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TEACHER'S CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK STRATEGIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY IN EFL CONTEXTS

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role and effectiveness of corrective feedback in improving students' speaking performance in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Corrective feedback is considered one of the essential strategies in the language learning process, especially in addressing students' language errors both directly and indirectly. Various types of corrective feedback, such as recasts, prompts, and explicit correction, are known to facilitate effective learner uptake and positively impact students' speaking accuracy and fluency. Based on a comprehensive review of academic literature, this study reveals that timely and context-appropriate corrective feedback significantly contributes to the development of students' speaking skills. Additionally, both teachers' and students' perceptions of the importance of corrective feedback play a crucial role in determining its effectiveness. Teachers who can select the appropriate feedback techniques based on students' characteristics and learning situations help learners build confidence and self-correct their language errors more effectively. This study suggests that English teachers should actively and consistently provide corrective feedback during speaking activities. The selection of feedback types and timing should be adjusted to maximize their impact on students' speaking development. Thus, corrective feedback serves not only as a correction tool but also as a pedagogical strategy that encourages students to engage more actively in the language learning process.

Keywords: Corrective Feedback, Speaking Performance, Learner Uptake

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak fluently in a second or foreign language is one of the most challenging yet essential skills for language learners. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), speaking fluency represents not only the learners' linguistic competence but also their confidence and motivation to engage in communicative tasks. According to Harmer (2007), speaking fluency requires learners to produce language spontaneously, without unnecessary pauses or breakdowns in communication, making it a complex skill that involves both linguistic knowledge and the ability to perform in real-time interaction. Fluency is thus a critical component of language proficiency and a primary goal of EFL instruction.

One of the key instructional strategies that influences learners' speaking development is corrective feedback (CF), which refers to the responses provided by teachers to learners' erroneous language production. CF plays a vital role in guiding learners toward more accurate and fluent language use. As noted by Ellis (2009), corrective feedback serves not only to correct errors but also to support learners' noticing of the gap between their interlanguage and the target

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language norms. Various forms of CF, such as recasts, explicit correction, prompts, and metalinguistic feedback, have been widely implemented in EFL classrooms to facilitate language learning (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). These feedback strategies, when applied appropriately, can promote learners' reflection and adjustment of their output, potentially leading to increased fluency.

Different CF strategies, however, vary in their effectiveness depending on multiple factors, such as learner proficiency level, learning context, and the nature of the speaking task. Ammar and Spada (2006) emphasized that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to CF, and specific techniques like recasts or prompts can lead to different learning outcomes. Meanwhile, Lightbown and Spada (2013) highlighted that learners often perceive CF differently, which affects how they respond to it and whether it enhances their fluency. Ölmezer-Öztürk and Öztürk (2016) found that the types and timing of oral corrective feedback significantly influence learners' engagement and uptake during speaking activities. This indicates that the relationship between CF and speaking fluency is complex and mediated by several contextual and individual learner variables.

In recent years, advances in technology have also introduced innovative ways to deliver corrective feedback, such as computer-aided systems that provide exaggerated audio-visual feedback for pronunciation training (Bu et al., 2021). Despite these technological developments, teacher-provided CF remains a crucial element in classroom interaction, especially in face-to-face EFL settings where immediate feedback can support learners' real-time speech production. As Lyster, Saito, and Sato (2013) argued, well-delivered oral corrective feedback can reinforce correct forms while maintaining communicative flow, thereby fostering speaking fluency over time.

The motivation to improve speaking skills is also deeply connected to how learners perceive feedback. According to Al-Hoorie and Vitta (2019), motivation is a central factor in language learning success, and positive experiences with corrective feedback can enhance learners' willingness to speak and reduce anxiety in classroom interactions. Therefore, understanding the influence of different CF strategies on speaking fluency is essential for designing effective pedagogical interventions that support both language development and learner motivation.

However, despite the growing body of research on corrective feedback, there remains a notable gap in studies that specifically link teachers' CF strategies to students' speaking fluency in EFL contexts. Much of the existing literature has focused predominantly on grammatical accuracy or error correction rather than exploring how CF influences the fluency aspect of speaking (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster et al., 2013). Additionally, few studies have integrated learners' perceptions and motivational factors when examining the impact of CF on fluency development. This study seeks to address these gaps by offering a comprehensive analysis of how various teacher CF strategies affect students' speaking fluency in EFL classrooms. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on connecting corrective feedback not only to linguistic accuracy but also to the development of fluency, while considering the interplay of learner motivation, perceptions, and the communicative nature of speaking tasks. Such an approach is expected to contribute valuable insights for EFL teachers and curriculum designers in enhancing speaking instruction effectively.

