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Is approved by the final examining committee:

Colleen Neary-Sundquist
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Chair

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Approved by Major Professor(s): Colleen Neary-Sundquist

Approved by: Madeleine Henry   7/17/2015

Head of the Departmental Graduate Program   Date

ASSESSING INTRODUCTORY-LEVEL SPANISH LEARNERS' ATTITUDES

TOWARDS FEEDBACK IN THE CLASSROOM

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Aparecida de Fatima Cordeiro Dutra

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Arts

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Aos meus pais que nunca tiveram a oportunidade de ter uma educação formal, mas cujo

conhecimento é imensurável.

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ABSTRACT

Cordeiro Dutra, Aparecida de Fatima. M.A., Purdue University, August 2015. Assessing Introductory-level Spanish Learners' Attitudes towards Feedback in the Classroom. Major Professor: Colleen Neary-Sundquist.

This study examines beginner Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback in the classroom. The role that feedback plays in second language studies has been debated, and corrective feedback has been justified and criticized under different perspectives. The controversies surrounding feedback have led many researchers to investigate not only the feedback process itself, but variables that could affect its effectiveness. In this context, understanding learners' attitudes towards feedback is crucial in developing pedagogical practices that will enable learners to benefit from feedback provided. In this study, 38 participants responded to a questionnaire that gathered their attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom. The findings of this study revealed that beginners Spanish learners hold positive attitudes towards feedback in the classroom. The analysis did not find any significant correlation between attitudes and proficiency neither between attitude and level of Spanish. This study also revealed that female participants demonstrated to have significantly more positive attitudes toward feedback than male did.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This study investigates American-English-speaking learners of Spanish's attitudes towards feedback and can contribute to the controversial discussion about variables that affect the effectiveness of feedback in second language classrooms. Many aspects, such as motivation, age, and working-memory, among others have been studied and seen as aspects that may influence the efficacy of feedback. However, the role that attitude plays in the feedback context has been somehow neglected. Thus, the present study will bring further contributions to the field and serve as ground for a deeper discussion on the role that attitude plays in the feedback context.

Corrective feedback, both oral and written, is seen by many researchers as a crucial principle of teaching practice (Lyster and Spada, 1999; Schmidt, 1990), because it is used to encourage learners to further their knowledge of the target language. However, there are some researchers that believe that corrective feedback should not take place, because it does not bring benefits to learners (Krashen, 1981; Truscott, 1996). Therefore, the role of feedback has been justified or criticized under different perspectives and this is the reason that some controversy has arisen between Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers.

Although corrective feedback has generated controversies among researchers,
feedback is widely used in most language classrooms. However, teachers have sometimes
wondered why students, after receiving feedback on an aspect of the language being
learned several times, keep making the same mistakes. This situation led many
researchers to investigate not only the feedback process itself, but also variables that
could affect its effectiveness. In this context, attitude as an affective variable needs to be
investigated in order to understand to what extent that attitudes, which are peculiar to
each individual, can affect the efficacy of feedback.

Despite the existence of many studies investigating attitudes in the field of second
language acquisition (Gardner, 1983; Dörnyei 2006), few studies specifically focus on
learners' attitudes towards feedback in the classroom and no studies were found
specifically investigating beginner Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback.

1.2   Motivation for this study

Understanding learners' attitudes towards feedback is crucial to developing
pedagogical practices that will enable learners to benefit from the feedback provided, due
to the relationship between attitude and learning and the unfixed nature of attitudes. It has
been shown that when leaners present positive attitudes towards a learning situation, they
tend to achieve better results in their learning (Gardner, 1985; Reid, 2006). Concurrently,
it has been shown that, while in the classroom context, leaners may display different
attitudes towards feedback; their attitudes are not fixed but can improve by way of the
instructor (Mori, 1999). Based on these principles, it would be important to encourage
students to appreciate the purpose of feedback in the classroom, in hopes that their

appreciation of feedback would generate more positive attitudes and better learning outcomes. In order to do this effectively, one must first know what students' attitudes toward feedback are. As there is a lack of studies investigating Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback, the present study is motivated toward providing this important information.

1.3   Outline of this study

The present thesis is organized as follows. Chapter One presents an introduction to this study. In Chapter Two, the review of literature on feedback and attitudes is examined. It also discusses previous studies that have been executed regarding feedback, as well as studies involving learners' attitudes towards feedback in the classroom. Chapter Three presents the methodology, explaining the procedures used to gather learners' attitudes towards feedback. Chapter Four presents the findings of the present study, where descriptive analyses are presented. Chapter Five presents a discussion related to the results, and shows how the findings from this study either corroborate or contradict previous studies. Chapter Six contains the conclusion, the limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

CHAPTER 2.   FEEDBACK AND ATTITUDES

2.1   Introduction

Learning a language is a progressive process that involves and is influenced by both cognitive and affective factors. Cognitive factors consist of intelligence and working memory among others, while affective variables include but are not limited to motivation, anxiety and attitudes. (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992). In classroom settings, dealing with these different variables, teachers must use a variety of methods and approaches to enable learners to acquire and improve their language. In this context, feedback is widely used, however, regarding its effectiveness, while cognitive factors have been looked at as factors that may influence its efficacy, affective factors have been somehow overlooked (Agudo, 2010). Both aspects should be taken into consideration, since they may influence students' perspectives about learning.

Feedback is defined by Ramaprasad (1983, p.4) as **"**information about a gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way"**.** The term "feedback" can also be understood both as something that "includes all communication from a teacher to a student following appraisal of a student response" (Sadler, 2010, p. 537).

There is great debate around the effectiveness of feedback and what variables such as age, aptitude, working memory, attitudes among others may influence its efficacy (Dekeyser, 1993; Mackey, Gass, McDonough, 2000). However, in looking for studies about learners attitudes towards feedback in Spanish language classrooms, none were found that contributed to the feedback discussion. The next section will provide a review of both the literature on oral and written corrective feedback and a review of studies on learners' attitudes towards learning situations in a classroom where feedback is given.

2.2 Feedback

According to Merry and Orsmond (2008), feedback is a vital aspect in the learning process, and for this reason, learners should be actively engaged with feedback in order to improve their language proficiency. These authors also advise that instructors should learn how to provide feedback effectively in order to help students reach their objective of learning a target language. Long (1996) suggests that "[f]eedback obtained through conversational interaction promotes interlanguage development because interaction connects input, learners' internal capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (Long, 1996, p. 451-452). In the same fashion, Moreno (2004) states that feedback is decisive for improving language acquisition and this position is further corroborated by Hattie and Timperley (2007). They describe feedback as one of the most important factors in learning.

The credibility that feedback has gained among researchers and teachers means it can be implemented in the classroom in order to provide learners with either approval or disapproval of their oral and written productions. The main objective of feedback is to

assist learners to further their second language acquisition. However, many conditions may influence the outcomes of corrective feedback. Gibbs and Simpson (2004) suggest several conditions that would influence student's learning, regarding feedback: 1) sufficient feedback is provided, both in terms of frequency and sufficient detail; 2) the feedback provided focuses on students' performance, that is, on students' learning and on actions under students' own control rather than upon students themselves and their characteristics; 3) the feedback is timely, in that it should be received by students while it still matters to them and in time for them to pay attention to further learning or receiving further assistance; 4) the feedback is appropriate to the purpose of the task at hand and to its criteria for success; 5) the feedback is appropriate in relation to students' understanding of what they are supposed to be achieving; 6) the feedback is received and attended to; and 7) the feedback is acted upon by the students (p.16-25).

It has been claimed that such conditions are essential in providing learners effective feedback (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004). In this context, feedback has received much attention by researchers and scholars with the idea that learners will learn to speak and write correctly when teachers or peers call attention to any erroneous utterance produced by students. However, another possibility is that learners do not retain the feedback provided by instructors or peers and keep giving erroneous answers that are not really what the instructor expects to hear (Agudo, 2012).

In order to call learners' attention to specific aspects of the target language, different types of corrective feedback need to be provided in the classroom. In the following section, each type will be discussed in more detail.

2.3   Corrective feedback

A narrower kind of feedback, corrective feedback is any information delivered to learners upon producing any sort of linguistic error (Sheen, 2007). There are a variety of ways to provide feedback in the classroom and they may be either positive or negative. Positive feedback is given when a learner's response is correct and negative feedback is given when a response is incorrect. According to Ellis (2008), both positive and negative feedback have their own advantages and disadvantages. He claims that an advantage of negative feedback is that it can help students improve their accuracy; but a disadvantage may be discouragement and loss of motivation, since learners' errors are being corrected in front of others, and clearly disapproved by their instructor. Related to negative feedback, Richards (2009) recommends that teachers need to find ways to give feedback without making the students insecure and threatened.

Positive feedback has also been shown to be helpful in the classroom. It may, for example, increase learners' motivations and confidence on account of clear approval of a student's response (Cianci et al., 2010). However, if teachers only provide positive feedback in the classroom, students may be deprived of the opportunity to improve their understanding, since errors will not be addressed (Ellis, 2008). Furthermore, Lee (2013) delineates six types of corrective feedback: explicit correction; recast; clarification request; meta-linguistic feedback; elicitation; and repetition. Explicit correction is when a teacher indicates that a student's utterance was incorrect, and it needs repair. A recast is when a teacher reformulates a student's wrong utterance or gives the correct answer without pointing out the student's error. For meta-linguistic feedback, teachers ask questions or comment about student utterances without providing the correct form. The

main objective of this type of feedback is to help students notice what was wrong in a production. In elicitation, teachers directly evoke the correct form from learners by posing questions. For repetition, teachers repeat a student's utterance with an emphasis on the error, in order to draw the student's attention to the error, hoping that a correctly formed utterance will follow.

Corrective feedback has gained notable attention in second language acquisition, but with differing points of view. From a theoretical standpoint, Krashen (1981) and Truscott (1999, 2007, 2009) claim that feedback does not benefit learners and should not be used. On the other theoretical hand though, Schmidt (1990) supports the effectiveness of feedback, emphasizing the positive effects that feedback brings to learners to help them to notice gaps between interlanguage forms and target forms

2.3.1   Introduction to oral feedback

Oral feedback in the classroom is provided for several reasons, including driving leaners' attention to any incorrect utterance produced by them, explaining why and what is wrong, and providing a correct form. Oral feedback is also used to acknowledge and praise correct forms produced by students.

Students' errors enable teachers to observe what aspects of the language learners need to give more attention to in order to improve their proficiency in the target language. Furthermore, learners' errors may help teachers address issues regarding appropriate methodology about what, when, and how to correct errors made in learners' productions. As a result, any activity that requires production from learners also requires a teacher's

attention in order to find out how learners are using the target language. It is in this context that different types of oral corrective feedback are applied (Agudo, 2012).

According to Agudo (2012), oral feedback is sometimes hard to implement due to two basic factors. The first is that all of the interactions and decisions made to correct students must happen simultaneously and in real time; as such, it may be hard for teachers to pay attention to grammar mistakes, pronunciation, and other types of errors all at the same time. Secondly, there is a necessity to avoid breaking the flow of conversation in the classroom to address errors as such disturbances can negatively affect the communicativeness of students. Although, many studies (Dekeyser, 1993; Lyster and Saito, 2010; Mackey, 2006) have been performed in order to identify the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback, their effectiveness may be related to the type, amount, and source of feedback, learners' proficiency levels and aptitudes, noticing and interpretation of feedback, learners' attitudes, and method used to measure the effectiveness of feedback (Spada, 1997).

