

CORRECTIVE FEEDBACKS AND THEIR IMPACTS TO LEARNERS' UPTAKES IN EFL SPEAKING CLASS

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the importance of both teachers' and students' acceptance about the fact that errors are important part of learning process. It is through students' errors, teacher can observe what students are trying to possess, what notions students have misunderstood and what additional work they might need. For that reason, errors are often seen as a sign of learning in language acquisition process. On the other hand, teachers' habits in responding students' spoken errors are varied, showing different reactions they hold towards student's spoken errors. Some teachers tend to correct all the errors while some tend to be tolerant, and still some others do not correct at all. Corrective feedbacks are provided by the teacher in responding student's errors. From the language teacher's point of view, the provision of feedback is a major means to inform learners of the accuracy of both their target language production. Unfortunately, sometimes, feedback as a part of teacher-learner interaction in the class is assumed as a barrier in doing a communication. This paper calls the attention to the importance of applying the appropriate corrective feedbacks toward students' spoken errors and the impacts of that error correction behavior toward students' uptake.

Keywords: Corrective feedbacks, categories of errors, students' uptake.

Introduction

One of the natural aspects in the world which is quite related with human being is error. In particular, in language learning, error commonly happens in the process of learning. However, the next question will arise, how error in language learning will be defined. As Ellis (1997) explains "learners make errors in both comprehension and production, the first being rather scantily investigated". Furthermore, Maicusi and Lopez (2000) argue that "children, adult, and second language learners learn and make errors which have a different name according to the group that commit errors." Children's error is so called as 'transitional forms', meanwhile the native speakers' ones are so called "slips of the tongue" and the second language (L2) errors are considered as 'unwanted forms'.

One perspective that sees error as a part of language learning in a combination of forms that have the same condition and similar context of language production that is impossible produced by the native speakers. Mostly, in the second language teaching learning process, error has always been seen as something negative which must be avoided. As a result, teachers have always used a repressive attitude towards errors produced by the student. On the first view point, error was considered to be a sign of deficiency of the teaching approach and on the other view point it was seen as a natural result of the fact that errors could not be avoided. Luckily, errors nowadays are seen from different view point that language

teacher and language learner can learn from. One of the most broadly famous approaches concerning the error during human history is considered as a negative effect. And error is even worth to be punished. Punishing the error has occurred along with teaching and learning processes and has been used as an instrument of authority and a teaching approach. For this time being, error has been abandoned. The idea of the error as an effect to be avoided has been especially supported by behaviorism. Behaviorism determines that errors are obstacle to language learning. They view errors as an indication of unproductive teaching or as a proof of failure, and they believed that when they occur they must be repaired. The improvement can be achieved by providing the correct forms, which use serious drilling and over teaching.

One of different perspectives is the idea from the behaviorism. Behaviorist argues that language learner will get no any progress in learning language without committing errors. The idea is based on Chomsky's idea that a child produces language through innate universal structures. One can have entrance to different pieces of knowledge not as something mechanically learned but as mentally constructed through try and error. The idea is now that the second language learners form practical prediction about the rules to be shaped in the target language and then test them out against input data and adjust them. This is how the error promotes progress and improvement in learning. The behaviorists' model is now gradually substituted by the mentalists'. This new conception states the error is finally seen as something positive and not as a problem. It is great importance to try to find out why the error is made. It is because not all types of error must be treated in the same way. It is not just the teacher that should correct the student, however

the errors made by the learner.

students should actually be motivated to do themselves. Here, the teacher's role is to help the students become conscious of their errors and give them motivation to try and find for themselves why they have made the error and how they could avoid repeating it.

When errors should be corrected? Chaudron (1998) argues that "the general tendencies vary according to the instructional focus". Errors correction happens when the teaching and learning focus on form corrections. On the other hand when focus is on the communicative competence teachers tend to correct those errors which seem to barricade communication. Which errors should be corrected? Chaudron (1998) also states that "errors which damage communication significantly, errors that have stigmatizing effects on the listener or the reader that should be corrected."

