Investigating Corrective Feedback in Speaking Practice: *Students' Preferences*

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Abstract—**Corrective feedback (CF) has been seen as an essential facet in promoting students' second language learning, including in speaking practice. CF in speaking practice might cause a distraction if it is not provided solicitously according to how students prefer to accept. This study aims at investigating students' preferences in accepting CF during speaking practice, covering the preferences of type, manner, time and source. Additionally, this study also explores how CF contributes to students' willingness to communicate. The method used in this study was a qualitative study. The data were collected by using an open-ended questionnaire and analyzed by coding. The questionnaire was distributed to 30 EFL undergraduate students in a university in Jakarta. Explicit correction emerged as the most preferred type. In addition, the students favored being corrected explicitly as soon as they made mistakes. Further, a teacher was seen as the one who owned the authority as the source of CF. The provision of CF given by teachers promoted students' motivation and self-confidence resulting in students' willingness to communicate increased. In conclusion, learners preferred being corrected directly by the teacher as soon as they made mistakes. The more CF is given, the more students foster their confidence and motivation to communicate. It is also recommended that the teacher consider students' preferences so that CF can encourage students to speak more during speaking practice.**

Keywords: corrective feedback, learners' preferences, speaking practice

I. INTRODUCTION

Corrective Feedback (hereafter, CF) is described as responses given by teachers and peers to learners' erroneous utterance produced in second language production by reformulating the forms or giving clues for corrections (Ellis, 2006; Li, 2014; Yoshida, 2008). It has been widely addressed in research on teaching and learning as it facilitates learners' interlanguage development and learning (Phuong & Huan, 2018). It also contributes to language learning, fosters learners' motivation, ensures linguistic accuracy (Ellis, 2009) and assists students to identify problems in their non-target-like utterance (Mackey, M, Atanassova, Hama, Logan-Terry, & Nakatsukasa, 2007). When a teacher gives CF, the acceptance of students might be different. Some students might highly value CF since it helps them improve their learning. In contrast, other students consider themselves being judged and intimidated because their ideas or thoughts are likely opposed or declined (Burke & Peterick, 2010). Students may also feel that CF is upsetting (Spiller, 2014). Therefore, it is evident that misunderstanding can take place whenever CF is given which consequently results in negative effects on learning (Nunan, 1988).

Regarding the manner of providing CF, students may desire to be corrected explicitly or implicitly. This happens because students have diverse preferences. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the teachers to use different error correction strategies to cater for differences in the learners' preferences (Abedi, Mahadavi, & Hassaskhah, 2015). Lyster and Ranta (1997) classified CF into six different types which can be provided to the student. This classification has been used by many scholars who investigated CF (e.g.: Abedi, Mahadavi, & Hassaskhah, 2015; Han & Jung, 2007; Lee, 2013; Nabei & Swain, 2002; Phuong & Huan, 2018; Sheen, 2004; Yang, 2016; Zhang & Rahimi, 2014). The six types of CF are:

- Explicit correction refers to an explicit provision of the correct form which directly points out the mistakes.

- Recasts are reformulation of all or part of students' utterances produced by the teacher without mentioning the errors.

- Clarification request is used when the teacher indicates students' mistakes and comprehensibility and accuracy problems. Clarification request includes phrases such as "pardon me?" or "sorry?"

- Metalinguistic feedback consists of any comment, information or questions delivered without explicitly stating the correct form of students' utterances. It can encourage students' self-reflection since it requires students to figure out their own mistakes (Méndez & Cruz, 2012).

- Elicitation covers three activities; asking students to fill in the blank, eliciting correct forms and reformulating students' utterances. Although elicitation is less common than recasts, elicitation is more conducive to learning and interlanguage development (Kaivanpanah, Alavi, & Sepehrinia, 2012).

- Repetition refers to repeating students' errors which are highlighted by different intonation or facial expressions.