2.3.2   Previous studies on oral feedback

Researchers have shown that many variables like motivation, aptitude, anxiety and attitudes should be taken into account when analyzing the potential effects of feedback. Dekeyser (1993) investigates the effect of error correction on L2 grammar knowledge and oral proficiency. The subjects of his study were Dutch speakers learning French as a second language. Participants in this study were from two separate classes and were observed throughout a full school year. In one of the classes, the teacher was required to correct students' mistakes explicitly and give them as much as feedback

possible. Meanwhile, the other teacher was asked to avoid any type of error correction and feedback. The classes were audiotaped, transcribed and analyzed, which included the use of a specific questionnaire to measure students' aptitudes, motivation, and anxiety. The results showed that individual differences, such as motivation, aptitude and anxiety, are important factors that need to be taken into account when the issue is corrective feedback. Extrinsic motivation (motivation related to external factors) and lower levels of anxiety were shown to be an advantage and led students to benefit more from error correction. On the other hand, leaners that presented a low extrinsic motivation and high levels of anxiety would benefit less from error correction. These results indicated that the impact of oral feedback on learners strongly depends on individual difference and ways that individuals respond to corrective feedback in the classroom. This finding clearly states that overall effects for correction cannot be generalized.

Moreover, the relevance of noticing in the feedback process has also been demonstrated as an aspect that might influence feedback outcomes. A concrete example is seen in the study conducted by Mackey (2006). She investigated 28 ESL learners enrolled in an intensive English program. Feedback was provided every time learners demonstrated problems with forming questions, plurals and the past tense. According to Mackey, both experimental and control groups completed the same kind of test. Analysis showed that noticing and interactional feedback are related. In question formations, about 83% of the learners who noticed corrections learned. For plural forms, 50% percent of those who noticed learned, but for past tense, only 20% who noticed learned (p. 422). The results demonstrated an association between feedback and instructed ESL learners noticing of L2 form. According to Mackey, noticing is a crucial factor in the feedback

learning relationship, in that as much as learners perceived of feedback the more they learned. The author also suggested that more research is needed in order to discover how individual differences such as working memory, grammatical sensitivity, and motivation would affect learning and its relationship with second language acquisition.

Furthermore, some studies have also pointed that some types of oral feedback bring better results in comparison to other types. For instance, Lyster and Saito (2010) investigated the effectiveness of error correction on target language development. Their study focused on quasi-experimental studies conducted in the classroom, because of the assumption that laboratory studies do not represent the real environment where feedback takes place. The authors' main objective was to find out whether corrective feedback is effective, and whether one type of feedback was more beneficial than others. The method used to investigate this issue was based on previous statistically significant studies that paid close attention to independent variables such as the durability of the effect of feedback, timing and types of outcome measures, learner age, instructional setting, and length of treatment, as these factors are extremely important when testing the effectiveness of feedback. The results demonstrated that corrective "feedback is meaningful to L2 acquisition and that its effects are durable and more apparent in free constructed-response measures than other types of measures points" (p. 283). In what refers to types of oral feedback, the authors found that recasts, explicit correction, and prompts, which includes clarification, repetition, metalinguistic and elicitation by teachers, are all significantly effective in L2 classrooms though the effects of prompts showed to be greater in comparison to the other two types. The effectiveness of prompts was also indicated in previous studies, as the one administrated by Lyster (2004), where

he points that the main advantage of prompts is that it gives learners the opportunity to rebuild their utterance on they own, modifying their output nearly without instructor intervention.

Age was another factor that showed correlation to the effectiveness of feedback, since younger learners seemed to be more affected by oral corrective feedback than older learners are. This finding corroborates with the critical period hypothesis, which indicates age as a factor affecting L2 development and acquisition. This hypothesis states that the younger the learner, the more they will benefit from language acquisition and are more likely to achieve native like competence in pronunciation. Lyster and Saito (2010) emphasize that further research is needed in order to see how the effectiveness of feedback is related to individual differences (level of anxiety, level of proficiency and so on).

It should be noted that Dekeyser (1993), Mackey (2006), Lyster and Saito (2010), mentioned individual differences as variables that may influence the effectiveness of feedback and they suggest that close attention needs to be paid to better address these variables in future studies.

It merits mention that the role that individual differences plays in second language learning has also been investigated (Robinson; 2002; Dornyei 2006), wherein researchers have addressed variables such as aptitude, cognitive ability, intelligence, motivation, and anxiety as aspects that might influence second language learning. While these aspects are advocated as ones that should be taken into account when approaching the learning of a second language, the relationship between learners attitudes and feedback has yet to be closely investigated

2.3.3   Introduction to written feedback

Like oral feedback, written feedback is also used to show students' errors in their written production, as well as to praise them when they do a good job. Sheen (2007) points out that the main difference between oral and written feedback is that the first occurs immediately after student's production, while the latter is postponed. Because of this, the effects found in each type of feedback may be different. Shen also states that written feedback differs pedagogically in the sense that accuracy is not the only relevant aspect being observed and expected by teachers, but, also content and organization in the overall writing.

Written correction is also an issue of disagreement between researchers. While some researchers (Chandler, 2003; Frantzen, 1995) have found that students that received corrective feedback showed some degree of improvement in their writing, others have found different results **(**Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998; Semke, 1984**).** Further, Truscott (1999, 2007) found no positive effects on grammar error correction, and suggested that it should not take place in the classroom.

2.3.4   Previous studies on written feedback

Studies regarding written feedback have demonstrated different results. The studies reported in this section illustrate this. As a case in point, Frantzen (1995) investigated the effect of grammar supplementation on written accuracy in an intermediate Spanish content course. Forty-four students from Indiana University participated in his study. Students were introduced to Spanish culture and conversation. They met three times a week for 15 weeks during the semester and each class was 45

minutes in duration. The collection of students was divided into two groups, the grammar supplement and the non-grammar.

The grammar supplement and the non-grammar groups were required to do the same reading and writing assignment, and both classes were conducted in Spanish, the target language. The grammar-supplement class received daily grammar explanations and written error corrections on topics such as *ser* and *estar* (both meaning "to be" in English), simple preterit and imperfect use, direct and indirect object pronouns, formal commands, and the subjunctive mood, etc. The instructor provided all error correction for students and also notes when thought necessary.

Conversely, the non-grammar class received neither daily grammar exposure nor written error correction. The instructor indicated errors by underlining or circling them, but the correct form was not provided for students. Both groups were given an in-class and an out of class essay and test. Although the results indicated that both the grammar supplement and the non-grammar improved in overall grammar usage on the post essay, the grammar supplement group improved significantly more, demonstrating that written feedback worked. However, the author suggests that more studies would be necessary to confirm whether the improvements were due to grammar review, the correction feedback, or a combination of both or not

Another aspect observed by researchers is related to the time given for students to review their errors and to what extent the benefits that feedback brings would last in long-term memory. A concrete example can be seen in a study completed by Polio, et al., (1998), in which they advocate that feedback does not result in notable differences on students' performance. They investigated whether students were more able to revise their

own grammatical errors when they were given more time to do so or not. The study had 65 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in an English class for academic purpose composition at Michigan University. The study had two parts. Participants were given a list containing different topics and were required to choose one topic and write about it for 30 minutes. Then, the students' writings were photocopied and given back to them two days later and students were asked to make changes to improve their essays with more time allotted (60 minutes). The extra time was given in order to observe whether students' writings would improve if they had more time to write and review their essays or not. The results found in this study demonstrated that even without feedback, learners are able to improve grammar and lexical choice in their essay writing as long as they have enough time to review their essay. The author emphasizes that short-term linguistic improvement was shown in this study; it is still not known whether improvement would appear in a long-term development or not.

A well-known researcher that advocates against corrective feedback is Truscott (1999). He analyzed the results found in several published studies that used controlled experiments and that had done correction in L2 writing classes. His analysis focused on two different groups of learners: one that received correction and one that did not. Truscott (2007) also looked at studies that did not have controlled experiment groups (Lalande, 1982; Frantzen, 1985; Chandler, 2003). He concluded that students had almost no improvement in their writing. Truscott (2007, p. 271) also states that instead of asking, "How effective is correction?" The question should be "How harmful is correction?" due to the ineffectiveness of correction on L2 writings.

For Truscott, error correction makes students uncomfortable and frustrated, provoking discouragement from learning a language; therefore, corrective feedback is useless and should be discontinued. According to him, the problem is aggravated when corrections come from peers, in that it is probable that peers will provide ineffective corrections that will confuse other students and will be in the same way as the one provided by teachers, useless. For Truscott (2007), teachers should focus on other aspects of teaching, instead of wasting time on feedback. However, Truscott did not considered learner's perspective in the studies cited above.

Later, Ferris and Roberts (2001) attempted to demonstrate that corrective feedback does make a difference in learners' writing. They examined the effects of written corrective feedback on 72 ESL learners. The majority of the participants were from Southeast Asia. The participants were divided into three groups and were asked to write different essays in a given period. The first group received their essays with errors marked with codes from five different error categories. The second group received their essays with errors from the same five error categories underlined, but not otherwise marked or explained. The third group did not receive any kind of feedback. After two weeks, the students received their essays back and were asked to spend 20 minutes self-editing their essays based on instructions that were given to them. The students' essays were recollected and analyzed by researchers who followed the five categories of error (verb error; noun ending errors; articles error; wrong word error; sentence structure). The authors found that the greatest number of errors were in the verb category, followed by sentence structure, word choice, noun ending, and article categories. The two groups that received different types of feedback did not differ in their ability to self-edit their essay

successfully. However, the students in the control group that did not receive feedback were unable to self-edit their revised essays, as those in the two experimental groups did. This finding indicates that feedback did have an effect on student's abilities to check and revise their compositions. However, learners' attitude about this specific teaching tool, feedback, was not taken into account.

A year later, Chandler (2003) examined two studies: one of them focused on when feedback should or should not be given, and the other focused on how feedback should be done with respect to learners' preferences. Both studies also analyzed the effect of error correction on students' accuracy and fluency.

In the first study, the participants of the experimental group were 15 undergraduate ESL (English as a Second Language) students. The control group had 16 participants, and the same teacher-researcher taught both classes. The goal of the classes was to help students improve their ability to read and write in English. The classes met twice a week for 14 weeks and each class lasted 50 minutes. Students were required to write autobiographies describing events, people, and their lives. Both groups received feedback in their writing, and most of the error correction was for grammar. The experimental group was required to revise each assignment, correcting all errors underlined before submitting the next assignment. The control group was asked to do corrections on all five assignments at the end of the semester. Results demonstrated that both the experimental and the control groups improved their writing ability, as they were both able to write the same kind and same amount of text with less time needed. However, the experimental group improved significantly more in accuracy compared to the control

group. These findings suggested that feedback benefited those students that had to review and rewrite their essays, before submitting them, throughout the semester.