In the language classroom the teacher tends to correct the errors automatically, and it is equally important that delay in the correction would allow the learner a greater opportunity of self correction and would help the development of independent control processes. It is characterized by the competence of communication in the mother language and which are considered to be necessary in the socialization of the second language. The routine correction on part of the teacher actually runs the risk of making the learner depended on correction by others. Moreover, the correction of an error by the teacher as self correction of a problem of perception would reduce the risk of harming the student's self esteem and would imitate the conditions of acquisition found in a natural setting.

There are two kinds of errors seen from their major distinction between overt and covert errors. The first kind is overtly erroneous

utterances. They are undeniably ungrammatical sentences. The second kind of error is covertly erroneous utterances, which are grammatically well formed but not interpretable within the normal context of communication.

Furthermore, related to error corrective feedbacks provided by the teacher in the classroom, there is another term which needs to identify, which is called as corrective feedback. Based on Lyster & Ranta (1997) corrective feedback is described as “the provision of negative evidence or positive evidence upon erroneous utterances, which encourages learners’ repair involving accuracy and precision, and not merely comprehensibility.”

In line with Lyster and Ranta, Chaudron (1988) states that corrective feedback is the “provision of feedback or ‘knowledge of results’ which is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy of both their formal target language production and their other classroom performance and knowledge.” Another term which needs to be identified is “uptake” that means different types of student responses following the feedback, including responses with repair of the non-target items as well as utterances still in need of repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). The correction mostly come from the teacher, however, it may come from the student or their peer.

After the explanation of some key definitions above, the issue of oral error correction can be approached from a historical view point to see the development of the issue until current days. In the very beginning, when the audio-lingual approach to teaching foreign languages was popular among English teaching professionals, errors were seen as something to be avoided.

Nevertheless, today, English teaching professionals seems to agree that students were encouraged to communicate in the target language and making errors in a process of their second language learning, as it is said by Dulay *et.al.*(1982) that “people cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors”.

Corrective Feedbacks

One natural aspects of classroom interaction that has a wide scope is considered as feedback. Feedback is included as one of the concept of error correction. Feedback is widely identified in information theory and general communication research outside classroom or language learning contexts as it is said by Annett (as cited in Chaudron 1998). In most of communicative exchange, speakers derive their information in natural communication and negotiate in the form of negotiation, discussion and question. On the other hand, in the classroom, the special situation happens when the teacher who have the superior knowledge and status consequences of imbalance in expectations about who will provide feedback and when will it is provided.

On the contrary from general instruction, the primary role of language teachers is often considered to be the provision of both error correction, a form of negative feedback, and positive rewards or positive approval of learners’ production. In most other social interactions, no one of participant is specified as having the routine right to enforce decision on the other’s performance, especially linguistic performance. If correction of another is to be done, it is not done obviously, with respect, since there is a strong preference to allow speakers to correct themselves. Repair of the communication by another is usually only allowed in the form of non comprehension.

In classroom, teacher has an expectation perform their instructional right to assess any and all student performance, non verbal or verbal. However, the impossibility of consistently applying standards of appropriateness or correctness leads to the possibility unwanted result that learner performance not receiving caution or correction is taken to be appropriate or correct. Feedback as contrasted with the narrower notion of "correction," is therefore predictable part of classroom interaction, for no matter what the teacher does, learners derive information about their performance from the teacher's reaction.

From the language teacher's point of view, the provision of feedback, or "knowledge of results" as it is stated by Annet 1969 (as cited in Chaudron 1998) is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy of both their formal target language production and their other classroom performance and knowledge. From the learner's point of view, the use of feedback in repairing their utterances, and involvement in repairing their friend's utterances, may represent the most potent source of improvement in both target language development and other subject matter knowledge. Adopting the notion of strengthening of performance as an essential factor in learning, learning theory tended to associate feedback with positive or negative support. These two aspects of feedbacks, are considered as consequences of a student performance (response). For positive feedback it is usually being considered either as positive praise, "very good" or repetition of student's correct response. For negative feedback, however, the traditional approach relied on grammar explanations and modeling of the correct response. In line with the previous explanation, Chaudron (1998) argues that correction is "any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly

refers to or demands improvement of the learner's utterance".

