Pedagogical Club 1: Feedback, Error Correction, and Learner Autonomy

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Error Correction

Mistakes: These occur when students produce the incorrect form even though they know the correct form. These often arise from stress or carelessness.

Errors: These occur when the student does not know the correct form or rule. As teachers, we should focus on errors, not mistakes.

How can we identify if a student is making a mistake or an error? What kinds of feedback / error correction can teachers give in both situations to be most effective?

Error Correction: Discussion

Five central questions

1. Should learners' errors be corrected?
2. When should learners' errors be corrected?
3. Which errors should be corrected?
4. How should errors be corrected?
5. Who should do the correcting?

(Hendrickson, 1978).

What to correct

- The gravity of an error - a matter of personal opinion (Ellis 2009).
- Some teachers were inclined to view all errors as equally serious—"an error is an error." (Vann, Meyer, and Lorenz (1984))
- Treat those errors which are regularly repeated by one or more students (Moss 2000)
- correct frequent, serious and stigmatising mistakes (Bitchener and Ferris (2011))
- Not been exposed to a language form or are not ready to learn a particular structure: there is little point in intervening and giving feedback.
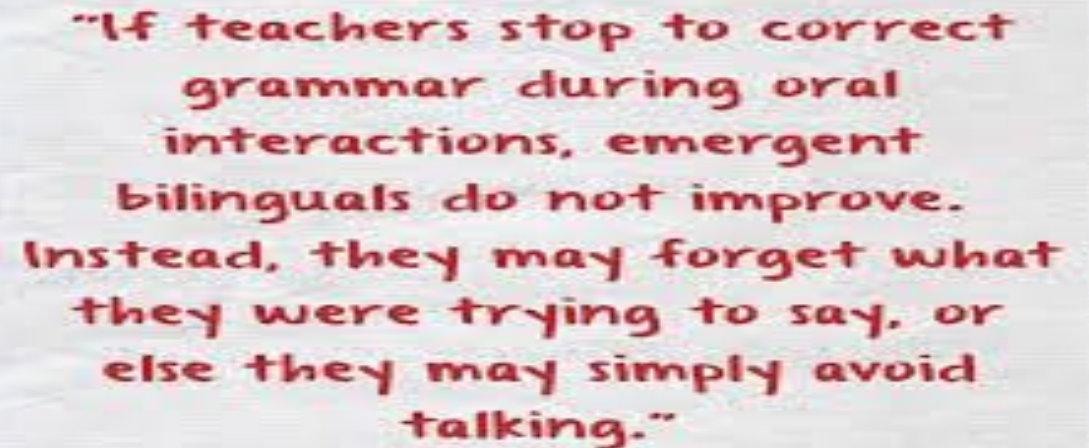
Types of Error Correction: Recasts

Commonly used in classrooms as this is the way parents often correct children.

Student: "I must to do my homework today."

Teacher: "I must do my homework today."

This type of implicit feedback is common, but it can be unproductive. Students often don't know the mistake that they have made, and they are unable to analyze their error.

"If teachers stop to correct grammar during oral interactions, emergent bilinguals do not improve. Instead, they may forget what they were trying to say, or else they may simply avoid talking."

- David and Yvonne Freeman in Education Week Teacher

Research has shown that recasts are about 60% effective to aid phonological errors, but only 20% for grammatical errors. In the communicative classroom, recasts are usually frowned upon.

Types of Error Correction: Clarification Requests

Student: "I had took the book"

Teacher: "Sorry. You what?", "I don't understand."

This technique implicitly forces students to consciously analyze what they have said and self-correct.

"The best ways to correct language errors with our students who are learning English is to do so in a way that preserves the student's dignity and self-confidence."

- Katie Brown in Education Week Teacher

Types of Error Correction: Metalinguistic Feedback

Student: "Where did he works?"

Teacher: "Do we say 'Did he works?'"

Student: "Where does he work?"

Teacher: "Correct. Why?"

The teacher draws attention to the linguistic form explicitly. This type of correction also encourages learners to actively think about their language use.

Types of Error Correction: Elicitation

Student: "I have been studying since three years."

Teacher: "I have been studying _____"

Student: "for three years"

Teacher: "When do we use 'for' and 'since'?"

This type of correction is either explicit or implicit, similar to recast, but it forces students to think about the linguistic form of their statement and usage.

Types of Error Correction: Repetition

Student: "I going to the store."

Teacher: "I GOING to the store?"

Student: "I am going to the store."

Repetition is a form of implicit feedback in which the teacher uses the tone of her voice to elicit the correct response from the student.