The second study was conducted in the same ESL writing course during a different year. Students wrote five essays of roughly eight pages a piece, accumulating to 40 written pages in total. The instructor would give students feedback for each of the essays they were required to write, and students had to revise each essay before submitting the next one. The four major ways used to give students feedback were correction, underlining with description, description only, and underlining only. Results demonstrated that having teachers correcting or underlining for students self-correction resulted in improvements for writing ability when writing about the same subject in a subsequent writing. Students also indicated corrections as the easiest way for them to make revisions of their writings. However, the majority of the students indicated that they learned more from the errors that were underlined and not corrected by teachers. The author concluded that although both studies have shown that both corrected error and underlined error feedback help students to improve their writing, it is important to have students do something with received error correction instead of just having everything done by teachers. Requiring students to do revision on their writing is a way to help them notice what they know and what they still need to know regarding the target language. Such results corroborate those found by Schmidt (1990) regarding the importance of noticing in second language acquisition. He points out that noticing leads learners to pay attention to form, promoting language learning. Additionally, it is important to highlight that even though Chandler's study has considered learners perspectives, his finding

cannot be generalized to a different language context, due to the peculiarity that each context possesses. This is one of the reasons why the present study is being conducted.

Despite the controversies around the effectiveness of oral and written feedback in the classroom, it has been argued that corrective feedback is preferable than not providing any feedback for leaners (Lyster and Saito, 2010). As seen previously, many studies discussing the effectiveness of oral and written feedback have been published, some even considering different variables (aptitude, anxiety, and age) that may affect the efficacy of feedback. However, few studies have centered their attention on analyzing learners' perspective towards feedback in the classroom. In the next section, the issue of attitude will be discussed, a definition of the term attitude will be provided as well as a discussion on students' attitudes towards feedback, and a review of previous studies that address this topic.

2.4   Attitude

Attitude has been studied for several decades. Montano and Kasprzyk (2008) state that:

> Attitude is determined by the individual's beliefs about outcomes or attributes of performing the behavior (behavioral beliefs), weighted by evaluations of those outcomes or attributes. Thus, a person who holds strong beliefs that positively valued outcomes will result from performing the behavior will have a positive attitude toward the behavior. Conversely, a person who holds strong beliefs that negatively valued outcomes will result from the behavior will have a negative attitude.

> Montano &Kasprzyk(2008,p.71)

The study of attitude, mainly explored in the field of psychology, has attracted the attention of different disciplines. For instance, the field of linguistics is now concerned with understanding how attitude may affect the prestige that a language has in a given place, the preference for a specific feature of a language, and the acquisition of a new language, among others aspects.

Gardner (1983) was one of the pioneers in exploring how attitude and motivation would affect second language acquisition; he sees motivation as a crucial factor that facilitates the acquisition of a second language. According to Gardner (1983) learners' instrumental and integrative motivation toward a language are important variables in promoting achievement in second language acquisition. The author claimed "attitudes and motivation are often treated together given that attitudes have motivational properties and motivation has attitudinal implications" (Gardner, 2008, p. 31). He also explains that instrumental motivation is related to the desire to learn a language for academic or professional reasons, including to fulfill a class requirement or to get a better job, while integrative motivation is a learner's desire to be engaged with a new culture and its speakers.

It has been demonstrated that several aspects are involved in the second language acquisition process. In this regard, Gardner and Lambert (1959) concluded that the acquisition of a second language is not only affected by mental/cognitive competence or language skills, but also by students' attitudes and motivations. In the same vein, Reid (2006) emphasizes the relationship between attitudes and achievements in second language acquisition. She points out that acquiring a language involves more than just cognitive factors.

Although for a long period it was thought that attitude could not be measured, Gardner (1983) developed the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a test composed of different questions with the intent to assess non-linguistics factors in second language acquisition, such as interest in foreign language and learners' attitudes towards a given language and its speakers. The AMTB was specifically created to be used in Gardner's studies with Canadian English speakers learning French in Canada; nevertheless, many studies have been using it, with adaptations, to fit their context of study.

In Gardner's studies, he found that when learners have integrative motivation, they are willing to accept and be part of the culture, which motivates them to learn the language. However, if there is no desire to accept the culture it is unlikely that learners will be motivated to learn the language, consequently presenting negative attitude. Gardner (1983) points out:

> "In the language-learning situation, if the students' attitudes are favorable, it is reasonable to predict, other things being equal, that the experience with the language be pleasant, and the students will be encouraged to continue. Simply, favorable attitudes tend to cause the experience to be perceived positively. If, on the other hand, attitudes are negative, the experiences will tend to be perceived unfavorably".

Gardner (1983, p.8)

Language attitudes have been widely investigated (Aceves, Abeyta &Feldman, 2012; Achugar & Pessoa, 2009**;** Chong**,** 2009; Galindo, 1995; Rivera-Mills, 2000). Nevertheless, studies specifically discussing college students' attitudes towards feedback in Spanish classrooms are still scarce.

2.4.1   Attitudes toward feedback

Studies investigating learner's attitudes towards feedback began to be performed over the last few decades. Most focused on learner's preferences about ways that feedback can be given, (Lee, 2013; Lyster and Saito, 2010), instead of focusing on learners' attitudes, an aspect that may influence the effectiveness of feedback in the classroom (Lee, 2013). The importance of learner's attitudes towards all facets of the classroom learning, including feedback, to further understand their relationship and learning outcomes has been demonstrated in several studies (Chong, 2009; Zacharias, 2007).

In this context, Lee (2013) states that students should be viewed as an important part of the feedback process; however, they are usually seen only as receivers. The teacher was the center of feedback in many studies that address this issue, they were the one who decided how, when, and what part of the content being learned students would receive feedback on. For Lee, it is crucial to understand how students feel and respond to feedback. Students' responses enable teachers to develop better ways to give effective feedback in the classroom.

In the classroom, there are many aspects that might influence learners' attitudes, such as instruction, the instructor who delivers the feedback, learners' prior language experience, and others (Lee, 2008). For instance, Schumann (1975) pointed out that learners' positive or negative attitude towards a language and the speakers of the language they are learning may affect learning outcomes. Learners demonstrating positive attitudes may have better results than those demonstrating negative attitudes;

such studies corroborate those findings stated by Gardner (1985) and show the relevance that attitude has in the second language process.

Although some researchers agree that attitudes may affect learner's motivations and consequently their achievement in second language acquisition, other researchers such as Hakuta and D'Andrea (1992) investigated high-school students' attitude towards Spanish language and its speakers in relation to language proficiency and found no significant effect on this relationship. Whether positive attitude would improve learning outcomes (Schumann, 1975; Gardner, 1985) or not is a dilemma that deserves further attention.

2.4.2   Previous studies addressing attitude

A large amount of research has been conducted in an attempt to explain the role that attitude plays in second language acquisition (Dornyei, 2006; Masgoret and Gardner, 2003; Masgoret, 2006). Masgoret and Gardner (2003) for instance, claim that attitude may affect motivation, and since motivation has a great influence on the process of language acquisition, this variable attitude is worthy of attention.

In order to understand learners' attitudes toward written feedback, Zacharias (2007) had 100 students responding to a questionnaire and had 21 learners interviewed in his study. The students were all from the writing department at the University of Satya Wacana in Indonesia. The participants were asked to answer a questionnaire stating their feelings regarding feedback in the classroom. Results from the questionnaire showed that, "when receiving feedback, 75% of the learners felt excited, followed by confused (39%), discouraged (25%), irritated (3%), disappointed (3%) and stressed (1%)"(p.45). The

learners revealing excitement when receiving feedback pointed out that feedback helped them to learn the content.

However, from the data collected through the interviews, a different result arose. Only two students reported being stimulated when a teacher gave feedback. All of the other students stated that receiving a large amount of feedback in their writing made them irritated and demotivated to rewrite their compositions from the draft corrected by the instructor. On the other hand, they suggested that when they receive only a little feedback they feel happier, and motivated.

When students were asked to state difficulties with teacher feedback, "91 % of them stated that sometimes they have difficulties understanding the feedback" (p.46), especially when teachers, instead of indicating what is wrong, just underline or highlight the error letting students find out by themselves.

Furthermore, Chong (2009) investigated Quebec 11th grade students' attitudes towards Spanish as a third language. Forty-eight students were required to answer a questionnaire composed of different questions that would elucidate students' attitudes and motivation to learn a foreign language in general, to learn Spanish, their attitudes towards the speakers of Spanish, and preference for language skill. In addition, whether they were motivated by integrative or instrumental motivation, and to find out the influence of parents' encouragement in their children's motivation to learn Spanish or not. She observed in the results that although 11th grade students demonstrated high positive attitudes toward learning a foreign language in general, their attitudes toward learning Spanish was only slightly positive, and their attitude towards speakers of Spanish was neutral, neither liking nor disliking.

Chong (2009) also noticed that instrumental motivation was neutral in the sense that students were not learning Spanish for pragmatic reasons. Integrative motivation was said to be the reason that they were taking Spanish. Regarding language skills that motivate them the most, they stated that listening came first, followed by reading, speaking and writing, clearly demonstrating that they are more passive than active learners of Spanish Chong (2009). In relation to parents' encouragement, Chong found that learners did not have a lot of support from their parents, and that may have generated a negative attitude toward the language they were learning.

The same author pointed out that the finding in her study may have had several reasons. The fact that students have negative attitudes towards Spanish and its speakers may be due to their lack of opportunity to use Spanish in a real context outside of the classroom. Another reason may be the fact that Spanish has no prestige in that area, being spoken only by a minority group. She also points to age as a factor; teenagers may want to learn a language thinking that it will benefits, but when they have trouble mastering the target language, they become demotivated. A final aspect that Chong talks about refers to the fact that the lack of encouragement from parents demotivates students to learn Spanish there.

In addition, de Pablos-Ortega (2010) carried out a study regarding learning a foreign language in the classroom. He investigated English speakers' attitudes toward the act of thanking in Spanish. Two hundred university students from the United States and the United Kingdom taking Spanish classes and 100 native speakers from Spain were involved in the study. He found that learners from the United States and the United Kington had negative attitudes toward the act of thanking in Spanish because these three

cultures use the act of thanking in a different way. For example, there are situations in Spain, such as the negotiation between a salesperson and a client or between a waiter/waitress and client, where thanking is not considered necessary, because the employees are just doing their jobs.

On the contrary, the situations described above require the act of thanking in both the United States and the United Kington cultures. The author concluded that due to this cultural difference, the Spanish way of not thanking in certain situations made them look rude and impolite, and these cultural differences created negative attitudes towards them.

Another study investigating student's perspectives was carried out by Agudo (2012). His research took place in a bilingual secondary school in Spain, where he investigated Spanish EFL students' beliefs and preferences regarding the effectiveness of corrective feedback. One hundred seventy two participants involved in the study were required to answer two types of questionnaire. One of the questionnaires was composed of yes or no questions and was used to find out what students thought about correction in the classroom. The other questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions in an attempt to determine students' suggestions and preferences for effective correction.

The results showed that between 80.81% of the participants agreed that error correction should be part of the learning process; however, some learners pointed out their discomfort when making mistakes in the classroom. Regarding the efficacy of error correction in the classroom setting, 77.91% of learners emphasized that corrective feedback was significant and 65.12% mentioned not feeling annoyed when their errors are corrected by instructors in the classroom. On the contrary, they believed corrective feedback was essential and valuable.

