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Error analysis and correction in oral communication in the efl context of Bangladesh

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Abstract
Error analysis and the needful correction have become the most talked issue in the present world of teaching English as a second or foreign language. Only 'mutual intelligibility' or mere communication through English has become most outdated considering the present competitive world where 'perfection' in any foreign language skill is the demand. The 'practice makes one perfect' motto of the audio-lingual approach between the 1950 s and 1960 s (Hendrickson, 1976) gave birth to incomplete speakers who produced errorless responses through the pattern drills but developed poor communicative competence. With the passing of time, other approaches (like structuralist and behaviorist) to language learning emerged and the attitude towards language learners and treatment of errors also underwent subsequent change. The newly emerged communicative approach of language teaching has made the situation for error correction more perplexing. The motto of the communicative approach: "Get your students to communicate at all costs" stretches the students and virtually guarantees that they will make errors (Mendelsohn 1990). Time and again, many linguistics and theorists have addressed this issue of error correction mostly in teaching reading and writing, but few have addressed error correction in the spoken language. Therefore, this article aims at proposing to remodel some of the existing and some new techniques which the researcher thinks would make them more effective, practical and usable in our English language classes.

Keywords: Error, Error analysis, Role of Teachers, Self-Correction

1. Introduction
To make an in depth analyses to correct errors, it is of great importance to know what exactly we are going to correct. We should clearly know the definition of errors. We should create some standard criteria and compare with the learners' performance in order to have the idea of error. Let us look at the different linguist's definition of errors in spoken language.
In connecting errors teachers must try to strike a balance between accuracy of linguistic form and fluency of the spoken language and proceed by a set of carefully thought out criteria which will make the process of error correction effective, reasoned and non-haphazard (Mendelson, 1990:p.25). In other words, they should not determine errors idiosyncratically-errors which are easy to label, easy to correct and easy to give rules for. My present article will look at the error analysis and correction taking all the above definitions of error.

2. Objectives, Literature Review and Methodology
With a view to having a resolution in this issue, this work will focus on certain factors such as defining the term 'Error' in spoken language, error analysis, the role of the teachers or instructors to correct errors and to what extent they (teachers) correct and self-correction in oral communication. Now detailed analysis of the above mentioned factors will surely make the spoken language teaching and learning process an enjoyable and fruitful one. Based on the information of modern ways and methods error analyses and their correction, enough critical essays and analyses were published in the shapes of different books and in many literary and linguistic journals which are very useful as a supporting material for further study of the research. Different critical books composed by – C. James, R. Ellis, D. Larsen-Freeman, M. H. Long etc remain helpful for the part of the study to deal with the error analyses and correction in spoken language. The critical articles of M. K. Burt, M. Sawkins, P. D. Shastri, D. J. Mendelson, J. M. Hendrickson etc were also supportive for the part of the study.

3. Definition of 'Error'

As we are going to make consistent corrections, we must have some idea of a correct standard in order to help us judge what an error is or what is not. If, for example, native speaker of English is the standard for comparison, students are corrected when production deviates from what a native speaker would produce (Woods, 1989: p. 61). This issue of a standard of correct English is further complicated by the differences between formal spoken language in an Oral presentation and informal spoken language in conversation with its false starts, incomplete sentences, sociolinguistic aspects, etc. which are some features of spoken discourse. In addition to some of these features, the teachers must keep in mind the issue of "global" and "local" errors. According to Burt (1975), errors in overall sentence organization which hinder communication are "global errors" and errors that affect single elements (constituents) in a sentence without causing hindrance to communication are "local errors" (pp. 56-57).