Error Correction: Discussion

Table 1. Types of CF Strategies
(Based on Sheen, 2011 and Yao, 2000)

Correct form is provided	Correct form is elicited
• Recasts • Explicit correction • Explicit correction with meta-linguistic explanation	• Repetition • Elicitation • Meta-linguistic cue • Body language • Clarification requests

- Types of corrective feedback
- * Implicit
  - recasts
  - repetitions
  - clarification requests
  - Elicitation
- * Explicit
  - explicit correction
  - metalinguistic feedback

Looking at the chart, which types of error correction do you use in the classroom? Can you provide examples?

What are some of the benefits and drawbacks you see with each of these techniques?

What are the benefits / drawbacks of implicit feedback? Of explicit feedback?

Research on Feedback

Research

Three key results:

- explicit corrective feedback (e.g. explicit correction or metalinguistic explanation) more effective than implicit feedback (e.g. recasts or clarification requests).

- Output-prompting feedback (e.g. elicitation) more effective than input-providing feedback (e.g. recasts).

- Graduated feedback can help scaffold internalization of new grammatical forms

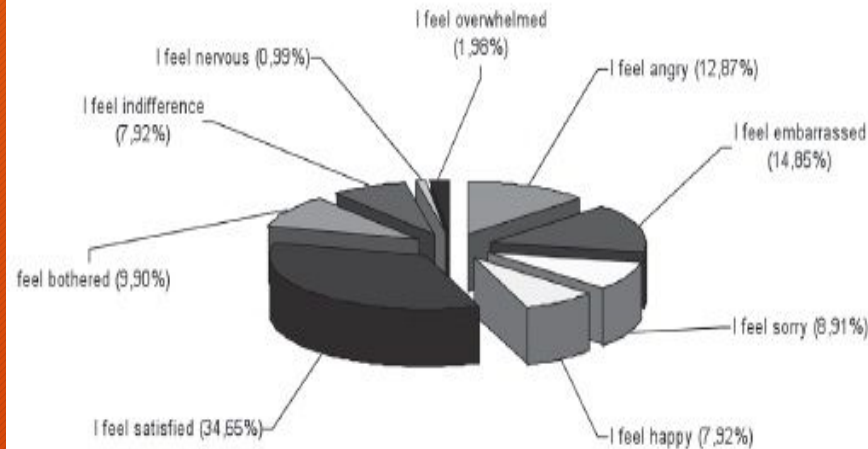Statement 9. How do you feel when the teacher immediately corrects yor mistakes?

- I feel overwhelmed (1,98%)
- I feel nervous (0,99%)
- I feel angry (12,87%)
- I feel indifference (7,92%)
- I feel embarrassed (14,85%)
- feel bothered (9,90%)
- I feel sorry (8,91%)
- I feel satisfied (34,65%)
- I feel happy (7,92%)

Figure 2. Graphical Illustration of Percentages of responses concerning statement 9

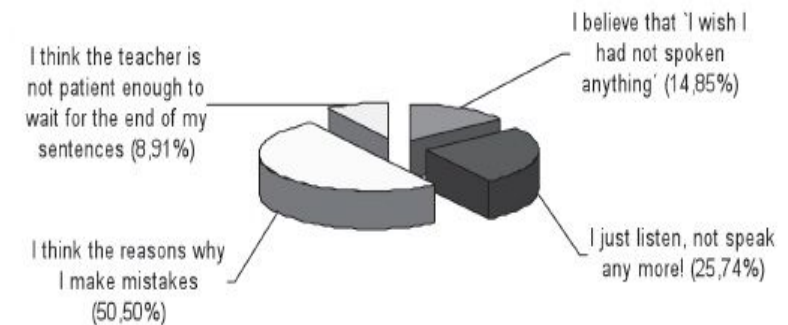Statement 10. What do you think and what do you do after the teacher´s immediate correction?

- I think the teacher is not patient enough to wait for the end of my sentences (8,91%)
- I believe that `I wish I had not spoken anything' (14,85%)
- I think the reasons why I make mistakes (50,50%)
- I just listen, not speak any more! (25,74%)

Figure 3. Graphical representation of percentages of responses concerning statement 10

Implicit feedback works well to correct mistakes; explicit feedback works well with errors to draw attention to the form and function of a statement.

Given student attitudes towards feedback, how we can provide more effective feedback as teachers? (Affective filter, etc)

Delayed Correction

-While students are on tasks, move between them and take notes.

-Write 7-10 incorrect sentences on the board when the activity is finished.

-Allow students to analyze and correct.

"I often tell my students that I don't care how many mistakes they make, so long as they are always new ones. A student's self-perception as a learner is vital in his actual success as a learner."

Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa in Education Week Teacher

This technique is good because correction is anonymous, and students discuss errors metalinguistically.

This technique does not disrupt an activity.

Works well for the free practice section of a lesson plan.

Learner Autonomy and Additional Resources

Speaking / Listening: http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/ http://iteslj.org/questions/ http://www.esldiscussions.com/

A Better Way to Teach Minimal Pairs: https://www.englishclub.com/esl-worksheets/pronunciation/minimal-pairs.htm