Concerning by whom they want to be corrected, 75% said they preferred being corrected by their teacher. Regarding timing of correction in oral feedback, 57.56 % stated that their error should be corrected promptly, while 59.30% claimed that teachers should wait to correct them until they have completed their speech. Seventy nine percent responded that they do not mind being corrected in front of the classroom and that feedback provided for a specific learner may help others, while 20.35% preferred to be corrected in private, since they thought that being corrected in front of others made them feel embarrassed and distracted, and not able to focus on the correction given.

Contrary to oral corrective feedback, the majority of the students highlighted their preference for private corrections in their written work. 82.56% of students said that they preferred that teachers used a red pen to correct their errors because it called their attention to the specific errors they made. In addition, 87.21% pointed out that they preferred that teachers correct their mistakes using a different color pen or pencil than the one they used.

The last question, an open-ended question, asked learners to relate their preference for corrective feedback method. Fifty nine point three percent of the participants stated that error correction must be followed by clarification to be of value.

The author concludes that student response in this study seems to confirm the need and value of corrective feedback in the classroom. However, the results also showed that some learners feel embarrassed when corrected in the classroom. Therefore, affective aspects cannot be neglected when the issue is corrective feedback.

In addition, Pyun (2013) examined 91 Korean ESL learners' attitudes towards task-based language learning (TBLL) at a public university in the United States.

Participants were engaged in task-based communicative classroom activities such as role-playing, problem solving, and information gap activities in order to prepare for real communication. At the end of the term, students were asked to respond to a questionnaire that would enable the researcher to determine learners' attitude toward TBLL and to what extend anxiety, motivation and self-efficacy influenced learners' attitudes.

Results suggested that students with high self-efficacy favored TBLL. However, those students that presented a high level of anxiety tended to disapprove of TBLL. Although integrative motivation has been seen as a factor that brings positive attitude from learners toward a given aspect of a language, in this study instrumental motivation led students to rate TBLL more positively.

The author states that the connection between learning and attitude toward TBLL is clear and these results bring implication for classroom teaching. For instance, providing students the opportunity to lower task performance difficulties, and having a better equilibrium between meaning–based and form–focused instruction, helps students increase their comprehension when dealing with TBLL.

As seen in the literature review of the present study, different aspects have been taken into consideration in the study of feedback, and there is some consensus that learner's attitudes towards a learning situation may influence learning outcomes. However, to what extent English speakers learning Spanish attitudes towards feedback are related and may affect the efficacy of feedback and learners' proficiency remains an open question.

2.5   Research Questions

In light of the lack of studies investigating attitudes of college American-English-speaking learners of Spanish towards feedback, the present study provides a contribution to the field by answering the following research questions (RQ).

RQ1. Do college American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish notice when they make oral mistakes? Do they notice the teacher's feedback?

RQ2. What are college American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish's attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom?

RQ3. Do American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish's attitudes towards feedback correlate with their proficiency?

RQ4. Do background factors have any effect on American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish's attitudes towards oral and written feedback?

In the next chapter, the methodology used in the present study to answer the research questions will be presented.

CHAPTER 3. METHODLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the procedures implemented in the present study. Section 3.2 discusses the questionnaires used to elicit participants' background and attitudes towards feedback. Section 3.3 presents the procedures utilized to collect participants' information. Sections 3.4, 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 report how the qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed.

3.2   Materials

The elicitation materials included two paper-based questionnaires and one paper-based proficiency test. Dörnyei, (2001), explains that "questionnaires are a type of survey method upon which L2 motivation research has heavily depended to measure constructs such as learners' attitudes and motivation, or any activities that are not directly observable" (p.101).The proficiency test was used to assess learning knowledge on the subject being learned. "A proficiency test targets what an individual can do with what one knows (languagetesting.com)". The first questionnaire was used in order to gather information about students' background, such as gender and age (see Appendix A).

The second questionnaire composed of nineteen closed questions and three open-ended questions was administrated to elicit learners' attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom (see Appendix B). The participants' written responses were transcribed into a spreadsheet to be analyzed by the investigator of this study. In the closed questions, students were free to comment on any question, although they were not required or told to do so. The participants received the feedback-attitude questionnaire and were asked to choose the answers that best represented their perception and feelings about the issues mentioned in the questionnaire. The feedback attitude questionnaires were adapted from previous studies, such as those executed by Amador (2013) and Seker (2011). The main change to their questionnaires was making closed questions into open-ended ones.

The proficiency test used in the present study was retrieved from the Cervantes website (http://www.cervantes.to/cgi-bin/test-2011.pl) in November of 2014 (see Appendix C). The website has different types of tests according to the proficiency level. Two proficiency tests that correspond to the first two semesters of Spanish language learning (levels 101 and 102) were applied in this study. Participants were told to choose the correct answer for each question posed in the questionnaire.

It is important to stress that both the background and the language attitude questionnaire were written in English. In this way, it was possible to have more accurate answers from the participants, taking into account that they are at a beginning level of Spanish. The only questionnaire written in Spanish was the short proficiency test that was applied as an attempt to find any relationship between learners' attitudes towards feedback and language proficiency.

3.2.1   Procedures

In order to find participants, the researcher of the present study talked to the

director and coordinator of the first two semesters of Spanish program, as well as with the

instructors of each of these Spanish classes, asking permission to visit their classes,

explaining the purpose of the present study, and asking students to volunteer.

In each class visited, the type of research was explained to students, and they were told

that their participation was voluntary. They were also told that those who participated

would receive a 2% extra credit on their final grade. In addition, those students that did

not want to participate answering the questionnaires in the present study were given

another way to receive extra credit.

The extra credit bonus was offered for students in order to find a considerable

number of participants. In each class visited, students received the name and contact

email of the researcher and were told to feel free to contact the researcher in case they

had decided to participate.

Those students interested in participating in this study contacted the researcher

through email. The research activities took place in the investigator's office. None of the

paper questionnaires were identified with participant's names in order to guarantee

confidentiality. Every participant received a random and distinct two-digit number that

was written on the participant's form before being handed out to the participant. The

researcher, herself, administered the questionnaire and appropriate proficiency test.

3.3   Participants

All participants in this study were college students learning Spanish as a second language in a large Midwestern university. Participants were drawn from Spanish 101 and 102, which are the first two semesters in the Spanish language sequence.

Forty-six participants (numbered 10- 55) voluntarily responded to the questionnaires; however, for the purpose of this study only the 38 questionnaires from native speakers of American English learning Spanish were included in the analysis. The main reason for using only the questionnaires from native speakers of American English was to avoid introducing the variable, first language. Of the respondents, six participants came from the 101 level, and 32 came from the 102 level, 15 male and 23 female, totaling 38 participants, with an average age of 20.2, ranging from 18 to 27 years old.

3.4   The analysis

To achieve the goals of the present study, quantitative and qualitative methods were used to elicit participants' attitudes towards feedback in Spanish classrooms.

3.4.1   The quantitative analysis

Quantitative research involves the numerical conversion of data into statistical results. According to Mackey and Gass (2011, p. 137), "in quantitative research there is an attempt to determine relationships between and within variables". In the present study, numerical data enabled analyses of learner's attitudes towards feedback in the classroom.

The data gathered from questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 15 was analyzed using SAS (Statistical Analysis Software) in order to answer research question one. For Research

Question 2, answers from questions 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 13, 14, 19, and 20 were analyzed using Univariate, frequency, and Uncover. In order to answer Research Question 3, an ANCOVA test, and the GLM (General Linear Model) procedure were run into SAS to determine if there was any relationship between attitudes and language proficiency. To answer Research Question 4, a GLM procedure and an ANOVA test were used to find out whether or not there was any relationship between learners' attitudes and gender. This latter procedure was also used in an attempt to find correlation between attitudes and level of Spanish.

3.4.2   The qualitative analysis

"Qualitative research does not rely only on the use of statistical procedures using numbers, but also tries to gather information that is not directly noticeable", Mackey and Gass (2011, p. 137). In this study, questions 12, 22, and 23 are open-ended questions eliciting information about learner's attitudes towards feedback.

In the following sections, the results obtained in this study will be presented.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analyses concerning the attitudes of

American English- speaking learners of Spanish towards feedback in the classroom.

Section 4.2 presents descriptive statistics that answer Research Question 1(RQ1). Section

4.2.1 discusses descriptive statistics that answer Research Question 2(RQ2). Section 4.2.2

presents descriptive statistics answering Research Question 3(RQ3). Section 4.2.3

presents descriptive statistics that answer Research Question 4(RQ4). Section 4.3

presents descriptive statistics regarding other findings in the present study. Section 4.4 is

a summary of the results presented in this chapter.

4.2   Results for RQ1. Do college American-English-speaking learners of Spanish notice

when they make oral mistakes? Do they notice the teacher's feedback?

In order to answer RQ1, the responses of the 38 participants that were directly

related to noticing, which were questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 15 from the feedback attitudes

questionnaire, were analyzed. For question 1, which asked if participants noticed when

they made oral mistakes, 71%, of the respondents stated that they noticed when they

make oral mistakes, and 21% stated that they did not notice it and 8% did not answer the

question (mean 1.77, with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes", with a standard

deviation of 0.42). For question 2, which asked participants if they generally noticed teachers' feedback, 97% of the participants stated that they did notice it, 3% stated that they did not notice it (mean 1.97, with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes", with a standard deviation of 0.16). For question 3, in which participants were asked if they generally understand the corrections from teachers, 84% stated that they understood the corrections and 8% stated that they did not understand it and 8% did not answer the question (mean 1.91, with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes", with a standard deviation of 0.28). For Question 5, which requested that participants state whether or not they notice when teachers correct their classmates, 55% of the participants stated that they do notice it, 5% stated that they did not notice it and 40% did not answer this question (mean 1.91, with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes", with a standard deviation of 0.28). For Question 6, which asked participants to state whether they understand feedback given to their peers, 55% understand it, 8% stated they do not understand it, and 37% did not answer this question (mean 1.87, with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes", with a standard deviation of 0.33). In question 15, participants were asked to state whether they tend to recognize what their mistake was when they receive feedback about a given mistake. Seventy- six percent of the participants responded that they tend to recognize it and 5% stated that they do not tend to recognize it and 19% did not respond the question (mean 1.93 with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes" with a standard deviation of 0.24).

As seen in the participants' answers from the items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 15, of the attitude questionnaire, participants often notice when they make mistakes, tend to recognize what their mistakes were, and notice the teachers' feedback.

4.2.1   Results for RQ2. What are college American-English-speaking learners of

Spanish attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom?

In order to answer RQ2, answers from questions 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 19,

and 20, which elicited participants' attitudes towards feedback, were analyzed. In

question 4, participants were asked to state if they liked to be immediately corrected

when they made a mistake in class. Eighty-seven percent stated that they do like to be

immediately corrected, 10% pointed that they do not like it and 3% did not respond to the

question (mean 1.89 with 1 representing "no and 2 representing "yes" with standard

deviation of 0.31).

For question 7, participants were asked to state whether feedback given to peers in

the classroom helps them to learn the content. Seventy-one percent of the participants

stated that feedback given to peers helps them, 3% stated it does not help them, and 26%

did not answer this question (mean 1.96 with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing "yes"

with standard deviation of 0.18).