4. Discussion

4.1 Error Analysis - A Transition from Contrastive Analysis

In the late 1960s and early 1970s emphasis was shifted from contrastive analysis (CA) to error analysis (EA). One of the main reasons was the fact that CA (Contrastive Analyses) was unable to explain all errors in language learning, as it is not possible to ascribe them all to differences between L1 and L2. Moreover, some of the predicted errors did not even appear in practice (see e.g. Allwright & Bailey, 1991). Thus there was a need for a new linguistic method, which consequently took form of error analysis. One of the major proponents of error analysis was Stephen Pit Corder. CA sees errors as results of L1 interference only. EA, on the other hand, "accepts many sources of errors such as intralingual interference, overgeneralization, misteaching and the role of the variables of age, attitude, aptitude, motivation etc." (Shastri, 2010, p. 25). It is important to stress that EA not only explored sources of error, but also many other aspects of error and language learning. As Yang (2010) states, Error Analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language. Another important change was that errors were not only predicted, but mainly observed, analysed and classified. As Corder (1981) explains, "We can regard the reconstructed utterances as translations of the learner's utterances into the target language" (p. 37). In this aspect, EA is very much like contrastive analysis. The process of analyzing an error has three stages. According to Shastri (2010), these are identification, reconstruction and description of error. First of all, one needs to identify an utterance as being erroneous (or idiosyncratic as referred to by Corder). Such idiosyncratic utterance is then compared with the L2 and an utterance with the same meaning is reconstructed. The final stage of the analysis is a description of how and why the idiosyncratic utterance occurred Error analysts frequently came up with various error typologies. The most widely spread division was between errors (systematic) and mistakes (accidental). From that, error typologies were derived. To illustrate the point, Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), in their summary of intra-lingual errors (those that are not traceable to L1 interference), identified four types: overgeneralization, simplification, communication based errors, and induced errors. S. P. Corder (1984) offers a similar typology, although with slight changes. Each of these categories is always clearly defined and distinguished from the others, which makes it easy to categorize all errors. These typologies will be paid closer attention further in the paper in the section on Types of Error. Despite the "sophisticated" process of analyzing errors, since its very beginning, EA was said to lack methodological rigor and to be limited in its scope (Ellis, 1985). As MacDonald Lightbound (2005) claims, one of the problems was that several researchers "have pointed out the negative attitude reflected in its analysis of 'what is wrong' or deviant in the learners' IL, while ignoring the achievements" (p. 74). Furthermore, the various typologies of error were problematic, too. In theory, it is very simple to distinguish between different kinds of error – not so much in real practice though. It was often impossible for teachers or researchers to find out what kind of error a learner was making. Last but not least, it was impossible to analyze errors such as avoidance of certain forms, which learners used when they needed to get by without an unfamiliar form. Finally, it is necessary to mention that the transition from CA to prevailing error analysis was not as linear as it might seem. As MacDonald Lightbound (2005) claims, …until the proponents of two different views come to a mutual agreement that recognizes the importance of taking into account both ends of the pendulum, i.e. L1 interference and intra-lingual interference, there have been dramatic swings from one extreme to the other, which serve at best, to cause confusion among applied linguists working in the field of SLA (Second Language Acquisition). (p. 107-8) it would thus be misleading to assume that EA globally took over the previous methods. As it seems, it took some time to establish a balance between the two methods (CA and EA), with error analysis gradually dominating the field. MacDonald Lightbound (2005) sees the reasons for its resulting dominance in its greater universality: "EA adopted a more balanced view with regard to the role of the MT in second language learning environments. Intra-lingual errors are liable to be committed by learners from all around the globe regardless of their L1" (p. 108). Despite its initial struggles, it thus seems that EA prevailed thanks to its more general applicability. Error analysis was at its peak in the 1970s and 1980s; after that, however, its influence began to fade. Since then, "researchers working more on matters related to error gravity, and causes of error, in particular, transfer or cross-linguistic influence. In this sense, it has never totally disappeared from the language learning scenario, continuing to be a more widespread practice than it is duly given credit for" (James, 1998, p. 18). Continually, it has given way to the communicative approach, which keeps prevailing still today and is a largely dominant practice overall.

4.2 The teachers' role to correct and to what extent do they correct

Having defined 'Error' and 'Error Analysis', we need to look on the teachers' role in error correction in spoken language. In oral English teaching, students are the implementers, while teachers play different roles during this process through correct positioning. Teachers are conductors, guiding students to start activities. They are directors, designing scenarios for the activities and assigning roles to students. They are also critics, evaluating students' oral expression appropriately. The appropriateness of roles that teachers play can change the traditional oral English teaching which is teacher-centered. In this way, teachers can develop

students' initiatives to a large extent and improve their abilities of oral expression in English. Teachers are also the demonstrators and commentators in this regard.

