

Abstract

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An Action Research Study Examining Teachers' and Learners' Beliefs regarding Oral Corrective Feedback: Exploring the Relation between Training and Teachers' Provision of Oral Corrective Feedback in the Language Classroom

In the language classroom, the majority of learners regard the teacher as the principal source of knowledge. Learners rely on their teachers to provide them with the target language norms and to deal with their erroneous language utterances, through providing oral corrective feedback (OCF), during interaction within the language classroom. This study examined teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding the use of OCF, and explored the potential influence of OCF training on teachers' beliefs and provision of OCF during teacher-student classroom interaction. Set in the tertiary level in Egypt, the current investigation examined intermediate EFL Egyptian students' beliefs on OCF. At the onset of each of three data collection cycles, quantitative data were gathered using a questionnaire and qualitative data were compiled through focus groups. Five Egyptian English language teachers participated in the study, each teaching a class of first year students. Teachers' beliefs and provision of OCF were examined prior to commencing the training process using one-to-one interviews and classroom observations. To investigate how OCF training influenced the five participants' beliefs and teaching practices throughout the course of the intervention, qualitative data were collected using stimulated recalls, reflective e-journals, interviews and classroom observations. Learners' beliefs were probed once again through post-intervention focus groups to examine any changes that could be linked to their teachers' in-class provision of OCF throughout the 6-week training process. Analysis of the pre-intervention data demonstrated that both teachers and learners valued the role of OCF as an integral part of classroom interaction. However, the majority of students reiterated past classroom experiences citing lack of OCF negative affective effects concerning how feedback was provided by their teachers. As for the five teachers, various degrees of incongruency between beliefs and OCF practices transpired through data analysis. In addition, there was an apparent lack of familiarity with OCF techniques, especially among the less experienced teachers. Data gathered throughout the intervention indicated a development in teachers' knowledge and classroom practice, as regards the provision of the OCF, in relation to the training process. Analysis of the post-intervention focus groups indicated a more positive outlook on students' part concerning their teachers' approach to the correction of oral errors. The current investigation contributes to the growing field of OCF research by exploring both teachers' and learners' voice. Findings highlight the importance of focusing on the under researched area of OCF training and suggest potential benefits for incorporating this training component in mainstream teacher training and teacher development programmes.