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Research Gap on Oral Corrective Feedback in Second Language Acquisition Theory - Affective Filter Analysis: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

Purpose

Oral corrective feedback, despite its historical precedence, continues to captivate researchers' interest, driving ongoing discourse within the scholarly community. The existing body of research on this subject displays a degree of controversy, with divergent perspectives regarding its efficacy. While proponents endorse its utilization, opposing voices question its impact. This study seeks to identify research gaps within the last decade to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of oral corrective feedback literature.

Methodology

Employing content analysis, data are extracted from pertinent documents, shedding light on the existing landscape.

Results/Findings

This study suggests that while oral corrective feedback is widely used and debated in language learning, there is insufficient research addressing its potential drawbacks. It calls for further studies to fill this gap and ensure that oral corrective feedback practices effectively benefit language learners.

Implications

This study emphasizes the importance of future research in refining practices and ensuring positive outcomes in language education.

Keywords: Corrective; Feedback; Oral

1. Introduction

Corrective feedback in language learning is an interesting topic for researchers as it has been studied for more than a few decades (Ellis, et.al., 2006) and its effectiveness is still debated especially in second language acquisition research (Sheen, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010). Corrective feedback is described as the responses students get to the errors they make when producing written or spoken material in a second language (Sheen & Ellis, 2011). This corrective feedback can be either verbal or written. Furthermore, corrective feedback has also received a lot of interest due to its contribution to the improvements of second language acquisition theory and it also has a role in second language acquisition pedagogy (Sheen & Ellis, 2011).

As time passes, corrective feedback is seen to have a contribution in improving students' performance. Chaudron (1977) said teachers' use of corrective feedback is beneficial in helping students to demonstrate accurate

performance and improve their communicative skill. Moreover, Pfanner (2015) said that using corrective feedback in language teaching is one of the best strategies to ensure that students have a strong foundation for studying the target language. This viewpoint agrees that teachers' purposeful use of corrective feedback play an essential role in promoting accurate performance and creating a strong foundation for language learning. On another occasion, Alsolami (2019) stated that corrective feedback (both oral and written) is very important as it helps teachers and students to identify and focus on common mistakes made in the target language. Furthermore, Alsolami (2019) explained that written corrective feedback is primarily used to correct spelling and grammar errors. On the contrary, oral corrective feedback is seen as an essential part of language teaching as it offers a dynamic atmosphere for teachers and students to work together in improving their language skills.

While corrective feedback has been considered an efficient way to improve accurate performance and create a strong foundation for language learning, some researchers have discovered another fact. According to Ellis (2013), although corrective feedback is considered important in learning, it needs to be recognized that the provision of such feedback can also have a negative impact or disrupt student learning. In an earlier study, Truscott (1996) made a strong argument the usage of grammar checkers in writing classes as it has no impact on the accuracy of students' writing and can even be harmful to students. It can be said that teachers should consider whether the role of providing grammar correction to students is important and really contributes to the learning of the target language.

Furthermore, Hartono et.al (2022) found that the teacher's corrective feedback, especially oral corrective feedback, can cause several psychological problems for students, including low self-efficacy, self-confidence, anger towards themselves, and fear of committing errors in class. These findings highlight the need to address students' psychological aspects in the use of corrective feedback and raise the question of a more holistic and supportive approach to learning.

Apart from the negative side of providing corrective feedback to students, the absence of corrective feedback is expected to have a bad impact on students. Because in the absence of correction, this may make students continue to repeat the same mistakes in language learning. So, it can be said that there is a gap between the purpose of giving corrective feedback and the facts that occur in its application in language learning.

Interestingly, there is potential in the use of nonverbal communication as an effective way of reducing students' stress and anxiety levels when integrated with teachers' corrective feedback. The study from Wang & Loewen (2015) showed that giving corrective feedback to students accompanied by positive nonverbal communication can create a more conducive atmosphere. According to McDonough et al. (2015), there is a correlation between students' eye gazing and how L2 English speakers react to recasts. The findings of their investigation validated the theory that the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback is significantly influenced by the teacher's facial expression. In addition, a better understanding of the function of gestures in teaching English for academic purposes (EAP) is by the research of Kartchava & Mohamed (2020). According to the findings of the study, nonverbal feedback plays an important role in EAP classes and, in rare cases, can help teachers provide corrective information.

Based on the explanations presented, a question then arises. Whether with the negative impact caused by oral corrective feedback then its use is discouraged and not used at all? Therefore, our research aims to explore existing research related to what exactly are the supporting factors for the effective use of oral corrective feedback without having to ignore its negatives.

