The Methods Preferred in Oral Error Correction at the University of Phan Thiet

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Abstract: *The motivation of students to learn English is the first priority of English lecturers. Finding out how students feel about oral error correction can help to better understand students' desire to determine the best way to motivate them to study successfully.*
In this research, the author studied methods of oral error correction that students preferred. Therefore, we can find a variety of options that help to improve English speaking teaching efficiently.

Keyword: *oral error correction, motivation, students' attitude.*

I. INTRODUCTION

1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the previous research (Pham 2022), the author investigated students' perceptions at the University of Phan Thiet on oral error correction in terms of types of errors, error corrector, type of correction, and extent of correction. The purpose of that study was to find out students' needs and expectations in order to help lecturers to design the best methods to motivate students in learning to speak effectively.

In this research, the author focused on the methods used in oral error correction that students preferred and how is the correction expressed? (Alternatively, how does the teacher correct students?)

The author investigated two classes, K11NNA1 and K11NNA2. The English levels of students are completely different, some students are excellent while some are fair or bad. In the school year of 2021-2022, students are studying the subject "TOURISM ENGLISH 2".As the lecturer of those classes, the author focused on correcting students' oral errors using different techniques, even though there was not enough time to correct all errors in the classes.

2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate students' perceptions towards methods used in oral error correction in English classes at the University of Phan Thiet. By investigating techniques of correction, the researcher will suggest some solutions for improving teaching and learning speaking more effectively.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will answer the following question in order to fulfill its intended goal:
What are the perceptions of students at the University of Phan Thiet on oral error technique? And how is the correction expressed? (Alternatively, how does the teacher correct students?)

4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study will be limited to documenting the phenomenon of oral error correction in two third -year English classes at the University of Phan Thiet during the second semester of the school year 2021–2022. Due to time constraints, the study won't look at instructors' and administrators' perspectives on oral error correction. Moreover, this study will not address the impact of spoken error correction on instruction and learning EFL.

5. THE STUDY'S CONTRIBUTION

According to the researchers, the findings of this study should help teacher's better grasp what students require. Therefore, teachers will use the research's findings to motivate and encourage students to learn to speak effectively. It is also hoped that the findings will be helpful for teaching English at the University of Phan Thiet.

II. LITRATURE REVIEW

DEFINITION OF ORAL ERROR CORRECTION TECHNIQUE

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to respond to students' errors in oral performance. To understand error correction techniques, the following issues should be defined:

A range of strategies can be applied to address students' oral errors. In order to comprehend correction techniques, in this research, we chose the following issues to answer clearly:

Which method of error correction should be used?

How is the correction expressed? (Alternatively, how does the teacher correct students?)

1. Which method of error correction should be used?

Depending on the particular situation, relationship between teacher and students, stage of teaching, the content of lesson, and the most important aspect: the learner, different learners with different learning styles, the teacher should use an appropriate correction method. There are many types of correction methods. According to Katayama (2007), Harmer (1991), Bartram and Walton (1991), teachers should use one method among the following methods to correct errors, such as explicit correction, recast, clarification request, meta-linguistic clues, gesture, repetition, and echoing.

a. Explicit correction:

According to Harmer (1991) and Katayama (2007), the teacher should clearly indicate the students' sentences were incorrect and then provide the correct response.

Similarly, Ur,P. (1999)also agreed with this method. The teacher should say what was wrong and provide a model of the acceptable version. The author, as well as many teachers, have been using this method because it is clear to understand and it does not take much time. However, teachers should be very careful in applying this method because it might break the main stream of conversation and discourage students at stage of producing language.

b. Clarification request:

Katayama (2007) supposed that when the teacher didn't understand students' utterance or their sentences were not clear enough, they should ask question to show that the sentence was incorrect and order a repetition or reformulation.

In my opinion, when using this kind of correcting, teacher lets students understand that their sentences are not clear, it doesn't mean wrong sentence. Therefore, students have a chance to correct their sentences when repeating the sentences.

c. Meta-linguistic clues:

Katayama (2007) recommended that teachers should provide comments or information concerning errors without providing the correct form. Besides, teachers should explain how to correct the errors.

