

Oral corrective feedback in English speaking classroom: Students' and teachers' preference

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate high school students and teachers' preference in oral corrective feedback, while also investigate their reasons in preferring certain types of oral corrective feedback. The participants for this study are 79 randomly-chosen 11th grade high school students from five different classes and a high school English teacher. The students were asked to fill a questionnaire regarding their preferred type of oral corrective feedback, followed by a semi-structured interview to investigate their reasons in preferring certain oral corrective feedback. The teacher was also interviewed to find out his preferred type of oral corrective feedback and his reasons. The result of the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis, while the interview was analyzed using inductive research analysis. The results revealed that high school students prefer recast and metalinguistic feedback due to effectivity and memorability.

Keywords: High School Students; High School Teachers; Preference; Oral Corrective Feedback

INTRODUCTION

Oral corrective feedback plays a critical role in English language classes. As a teacher it is expected to encounter students' error, whether it is grammatical or pronunciation. What is necessary for teachers to understand is that sometimes errors are more than just that. It could be a beginning of a "fossilized error," a phenomenon where students' error is ignored until that error becomes the norm for this student (Z. Han & Odlin, 2006). One of the ways to prevent our students from having a misconception in the language is by giving them oral corrections when they make mistakes. According to Schachter, (1991), corrective feedback is a teacher's utterance that identifies a learner's error and provides feedback in response to the error. Another definition of corrective feedback is the form of teacher's responses to learner utterances that contain an error (Ellis et al., 2006). Thus, it can be concluded that corrective feedback is a teacher's responses to learners' error.

Roy Lyster & Leila Ranta, (1997) distinguished six different types of feedback commonly used by English teachers: Explicit correction, which refers to explicit provision of the correct form; Recasts, which refers to reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance except the error; Clarification requests, which refers to when teacher responds with questions; Metalinguistic feedback, which refers to when the teacher provides some grammatical metalanguage that refers to the nature of the errors; Elicitation, which refers to when the teacher ask the students to reformulate their utterance; and Repetition, which refers to when the teacher repeating students faulty utterances and adjusts their utterances as to highlight the error.

Based on the delivery, there are two types of corrective feedback: written corrective feedback and oral corrective feedback. In his study, Irwin (2018), defines written corrective feedback as direct or indirect error correction, words of encouragement or praise, comments, advice, and suggestions that instruct students to make changes to their written compositions. Written corrective feedback is almost always given at students' final draft. Oral corrective

feedback is generally regarded as corrective feedback which focuses on teacher's immediate response of learner's erroneous utterance (Lyster et al., 2013). Compared to its counterpart, oral corrective feedback is more prompt, in which the teacher give corrective feedback immediately, or almost immediately, after learner's error. Some researchers argue that written corrective feedback is ineffective (Knoblauch & Brannon, 1981; Straub, 1996; Truscott, 2007). However, some other researchers state that students actually appreciate teacher's written feedback (Hedgecock & Ferris, 2005; Lee, 2008; Yang et al., 2006).

More recently, the studies have shown different focuses on oral corrective feedback, particularly on students' view on oral corrective feedback. Ünsal Şakiroğlu, (2020) investigated Kafkas University students' view on oral corrective feedback. The results showed that 86.3% would like to be corrected when they make a mistake. 39.2% of the students feel happy when they are corrected, the rest feel bad when they are corrected, but they deem it necessary anyway. Majority of the students (37.3%) prefer to be corrected at the end of their speech. Another study by (Huong, 2020) investigated Vietnamese university teachers' and students' preferences for oral corrective feedback. The result shows that students preferred to have explicit correction followed by paralinguistic signal. Other categories are repetition, meta-linguistic feedback and recast. They did not prefer to have clarification request and elicitation. The greatest difference between the students' and teachers' responses was noticeable in recast. While students showed a negative opinion about this feedback type, teachers showed positive view toward it.

