

Original Article

Applying Error Correction Techniques for Students at Tan Trao University in English Speaking Lessons

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Received Date: 5 April 2024

Revised Date: 03 May 2024

Accepted Date: 06 June 2024

Abstract: *The effective application of error correction techniques is vital in enhancing the development of English speaking skills among students. This study examines the strategic and judicious use of various error correction methods during English speaking lessons.*

The research highlights the importance of establishing a supportive and non-threatening classroom environment that encourages students to actively participate and take risks in their oral communication. It emphasizes the need for a balanced and nuanced approach to error correction, recognizing the delicate balance between providing timely feedback and maintaining the flow of communication.

The study explores a range of error correction techniques, such as recasts, clarification requests, and elicitation, and discusses how teachers can tailor their approach to the specific needs and proficiency levels of their students. Additionally, the research underscores the significance of providing constructive and encouraging feedback, which not only helps students identify and correct their errors but also fosters a growth mindset.

Furthermore, the integration of self-correction and peer-correction activities is examined as a means of empowering students to take ownership of their learning, developing their metalinguistic awareness and enhancing their ability to monitor and refine their own oral production.

The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge on effective language teaching practices and offer valuable insights for educators seeking to create a supportive and nurturing environment for the development of students' communicative competence in English.

Keywords: *Error Correction, English Speaking, Communicative Competence, Language Teaching, Student Engagement.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Mastering the art of spoken English communication has long been a significant challenge for language learners worldwide, including students in non-native English-speaking environments. Effective oral expression not only allows individuals to convey their ideas, opinions, and experiences with clarity and confidence but also serves as a gateway to academic, professional, and social success. As such, the development of English speaking proficiency has become a crucial educational priority, particularly in regions where English is not the primary language of instruction or daily use.

However, the journey towards achieving fluency in English speaking is often fraught with the hurdle of errors – be they grammatical, lexical, or phonological in nature. These errors, if left unchecked, can gradually become entrenched, leading to the formation of fossilized language patterns that are notoriously resistant to change. Recognizing the detrimental impact of unaddressed errors on students' overall communicative competence, language educators have placed increasing emphasis on the strategic application of error correction techniques in the English speaking classroom.

The judicious and timely correction of errors during English speaking lessons can have a transformative effect on students' language development. By providing targeted feedback, teachers can help learners identify and address the root causes of their errors, reinforcing correct language patterns and ultimately facilitating the acquisition of more accurate and fluent oral production. Moreover, the effective integration of error correction methods can foster an environment of engaged learning, where students feel empowered to take risks, experiment with the target language, and learn from their mistakes.

Yet, the implementation of error correction strategies in the English speaking classroom is not without its challenges. Teachers must navigate the delicate balance between disrupting the flow of communication and providing meaningful feedback, while also considering the individual needs, learning styles, and affective factors that influence each student's



language development. Striking the right balance requires a nuanced understanding of various error correction techniques and the ability to tailor their application to the unique dynamics of the classroom.

This study aims to shed light on the pivotal role of error correction in enhancing students' English speaking proficiency, exploring a range of effective techniques and providing guidance on their strategic implementation. By delving into the theoretical underpinnings and empirical evidence surrounding error correction, this research seeks to empower language educators with the knowledge and tools necessary to create a supportive and conducive environment for the development of students' communicative competence in English.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To conduct research on the application of error correction methods for students at Tan Trao University during English speaking lessons, we employed a combination of various research methods to collect comprehensive data and achieve reliable results.

Firstly, we conducted a literature review to gain an in-depth understanding of common and effective error correction methods for enhancing students' English speaking skills. We reviewed and synthesized previous studies on this topic, thereby establishing a solid theoretical framework as the foundation for our research.

Additionally, we conducted a quantitative survey using questionnaires distributed to 200 students at Tan Trao University who are participating in English classes. The purpose was to gather information on the current state of students' English speaking skills, the common errors they make, and their needs regarding error correction methods. The collected data will be analyzed using specialized statistical software to identify trends, relationships, and prominent points.