The author have regularly applied this method in teaching because it helped my students to review their lessons in order to correct themselves. Teachers use hints, links to help their students to come up with appropriate answers.

d. Gesture:

In Bartram, Walton's book, they introduced many interesting techniques, such as using hand, palm, wrist, and finger to indicate the existence of errors. Each teacher has his/her particular creativity in expressing the errors. Even though, there are many interesting gesture methods in teaching in general and in correction in particular, gesture is not familiar to students in many Vietnamese high schools and universities. Teachers should learn more about this method to enrich their teaching methodology, particularly in error correction.

e. Repetition:

This is an effective traditional technique of correction. According to Harmer (1991), Bartram and Walton (1991), teacher just simply asks the student to repeat what he/she has just said by changing intonation or a request with the word "again". Students might understand that their teacher has not heard the students' response or misunderstood. This is a common method that many teachers apply in error correcting because it is easy for students to understand their errors and correct them by themselves.

f. Echoing:

Hamer (1991), Bartram and Walton (1991) mentioned this technique in their book. The teacher repeats what the student has said by using questioning intonation. Actually, this method will bring great results if the teacher uses it flexibly. A teacher can echo in various forms. He/she can echo the complete sentence of the student, but he/she can stress the part of the utterance that was incorrect.

g. Recast:

According to Bartram and Walton (1991), some of the correction methods mentioned above are a kind of traditional method. The teacher has to point out where the errors are and how to correct them. Those techniques will have many long- term disadvantages. Firstly, students might feel frustrated and discouraged. They might become resentment, humiliation, and build resistance to the teacher and the language. Second, while students who made errors are not involved in correcting them and learning a little or nothing, the other students are doing nothing. Finally, although the teacher's talking time is increased, some words and phrases will only have value to a limited number of students.

2. How is the correction expressed?

(Alternatively, how does the teacher correct students?)

Ur,P. (1999) heavily focused on how the correction is expressed. It is as important as a correction. There are many ways to express correction, including gently, assertively, supportively, or as a condemnation, tactfully or rudely. A teacher should not correct errors seriously. Correction brings great results when it is expressed gently, assertively, supportively, and tactfully. Otherwise, correcting causes negative effect, such as students worry about making errors. Therefore, they are afraid of speaking. Gradually, they are losing their confidence.

In summary, students' attitudes toward error correction are greatly affected by the teacher's manner. A positive attitude will reduce students' anxiety and increase their motivation in learning and using language, particularly in speaking.

III.   METHODOLOGY

1. RESEARCH QUESTION

To achieve the objective, this research must answer the following questions:

1. Which method of error correction should be used?

2. How is correction expressed? (Alternatively, how does the teacher correct students?)

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

Because the primary goal of this research was to describe the phenomenon of error correction in English classes, it used a descriptive research design with a questionnaire to gather information during teaching English at classes at the University of Phan Thiet.

3. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in May 2022, the second semester of school year 2001-2002, at the University of Phan Thiet. This year, Tourism English 2 was a compulsory subject, a special English subject, so students have to spend much time on learning English. In performance assessment, individual speaking ability assessment is required. As a result, whenever students practice or present their project, assignment, lecturers have to correct their errors appropriately and efficiently.

4. PARTICIPANTS:

4.1 Participants:

In the Foreign Languages Department of the University of Phan Thiet in the school year of 2021-2022, there are 550 students, of which 145 students are in their third year. However, the researcher chose 96 students in two classes to investigate. This semester, they finished 4 courses in speaking and they are learning Tourism English, in which, speaking skill is one of four skills in special English. Therefore, it is obvious how they perceive oral error correction. For that reason, the researcher investigated these two classes from three classes of third year students. The researcher thought that selecting these students to conduct the study would produce more objective and understandable results.

4.2 Sampling:

The accuracy and reliability of the research will be affected by the sample size. In this research, I used cluster sampling, a method developed by Cohen, L., L. and Morrison K. (2007), in which, select a set number of classes and test every student in those classes. I chose 96 students from two classes of K11NNA1 and K11NNA2 to investigate.

5. INSTRUMENT

There are many advantages of using questionnaires, such as low budget, convenience for students in using their time in class, and standardized results. So, questionnaires were used as a tool for the research in this study.

In this research, the researcher used questionnaires with open-ended questions and likert-scale questions to collect data from participants to investigate their perceptions of the method to correct errors and the manner of teachers when correcting them. The questionnaires with open-ended questions were delivered to all participants. Their answers would be kept confidential.

In order to get information about the participants' perceptions of the method of correction and the behavior of teachers when correcting errors, the researcher employed questionnaires with open-ended and likert-scale questions. All participants received questionnaires with open-ended questions. Their responses will remain private.