2. Methods

This study used a content analysis approach. Quoted from Neuendorf (2002), content analysis defined as "the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics". It may involve both computer-aided text analysis (CATA) and human-coded analyses during the process. The researchers then utilized the Publish or Perish application to retrieve articles that were published online. It consists of a number of articles published between 2013 and 2023.

Afterwards, the data obtained from the selected articles were analyzed using four stages of data analysis adopted from Bengston (2016), namely (1) decontextualization which involves identifying units of meaning; (2) recontextualization which includes "context" and excludes "junk"; (3) categorization which identifies the homogeneous groups; and (4) compilation which involves drawing up realistic conclusions.

3. Results and discussions

3.1. Basic concepts and key components of theory

3.1.1. What is oral corrective feedback?

The term oral corrective feedback has been put forward by many different experts. In an earlier study, Day et al. (1984) said that corrective feedback happens when the native speaker provides an appropriate item in

response to what they perceive to be a mistake made by the nonnative speaker. It may follow lexical or syntactic mistakes or improper pronunciation. In other study, Chen et.al (2016) said corrective feedback, sometimes referred to as grammatical or error correction, is an essential method used by teachers in second language classrooms to address students' mistakes. Similarly, quoted from Sheen & Ellis (2011), corrective feedback refers to the response that students get on the linguistic mistakes they make when producing written or spoken content in a second language. Thus, it can be said that corrective feedback is an important method in second language learning. In other occasion, Calsiyao (2015) said oral corrective feedback is a way to provide students changed input, that could lead them to produce modified work. In short, corrective feedback can be referred to as the response given by the teacher to students' utterances that contain errors in second language learning.

In relation to giving corrections, Ellis (2006) explains that teacher's response may include one of three things, such as (1) an acknowledgment that a mistake has been made; (2) a recommendation of the appropriate target language form; or (3) metalinguistic information regarding the nature of the error. Hartono et.al (2022) added, when "correcting" student mistake, teachers gave feedback that aimed to improve student performance. Therefore, rather than listening and reading, this corrective feedback is usually applied to productive skills like speaking and writing (Hartono et.al, 2022).

Referring to the seminal work of Lyster & Ranta (1997), they categorised teachers' oral corrective feedback into six types, namely explicit correction, repetition, elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests, and repetition. Explicit correction involves direct correction given by teachers when students make an error (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Recasts occur when the teacher is implicitly reformulating all students' utterances with the correct form (Hartono et.al, 2022). Clarification request is when the teacher clarifies on what the student said, e.g. "sorry?" (Li, 2014). Metalinguistic feedback involves teacher comments relating to the students' utterances without giving the right form directly (Hartono et.al, 2022). Next, elicitation, where the teacher asked the students a question or interrupted their utterance to give them a chance to correct the error, e.g. "He has...?" (Li, 2014). Lastly is repetition, where the teacher reiterates the mistake directly to the student, usually accompanied by a high tone to emphasise the mistake (Hartono et al, 2022).

From those categories, Ranta & Lyster (2007) then restructured the categories of oral corrective feedback into two core categories such reformulation and prompts. Lyster et.al (2013) explained that in this subdivision, reformulation includes both recast and explicit correction, because this strategy gives students a targeted reformulation of results that do not match the target. Meanwhile, prompts can take various forms that promote self-correction. (e.g., elicitation, repetition, clarification requests, and metalinguistic cues).

3.1.2. Factors affecting oral corrective feedback

The efficacy of corrective feedback in improving student performance in second-language learning depends on several factors. Havranek & Cesni (2001) in their study concluded that the type of correction, type of error, and students' personal characteristics are supporting factors in the success of corrective feedback. In addition, Havranek & Cesni (2001) clarified that students with strong verbal intelligence and language competence but who often feel frustrated and embarrassed by their mistakes are the students most likely to benefit from self-correction.

In another study, Havranek (2002) mentioned three variables that can affect the effectiveness of the use of corrective feedback, which are (a) the type of correction sequences; (b) correction sequence duration; and (c) communicative center of the speech that contains the error. The type of correction sequence and its length are closely linked as the emphasis of the utterance affects how much attention and processing power the student has to set aside (Havranek, 2002). By paying attention to these variables, students and teachers can improve the effectiveness of using corrective feedback in the context of second language learning.

Similarly, Lemak (2023) in her research contends that personality traits influence how students perceive and react to corrective feedback. In an earlier study, Lemak and Valeo (2020) utilising the global Five-Factor Model (FFM) personality test to measure the students' personality traits and examined the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback for students in EAP context. The result of this study indicate that personality traits seem to play a role in how students perceive corrective feedback. Students who have higher accuracy and openness to experience tend to benefit more from oral corrective feedback.