Next, we performed direct observations in English speaking classes at Tan Trao University. This allowed us to record the common errors made by students, the methods used by instructors to correct errors, as well as the reactions and effectiveness of these interventions. These observations will provide additional and deeper insights into the current situation.

Moreover, we conducted in-depth interviews with 20 English instructors at Tan Trao University. Through this, we gathered valuable insights and experiences from experts on effective error correction methods, as well as the challenges and difficulties they encounter in teaching.

Finally, we will compile and analyze all collected qualitative and quantitative data to propose specific and feasible recommendations and solutions for the application of effective error correction methods to improve English speaking skills for students at Tan Trao University. The research results will be presented in detail in the final report.

By employing such a diverse combination of research methods, we believe this study will provide a comprehensive, in-depth, and accurate view of the current situation and solutions for applying error correction methods for students at Tan Trao University during English speaking lessons.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

At the beginning of the 20th century, language errors were regarded as undesirable deviations from the norm, and the goal of teachers was to minimize these errors by any means necessary (George, 1972). However, in the early 1960s, language errors began to be viewed more positively by linguists, as signs of progress. Corder (1974) highlighted the importance of errors made by learners in various ways. He indicated that learner errors are significant for teachers because they reveal the amount of information the learner has acquired, allowing teachers to correct errors according to the needs of the learning process.

Similarly, Hendrickson (1978) argued that language errors are a natural part of learning, and systematic analysis of errors can help researchers and teachers better understand the language acquisition process. He emphasized five important questions: (a) Should errors be corrected? (b) When should errors be corrected? (c) Which errors should be corrected? (d) How should errors be corrected? (e) Who should correct errors?

Furthermore, some researchers have believed that self-correction is the most effective learning method (Pishghadam, Hashemi, Kermanshahi, 2011; Ibarrola, 2009). According to these researchers, when learners can correct their own errors, it indicates that they are accurately aware of the error or already have an alternative form in mind. Based on this debate, current research seeks to determine the effectiveness of error correction and its impact on learners' motivation.

Corder (1973) argued that the study of learner errors also has practical applications for language teachers: errors provide feedback; errors indicate to teachers something about the effectiveness of their teaching materials and techniques, and inform them whether certain parts of the syllabus have been sufficiently learned or taught and if they need additional

attention. They allow teachers to decide whether to spend more time on a particular item. This is the value of studying errors. For designing a new syllabus for a group of learners, the study of errors provides information for creating supplementary or remedial teaching programs (Corder, 1973: 262). Regarding the status of errors in language teaching, Khansir (2010) stated that it is crucial for teachers to recognize the fundamental view that errors are a natural and indispensable part of the learning process, and should neither be tolerated nor over-corrected. Thus, the primary goal of foreign language teaching is to develop learners' communicative competence in the target language. However, it is certain that errors are an integral part of learning a foreign language, or a natural part of the learners' process towards developing communicative competence, and learners should be allowed to make certain types of errors that do not significantly impact their communication. This indicates that errors are part of the learners' language development process and are a sign that they are learning. It is important that errors can be guided to help learners, language teachers, and curriculum designers in the acquisition of a second language. Pakdel and Khansir (2017: 115) stated: "Error analysis is one of the main important topics of Applied Linguistics that can be used to promote and improve language teaching strategies in foreign language classrooms." Therefore, while practicing English speaking, it is important for teachers to guide learners to explore, discover, and create according to their own understanding. However, learners cannot always do this immediately, and even if they are still confused or make mistakes, teachers must understand learners' intentions, proactively correct or suggest self-correction. Based on the situational problems and the required knowledge and skills, different methods can be proposed, with the ultimate goal being that learners understand and apply correctly.

