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Are There any Differences between EFL learners of High Anxiety vs. Low Anxiety and Demotivated vs. Motivated for Their Preferences toward Teachers' oral Error Correction?

MA. Thesis

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Abstract

The role of oral corrective feedback in foreign language learning has been a highly controversial issue. There are many problems related with oral error correction in EFL classrooms. One of these common problems is the student and teacher disagreement on the amount of error correction, type, techniques of error correction. So, it is important for teachers to know the learners' preferences for corrective feedback in order to maximize its positive effect on language development. The purpose of this study is to compare the differences between low versus high anxiety and demotivated versus motivated EFL learners regarding their preferences for oral error correction and also to investigate teachers and students' preferences for oral error correction. To this end, 141 Iranian EFL students and 15 EFL teachers at English departments of Zabol and Sistan and Baluchestan universities will take part in this study. Three self–reporting questionnaires for gathering the data are to be used: the learners' preferences for error correction questionnaire (Fukuda, 2004), the demotivation questionnaire (Sakai & Kikuchi 2009), and classroom speaking anxiety scale (Sheen, 2008). At the end, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations are used in order to triangulate the data. The results of independent sample t-tests indicated that there would be no significant differences among the demotivated and motivated learners and high and low anxiety learners toward oral error correction. Furthermore, male and female students have similar preferences toward the necessity of error correction, frequency of error correction and delivering agent of error correction but they had different preferences toward timing, types, and methods of oral error correction. The findings would reveal five suggestions: firstly, most of students favored errors should be corrected. Secondly, correcting errors after the student finishes speaking is the most appropriate time among students. Thirdly, serious spoken errors that may cause problems in listeners' understanding and frequent spoken errors should be corrected more than other errors. Fourthly, elicitation and explicit feedback are the most popular methods of corrective feedback among the two groups. Finally, teachers are the most preferred persons to deliver corrective feedback. Regarding the interview findings, the teachers and students have similar preferences toward necessity, frequency, types of errors and delivering agent of error correction. However, there are more differences between the teachers and students regarding time and methods of oral error correction. Furthermore, the results of the observation data show that what students received as error correction in oral classes aren't in line with what students preferred to be corrected. Implications for providing oral error correction have also been discussed.

Key words: Error correction, Preference, High anxiety, Low anxiety, Demotivated learners, Motivated learner.