

INVESTIGATING THE USE OF EFL TEACHERS' ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN SPEAKING CLASSES

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Abstract

As far as making errors is unavoidable in speaking class, oral corrective feedback (OCF) plays a crucial role to solve that problem. For the past two decades, OCF has become the debatable issue among researchers. This present study was conducted in one of the English courses in East Java, Indonesia. The participants were one native teacher and one non-native teacher teaching two different classes alternately. The speaking class was for elementary school students. This qualitative study has several aims; 1) to investigate the distribution of OCF types provided by the teachers in the speaking class, 2) to know whether or not there is an ignorance of the errors by the teachers and the reason behind it, 3) the types of OCF often used by the teachers. The data were collected through video recording, stimulated recall and semi-structured interview. The results evinced that the teachers provided all the types of OCF to the students with different portions of usage. Recast became the type of OCF that is commonly used by teachers. Furthermore, the teachers corrected almost all of the students' errors. Unfortunately, there are several ones ignored by them. The ignorance of the students' error is due to some reasons such as tiredness and lack of knowledge. Nevertheless, the most prominent reasons were they did not want to interrupt the students' utterances in order not to create the students' negative feelings about OCF.

Keywords: *corrective feedback; error correction; oral corrective feedback; speaking class*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, ample language classrooms put forward communicative language teaching or communicative-oriented class which is focused on communication. It means that there is an inclination to emphasize meaning. As meaning is pivotal, it raises a question for the language form, especially dealing with the issue of how students learn the correct form of the target language. One of the ways to address this issue is by providing effective corrective feedback to them. Corrective feedback is the valuable input containing the accuracy of the utterance that can be in the form of oral or written feedback. Interaction between teachers and students is also essential particularly in the error correction.

Among the four English skills, speaking skill is a place where students often need to correct their mistakes. Making errors in speaking a foreign language is inevitable. Learners who make errors often need to realize that the utterances they produce orally are

erroneous. Leaving students' errors uncorrected will lead them to fossilization (Sopin, 2015). Untreated errors will become a negative input for all the students in the class. Therefore, corrective feedback has the most significant attention in classroom research due to its undeniable contribution to the development of language learning. Most of the teachers in speaking class often give oral corrective feedback (henceforth OCF).

Regarding this issue teachers should be aware of the errors created by the students. On top of that, the teachers have to provide them with corrective feedback based on the available types of corrective feedback. The findings of several studies have already revealed that the use of OCF in speaking classes helps learners acquire the target language (Rahimi & Zhang, 2014; Kaivanpanah, Alavi & Sepehrinia, 2012; Hashemian & Mostaghasi, 2015; Gamlo, 2019; Yakisik, 2021).

Thus, observing the types of OCF given by the teachers is one of essential things to do in the language learning context. This information can, in turn, help English teachers to enhance the efficacy of their OCF. Adult learners, especially in the ESL context, have been conducted in most previous studies. Much less research has investigated teachers' OCF at young learners' level and in the EFL context. In light of this theoretical base, the objective of this current study is to focus on the use of OCF in EFL speaking classes at the elementary level from several aspects. Consequently, in order to address the research gap, this study has several aims concerning the issue; 1) to know to what extent do the EFL teachers give OCF to the students, 2) explain the reasons why the teachers ignore some students' errors (if it is any), and 3) reveal the types of OCF often used by experienced and novice teachers.

2. Literature Review

Oral Corrective Feedback often explains as the response to the students' errors in utterances given by the teachers or classmates (Ha, Nguyen and Hung, 2021). Lyster and Ranta (cited in Yakisik 2021) classified OCF into two broad categories: prompts and reformulation. Prompts include elicitation, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, and repetition. It is a kind of feedback that encourages students to become an autonomy learner by doing self-repair. Meanwhile, reformulation consists of recast and explicit correction, which do not motivate students to self-correction.

Feedback and errors cannot be separated because they are related to each other. Appropriate feedback can overcome the erroneous created by the students. Thus, a discussion about the error is also needed. Errors are the disability of linguistics form or contents that dispartate from the native speaker rules. There are three points regarding the importance of errors in learning process: 1) they become a signal for the students' learning progress; 2) for language teachers as an input for them to understand deeper about how language is learnt; 3) creating an improvement for the learners.

