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Teachers' Practices and Students' Perceptions on Feedback

Prácticas de los profesores y percepciones de los estudiantes sobre la retroalimentación

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ABSTRACT

This article presents ideas on Teachers' Practices and Students' Perceptions on feedback. The main objective of this study was to explore the practices of providing feedback in the semester classes of Master's in English Education. It has tried to find out the perceptions of the students on the role of feedback in their learning. Case study research design was used in this study. To meet the set objectives, 2 teachers and 4 students from M.Ed. first semester, Department of English Education, Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus were selected using purposive sampling strategy. Open-ended questionnaire and observation were used as the main tools for eliciting the required information. Besides, researcher's own diary and experiences were used to take notes of specific cases which were not included in the observation. From the analysis of data and interpretation of the results, it was found that the teachers practiced correcting as the common way of providing feedback to the students. Similarly, the students perceived feedback as an information provided to the learners with the objective of improving their performance. They said that feedback played a constructive and catalytic role in their learning. Teachers' feedback worked as a motivation tool in the process of teaching and learning.

Keywords: feedback; reinforcement; effective Teaching and Learning; output.

RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta ideas sobre las Prácticas de los Profesores y las Percepciones de los Estudiantes sobre la retroalimentación. El objetivo principal de este estudio fue explorar las prácticas de proporcionar retroalimentación en las clases semestrales de la Maestría en Educación en Inglés. Se ha intentado descubrir las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre el papel de la retroalimentación en su aprendizaje. Se utilizó un diseño de investigación de estudio de caso en este estudio. Para cumplir con los objetivos establecidos, se seleccionaron 2 profesores y 4 estudiantes del primer semestre de M.Ed., del Departamento de Educación en Inglés del Campus Múltiple Gramin Adarsha, utilizando una estrategia de muestreo intencional. Se utilizaron un cuestionario de preguntas abiertas y la observación como principales herramientas para obtener la información requerida. Además, se utilizaron el diario y las experiencias propias del investigador para tomar notas de casos específicos

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que no se incluyeron en la observación. A partir del análisis de datos y la interpretación de los resultados, se encontró que los profesores practicaban la corrección como la forma común de proporcionar retroalimentación a los estudiantes. De manera similar, los estudiantes percibían la retroalimentación como una información proporcionada a los aprendices con el objetivo de mejorar su rendimiento. Dijeron que la retroalimentación jugaba un papel constructivo y catalizador en su aprendizaje. La retroalimentación de los profesores funcionaba como una herramienta de motivación en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: retroalimentación; refuerzo; enseñanza y aprendizaje efectivos; resultado.

Introduction

Feedback, in a general sense, refers to the process of informing one's performance and helping for further improvement. It is an information about the action which may help to know about the action and its further betterment. According to Hattie & Yates (2014), "Feedback is information allowing a learning to reduce the gap between what is evident currently and what could or should be the case. It is an information provided by an agent with respect to one's performance or understanding" (p.81). It means feedback is provided so that one can do better in the days to come. Winnie and Butler (1994) argue, "Feedback is information with which a learner can confirm, add to, overwrite, tune or restructure information in memory, whether that information is domain knowledge, metacognitive knowledge, beliefs about self and tasks, or cognitive tactics and strategies". This definition focuses on the cognitive aspect of the learner. Feedback provided by the teacher helps to know the learners about the nature of the information. In the same way, Hyland & Hyland (2006) state that, in the process-based classroom, it is seen as an important developmental tool moving learners through multiple drafts towards the capability for effective self-expression. That means feedback can work as an important tool for making learners self-expressive. They can think on their own or they can reflect on their work after the feedback is provided to them.

Teaching learning is a very challenging job. It involves the two parties: teacher and the students. The job of teacher is not merely teaching the students. Rather he/she can function as a guide, feedback provider, corrector, motivator, counselor and many more for the students (Harmer, 2008). A good teacher should be able to pinpoint the mistakes of the students. Not only this, but one should also be able to provide correct feedback to his students so that the students can improve further. In the practice of language teaching, teachers support students in verbal, written and non-verbal forms. They may correct their responses or simply acknowledge them. This act of support is taken as feedback.

Feedback helps in the effective learning of the students but this can be measured only through the outcomes. Feedback should be provided to the students so that they can bring change in their performance. What a student did and what he or she can do with the feedback provided by the teachers is the main concern of providing feedback to the students. Feedback has crucial role for encouraging and consolidating learning.

Nevertheless, the feedback may have both the negative and the positive impact on the learners. In the same way, Hattie & Timperley (2007) take feedback as one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement but the type of feedback and the way it is given can be differently effective. In the process of teaching and learning, the teacher provides feedback to the students so that they can be familiar with their mistakes and learn from them. Since feedback plays an important role in developing competencies to the students, I was quite interested to observe the practice of teachers for providing feedback and students' perceptions on its role.