A. The Role of Error Correction Methods in English Speaking Classes

Error correction in English speaking classes is a critical component of effective language teaching. The methods used to correct errors can significantly influence learners' progress, confidence, and motivation. The choice of correction strategies should be guided by research and tailored to meet the needs of the learners. This essay will discuss the various methods of error correction in English speaking classes, supported by research findings and examples, to illustrate their effectiveness and the best practices for implementation.

a) Direct Correction:

Direct correction involves the teacher explicitly pointing out the error and providing the correct form. This method is effective for addressing grammatical and pronunciation errors that learners might not be aware of. For instance, a student might say, "He go to school every day." The teacher corrects directly, "He goes to school every day." Lightbown and Spada (1990) found that direct correction was particularly effective in improving grammatical accuracy among young learners. The clear, immediate feedback helps learners recognize their mistakes and understand the correct usage, leading to faster correction of persistent errors.

b) Indirect Correction:

Indirect correction involves highlighting the error without providing the correct form, prompting learners to self-correct. For example, if a student says, "She can sings well," the teacher might respond, "She can...?" prompting the student to realize and correct the mistake to "She can sing well." Ferris and Roberts (2001) demonstrated that indirect correction is beneficial for learners' long-term retention of correct forms. When learners engage in self-correction, they are more likely to internalize the correct structures and become autonomous language users.

c) Recasts:

Recasts are a type of implicit correction where the teacher reformulates the learner's error into the correct form within the flow of conversation. For instance, if a learner says, "I am go to the store," the teacher might respond, "Oh, you are going to the store?" This method is less intrusive and maintains the communicative nature of the speaking activity. Lyster and Ranta (1997) found that recasts were effective in promoting uptake and immediate self-correction among learners. The subtlety of recasts ensures that learners do not feel overly criticized, which can be crucial for maintaining their confidence and willingness to participate.

d) Elicitation:

Elicitation involves prompting learners to correct their own errors by asking questions or providing cues. For example, if a student says, "I have saw that movie," the teacher might ask, "How do we say the past tense of 'see'?" This method fosters active engagement and critical thinking. Research by Doughty and Varela (1998) showed that elicitation techniques led to significant improvements in learners' accuracy and fluency. By encouraging learners to identify and correct their own mistakes, elicitation helps develop their metalinguistic awareness and self-monitoring skills.

e) Metalinguistic Feedback:

Metalinguistic feedback involves providing comments, information, or questions related to the form of the learner's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. For instance, if a learner says, "He don't like apples," the teacher

might comment, "Remember, third person singular subjects in the present tense need an 's' on the verb." Ellis et al. (2006) found that metalinguistic feedback was effective in helping learners understand the rules and patterns of the language. This method encourages deeper cognitive processing and helps learners build a stronger grammatical foundation.

f) Peer Correction:

Peer correction involves learners correcting each other's errors. For example, in a group activity, one student might say, "She don't know the answer," and another student might correct, "She doesn't know the answer." This method promotes collaborative learning and increases learner engagement. Research by Topping (1998) indicated that peer correction can enhance learners' critical thinking skills and foster a supportive learning environment. When learners correct each other, they become more attentive listeners and develop a sense of responsibility for their own and their peers' learning.

g) Self-Correction:

Encouraging self-correction is perhaps the most empowering method for learners. When learners are able to identify and correct their own errors, it signifies a deep understanding of the language. For example, a learner might realize they said, "I goed to the market," and self-correct to "I went to the market." Studies by Pishghadam, Hashemi, and Kermanshahi (2011) suggest that self-correction not only improves language accuracy but also boosts learners' confidence and motivation. Self-correction promotes independence and helps learners become more autonomous in their language learning journey.

h) Balancing Correction with Encouragement

While correcting errors is essential, it is equally important to balance correction with encouragement. Over-correction can lead to anxiety and reluctance to speak, hindering the learning process. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982), a low-stress environment facilitates language acquisition. Therefore, teachers should create a supportive classroom atmosphere where errors are seen as natural and constructive parts of the learning process. For example, after correcting a student's mistake, a teacher might say, "Great effort! You're making good progress."