Most studies in the field have focused on students at university level (Amalia, Fauziati, & Marmanto, (2009); Fadilah, Anugerahwati, & Prayogo, (2017); Gamlo, (2019); Huong, (2020); Ünsal Şakiroğlu, (2020); Wiboolyasarín, Wiboolyasarín, & Jinowat, (2020). What is less known is how oral corrective feedback is practiced in high school levels (Khatib & Vaezi, 2017; Saeb, 2017). In particular, very little is currently known about how oral corrective feedback is practiced in Indonesian high schools. English is a compulsory subject in Indonesian education; therefore it is impossible for oral corrective feedback to not occur. Moreover, according to a survey conducted by English First in 2019, Indonesia ranks 61st among 100 countries on the English Proficiency Index. Almost all of the graduates from one of Indonesia's university are not able to have conversational English. Only two percent of all the graduates are able to gain TOEFL score of 550 (Silalahi, 2017). On the other hand, high school teachers in Indonesia are required to complete a four year degree and are required to complete a formal certification. The certification process consists of attending teacher professional development programs and takes a series of teacher assessments. With such level of English proficiency among Indonesian students, it is impossible to imagine for oral corrective feedback to not occur in Indonesian high school context. There is currently very little research that investigates students' perspectives on oral corrective feedback in Indonesian high school context (Irawan & Salija, 2017). Which is where this research takes part, it will give further insights into how oral corrective feedback is practiced in Indonesian high school context.

This study was aimed at investigating high school students' and teachers' most preferred types of oral corrective feedback and their reasons. The researcher used the qualitative research design to answer the research questions. This research provided an in-depth understanding of the oral corrective feedback in English high school class settings. The researcher used questionnaire to gain information about high school students' and high school English teachers' most preferred type of corrective feedback. As the supporting data, the researcher used interview to gain in-depth information on participants' opinion. This paper attempts to show how oral corrective feedback at high school level is practiced. Specifically, high school students and English teachers preferred type of oral corrective feedback. Hopefully, this research will spark a deeper investigation on oral corrective feedback at Indonesian high school context.

The research questions for this research are formulated as follows:

- a) What are high school students' most preferred types of oral corrective feedback in English class and their underlying reasons?
- b) What are the students' English teacher's most preferred types of oral corrective feedback and what are the underlying reasons?

METHOD

This study investigated two things: high school students most preferred type of oral corrective feedback and their reasons and teachers' preferred type of oral corrective feedback and his reasons. The researcher believed that those are the necessary things to investigate in order to answer the research questions. This research used survey research design and interview to support the data.

This study was conducted at MAN 2 Kota Malang in the 2021/2022 academic year. English teachers of MAN 2 Kota Malang implemented many speaking activities in teaching 10th grade students. This is in line with the curriculum 2013 which includes many speaking activities for the students. The classes in MAN 2 Kota Malang are divided into three categories: Olympiad classes, Tahfidz & Arabic classes, and regular classes. This research took students from regular classes as the sample since they reflect high school students in general. For the teacher, this teacher took one English teacher who had taught the students when they were in 10th grade.

There were 79 participants in for the questionnaire in this research. All 79 students were 10th grade students from MAN 2 Kota Malang. 10th grade students have the most speaking activities in their curriculum. This ensured that there are many instances of oral correction in their English classes. However, at the time of this research, 10th grade students at MAN 2 Kota Malang had just started the first semester, and have not had experience regarding speaking activities in 10th grade. 11th grade students are chosen as the best fit for the respondents since they just completed the 10th grade and had the experience necessary to answer the questionnaire. The questionnaire is developed by the researcher and consisted of 12 close-ended questions so that the students can answer the questions easily and quickly. It is also easier to code and analyze to investigate the meaning of the data. The body of the questionnaire contained 2 close-ended Likert scale questions. The first scale consists of six questions regarding students' perception on the effectivity of each type of oral corrective feedback. The second scale consists of six questions regarding students' preferred type of oral corrective feedback. The participants were required to choose one of the options available in each item, ranging from "strongly disagree", "disagree", "agree", and "strongly agree". The questionnaire is designed following Freiermuth (1997) theory on L2 error correction. Freiermuth's theory is chosen due to his thorough view in giving oral corrective feedback (exposure, seriousness, students' needs, and consistency) which many of newer theories overlooked. Though developed in 1997, the correction techniques he addressed in his theory are still relevant to this day (repetition, metalinguistic feedbacks, clarification request, etc.). Cronbach's Alpha test for reliability is also done to both scales of the questionnaire. With the formula of:

$$\alpha = \frac{N\bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1)\bar{c}}$$

