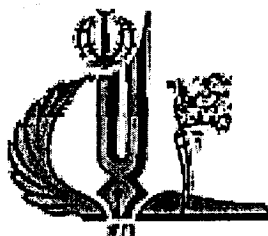


In The Name of God

1 ΕΞΟΥΣΙΑ - Υ.Κ.Υ.Α.Σ.



۱۳۸۹/۱/۱۰

University of Tabriz

Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages

English Language Department

Thesis:

**Submitted in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching (ELT)**

Entitled:

**The Effects of Explicit Correction and 'Negotiation of Form' on
Linguistic Accuracy of Iranian Adolescent EFL Learners**

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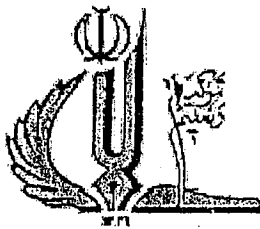
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۱۳۸۹/۱/۱۰

Handwritten signature or stamp

January 2010

۱۳۸۹/۱/۱۰



دانشگاه تبریز

دانشکده ادبیات فارسی و زبانهای خارجی

گروه زبان انگلیسی

پایان نامه

برای دریافت درجه کارشناسی ارشد در رشته آموزش زبان انگلیسی

عنوان

تأثیر بازخورد مستقیم و تعامل دستوری بر صحت گفتار زبان آموزان نوجوان ایرانی

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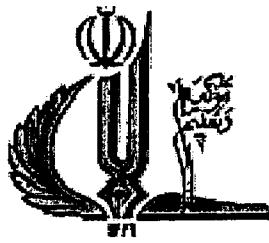
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۱۴۴۷۲۴



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We hereby recommend that the thesis by Hasan Mohamadi

Entitled:

**The effects of explicit correction and negotiation of form on
linguistic accuracy of Iranian adolescent EFL learners**

**Be accepted in the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
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Dedicated to

My teachers

And my beloved family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Ali Akbar Ansarin who honored me to his supervision of my study, who was of abundant help and inspiration during different stages of doing the research. Equally, I would also like to express my gratitude to prof. Masoud Rahimpour, the honorable advisor who provided me with encouragement to proceed with the study. Moreover, I owe a great deal to Dr. Farahman Farrokhi for his kind cooperation as the examiner of this study.

I am also grateful to Dr. Torabi, Dr. Yaghobi Notash and Mr. Adalat who spared no effort in encouraging me during my study. I also express my appreciation to my classmates, friends and university staff Mr. Mahmodi, Mr. Yousefi, Mr.Khanzadeh and Mrs Razavi to name just a few. Finally I gratefully acknowledge the directors of Mehre Aein and Gouya language institutes, Mr Ezati, Mr.Aeini and Mr. Zarin for letting me conduct my study in their institutes.

Name: Hasan	Surname: Mohamadi
Title of the Thesis: The Effects of Explicit Correction and Negotiation of Form on Linguistic Accuracy of Iranian Adolescent EFL Learners	
Supervisor: Dr. Ali Akbar Ansarin	Advisor: Prof. Masoud Rahimpour
Degree: Master of Arts	Major: English Language Teaching
University: University of Tabriz	Date of Graduation: 2010
Faculty: Persian Literature & Foreign Languages	Number of Pages: 125
Key Words: Interactional feedback, explicit correction, negotiation of form, accuracy	
<i>ABSTRACT</i>	
<p>The relationship between various types of feedback and second language learning has been the focus of much recent research. Studies have examined the type and effectiveness of explicit correction and ‘negotiation of form’ in a range of different contexts. However, relatively little research has been done on early teenagers, despite the fact that they are one of the biggest groups of language learners in Iran. In the current study, we explored the possible effect of explicit correction and negotiation of form on early adolescent’s L2 development in a pretest/posttest design. Forty-two male adolescent ESL learners at the lower- intermediate level carried out communicative tasks that provided contexts for targeted form (English question formation). The participants interacted in the classroom with the teacher who also had the role of the researcher. During five weeks-15thirty minute-sessions, the interactional group ($N=21$) received negotiation of form in response to their non-targetlike production of question forms, while the explicit group ($N=21$) interacted and received immediate explicit feedback. At the end of the fifth week the posttests were administered. Independent sample T-Test was used to analyze the data. Results showed that the interactional group improved more than the explicit group in terms of English question formation.</p>	

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction

1.0. Introduction

Observation in some English language classrooms in Iran, makes it clear that the teacher –as the sole source of information in most classrooms- uses some corrective strategies that seem to be easy in his/her eyes but might not turn out to be effective for most of the language learners. For instance, the teacher himself or herself usually corrects the errors of the learners immediately, occasionally dismisses them and at times feigns understanding and lets the classroom interaction go on. In this way he or she may provide little or no opportunity for the students to do the correction themselves. Therefore, I became interested in the ways that teachers might provide interactional strategies and negotiation for the language learners on their non-targetlike utterances in the classroom context, with the hope that they can raise the students' awareness and the learners themselves repair their own erroneous or non-targetlike utterances.