5.1. The open-ended questions:

Open-ended questions were used in this research because of their advantages: Firstly, the participants have a variety of options and flexibility in their responses. Secondly, the researcher hoped to receive a variety of potential responses, especially unexpected ones. Finally, open-ended questions might allow researchers to understand the various facets of oral error correction.

5.2. The Likert-scale questions:

The researcher used the likert - scale questions with four dimensions: from strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. In order to overcome the tendency for opinions to be neutral, the researcher employed four likert scales rather than the more frequent five scales. Participants were required to provide their definite opinion.

5.3. The format of the questions:

There were two parts of questions: part 1 with six questions relevant to general information about participants; and part two with the questionnaire relevant to oral error correction. The questionnaires were designed with six questions about methods of correction.

These are the summary tables:

No	Students' attitude	Research tool	Question number
1	Attitude toward method of correction	Likert-scale question	Question 1to 6

Table1: Summary table of instrument tool

Based on the conceptual framework, questionnaires were designed in a detailed format as follows:

No	Students' attitude	Detail Information	Question
1	Method of correction	Explicit correction	Question 1
		Meta-linguistic clues	Question 2
		Gesture	Question 3
		Repetition	Question 4
		Echoing	Question 5
		Recast	Question 6

Table 2: Table of framework of questionnaire

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Analysis of data and discussion of results:

METHODS OF CORRECTION

In terms of students' attitudes towards methods of correction, the results of responses are divided into three categories, including 1) liked methods; 2) neither liked nor disliked methods; and 3) disliked methods.

As shown in table 3, among types of correcting methods, the most favoured method by the majority of students in this study (27% agree and 72% strongly agree) is "the teacher points out errors and explains why responses are incorrect". The second most favoured method of students is "teacher indicates the errors and provides the correct responses". 27% of students agreed and 42% of students strongly agreed with this statement. Results discovered in table 8 showed that the majority of students preferred methods that were clear to students. These preferences could be explained by the fact that students in this study had many difficulties in locating the errors and specifying the method of correcting them.

As can be seen in the table 3, neither liked nor disliked methods that students showed were "teacher repeat my sentence with intonation to help me to recognize my errors and correct by myself (M=2.19; 34% strongly disagree and 38% agree) and "teacher asks me to repeat the sentence with error (M=2.32; 26% strongly disagree,22% disagree and 43% strongly agree). Teachers applied these methods to elicit students to self correct. However, with English proficiency level of students in this study as well as their habit of learning English, they found it ambiguous to recognize their errors. They had no clue to help them in correcting by themselves.

According to table 3, two methods that students most disliked are "teacher gives a hint which draw attention to error and self correct (M=2.18; 28% strongly disagree and 38% disagree) and "teacher points out errors by using gesture such as hand, finger, body, etc. (M=2.07; 43% strongly disagree and 10% disagree). These methods were not preferred by many students because they found the teacher's gesture or implication is unclear. They had difficulties in understanding what the teacher implied or how to correct their error. In contrast, there were still fewer students 43% agreed and 3% strongly agreed that "teacher points out the errors by using the gesture". Similarly, fewer students 28% agreed and 12% strongly agreed that "teacher gives me a hint which draws attention to error and self correct". The different preferences of fewer students in this study because they found interesting in discovering and correcting their errors.

TABLE 3: ATTITUDE TOWARD METHODS OF CORRECTION

ITEM	No	STRONGLY DIAGREE 1 %	DISAGREE 2 %	AGREE 3 %	STRONGLY AGREE 4 %	MEAN	SD
1. I want the teacher to indicate the errors and provide the correct response.	96	0.1	0.2083	0.2708	**0.4167**	3	1.03
2. I want the teacher to point out my errors and explain why my response is incorrect.	96	0	0.0104	0.2708	**0.7188**	3.71	0.48
3. I want the teacher to point out my errors by using gestures, such as hand, finger, body, etc.	96	**0.43**	0.1042	**0.4375**	0.0313	2.07	1
4. I want the teacher to ask me to repeat the sentence with an error.	96	0.26	0.2292	**0.4375**	0.0729	2.32	0.95
5. I want the teacher to repeat my sentence with intonation to help me recognize my errors and correct them by myself.	96	**0.34**	0.1979	**0.3854**	0.0729	2.19	1
6. I'd like the teacher to give me a hint that will draw my attention to an error and allow me to correct it on my own.	96	0.28	**0.3854**	0.2083	0.125	2.18	0.98

2. Findings

In contrast to other studies, students in this research preferred correction methods which were direct and clear to help students easily recognize their errors and understand explanation of the teacher such as " the

teacher should indicate the errors and provide the correct response" or "the teacher should point out errors and explain why response is incorrect". For students in this study, the teacher should avoid using correction method which might lead to ambiguous or confused, such as teacher should point out errors by using gesture such as hand, finger, body, etc.