METHOD

This study employs a literature review method to analyze and synthesize previous research related to teachers' corrective feedback strategies and their influence on students' speaking fluency in EFL contexts. The research was conducted through the following steps:

1. **Topic Identification**

The researcher determined the research focus on corrective feedback strategies and their impact on speaking fluency in EFL settings.

2. **Literature Search**

Relevant literature, including journal articles, books, and conference papers, was collected from trusted academic databases and online sources.

3. **Screening and Selection**

The researcher reviewed the collected literature and selected studies that were closely related to the research topic and objectives.

4. **Data Extraction**

Key information, findings, and arguments from the selected studies were extracted and categorized based on themes such as types of corrective feedback, speaking fluency, and EFL classroom contexts.

5. **Analysis and Synthesis**

The researcher analyzed the extracted data, compared findings across studies, and synthesized the information to identify patterns, similarities, and differences.

6. **Conclusion Drawing**

Based on the analysis, the researcher formulated conclusions that address the research questions and highlight the role of corrective feedback strategies in enhancing students' speaking fluency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the literature review, the following key findings regarding teachers' corrective feedback strategies and their influence on students' speaking fluency in EFL contexts were identified:

1. **Effectiveness of Corrective Feedback on Speaking Accuracy and Fluency**

Studies by Phuong & Huani (2018) and Tran & Nguyen (2018) reveal that corrective feedback, especially recasts and prompts, significantly enhances students' speaking performance by helping them notice and correct their errors, leading to improved fluency and accuracy over time.

2. **Students' Positive Perception of Oral Corrective Feedback**

Sahatsathatsana (2017) found that both students and teachers view oral corrective feedback as essential in EFL classrooms. Students appreciate feedback that is immediate and clear, as it helps them become more aware of their speaking mistakes and motivates them to improve their fluency.

3. **The Role of Form-Focused Feedback in Pronunciation Development**

Saito (2013) and Zhu & Wang (2019) emphasized that recasts and form-focused feedback are highly effective in improving learners' pronunciation, which is closely tied to their speaking fluency. Such feedback helps students internalize correct pronunciation patterns through repeated exposure and practice.

4. **Peer Interaction Combined with Feedback Supports Fluency Development**

Sato & Lyster (2012) highlighted that peer interactions combined with corrective feedback promote both fluency and accuracy. Monitoring each other's speech and providing feedback helps proceduralize correct language use, making speaking more automatic and fluent.

5. **Gender-Based Differences in Learners' Uptake of Corrective Feedback**

Taheri & Zarei (2021) revealed that gender influences the effectiveness of corrective feedback, with female learners showing a higher rate of uptake. This suggests that individual learner factors can affect how feedback impacts speaking fluency.

6. **Focused Feedback and Learners' Language Aptitude**

Sheen (2007) found that focused corrective feedback, especially when aligned with learners' language aptitude, significantly improves grammatical accuracy, which indirectly supports fluency as learners gain confidence in producing correct sentences.

7. **The Importance of Immediate Feedback on Learner Uptake**

Zhang (2017) and Yang & Lyster (2010) demonstrated that immediate feedback leads to higher rates of learner uptake, allowing students to notice their errors and attempt self-correction. This process contributes to long-term fluency improvement.

8. **Corrective Feedback on Prosodic Features such as Word Stress**

Zhao (2015) found that corrective feedback focusing on English word stress helps learners produce more natural and fluent speech, as prosodic accuracy is crucial for intelligibility in speaking.

9. Teachers' Feedback Strategies Shape Learners' Speaking Habits

According to Sheen & Ellis (2011), teachers' choice of feedback strategies—whether explicit or implicit—significantly shapes learners' speaking habits and fluency development. Explicit corrections may lead to immediate learning, while implicit feedback fosters self-monitoring skills.

Discussion

Corrective feedback (CF) has long been recognized as an essential pedagogical tool in language learning, particularly in speaking skills development in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. CF not only helps learners notice their linguistic errors but also supports the internalization of correct forms, which is crucial for language acquisition (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Ellis, 2009). Various studies have explored different types, effects, and perceptions of corrective feedback, revealing both its complexity and significance in second language learning environments.

One of the primary considerations in applying corrective feedback is understanding the types of feedback that can be most effective for learners. Lyster and Ranta (1997) classified CF into several categories, including recasts, explicit corrections, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. Each type varies in its explicitness and the extent to which it pushes learners to self-correct. Later, Lyster, Saito, and Sato (2013) emphasized that the nature of CF—whether implicit or explicit—significantly influences learners' uptake, with prompts often leading to higher rates of learner-generated repairs compared to recasts.