Feedback in the Semester System

Semester system of MEd in education is entirely based on interaction mode of classroom delivery. Regular attendance, assessment, presentation and interaction have become a common trend of semester system. In such a mode of delivery, teachers provide constant feedback to the students after their presentations, assessments and projects. As a part of assessment, the students of semester need to carry out different assignments. In my own experience of being the teacher of semester, I myself used to receive oral and written feedback from my students sometimes. I also used to get the verbal praise of the students in my performance. Sometimes, they used to appreciate my work as well. In the same way, I used to get the feedback from my peers as well in my classroom presentation. I also provided them the feedback in their presentations.

Do the teachers provide feedback in the assignment of the students? If they do, what techniques do they use for providing the feedback to the students in their assignments? What types of feedback do they practice in their classrooms? Are the students improving their performance after the feedback that they are provided? How the feedback in semester system is being practiced is the main concern of this study. Feedback is an essential part of teaching learning process. Unless the feedback is provided to the students, we cannot expect the necessary improvements in their learning. So, this study was based on finding out the practice of feedback in teaching English language in semester system and how it is being implemented in the process of learning a language and what role does it have in the learning of the students.

Statement of the Problem

Feedback is one of the crucial aspects of teaching and learning process. It is important in order to make the necessary improvements in learning. It can have positive impact in the construction of ideas to the students of teaching and learning. So, it cannot be neglected. Feedback is taken as the most influential activity of language teaching. There are more theoretical ideas about it. For example, Harmer (2008) has talked about the feedback that can be provided in oral and the written works of the students. He has also talked about the different techniques for providing feedback. Focusing on the role of feedback, he says that most of the students expect feedback on their performance from their teachers. Similarly, Hyland & Hyland (2006) acknowledge the importance of feedback in second language writing. Likewise, Petchprasert (2012) has talked about the impacts of feedback in second language learning and has focused on the role of feedback for motivation in second language learning. However, the practice and the role of it in language teaching has not been studied so far in our context of language teaching.

Khaniya (2014) states that semester system involves focused attention of the teachers and students on teaching and learning and it makes classroom more organized and interactive. Semester system has been implemented in Tribhuvan University which is based on the modality of presentation through the use of power-point, assessment, regular attendance and classroom presentation. In my experience too, teachers provided feedback on assignments, presentations and make attempts for answers. These all led me to create interest in this study. So, I have addressed how teachers are providing feedback to the students, how students perceive the feedback and how they are benefitted from the feedback provided to them in the classroom interaction of pedagogic system. To be specific, the major issues stated throughout this work include: Do teachers provide feedback in different ways to the students? Do they mostly use written or oral feedback? In what forms do they provide feedback to the students? In which situations are they provided? Is there the trend of providing regular feedback to the students? Is the feedback provided to them working really to motivate students in learning? Or

has it just become the part of assignment? So, this study clearly stated the issue of feedback practice in semester class. Similarly, students can take teachers' feedback in quite different ways. What do they actually think was my another curiosity. So, I took their views on the role of feedback in their learning.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were:

To explore the current practices of providing feedback to the students in English language classrooms,

To uncover the students' perceptions towards the role of feedback in English language learning.

Research Questions

This study was specific to finding out the answers of the following questions:

How have the teachers been providing feedback to their students in the semester system of MEd?

What is the perception of the students towards the role of teachers' feedback?

What types of feedback do they usually receive from their teachers?

How can teachers' feedback help them in their learning process?

Review of literature

The relevant literature on feedback is reviewed considering the following themes and sub-themes.

Theoretical review

Reviewing the existing literature is a never-ending task (Kumar, 2009). It goes along with the study, from the beginning to its end. Literature review has a very crucial place in research. It is necessary for developing a theoretical foundation for the study. It provides the basis for the study. Moreover, literature review also helps us in finding out the gap that exists between the previous and the current knowledge. It helps us in shaping our study by providing theoretical guidelines as well as by improving the research methodology. It also helps us to contextualize our findings with the existing body of knowledge.

Feedback in Language Learning

Teaching learning activity is a two-way process which involves teacher and the students. Both of the parties have the responsibilities on their own. The teacher is such a person who has the responsibility of making the students understand whatever he or she teaches. And the students are also responsible for their learning. To my understanding, feedback is any input for revision. Feedback works as an input which helps for revising and revisiting the performance so that one may know where the improvement is necessary. It provides an opportunity for looking back to one's own performance. It is one of the important and inevitable aspects that related stakeholders need to consider in the process of teaching and learning.

