

# Students' Perception of Lexical Errors and the Teachers' Feedback

## Long- term Effects

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### Abstract

The errors of L2 learners are much influenced by their L1. they (errors) were the result of interference in the learning of a second language from the habits of the first language. Corrective Feedback (CF) does not always provide the correct form but it also forces learners to utilize their own resources in constructing a reformulation. Direct feedbacks do not figure out the actual performance of students' comprehension in correcting the errors because teachers have provided the correct one. Teachers have to invite students to be active finding the correct one from their errors they produce

#### A. Introduction

Errors are flawed side of learner speech or writing (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982). This occurs because errors deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982). Since spoken and written are the productive knowledge made by second language learners, the errors are frequently committed by L2 learners. The errors of L2 learners are much influenced by their L1. It is in line with the statement stated by Corder (1967) saying that they (errors) were the result of interference in the learning of a second language from the habits of the first language. Large corpora of errors consistently indicate that lexical errors are the most common among second

language learners (Gass & Selinker, 1994: 270).

In language acquisition, some errors are unavoidable, particularly interlanguage (the process between L1 and L2). The query is that the errors have to be corrected or not. To answer this, it is necessary to take the advantages and disadvantages of correcting. In many previous studies, both teachers and students think that corrective feedback is very important to improve their language competence. Corrective Feedback (CF) does not always provide the correct form but it also forces learners to utilize their own resources in constructing a reformulation. It is also investigating the future achievement than current. Long-

term quality of writing and speaking is the main objective than only knowing the effect after giving corrective feedback. The new paradigm that must be taken into account is the long-term effect is more important than the current (short-term effect) of providing CF.

## **B. Theoretical Background**

Lewis (2008) defines errors as anything that sounds wrong which occurs when students communicate in more complicated language. Error types then can be classified into: (1) errors of omission, (2) errors of overuse, (3) errors of fact, (4) errors of form, (5) errors of clarity, (6) socio-cultural errors, (7) discourse level errors, (8) local and global errors. Meanwhile, Heaton (1991) argues the test writers in elementary level will be treated far more tolerant than intermediate and advanced levels in treating errors.

There are two lexical errors; (1) formal errors, and (2) semantics errors (Hemchua, and Schmitt. 2006). This article only focuses on formal errors which are categorized into (1) formal misselection; involving similar lexical forms (visual and sound similarity), (2) misformation: not existing in the L2, (3) distortion: misapplication of the target language or misspelling.

It is strongly believed that the debate between two contradictory ideas “To correct or not correct” arrives to the appropriate statement saying what to correct and how to correct”. Yet, it is out of the question to correct all students’ errors. Teachers have to focus on a certain aspect of language that must be corrected such as lexical, grammar, semantic errors and etc. Giving corrective feedback should consider the actual students’ needs to improve their L2. In addition, different errors have different treatment based on the learners’ proficiency. CF functions are not to give too much burden in correcting, and every single error must not be corrected since there is no much time for teachers to correct it. On the other hand, students would be very uncomfortable and unmotivated to face that they have many errors in their writing and speaking.

The other aspect which must be regarded is a consistency. A consistency in giving CF never gets much attention in previous research. The previous studies only emphasize on the effectiveness of CF and how it is conducted by teachers. Teachers of L2 have to be alert that applying CF won’t be very beneficial to students’ L2 improvement if it is prepared, planned and implement consistently.

### **C. Research Method**

The three categories of errors above will be discussed by providing some examples both in speaking and writing. The examples of errors are taken without regarding the level of L2 learners where they are beginners, intermediate and advanced. Frequently, almost errors are made by the beginners because of some logical reasons such as their linguistic knowledge and competence. Here are some examples of

1) Formal misselection: (a) They haven't difficulty again (suffix type), (b) The setting of their sit is male and female (vowel-based type), (c) Teachers and students fell dissatisfaction with it (consonant-based type).