The role of motivation in accepting and utilizing corrective feedback cannot be overlooked. Al-Hoorie and Vitta (2019) stress that motivated learners are more likely to view CF as constructive and beneficial, rather than as criticism. Harmer (2007) further highlights that learners with intrinsic motivation tend to embrace feedback and engage more actively in error correction, which enhances their speaking proficiency. This is consistent with Bu et al. (2021), who introduced a personalized pronunciation training system that combines exaggerated audio-visual CF, illustrating how technological tools can leverage motivation and engagement in error correction practices.

Timing is another crucial factor that shapes the effectiveness of CF. Ölmezer-Öztürk and Öztürk (2016) argue that immediate feedback during speaking tasks allows learners to notice and correct errors on the spot, reinforcing the correct form. Conversely, delayed feedback may reduce its impact due to the loss of contextual relevance. However, the preference for timing can differ between students and teachers. Sahatsathatsana (2017) found that while many teachers preferred immediate correction, some students felt overwhelmed by it, preferring delayed feedback to avoid disruptions in fluency.

Peer interaction has also been identified as a valuable context for delivering corrective feedback. Sato and Lyster (2012) demonstrated that peer feedback not only promotes accuracy but also supports fluency development through increased monitoring and practice. This collaborative approach fosters a supportive learning environment where learners are more willing to experiment with language and correct each other's errors, thereby enhancing proceduralization of language forms.

Pronunciation is another area where CF plays a pivotal role. Saito (2013) examined form-focused instruction and found significant improvements in learners' pronunciation accuracy when CF was integrated into the learning process. Similarly, Zhu and Wang's (2019) meta-analysis confirmed that recasts, despite being implicit, positively affected learners' pronunciation development. Zhao (2015) extended this finding by showing that corrective feedback was instrumental in helping Chinese learners acquire proper English word stress, a crucial yet challenging aspect of spoken English.

The gender-based analysis by Taheri and Zarei (2021) adds another dimension to the discussion, revealing that male and female learners might respond differently to CF due to variations in learning styles and classroom dynamics. Such findings indicate the necessity for teachers to adopt flexible and learner-centered feedback strategies, ensuring that all students benefit from CF according to their individual needs and preferences.

From a theoretical perspective, Lightbown and Spada (2013) emphasize that second language acquisition is greatly facilitated when learners are given opportunities to notice the gap between their interlanguage and the target language. Corrective feedback serves as a bridge in this process, especially when combined with form-focused instruction (Yang & Lyster, 2010). This aligns with Ammar and Spada's (2006) argument that prompts often outperform recasts in promoting learner uptake because they encourage active engagement and hypothesis testing.

Moreover, the digital era has introduced new modalities of delivering CF. Tools like PTeacher (Bu et al., 2021) demonstrate how technology can personalize feedback, making it more accessible and engaging. Computer-aided systems provide consistent and exaggerated feedback, which is particularly useful for pronunciation training, addressing an area where traditional classroom feedback might fall short.

The teacher's role in CF delivery remains central. Phuong and Huani (2018), along with Tran and Nguyen (2018), stress that teacher feedback significantly influences learners' speaking performance and uptake. Teachers' ability to balance corrective strategies with encouragement determines the classroom atmosphere and students' willingness to take risks in speaking. Brown (2007) adds that creating a safe and supportive environment is essential for learners to view feedback as a learning opportunity rather than a threat.

In conclusion, corrective feedback is a multifaceted instructional strategy that, when appropriately implemented, can greatly enhance EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Its effectiveness depends on several interrelated factors, including type, timing, delivery mode, learner motivation, and individual learner differences. Teachers must be adept at navigating these variables to maximize the pedagogical benefits of CF. Future research and practice should continue exploring innovative approaches, including technology integration, to further refine corrective feedback strategies in diverse language learning contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that corrective feedback plays a significant role in enhancing students' speaking performance in EFL classrooms. Various types of feedback, such as recasts, prompts, and explicit corrections, contribute to learners' uptake and language development when delivered appropriately and timely. Both teachers' and students' perceptions highlight the importance of corrective feedback as a tool for improving accuracy and fluency in second language learning.

SUGGESTION

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers consistently provide timely and appropriate corrective feedback during speaking activities. Additionally, integrating diverse feedback techniques can better support students' language acquisition and build their confidence in speaking English.

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