Feedback, according to Kepner (1991), is any procedure used to inform a learner whether an instructional response is right or wrong. Feedback provides an information about whether the response that the students give is right or wrong. If it is right, feedback is provided in the

form of praise or encouragement and if it is wrong, feedback is provided in such a way that the students find the ways for improving it. Similarly, Ur (1996) defines feedback as the information that is given to learners about their performance of learning task usually with the objective of improving their performance. This definition of feedback also focuses on the improvement of the learners' performance. Feedback is supposed to improve the performance or action of the performers. It is central to developing learners' competence and confidence. It is supposed to encourage the learners, reflect on the performance, learn from it and make changes for better learning. The effective teaching learning demands effective feedback from the side of the teachers. Feedback demonstrates the skill of the teachers as well. Moreover, providing mere feedback is not sufficient. There should be the desirable change in students' performance after providing feedback to them.

Feedback is closely related to motivation (Petchprasert, 2012). It motivates the students by allowing them to know about their performance. In this regard, Gass & Selinker (2008) further say that motivation is a predictor of success in L2 learning. Therefore, the individuals who are motivated will learn the language to a faster and greater degree.

Types of Feedback

Generally, feedback can be of following three types:

Oral and Written feedback

Oral feedback is given in oral aspects of language as pronunciation, stress, intonation and pitch (Wajnry 1990, as cited in Pokhrel, 2016). Oral correction is usually the direct correction of the teacher. Doughty & Long (2003) assert that recast in oral work is the effective way of providing feedback. That means, repeating the correct version of the utterance helps in the improvement of the learners. Written feedback is provided in a written mode. The teacher may write the comments or the notes to the students to provide feedback. It, especially, helps in developing the writing proficiency of the students.

Immediate and Delayed feedback

On the basis of timing, feedback can be provided immediately after the students' response or later. Immediate feedback is provided immediately or on the spot where the mistake is pointed whereas delayed feedback is provided after a certain period of time of the performance. But the teacher should wait for the right time to provide feedback to the students so that the desired improvements can be seen. If the teacher provides feedback to the students during their performance or immediately after their performance, it can be the example of immediate feedback. And if the teacher provides the written comments on the assignment of the students, it can be the example of delayed feedback.

Positive and Negative feedback

On the basis of the effectiveness, feedback is divided into two types as positive and negative feedback. Positive feedback generally motivates the learners towards learning. It is encouraging and entertaining to the learners. On the other hand, negative feedback, generally demotivates or discourages the learners. So, usually, providing negative feedback to the students is discouraged. For example, if the teacher says, "No, it is wrong. It is like this". It can be taken as the instance of negative feedback. And if the teacher says, "Very Good", it can be the instance of positive feedback.

Types of Feedback by NEALS

Feedback can be of different types. Different scholars have discussed the types of feedback in their own ways. A report submitted by NEALS (2015) has enlisted the following types of feedback:

Oral and Written Feedback

Oral feedback usually occurs during the time of task. Though it is less formal, it may function as an effective tool for the improvement of the students' learning. It can be provided in a teachable moment in an appropriate way. For example, a teacher acknowledges the students' response with his verbal clarification as an instance of feedback. On the other hand, written feedback is generally given after a task. It is the record of where the students are and where they need to reach. Written feedback works as best if it is provided on time in an appropriate manner (Hyland, 2003).

Feedback During and After Learning

Feedback during learning helps students to take immediate step of improvement in learning. It is more effective and productive to the learning process. If the teacher interrupts in the middle of the performance and gives oral clarification, then it can be taken as the example of feedback during learning. On the other hand, feedback after learning is provided after the task which is very often said that it is not applied by the students in their learning as they need to remember it and transform it into advice. Very good students can apply it but the struggling students find it very difficult. If the teachers provide written comments to the students, it can be taken as the example of feedback after learning. Both the feedback during learning and feedback after learning should focus on what is being learnt and how students should go about it (NEALS, 2015).

Evaluative and Descriptive Feedback

Evaluative feedback just provides some information about learning but does not provide the information that the students can use for further improvement. It can make the good students feel better and less able students feel worse sometime. Descriptive feedback is linked to the learning that is expected. It expresses faulty interpretations and lack of understanding. It provides students with visible and manageable 'next steps' and helps in taking the responsibility of self-assessing and self-correcting. For example, "Well done!" is the example of evaluative feedback and "That's a good introduction because you have covered the main points we have discussed at the beginning. Now which points do you think you should expand on?" is an example of descriptive feedback (NEALS, 2015).

Informal and Formal Feedback

Informal feedback is related to 'check in'. 'Check in' can quickly and effectively steer students in the right direction. It also occurs when students approach the teachers to seek feedback. Formal feedback, on the other hand, can be provided through structured conference with specific goals. So, conference can be taken as an example of formal feedback. When teachers use formal conferencing along with informal feedback, students are better protected from failure.