Meanwhile, Lightbown and Spada (2003) define corrective feedback as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect". In classroom, teachers can make and provide corrective feedback either without interrupting the flow of conversation (implicit feedback) or overtly with an emphasis on the ill-formed utterance (explicit feedback). Long and Robinson (1998) make a distinction between negative and positive feedback. According to Long and Robinson, negative feedback points out to the learners that their utterances are faulty in some way, and all feedback that is not negative is positive. Long and Robinson (1998) also define negative feedback as "implicit correction immediately following an ungrammatical learner utterance". Long claims that negative feedback is generally facilitate L2 acquisition because negative feedback, such as recasts, contains positive evidence, which provides the correct form. In language acquisition research, feedback generally refers to the listener's or reader's response given to the learner's speech or writing as it is stated by Dulay (1982). One type of feedback is correction, another is approval or "positive feedback," as some call it. Furthermore, Annet as cited in Chaudron (1998) states that from the language teacher's point of view, the provision of feedback, or "knowledge of results", is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy of both their formal target language production and their other classroom performance and knowledge. Moreover, as it is stated by Brown (2003) that "foreign language learning occurs in the formal situation of a classroom, and the learner hardly has any access to the target language out of classroom." In line with Brown, Ellis (1994) states that the classroom

as a place where interactions of various kinds take place, affording learners opportunities to acquire the L2. It seems that classroom activities in language learning is the only place to learn English.

Unfortunately, sometimes, feedback as a part of teacher-learner interaction in the class is assumed as a barrier in doing a communication in the classroom. However, it is stated by (Mey,1993) that “it appears that corrective feedback and learner uptake constitute an adjacency pair that is clearly anticipated in classroom discourse and that occurs as an insertion sequence without stopping the flow of communication concerning repair as an insertion sequence that does not damage conversational coherence.” From the learner’s point of view, the use of feedback in repairing their utterances, and involvement in repairing their interlocutors’ utterances, may constitute the most potent source of improvement in both target language development and other subject matter knowledge. In line with Dulay and Annet, Lyster and Ranta (1997) provide more detail definition, examples and picture of corrective feedback which is included in error treatment sequence. They states that six different corrective feedback types, as it is stated in their research:

1. Explicit correction. This refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. As the teacher provides the correct form, he or she clearly indicates that what the student had said was incorrect (No, what you said was wrong, or You don’t say...). On occasion, the wrong form is identified along with providing a correct form in the teacher’s turn.
S: there is a little milk in fridge.
T: + in the fridge
2. Recast. These involve the teacher’s reformulation of all or part of a

student’s utterance, minus the error. They are generally implicit in that they are not introduced by phrases such as You mean, and You should say. That is, the teacher would not indicate nor point out that the student made an error, but merely give a correct form.

S: he like pop-music.

T: yes, he likes pop-music

3. Clarification request. These are either in the form of question such as Pardon? and I’m sorry? or attempts to reveal the intended form of the error with the rising tone. This type of corrective feedback is used when there are linguistic problems in the learner’s turn, and also when the learner’s utterance is not comprehensible. Unlike explicit correction or recasts, clarification requests can refer to problems in comprehensibility
S: there aren’t many /hotils/ in this town.
T: again?
4. Metalinguistic clues. This contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student’s utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. It points to the nature of error but attempts to elicit the information from the student. This kind of corrective feedback makes the learner analyze his/her utterance linguistically, not quite in a meaning-oriented manner.
S: She without. (Error – grammatical)
T: without... what is the verb? (Feedback – metalinguistic)
5. Elicitation. This refers to techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the student. One technique is that teachers elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to fill in the blank as it were. The other

technique is that teachers use questions to elicit correct forms. Either way, teachers do not provide correct forms in their turn.