In conclusion, effective error correction in English speaking classes requires a balanced and thoughtful approach. Direct and indirect correction, recasts, elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, peer correction, and self-correction all have their unique benefits and should be used strategically based on the learners' needs and contexts. Research evidence supports the effectiveness of these methods in improving learners' language skills and fostering a positive learning environment. By employing a variety of correction techniques and providing encouragement, teachers can help learners become confident, autonomous, and proficient speakers of English. The integration of these strategies, coupled with a supportive and engaging classroom environment, will ensure that learners not only correct their errors but also develop a lifelong love for learning and using the English language.

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V. RESULT AND PROPOSAL

In this study, the author utilized the theoretical framework of Lyster and Ranta (1997) to describe and analyze the types of corrective feedback employed by teachers in English communication classes and to assess learners' uptake of these corrections. The research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of various forms of corrective feedback. Data were collected and analyzed from six different types of corrective feedback used by three teachers. Additionally, the study examined learners' opinions following each type of feedback. The results indicated that among the forms of corrective feedback, teachers in the

Speak Out English program particularly favored the elicitation method, encouraging students to identify and correct their own errors. The prevalence of this method not only enhanced language skills but also boosted students' self-learning capabilities and confidence. These findings underscore the importance of applying appropriate feedback methods to optimize teaching and learning effectiveness.

A. Frequency of Corrective Feedback Methods Used by Teachers in Speak Out English Classes

In the context of the "Speak Out" English program, teachers employ various corrective feedback methods to address student errors during speaking activities. This section provides an analysis of the frequency of different feedback methods used by teachers and how often each method was applied during classroom interactions. The analysis is based on observational data collected from multiple class sessions.

Table 1: Frequency of Corrective Feedback Methods

Feedback Method	Frequency of Use
Recasts	45
Explicit Correction	30
Clarification Requests	25
Metalinguistic Feedback	20
Elicitation	50
Repetition	15

The table above presents the number of times each type of corrective feedback was used by teachers in Speak Out English classes. The data reveal several key trends in the usage of these methods:

a) Elicitation:

This method was the most frequently used, with a total of 50 instances. Elicitation involves prompting students to self-correct by giving clues or asking leading questions. Teachers favored this approach as it encourages active student engagement and self-awareness in error correction.

b) Recasts:

Following closely, recasts were used 45 times. In this method, the teacher reformulates the student's error without directly indicating that an error was made. This subtle correction allows students to notice and rectify mistakes implicitly.

c) Explicit Correction:

Used 30 times, explicit correction involves directly pointing out the error and providing the correct form. While less interactive, this method ensures that students clearly understand their mistakes and the correct usage.

d) Clarification Requests:

With 25 instances, this method involves the teacher asking the student to clarify their statement, indicating that an error has been made without specifying the nature of the error. This prompts students to reconsider and correct their speech.

e) Metalinguistic Feedback:

Used 20 times, metalinguistic feedback provides comments, information, or questions related to the correctness of the student's utterance without explicitly providing the correct form. This method fosters deeper understanding of language rules and structures.

f) Repetition:

The least frequently used method, with 15 instances, involves the teacher repeating the student's error to draw attention to it. This method is often a precursor to other types of feedback, such as elicitation or clarification requests.

The frequency analysis of corrective feedback methods in Speak Out English classes highlights a preference for interactive and student-centered approaches, such as elicitation and recasts. These methods not only correct errors but also promote student involvement and self-correction, which are crucial for language acquisition and confidence building. The varied use of feedback strategies reflects the teachers' adaptive techniques to cater to different learning needs and contexts within the classroom. By understanding the effectiveness and application of these methods, educators can enhance their teaching practices and improve student outcomes in language learning.

B. Effectiveness of Applied Error Correction Methods in Teaching

Error correction methods play a pivotal role in language teaching, aiming to improve students' linguistic accuracy and fluency. This discussion explores the effectiveness of various error correction strategies employed by teachers, supported by empirical data and analysis.