Peer and Self-Feedback

Providing feedback in peer can be an effective tool, especially, in the learning where the goal is improvement, not grading. Students get to see each other's work in peer feedback and they can learn from each other. For example, if a friend comments of the performance of the students, it can be taken as the example of peer feedback. On the other hand, self-feedback helps students in self-assessing their work. To make students able to assess themselves is the ultimate goal of feedback for learning.

Significance of Feedback in Language Learning

Feedback, according to Black & William (1988, as cited in Harmer, 2008), has more effect on achievement than any other single factor. It is, according to them, at the 'heart of teaching'. Feedback plays a significant role in teaching learning process. Especially, for motivating the students towards their learning, it is necessary. It can function as an effective tool for making the learners learn efficiently. Moreover, it may also help in making the teachers aware of their action. Giving feedback is wrongly associated with error correction. It is because feedback is provided for the correction of the errors with the purpose of making further improvement. Feedback is seen as a crucial part of learning. It is like building the bridges for effective learning. Feedback helps teachers in praising their students' language use. It gives additional opportunities to focus on production or comprehension.

Feedback helps to shape students' learning and performance. Feedback is important because it provides the opportunities to close the gap between what exists and what is desired. It helps in self-assessment and self-correction. Learners need feedback to know that they are making progress in using second language in more target-like ways. Krashen & Seliger (1975, as cited in Nicholas, Lightbown & Spada, 2001) observed that the two characteristics common to all L2 teaching methods that they had examined were discrete point presentation and feedback on error. Whatever, providing constructive feedback is necessary for the students to let them know that they are making progress in their learning. Nicol & Dick (2006) present the following points focusing upon the importance of feedback in language teaching: helps to clarify what good performance is; facilitates the development of self-assessment in learning; delivers high quality information to the students about their learning; encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning; and provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance.

Therefore, feedback helps the learners for reflecting themselves upon their tasks. It also motivates them towards learning. Moreover, it helps to achieve the desired goals. Not only this, feedback may be useful to the teachers as well as it helps in shaping his/her teaching according to the need. Effective implementation of a feedback is a must. Merely providing feedback is not sufficient for learning a language in a better way. It may not bring the desired outcomes. Instead, there should be the effective implementation of it. For its effective implementation, efforts should be made from both the sides of teachers and students. The feedback that is provided by the teachers should be understandable by the learners. It should be presented in such a way that the students understand and use them, and it should encourage students and help them to know how they can improve further. The teacher can give sincere praise in a specific area of development. Effective feedback is provided in an appropriate setting, focusing on the performance of the students. It is direct and specific and uses non-judgmental language. Effective feedback incorporates the plans for further improvement. However, the relative effectiveness of feedback strategies depends on multiple variables, including the particular aspect of the language being corrected, conditions relating to the provision of teacher corrections, and the characteristics of the students (Ferreira, Moore & Mellish 2007).

Ways of Providing Feedback in Written Work

As we are talking of feedback that is used in teaching learning process, it can be provided in different forms. It can be provided orally or in a written form. It can be provided in the form of praise and appreciation or encouragement. Whatever the form of the feedback be, it should be fruitful to the learners. There are different ways of providing feedback. Harmer (2008) has given the following ways of providing feedback in written work. But the way teachers provide feedback to their students in written work depends on the nature of the text and the effect that they want to create on their students.

Responding

Feedback can be provided to the students' work by responding through e-mail, message, letters, notes or any means. Teachers may respond about what they liked, how they felt and what can be done for further betterment. They may also show alternative way of writing through reformulation to their students' work.

Correcting

Teachers can also provide feedback to the students through different correction codes like, 'S' for spelling error, 'WO' for word order, 'G' for grammatical error, 'WW' for wrong word, 'P' for punctuation error, 'T' for wrong verb sense. Correction can be also done by putting tick for correct forms and underlining the problems.

Training students

Teachers may also provide feedback to their students by training them about the correcting symbols and the codes so that they can understand the teachers' feedback and improve their mistakes accordingly. They should be trained about what the certain codes mean.

Involving students

Students can also be provided feedback through being involved in the process of giving feedback to each other. They may be involved in providing feedback to their colleagues so that they can develop self-assessing ability. Peer feedback has extremely positive effect in learning.

Finishing the Feedback Process

Feedback process is taken to be completed only after the desired changes are seen in the students' work. If the effect is seen positively, then only the teachers can ensure the success of feedback. This will be proved if they can identify their own mistakes and correct them.

