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The Effect of Corrective Feedback Modalities on Second Language Post- Speaking Activities among Iranian Pre-intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract-This research project reported on the study regarding the effect of teacher and peer feedback in post-speaking activities among 120 second-grade Iranian students selected from three different classes in Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz branch, through random judgment sampling. It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference between the mean scores of the students who completed the experiment with teacher corrective feedback and peers corrective feedback. 84 homogeneous students were selected and divided randomly into three groups of 28 students, two experimental classes and one control group. Three groups took part in a pre-test derived from Hill's book (1995); their performances were estimated through Hughes' (2003) checklist. One group received peer corrective feedback in which students themselves corrected each other and the other group received teacher corrective feedback done by the teacher while the control group received some placeboes on speaking activities. At the end of instruction the three groups participated in a post-test derived from Hill's (1995). A One-way ANOVA test was used to analyze data to compare the results of both pre-test and also post-test. A post-hoc Scheffe test was utilized to compare groups' means. Findings indicated that the class with teacher corrective feedback outperformed the peer corrective feedback and control groups ($p < .001$).

Keywords-Teacher corrective feedback; peer corrective feedback; post-speaking activities

1. INTRODUCTION

There are a number of purposes in learning other languages. Some learn a language only for communication others because of school training, some for specific purposes and others for being proficient and so forth (Gorjian, Alipour & Saffarian, 2012). Broadly speaking, everybody likes to be fluent in using language; however, making error is an indispensible part of learning process. Teachers desire to pave the way for learners in order to learn correctly. Giving corrective feedback is one applicable way in class environment produces by teacher or peers to improve learners' ability in language skills.

It is for decades that error treatment is one of the main concerns of teachers to help learners overcome their weaknesses. Still we do not have a clear-cut method for error correction; the present study has tried to provide the answers to the questions as follows: Should peers in the class correct errors or the teachers are to shoulder this responsibility? There is no denying the fact that EFL subjects cannot receive as adequate English input in everyday life as an English as a Second Language (ESL)

subjects. Actually, the majority of their English input is from English class, so what they can do to improve their English ability depends primarily on language input from EFL teachers in English classes. The reason is that the language learning environment for EFL students is quite different from that for ESL students, thus to certain extent leading to different findings. Or rather, ESL subjects are set in English-speaking environment, where they receive sufficient English input not only in English classes but also in their daily life. Therefore, the language environment definitely has a positive impact on ESL students' speaking progress.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Corrective feedback (CF) can be considered a type of negative feedback. In this exchange, the teacher provides feedback on a student's utterance that contains an error. The feedback can consist of several forms: (a) to indicate the error, (b) to provide the correct form of error committed, and (c) extended (metalinguistic) information about the error such as nature of error, and all these

modalities of feedback were used in the present research alternatively (Ellis,2009).

The corrective feedback given by the lecturer or teacher can be six types: explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic clue, and repetition. After the teacher or lecturer gives feedback to the learners they also give some responses the teacher's feedback such as repeating the teacher's correction (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, pp. 37-66).

When learning to speak a second or foreign language, any learner makes errors and they are a natural part of mastering a new language. The errors can be of various kinds, for example, pronunciation, syntax, or word choice errors. Feedback is needed to avoid fossilization. As errors cannot be self-corrected, teachers' reaction toward error in the form of corrective feedback is essential: if errors are not corrected, various aspects of a learner's interlanguage may get fossilized and he/she will not be able to "progress to fully mature linguistic competence"(Tomasello & Herron, 1988, p. 237, cited in Ahangari & Amirzadeh, 2011).

One of the major issues of language teaching that obsessed any teacher is how to correct errors. Peer correction and teacher correction for instance, are considered to be a solution and alternative. This study tries to determine whether peer correction and teacher correction have any effect on English language students' post- speaking activities. One size does not, unfortunately, fit all. Some students experience more negative emotions on being corrected explicitly than others, and some students experience more nervousness than others. A teacher who is cognizant of the impact that negative emotions can have on a student's ability to process and concentrate will also likely be aware of which students would be less able for these reasons to benefit from CF types in which they would feel put on the spot than others. For this reason, a teacher may choose two different CF techniques for two different students who make the same error in the same context, regardless of personal philosophy concerning which type would have been the best (Smith, 2000).