S: Because I enjoy city life [laip]
(Error – phonological)

T: City... (Feedback – elicitation)

6. Repetition. This refers to the teacher’s repetition, in isolation, of the student’s erroneous utterance. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation so as to highlight the error.

S: How much money do you have in your /pakɪt/?

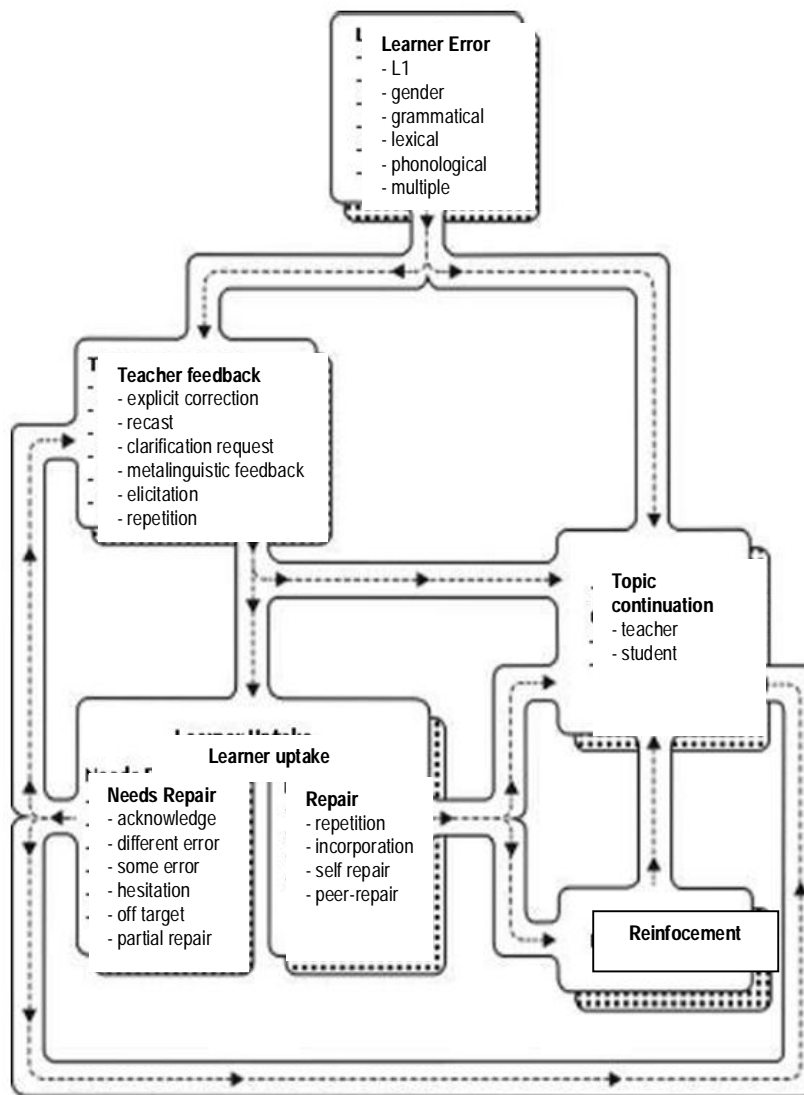
T: /pakɪt/?

S: /pokɪt/

T: yes

As it is mentioned above that in Lyster and Ranta’s research about types of errors corrective feedback, they also provide picture of corrective feedback which is included in error treatment sequence as presented in figure 2.1

Figure 2.1 Error Treatment Sequence



Source: Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). *Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms*. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*.

The sequence of error treatment emerged as stated by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in the model presented in Figure 2.1. The figure indicates a flow chart that present a series options that together compose an error treatment sequence. The sequence begins with a learner's utterance containing at least one error. The erroneous utterance is followed either by the teacher's corrective feedback or not. If there is no teacher's corrective feedback, then there is topic continuation. If corrective feedback is provided by the teacher, then it is either followed by uptake on the part of the student or not (no uptake entails topic continuation). If the utterance needs repair, then corrective feedback may again be provided by the teacher; if no further feedback is provided, then there is topic continuation. If and when there is repair, then it is followed either by topic continuation or by some repair-related reinforcement provided by the teacher. Following the reinforcement, there is topic continuation.