4.2.1 Correct Positioning

So, how do the teachers position themselves in oral teaching? First, teachers should bear in mind that the protagonists of classroom teaching are students, and not teachers. Therefore, teachers should avoid too much input during the course of teaching, which will affect students' output. At the same time, teachers should be aware that they are also the organizer and implementer in classroom teaching besides being a participant. They can provide advice to students and teach them knowledge and ways of learning, but they should remember that students are the main subject of study. Students' input and output positively are the reflection of excellent teaching results, as John and Morrow 1981 said ''The teacher can help, advise and teach, but only the learner can learn.'' Besides, teachers should play the following roles well—demonstrators, conductors, directors, and commentators.

4.2.2 Demonstrators

In the eyes of students, teachers are their models and tasks to be imitated. Therefore, teachers should be aware of their status in the eyes of students, undertaking responsibilities actively and demonstrating themselves positively. Oral teaching consists of listening and speaking in simple terms. Besides, it also involves body language, rapid response capabilities, and language organization abilities. In oral teaching, teachers should require themselves strictly to correct their pronunciation to make sure they do not pronounce mistakenly. Students mainly listen to the teachers. So teachers are the demonstrators in oral teaching. They should play this role well by developing their oral English levels, pro-nouncing like native speakers, and training their language. In this way, they can create a better atmosphere for students. By listening, teachers should summarize some effective ways in teaching. They should try their best to speak English in classes by adopting the method of from easy to difficult and from simple to complex. By being taught in English, students can learn more actively. They should also ask students to answer questions in English. In this way, students can learn gradually without notice. They will listen naturally, just like staying in English-speaking countries. Body language is essential during interaction between teachers and students. Sometimes, students may not understand some sentences, but if teachers give some guidance and encourage them to listen carefully, they will tend to understand gradually. As a result, the sense of language will be developed. The gradual transition from listening to speaking will be beneficial for the improvement of students' listening and speaking skills.

4.2.3 Conductors

Conductors in bands play roles of expressing their understanding of music. A good conductor is like a doctor who can point out the band's shortcomings and come up with some improvement. They make the whole band reach the ideal state by adjusting the band. Likewise, for students, teachers are the conductors in classes, while the class is a symphony. Before conducting, teachers should bear in mind the teaching purpose, teaching method and any steps, key points, and difficult points of teaching. For some topics, the key function of conductors is to provide guidance to students on the activities carried out—dialogues between two or group discussion, scenario performance or debate, when to carry out the activities, what activities should be carried out, how to carry them out, and so on. In this way, teachers can activate students' initiatives to expand the variety of teaching activities. The ideal teaching effectiveness can be achieved. At the same time, as a conductor in classes, the teacher should fully understand students' English levels, knowing their interest and focus. They should also be clear about who does well or poorly in study to activate the atmosphere of the whole class. As a result, students will find their own value and be confident about their further study.

4.2.4 Directors

Conductors grasp the general situation of classroom teaching, while the roles of directors are shown in different activities of teaching. Oral classroom teaching is different from writing and reading. It requires students to take part in various activities to achieve different purposes. So how to design activities and how to carry them out have been the questions for teachers to act into the role of directors, arranging roles according to different teaching activities. For example, in Spoken English Course Volume III Unit 3 Part-time Job, teachers can design an activity of finding a job and doing interviews, with two students being the interviewers and some being the interviewees. Students should be divided into groups. Finally, the best group should be selected. In this activity, teachers act as directors, assigning roles, designing situations, and solving problems occurring during the activity. In this way, students' ability to express themselves orally in English can be improved. As directors, teachers should also discover and develop roles besides organizing and coordinating. They should discover the advantages and shortcomings of stu-dents so that they encourage students to develop advantages and overcome shortcomings, which can help students to develop themselves comprehensively.

4.2.5 Commentators

The task of conductors is to coordinate students in a macro way, while the job of directors is to grasp the situation in a micro way. It is the task of commentators to evaluate all the teaching activities in a summative way. They should evaluate the advantages and shortcomings comprehensively during students' oral expression to make students more confident. They should let students understand their short-comings and provide guidance for them so that the same mistakes can be avoided. In order to be more objective and reasonable, commentators should take part in different activities to discover problems and solve them in time. To be a good commentator, teachers should follow one principle. That is, they should not point out the errors during the process of students' expression, which will interrupt their thinking and discourage their confidence. For some simple slip of the tongue, teachers should pay less attention, while for some big mistakes especially those in thinking and being made easily by the majority of students, teachers should point them out in front of all students. In this way, students will pay more attention to the problem. Besides summarizing the past experience, commentators should also predict the future and provide guidance for students. Teachers should know the employment situation in the industry and the trend of future development of oral English talents as well as how to win in

the future employment competition. They should guide and develop their students according to the situations above.