N: number of items

$\bar{c}$: average inter-item covariance, and

$\bar{v}$: the average variance

The results are respectively .429 and .478 for both scales in the questionnaire. Though it might seem unacceptable, low level of Cronbach's Alpha in this research is explainable due to the small numbers of items in each scale as also reflected in (van Griethuijsen et al., 2015). This is further supported by (Taber, 2018)'s study on the use of Cronbach's Alpha in Science Education which concludes that a very high value of Cronbach's alpha is not always a good thing and adding any questions, though unrelated, will increase Cronbach's alpha score of reliability. However, it does

not mean that the use of Cronbach's alpha should be dismissed entirely. The point in including the Cronbach's alpha score is to help further researchers in the field who might come across Cronbach's alpha reliability test.

For the students' interview, this research used the concept of saturation in choosing the number of participants to avoid unnecessary interviews and a waste of time which otherwise can be used to analyze the interviews. The concept of saturation means the point when gathering new data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveal new properties of the topic being investigated.

To gather the data from the teacher, this research used only interview since there was only one respondent. Interview was also seen fit because it was necessary to gain as much data as possible from this sole respondent. The teacher is Mr. Y who had been teaching English for more than 20 years. Mr. Y is chosen as the participant of this research since he teaches English for 10th grade students in MAN 2 Kota Malang. Other than that, Mr. Y uses many speaking activities in his teaching. This ensured that Mr. Y had enough experience with oral corrective feedback and how his feedbacks affect his students.

The interview was a semi-structured interview, where the area of interest was chosen and questions were formulated. However, the interviewer might modify the format question during the interview (Ary et al., 2010). In developing the interview questions, this interview follows the method proposed by Roberts (2020). Firstly, an Interview guide is developed. The questions for the interview guides are taken directly from the research question, with some changes in the wordings to make it seem more conversational. For example, the research question is "What are the students' English teacher's most preferred types of oral corrective feedback and what are the underlying reasons?" Therefore, the guiding question is "In your opinion and from your own experience, how do you think that the student's spoken error should be treated?" From the interviewee's response, several follow up questions were asked to gain a more holistic view from the interviewee such as "What do you think is the biggest obstacle in your practices by giving corrective feedback in your way?," "do you give the corrective feedback at the end of the classes by explaining the grammatical form?," "Do you think that the way you treat students' spoken error is effective?," "how do you measure the effectivity of your treatment?" Lastly, to make the interview felt less like an interrogation and more like a conversation, an orienting question is developed and to be asked before the main questions.

The data collection was done using questionnaire, and six interviews. Firstly, the questionnaire was distributed to students for them to fill. Based on the data gathered from the questionnaire, students are interviewed to gather deeper understanding of their view about oral corrective feedback preferences the interview went on until it reach the point of saturation, which in this case is six, where the interviews with other students no longer sparks new findings. Lastly, the teacher was interviewed to gain information about his preferred oral corrective feedback and why he preferred it.

Students were asked to complete the questionnaire in order to identify students' preferences for a certain oral corrective feedback. All students were sent a link to a Google form, in which they can answer the questionnaire. They were given a week to complete the questionnaire to ensure maximum participation. Students' responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Each possible response was given value starting from 1 for "strongly disagree" up to 4 for "strongly agree". The data was entered as numeric data with ordinal measure. The analysis using SPSS is to find the frequency distribution of students' responses. After the frequency distribution of each type of oral corrective feedback is gathered, the data is presented via bar graph.