The third null hypothesis in this research asserted that peer correction and teacher correction have no effect on the improvement of English language post-speaking activities. Therefore, in this study, we investigated whether the participants` performances of Iranian EFL students were different with respect to the different kinds of feedback modalities or not and whether their performances will progress in speaking skill or not.

When the learners learn a second language, especially the speaking skill, they still have some difficulties on, such as pronunciation, grammar, limited vocabulary, or their fluency. The lecturer has to give some corrections to the learners about their errors they have made (Zhang, Wu, Wei & Wang, 2011). Research on the impact of feedbacks has shown the quality of the information provided is important. Students make use of the feedback not only to guide revision and to improve their performance in the future but also they make use of it to understand the instructor's expectation, grasp, methodology, and gauge their progress in a course (Meerah & Halim, 2011).

The purpose and also the challenging point is, if the speaker especially students have problem in speaking, how can it be removed? Who has the more significant effect on improving speaking skill among language learners in class, their teacher or their classmates?

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

In order to conduct the research project, the researcher administered a proficiency test by Fowler and Coe (1976), which consisted of 67 multiple questions, in order to choose homogeneous students whose marks were at the same range or near each other. The researcher chose 84 pre-intermediate students out of 120 students, who studied English as a foreign language. Their ages ranged from 18 to 25, and they were selected from three similar classes at Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz branch. Then, the subjects were divided randomly into three groups, each with 28 students, two of them were considered as experimental groups (one with teacher feedback and the other with peer feedback) and one class as the control group which received no feedback.

3.2. Instrumentation

In order to estimate the students' homogeneity the researcher used a multiple proficiency test consisting 67 items adapted from Fowler and Coe's (1976) with (0.76) amount of reliability coefficient, each item valued 1.5 point, Those students whose scores fell within the range of +1 SD above and -1 SD below the mean, they were considered as the mid-level ones. After that, the students took a pre-test to estimate their initial proficiency level before having treatment. The pre-test were selected from five initial short stories for reading comprehension by Hill (1995). As a flow of the research during treatment sessions, the students were practiced by the use of the same short stories for reading comprehension by Hill (1995) in order to be prepared for post-speaking activities. In each section, there were some strategies, extracted from Richards and Renandya (2002) to elicit and practice students' post-speaking abilities in order to show their comprehension of the lesson. At the end of five sessions of treatment, there was post-test examination in order to check the students' progress in speaking skill. To score learner's proficiency both in pre-test and post-test, a checklist of speaking fluency adapted from Hughes (2003) was used. The reliability coefficient between the two raters' score of the speaking skill in pre-test and post-test was estimated through KR21 formula. It showed how much the scores of the two raters were reliable. The others instruments were CD player for the purpose of listening to discussions and questioning and answering happening between researcher and students and a cassette recorder used to record the students interview with researcher for after class survey and grading.

3.3. Procedure

To select homogenous participants, all 120 students participated in the study took Fowler and Coe's, (1976) proficiency test. As a result 84 participants who were signified homogeneous ones were divided randomly into three groups; one control group and two experimental classes, in one experimental class that was a teacher responsibility to correct students' error and in other class, peers had responsibility for error correction in group discussions.

For the purpose of study, the control group was not under treatment in order to clarify the effect of having feedback in class or ignoring it; otherwise there were five sessions of treatments to work on students in the experimental groups in order to reach the result of observing whether the teacher or peers feedback have any effect on students post-speaking activates or not. Pre-test was administrated based on the questions derived by the researcher from five short stories developed by Hill (1995) as a point of departure to start discussion. The students were scored by the use of Hughes's (2003) checklist. In the next stage, during classroom treatment, post-speaking activities were practiced based on Richards and Renandya's (2002) strategies to elicit students' abilities in class communication and discussions after presentation of each lesson in each session. Namely, those strategies were informal and formal interview, group discussion, dialogue journal between the students and the teacher, and language learning diaries of what they have thought from class discussion. After five sessions of treatment and exactly at the end of instruction the post-

test prepared by teacher from Hill's (1995) in order to show the differences or similarities based on the absence or presence of feedback, and both experimental groups and the control group participated in it. The items of post-test were prepared from those five previous lessons with some changes. Students were scored through Hughes's (2003) checklist as well.