Categories Of Errors

Errors are categorized in various ways. According to Dulay and Burt (1982), errors are classified into two categories. The first classification is global errors, and the second classification is local errors. Here, global errors refer to errors that significantly obstruct communication and "those that affect overall sentence organization, wrong word order, missing, wrong, or misplaced sentence connectors. On the other hand, "local errors affect single elements in a sentence but do not usually obstruct communication significantly such as errors in noun and verb inflections, articles, and auxiliaries". Dulay and Burt (1982) also focus on correction of one

global error that clarifies the intended message more than the correction of several local errors. Moreover, they also argue that high-frequency errors should be the first errors teachers should correct.

In a different view point, Chaudron (1988) categorizes the range of errors from the strictly "linguistic including phonological, morphological, syntactic to subject matter content including factual and conceptual knowledge, and lexical items". Chaudron (1988) also specify some classification of errors into grammatical errors, including a. errors in the use of closed classes such as determiners, prepositions, and pronouns b. errors in grammatical gender (including wrong determiners and other noun and adjective agreements) c. errors in pluralization, negation, question formation, and word order. Moreover, for lexical errors, including a. inaccurate, imprecise, or inappropriate choices of lexical items in open classes-namely, nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives. b. nontarget derivations of nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives, involving incorrect use of prefixes and suffixes. Furthermore, for phonological errors, including a. decoding errors as students read aloud b. Pronunciation of silent letters c. addition of other elements or omission of obligatory ones.

Uptakes Or Learner Responses To Feedbacks

The first use of uptake notion was drawn by Austin in 1962 in his book entitled "How to Do Things with Words". In his book Austin states that generally the effect amounts to bringing about the understanding of the meaning and the force of the locution. So the performance of an illocutionary act

involves the securing of uptake (Austin, 1962). Furthermore, in Lyster and Ranta research, the notion of uptake has a different meaning. In their research, the students' responses is called "uptake". In particular, uptake is deeply defined as "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teachers' feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teachers' intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance". In short, uptake is the students' trial to respond the teachers' corrective feedback.

In the following of the previous statement about corrective feedback, Lyster and Ranta (1997) also explained types of students' responses to teacher's corrective feedback. The data of their research finds that two types of student uptake are most uptakes used by the students, they are uptake that produces an utterance still needing repair and uptake that produces a repair of the error on which the teacher's feedback focused. The definition of uptake for the present study will be also adapted from Lyster and Ranta's definition of uptake. That is, uptake is "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Lyster and Ranta makes some categories of uptake moves into repair when the uptake move resulted in repair of an error, and needs-repair when an error was not repaired in the uptake move. In their study, no uptake was considered as the third category. No uptake referred to the case where teacher feedback was not responded to nor reacted to by the student at all. Lyster and Ranta distinguished four kinds of repair in their study: repetition, self-repair, peer-repair, and incorporation.

Some examples of the three kinds of repair as follow.

1. Repetition. A student repeats the correct form given in the teacher's feedback when the feedback includes the correct form.
S: You should go see doctor. (Error – grammatical)
T: The doctor. (Feedback – recast)
S: The doctor. (Repair – repetition)
2. Self-repair. This refers to a self-correction, produced by the student who made the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback when the latter does not already provide the correct form.
S: Do the parents time to do so? (Error – grammatical)
T: What? (Feedback – clarification)
S: Do the parents... pare, parents time, do the parents have time to do so? (Repair – self repair)
3. Peer-repair. This refers to peer-correction provided by a student, other than the one who made the initial error, in response to the teacher's feedback. The nature of this uptake type is the same as self-repair.
S1: There is poor (Error – phonological)
T: Sorry? (Feedback – clarification)
S2: Pool. (Repair – peer repair)
4. Incorporation. This refers to a student's repetition of the correct form provided by the teacher, which is the incorporated into a longer utterance produced by the student.
S: You should go see doctor. (Error – grammatical)
T: The doctor. (Feedback – recast)
S: The doctor in the hospital. (Repair – incorporation)

The other type of uptake is needs-repair, which refers to a situation where the learner responds to the corrective feedback but the learner's utterance does not result in repairing the original erroneous utterance. In Lyster and Ranta (1997), there are six types

of needs-repair identified in their data: acknowledgement, same error, different error, off-target, and partial repair.

a. Acknowledgement. The learner positively recognizes teacher's feedback, generally saying yes.