2) Misformation: (a) The third reason is the facilities (coinage) in this school are very less (calque), (b) Then, absent the students one by one

3) Distortion: (a) Teachers and students fell dissatisfaction with it (overinclusion), (b) It can help the teacher to maximal when learn the material (misselection and omission), (c) The condition of classroom is quite too because the classroom is far from the road (misordering)

It is not doubtful that second language learners acquire feedback from their teachers to improve their second language

competence. Teachers only give feedback on students' productive knowledge (spoken and written). As giving a corrective feedback has been debatable for many years among the researchers, the most important of giving of feedback should be taken into account. It is not dealing whether the errors must be corrected or not, but what to correct and how to correct are more prominently regarded. It is not wise to let students do the errors without correcting their errors. Some people who encounter that errors must not be corrected should consider the better treatment to solve the problem and not abandon it without any alternative solution.

### **D. Analysis**

#### **1. Students' Perception of Lexical Errors**

Perhaps, many learners are aware that their production in writing and speaking are not always accepted by the native speakers' understanding or advanced English users. The lack of vocabulary knowledge is the reason why it happens. Many of learners formulate their production of second language which is dominantly affected by their first language. The affection is unavoidable since it is easier to adopt the L1 patterns into L2. Therefore, the mental linguistics of L1 learners reflects to their

L2. For beginner level, errors are conducted without consideration that they have made errors, but for intermediate and advanced level, the errors occur because of the careless of using L2. It means that intermediate and advanced level students should think whether their sentences or utterances are correct or not. It seems very hard to do this on speaking because there is no revision. Usually, it can be done on writing during revising.

## **2. Teachers' Feedback for Long Term Effect**

Direct feedback is the most preferable type of feedback that both students and teachers like. Yet, it does not contribute significantly in the future. It indicates that the effect of direct feedback merely emerges in short-term quality. Teachers have to check whether their feedback improve the students' quality in acquiring L2 in the future meaning the long-term effect. Later, the teachers' belief has also important rule. Feedback strategies cannot work without teachers' beliefs that the

strategies can work or their readiness to innovate in their own classroom (Lee, 2011)

This article suggests that in giving corrective feedback a teacher has to considered three important things; (1) consistency, (2) long-term effect, (3) individual student record of errors, (4) possible solution. To gain long-term effect of corrective feedback, a teacher must be consistent in what area the feedback should be given. Simple meta-linguistic explanation, namely, explanation of rule(s) with example(s), is the best type of written CF for long-term accuracy (Bitchener and Ute. 2010). Finally, the long term effect can be evaluated if a teacher is able to identify, categorize, find the best solution, and check whether the same errors which have been corrected still occur in the future (Does he/she still make the same errors in the future or not).

## **3. Examples and (in-depth) analysis**

Table 1. Examples of Speaking and Writing Errors

No	Utterance Sentence	Formal Errors		
		Misselection	Misformation	Distortion
1	A: Do you mind if I Open the door? B: <i>Yes, of course</i>	√		
2	<i>Where are you from?</i>	√		
3	<i>I breakfast at 6 in the morning</i>		√	
4	<i>I am difficult to do that</i>		√	
5	Welcome to <i>democraton</i> era	√		
6	The <i>birocration</i> is always difficult	√		
7	<i>Congratulation</i> on new job.		√	
8	I go to school with my father?			√

**a. Examples of Lexical errors in speaking**

1. A: Do you mind if I open the door?  
It's very hot here  
B: Oh, yes. Sure. The correct reply is "No, I don't / No problem"

Frequently the request should be replied by the positive form of phrase or sentence. B assumes that A wants to open the door and needs B's permission, so B simply responds with showing an agreement. I have tested many times this request on my speaking class, and I found most students replied my request with the positive one meaning to show the agreement what I wanted to do. It occurs in Indonesian context because almost request in Indonesian use the positive one for examples, *Bolehkah saya..., Apakah boleh saya...,* and these two sentences won't be said *Tidak bolehkah..., Apakah tidak boleh....* The best correction to this error

probably can be given by showing some other exceptions of English request using "mind", for examples would you mind shutting the door please!. It is a misselection error where the expected response is not what the request wants. The possible solution for this error above is by showing some exceptions of replying request in English which explain that some requests should be replied with expression 'No' to show the acceptations. A teacher has to use the request using 'Do you mind... or Would you mind if... ' which make students accustomed with this expression.