Furthermore, according to study by Basiron et al. (2008), students' ability to identify, find, comprehend, accept, and fix their mistakes is influenced by the explicitness and implicitness of corrective feedback. Following the giving of the corrected feedback, the students must first acknowledge their error. As soon as they become aware that a mistake has happened, they will locate the mistake, identify its source, and fix it (Basiron et al., 2008).

3.2. Historical development of oral corrective feedback theory

3.2.1. Key research developments on oral corrective feedback theory

The topic of error correction has long been controversial and has a long history in the domains of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) and Second Language Education (SLA). Correcting errors and how to do so usually depends on the methodological stance adopted by the teacher.

Historically, error correction at all costs was emphasized by behaviorist teaching techniques, such as the Audiolingual Method, that were used in the 1950s and 1960s. Behaviorists tried to prevent and overcome mistakes by giving prompt examples of appropriate reactions, even though they believed that mistakes were unavoidable (Russell, 2009). Brooks in 1996 wrote that error is to be avoided and its influence subdued, just as sin. Reducing the amount of time that passes between an incorrect response and another display of the correct model is the main strategy for overcoming this. On the other hand, due in large part to the results of naturalistic SLA research, behaviorist theories of instruction as well as the usefulness of grammar and error correction instruction in the second language (L2) classrooms started to be questioned in the 1970s.

Furthermore, there has been discussion about corrective feedback theory in both language acquisition and language teaching theories. This is demonstrated by the various purposes of corrective feedback in each theory, and the practical ramifications of teaching languages in the classroom reflect this.

According to the first generalized theory, which was primarily advanced by Chomsky in 1975, negative evidence that is knowledge concerning things that are not grammatically correct has very little bearing on an individual's capacity to learn a new language. All humans with the capacity to speak have been biologically endowed with Universal Grammar (UG), which is defined as the universal laws unique to the construction of grammar and the innate processes of language that have trained us to obey these restrictions. Nativists believe that adults only correct grammatical errors, not the correctness and meaning of children's speech. Additionally, their efforts to improve syntax and phonology had no impact on children's language development. This theory has been incorporated into language learning.

Over the past few decades, debate about the concepts of negative evidence has been widespread. Pinker (2004) states clearly that Chomsky (1965) considers children's input to "consist[s] of signals classified as sentences and nonsentences"—or negative evidence—and that Chomsky (1981) also uses negative evidence indirectly.

Some academics argued in the 1970s and 1980s that mistake correction was detrimental to SLA and not merely needless. Stephen Krashen is primarily recognized for being a proponent of the "hands-off" method to error correction, having included his five language learning assumptions in his 1981 and 1982 Monitor Models. The Affective Filter Hypothesis states that fear may cause an individual's affective filter to increase, hence impeding their ability to speak languages fluently. In addition, learners acquire grammatical forms and structures in a preset sequence that is unalterable by teaching, according to the Natural Order Hypothesis, which is based on morpheme order research by Dulay and Burt (1973, 1974). To incorporate Krashen's views regarding second language acquisition (SLA) into classroom instruction, Terrell (1977, 1982) created the Natural Approach, a teaching method that emphasizes the development of communicative competence in the target language (TL) rather than obtaining grammatical perfection. The Natural Approach prohibits both organized grading and error correction to keep students' affective filters low. Terrell (1977) asserts that in language classrooms, emotive rather than cognitive aspects are more important, and correcting students' mistakes has a detrimental impact on their motivation, attitude, and self-esteem. With this approach, teachers never give students specific grammar lessons or correct their oral mistakes; instead, students are responsible for studying grammatical structures outside of the classroom and fixing their own written mistakes (Omaggio Hadley, 2001).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been a popular teaching method since the 1980s and is still widely used today. In addition, CLT emphasizes communicative skills and notional-functional concepts in teaching grammatical structures (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). This method is similar to the natural approach. In CLT, the goal of teaching is to increase acceptable language use skills and language fluency (Omaggio Hadley, 2001). Because CLT focuses on meaning rather than form, correcting grammatical errors is not important. However, as stated by Omaggio Hadley (2001), context is always needed to assess student accuracy.

Theoretical and empirical studies conducted in the 1990s demonstrated that form-focused instruction, explicit grammar, and/or error correction can facilitate the acquisition of a second language (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Ellis, 1993, 1994; Long, 1996; Schmidt, 1990, 1993, 1995, cited by Russell, 2009). Speaking about second language acquisition, Long (1996) said that there is a lot of evidence against SLA, particularly when it comes to adult and teenage L2 learners.