Following the questionnaire, it was necessary to confirm and investigate students' responses. Six students were chosen to represent the most preferred oral corrective feedback. The participants were asked questions about their reasons to prefer certain type of oral corrective feedback and which type of oral corrective feedback is the most effective in improving their

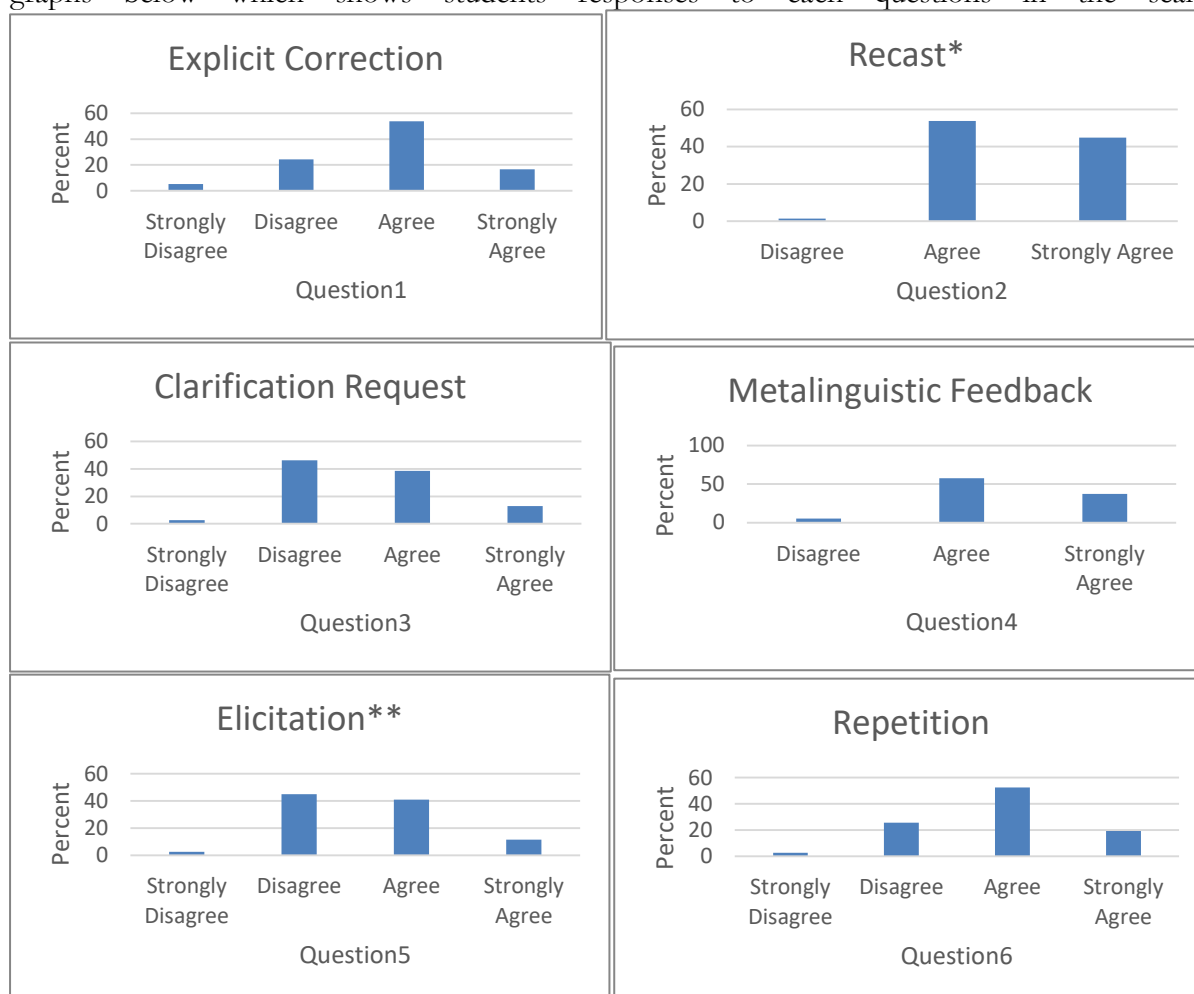
English skills. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, after which the answers were categorized and interpreted.