S: Two people go out, and pay for one people price... I don't know (Error – grammatical)

T: Exactly. That's exactly what you said. Two people go out and pay for one person. (Feedback – recast)

S: Yes. (Needs repair– acknowledgement)

b. Same error. The learner gives uptake upon receiving feedback, but repeats the same error in his/her turn.

S: Take one [kuri] (Error – phonological)

T: Take one what? (Feedback – clarification)

S: [kuri]. [kuri]. (Needs repair – same error)

c. Different error. The learner does not correct nor repeat the error after the feedback, and makes a different error.

S1: Take it from [poket] (Error – phonological)

T: Pocket? (Feedback – repetition)

S1: Not pocket, uh, [bok] (Needs repair – different error)

S2: bottom.

S1: Yeah bottom.

d. Off target. The learner responds to teacher feedback, but not to the targeted form in the feedback.

S: Many shops are downtown. (Error – grammatical)

T: Sorry? (Feedback – clarification)

S: Downtown, many shops and places everywhere, a lot of people (Needs repair – off target)

e. Partial repair. This refers to uptake that includes a correction of only part of the initial error.

S: When I don't understand what garden [kuden] is in Japan, (Error – phonological)

T: [kuden]? (Feedback – repetition)

S: [guden]? (Needs repair – partial repair)

Corrective Feedback And Second Language Acquisition

It is quite predictable for language learners to make errors when they have an effort to use the target language before they are proficient on that language. Here, the teacher will have an important role, in preparing to handle the various errors that could occur in learners' utterances. Moreover, the role of corrective feedback in the process of learning a second language has been debated. Krashen (1982) states, "corrective feedbacks may not benefit learners in acquiring the correct form if they are not ready to learn". After that, the question will arise that whether treating errors will make the speed of acquisition will be faster or correcting form will be simply useless until the learners reach a stage of interlanguage development where they can make use of such feedback to modify their ill-formed utterances. On the other hand, if a teacher chooses not to treat an error in one learner's utterance, the other learners in the classroom may assume that the form is correct.

As a result, this assumption could guide some learners to memorize incorrect forms. The next question is when teachers should correct student's errors, whether teachers should deal with errors immediately or wait until learners finish with the messages they are trying to convey. Direct error correction may hold back a learner's willingness to speak in class at all because it can interrupt the learner in the middle of a sentence. On the other hand, although delayed feedback can allow the learner time to finish what the learner is trying to say, the feedback may become less effective as the time between the error and treatment increases. It is necessary to investigate when, which, and

how student errors should be corrected and who should correct them. It is important to make a correction in encouraging language learning.

The appropriate time in making errors treatment is when errors occur and damage communication. There are various corrective feedbacks types are used by teachers. Teachers use various strategies to help their learners notice errors, but they are not always efficient because sometimes such feedback is not beneficial. Chaudron (1998) states that error treatment strategies regarding how teachers correct different errors simultaneously and select certain errors over others.

Conclusion

Current practices of the teacher in student's foreign language learning process must be adjusted to the current classroom research result, especially about error treatment research. Moreover, teachers who have an important role of a pedagogic activity will become aware of their current practices in the classroom. Teachers must also apply various types of feedback techniques in a different techniques that might attract to different students in terms of their needs, proficiency level, age and classroom objectives. Since these factors have an effect on whether to correct, which errors to correct and how to correct, studies done in some other settings can yield different results and thus there is a need for further research conducted with different classrooms and learners. Classroom research result will help teachers achieve the consciousness that each class has its own uniqueness.

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