Role of Direct and Indirect Corrective Feedback in improvement of Hindi students’ writing skills
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Abstract: The direct and indirect corrective feedback are the most common strategies of written feedback used by the teachers to correct the mistakes of the students of their written works. Various researches have been done to know the effectiveness of the direct and indirect corrective feedback in students’ writing ability but still no any rigid result has been found to prove the effectiveness of either. This paper looked the attitudes of Hindi learner’s towards direct and indirect corrective feedback for improvement of their writing ability in Hindi. The study revealed that the direct feedback is more helpful to correct their errors and to make them understand the type of the errors.

Keywords: Direct feedback, indirect feedback, effectiveness, attitudes, improvement

I. Introduction
Effectiveness of the corrective written feedback is a really important issue to make students proficient in the foreign languages. Sometimes foreign language instructors become disappointed with students’ results and performance in the target language. But it is also true that the methods of providing feedback to the students affect their performance in the target language.
The direct and indirect corrective feedback are the most common methods used by the instructors to respond, comment and correct grammatical errors on students’ written works. Direct corrective feedback is provided when the teacher writes the correct form on the student’s paper, while indirect feedback is provided when the teacher indicates the location of the error on the paper by underlining, highlighting or circling it without providing the correct form (Lee, 2004).
Several studies have been conducted in this area to know the impact and effectiveness of the direct and indirect feedback on students’ writing ability but it is still not possible to adjudge which feedback is the most beneficial and effective for improvement of students’ writing skills. The study intends to know the attitude of non-native of Hindi learners about direct and indirect corrective feedback at Yale university. This research discovered that the direct corrective feedback is more helpful for students to improve their writing skills in Hindi language.

II. Direct Feedback
The teacher provides the student with the correct form (Lalande, 1982 and Robb et al. 1986). Direct corrective feedback has the advantage that it provides learners with explicit guidance about how to correct their errors. (Rod Ellis). Ferris and Roberts (2001) suggest that direct corrective feedback is probably better than indirect corrective feedback with students having low levels of proficiency in writing. A recent study by Sheen (2007) indicates that direct corrective feedback can be effective in promoting acquisition of specific grammatical features. Guenette (2007) defines direct feedback that it refers to the teacher’s correction of errors. According to Lee (2004), direct or explicit feedback occurs when the teacher picks out errors and gives the correct forms. (Lan Anh, 2008, PP 126-127). There are some types of errors that might prove that direct feedback is better than indirect feedback. For example, if student writes ‘I good to the school’ instead of ‘I went to the school’ and teacher has introduced only the formation of regular past tense verb rules in the class but he has not taught yet irregular past tense verbs. So in such a situation it is best to provide the direct feedback with explanation of the unknown concept.

III. Indirect Feedback:
The teacher indicates that an error exists but does not provide the correction. Lalande (1982) suggests that indirect feedback is indeed more effective in enabling students to correct their errors but others, for example, Ferris and Roberts’ own study found no difference between direct and indirect corrective feedback. Guenette (2007) states that indirect feedback mentions the teacher’s indication of errors by underlining, highlighting or coding them and then letting learners do the corrections. According to Lee (2004), indirect correction refers to situations when the teacher marks that errors have been made but does not supply the correct forms, requiring the learners to diagnose and correct their errors. Further, she distinguishes indirect feedback strategies with a code
from those without a code. Coded feedback refers to instances when the teacher points out the locations of errors and the types of errors are marked with codes for example-
- Vera Tense- VT
- Subject Verb Agreement- SV
- Word Form-WF

Wrong Word- WW
- Sentence Fragment- FRAG
- Word Order- WO
- Insert Word- ^
- Spelling- SP

Uncoded feedback implies situations when the teacher circles errors, underlines errors or puts a tally in the margin to offer learners a chance to diagnose and correct errors. (Lan, 2008, pp 126-127).