Ample studies explored the types of OCF often used by teachers. One of the studies by Jabbari and Fazilatraf (2012) shows that English teachers used recast many times compared with the other types of feedback. The effectiveness of OCF types in Turkish EFL classrooms is seen through grammar tests and stimulated recall. The findings showed that repetition is considered an effective technique to correct the students' errors, and the teacher has a positive perception of it. In addition, recast and explicit corrections are two types of OCF that EFL teachers frequently use, and there are different OCF preferences between experienced and novice teachers. Moreover, teachers ignore several students'

errors for reasons such as tiredness, not wanting to bother the students' activities and lack of knowledge.

3. Research Method

A qualitative design was employed to investigate the issue in this present study. This design is suitable for digging up deep information about a related topic. Qualitative design means events and processes are used to conceptualize the world. Additionally, qualitative research rarely appears in most applied linguistics journals (Phakiti, Plonsky, & Starfield, 2018). Phakiti, Plonsky, & Starfield (2018) assert that the prominent characteristics of qualitative research are the analysis of participants by observation and interviews or the breakdown of audio or video recordings and text. Accordingly, this study is in line with the concept of qualitative research.

The researcher chose two speaking classes at one popular English course in East Java, Indonesia. The teachers consist of native and non-native speakers: one male teacher (T1: 39 years old, native-speaker, eight years of teaching experience) and one female teacher (T2: 30 years old, non-native speaker, four years of teaching experience). They graduated from the English language teaching department. The speaking classes have a weekly schedule. It always occurs twice a week, every Tuesday and Thursday. The teachers teach alternately on different days. Each course consists of ten students. This speaking class aims to encourage the learners to communicate in the classroom atmosphere. The researcher should have told the aim of this study to the teachers and the learners. They just said that the data would benefit this study so they could behave naturally. For these reasons, this speaking class is considered appropriate to be observed by the researcher, considering the goals of this present study.

There were two ways to collect the data; video recording is the primary data to collect, so that the researcher can observe the teaching and learning process by watching the video-recorded. Due to the popularity of digitalization, research studies often integrate and use technology (Creswell, 2012). The duration of every meeting in each class was 90 minutes. The researcher recorded two sessions for each class wholly. After recording those meetings for 360 minutes, the data were transcribed verbatim and prepared for the analysis step.

The other instrument was the interview. This study used Stimulated recall and semi-structured interviews to get reasons and deeper information regarding the teachers' behavior in the class. To minimize intervention that can occur during the events under investigation, we need to use stimulated recall (Lyle, cited in Nguyen, McFadden, Tangen & Beutel, 2013). In the interview session, the researcher asked the question in English, and the participants also answered it in full English.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 The Result of Video-Recorded

a) The Distribution of Teachers' OCF

The first research question investigated to what extent the teachers give OCF to the students during the class. The researcher video-recorded the course from beginning to end to collect that data. After getting the data, the analysis was conducted. First, the information

was transcribed verbatim. Secondly, initial codes were used to label the same and coherent idea of the utterances. Lastly, the themes were presented quickly. Then, the researcher edited the videos beforehand, so they were only asked to watch the parts where they gave or ignored the OCF. Based on the result of the transcription of 360 minutes of video recording in two meetings for each class, the students created 186 wrong utterances. That fact showed that the teachers only gave OCF to 163 errors among those 186 students' incorrect utterances, meaning 23 errors were ignored. The detailed distribution of teachers' OCF is presented in Table 1.

Teacher	Students' Erroneous	OCF distribution	Ignorance the errors	Percentage of error correction
T1	82	77	5	93%
T2	94	78	16	82%
Total	176	155	27	88%

Table 1. The extent of Teachers' OCF

From the table above, we can see that the teachers in speaking class corrected 88% of the students while the teachers neglected 12% of their error utterances. It is understandable that although the teachers ignored some students' error utterances, they still gave the OCF to most of the erroneous utterances.

b) The Usage of OCF Types by the Teachers

The videos recorded were about the flow of two speaking classes for young learners in the English course. Through videos the researcher can observe and identify the appearances of all six different types of OCF employed by Lyster and Ranta (cited in Yakisik 2021) that the teachers used in their class. The definition and the example of each OCF types will be presented below by using the actual data from those classes:

4.1.1.1 Recast

Recast is the way to give feedback by reformulating all of error parts made by the students. Then, the teacher corrects the errors implicitly without prompt in the error parts.