1.1. Background of the study

Just as it is interesting to explore the nature of feedback provided by different interlocutors, it is important to assess whether learners make different use of that feedback depending on how these corrective strategies are provided. Some studies have attempted to differentiate among feedback types in interesting ways, such as whether or not feedback includes the target form (Gass,1997; White, & Spada, 1991, cited in Mackey, Oliver & Leeman, 2003) and whether or not feedback enhances the salience of target forms (Lyster &Ranta, 1997).

Given the hypothesized importance of pushing learners to modify their non-targetlike production (Pica, 1992; Swain, 1985, 1995, cited in Lyster,1998) and the key role that instructors

or teachers may play in providing “modified output” for SL learners , combining and operating both of them are of great importance. There is some empirical evidence that some types of feedback seem to promote modified output whereas other types limit the opportunity for and appropriacy of self-modification (Lyster, 1998; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Oliver, 1995, 2000), another way to classify various types of feedback is to consider whether or not the feedback provides opportunity to self- repair and modified utterances.

Research and theorizing focused on the effects of interactional feedback and ‘negotiation of form hardly exists, the main problem is that ‘negotiation of form’ has rarely been distinguished from overt correction and from more implicit forms of negative feedback. Lyster and Ranta (1997) argued that encouraging language learners to self-repair their formal errors through ‘negotiation of form’ may be important in language learning for at least two reasons: First, negotiations of form allow opportunities for learners to automatize the retrieval of their target language knowledge. Second, when language learners themselves generate repair, they draw on their own resources and thus actively confront errors in ways which may lead to revisions of their hypothesis about the target language. Swain (1995) pointed to another way in which “negotiation of form” may take shape in learners’ joint hypothesizing about the forms and structures of the target language.

In comparison with the research on negotiation and recast, the empirical body of evidence on the effect of overt correction is more substantial. However, the results are inconclusive (Chaudron, 1988;, cited in Panova & Lyster,2002) DeKeyser, 1993). They argue that overt corrections are not necessary for language acquisition in an absolute sense. Whether they facilitate smooth and rapid acquisition remains an open question.

In a review of research on overt correction in instructional setting, Lyster and Ranta (1997) concluded that research has come hardly any closer to knowing the answer to the deceptively

simple questions Hendeickson (1978, cited in Lyster and Ranta, 1997 & Han,2002) started with 30 years ago: should learner's errors be explicitly corrected? And which errors should be corrected, when should this happen, who should do it, and how should they be corrected? With regard to "how" one crucial question is whether the acquisition of formal aspects of the target language can be more efficiently promoted through 'negotiation of meaning or form' than by means of overt correction.

In both traditional L1 and L2 classrooms, individual language learners receive a limited number of speaking turns, partly because in most classrooms a large number of language learners have to share speaking turns. To an even greater extent, the teacher's interactional behavior is determinant in this respect. Especially in classrooms in which the teacher monopolizes the discourse and in which the information predominantly flows in one direction (i.e., from the teacher to the learners), the less assertive and less proficient learners receive minimal output opportunities.

In providing feedback to the learner, teachers have been inconsistent and unpredictable Chaudron (1988, cited in Kim, 2003). Furthermore, they fail to realize the full range of feedback types. In particular, language learners are rarely pushed through 'negotiation of form or meaning' (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Van den Branden, 1995, cited in Van den Branden, 1997). When a student fails to provide a correct answer, within a few seconds, or gives an incorrect or incomprehensible answer, chances are small that the teacher will push this student toward producing a more comprehensible, complete or correct reply. Instead the teacher far more likely switches to another student, or simply provides the correct answer at once.

Teachers may have multiple reasons for rarely 'pushing learners to self-modify their output: they want to move on with the lesson, they want to save the student's face and avoid pushing them on the spot, they want to maintain a proper balance of power and so on. Moreover,

some teachers view 'negotiation on learner's output as time-consuming, embarrassing (for students), inefficient and inappropriate.