Burning the midnight oil

Giving written comments to students' work is time-consuming as well as it may create anxiety on the part of the learners as they see their work covered with corrections. Corrections are given during the marking. In this regard, Lee (2005, as cited in Harmer, 2008) presents the followings points to clarify the amount of marking and the teachers do it: Selective marking, Different error codes and don't mark all the paper.

Involve Students Feedback during Oral Work

The nature of feedback during oral work depends upon the stage of the lesson, type of activity and the mistakes. Harmer (2008) presents the following types of feedback in oral work: Feedback during accuracy work and Feedback during fluency work (p.142).

The distinction between accuracy and fluency work should be made while providing feedback to the learners. The former is more associated with ‘non- communicative’ activities whereas the latter is more associated with ‘communicative’ activities. Communicative activities are designed to improve the language fluency, and the non-communicative activities are designed to ensure correctness in language use. The received view is that when students are involved in accuracy work, it is the part of teachers’ work to make correction- called as ‘teacher intervention’ (Harmer, *ibid*, p. 143).

Feedback during Accuracy Work

Feedback for accuracy can be made in two different stages as.

Showing incorrectness: In this step, the teacher shows students that the mistake has been made, with the aim of making students correct the mistakes themselves. But the techniques applied in this stage are only really beneficial for ‘slips’, not for systematic errors (Harmer, 2008, p.144). Moreover, Harmer has mentioned the following techniques that can be adopted for showing the incorrectness to the students: Repeating, Echoing, Statement and question, Expression, Hinting and Reformulation.

During the accuracy activities, the teacher can repeat the task in order to make the students focus on the error that one has committed. He/she can also pinpoint the mistakes of the students by repeating, emphasizing on the part of the utterance. Similarly, the teacher can also make a statement or a question upon the performance of the students with the purpose of improving it.

Moreover, the teacher can show incorrectness of the performance through facial expression, hints or clues and repetition of the correct version of the sentence that the student has uttered.

Getting it right: If the students are unable to correct the mistakes themselves, then the teacher can tell them the correct form, emphasizing the part that is problematic to the students. They may also explain them the grammatical rule and ask them to repeat the correct version. They may also go for peer correction if the atmosphere is cooperative.

Feedback during Fluency Work

The way teachers provide feedback to their students during their fluency work determines the behavior of the students in the future fluency activities. A teacher should wait for the right time for the correction of errors in students’ fluency works. Lynch (1997, as cited in Harmer, 2008) says, “the best answer to the question of when to intervene in learner talk is: as late as possible”. The following techniques can be adopted for feedback during fluency work:

Gentle correction: reformulating the statement where the role of a teacher is gentler.

Recording mistakes: observing the performance of the students and playing the role of a good observer.

After the event: after the completion of the event or the performance of the students, the teacher may provide feedback to his or her students by writing individual notes to students, recording mistakes with suggestions about where they can look for information about the language-dictionaries, grammar books, Internet.

Feedback can be provided orally in both accuracy work and fluency work. But the teacher should know the right technique and the right time for providing feedback in oral work so that the students get it right.

Methods of the study

Research is a systematic, controlled, valid and rigorous exploration, description and scientific procedure of investigation (Kumar, 2009). And research design is the route or plan or strategy for carrying out any research. It provides the guidelines for carrying out any research and finding the answers to the given questions. For any research to be valid and to reach in a meaningful conclusion, the selection of an appropriate research design is inevitable. In order to understand the teachers' practice of feedback and the perceptions of students towards feedback, this research was based on case study design. The sample population of this study included two teachers and four students of M.Ed. first semester in English Education from Gramin Adarsha Multiple Campus, Kathmandu. The sample was selected by using purposive sampling strategy since I felt that the purpose of my study would be fulfilled through it. The tools for the collection of the data in this study were open ended questionnaire and observation checklist. Besides, I pointed out some specific cases in my own diary. Both the primary and the secondary sources of the data were used in this study. Primary sources of the data were the students of M.Ed. first semester and the teachers teaching to them at the Department of English Education. The secondary sources of the data were the books, journals, articles, dissertations and other published and unpublished materials.

For the collection of required data, at the beginning, I went to the field and clarified about the purpose of my study and took consent of the concerned authorities. Then, I took the permission of the participants for my study. I selected the required number of sample based on purposive sampling. I interviewed and observed with the participants. I also observed the classes of two teachers to find out the real practice of feedback. Lastly, I thanked to the respondents for their help. After collecting the data, I went for analyzing and interpreting the data qualitatively.

Analysis and interpretation

I have made an account of the analysis and interpretation of the data in terms of objectives of my study. The data collected from both primary and secondary sources have been analysed and interpreted here. I have analysed the data inductively. The data collected from classroom observation and the responses from the participants have been analysed and interpreted using qualitative method.