For question 8, participants were asked to indicate what they thought about oral

feedback in the classroom. Thirty-four percent of the participants stated that oral

feedback makes things more clear, 32% stated it helps them to improve their language, 23%

stated it helps them to learn the content and 11% stated that it can sometimes make them

confused (mean 3.60 with standard deviation of 1.17).

Question 10 asked participants to indicate how they feel when they receive oral

feedback and 47% of the participants pointed that they feel satisfied, 21% stated that

they feel curious about it, 10% embarrassed, 16% nervous, 3% dissatisfied, and 3%

unsecured (mean 6.55 with standard deviation of 1.81). In question 11, participants were

asked to indicate how they feel when receiving written corrective feedback. Sixty-three percent of the participants stated that they get satisfied, 16% stated that they feel curious, 5% feel nervous, 5% dissatisfied, 3% unsecured and 8% concerned (mean 6.65 with standard deviation of 2.33).

Question 12, an open-ended question, asked participants to state whether or not they believe that their feelings, when receiving oral and written feedback in the classroom, would somehow affect their learning. Thirteen participants, representing 34% of the respondents in this study stated that they do not believe that their feelings may somehow affect their learning. However, they stated that oral feedback is positive and helped them to learn the language, as it can be observed in the examples transcribed from their questionnaires.

"No, I think that oral feedback helps me grow as a Spanish speaker and gives me the opportunity to ask questions, whereas written feedback gives me the correct answer and quickly helps me understand what is right". (Participant 14, female, level: Spanish 102).

"I prefer feedback because it helps enhance my learning experience" (Participant 26, female, level: Spanish 102).

"I believe it helps me work towards getting a better grip of the language". (Participant number 63, female, level: Spanish 101)

Although participants stated that their feelings do not affect their learning, their responses show that they tend to have positive attitudes towards feedback, which

suggests that they are affected positively. Nevertheless, in question 12, 25 participants, representing 66% of the respondents, stated that the way they feel when receiving oral and written feedback affected their learning and it seems that it does affect them negatively. Most of the respondents highlighted the difficulty they have with their ability to speak after being corrected. This can be seen in some of the participants' responses transcribed below.

"Yes, because sometimes I am afraid to talk in class" (Participant 58, female level: Spanish 102)

"Yes, I may be too concentrated on the emotion". (Participant 15, male, level: Spanish 102)

"Yes, I think so, because it is embarrassing to say something wrong and be corrected" (Participant 37, female, level: Spanish 102).

Question 13 requested participants to indicate how they react when receiving written feedback from the instructor. Forty-seven percent of the participants stated that they ask clarification from the instructor, 32% ask for help from the instructor, 16% ask for help from their peers, and 5% just ignore corrections made by instructors (mean 3.21, with standard deviation f 0.90). In question 14, participants were asked to classify the importance of feedback. Eighty-seven percent of the participants consider feedback very

important, 8% consider feedback a little important, and 5% did not answer the question (mean 2.91 with standard deviation of 0.28). No one stated that feedback is not important.

For question 19, participants were asked to state their feelings upon reading teacher's comments about their writing. Twenty-one percent of the participants stated they feel happy when receiving feedback, 47% feel curious, 3% embarrassed, 10.5% nervous, 5% dissatisfied, 3% insecure, 10.5% concerned (mean 5.86 with standard deviation of 2.32). For question 20, participants were asked to indicate how they perceive feedback in general. Ninety-seven percent of the participants consider feedback a tool for learning, while 3% does not have an opinion (mean 2.97 with standard deviation of 0.16).

As observed from the participants' answers, most of the respondents stated that they like to be immediately corrected after a given mistake. This suggests positive attitudes towards error correction. The study reveals that the level of satisfaction is higher for written feedback than for oral feedback. Although participants' attitudes towards both types of feedback were significantly favorable, students tend to favor written feedback.

It is important to stress that from the qualitative data obtained from question 12, it was observed that oral feedback is still an issue for learners. It is a procedure that makes them insecure and sometimes demotivated to participate in class, because certain feelings, such as embarrassment, and fear, seem to negatively affect their learning. However, in reference to the feedback purpose, most of the participants perceive that it is a tool for learning, which indicates a tendency to value the corrective purpose of feedback. The value attributed to feedback seems to generate more positive attitudes towards it.

4.2.2 Results for RQ3. Do American-English-speaking learners of Spanish's attitudes towards feedback correlate with their proficiency?

To answer RQ3, participants' responses from questions 10, 11, and 19 were used to measure the participants' attitudes and correlate them with their grades from the proficiency test. An ANCOVA test and the GLM (General Linear Model) procedure were put into SAS (Statistical Analysis Software) to determine if there was a relationship between attitudes and proficiency, as measured by participants' grades. The test did not reveal a relationship between these factors ($F(2, 38) = 0.28$, $p = 0.92$).Tests Type I SS and III SS did not reveal a relationship between the factors either**.** This lack of relationship can also be seen in the following graphic, where the lowest number represents more negative attitudes, while the highest number represents more positive attitude. As there is no clear pattern, it can be claimed that there is no relationship between attitudes and proficiency.
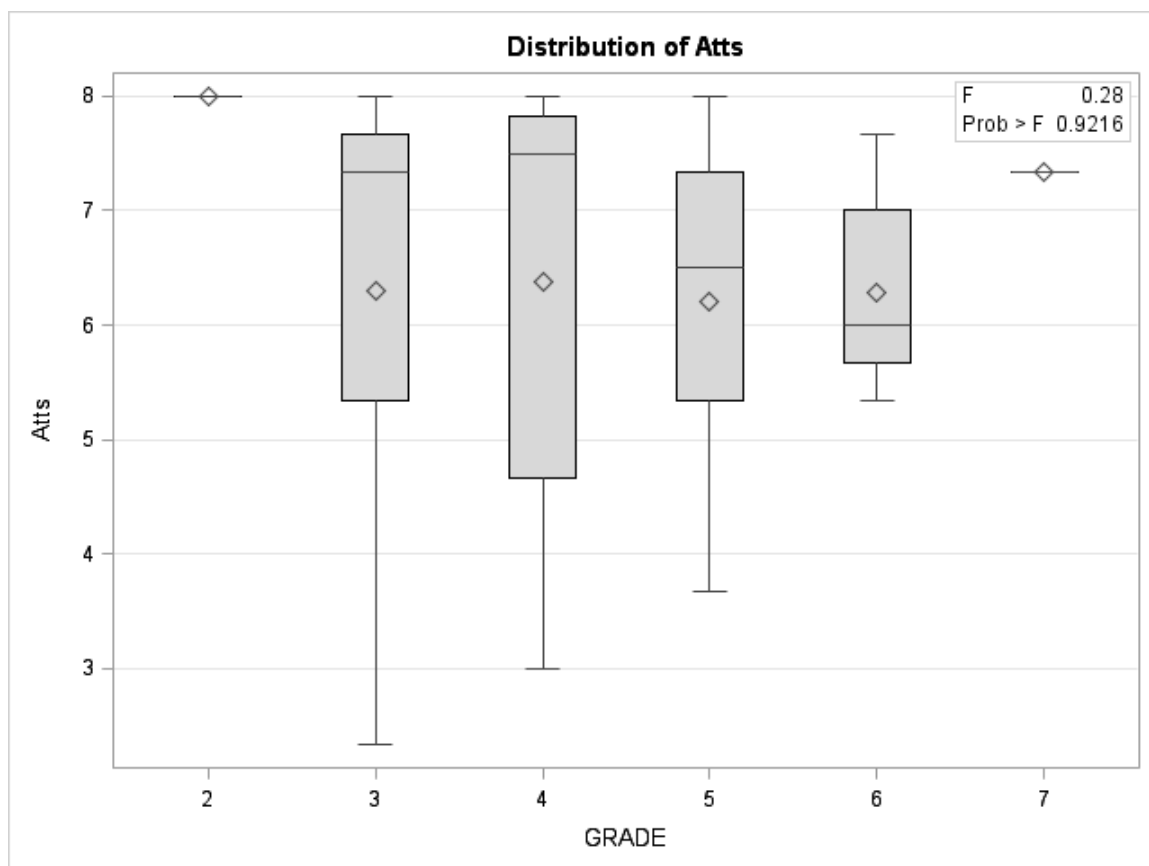
Figure 4.1: Relationship between participants' attitudes and proficiency

4.2.3   Results for RQ4. Do background factors have any effect on American-English

learners of Spanish's attitudes towards oral and written feedback?

In order to answer RQ4, participants' gender was correlated with their attitudes gathered

in questions 9, 10 and 19. A GLM procedure in an ANOVA test revealed that females

showed to have more positive attitudes in comparison to male. There is a significant

difference between the two groups (male and female) as regards to their attitudes towards

feedback (F (2, 38) = 0.00, $p = 0.00$). As it can be seen in the graph below, (number "1"

represents male and number "2" represents female).
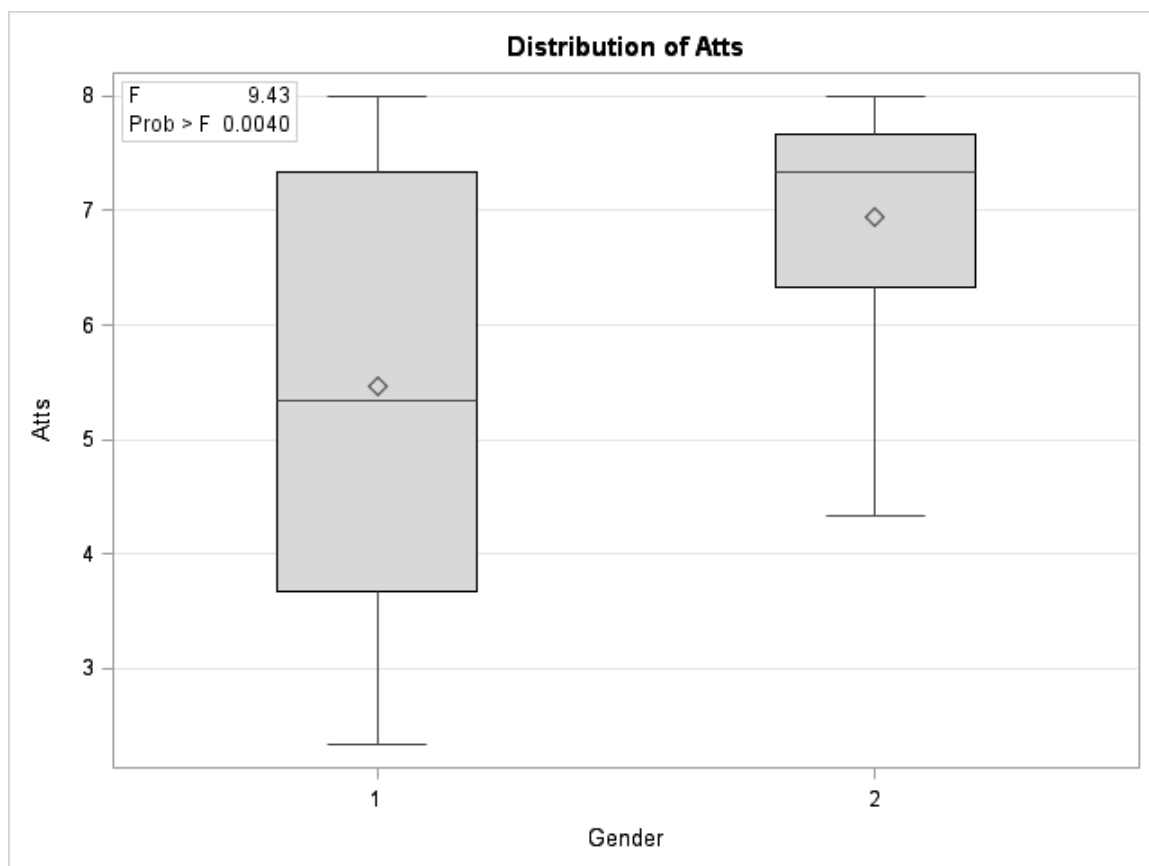
Figure 4.2: Relationship between attitudes and participants' gender.