To collect data from the teacher, an interview was carried out. The interview is a semi-structured interview with three guiding questions. The first question elicited information about the teachers' overall view about students' spoken error. The second and third questions obtained information about the teachers' preferred type of oral corrective feedback and his reasons for preferences. Similar to students' interviews, the interview were also recorded and transcribed. To analyze the interviews, this research used inductive research analysis (Thomas, 2006). To start, the interviews were broke down into sentences and grouped based on the ideas. Each of these groups is given codes. The codes gained from previous step were then grouped based on the ideas to make it more compact, into less than 10 codes. The codes were analyzed based on the theories from the related field to find relationships between each codes and explanations of the codes. Lastly, sentences from the interviews were put into this more "compact" coding system to make it easier to give authentic proofs about certain theories.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students' Responses

This part shows students' responses to the questionnaire and interview. This amalgamation is done on the basis that the interview was conducted to support the data gathered from the questionnaire. The results for the effectivity of oral corrective feedback scale can be seen in the graphs below which shows students responses to each questions in the scale.



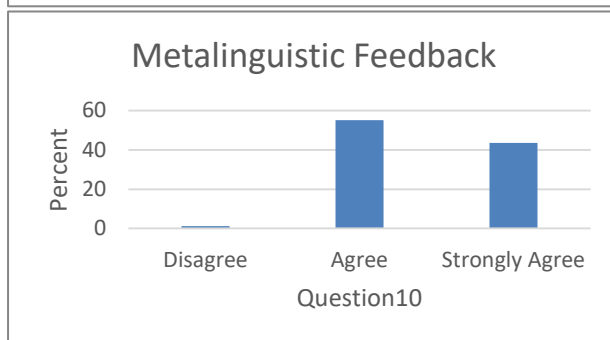
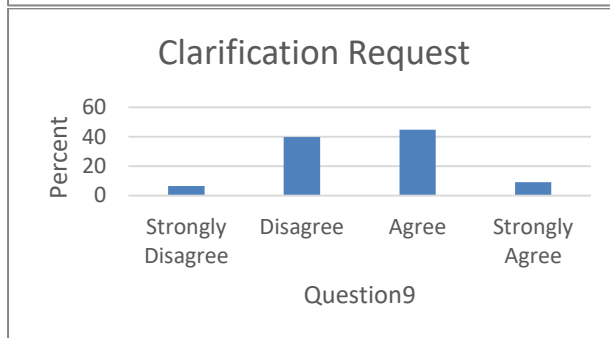
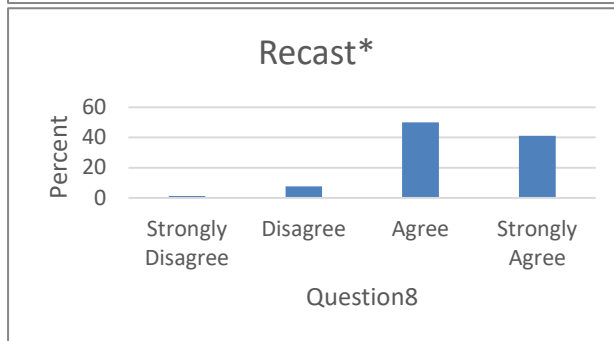
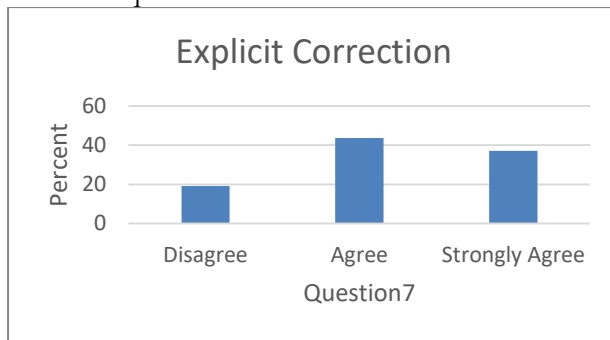
* Refers to (Roy Lyster & Leila Ranta, 1997)'s repetition with change and emphasis type of recast