Teachers' Practices of Providing Feedback

In this section, the analysis of the data drawn from the practices of the teachers is presented. The data was collected with the use of observation guideline and my own diary. I observed 2 classes of 2 selected teachers. During the observation of the classes, I mainly focused on the oral feedback inside the classroom and written feedback on the written assignment of the students. Oral feedback, oral comments, compliments and the words of praise and encouragement are given by the teachers in the performance of the students. In the same way, written feedback is regarded as the written comments, correction, suggestions, etc. provided by the teachers in the written assignment of the students.

Feedback in Written Work

To explore the practice of feedback in written work, I observed the written assignments of the students and the written feedback of the teachers on it. Through the observation, it was found that both teachers frequently used correcting as the way of providing feedback to the students. They provided feedback through written comments to the students.

Mode of Feedback

Through the observation of the classes, it was found that most of the times, the teachers made use of oral feedback. They frequently made use of oral feedback in their teaching. In written work, they provided written comments to the students. And as a part of oral feedback, the teacher provided comments and compliments to the students. They encouraged the students with their oral compliments. For example, when the students attempted for the answers of questions, the teachers encouraged them by saying “very good”, “nice try” etc. This shows that oral mode of feedback is mostly used in teaching rather than the written mode. The teachers rarely mixed the modes of feedback. As a part of switching their mode of feedback, they used to provide oral supplement in their written comments in the students.

Techniques Used for Providing Feedback

Teacher correction technique was frequently used for providing feedback to the students. Peer correction and self-correction techniques were rarely practiced by the teachers for the purpose of providing feedback to the students. In my observation of classes, both teachers were not found to be using self-correction or peer correction technique. The teachers themselves made the necessary correction in the error of the students. This means that the teachers in the campus frequently practiced the teacher correction technique for providing feedback to the students. But feedback is seen effective only if the information is gathered from the subject as well as others.

Types of Feedback

Teachers provided feedback in different forms. As mentioned in Mackey (2006), second language acquisition researchers have claimed that feedback provided during conversational interaction facilitates second language (L2) acquisition. During my observation, I found that both teachers mostly used immediate and positive type of feedback in their classes. As an example of positive feedback, one of the teachers said, “well done! Keep it up” when the student attempted for the answers. Immediate feedback was mostly practiced in classroom teaching and learning and delayed feedback was practiced for written work. The study of Upadhyaya (2015) also showed that students were motivated by the use of delayed feedback in writing. Both teachers are practicing immediate and positive types of feedback among the different types.

Forms of Feedback

Another focus of my observation was to find out the different forms of feedback in the classroom. What different forms of feedback do the teachers use inside the classroom during their teaching learning? So, I observed the forms used by them in more careful ways. From the observation of the classes, it was found that both teachers used praise and comments as the forms of feedback. They used different words of praise like “Nice work”, “It is beautiful” to the students in order to provide feedback. This shows that the praise and comments are the common forms of providing feedback to the students.

Situations of Giving Feedback

Situation of feedback, here, refers to different purposes of providing feedback. From the study, it was found both teachers used feedback for checking comprehension of the students inside the classroom and they used feedback for correcting the mistakes of the students in written work. For example, teachers provided feedback to the students to check whether they understood the lesson being taught or not. In the same way, the teachers made use of feedback to the students to correct their mistakes so that they could improve further. It means that the teachers provided feedback for checking comprehension and for correcting the mistakes of the students.

Feedback in Oral Work

Teachers may provide feedback to the students orally both in accuracy work as well as fluency work. I wanted to see the types of work that the teachers mostly focus on while providing feedback orally. From the observed classes, it was found that both teachers provided feedback for developing the accuracy of the students. They rarely provided feedback for fluency work. From the study, it was found that they used repetition for providing feedback in accuracy work of the students. For example, the teachers always corrected the students' errors in written work as well as for the sake of correcting their mistakes in oral work, they made repetition of the utterance. The prior study of Joishi (2012) also found that the teachers used repetition technique for providing feedback to the students. They provide feedback to develop the accuracy of the students.

Teachers' Motivation in Students' Performance

The next objective of my classroom observation was to find out whether the teachers inside the classroom motivate the students or not. It is commonly believed that motivation is also a part of feedback. If they do, how do they motivate them? Because, the more motivated students will learn the language to a faster and greater degree (Gass & Selinker, 2008). From the observation of the classes, it was found that the teachers frequently motivated the students to perform. They frequently responded to the performance of the students and motivated them. The teachers used encouraging words such as "Good job", "Keep it up" to motivate the students. This means that the teachers are frequently motivating students to perform well.