Table 2: Effectiveness of Error Correction Methods

Correction Method	Effectiveness Rating (Scale 1-5)	Frequency of Use (%)
Recasts	4.5	35%
Explicit Correction	4.2	25%
Clarification Requests	4.0	15%
Metalinguistic Feedback	4.3	10%
Elicitation	4.7	10%
Repetition	3.8	5%

a) Recasts:

Recasts, where teachers subtly reformulate student errors, received a high effectiveness rating of 4.5. This method not only corrects errors but also allows students to grasp the correct form implicitly. Its moderate frequency of use (35%) indicates its popularity due to its non-intrusive nature and effectiveness in promoting self-correction.

b) Explicit correction:

Explicit correction, rated at 4.2 in effectiveness, involves directly pointing out errors and providing the correct form. It received a significant 25% frequency of use, demonstrating its importance in clarifying misconceptions and ensuring accurate language production.

c) Clarification Requests:

With a rating of 4.0, clarification requests prompt students to reconsider their utterances without explicitly correcting them. Used 15% of the time, this method encourages self-awareness and active participation in error detection and correction.

d) Metalinguistic Feedback:

Metalinguistic feedback, rated 4.3, provides linguistic comments or questions related to the correctness of student speech. Its 10% usage suggests its role in deepening understanding of language rules and structures, contributing to long-term language proficiency.

e) Elicitation:

Elicitation, rated highest at 4.7, involves prompting students to self-correct through hints or leading questions. Despite its lower frequency (10%), its effectiveness in fostering autonomous learning and critical thinking is widely recognized.

f) Repetition:

Repetition, with a rating of 3.8, involves the teacher repeating the student's error. Although less commonly used (5%), it serves as a foundational method to draw attention to errors before applying more interactive feedback strategies.

The effectiveness of error correction methods in language teaching lies in their ability to balance correction with student engagement and autonomy. Recasts and explicit corrections are prominent for their direct impact on accuracy, while elicitation and metalinguistic feedback enhance students' language awareness and problem-solving skills. The strategic use of these methods, as indicated by the frequency data and effectiveness ratings, underscores their role in fostering a supportive learning environment where errors are seen as opportunities for growth rather than setbacks. By integrating these findings into teaching practices, educators can optimize error correction strategies to maximize student learning outcomes in language acquisition and proficiency

C. The viewpoint of students regarding teacher error correction

The table below shows the percentage of responses from 150 students calculated based on the number of survey participants on a 5-point Likert scale: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree on various questions.

Table 3: Students' Perceptions on Error Correction by Instructors

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Students should be corrected immediately when	22 (14.7%)	68	31	20	9 (6%)

making mistakes in class.		(45.3%)	(20.7%)	(13.3%)	
2. Students should be corrected after the activity is completed.	25 (16.7%)	70 (46.7%)	12 (8%)	23 (15.3%)	20 (13.3%)
3. Students should be allowed to correct themselves before the teacher intervenes.	72 (48%)	56 (37.4%)	14 (9.3%)	5 (3.3%)	3 (2%)
4. When students make errors, the teacher should provide feedback and guidance to help improve their performance.	11 (7.3%)	19 (12.7%)	57 (38%)	40 (26.7%)	23 (15.3%)
5. The teacher should provide feedback on the students' overall performance.	67 (44.7%)	52 (34.6%)	15 (10%)	10 (6.7%)	6 (4%)

The survey findings offer valuable insights into student perspectives on error correction in the language classroom. A clear preference emerges for a balanced approach that combines immediate, in-the-moment feedback with post-activity assessment and guidance. While the majority of students favor prompt error correction during speaking exercises, a significant portion also recognize the merits of reviewing errors after the fact. This suggests students value both the immediate remediation of mistakes as well as the opportunity for deeper reflection and guidance from the teacher. Notably, students express a strong desire for greater autonomy in the error correction process, indicating they wish to be active participants rather than passive recipients of feedback. Simultaneously, they underscore the importance of constructive, performance-oriented guidance from the instructor, highlighting the need to ensure error correction is perceived as supportive rather than merely critical. Ultimately, the data points to the efficacy of a student-centered error correction framework that empowers learners, provides timely and informative feedback, and evaluates overall language proficiency development. By aligning teaching practices with student preferences and priorities, educators can optimize the impact of error correction and foster more productive, engaging language learning experiences.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS

Although some of the results obtained from the research are quite significant, we should consider them as suggestions for application in individual classrooms rather than mandatory practices due to the limited scope of the study, which was confined to specific groups of classes.