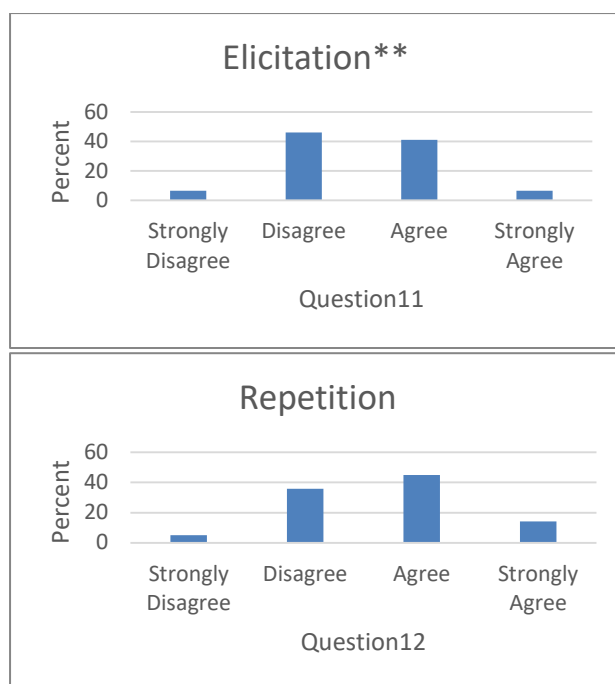
** Refers to (Roy Lyster & Leila Ranta, 1997)'s third type of elicitation

As the graph showed, students consider Recast (98.7% agreement) and Metalinguistic Feedback (94.9%) as the most effective type of oral corrective feedback. When asked for their reasons during the interview, students' answered that Recasts are easy to spot and the error is quickly fixed so they can immediately continue the lesson. This was confirmed by Roothoof (2014) in her study. It was found that most teachers in (Roothoof, 2014) favored recast due to its non-intrusive nature. However, students also voiced their concerns about the use of recast. The prominent response to the drawbacks of recast is that it reduces students' confidence because they get the impression that their teacher do not think in their abilities to correct their own mistakes. Though many researches have shown that excessive oral corrective feedbacks will reduce their confidence (Asnawi et al., 2017; Esther Lee, 2013; Lailatus et al., 2018; Lee, 2008; Lyster et al., 2013), there is but one that highlight the specific type of oral corrective feedback that hurt students' confidence. One of the not-so-much research that shows the type of oral corrective feedback that damages students' confidence is done by Amalia et al., (2009). In her research, it is found that metalinguistic feedbacks affect students' confidence in a negative way. This contradicts the findings of this research, where students consider recast as the type of corrective feedback that reduce their confidence. However, it should be noted that there is a difference in the level of education between the participants in this study and (Amalia et al., 2009)'s which might explain this contradiction. On the other hand, Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi (2018) did a study about the effect of oral corrective feedback on students' perceived linguistic competence which in turn affects their willingness to communicate. It was found that recast and other input-providing types of oral corrective feedback do not have significant influence on students' willingness to communicate. Though this discussion on recast seems paradoxical, i.e. it gains high level of students' approval on being effective but many also say it reduces their confidence; there is an explanation for this. Zare, Shooshtari, & Jalilifar (2020) found an explanation for this phenomenon. It was found that even though recast reduces students' confidence, students are willing to sacrifice their confidence for the greater purpose of longer lasting correctional merits of this type of OCF.

