	.94
10. When I think I might have used a target language word, phrase, or idiom incorrectly in my speaking, I ask others (teachers, peers, etc.), use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) or other resources (e.g., the internet, dictionaries) for corrections.	.88
<i>Feedback Monitoring</i>	
2. I pay close attention and try to learn from the corrections I receive on errors in my spoken target language.	.88
5. I pay close attention and try to learn from the corrections I receive for my target language pronunciation errors.	.93
8. I pay close attention and try to learn from the corrections I receive on grammar errors I make when speaking the target language.	.90
11. I pay close attention and try to learn from the corrections I receive for my use of target language vocabulary and idioms in speaking.	.92
<i>Feedback Use</i>	
3. I try to use the correct forms in my target language speaking after I get corrected.	.90
6. I try to adjust my target language pronunciation after I get corrected.	.92
9. I try to use the correct grammar in my target language speaking after I get corrected.	.93
12. I try to use the correct vocabulary and idioms in my target language speaking after getting corrected.	.93

Note. $N = 206$ after listwise deletion of cases with missing data. All coefficients significant at $p < .001$.

Table 6. Descriptives and reliabilities of final scales in the three-factor model.

	k	M	SD	α	CR	AVE
Elicitation	4	4.34	1.24	0.91	0.92	0.74
Monitoring	4	4.63	1.12	0.93	0.94	0.80
Use	4	4.95	1.07	0.93	0.95	0.82

Note. CR = composite reliability. AVE = average variance extracted.

reliability (CR = .92–.95). The average variance extracted (AVE) values ranged from .74 to .82, exceeding the recommended threshold of .50 and indicating adequate convergent validity.

Multiple regression analyses

To investigate the predictive relationships between regulatory modes and FSB (see Table 7 for intercorrelations), regression analyses were conducted across the FSB components: elicitation, monitoring, and use. General RM predictors (Table 8) and L2RM predictors (Table 9) were analysed to evaluate their unique contributions when controlling for shared variance.

When general locomotion and general assessment were entered as predictors, the models accounted for relatively small proportions of the variance in FSB: 5.6% for feedback elicitation, 7.8% for feedback monitoring, and 2.3% for feedback use. Although the overall models were statistically significant, these R^2 values suggest that general regulatory modes explain only

Table 7. Intercorrelations among study variables.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. General Locomotion	—						
2. General Assessment	.21**	—					
3. L2 Locomotion	.29***	.03	—				
4. L2 Assessment	.25***	.25***	.32***	—			
5. Feedback Elicitation	.21**	.15*	.29***	.32***	—		
6. Feedback Monitoring	.28***	.10	.38***	.42***	.69***	—	
7. Feedback Use	.15*	.04	.29***	.42***	.67***	.76***	—

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 8. Multiple regression results with general regulatory modes predicting FSB components.

	Feedback Elicitation		Feedback Monitoring		Feedback Use	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β
Locomotion	.32 (.12) **	.191	.40 (.10) ***	.269	.22 (.10) *	.149
Assessment	.15 (.10)	.107	.05 (.08)	.040	.01 (.08)	.007
R^2	.056		.078		.023	
F (2, 205)	6.11**		8.70***		2.40*	

Table 9. Multiple regression results with L2 regulatory modes predicting FSB components.

Predictor	Feedback Elicitation		Feedback Monitoring		Feedback Use	
	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β	B (SE)	β
L2 Locomotion	.26 (.09) **	.210	.30 (.07) ***	.268	.16 (.07) *	.151
L2 Assessment	.36 (.10) ***	.246	.44 (.09) ***	.333	.49 (.08) ***	.383
R^2	.138		.241		.207	
F (2, 200)	16.06***		31.71***		26.17***	

a modest amount of individual differences in FSB. General locomotion emerged as a consistent positive predictor of feedback elicitation ($\beta = .191$, $p = .006$) and feedback monitoring ($\beta = .269$, $p < .001$) and showed a smaller yet significant effect on feedback use ($\beta = .149$, $p = .035$). In contrast, general assessment did not significantly predict any FSB behaviours across the three models. These results suggest that, at the trait level, locomotion is associated with greater engagement in FSB, whereas assessment does not emerge as a significant predictor. Furthermore, the relatively low R^2 values indicate that much of the variance in FSB remains unexplained by general RMs alone, suggesting that other factors, such as L2 regulatory modes, may be more important determinants of FSB.

Table 9 summarises the regression models using L2 locomotion and L2 assessment as predictors. In contrast to the weaker predictive patterns observed in the general RM models, the L2-specific models accounted for substantially larger proportions of variance in FSB, explaining 13.8% in feedback elicitation, 24.1% in feedback monitoring, and 20.7% in feedback use. These findings indicate that L2-specific RMs have considerably greater explanatory power for FSB than general RMs. Both L2 locomotion and L2 assessment emerged as consistent and significant predictors across all three FSB dimensions.

