



THE IMPACT OF IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED ERROR CORRECTION ON IRANIAN EFL LEARNER'S MOTIVATION

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Abstract:

Purpose: This research investigated the effect of immediate and delayed error correction on motivation of EFL learners to approve or disapprove the research hypothesis that, there is not any significant difference between three group of immediate correction, delayed correction, and control group.

Methodology: This study was conducted among three groups of 30 subjects and in total, population of 90 learners. The errors committed by three groups of immediate correction, delayed correction, and control group were addressed in three different ways: immediately, with delay, and with no special method, respectively. A motivation questionnaire and a language test were given to three groups in the first session of the term and the last session of the term to see the effect of different kinds of error correction. The data of pre-test and post-test were analyzed by SPSS and one way ANOVA was used.

Findings: The result provided evidence for rejection of the hypothesis and immediate group performed better than delayed group and control group.

Significance: This study is the first research investigating the effect of error correction time on motivation.

Keywords: error correction, motivation, immediate error correction, delayed error correction

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1. Introduction

A lot of research has been dedicated to study how a second language should be taught; however, a very good technique or a good teacher does not always mean that a better learning process will take place. A good teacher is not a person who has got a good proficiency in English. In fact, a good teacher is someone who is aware of the students' needs and focuses his/her teaching on them. In other words, a good teacher is really the one who can see beyond the face of the students and beyond the grammar books he or she is using in teaching (Gómez Martínez, 2006).

So, teachers should help learners to gain their goals by applying suitable techniques for tackling learners' error in order to increase their language achievement. Language acquisition researchers and second languages teachers have confirmed the importance of errors and error correction and they confirmed the rule of correction as a part of teaching and learning process. According to second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, the acquisition process will be easier with feedback provided during interaction (Long, 1977; Swain, 1985). Useful interactional process helps learners to understand that their speeches are problematic.

The time of teacher's correction has an important role in learner's learning process. Teachers might address learner's error immediately, with delay or with no correction. When language teachers are silent about learners' wrong language use, learners normally think that teachers' silence indicates that they have made no errors. If teachers correct them immediately, this correction discourages them from speaking. This is exactly the turning point that the issue of motivation raises.

Motivation is one of the major variables determining the success and level of second language learning according to teachers and researchers. It is an important factor that has a positive influence in learning second language. As emphasized by Dornyei '*teacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness*' (Dornyei, 2001).

Motivated learners are keen to work hard, focus on the given tasks, not requiring constant support and even they are willingness to take part in the process of learning. The effect of motivation on language learning originated from the field of social psychology (Ellis, 2009).

The main goal of this article is to study the motivation experienced by learners in class, when the teacher corrects their errors immediately or with a delay. So, the present study investigates on the effect of immediate and delayed error correction on learner's motivation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Many factors such as motivation, personality, cognition, age, native language experiences, Curriculum, instruction, self-esteem, anxiety, risk taking, empathy and self-efficacy have impact on the acquisition of L2.

These factors are used for a usual learning process but all of them are not essential for language learning. Motivation is an important psychological factor for the acquisition of L2 according to the second language acquisition research.

Being motivated increases the desire to learn English. If learner is motivated, a suitable outcome will be achieved. In fact, in the process of language learning, the lower the motivation, the lower the English proficiency; the greater the motivation, the greater the English proficiency will be.

Despite the importance of errors, not enough empirical studies have yet been undertaken to show the effect of immediate and delayed error correction on second language learning. Research studies that focus on error correction time are extremely rare in comparison to the large number of studies that focus on error correction. Also, despite the importance of psychological factor, there is not any study that pays attention to the effect of error correction on motivation.

Lukmani published an article discussing the problems associated with the correction of pronunciation errors (Lukmani, 1972). Cohen gives a very short account of the topics and classification of errors involved in error correction (Cohen, 1975). Sanders emphasized on the effect of immediate feedback on learning on his thesis (Sanders, 2005). Varnosfadrani investigated the effects of immediate and delayed error correction on learners' pronunciation. (Varnosfadrani, 2006).

Rahimi and Dastjerd published an article discussing the impact of immediate and delayed error correction on EFL learners' oral production (Rahimi & Dastjerdi, 2012). Quinn emphasized on delayed and immediate corrective feedback on passive errors on his thesis (Quinn, 2014). As we can see from the above findings, there is no study that focuses on effect of immediate and delayed error correction on learner's motivation.