Metalinguistic feedbacks are considered effective because students' mistakes are generally easy to spot. Therefore, students know which part of their speech is faulty and can correct them immediately. Other researches in the field also show similar theories regarding metalinguistic feedbacks being easy to spot for students. (Amalia et al., 2009) in her study investigating university students' preferred oral corrective feedback and their reasons, found that both group of students (male and female) consider metalinguistic feedbacks as easy to spot. This explicitly shows that there is a correlation between university students' reasoning for preferring metalinguistic feedbacks and high school students'. On the other hand, Roothoof & Breeze (2016) also found that students' prefer output-prompting type of OCF such as metalinguistic feedbacks over input-providing types of OCF, albeit without explanation for this preference. In a study with similar topic taken in Austrian EFL context, Nußbaumer (2019) found similar result. It was found that Austrian students favor metalinguistic feedback as the most effective type of OCF by 87%, with other types of OCF hardly gets 70% approval by students. However, small percentage of students (5.1%) begs to differ. One student claims that when his teacher corrects him by giving metalinguistic feedback, he will not immediately notice the answer since he have to think twice (the grammatical form and how his speech is faulty). The academic guess to this different perception is because of students' varying level of English proficiency. Yilmaz, (2013) found that students who have better working memory capacity (WMC) and/or language analytic ability (LAA) benefit most from metalinguistic feedbacks since they are better at noticing, identifying patterns and generalizing from input. Thus they does not need to think twice about the meaning of the pattern (grammatical form) presented to them by their teacher. This study more or less confirms that students might perceive metalinguistic feedbacks differently since they have different cognitive abilities.

On the scale for students' preferred type of oral corrective feedback, the data obtained from the questionnaire are as follows:





* Refers to (Roy Lyster & Leila Ranta, 1997)'s repetition with change and emphasis type of recast

** Refers to (Roy Lyster & Leila Ranta, 1997)'s third type of elicitation

The data speaks for itself how students favor Metalinguistic Feedback. A staggering 98.7% of students consider Metalinguistic Feedbacks preferable. In the interview, students claim that metalinguistic feedbacks tend to stick in their mind more compared to other types of oral corrective feedback. To quote one student in the interview, "If the teacher tells me that I have a mistake but is unclear which part of the grammar is faulty, I have the tendency to repeat the same mistake in the future." Previous literatures support this finding. Out of all types of oral corrective feedbacks, participants in Amalia (2008) claim that metalinguistic feedbacks are easier to recall in further scenarios. This is supported by Panova & Lyster (2002) in which it is found that metalinguistic feedback provides 29% of students' repair, surpassing recast and clarification requests (13% and 23% respectively).

However, the differing views between teacher-generated explicit feedbacks and implicit feedbacks to foster self-correction is a recurring theme in the field (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Esther Lee, 2013; J. Han & Jung, 2007) the results of mentioned studies showed that students prefer their teacher to give explicit correction and correct it immediately, while their teachers prefer to have their students to figure it out themselves by giving implicit feedbacks. Clearly there is a difference with the result of this study. Majority of the high school students in this study prefer metalinguistic feedbacks on the very basis that they have their own effort in correcting the mistakes, so that it is easier for them to remember.

Teacher's Responses

The interview with the teacher brings fresh perspectives to this study. There were several topics being discussed during the interview. Namely: Teacher's teaching style, teacher's oral corrective feedback strategy, Obstacles in teacher's strategy, and how he tackles those obstacles. During the interview, no question about teacher's view on the importance of oral corrective feedback is asked since there were already a lot of studies that investigates teachers' view on oral corrective feedbacks (Bell, 2005; de Dios Martínez Agudo, 2019; Gurzynski-weiss, 2010; Kamiya, 2016; Yüksel et al., 2021), and all uniformly show that teachers consider giving oral corrective feedback important.

On his teaching style, the teacher claims to teach with a communicative-based approach. His approach on EFL teaching is that he wants to provide his students an opportunity and access to practice their speaking orally. However, this does not mean that he ignores students'

grammar entirely. He claims to allocate 40% of his teaching focusing into grammar, and the rest 60% is focused on communicative English. When asked about his reason for applying this method, he said “that's the skill that they will really need (writing and speaking), like, you know, they are sometimes are very good at grammar, but when it comes to writing or speaking, then there is an issue”. His communicative-based approach ensures that he encounters students’ error during speaking activities, thus he is familiar in giving oral corrective feedback.