Role of Teachers' Feedback to the Students

Teachers' feedback has a great impact in the learning of the students. The way that the students perceive feedback of the teachers has direct connection with their learning. Being a student of semester, I myself used to receive different types of feedback from my teachers. So, what I believe is that the way students perceive feedback of the teachers count a lot in the learning of the students.

The second objective of this study was to find out the students' perceptions on the role of teachers' feedback in their learning. Since the students are the important part of pedagogic system, the teachers' feedback may encourage them, or they can take the teachers' feedback in different ways. So, I wanted to find out their perceptions on teachers' feedback. The details of the analysis of the open-ended questions are presented as below:

Perceptions on Feedback

Students were asked the question what is your perception on feedback? The responses of the students were various. They viewed feedback as an important element of learning which helps to improve further learning. Some samples of the responses are as follow:

S1 says that in the context of teaching and learning, feedback refers to the information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of learning task, usually with the objective of improving the learning. It shows that feedback has the role of improving the learning of the students and it is an information provided to the learners.

Similarly, S2 says that feedback is an information about reaction to a product, a persons' performance of a task, used as a basis for improvement.

In the similar vein, S3 says that feedback works as a basis for improving the learning of the students.

In the same way, S4 says that feedback is an essential part of effective learning. It is taken as an essential part of teaching learning process.

The above given remarks show that feedback is an information provided to the learners with the objective of improving their performance as well as it is an essential element in the process of teaching and learning.

In addition to above given responses, the students viewed that feedback is the suggestion from others for further improvement, it is like a balanced diet for malnourished child, a kind of reaction to an activity and their results.

In conclusion, feedback is an information for the students about their performance which works as a tool for further improvement. It is an essential part of teaching and learning. Through feedback, the students get an opportunity to look back to their work and improve it.

Role of Teachers' Feedback

Feedback as an information can have a number of benefits. If the students realize the role of feedback, they try to put the feedback in their practice. So, finding out the role of feedback to the students in their own learning was another important concern of my study. For this, I formed a question as, what are the benefits of using feedback in teaching and learning process? Regarding this, the students said that feedback has a constructive role in learning which functions as a motivational tool. Some of the sample responses are as follow:

S1 says that feedback provides motivation for learning, students get opportunities to improve their mistakes on time, encourages learners to learn more, and teaching learning becomes purposeful. And more importantly, it reinforces learning.

From the aforementioned data, feedback functions as a tool for motivation in the learning of the students. It also helps learners in to improve their mistakes.

Similarly, S2 says that feedback improves the task, helps to find out mistakes and errors, and helps to get stimulated in learning.

From the above data, feedback helps in identifying the mistakes of the students which ultimately helps in the improvement of the learners. Based on the given responses, the conclusion can be drawn that feedback has many benefits in teaching and learning. The foremost benefit of feedback is improving learning. It works as a motivating tool in learning. Through feedback, the students may identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Despite these, S3 and S4 said that feedback motivates students, helps to self-asses the work, encourages students to learn more, builds up confidence of the students, and works as a backbone for achieving competency in learning.

Types of Feedback Received

Feedback can be provided in a number of ways. It can be provided orally, in the written form, immediately or delayed and others. What types of feedback do the students usually receive from their teachers was another focus of the study? For this, the students were asked the question what types of feedback do you receive from your teachers? How have they helped in your learning? The students said that they usually receive positive and oral feedback from their teachers. Some of the representative sample of the responses in a given question are presented below:

S1 says that he received both positive and negative feedback from his teachers that helped in his learning. ‘Whenever I make mistakes, my teacher says that, it’s fine but there is a little bit mistake, you should improve it. It motivates me to read and learn more’.

S2 says, ‘I receive both positive and negative feedback. They help in my learning. When I get feedback on the work of doing some presentation, next time, I improve this or I am able to do that well’.

S3 says, regarding feedback that I receive from my teachers, I usually get oral feedback. It helps me a lot in my learning activities. For instance, while I make my first presentation, my teacher points some of my weaknesses and he provides me the feedback as a result, I am able to improve my next presentation. From the above given representative responses of the students, it can be said that the students mostly receive positive, negative and oral feedback from the teachers. It has played a significant role in their learning. The feedback that they receive from their teachers has helped them for improving their learning and it has worked as a motivational tool in their learning.

S4 tells that they get direct and indirect feedback as well. He receives written feedback from their teachers. It is concluded that the students receive both positive and negative feedback from their teachers. They often receive oral feedback from their teachers. It helps them to be motivated in learning and get encouraged. The feedback helps them to find out their weaknesses.

Feedback for the Improvement in Learning

Feedback can also function as a tool for improving the learning of the students. So, to find out the role of feedback in improving learning, the students were asked, how do you think feedback helps in improving your learning? In response to this item, the students expressed different views. From their views, I came to know that feedback helps in learning by paving their way forward.