The Spanish level of the participants was also correlated to their attitudes, in order to observe whether the time exposed to the language could generate more or less positive attitudes towards the feedback or not. A GLM procedure in ANOVA test revealed that participants from 101 level have more positive attitudes in comparison to participants from level 102. However, this difference was not significant ($F(2, 38) = 2.750$, $p = 0.10$), as it can be observed in the graph below.
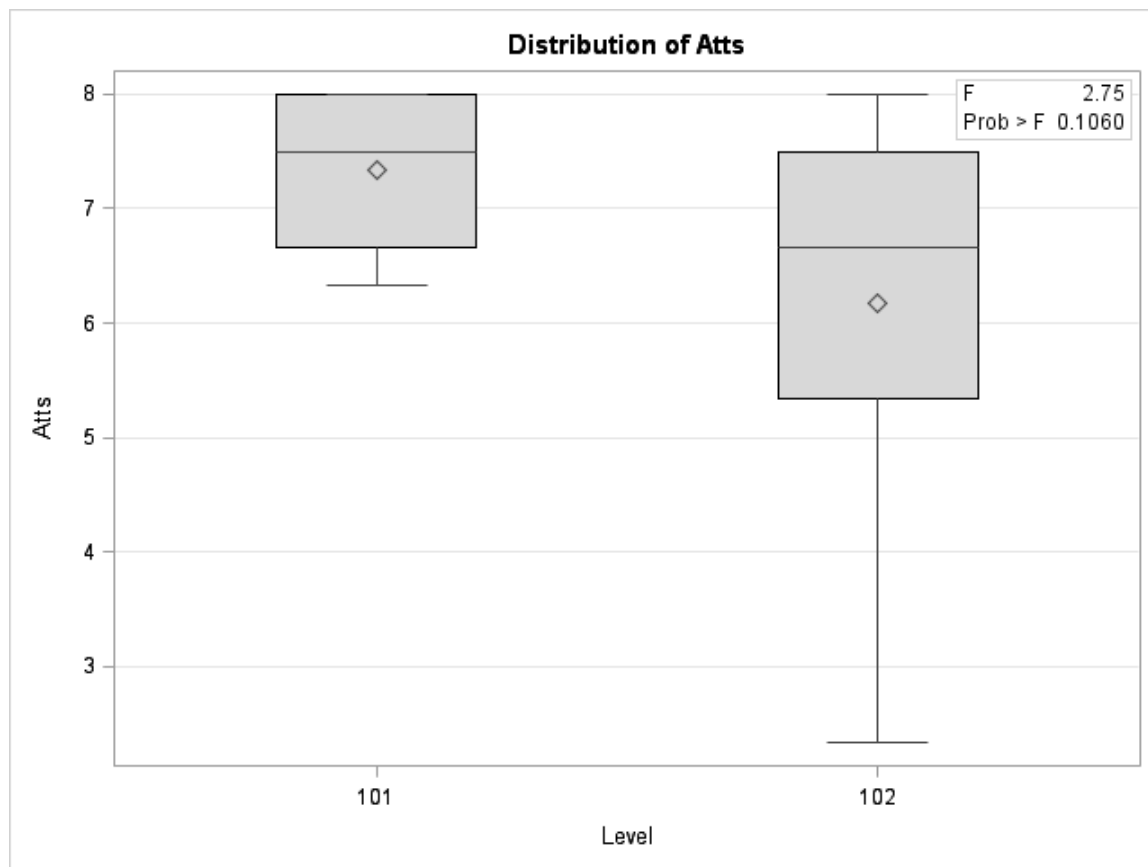
Figure 4.3: Relationship between attitudes and level of Spanish.

4.3   Other findings in the present study

Question 6, participants were asked to state if they understand feedback given to their

classmates, 55% pointed that they understand it, 8% stated that they do not understand it,

and 37% did not answer this question (mean 1.87 with 1 representing "no" and 2

representing "yes" with standard deviation of 0.33).

Question 7 asked participants to state whether the feedback given to peers helps

them to learn the content, 71% of the participants elected yes, 2% selected no and 27%

did not answer the question (mean 1.87 with 1 representing "no" and 2 representing

"yes", with standard deviation of 0.18). Question 9 asked participants to state from whom

they like to receive feedback. Thirty-six of the participants, which represents 95% of the total participants, claimed that they like to receive feedback from their instructor, and most of them explained that the instructor is the one who has the most knowledge and is normally a native speaker of Spanish. Therefore, instructors' feedback can be trusted. The examples below transcribed form participants' answers illustrate the situations.

"They have the most knowledge"

(Participant 15, male, level: Spanish 102)

"Teachers knows (sic) the language the most and can explain why much better than a peer"

(Participant 32, male, level: Spanish 102).

 "They normally are native speakers so I know their feedback will be helpful in comparison to peer which may give incorrect feedback".

(Participant 34, male, level: Spanish 102).

Two participants, which represents 5% of the total participants, stated that they like receiving feedback from their peers. However, just one of them justified his answer:

"Both really, but peers speak more simply".

(Participant, 30, male, level: Spanish 102).

It is clear from participants' answers that the instructor is seen as the holder of knowledge and any feedback that comes from the instructor is welcomed.

In question 16 participants were asked to state whether or not they like receiving praise in the classroom. While 79% of the respondents demonstrated that they like to receive praise, 10.5% stated that they do not like to be praised in the classroom and 10.5% did not answer the question (mean 1.88 with 1 representing "no "and 2 representing "yes" with standard deviation of 0.32). Most of the respondents explained that praising makes them more motivated to learn the language, as it can be seen in the data transcribed below:

"Learning a language is difficult; when I receive praise it gives me confidence and motivation"

(Participant, 54, female, level: Spanish 102).

"It makes me feel more secure, like if I make a mistake it won't be as embarrassing. Confidence booster"

(Participant 58, female, level: Spanish 102).

"Awesome and motivated to learn more of the language"

(Participant 47, female, level: Spanish 102).

Moreover, 10.5 %, of the respondents stated that they do not enjoy receiving praise in the classroom. They stated that praise sounds weird. Some of their transcribed answers can be seen in the examples below.

"It is usually a little awkward"

(Participant 45, male, level: Spanish 102).

"I do not need praise if I do something correct, I believe my grade will reflect my effort".

(Participant 27, female, level: Spanish 102).

Although some participants have stated that they do not like to be praised in the classroom, the majority of them indicated feeling more encouraged to participate after being praised.

Question 17 requested that participants state what parts of their writings they like to receive feedback on. Eighty- nine percent of the participants stated that they like receiving feedback on all aspects of their writing, which are grammar, vocabulary choice, organization, and content. Eight percent of the participants like to receive feedback just on grammar and 3% percent like receiving feedback on content. It was demonstrated by the participants' answers that the majority of them like to receive feedback in all aspects of their writing.

In question 18, participants were asked to state whether or not they read teachers' feedback on their writing. Eighty nine percent of the participants stated that they read the written feedback from teachers, 8% pointed that they do not read the comments, and 3% stated that they read part of the feedback given by teachers.

In question 21, participants were asked to state whether or not they have difficulties revising their writing after feedback. Seventeen out of 38 respondents wrote

"yes" and some explained their difficulties. From the transcribed data below it can be observed.

"The difficulty would be knowing the error but not finding or understanding proper replacement".

(Participant 53, female 102).

"Yes, sometimes I do not know why my choice was wrong or the corrections to make".

(Participant 50, male 102).

"I have difficulties understanding the feedback such as grammar and translating the feedback properly".

(Participant 49, male 102).

It can be observed, by the participants' responses, that they have difficulties identifying what their error are, how to correct it, and understanding the feedback given. Twenty-one participants stated that they do not have any difficulties revising their writing after feedback, and some of them explained why, as it can be seen from the transcribed data.

"No, feedback makes revision easier for me"

(Participant 41, male 102).

"No, feedback helps me to improve my writing overall"

(Participant 20, female 102).

"I usually don't have difficulties because the teacher puts the correct answer next to the wrong answer"

(Participant 21, female 102).

In question 22, participants were asked to respond if they have any difficulties participating in oral activities after receiving oral feedback. Twenty-one participants stated "yes" and some of them explained their answers.

"I get very nervous that I am pronouncing a word wrong when I speak Spanish"

(Participant 14, female 102).

"I know it is important to participate in order to learn, but I'm shy and if I feel like I'm saying something incorrectly, I won't say anything"

(Participant 36, female 102).

"If I mess up in class and end up being corrected in many ways, I'll think twice before participating that day"

(Participant 34, male 102).

"I know it is important to participate in order to learn, but I am shy and if I feel

like I am not saying something correctly I won't say anything"

(Participant 36, female 102).

For question 22, however, 17 participants stated that they do not have any difficulties

participating in oral activities after receiving oral feedback. They explained that oral

feedback helps them to improve their learning, as it can be seen from their answers below.

"No, I take the corrections and work on them and learn from them"

(Participant 47, female 102).

No, I don't. I just try to improve my speaking with the feedback given"

(Participant 29, male 102).

"I think after oral feedback, it makes it easier to participate in oral activities"

(Participant 16, female 102).

As it can be observed from the last two questions, although students value both oral

and written corrective feedback, they state some difficulties understanding the written

feedback and the challenge that it is to participate in oral activities after being corrected

orally.

4.4   Summary of the results

In summary, results demonstrated that American-English-speaking beginning learners of Spanish often notice when they make oral mistakes and they notice and understand teacher feedback. However, when feedback is given by peers, although just half of the participants reported noticing and understanding the feedback given to peers, 72% of the participants think that feedback given to peers helps them to learn the content. Moreover, students tend to prefer to be immediately corrected after a given mistake, and believe that the feedback provided by teachers helps them improve their language learning. The responses from participants suggest that they tend to display positive attitudes towards feedback in the classroom.

Although both, oral and written feedback, are valued by students, the level of satisfaction is higher for written than for oral feedback. It seems that novice learners of Spanish favor written feedback, and it may be because written correction is made privately. It is important to note from the qualitative data, specifically on question 12 of the attitude questionnaire, that after oral feedback, students feel insecure and embarrassed to participate in class. However, even though oral feedback brings some difficulties for learners, when they are asked to rate how they perceived feedback in general, the majority of them believe that feedback it is a tool for learning.