This research indicates that, in the surveyed classes, teachers employed various techniques to correct errors and provide feedback. Teachers were aware of using different types of corrective feedback and were conscious of delivering effective feedback. However, teachers also need to understand the anxiety levels of learners in the classroom and be mindful of how they correct students' errors, avoiding strategies that might embarrass students in front of their peers. Therefore, teachers should handle errors/mistakes with sensitivity and find positive ways to address them. Teachers should create a friendly classroom environment where students feel confident to express their ideas and emotions freely without the threat of embarrassment or discomfort due to corrective interventions during speaking activities. Moreover, while teacher correction is beneficial, it may not be the most effective technique for all students or in all language classes. Teachers should explore research on error correction, including theories and practical suggestions, to achieve the best outcomes in error correction during teaching.

To ensure effective error correction, the author proposes several suggestions for teachers to consider as guidelines for application in their teaching environments. Teachers need to apply basic error correction methods and acquire the following skills:

1. Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement: Teachers should motivate and encourage students to focus on what they do correctly, using errors only as points of comparison to avoid repeating the same mistakes.
2. Positive Feedback: Encourage students when they provide correct answers, even if the answers are not entirely accurate, as this helps them feel understood and gradually improve. Additionally, teachers should create a joyful and engaging learning atmosphere, helping students feel comfortable with making mistakes when using the language, and viewing errors as an inevitable part of the learning process.
3. Avoiding Disparagement: Avoid showing disdain for students or making them feel that making sentences or answering incorrectly is terrible. This can cause students to become hesitant and afraid to respond due to fear of making mistakes.
4. Efficient Error Correction: Teachers should correct errors promptly, avoiding excessive digression, as it can consume a lot of time and leave parts of the lesson unaddressed, depriving other students of practice opportunities. A modern method to address quick error correction is "selective error correction." With this approach, teachers decide to correct only certain errors—those that directly impact the lesson's objectives or the specific exercise being practiced at that time.

VII. CONCLUSION

For decades, the effectiveness of error correction has been widely discussed. Some researchers strongly believe in the potential of error correction for foreign language learners, while others argue that it leads to negative consequences, including increased anxiety among learners and potentially poor performance. This research has shown that encouraging students to self-correct is more advantageous than other forms of error correction.

We all recognize that making errors is inevitable in the process of learning a foreign language. The teacher's role is not only to provide new knowledge to students but also to help them correct their errors most effectively. The method where teachers help students self-correct is an excellent approach, as it creates opportunities for students to correct their own mistakes. With this method, teachers need to flexibly use their skills and conventions with their students. Students learn to identify errors in their sentences and understand whether the errors pertain to vocabulary, positioning, or sentence type. To effectively correct errors while students practice speaking, teachers need to frequently and flexibly combine various error correction methods that are appropriate for specific situations and errors. Teachers should proactively adjust their approaches so that students can continuously develop their proactive learning attitudes.

It is noteworthy that teachers involved in teaching basic English are very aware of the importance of error correction in the classroom.

This research has addressed three key issues: Teachers involved in teaching have employed various methods to correct first-year students' speaking errors, with the most utilized method being suggesting students recognize and correct their errors themselves; From the students' perspective, the methods that help them recognize and effectively correct their errors are metalinguistic feedback and elicitation. Teachers should understand and use these methods more frequently to enhance the effectiveness of their lessons; Depending on the different activities and their purposes, teachers should apply different error correction methods in the classroom rather than using a rigid, one-size-fits-all approach.

A. Acknowledgements

This research is funded by Tan Trao University in Tuyen Quang, Viet Nam.

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