2. Where do you from? / Where are you from? The correct question is (Where have you been)

Tense in English has a very crucial in determine the meaning of an utterance. In some occasion, Indonesian L2 learners only use their Indonesian form into

English without regarding the sense of sentence in the target language (English). Their inadequate knowledge of English grammar causes L2 produce their utterances. These question is merely derived from L1 (1) “*Dari mana kamu? Kok lama tidak kelihatan?*, (2) *Anda dari mana? Saya tunggu ga datang-datang.* This error is categorized as misselection error. The question maker selects an inappropriate way to get the information. The appropriate way to solve this error is by showing the function of every tense in English. When students study present perfect, they have to be told the different between ‘Where have you been?’ and ‘Where are from?’.

3. I breakfast at 6 in the morning → the correct one ( I have breakfast at 6 in the morning)

The word “breakfast” probably is assumed as a predicate. What happens next is that the sentence looks like correct because it consists of subject (I), predicate (breakfast) and adverb of time and place (at 6 in the morning). Another example is “They absent today”. Perhaps, L2 learners have to know that an English sentence is always needed a predicate. The predicate can be verb (go, study, eat, and etc) or be / linking verb (am, is, are, were, was, etc). It proves that the error made by the speaker

is a misformation error because the speaker uses the wrong L2 linguistic form.

4. I am difficult to do that → It is difficult for me to do that.

The speaker assumes that this pattern of the sentence is the same with I am absent or I am busy. This error should not happen in intermediate and advanced learners if they have learner the form of adjective + to infinitive. It probably occurs because the speaker adopt Indonesian “ *Saya sulit untuk melakukan itu*”. It is called as misformation error because the speaker gets the interference of L1 linguistic form.

#### **b. Examples of Lexical errors in writing**

5. Welcome to democracation era! → Welcome to democracy era!

This example shows that overgeneralization is frequently conducted by the students (beginner) meaning a certain linguistic pattern can be applied into the other linguistic pattern. Probably, students assume democracation has the similar pattern in the words such as solution, revolution, transportation. The other example is “The birocracation is difficult (The bureaucracy is always difficult). Here, the writer of that expression cannot find the appropriate form of L2, so it is a misselection error.

6. Congratulation on your new job → Congratulations on your new job  
What students hear or listen the word (s) of L2 have influence to what students think. The suffix 's' in congratulations is not clearly pronounced whether it is pronounced with 's' or without 's'. Then, this trivial matter reveals on students' writing. The suffix 's' probably can be easily neglected since the word 'congratulation' cannot be changed into the plural one. Therefore, it is a misselection error.

7. I go to school with my father? →  
For Indonesian context, that example has three propositions; (1) I go to school, (2) My father goes to work, and (3) We go together. This sentence is very confusing in native speakers' interpretation because it has a meaning that (1) I am a student, (2) my father works in school where I study, and (3) we go to same place (school) together. The writer uses L1 linguistic form into L2, but the meaning can be interpreted in some ways. It does not matter if the hearer knows Indonesian context well. Otherwise, the message is not going to be understood or gained. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the error is a distortion error.

## E. Conclusion

Have EFL teachers thought that their feedbacks to their students' writing and speaking are effective or not? Is there any students' progress or improvement of their writing and speaking in the future? Have teachers' feedbacks fitted students' perception? There are few questions rising of students' perception and teachers' feedback in the context of EFL classroom. EFL teachers have to evaluate the effectiveness of feedback they have been giving to the students. It can be conducted by looking how the students response toward the feedback. Direct feedbacks do not figure out the actual performance of students' comprehension in correcting the errors because teachers have provided the correct one. Teachers have to invite students to be active finding the correct one from their errors they produce. This is necessary to utilize the students' meta-linguistic. It means students are also active to empower their prior knowledge to correct their own errors. The other possible solution is that teachers should be consistent in providing corrective feedback. It is very necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of corrective feedback and the long term quality of corrective feedback.

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