Regarding to the correlation between attitude and level of proficiency, results did not reveal significant difference between these two variables, neither between attitudes and level of Spanish. However, regarding correlation between gender and attitudes, female participants showed significantly more positive attitudes towards feedback than male did in this study.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to examine American-English-speaking learners' of Spanish attitudes towards feedback in the classroom, as well as possible correlation between participants' gender and level of Spanish with their attitudes. Although several studies (Gardner, 1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) have investigated the role that attitude plays in second language learning, there were no studies specifically addressing college level American-English-speaking beginner learners' of Spanish attitudes towards feedback.

5.1   Research Question 1

The first Research Question was "Do college American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish notice when they make oral mistakes? Do they notice the teacher's feedback?". The quantitative data gathered in this study suggests an affirmative answer for RQ1. The majority of the participants in this study stated they noticed their oral mistakes and all of the participants stated they noticed teachers' feedback. This finding corroborates well with the study performed by Kartchava and Ammar (2014) in that the learners in their study noticed the feedback given. These authors explained that when learners believe that feedback is important, they tend to perceive it, and that learners' beliefs about feedback are strongly correlated to the noticeability of feedback.

Based on the study executed by Kartchava and Ammar (2014), it could also be suggested that learners in the present study noticed the feedback because they value the feedback provided to them, and this generates more positive attitudes towards feedback. In this context, Kartchava and Ammar (2014) suggested that the more students value corrective feedback and believe in its efficacy, the more they will notice its purpose.

All data collected in the present study reflects participants' perspectives, since they stated their own evaluations in response to the questions of the questionnaire given them. A great number of respondents claimed they noticed when they made mistakes and almost all of them stated they noticed teacher feedback. The fact that they noticed both their mistakes and teacher feedback may be attributed to their positive attitudes. It is not possible, however, to suggest that what they noticed was a sufficient condition for acquisition. In addition, readers could argue to what extent the self-report of noticing is accurate. It was assumed that participants was truthful in their responses, since there was no right and wrong answers and the compensation was the same for every participant, independently of the answer. In addition, whether learners consciously notice what they are learning is an issue that has been addressed under different points of view.

Noticing is an issue that has generated much discussion in second language acquisition research. Some researchers, such as (Krashen, 1981) state that noticing plays no role in the language learning context, and that comprehensible input is sufficient. Others (Rosa & O'Neill, 1999; Schmidt, 1990) explain that noticing is crucial for the development of formal aspects of the target language. These latter authors also claim that without noticing, there is no intake (which promotes acquisition). This discussion is very important in second language studies, however, it seems very hard to affirm what learners have noticed or not

noticed from the feedback given, unless specific tasks were used to elicit it, which was not the purpose of this study.

Another issue in this study regards noticing feedback when it is given to classmates. Although just over half of the participants stated they understand when the teacher is correcting classmates, more than 70% stated that the feedback given to peers helped them to learn the content. That suggests that even though not understanding very well which part of the language the teacher is giving feedback on, they learn something from it. Hyland (2000) explains that in most classrooms, teachers are in charge of providing feedback. He suggests that teachers should allow students to exchange feedback between themselves, because this activity gives learners more autonomy and encourages them to exchange their own ideas about the language they are learning. It also enables learners to make decisions, helping their peers to learn.

5.2   Research Question 2

The second Research Question was "What are college American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom?" Quantitative and qualitative data gathered indicated that American-English-speaking novice learners of Spanish possess significant positive attitudes towards oral and written feedback. These findings corroborate well with the studies carried out by Zacharias (2007) and Agudo (2012) in that they also observed that learners demonstrated favorable attitudes towards feedback in their studies.

Attitudes toward learning situations have been investigated a lot, lately. In the present study, one of the main interests was to examine whether learners' attitudes

correlate with their proficiency or not. Taking into consideration that previous studies have demonstrated that attitudes may affect achievement (Gardner, 1983), it is very important to take into account learners' attitudes towards a given learning situation.

Moreover, Clark and Trafford (1995) state that the teacher plays a major role in students' attitudes towards the subject being learned. If students like their teachers, they tend to have more positive attitudes towards the learning situations. In the same vein, Sundquist and Neary- Sundquist (2007) observed in their study that the way that students rate their courses is related to the way they rate their teachers. Such statements indicate that attitudes towards teachers may reflect attitudes towards any other aspects related to classroom learning.

5.3   Research Question 3

The third Research Question was "Do American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish attitudes towards feedback correlate with their proficiency?" The data gathered in this study did not support an affirmative answer for RQ3, since no significant correlation between the variables attitude and proficiency was found. However, this study is in line with previous research carried out by Hakuta and D'Andrea (1992). These authors did not find a correlation between high school learners' attitudes and their achievements in second language acquisition. However, it may be argued that the test used in the present study was not a validated instrument to measure students' proficiency in Spanish, and it could have hindered the finding of a correlation between the two variables, attitude and proficiency.

5.4   Research Question 4

The fourth Research Question was "Do background factors have any effect on American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish's attitudes towards oral and written feedback?" Although many studies have found significant correlation between level of language and attitude, the findings in this study did not show significant correlation between these variables. However, this study revealed a significant relationship between attitudes and gender, where female showed more positive attitudes. This latter finding corroborates well with previous studies stressing that female students hold more positive attitudes when compared to male.

Many studies have noted significant correlation between gender and achievements in language learning. Clark and Trafford (1995) for instance, studied the achievements of females and males in modern language in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). They found that the achievements of females were much higher than males. The authors pointed out that the attitudes demonstrated by female versus males may be related to the notion, socially constructed, that females will devote more time and do better on school subjects, including foreign language acquisition. In addition, MacIntyre et al. (2002) point out that on the average, females mature earlier in comparison to males, and this enables females to get rid of the anxieties that affect and discourage learning.

Some studies investigating the relation between gender and attitude towards foreign language have also focused on social aspects as an element that may affect learner's attitudes. The study executed by Kobayashi (2002), and Clark and Trafford (1995), suggests that the correlation between gender and attitude must be looked at beyond the biological aspects. Kobayashi (2002) investigated Japanese college students'

(male and female) attitudes towards the learning of English both in and outside of Japan. She observed that females showed more positive attitudes towards the learning of English than males did. She attributed her result to social elements. She pointed out that Japanese females demonstrated positive attitudes towards acquiring English since it is viewed by many Japanese females as a way to study or work abroad, which represented to them freedom from a society where females are stereotyped and viewed as inferior. She also stated that, since females occupy the majority of English teaching positions, males lack male models in language classrooms. In addition, Clark and Trafford (1995) suggested that females achieve higher results because teachers favor them in the classroom.

It has also been shown that the time that a learner has been exposed to a second or foreign language may influence their attitude towards that language and its speakers. Although in the present study, students from the level of Spanish 101(first semester of Spanish language) demonstrated to have more positive attitudes, which corroborates well with previous studies, the issue regarding the time exposed to the language and attitude has generate great controversies in second language. Riestra and Johnson (1964) for example, claim that students develop more positive attitudes when they learn more about the language. Likewise, Gardner and Smythe (1975) state that those learners that spend more time learning a language demonstrated attitudes that tended to be more positive. Corroborating the same idea, Cortes (2002) observed that learners in grades 7 and 8 demonstrated more positive attitudes than those in lower levels.

However, some researchers have reported that positive attitudes towards language decrease over time. Tucher and Donado (2001) reported that learner's attitudes towards Japanese decrease after a year of exposure. In the same vein, Heining-Boynton and

Haitema (2007) state that elementary school learners' attitudes towards learning a foreign language tend to become negative over time.

In the present study, although first semester Spanish students demonstrated to have more positive attitudes towards feedback in the classroom, there was not a significant correlation between participants' levels of Spanish and their attitude.

It is important to mention that the diverse findings regarding gender, time exposed to the language, and achievements, in different studies, do not undermine the importance of these variables in studies investigating attitudes. Instead, they demonstrate that more empirical studies are needed, systematically controlling these correlations, to shed more light on this matter.

5.5   Other findings in the present study

Ninety-five percent of the participants in the present study stated their preferences in receiving feedback from the instructor. This finding corroborates the study carried out by Agudo (2012) in that learners stated their preferences in receiving feedback from instructor. In this study, participants stated that instructors were best able to provide feedback because they are native speakers and have more knowledge of the language. Although the goal of the present study was to examine learners' attitudes towards feedback, their input also brought pedagogical implications to the feedback process.

Finkel and Monk (1983) explain that it is already expected that teachers provide everything for learners in the classroom. Teachers are seen as the expert in the classroom and the leader of it, and usually, learners rely heavily on the output of teachers. These authors state that teachers need to make changes in their teaching, enabling learners to be

responsible for their own learning processes. If teachers center themselves in the classroom, it is not possible to dissolve, what these authors call the Atlas Complex (all burdens and responsibilities are on teachers' shoulders).

Moreover, Hyland (2000) suggests that sometimes teachers do not take into account learners' preferences in the use of feedback. According to Hyland, peer feedback appears to give learners more opportunity to participate in the feedback process. In the same vein, Mittan (1989) also stated that peer feedback gives learners more confidence and control of the language being learned. She also explains that both teachers and learners need to overcome the concept that only teachers are able to give feedback.

Regarding the statement that instructors are the best able because they are native speakers of Spanish, Valdes et al., (2003) explains that the good, and free of error Spanish is generally seen as the Spanish spoken and taught by native-speakers of this language. She explains that these ideas reinforce and spread the dominant ideology that native speakers are the ones prepared to teach the language and delay the crucial discussion about bilingualism in academic setting.

In this study, learners demonstrated having positive attitudes towards feedback provided by teachers. However, what came from peers was not valued by them; they had preconceived negative attitudes towards peer feedback. It seems necessary that learners are enabled to change their views and, since teachers are the ones that spend time with students in the classroom, it seems their duty to help students to overcome the idea that peer feedback is worthless.

Another finding in this study is in regards to praise in the classroom. Most respondents stated that they feel motivated to learn a language if the teacher praises them.

In this context, Dornyei (1994, p. 278) explains, "Praise is a type of informational feedback, should attribute success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future". It is clearly seen by the participants' statements in question 16 on the attitude questionnaire, that praise encouraged them to move forward with the language. It suggests that teachers should be attentive to point out even small advances and the willingness of learners to learn the language, since this seems to motivate and generate more positive attitudes towards feedback.

Furthermore, the majority of the participants in this study have indicated that they like to receive feedback in all aspects of their writing, which involves grammar, organization, vocabulary choice and content.

Moreover, most of the participants stated that they read written feedback from the teacher, which suggests favorable attitudes towards written correction. However, some expressed difficulties understanding the feedback provided. This situation suggests that it is important to make it clear that the purpose of feedback is not only to indicate error, but also to enable learners to learn from it.

As to the difficulties in participating in oral and written activities after receiving feedback, it is possible to observe from the qualitative data from the open-ended questions 21 and 22 of the feedback questionnaire, that participating in oral activities after receiving oral feedback is still a challenge for students. Such findings indicate that instructors need to find ways to give learners feedback that does not expose them to any embarrassing situation. It is also important to make learners aware that mistakes are part of the process of learning a language and that they should not be embarrassed if they are corrected. It is also relevant to tell students that taking risks is important when learning a

language, and being aware of this helps them to move forward in their learning. A

comfortable classroom environment can generate more positive attitudes toward feedback.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis was to investigate American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish attitudes towards feedback in the classroom. In addition, it aimed to find out whether or not there was a relationship between attitudes and gender and between attitudes and level of Spanish. Results from this study demonstrated that Spanish students hold positive attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom, and that they are motivated to learn the content when teachers praise them. It was also showed that female hold more positive attitudes than male. The findings also have shown that students believe that the only reliable feedback comes from teachers. Another finding was the lack of correlation between students' attitudes and proficiency, as well as the lack of a relationship between attitudes and level of Spanish. These results have important implications, including moving the discussion of Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback even further.