Excerpt 1

T1: Can you repeat again, when does she water the plants?

S: She always watering plants every Sunday.

T: Yes, she always waters the plants every Sunday.

4.1.1.2 Repetition

Repetition refers to teachers' high intonation or stress as the correction for the error parts of utterances.

Excerpt 2

T2: What should we read to cook something?

S5: /ri'sɛp/ (Miss.

T2: /ri'sɛp/ ?(rising intonation)

T2: I mean Friday/ 'rɛsəpi/

S: great

4.1.1.3 Explicit Correction

Explicit correction is given mentioning the errors explicitly with the correct forms.

Excerpt 3

S4: I always read a book in the bus.

T:2 it should be on the bus

S4: yes, I mean on the bus.

4.1.1.4 Clarification request

Clarification request is the way to correct the errors by saying “Sorry?” or phrases such as “Excuse me”, “Pardon me” or question like “What do you mean by ...?”

Excerpt 4

S2: I was used to did that to be happy.

T1: Sorry? Can you repeat again!

4.1.1.5 Metalinguistics Feedback

The right linguistics forms are given by the teachers about the error without explicitly providing the correct answer.

Excerpt 5

S8: I think she shy girl.

T1: You need to be and article.

S8: Sorry , I mean she is a shy girl.

4.1.1.6 Elicitation

Prompting means the students make self-correction by pausing, so the student can fill in the blank by the correct word or phrase

Excerpt 6

S10: I did not went there...

T1: (interrupting) did not went...?

T:1: Are you sure, did not went?

S10: hmmm wait.....

S10: Oh I mean, I did not go there , that’s what I mean.

T1: Nice

From the recorded videos of the teaching and learning processes in the classes for 4 meetings (360 minutes), the usage and the distribution of OCF types proposed by Lyster and Ranta (cited in Yakisik 2021) between the native and non-native speakers of English teachers can be seen. The details are provided in Table 2.

Teacher	Recast	Repetition	Explicit Correction	Clarification Request	Metalinguistics Feedback	Elicitation
T1	10	13	4	19	4	12
T2	18	11	15	6	3	2
Total	28 (24%)	24 (21%)	19(16%)	25(21%)	7 (6%)	14(12%)

Table 2. The distribution of OCF types

The table above shows that mostly the teachers frequently used recast (24%) as OCF types that they give to their students. Then repetition (21%) and clarification request (21%) almost have the same frequency of usage. Repetitions are used 24 times and clarification

request 25 times. The other types have the following frequencies: explicit correction (16%), elicitation (12%) and metalinguistics feedback (6%).

4.1.2 The Result of Interview

From the actual data in this current study, we can notice that the teachers sometimes ignored the error utterances that the students made during the speaking class. The answers and the reasons why the teachers left some errors untouched can be found through stimulated-recall and semi-structured interview. Their answers generated a significant finding as shown in Table 3.

Reasons	Frequency
Do not want disturb students' utterances	1
Do not want to create students' negative feeling	2
Tiredness	2
Lack of knowledge	1
Forget the errors	1

Table 3. The Teachers' reasons for ignoring oral errors

As we can see in the Table.3 the 27 the students' erroneous utterances were neglected mostly because the teachers wanted to appreciate the students' performance and their feeling. In the case of tiredness, they say that sometimes tiredness comes from their busy schedule or sometimes it is about the teachers' tiredness because of the repetition of the same students' errors. The detail statements can be seen in the utterances below that were taken in interview session:

Excerpt 7

T1: "I really want to focus on the students' performance, I just neglected not crucial errors. Honestly, I do not want interrupt them in the middle of their speech."

T2: "I have some sensitive students, so yeahh I do not want to hurt their feelings by interrupting them to give them feedback. Anyway, the errors are not too fatal. Sometimes, I forgot to note their errors so I forgot their errors' part."