1.2 Research Question

Q1: Is there any significant difference between three groups (immediate and delayed error correction as well as no correction) in terms of language achievement?

Q2: Is there any significant difference between three groups in terms of motivation?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

H1: There is not any significant difference between three groups in terms of language achievement.

H2: There is not any significant difference between three groups in terms of motivation.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants

After approaching the institute administrator and receiving his consent, one of the researchers visited intermediate level classes and invited students to participate in the study. A number of students did not accept to participate in the experiment. 106 students agreed to participate.

Cambridge Placement Test was used to ensure about the homogeneity of the subjects. This test was used as a means of determining their proficiency level, whether to include/exclude students from this study. 16 learners whose scores were below the mean were excluded from the study.

The participants in this study were 90 females at intermediate level aged 15 to 20 with the majority being between 15-17 years old, at one of the English language institutes in Shiraz, Iran. The remaining 90 learners were the subjects of our study. They were classified into three groups. The participants were divided into 3 groups of 30, 30 and 30 (one group= 30, one group 30, one group 30, group one is immediate group with 30 population, group two is delayed group with 30 population and group three is control group with no special method with population of 30). Then, they were randomly divided into experimental and control group.

The errors were corrected immediately for one group of experimental groups and they were corrected for another group of experimental group after finishing their speech and with delay. Control group was without any special method of correction (sometimes teacher corrected their error immediately and sometimes with a pause in the class).

2.2. Instruments

For this study, motivation questionnaire and English Proficiency Test (the test of the institute used for final exam and it is not possible to mention the exam because of lack of the administrator permission) were used to elicit learners' level of motivation and English proficiency, respectively. The motivation questionnaire was translated by Mostafa Papi who created the questionnaire based on Dornyei questionnaire.

This questionnaire consists of four sections with 6-point Likert-scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. The range of responses were from 1 (least motivated) to 6 (most motivated) for scoring the responses. Therefore, the response choice started with 'strongly disagree,' which was worth 1point. Number 2 was disagreeing. Number 3 was slightly disagreeing. Number 4 was slightly agreed. Number five was agree. Number 6 was strongly agreed. To make it easier for learners to answer questionnaires correctly, this study used Persian version of motivation questionnaire. For this purpose, motivation questionnaire translated to Persian by Mostafa Papi, was used. To make sure that this translated version of motivation questionnaire had the same reliability as the original version, Cronbach' alpha was used.

Table 1: The Reliability Indices of Motivation Questionnaire

| Factor | Number of Items | Reliability |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Motivation | 76 | .91 |

As it can be seen in table 1, the total reliability of the motivation questionnaire with 76 items was calculated via Cronbach' alpha and the result was .91.

2.3 Procedure

The students participated for 20 sessions, 10 weeks lasting for 100 minutes. Group A, which had 30 members, was the immediate correction group while Group B, which had 30 members, was delayed correction group and group C which had 30 members, was control group with no special method. Feedback was different depending on whether participants were in the immediate or delayed condition.

During the term, the teacher immediately corrected the errors for Group A. If learners made errors, the teacher instantly corrected their error by giving the correct answers to them. On the other hand, Group B members were allowed to continue even if they committed errors. Teacher corrected errors which were effective in their communication.

Long explains that delayed correction referred to correction provided after the completion of the student's utterance and rejected delayed correction with a delay of merely 5 to 10 seconds (Long, 1977). So, group B error was corrected as researchers have said in this field.

Cambridge Proficiency Test for intermediate level was administered twice, firstly in the first session of the term which was the pre-test of this study and secondly in the

last session of the term which was the post-test to the same subjects to see the learner's progress.

For achieving the reliability of the test, the researcher controlled the variables including noise, light, time that might affect the test. So, the test was done in a controlled condition without noise, and other annoying factors. The Foreign Language motivation questionnaire by Dornyei was given to participants once in the first session of the term and secondly in the last session of the term to the same subjects in order to measure their level of motivation during the term.

The questionnaire was given to participants and some points was mentioned and explained to them so that they could respond easily, although the questionnaire itself had some extra explanations and examples. They were asked to complete the questionnaire by bolding the items which they strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, or disagreed. The learners were given time to answer the questionnaires very carefully and the teacher gave an extra mark to them for participating in the study.