For more pushing and negotiation to occur in the classroom, the attitudes, roles and responsibilities of all participants in the instructional process require firm adjustment; teachers and students should not interpret negotiation and interactional strategies as repair of imperfect or failed communication but rather as an important component of learning experience Van den Branden, (1995, cited in Van den Branden, 1997).

1.2 . Significance of the study

As noted earlier, proponents of the interaction hypothesis of L2 acquisition (Gass, 2003; Long, 1996; Pica, 1994, cited in Iwashita, 2001) have argued that interaction that pushes learners to modify their output in response to an interlocutor's negative feedback may facilitate L2 development of some linguistic forms. This type of interaction brings together input features e.g., negative feedback, internal learner capacities, e.g., attention, and language output. Because of the potential benefits of interactional feedback, this study has attempted to examine whether it is available to learners in different interactional contexts.

On the other hand, there are some researchers who attach high importance to explicit feedback. Among others are (Loewen and Erlam, 2006; Leeman, 2003; and Carrol & Swain, 1993). They argue that most of the indirect forms of feedback do not locate an error. In contrast, explicit types of feedback not only make the corrective force clear to the learner but also give clues to the exact location of the error.

The purpose of the present study is to build on previous research by identifying whether both negative feedback and learners' responses to that feedback are predictive of ESL question development. English question formation was selected for the following reasons: a) questions are complex structures that are readily elicited and likely to be affected by interaction, b) different

question forms are present at all stages of learning, c) empirical support for the developmental stages is relatively robust and, d) developmental stages allow researchers to assess and control learners' readiness to acquire certain forms (Mackey & Philp, 1998).

1.3 Definitions of key terms and concepts

This study is concerned with the role of different types of corrective feedback in EFL classrooms and their possible effect on linguistic accuracy of young learners. To this end, a collection of terms and concepts have been used that demands definition and explanation.

The most salient term is feedback which contains information or questions related to well-formedness of students' utterances (Lightbown & Spada, 2003). Another related term is *corrective feedback* which Ellis et.al, (2006) define as follows:

Corrective feedback takes the form of responses to learners' utterances that contain an error. "The responses can consist of a) identification of an error that has been committed b) the provision of correct target form c) metalinguistic information about structure of the error or any combination of these strategies.

(p.340)

In the current study, feedback has been categorized to two main categories; explicit correction and negotiation of form.

Explicit correction; this is a type of feedback in which the teacher clearly indicates that what the student has said is incorrect and the teacher supplies the correct form (Lyster & Mori, 2006).

Negotiation of form is a kind of indirect corrective feedback in which the interlocutor tries to 'push' the other toward producing a formally more correct or appropriate utterance (Lyster, 1998).

Interactional feedback refers to negotiation and modification strategies such as repetition, clarification requests, confirmation checks and metalinguistic comments which are directed to learners to facilitate understanding (Nassaji, & Fotos, 2004).

Interactional feedback has also been approached from two aspects, that is, “negotiation of form” and “negotiation of meaning”. The current study is mainly about “negotiation of form”, *Accuracy* is a key term that is often used in this study. Accuracy is defined as the degree to which learner’s linguistic performance conforms to the rules of target language and is appropriate for the purpose it is employed (Yuca and Ellis, 2003).

1.4 Organization of the study

In addition to CHAPTER ONE, *Introduction*, in which background and significance of the study and key terms and concepts are defined, this thesis is composed of four other chapters.

CHAPTER TWO: *Review of the related literature*

- 1) elaborates on theoretical stance on the role of corrective feedback in SLA
- 2) discusses the role of classroom interaction and negotiation on the FL development
- 3) reviews the notion of interactional feedback
- 4) sheds light on explicit feedback and teacher’s inconsistency and unpredictability in error correction
- 5) enumerates some conditions and problems in providing feedback

CHAPTER THREE; *Methodology*

- 1) lists variables included in the study
- 2) Introduce the subjects (participants) of the study
- 3) describes the instructional materials used in the study

- 4) outlines the characteristic of the data
- 5) elaborates on the procedures used in the study

CHAPTER FOUR: *Data analysis, results and discussion*

- 1) uses the necessary tables and figure to present the results and findings of the data analysis
- 2) Interprets the tables and figures to shed light on the results
- 3) Discusses the results and research question

CHAPTER FIVE: *Conclusions and pedagogical implications*

- 1) discusses the conclusions of the study
- 2) enumerates the limitations that the study has confronted
- 3) discusses the pedagogical implications of the study and
- 4) provides some suggestions for further research