T1: "In Tuesday, I am so busy. I have 5 classes on that day whether it is online or offline. So that is why sometimes I lost my focus and concentration then let the errors' part. "

T2: "I am tired to correct the same errors that never change during the performance"

4.2 Discussion

Teachers should utilize every available OCF strategy. Regarding the OCF types used by the teachers, recast has the most considerable percentage among others. Some previous studies, such as (Panova and Lyster, Nassaji, Ellis & Sheen, Jabbari & Fazilatraf, cited in Yakisik 2021), supported that fact. It is also discovered that recast is one of the OCF types frequently used among English teachers to correct the students' errors in their speaking classes. Although recast is very popular as the most commonly used type of OCF yet it is least effective for students (Lyster and Ranta, Panova and Lyster, Sheen, cited in Yakisik 2021). It is also in line with the basic theory of OCF types argued by Lyster and Ranta (cited in Yakisik, 2021) that recast and explicit correction belong to reformulation types of feedback which do not lead the students to do self-repair. It can be effective if the teachers add some prompts in the correction process. The combination of recast and additional prompts can make the feedback noticeable to the students (Kaivanpanah, Alavi, & Sepehrinia, 2012).

Even though recast has the most significant percentage, if we look at the distribution and the usage of OCF between native speaker teachers and non-native speaker teachers individually, it emerges the different consequential types of OCF that they often use. The native teacher used clarification requests 19 times and elicitation 12 times while ten times recast during two meetings. The non-native teacher used recast 18 times, explicit correction 15 times, clarification request six times, and elicitation two times. It can be stated that the native teacher wants to encourage the students' autonomy level by often providing clarification requests and elicitation, which are true that they can lead to the learners' self-correction. Metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, clarification request and repetition can give the students the necessary cues to repair their errors (Yakışık, 2021). Besides, the non-native teacher still lacks awareness about that. She ss in the interview that recast is the quickest way to correct the students' errors, considering the limited time of the class. She experienced giving a chance to the students doing self-repair, yet it ended up with time-consuming.

Furthermore, regarding ignorance of errors, it is seen from the result that most teachers leave the errors untreated because they think the erroneous utterances are not too fatal. The highlighted point is that they do not want to intervene in the students' reports not to create students' negative feelings concerning the OCF. Hattie and Timperley (cited in Kaivanpanah et al., 2012) also agree that feedback should not interrupt teaching and learning activities in the class. It contradicts Fadilah, Anugerahwati & Prayogo's (2017) statement that untreated errors will fossilize in students' minds, and they will assume that their erroneous utterances are correct. In addition, if the teachers leave the errors untreated, they will become a negative input for all the students in the class.

5. Conclusion

The use of OCF types by the teachers in the speaking class varies. Fortunately, they provide all six kinds of OCF proposed by Lyster and Ranta (cited in Yakışık 2021) with the different portions. The non-native teacher tends to offer her students reformulation types of feedback that do not grow the students' autonomy level. The more advanced learners understand the intention of recast and elicitation more efficiently than lower proficiency learners (Philp, Trofimovich, Ammar & Gatbonton, Yoshida, cited in Yakışık 2021). On the other hand, the native teacher is highly aware of autonomy issues. Even though his students are considered young learners, he tries to practice them from the beginning so that they can think critically and make self-repair by processing the prompt feedback from the teacher. Accordingly, the more proficient learners prefer more elicitation types of OCF that require self-correction (Kaivanpanah, Alavi and Sepehrinia, 2012). The other point is, whatever the reasons behind the ignorance of errors, the teacher should not ignore the errors utterance made by the students because they will think it is suitable for them and will be eternal. As Sopin (2015) suggests, teachers should always correct the students' errors, and the non-correction will lead to fossilization. Considering all the facts, it is the teachers' role to facilitate the students with a safe learning environment with tension free. It minimizes the possibility of negative feelings so the students can achieve the learning objective.

There are several limitations of this present study. First, only a few teachers or participants participated in this study—the data collection method is only focused on qualitative data. For more detail and proper research, we can add quantitative data to

complete the research finding. This present study can contribute to related literature on OCF. It can also be fruitful for English teachers or instructors, especially in the EFL context, in providing OCF in the class researching how to give effective OCF that impacts learners' uptake.

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