Previous studies have demonstrated that understanding learners' attitudes towards a learning situation is an important component in the process of language learning, taking into consideration that attitudes may influence learners' achievements (Gardner, 1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). In the present study, although learners have expressed some concerns regarding oral feedback, overall, they demonstrated favorable attitudes towards oral and written feedback in the classroom.

As discussed in the review of literature in this study, many variables have been seen as obstacles that may interfere in the effectiveness of feedback. Thus, the present study brings further contributions to the field, taking into account that the findings will add new insights into the controversial discussions of feedback effectiveness. The purpose of this study was not to measure whether feedback is effective or not. Instead, it aimed to measure Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback, taking into account that attitudes might influence the efficacy of feedback. The results of this study provide a basis for further investigation on Spanish learners' attitudes towards feedback and the potential impact that their attitudes may have on feedback context.

6.1   Pedagogical implications

Findings in the present study present pedagogical implication for classroom teaching and learning. The present study demonstrated that overall, novice learners of Spanish have favorable attitudes towards oral and written feedback. Such findings may encourage teachers to keep seeking effective ways to provide feedback, enabling learners to benefit from feedback.

Although participants value oral and written feedback, some of them stated their difficulties in understanding written feedback and in participating in oral activities after oral feedback. Regarding written feedback, teachers should find ways to give written feedback that learners will not be confused with and that they will benefit from. In addition, oral feedback should be given carefully, without embarrassing students, but instead, helping them to understand that oral feedback is part of the learning process.

A further pedagogical implication refers to the idea that only the instructor is able to give students feedback. Students need to be aware that learning a language is a process that involves interactions not only with teachers, but also peers. In this context, teachers should enable students to understand that each of them is responsible for their own language learning, and that feedback from peers might also be helpful.

6.2   Limitations of the study

This study had several limitations. Although this study had 38 participants, this number represented only 11% of the beginner Spanish students enrolled in the spring of 2015, where the study took place. This suggests that a greater quantity of participants would be needed in order to give more generalized ideas about American-English-speaking learners of Spanish' attitudes towards feedback. A further limitation of this study is that the data was collected using only written questionnaire feedback. Other methods, such as interviews, would have complemented the written questionnaires. Interviews could have given the investigator a greater chance to encourage discussion in each of the questions presented to the interviewees, in order to explore participants' answers more deeply. Another limitation that may have affected the outcome of this study was the type of test used to measure students' proficiency. The test was not validated and it may have hindering possible correlation between variables.

Notwithstanding the limitations, this study brings significant contributions to the field, since, to my knowledge there were no studies investigating American-English-speaking beginner learners of Spanish attitudes towards feedback. The present study also

provides the groundwork for further research that will generate important contributions to the field of Spanish as a second or foreign language studies.

6.3   Suggestions for future studies

Future research should find a more effective way to test learners' proficiency in Spanish and to correlate it with their attitudes. An effective way would be to take their grades from the current Spanish class they are taking, since they reflect their development in all aspects of the language, including reading, listening, writing and speaking. Further research should also be undertaken having learners from different levels of Spanish. In this way, it would be possible to find out whether or not Spanish learner's attitudes towards feedback increase, decrease, or remain the same, according to the amount of time spend on a language.

An additional suggestion is to include more questions on the background and attitudes questionnaire, in order to find, for instance, whether or not parental encouragement is significant for adult Spanish learners, and how it affects their attitudes towards feedback. This is important, since some studies (Baker, 1985) have demonstrated that parents' encouragement plays an important role in learners' attitudes.

Another suggestion is to include questions addressing the types of motivation that students have to take Spanish, such as instrumental and integrative motivation, observing whether or not any of them generate more positive attitudes towards feedback, given that some studies (Gardner, 1985) have shown that integrative motivation generates more positive attitudes towards the language and its speakers. It could be observed whether it also applies in the feedback context or not.

Another issue that could be investigated, along with learners' attitudes towards feedback, is teachers' attitudes towards this learning situation. In this context, Zacharias (2007) suggests, "there seems to be a mismatch between the students' and teachers' perception in the use of feedback" (p.39). Thus, the observation of teachers' attitudes towards feedback is an important aspect in this process in order to observe if both, learners and teachers value feedback in the same way.

Although the present study did not find any significant correlation between attitudes and learners proficiency, and also not between attitudes and level of Spanish, such variables are worthy of attention and should be investigated in future studies. In addition, due to time constraints, focusing on one kind of feedback, oral or written, would enable investigators to deepen the investigation even more.

Finally, it seems crucial to assess learners' perspectives concerning any aspect of learning in the classroom, since they are the primary focus in classes. An effective way of finding out learners' point of view is to give them the opportunity to give teachers feedback (how they would like to receive oral and written feedback and the kinds of feedback that they believe work better, are some examples). This assessment could be done anonymously throughout the semester, and it could bring valuable insights into teachers' methodologies and practices.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Background Information Questions

Participant #:

Age:

Nationality:

Major:

Gender:

Class level of Spanish:

Do you speak or is heritage speaker of Spanish or is learning any other language besides Spanish?

Yes, I am heritage speaker

No, I am not learning any other language besides Spanish

Yes, I am learning:

Appendix B Language Attitude Questionnaire

1.   Do you generally notice when you make oral mistakes when you are speaking Spanish?

1 – No

2 – Yes

2.   When the teacher corrects you when you are speaking, do you generally notice it?

1 – No

2 – Yes

3.   When the teacher corrects you when you are speaking, do you generally understand the correction? Do you understand what was wrong?

1 – No

2 – Yes

4.   Do you like to be immediately corrected?

1 – No

2 – Yes

5.   Do you generally notice when your teacher is correcting classmates?

1 – No

2 – Yes

6.   Do you generally understand feedback when you observe it given to your peers?

1 – No

2 – Yes

7.   Do you think the feedback given to your peers in the classroom helps you to learn the content?

1 – No

2 – Yes

8.   What do you think about oral feedback in the classroom?

1 – It can sometimes make me feel confused.

2 – It does not help me in anyway.

3 – It helps to improve my language.

4 – It makes things more clear.

5 – It helps me to learn content.

9.   Whom do you like to receive feedback from?

1 – Peers

2 – Instructor

Why?

10.   How do you feel when you receive oral feedback?

1 – Angry

2 – Dissatisfied

3 – Nervous

4 – Embarrassed

5 – Insecure

6 – Concerned

7 – Curious

8 – Satisfied

11.   How do you feel when you receive written corrective feedback?

1 – Angry

2 – Dissatisfied

3 – Nervous

4 – Embarrassed

5 – Insecure

6 – Concerned

7 – Curious

8 – Satisfied

12.   Do you think your feelings expressed on the above two questions may somehow affect your learning?

13.   How do you react when you receive written feedback from your instructor?

1 – I ask for clarification from the instructor.

2 – I ask for help from the instructor.

3 – I ask for help from a peer.

4 – I just ignore the corrections.

14.   How do you classify the importance of feedback when learning a second language?

1 – Not important

2 – Undecided

3 – A little important

4 – Very important

15.   When you receive feedback about a given mistake, do you tend to recognize the mistake?

1 – No

2 – Yes

16.   Do you enjoy receiving praise in the classroom?

1 – No

2 – Yes

How does it make you feel?

17.   What are the parts of writing you like to receive feedback on?

1 – Grammar

2 – Vocabulary choice

3 – Organization

4 – Content

5 – All of them

18.   Do you read your teacher's comments about your writing?

1 – No, I don´t read them.

2 – Yes, I read them.

3 – I read part of them.

19.   How do you feel upon reading your teacher's comments about your writing?

1 – Angry

2 – Dissatisfied

3 – Nervous

4 – Embarrassed

5 – Insecure

6 – Concerned

7 – Curious

8 – Happy

20.   How do you perceive feedback in general?

1 – It's a waste of time.

2 – I don't have an opinion.

3 – It's a tool for learning.

21.   Do you have any difficulty to revise your writing after feedback? If so, would you report at least two of those difficulties here?

22.   Do you have any difficulty participating in oral activities after receiving oral feedback? If so, can you tell me at least one?

Appendix C Proficiency Test for Level 101

1.   ¿A qué hora sale de casa para ir a estudiar? [What time do you leave home to go study?]

Normalmente Yo ------------------ (salir, salgo, salió) a las 7:30. [Usually, I leave at 7:30.]

2.   ¿Qué hora es? [What time is it?]

a.   Son la una y media. [They are 1:30.]

b.   Es la una y media. [It is 1:30.]

c.   Es una media. [It's a middle.]

3.   A mis amigas ------------- (les gusta, les gustan, gustan) las compras. [My friends like shopping.]

4.   No me gusta nada la música latina. [I do not like Latino music.]

a.   A mí tampoco [I don't either.]

b.   A mí también [I do too.]

c.   Yo tampoco [I don't either.]

d.   Yo también [I do too.]

5.   Los hijos de mi tíos son mis… [The sons of my uncles are my…]

a.   Primos (Cousins)

b.   Nietos (Grandchildren)

c.   Hermanos (Siblings)

6.   (Cuál, Qué, Quién) ¿--------------- significa "sobrina?" [(Which, What, Who) does "niece" mean?"]

7.   (Hay, Está, Es) ¿------------------ una farmacia aquí cerca? [(Is there, Is, Is) a pharmacy here nearby?]

8.   Voy a cerrar la ventana porque tengo ---------------- (frio, calor, sed). [I am going to shut the window, because I am (cold, hot, thirsty).]

Appendix D Proficiency Test for Level 102

1.   ¿Ha venido ---------------- (alguien, algún) estudiante? [Have (someone, any) students come?]

2.   Hola--------------------- (soy, es) Juan. [Hi (I am, he/she/it/you is/is/is/are) Juan.]

3.   Ayer Andrés no ------------ (trayo, trajo, traje) su libro. [Yesterday Andrés did not ([incorrect conjugation], he brought, I brought) his book.

4.   No te vi en clase ayer. Estaba muy cansado y no -------------- (fui, iré, iba). [I did not see you in class yesterday. I was very tired and I did not (I went, I will go, I was going).]

5.   No---------------- (fume, fumas) aquí, está prohibido. [Do not (smoke, you smoke) here, it is prohibited.]

6.   ¿Es ésta la ciudad de María y Ana? Sí, ésta es ------------ (suya, su, sus) ciudad. [Is this one they city María and Ana are from? Yes, this one is (theirs, their, their) city.]

7.   El otro día se me rompió el coche y tuve que volver a la casa -----------(a, de, por) pie. [The other day my car broke down and I had to go back home (to, by, for) foot

8.   Ayer----------------------- (fui, fue, fuyó) a la playa con mis compañeros de clase. [Yesterday (I went, he/she/you went, [incorrect conjugation]) to the beach with my classmates.