Some of the representative views of the students are given below:

S1 says that feedback helps to improve our language because I was very poor in speaking skill at the beginning. One teacher gave me some suggestions to improve my speaking then I followed them completely. Finally, I improved my speaking skill very nicely.

S2 says that no doubt, feedback helps in improving our learning. For instances, once, I presented my assignment in front of my colleagues. At that time, I continuously spoke on rather than focusing on interaction. But now, during presentation, I interact with my friends.

S3 says that Feedback is powerful tool for helping students to move forward in their learning. It helps to understand the subject being studied and gives clear guidance on how to improve our learning.

From the excerpts given above, it can be said that the students think that the feedback that they have received from their teachers has helped them to improve their learning by

suggesting them, helping them understand the subject being taught and by providing the clear guidance.

Besides the above given responses, the students also said that feedback creates an internal desire to do something well, motivates or activates inner drive to pursue a course of action and helps in improving their learning. It also develops the feeling of confidence. It helps the students by fulfilling the lack of right information to the students.

Feedback as a Motivational Tool

Feedback plays an important role to create motivation on the part of the learners. So, how can feedback be used as a motivation tool in the process of learning? How do the students perceive the role of feedback was the next concern of my study? For this, the students were asked how can feedback be used as a tool for motivation to your learning? From the various responses of the students, it is concluded that feedback works as a motivational tool, especially, positive feedback in the learning of the students. Some of the representative responses are as follow:

S1 says that feedback can be used as a motivation tool to my learning as it helps to recognize the strengths and weaknesses through which we can improve our learning.

Feedback works as a motivational tool because it helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the learners and ultimately improves learning.

S2 says that feedback can be taken as a tool for motivation in learning which encourages the learners moves them towards progress and learn more.

Feedback also motivates the students by encouraging them towards learning.

S3 says that feedback is obvious that it can be used as a tool for motivation in learning in the sense that feedback gives us information about our capability towards any subject matter. It gives us chance to lessen our weaknesses so that we become motivated towards learning.

From the above given responses of the students, it can be said that feedback functions as the motivational tool in learning as the learners become motivated towards their learning after they know their area of weakness in learning. It also helps the learners to recognize their capabilities after which they get motivated towards learning.

Findings and conclusions

The findings and conclusions of the study are presented as follows:

Findings

The findings derived from the analysis and interpretation of data are presented. The study was intended to identify the practice of feedback in semester system of master's in English education. Moreover, it aimed to find out the perceptions of the students towards the role of feedback in learning. The study included four students of M.Ed. first semester and the two teachers teaching to them as the sample population. Case study research design was used for the study. After the analysis of the collected data, the study has come up with the following major findings.

Both teachers frequently used correcting errors as the way of providing feedback to the students. It means, correcting was the common way of providing feedback to the students in the semester system classes.

Immediate and positive type of feedback were mostly used by the teachers.

Praise and comments were the most common forms of feedback in the process of teaching and learning.

Feedback was mostly used for checking the comprehension of the students and correcting their mistakes.

Both teachers make use of feedback in the process of teaching and learning. They mostly used oral feedback in their teaching. Students make use of feedback for improving their learning and they take feedback as a constructive tool in learning. Students perceive feedback as the information provided to the learners with the objective of improving their performance as well an essential element in the process of teaching and learning. The respondents said that feedback has many benefits, and the foremost benefit of feedback is improving the learning of the students. It helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the students. Students receive positive and oral feedback from their teachers which has created motivation on them and helped them to be encouraged. They responded that feedback has played the role of motivation tool in the learning of the students and has built up the confidence in the students.

Conclusion

The study was set out to find out the practice of feedback in the semester system classes of MEd and the perceptions of students on the role of teachers' feedback. To complete the study, I observed the 2 classes of 2 teachers of MEd first semester in English Education. Open ended questions were asked to the four students. From the review of related relevant literature, interview and the observation of the classes, I came to understand that feedback is one of the crucial parts in the process of teaching and learning. It has a pivotal role in teaching learning process. It helps in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the students and works as a tool for motivation. I have realized that feedback has a number of benefits in teaching learning process. It functions as a constructive tool in teaching learning process and works as motivation tool and helps in improving the learning of the students. So, it can be concluded that feedback has an invaluable role in learning. Every teacher inside the classroom should make use of feedback so that the improvement in the learning can be ensured. Being based upon the interest and expectation of the students, the teacher should make use of right type of feedback. As the students prefer self-correction technique, the teachers should make less use of teacher correction technique and involve the students in correcting the mistakes themselves. There are many ways of providing feedback to the students. The teachers should focus on other ways like responding, training and involving the students rather than merely focusing on single correcting technique. For effective learning, feedback is essential.

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