For elicitation and monitoring, the effects of L2 locomotion ($\beta = .210$, $p < .01$ and $\beta = .268$, $p < .001$, respectively) and L2 assessment ($\beta = .246$, $p < .001$, and $\beta = .333$, $p < .001$) were significant and moderately sized. For feedback use, L2 assessment was the strongest predictor ($\beta = .383$, $p < .001$), while L2 locomotion also contributed significantly ($\beta = .151$, $p = .024$). These results show that learners' regulatory orientations within the

specific context of L2 learning play a more prominent role in shaping how they seek, monitor, and use feedback in the classroom.

Discussion

Grounded in RMT (Kruglanski et al., 2000), this study examined whether and how general and L2-specific regulatory modes predict learners' FSB, including elicitation, monitoring, and use. The results supported the central assumption that regulatory mode is associated with FSB. Learners' general and L2-specific regulatory modes were found to account for significant variance in how they actively seek, attend to, and use CF within and beyond the instructional context.

The general locomotion mode significantly predicted all three dimensions of FSB, including elicitation, monitoring, and use, although the effects were relatively modest. Theoretically, locomotion reflects a self-regulatory orientation towards initiating and sustaining goal-directed action without unnecessary delay (Higgins, 2011; Kruglanski et al., 2000). Individuals high in locomotion tend to prioritise movement from one state to another and commit psychological resources to maintaining progress towards their goals. Studies grounded in RMT show that locomotion is associated with greater task engagement, persistence, and goal pursuit (Kruglanski et al., 2000; Pierro et al., 2011). Similarly, research examining motivational dispositions in oral L2 task performance has shown that locomotion predicts greater oral and written L2 fluency, indicating that action-oriented learners tend to maintain communicative momentum during language use (Eom & Papi, 2022; Papi et al., 2023; Tabari & Farahanynia, 2026). From this perspective, locomotion serves as the motivational force that energises FSB by prompting learners to initiate interaction, remain engaged in communicative activity, and continue progressing towards their L2 learning goals. In terms of FSB, this locomotion mode can naturally drive learners to engage in more interactive behaviours (Papi & Hiver, 2025), which provides them with more chances to elicit corrective feedback, monitor it for optimal processing, and incorporate it into their subsequent language use.

Although general assessment showed a weak positive bivariate association with feedback elicitation, it did not emerge as a significant predictor of feedback elicitation, monitoring, or use when locomotion was included in the regression models. In RMT, assessment involves critically evaluating goals, means, and performance to make the best possible decisions (Higgins, 2011; Kruglanski et al., 2000, 2010). Assessment-oriented individuals tend to compare alternatives, reflect on their performance, and scrutinise their actions against internal and external standards. Although such tendencies may promote careful and accurate performance, they do not necessarily translate into proactive behavioural engagement (Higgins, 2011; Kruglanski et al., 2000). In fact, RMT research has shown that strong assessment concerns may sometimes lead to hesitation, fear of making mistakes, or delayed action when evaluative comparison becomes excessive and is not balanced by locomotion tendencies (Higgins, 2011; Kruglanski et al., 2000; Pierro et al., 2013). Consistent with this view, Papi et al. (2023) found that assessment positively predicted the complexity dimensions of L2 task performance, which signal forethought and monitoring of one's L2 speech. At the same time, learners who are highly focused on evaluating the accuracy and appropriateness of their behaviours may be less willing to engage spontaneously in L2 communicative activities, thereby limiting their opportunities to receive and act on CF. This tendency may help explain why assessment did not predict FSB.

L2 locomotion predicted the elicitation, monitoring, and use of feedback. In an L2 learning context, where communication and interaction frequently provide opportunities for CF, such an action-oriented tendency should naturally increase learners' engagement in FSB. L2 locomotors tend to initiate communication rapidly and engage readily in speaking opportunities, which increases their exposure to feedback along the way. Logically, locomotion should facilitate elicitation because learners who engage in classroom speaking are more willing to initiate interaction (Teimouri et al., 2022) and actively request information when communication difficulties arise. It should also support monitoring, as learners who remain actively engaged in communication are more frequently exposed to CF and therefore have more opportunities to attend to and process it. Finally, locomotion may facilitate the use of feedback because learners who maintain sustained engagement in communicative activity are more likely to incorporate feedback immediately as they continue towards their communicative goals. By using feedback, they can communicate more effectively and maintain the flow of communication. Empirical research provides support for this interpretation.