4. RESULTS

Firstly, the reliability of the Fowler and Coe's (1976) proficiency test which administered beforehand for 20 participants through a pilot study was calculated on the base of KR-21 formula, and it was 0.76. Following that, the descriptive statistics were calculated for all participants` scores in pre-test. However, the descriptive statistics for the 84 participants participating in the study were calculated. To see if there was any significant difference among the participants` performances, a One-way ANOVA test was used to determine whether the observed F was significant at 0.05 level of significant (Table 1). As table shows, by calculating the observed F (.25) and the level of significance (.77) which was higher than 0.05, the researcher could claim there were not meaningful differences among three groups' means. So, the null hypotheses were not rejected, because the groups were homogeneous so their performances in pre-test were the same.

Table 1. One-way ANOVA (Pre-test)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.357	2	.679	.258	.773
Within Groups	213.214	81	2.632		
Total	214.571	83			

In post-test examination the conditions are different because two experimental groups had five sessions of treatment in order to show whether there was different between receiving feedback from teacher and feedback receiving from peers however the control group during five sessions received just placeboes. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the 84 participants participating in post-test, which representing three groups' means and their standard deviations.

To see if there was any significant difference among the participants` performances, One-way ANOVA determined whether the observed F was significant at 0.05. As table 4 shows, by calculating the observed F (8.9) and the level of significance (.001) which was smaller than 0.05, the researcher could claim there were meaningful differences which could be attributed to the treatment in groups of the study.

Table 2. One-way ANOVA (Pre-test)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	72.595	2	36.298	8.969	.001
Within Groups	327.821	81	4.047		
Total	400.417	83			

So as a result the third null hypothesis which indicated that there was no significant difference between peer and teacher corrective feedback was rejected. In order to show which group has the more significant effect on students'
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post- speaking activities a Scheffe test was applied to pinpoint the exact location of the difference among the means. Table 3 is a representative of these differences

Table 3. Scheffe test: Multiple Comparisons

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Teacher	Peer	1.42857[*]	.53767	.034
	Control	2.25000[*]	.53767	.000
Peer	Teacher	-1.42857*	.53767	.034
	Control	.82143	.53767	.316
Control	Teacher	-2.25000*	.53767	.000
	Peer	-.82143	.53767	.316

Table 3 represents that it is teacher group which has the more significant effect in comparison to two other groups. Base on this table two peer and control groups are homogeneous they did not show significant difference in post-test regarding the learners abilities in post-speaking activities.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

We observed that teacher corrective feedback and peer corrective feedback had an effect on students' ability in post speaking activity but the effect of teacher feedback group was more influential than peer feedback group. It was pointed out that despite its reduced impact, peer feedback did lead to improvements, encouraged learner autonomy, and served as a useful adjunct to teacher feedback even in Iranian classrooms, which were claimed to grant great authority to the teacher.

Generally, teacher feedback is regarded as a main requirement for improvement in students' post- speaking activities. This research has indicated that teacher feedback tends to generate more comments at the grammatical level, accent and comprehension but peer feedback can generate more comments on the communication (Zhang, Wang, Wu & Huo, 2011) and vocabulary. Besides beneficial effects on the quality of speaking, peer feedback has advantages such as developing critical thinking, learner autonomy and social interaction among students. The practice of peer feedback allows students to receive more individual comments as well as giving interlocutor the opportunity to practice and develop speaking language skills however of students' limited knowledge, experience and language ability.

In the absence of teacher feedback, EFL students showed lack of improvement in the content and structure of their speech, but those who were given teacher feedback made greater improvements. Similarly, teacher feedback has been observed as having a positive effect on the accuracy of the target form when participants are asked to practice and negotiate (Zhang, Yan, Wei & Wu, 2010). EFL students look at the teacher as a figure of authority that guaranteed quality they feel unsure on their correction and opinion about others performance so every time they refer to teacher and ask if my revision is correct or not. They focus on teacher as source to correction and revision even if they work on group discussions (Gorjian, Pazhakh & Parang, 2012).

In summery peer feedback activities were ineffective for EFL students who were used to teacher-dominated pedagogies and preferred to incorporate teacher feedback because the teacher was deemed to be the expert and the only source of authority. This finding does not argue for the continuation of error correction by second language (L2) speaking teachers (Zhang & Wu, 2011). Students are not, after all, always the best judges of what they need most. However, from an affective standpoint, students' strongly held opinions about this issue may influence their success or lack there in L2 speaking class and student performances predict that the presence of error feedback may be beneficial and its absence may be harmful (Gorjian, Pazhakh & Naghizadeh, 2012). The study result shows students value error feedback from their teachers and consider it extremely important to their success.

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Vitae

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