2.4. Data Analysis

The final results were analyzed using SPSS software. In analyzing the data, some statistical procedures were carried out in this study: one way ANOVA to see the effect of error correction on learner's motivation in three group before and after the term as well as to see the effect of error correction on learner's language achievement in three group before and after the term.

3. Results

1. Is there any significant difference between three groups in terms of motivation?

1. There is not any significant difference between three groups in terms of motivation.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Students' motivation in Three Groups in pretest

| Groups | N | Mean | SD | Min | Max |
|----------------------|----|----------|----------|--------|--------|
| Immediate Correction | 30 | 341.4333 | 44.92038 | 261.00 | 437.00 |
| Delayed Correction | 30 | 327.9333 | 31.89847 | 269.00 | 415.00 |
| Control | 30 | 317.3667 | 40.01335 | 250.00 | 407.00 |

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics of students' motivation in three groups (immediate correction, delayed correction, control). As it can be seen in table 2, the mean score, standard deviation, the number of participants, the minimum and maximum score of

three groups are presented. Motivation questionnaire had 76 6-likertscale items; the possible range of score is between 76 and 456.

Table 3: Results of One Way ANOVA for Students' Motivation Level in Pre-test

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 8731.089 | 2 | 4365.544 | 2.825 | .065 |
| Within Groups | 134456.200 | 88 | 1545.474 | | |
| Total | 143187.289 | 90 | | | |

As table 3 indicates, the results of the one-way ANOVA shows that there is no significant difference in Students' motivation Level in Pre-test of three groups: $F = 2.825$, $p = .065$.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Motivation in Three Groups in Post-test

| Groups | N | Mean | SD | Min | Max |
|----------------------|----|----------|----------|--------|--------|
| Immediate Correction | 30 | 343.8000 | 44.79717 | 245.00 | 429.00 |
| Delayed Correction | 30 | 327.9333 | 42.82115 | 230.00 | 409.00 |
| Control | 30 | 309.7000 | 56.29059 | 140.00 | 422.00 |

Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of students' motivation in three groups (immediate correction, delayed correction, control). As table 4 indicates immediate correction group has the highest mean (343.80) and the control group has the lowest mean (309.70).

Table 5: Results of One-Way ANOVA for Students' Motivation Level in Post-test

| | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 17470.156 | 2 | 8735.078 | 3.739 | .028 |
| Within Groups | 203262.967 | 88 | 2336.356 | | |
| Total | 220733.122 | 90 | | | |

The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the three groups at the end of the term in post-test because: $p\text{-value} = 0.028$.

Table 6: Scheffe's Test for the Differences of Students' Motivation among Three Groups

| (I) group | (J) group | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------|------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Immediate | delayed correction | 15.86667 | 12.48027 | .415 | -13.8923 | 45.6256 |

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| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|----------|------|----------|---------|
| Correction | control | 34.10000* | 12.48027 | .021 | 4.3411 | 63.8589 |
| Delayed Correction | immediate | -15.86667 | 12.48027 | .415 | -45.6256 | 13.8923 |
| | correction | | | | | |
| | control | 18.23333 | 12.48027 | .315 | -11.5256 | 47.9923 |
| Control | immediate | -34.10000* | 12.48027 | .021 | -63.8589 | -4.3411 |
| | correction | | | | | |
| | delayed correction | -18.23333 | 12.48027 | .315 | -47.9923 | 11.5256 |

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

At this phase, the post hoc Scheffe's test (see the table 6) is used to show the place of the differences among the groups. Table 6 shows Scheffe's test for the differences of students' motivation among three groups. As we see in the table 6, there is a significant difference between the immediate and control groups which are marked by asterisks.

2: Is there any significant difference between three groups in terms of Language Achievement?

2: There is not any significant difference between three groups in terms of Language Achievement.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Language Achievement in Three Groups in pretest

| Groups | N | Mean | SD | Min | Max |
|----------------------|----|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| Immediate Correction | 30 | 15.9000 | 2.74616 | 8.00 | 20.00 |
| Delayed Correction | 30 | 15.7833 | 1.86475 | 12.00 | 20.00 |
| Control | 30 | 15.4917 | 2.45167 | 10.00 | 20.00 |

Table 7 shows descriptive statistics of students' Language Achievement in three groups (immediate correction, delayed correction, control). The possible range of score for the language achievement test is between 0 and 20.