Another issue to be considered is the source of CF. Martin and Valdivia (2017) proposed three sources of CF; teacher, peers, and self-assessment. CF provided by a teacher is the most common, correct, reliable and effective (Gielen, Tops, Dochy, Onhema, & Smeets, 2010). This happens because the students accept the authority of the teacher in the classroom (Baz,

Balçıkanlı, & Cephe, 2016). Secondly, peer feedback can be very effective if a friendly and cooperative condition can be achieved among the students (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2012). Peer feedback enormously emphasizes the informal response which is less intimidating, less terrifying, much more time providing and more supporting (Rollinson, 2005). The last source of feedback is the students' self-assessment. Self-assessment relies on students' ability to be critically correct their own mistakes.

Previous studies have been conducted in exploring learners' preferences of CF. A study by Tavakoli and Zarrinaabadi (2016) revealed that explicit CF is favored since it effectively stimulated students' willingness to communicate. It is also supported by Lee (2013) whose study revealed the preference of explicit CF by ESL students. The provision of explicit CF can measure the learning progress which can be marked beyond the fewer error corrections given to the students. Another study conducted by Demir & Özmen (2017) who explore the CF preferences of native and nonnative English teachers in Turkey. The finding indicated that recast was more favorable than other types of CF. Similarly, Sheen (2004) argued that recasts are predominant in leading to learners' uptake. Additionally, Zhai and Gao (2018) showed other preferred types of CF. They proposed that clarification requests and metalinguistic feedback were the most dominant types in stimulating learning progress of different speaking task complexity.

Despite various studies mentioned, this study aimed at investigating learners' preferences of CF covering type, manner, source, and time. This study is potentially worth-doing since its exploration is not limited to the type of CF only, but also other considerations. In the same way, this study focuses on the preferences of CF during students' speaking practice which seems to be less explored by previous studies. Thus, it is expected that this study can develop students' speaking performance, give insight to teachers in providing CF and fill the gap among the previous studies.

II. METHOD

A qualitative study was conducted in order to answer the research questions. A qualitative study explores a problem and develops a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). The central phenomenon in this study is the learners' preferences of CF, covering the types, manner, time, source and learners' perception of how CF contributes to their willingness to communicate. The qualitative design fits the goal of this study since it can picture deep information from the participants.

A. Participant

The participants of this study were 30 EFL undergraduate students from two classes in a university in Jakarta. The rationale for choosing the participants was the exploration regarding CF in these classes remains limited. Furthermore, the teacher stated that she faced difficulty in providing feedback. She assumed that the students did not highly consider the CF given. This situation led the writer to explore more about CF given and how the learners actually like to be corrected.

B. Instrument and Materials

An open-ended questionnaire was prepared as an instrument of this study. The questionnaire was adapted and developed based on three studies by Han and Jung (2007), Yang (2016), and Zang and Rahimi (2014). The total questions were 15 questions. Meanwhile, the materials of the instrument are elaborated based on the research questions mentioned before.

In this study, the most favored type of CF was investigated based on three common mistakes in speaking practice. Those common mistakes were the grammatical error, the mispronunciation, and the lexical choice. Further, the manner of giving CF includes explicit and implicit. Next, the time of giving CF was classified into as soon as the students made mistake, after students' turn in speaking activities and at the end of the class as a conclusion for all the students. Meanwhile, there were three sources of corrective feedback included in this study. The sources were from the teacher, peer, and self-assessment. Last, the questionnaire also portrayed how CF contributed to the students' willingness to communicate.

C. Data Analysis

The process of analyzing and interpreting the data involved in the process of coding. Coding the open-ended questionnaire typically involves transcribing the data (Brown, 2009). The coding process can be done by putting tags and names against pieces of the data (Hamied, 2017). The questionnaire was coded based on the criteria of each research question. The criteria were presented in part of the instrument and materials. After the questionnaire was coded, the findings of the data were presented in a pie chart and bar chart in order to show the percentage of each finding. This presentation also helps the readers to gain a full understanding of the findings of this study.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