Many models and hypotheses have been developed within this framework, examining cognitive processes in language learning. The interactionist model is the most prominent. Proposed by Long (1996, 1998) is that selective attention (paying attention) and the enhancement of students' L2 processing abilities are essential for conversational meaning. According to this acquisition model, corrective feedback (CF) helps L2 growth. Mackey (2006) found that attention and awareness are two cognitive processes that interact to regulate L2 input and growth.

Studies on written and oral CF have been conducted independently. SLA scholars investigate how CF affects learners' interlanguage development, learning procedures, and results. However, the effect of CF on students' overall writing ability is of relevance to scholars studying second language writing (Sheen, 2011). Moreover, there are various distinctions between written and oral CF. First, spoken CF may not always be understood by pupils, but written CF frequently is. Second, CF delivered orally can be supplied immediately or later, whereas CF given in writing is delayed. Third, whereas spoken communication can be directed to a class of students, written communication is directed to specific individuals.

A frequently studied topic in theoretical and methodological contexts in oral corrective feedback studies is learner uptake. Lyster and Ranta (1997), who offered a taxonomy of the different kinds of corrective feedback, coined the term "learner uptake." Their categorization of learners' reactions to corrective feedback into two groups, one for utterances that require repair and the other for utterances that have been repaired was termed "learn uptake.".

3.2.2. Research gap in this theory

When a student makes a mistake in an oral manner, oral corrective feedback is described as negative evidence provided (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2021). Alkhammash and Gulnaz (2019) found that while some research supports teachers' positive views of oral corrective feedback, others find that giving feedback to students can be emotionally taxing. The affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses of low-proficiency Iranian EFL students to oral corrective feedback (OCF) on interdental fricative errors—/θ/and /ð/—were studied in one study. Research indicated that students who experienced poor affective engagement with feedback also experienced negative behavioral and cognitive engagement with the given direct instruction. Yet, students who felt favorably about OCF showed noticeably greater accuracy gains (Saeli, et.al., 2021). In a different study, which investigated Indonesian EFL students from groups with varying levels of anxiety (extremely nervous, anxious, somewhat anxious, and calm), it was found that OCF made it easier for them to recognize their errors and inspired them to work harder in their studies, but it did not affect their speaking performance. Even though OCF discourages students' inventiveness from leading to greater output in speaking performances, students in extremely nervous and anxious groups react negatively to the practice. The students in the group that was calm and slightly nervous, however, felt a different effect. OCF's effect on the slightly stressed group is not entirely evident since learners respond and react differently to its effectiveness (Mufidah, 2017).

Several studies highlight the negative impact of providing oral corrective feedback, but there is very little research that includes solutions to address the negative side of oral corrective feedback. So, the gap from the study was alternative teaching strategies that minimize students receiving corrective feedback.

3.3. Proposed Conceptual Framework

Taking into account the review of existing literature and the outcomes of prior research, the conceptual framework is depicted in the following manner.

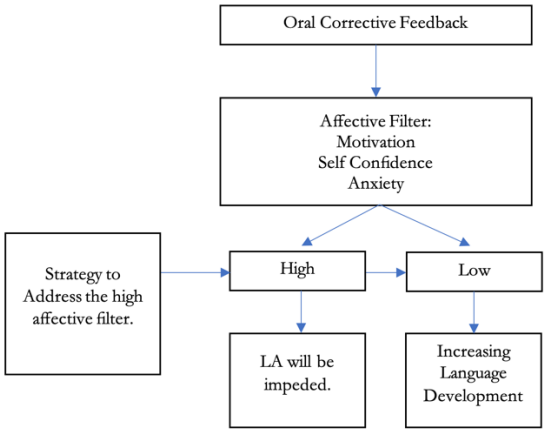

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

The diagram presented illustrates the intricate relationship between oral corrective feedback and its influence on students' affective filters, subsequently affecting their Language Acquisition (LA) or Language Development (LD) stages. High affective filters impede LA progress, whereas lower affective filters hold the promise of advancing LD. While acknowledging the benefits of oral corrective feedback, it is crucial to devise strategies to address high negative affective filters. This approach ensures that the well-intentioned feedback effectively enhances students' language development without being hindered by emotional barriers.

4. Conclusions

Oral Corrective Feedback remains a topic of debate, with divergent research findings. While some studies advocate its positive influence on foreign language learning, endorsing its delivery by more scientifically adept educators or proficient peers, others argue that it might impede students' language development. Consequently, it becomes vital to incorporate a strategy aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of oral corrective feedback. For instance, integrating genuine smiles within this feedback process could potentially counterbalance its negative impact (Arapova, 2016). The approach underscores the potential of retaining the beneficial aspects of oral corrective feedback while devising specific strategies to neutralize its potential drawbacks.

Declaration of conflicting interest

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