Likewise, L2 assessment predicted all dimensions of CF elicitation, monitoring, and use. Learners high in L2 assessment habitually scrutinise their linguistic accuracy, which leads them to actively gather and monitor information to reduce uncertainty about their L2 performance (Teimouri et al., 2022). Interestingly, L2 assessment also strongly predicted the use of feedback. An important reason why L2 assessment may predict feedback use is that once CF is elicited, the L2 assessor may engage in more than merely monitoring corrective feedback. Monitoring requires learners to evaluate feedback, determine its relevance and accuracy, and consider how future performance should be adjusted. Because L2 assessment reflects a chronic concern with evaluating linguistic performance and achieving accurate language use, learners high in assessment may be particularly inclined not only to process the feedback but also to translate it into behavioural adjustment by incorporating corrections into subsequent language production (Papi et al., 2023). Through L2 application, L2 assessors determine the accuracy of their hypotheses about how the language works.

The predictive contributions of L2 assessment and L2 locomotion to all three FSB dimensions suggest that domain-specific RMs may operate differently from their general counterparts. Unlike the general RMs, which exhibited qualitatively different patterns of association with FSB, with locomotion emerging as the only significant predictor, both L2 assessment and L2 locomotion positively predicted feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use. Moreover, general locomotion correlated weakly with L2 locomotion ($r = .29$), and general assessment correlated weakly with L2 assessment ($r = .25$). The present findings raise questions about the extent to which L2-specific regulatory modes capture the same qualitative distinctions represented in general regulatory mode theory. The strong positive associations between L2 regulatory modes and FSB suggest that these orientations may reflect learners' overall engagement in classroom activities rather than self-regulatory orientations rooted in their motivational principles driving qualitative differences in learners' behaviour (Papi, 2018). In other words, L2 assessment and L2 locomotion appear to show learners' engagement in classroom L2 speaking activities, which, in turn, may increase their likelihood of FSB.

Finally, although there was a large correlation between feedback monitoring and use ($r = .76$), the two FSB components should be viewed as closely related but distinct constructs

(Papi et al. *in press*). Monitoring represents a cognitive-evaluative process through which learners attend to, interpret, and evaluate corrective feedback in relation to their current language performance. Use, in contrast, represents a behavioural implementation process that involves incorporating feedback into subsequent language production. This distinction somewhat parallels the well-established SLA distinction between noticing and uptake, where learners may notice or understand feedback without necessarily modifying their future language use. Although the two processes were strongly correlated in the present study, the superior fit of the three-factor model relative to the competing one- and two-factor models indicates that monitoring and use capture related but distinguishable dimensions of oral FSB. Consequently, learners who carefully process and evaluate feedback are more likely to implement it, but successful monitoring does not automatically guarantee behavioural adjustment.

Pedagogical implications

The results of this study offer pedagogical implications for fostering learners' proactive engagement with corrective feedback. First, teachers can strengthen L2 assessment, which involves critical evaluation and comparison (Teimouri et al., 2022), by building regular opportunities for self-evaluation and reflection on one's own L2 performance. Practices such as transcription, metacognitive reflections, peer review with explicit criteria, and reflective learning journals can enhance learners' evaluative awareness and promote FSB and learning (Chiocca, 2025; Sato & Storch, 2022; Sippel, 2024; Ziegler et al., 2026). These activities support the development of a feedback-seeking mindset by fostering cognitive–evaluative engagement with learning processes (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). Given that L2-specific regulatory modes were associated with feedback elicitation, monitoring, and use, instructional practices that promote active participation in interactive activities that enhance FSB opportunities and needs may be particularly beneficial (Sato & Loewen, 2018). Another promising approach is the development of learners' feedback literacy (Carless, 2026). Feedback literacy refers to learners' capacities and dispositions to seek, interpret, and use feedback to improve their work and learning strategies (Carless & Boud, 2018; Malecka et al., 2022). This pedagogical direction is especially relevant because feedback literacy emphasises learners' active engagement in seeking, processing, and acting upon feedback, behaviours that closely align with the dimensions of FSB examined in the present study. Such competencies are likely to become increasingly relevant as language learners increasingly access feedback through AI-supported technologies. Simply having access to automated feedback is unlikely to promote learning unless learners are equipped to seek feedback intentionally, evaluate it critically, and use it to support subsequent learning (Murtisari et al., 2025). Carless (2026) highlights that learners need to appreciate the value of feedback, develop evaluative judgement, manage emotional responses, and translate feedback into deliberate action. To foster these competencies, teachers can design structured reflection activities that encourage deeper engagement with CF. For example, learners may analyse teacher corrections, identify recurring patterns in their errors, or write short reflections explaining how they will address feedback in subsequent tasks. These practices encourage learners to evaluate language use, notice linguistic features, and make informed decisions

about revisions, thereby strengthening their ability to benefit from feedback and to engage more proactively with feedback processes.