There is an interesting finding which shows that the most preferred type of corrective feedback for three common mistakes is an explicit correction. This finding is in concurrence with Tavakoli and Zarrinaabadi (2016) who revealed the preference of explicit CF. It can be seen in the following Figure 1 that explicit correction dominated the type of CF that the learners want to get. In correcting a grammatical error, 36.67 % of the students most valued explicit correction since it could directly point out their mistakes. In the same way, the student found it easier to immediately correct their mistakes.
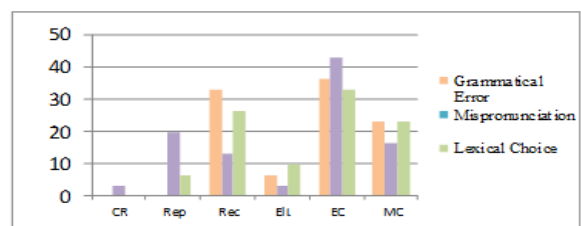

Fig. 1. Most Preferred Type of Corrective Feedback

Similar to a grammatical error, explicit correction owned the highest percentage of the most preferred type dealing with a mispronunciation. More than 40% of the students liked to be corrected by using explicit correction, followed by repetition

which is approximately 20%. Meanwhile, clarification requests and elicitation claim the lowest percentage.

Correspondingly, explicit correction reached 33.33% of all percentage in correcting lexical choice. Followed by recast which owned 26.67% made the finding of this point similar to grammatical error. Meanwhile, a clarification request remained in its position as the lowest percentage.

In line with the type of CF favored by students, the manner of delivering CF led to an explicit manner. According to Figure 2, half the number of total students preferred to be corrected explicitly. This finding evidently claimed that explicit correction was eminently desired and appreciated by the students.
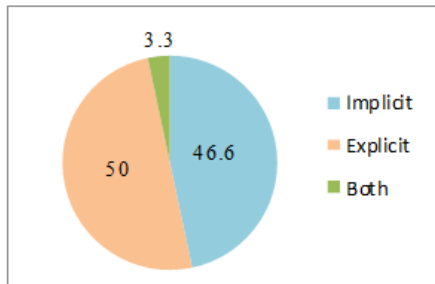

Fig. 2. Manner of Giving Corrective Feedback

Furthermore, Figure 3 shows that more than 60% of the students like to get corrected as soon as they made a mistake. This percentage is unquestionably dominant. Most students argued that being corrected as soon as they made mistake helped them discovering the mistakes and correcting them afterward. On the other hand, the correction after the activity has done is the least favorable time. The students revealed that they tended to forget their mistakes when the teacher provided the CF.
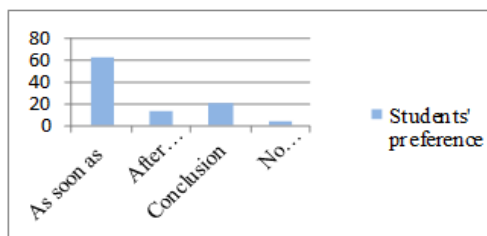

Fig. 3. Time of Accepting Corrective Feedback

Next, the following figure revealed that approximately 56% of the students chose to be corrected by the teacher. They delightfully put their expectancy on the teacher's CF. On the other hand, 30 % of the students cannot choose between teacher or peer as their favorite source of feedback. Most of them agree that basically feedback is beneficial for them regardless of who the sources are. Further, the least percentage is being corrected by peers which owned 13.33% of the total students.
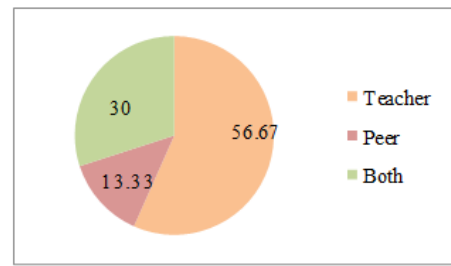

Fig. 4. Source of Corrective Feedback

In the same way, the students asserted that CF contributed to their willingness to communicate. CF can increase their motivation and self-confidence. The feeling of being judged is unavoidable yet it can be dealt with providing an appropriate and acceptable type, manner, and time of CF.