Table 8: Results of One Way ANOVA for Students' Language Achievement Level in Pre-test

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-----|------|
| Between Groups | 2.645 | 2 | 1.32 | .23 | .794 |
| Within Groups | 493.852 | 88 | 5.67 | | |
| Total | 496.506 | 90 | | | |

As table 8 indicates, the results of the one-way ANOVA show that there is no significant difference in Students' Language Achievement Level in Pre-test: $F=.23$, $p=.794$.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of Students' Language Achievement in Three Groups in post-test

| Groups | N | Mean | SD | Min | Max |
|----------------------|----|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| Immediate Correction | 30 | 16.7167 | 1.33703 | 13.00 | 19.00 |
| Delayed Correction | 30 | 16.5333 | 2.11291 | 11.00 | 20.00 |
| Control | 30 | 15.4833 | 2.15552 | 10.00 | 20.00 |

Table 9 shows descriptive statistics of students' language achievement in three groups (immediate correction, delayed correction, control). As table 9 indicates, immediate correction group has the highest mean (16.716) and the control group has the lowest mean (15.483).

Table 10: Results of One Way ANOVA for Students' Language Achievement Level in Post-test

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 26.572 | 2 | 13.286 | 3.657 | .030 |
| Within Groups | 316.050 | 88 | 3.633 | | |
| Total | 342.622 | 90 | | | |

The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the three groups at the end of the term in post-test because: p-value = 0.030.

Table 11: Scheffe's test for the differences of Students' Language Achievement among three groups

| (I) group | (J) group | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------|------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Immediate Correction | delayed correction | .18333 | .49212 | .926 | -.9901 | 1.3568 |
| | control | 1.23333* | .49212 | .037 | .0599 | 2.4068 |
| Delayed Correction | immediate correction | -.18333 | .49212 | .926 | -1.3568 | .9901 |
| | control | 1.05000 | .49212 | .089 | -.1235 | 2.2235 |
| Control | immediate correction | -1.23333* | .49212 | .037 | -2.4068 | -.0599 |
| | delayed correction | -1.05000 | .49212 | .089 | -2.2235 | .1235 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 11 shows Scheffe's test for the differences of students' language achievement among three groups. As we see in the table 11 there is a significant difference between the immediate and control groups which are marked by asterisks.

6. Discussion

The analysis of the questionnaires and scores of motivation revealed that type of error correction affect performance of studied subjects. In other words, from the obtained results we understand that there is a relationship with teacher's error correction and learner's achieved results.

Therefore, the language learners will be more motivated if they are corrected immediately. In other words, the studied subjects preferred to be corrected instantly without any lag. The results of this study showed that suitable error correction confidently affects learners' performance. So, teachers should select useful and effective error correction.

These results agree with Brosvic, Epstein, Dihoff, & Cook that immediate feedback is more beneficial than delayed feedback and delayed feedback is more beneficial for laboratory while immediate feedback is more suitable for classroom (Brosvic, Epstein, Dihoff, & Cook, 2006).

Also, the results agree with Kulik & Kulik's study. They proposed that delayed feedback may have better results in laboratory studies but immediate feedback have better results in classrooms. They believed that classroom setting is key factor for this reason. (Kulik & Kulik, 1988).

These results are contrary to Allwright & Bailey's study. They believed that when teachers correct learners' error instantly, it reduces their motivation to speak. As a result, errors should be corrected after finishing their utterances. (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). Teachers are responsible to provide a situation for students to be encouraged to speak.

Teachers are responsible to provide a situation for students to be encouraged to speak learners need opportunity and time for correcting their error. It is only possible by taking risks, by trial and error, and as a results improve their speaking. So, teachers by using questionnaires, interviews, and observations should be aware of students' preference toward error correction. They should consider on the first hand the students' reaction to error correction, because some want to be corrected soon and some want to be corrected with pause and error correction depends on the students level and students' needs. Further research is needed to see whether it affects similarly for beginners or advanced learners.

Declaration of interest statement

There is none to declare.

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