In the present study, both L2 assessment and L2 locomotion were positively associated with dimensions of FSB. The findings suggest that instructional practices may benefit from supporting both evaluative and action-oriented engagement with feedback. Consistent with Teimouri et al. (2022), who emphasise the complementary roles of assessment and locomotion in language learning, teachers can create opportunities for learners to both evaluate their performance and actively pursue improvement. For example, learners might be encouraged to identify areas where they need feedback, seek feedback from teachers or peers, monitor and interpret the feedback they receive, and develop plans to incorporate it into subsequent learning activities.

Limitations and future research directions

Several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the exclusive reliance on self-reported questionnaire data, although validated and reliable, may be subject to the common method bias. Future studies would benefit from incorporating multi-method designs that combine quantitative data with observational, behavioural, or qualitative evidence. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences. Although regression analyses revealed meaningful predictive patterns, longitudinal or experimental designs are needed to establish temporal directionality, for instance, by manipulating feedback environments to examine how assessment and locomotion orientations influence adaptive engagement over time. Participants were drawn from a single North American university, representing a relatively homogeneous population of language learners. While this provided control over contextual variability, it may also limit the generalisability of the findings. Future research should replicate this study across diverse cultural and instructional settings, including EFL, ESL, and bilingual education contexts. This study examined self-reported FSB as a relatively stable behavioural pattern. Future studies could employ longitudinal, experience-sampling, observational, or diary-based methods to investigate how regulatory modes interact with situational factors to shape fluctuations in FSB over time.

Another limitation concerns the potential influence of language proficiency on responses to some questionnaire items. Because participants were enrolled in introductory and intermediate language courses, some behaviours assessed by these measures, such as speaking frequently in class or immediately expressing ideas in the target language, may be partly constrained by learners' linguistic ability and prior learning experience. Consequently, lower scores on certain items may reflect limitations in opportunity or proficiency rather than solely differences in regulatory orientations or feedback-seeking tendencies (Tabari & Farahanynia, 2026). Future research should examine the role of proficiency more directly, for example, by including proficiency measures as control variables or by investigating whether the relationships between regulatory modes and FSB vary across proficiency levels.

Moreover, while the present study focused on individual motivational dispositions, future research could build on recent findings by examining interactions among learner and contextual variables, such as trust in teachers, peer relations, and classroom climate. For instance, learners high in assessment may seek CF more frequently in supportive, low-cost feedback environments than in highly evaluative contexts due to fear of negative judgement (Mahbodi et al., 2025; Papi et al., 2026). Similarly, examining whether emotions mediate the relationship

between RMs and FSB may enrich the understanding of motivational dynamics within PLLT and help explain why some learners transform evaluative feedback into motivation while others experience demotivation or avoidance. Finally, future work could examine whether specific combinations of assessment and locomotion tendencies yield distinct learner profiles using person-centered approaches (e.g., cluster analysis, latent profile analysis). Such analyses would allow researchers to identify qualitatively different regulatory configurations and determine whether certain profiles correspond to more adaptive patterns of FSB.

Conclusion

The present study set out to explain why some L2 learners actively seek, monitor, and use CF while others do not, by examining the role of learners' RMs within both general and L2-specific regulatory modes. The findings demonstrated that regulatory modes predicted FSB in both their general and domain-specific forms; however, the predictive patterns differed across conceptual levels. At the general level, locomotion emerged as the only significant predictor across all three FSB dimensions, whereas assessment showed no significant effects. These results highlight that feedback engagement is not merely a reaction to instructional opportunities, but a proactive, motivationally driven behaviour grounded in how learners evaluate their performance and sustain goal-oriented action. In contrast, at the L2-specific level, both L2 locomotion and L2 assessment positively predicted all three dimensions of FSB and did so considerably better than general RMs. These findings raise the possibility that L2-specific regulatory modes (Teimouri et al., 2022) may partly reflect learners' engagement in classroom interaction rather than motivational principles that shape qualitative differences in learning processes, behaviours, and outcomes. These findings extend research on L2 regulatory mode by showing that they may operate at the same level as similar self-directed learning behaviours, such as interaction-seeking behaviour (Farhang and Papi, 2025) and information-seeking behaviour (Qian et al., 2026). The study underscores that developing learners' capacity to seek, evaluate, and apply feedback is not simply a matter of technique or exposure, but of trait-like motivational dispositions that shape L2 learning behaviours.

By situating RMT within the PLLT framework, the current study bridges two perspectives on motivation. PLLT explains *what* learners do to actively shape their learning environment and maximise growth opportunities, while RMT explains *how* learners regulate their motivational pursuits through evaluation (assessment) and action (locomotion). Learners who habitually analyse linguistic performance and reflect on linguistic information appear well-positioned to recognise when feedback is needed, to interpret it meaningfully once it is received; however, they may lag when it comes to creating the communicative opportunity where the CF is received and engaged with. At the same time, learners who habitually regulate their motivation through movement from one state to another are more likely to seek CF-rich communicative exchanges, in which they receive, monitor, and use CF for more effective communication.

Disclosure statement

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