Teachers generally agree that tolerating some oral and written errors help learners communicate more confidently in a foreign language (Hendrickson, 1976: p. 390). That is why they need to correct selectively. Here I would like to refer to the three criteria proposed by Mendelsohn (1990, p. 25) for efficient and effective error correction: "Correct selectively, choose productive items, correct constructively". From the survey of many university students, it can be seen that the "Students prefer not to be marked down for each minor speaking and writing error because this practice destroys their confidence and forces them to expand so much effort on details that they lose the overall ability to use language" (Hendrickson, 1976: p.390).He further stresses the fact that it is more important to communicate successfully rather than to try to communicate perfectly (p. 390). Therefore, regardless of whether the error is lexical, syntactic, phonological, the teacher should make a snap decision using the criterion of what will be most productive to the student, and concentrate on those errors (Mendelsohn, 1990:p. 26). Hendrickson (1976, p.391) claims that the correction of one global error in a sentence clarifies the intended message more than the correction of several local errors in the same sentence. Furthermore, he states that limiting correction to communicative errors allows students to increase their motivation and self-confidence towards learning the target language (p. 391). Finally, he identifies correction of three types of as being useful to the learners: errors that impair communication significantly, errors that have highly stigmatizing effects on the listeners or the readers, and errors that occur frequently in learners' speech or writing (p.391).

5. Further strategies which the Teachers may adopt

A Teacher or an Instructor has to be strategic while correcting students' errors in Spoken languages. They should bear in mind the extent to which the correction will be productive. That is, to what extent that particular feature of the language will be used by the student and will be necessary for developing competency in the language. In this connection Mendelsohn (1990), advises putting off the error correction until the end of the exchange or interaction In order to avoid interrupting communication exchanges (p. 28). This will necessitate the taking of notes both by the teachers ad by the rest of the students, but most certainly does not mean that less attention should be given to providing feedback of all types (p.28). However, It must be borne in mind that in certain situations, immediate correction of errors is necessary, for example, in situation where communication has broken down because of some linguistic or sociolinguistic difficulty (Mendelsohn, 1990:p.28). Selective error correction, therefore, promises to be a more effective and enjoyable instructional technique than "all out" correction (Burt, 1975:p.62).

While correcting errors in spoken classes, the primary concern of the teacher is to create a congenial, healthy atmosphere in the classroom where students do not feel threatened or scared to make mistake. The taking class should be a place where there is a lot of laughing with one another, but one in which there is never any laughing at anyone (Mendelsohn, 1990: p.26). Everyone has a fragile ego, and not everyone responds positively to unsoften correction (Mendelsohn, 1990:p.26) of errors therefore, the best results can be achieved by remodeling some of the strategies and techniques proposed by researchers and linguists. These are depicted below.

5.1 The use of feedback sheets in Oral communication: The use of the feedback instruments propounded b Mendelsohn (1991, pp. 27, 28) is an excellent way to enable students to keep track of their errors on a regular basis, observe not only by their teachers but also by their peers. He feedback sheets include both linguistics and socio-linguistic features of spoken discourse which the teachers and the peers will observe when an individual or group is giving an oral presentation in class. A detailed feedback instrument not only ensures specific feedback but also reminds the presenters of the parameters they should pay attention to (Mendelsohn, 1991: p. 26). Thus, "constructive error correction" (p.26) can be best achieved with the help of these feedback instruments.

5.2 The Use of media technology: Recording or filming students' interactions enables replay and detailed analysis (Mendelsohn, 1990: p.28). It also gives students the opportunity to be self-critique. I enable students to view the socio-linguistic features like eye contact, hand movement, facial gestures, body movement, etc. and be a better judge themselves. Besides, the use of a series of technological devices like- Audio, video, the use of a built-in camera in the classroom, the use f voice recorder etc. will be very helpful to students to analyze their linguistic errors.

One-on-one tutoring: In spoken language classes, the use of the feedback instruments mentioned above can be fully utilized when it is followed by One-on-one tutoring at the end of each oral presentation. After each presentation, the teacher can sit with student individually and allow them to analyze their errors first and then end the session with teacher's observation of sociolinguistic and linguistic errors and suggestions for improvement.