B. Discussion

According to the findings, explicit correction becomes the most favorable type of CF for all three most common mistakes. The explicit correction allows the students to know their own mistakes as well as how to correct them directly. This statement was shown in some of the participants' comments, as follow:

- "I know my mistakes and how to correct them."
- "I like being corrected with an explicit correction since it gives an explanation."
- "Explicit correction shows a detailed explanation of my mistake. Therefore, I know exactly my mistakes.

The students found explicit correction releasing the pressure of being corrected since the students did not need to figure out their mistakes within the given time or when the speaking practice was still ongoing. Furthermore, students considered explicit correction as an appropriate way which was not offensive for students. This statement was shown as one participant commented, "*I think it is a polite way.*"

Furthermore, an explicit correction was effective in promoting a reformulation of the mispronunciation. It led the students to pronounce the words correctly when they produced mistakes. Moreover, the direct explanation was clear and understandable for the learners.

Likewise, a general consensus emerged regarding the least favorable type of three common mistakes. Clarification request had the lowest percentage for all three mistakes. Students thought that clarification request was less considerate. The questions such as "Sorry?" or "What did you say?" seemed to be intimidated. By the time the student heard those questions, what they perceived was they clearly fabricated a mistake. Moreover, the intonation and facial expression of the teacher also determined how students' acceptance of clarification request. Therefore, some students commented that the clarification request was inappropriate.

Nevertheless, the reason why implicit CF was less desired by students respectably should be discussed. Most of the reason why implicit CF is less favorable is implicit CF did not pinpoint the mistakes. This fact made the students take time in discovering their mistakes. Additionally, some students

mentioned that they could be more nervous if they had to think about their mistakes immediately and it affected their willingness to communicate. However, other students proposed some advantages regarding the implicit CF. Contradictory with the explicit CF, the students recognized the implicit CF as a helpful input from the teacher in order to promote their critical thinking to their own mistakes. Some students believed that implicit CF fostered them to remember the mistakes and how to correct them so that they will not make exactly the same mistakes in the future. Further, implicit CF seemed to be more considerate. It is not potentially offensive and judgmental. One of the participants highlighted "*I don't like someone directly judge me because of my mistake. It is acceptable to give some clues to my mistakes*." The statement indicated that implicit CF gives an opportunity for students to feel secured and less anxious. Additionally, students implied that being corrected explicitly may be too embarrassing and terrifying for them. They believed explicit CF could affect their motivation and self-confidence.

In terms of time, most of the students agreed that being corrected as soon as they made mistakes was exceedingly helpful. The most common reason was that the students could easily identify their mistakes and understand how to correct them. Moreover, they will not forget the CF given. If they were given the CF after the activity had done, they tended to forget all the feedback. In the worst condition, they disregarded the given feedback. One of the participants claimed, "*It makes more sense. I will not forget my mistakes*." Another one added, "*It is more effective and I can understand directly*." A participant also mentioned, "*Faster is better*."

However, the teacher needs to concern about some considerations regarding giving the CF immediately as the students made mistakes. First, the CF should not distract the ongoing communication. An immediate correction allows the teacher to interrupt the communication which results in the increase of stress levels (Kavaliauskienė & Anusienė, 2012). Choosing the right type of CF is very essential at this moment. Secondly, students may decrease their motivation and self-confidence to talk as they are being corrected. Maintaining eye contact, intonation and facial expression are suggested to keep students' self-confidence. Last, the teacher should provide time for students to think of their mistakes if they are corrected implicitly. This consideration can develop students' self-correction.

As mentioned in the findings, the teacher was perceived as the most preferred source of CF. This finding is supported by most of the comments written by participants. They agreed on the expertise of a teacher. One of the comments can represent the whole ideas of the participants. A participant claimed, "*Teacher knows more than friends*." This fact promotes the role of a teacher as a feedback provider. In the same way, the prominent fact that the students perceived teacher's CF as something valuable was in concurrence with the finding of Baz, Balçıkanlı, and Cephe's study (2016).