In giving OCF, this teacher tends to give metalinguistic feedback more than other types of oral corrective feedback. Mr. Y allocates certain time to just focus on correcting students’ errors which happens at the end of a chapter, usually at the third or fourth meeting. However, sometimes he also gives corrective feedbacks at the end of each session, albeit not as thorough as the correction that happens at the end of a chapter. These per-session feedbacks happen at the last 10 minutes of a session to give students time to make progress by themselves and noticing their own mistakes. This case is similar to (Basturkmen et al., 2004) which investigates about teachers’ incidental focus on forms. His study showed that teachers generally do not prefer to interrupt students during communicative language teaching, and if they do, they focus on mistakes that affect the intended meaning. The difference is that, in (Basturkmen et al., 2004) the teachers focuses on multiple aspects of a language (phonology, vocabulary, and grammar). Meanwhile, Mr. Y focuses mainly on grammatical errors. However, several studies show different results regarding the timing of the oral corrective feedback. (Ünsal Şakiroğlu, 2020) showed that majority of students (37.3) prefer to get feedback at the end of their speech. There is no explanation in (Ünsal Şakiroğlu, 2020) regarding students’ reasons to prefer to get feedbacks at the end of their speech. Presumably, because students worry that they might have forgotten about their mistakes during their speech, such as the case with (Gamlo, 2019). (Gamlo, 2019), who also shows that students prefer to get feedbacks at the end of their speech, investigates further and finds that there are two reasons for this. First, is because students do not wish to forget their errors. Second, is because students wish to have the correct form reinforced, to improve their English skills. But, all students in the aforementioned studies (Asnawi et al., 2017; Gamlo, 2019; Ünsal Şakiroğlu, 2020) do agree that they would prefer their teacher not to interrupt them while speaking.

Teacher’s focus on grammatical errors in giving metalinguistic feedbacks is somewhat in line with students’ preferred type of oral corrective feedback. Diab (2006) suggests that it is a good thing when the teacher and students are on the same page regarding corrective feedback strategy.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study revealed that high school students do have preference for oral corrective feedback and perceive different oral corrective feedback to have different effectivity. High school students in this study considers recast and metalinguistic feedbacks as the most effective type of oral corrective feedback with varying reasons. However, it should also be noted that this is not the case for the whole class, since other students also voiced some strong objections toward the use of recast and metalinguistic feedbacks. The reason for this differing views toward certain oral corrective feedback strategies are because of their varying level of working memory capacity and language analytic ability. Investigation upon high school students’ preferred oral corrective feedback brings a rather conclusive result. It was found that metalinguistic feedback and recast are their most preferred types of oral corrective feedback. Their underlying reason however, is not very conclusive. Majority of the students prefer metalinguistic feedback on the basis that metalinguistic feedbacks tend to stick in their mind more compared to other types of oral corrective feedback. However, others who don’t prefer metalinguistic feedbacks consider it indirect and even at times confusing. Recast also have similar result, majority of students consider it preferable due to its direct and efficient nature. However, those who don’t prefer it perceive recast as an “incomplete correction” and might easily be forgotten.

In giving correction, the teacher in this study prefers to use metalinguistic feedback, which is in line with his students' preference. This is a good thing since it means that the teacher and the students are mostly on the same page regarding correction in speaking activities. The teachers' reason is that it is better to explain an issue thoroughly in case someone else in the class has a same problem or also still does not understand a certain concept. However, he also does not want to interrupt the communication flow of the class. His strategy is to deliver the correction at the end of each session instead of immediately after a student made the mistake.

It is important to note that the present study does have its caveats which future researchers on the topic might need to look into. Firstly, incorporating students and teachers from various schools might give a more complete view on high school students' and teachers' preferences on oral corrective feedbacks. Secondly, an investigation on why certain oral corrective feedback is not considered preferable by high school students, which might have a significant impact on ELT, is still untouched in this study. For ELT practitioners, especially high school English teachers, it is important to find out students' preferred type of oral corrective feedback, so that the correction delivered is highly valuable to the students and the teachers and students are on the same page regarding the most effective type of oral corrective feedback.

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