5.3 Self-Correction by students: This view holds that there is no need to correct the learner's errors. The teacher should not make correction; what is the essential to do is to make the learners correct the errors themselves. "Self –correction is which learners correct themselves instead of a teacher doing it." (Teaching English/ British Council / BBC, as cited from www.teachingenglish.org.uk). Therefore, the correction of errors by the learners themselves is self-correction. The learners should be encouraged to correct their erroneous themselves. For this, just re-teaching of the erroneous are rather than deliberates correction is essential. Re-teaching of the items rather than correction insures the better acquisition and language use. In addition, just as importance, it is recommended that the teachers become aware of their own beliefs and error correction. Self-correction is one of the best techniques of error correction in which the teacher guides, controls, and provides some hints. It encourages the learners to correct their errors themselves. It provides the positive reinforcement to the learners. When the learners make their habit of self-correction then they rarely commit the errors. If the learners are discouraged by the correction, the teacher is expected to reduce it. It is normally viewed that serious errors should be corrected in order to encourage the learners to learn language properly. Therefore, the teacher should apply the self-correction technique in language teaching, especially while teaching language as the learners' second language. When a child is

born and after 2 years he starts speaking. Generally he is encouraged to make mistakes and given chance to correct himself. Therefore, we should apply the similar technique in SLA too. We should give the chance the learners to commit errors and correct his errors himself that motivates the learners positively.

5.4 Model self-correction of Spoken Errors:

5.4.1 Using Teacher Correction Technique

T: Tania, how do you come to school?
S: I am come on bus.
T: That is not correct. The correct answer is 'I come by bus '.
Here the students is discouraged when I correct his errors he became very nervous and scared to speak further because I didn't give him chance to say the sentence correctly. It hindered him and he felt victimized.

5.4.2 Using Self-Correction Technique

I asked the same question to the students of class four but used self-correction technique.
T: John-how do you come to school?
S: I am come by foot.
T: Well, Anyone else? How do you come to school, Priya?
S2: I come to school on foot.
T: You come to school on foot but I come to school by bus.

And when I asked him the same question again after some days he said the sentence correctly

5.5 Teacher Training: According to Sawkins, [1987:p.60] "Number of years of experience is no guarantee of good teaching- Teacher training, in-service training and personal professional development are also needed for the development of good teaching strategies". In support of teacher training Sawkins refers to Rubin (1975) who advises teachers to attend to the learning process more and to tailor their input to their students' needs, thereby providing students with techniques that would enable them to learn on their own (p.61). Teacher Training is emphasized not only for the purpose of introducing them to the use of new methods and technologies but also to develop their understanding of when to play an active role in error correction and when "not to dominate the correction procedure (Hendrickson, 1978:p.395)".Teacher Training is also required because teacher need to accomplish their teaching goals within a specific time span. In order to accomplish as much as possible within the set time, stretegic planning, organization of syllabus and methods to be used, is prerequisite to the actual process of teaching. Teachers need to prepare their students in such a way that when the time comes for them to leave their teachers behind, students are well-prepared to carry on learning on their own (Sawkins, 1987:p.71)

6. Conclusion

The aim of my Article was to present and analyze error and error correction in oral practice in English lessons. Languages are being developed every day, while the future is constantly changing. Therefore, in oral teaching, either teachers or students should not play their role passively in teaching and learning process. Teachers should try to find the right balance between over-correcting and non-correcting; correction in general, however, is always more effective than no correction at all. Overall, it has been pointed out that teachers should mainly correct errors preventing successful communication; the way they should correct should not be threatening and should try to fit the learners' needs. All correction should be done with the specific learner and situation in mind. Teachers should also give enough space to self-correction, since it supports the learning process the most. It has been stressed that the most effective ways of correcting are explicit, output prompting strategies (elicitation, paralinguistic feedback and others). Most importantly, correction should be perceived as a means of helping learners rather than criticizing their performance which "can result in losing the product in the process" (as mentioned in Baines *et al.* 1999). Thus by supplementing the guidelines mentioned here "Teachers can proceed, (as Burt says in 1975, p.63), towards producing more relevant teaching, more confident learners and more effective communication".

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