V.   CONCLUSION

1.   Conclusion and suggestion

The researcher at the University of Phan Thiet looked into how students perceived the methods for correcting oral errors in this study. As a research technique, the researcher used questionnaires that included both open-ended and likert-scale questions. These yielded a wealth of insightful findings that were reported in Chapter 4. As a result of the data analysis, discussion, and study conclusions, teachers and the researcher in particular will have a deeper understanding of students' needs and expectations. The study's findings have some following implications, according to the researcher.

Although there are numerous error correction methods, teachers must understand and apply the appropriate method in error correction based on the goal of the lesson, student characteristics, level, and situation. For students at the University of Phan Thiet, the teachers should indicate errors to students directly. An indirect method or using a hint might cause students to feel ambiguous and misunderstand. After indicating the error, the teacher should provide the explanation and correct response. A teacher should not let students feel unclear or more complicated.

2.   Limitation of the study and recommendation for further study:

This study has some restrictions relating to participant count, aspect of correction, and correlation between correction method and teaching outcome due to time and project scope constraints. The researcher offers suggestions for further research based on each study constraint.

First, it's the two classes in the Foreign Language Department's Foreign Language Department's limited enrollment due to time constraints. As a result, the study's findings do not accurately reflect how the University of Phan Thiet students feel about correcting speech errors. More students from the University of Phan Thiet's other departments should be included in the further study.

Second, a questionnaire was the only research technique employed in this study. Additional research should employ more research tools, such as interviewing and observation. With the aid of these study methods, researchers will be able to obtain a more precise and vivid image of speech error correction at the University of Phan Thiet.

Finally, the study did not look into the relationship between the oral error correction technique and the outcomes of the speaking instruction given to students at the University of Phan Thiet. To better understand the relationship between the aforementioned factors and the influence of oral error correction and instruction, researchers should further explore this relationship.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRES

PART 1
PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION
Please stick (X) or write appropriate answers in the space provided:
1.   Name:………………..
2.   Gender: □ male   □ female
3.   Age   :
4.   Year of learning English: □ under 5 years□ over 5 years □ over 10 years
5.   I want to improve my English in speaking skill: □ yes   □ no
6.   I want my errors in speaking English to be corrected: □ yes   □ no

PART 2
QUESTIONS
Direction: Please read the following statements and questions, from item number 1 to 7, please stick (x) to the most appropriate choice. For question 7 that requires information, please write it down in the space provided.

(SD: strongly disagree; D: disagree; A: agree; SA: strongly agree;)

Question number	Statement	SD	D	A	SA
		1	2	3	4
	Method of correction				
1	"I want the teacher to indicate the errors and provide the correct response." (e.g. "Do' is wrong, you should say ' did")				
2	"I want the teacher to point out my errors and explain why my response is incorrect." (Student: Yesterday, I watch an excited film, The Walking Dead, on HBO channel. Teacher: "Watch" is a present tense verb, you need a past tense verb in your sentence.)				
3	"I want the teacher to point out my errors by using gestures, such as hand, finger, body, etc." (e.g when students make error, teacher show his/her finger or shake his/her head)				
4	"I want the teacher to ask me to repeat the sentence with error." (e.g. T: Please say that again)				
5	"I want the teacher to repeat my sentence with intonation to help me recognize my errors and allow me me to correct it on my own." (e.g Student; Flight VN210 go to Hanoi?" Teacher can echo part of sentence "Flight VN210 go to Hanoi?", the intonation emphasizes on "go")				
6	"I'd like the teacher to give me a hint that will draw my attention to an error and allow me to correct it on my own." e.g. S: I watch an interesting film on Sunday night. T: What? Every Sunday night? S: No, no, I watched…				

7.   Do you have any suggestions concerning oral error correction (method of correction and how to correct it)? Please give the reason.

……………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your contribution.