Meanwhile, some students also argued that getting CF from both teachers and peers was also advantageous. One of the participants said, "*Whoever is good. What matters is when they give the correction or how they tell their correction*." Another

participant added, "*Both of them. I can learn from anyone*." It can be implied that those students felt getting CF from both teachers and peers was not the most essential part of accepting CF. It indicated that the students put their expectations on the correction, the time and how the correction was delivered to them. Therefore, this finding also suggested the importance of taking students' preferences into consideration.

Furthermore, the feeling of being comfortable seems to be the main reason why peer corrective feedback is favorable. It can be seen from the following comments:

- "I liked to be corrected by my peer since she/he knows me better than my teacher."

- "I prefer being corrected by my friends because I feel more relaxed, comfortable and less worried."

Those two statements revealed that the students felt more secured and relaxed if they were corrected by their peers. It is unquestionably clear that the students were more comfortable if they got corrections or suggestions from their peers since they maintained an informal situation. The situation seemed to be less intimidating and less terrifying. Moreover, the stress level was possibly lower than the situation in which the students got corrected by the teacher. The relationship between students also allowed them to openheartedly accept and consider the CF.

Dealing with the contribution of CF to students' willingness to communicate, increasing motivation and self-confidence became the major contributions of CF mentioned by the students. However, the feeling of being judged, intimidated and threatened was inevitable for the students.

- "At first, it brings me down, but it eventually builds my confidence better."

- "It makes me confident because I know how to correct my mistake."

- "After I got the CF, I got more excited to talk in English."

- "It motivates me to learn more."

Students' comments show that even though corrective feedback can demotivate them, the result of its provision can promote their self-confidence and motivation. When the students feel confident and motivated their willingness to communicate, at the same time, increase. As a result, students potentially have a desire to communicate inside and outside the classroom. A participant mentioned, "*The more CF I got, the more I know how to communicate better. That's a big contribution*." The contribution of corrective feedback clearly can improve students learning process, especially in the process of second language acquisition.

IV. CONCLUSION

A. Conclusion

Corrective Feedback (CF) refers to all comments, suggestions, and corrections from teacher or peer which functions as correcting the erroneous utterance of the students. This present study aimed at investigating learners' preferences

for corrective feedback in their speaking practice. The findings showed that explicit correction is the most preferred type of CF in speaking practice. Clearly stating the mistake and its reformulation makes the explicit correction most valued by the students. In the context of manner, the students favored getting CF explicitly. Furthermore, regarding the time of CF provision, the students like to get CF as soon as they make mistakes. It helps them remember their mistakes and how to reformulate them. It is more effective to get corrected as soon as the students make mistakes. Additionally, CF from a teacher is more favorable. There are several key points as primary reasons why the students favored CF provided by the teachers. Those key points included the authority of the teacher, the expertise of the teacher and the knowledge that the teacher has. They believed that teacher CF is the most influential factor. Furthermore, CF highly contributes to learners' willingness to communicate. The more corrective feedback is provided, the more students feel motivated and confident. Thus, motivation and self-confidence have promoted their willingness to communicate.

B. Recommendation

Regarding to the type of CF, the teacher should emphasize more on providing explicit correction since the learners preferred it most. By giving explicit correction, it will be easy for learners to understand the mistake and how to correct them. Moreover, they will take the feedback considerably.

In addition, providing CF as soon as the students make mistakes is also suggested. However, the teacher needs to consider some possibilities that can occur during the speaking practice, such as the ongoing communication is distracted and the learners become less confident. Therefore, teachers should concern about the way he/she gives feedback including their intonation, facial expression, and eye contact so that the learners will not find themselves being intimidated and stressful.

Additionally, the area of this study can be broadened by exploring the effect of different types of corrective feedback in different are of language skills, such as writing, speaking performance or pronunciation. Delving the contribution of corrective feedback to students with different English proficiency is also recommended. Moreover, the perception of learners toward corrective feedback delivered by students' first language can be also investigated.

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