IV. Review of Literature

Many researchers have been presented the comparative studies on the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback with different results. De Jong and Kuiken state that direct feedback has significant long term effect in improving students written accuracy. Mirzaei and Aliabadi (2013) discovered that direct corrective feedback is more effective than indirect corrective feedback in the context of genre based construction. Baleghizadeh and Dadashi’s (2010) work reveals that indirect feedback is a more effective tool than direct feedback in rectifying students’ spelling errors. Elham Esfami’s very recent work conducted in 2014 presents the result of the comparison between two different written corrective feedback (WCF) techniques. The study shows that the indirect feedback group outperformed the direct feedback group on both immediate post-test and delayed post-test.

V. Research Questions

My article addresses the following questions. Main focus of my paper is on indirect corrective feedback. 
Q: 1. Is indirect corrective feedback effective in improving students’ writing ability?
Q: 2. What kind of feedback (direct feedback or indirect feedback) on written output will be most effective?
Q: 3. What are Hindi students’ attitudes towards the use of indirect feedback for their written work?

VI. Methodology

This study was conducted among 50 intermediate and elementary students of Hindi language at Yale University, New Haven, USA at the end of their semester fall 2014. During their classes, written corrective feedback were provided to them in both direct and indirect way. The objective of the study is to ascertain the attitudes of Hindi learners towards direct and indirect corrective feedback. Self constructed questionnaire were distributed among the participants.

VII. Findings of the Study

Majority of the students agree on this point that indirect feedback holds their attention towards improving writing skills. They also add that they do not get pressured while getting indirect feedback on their assignments. Some student’s responses reveal that they accept and work on indirect feedback because they do not have other choice than indirect feedback to get feedback. Teacher provides feedback on their work through indirect feedback. In other words, mostly student’s responses show that indirect corrective feedback is useful for the improvement of Hindi learners’ writing skills.

The researcher included some subjective questions besides objective type questions in the questionnaire to find out the students’ views about direct and indirect corrective feedback. Main points of their responses are follows-

Learners’ Attitudes towards Indirect Feedback
- Indirect feedback was a helpful learning tool, as it gave me incentive to go back and re-engage with the writing materials.
- It is helpful for improving grammatical errors.
- Sometimes it is difficult to understand what correction I needed to make.
- It is useful to a certain degree, it would be more helpful to talk through the mistakes with instructor rather than read them on paper and correct them on my own.
- It was specific and detailed.
- Indirect feedback did help in improving my writing because it made me pay attention to what I was doing wrong and think of ways to correct it.
- Indirect feedback is not helpful for a non-native speaker. Just seeing that I made an error doesn’t give information as to how I can correct it.
- It is very helpful for correcting the spelling errors.
- It is not easy enough to understand the mistakes by just underlining or circling.
- It is more confusing than helpful.
- It is a slow form of a feedback.

**Students after receiving the indirect feedback were not corrected**
- Sometimes the notes made by the instructor are not clear.
- I often don’t do correction.
- The errors that I could not correct by myself were underlying issues with the understanding of grammar. I did not understand what I had done wrong, so I could not fix it.
- I did not know how to correct the errors in sentence construction, idiomatic usage because in many cases the textbook does not specify the usage.
- Errors about grammar concepts, because it was difficult to understand how to correct them.
- Complex and compound sentences and sometimes complicated errors.
- It was harder for me to correct and understand the errors when it was explained in Hindi.
- Upon seeing the indirect feedback I had pretty good idea of how to fix the errors.

**In case if I don’t know how to correct the errors-**
- If I did not immediately know how to correct the errors, I would refer to the textbook, previous lessons, or make a note to ask the TA or instructor.
- Due to much underlining I become confused and usually do nothing.
- I would ask in the next class about the errors and its concept (grammar).
- I use the textbook and other resources to figure out. If they don’t help, I do not correct the mistakes.

**I prefer-**
- indirect feedback because it is more efficient and I can keep the records afterwards.
- direct feedback because it shows me what I did wrong especially if there is more than one mistake.
- direct feedback because it lets me know what I should do instead; positive reinforcement of right usage vs negative reinforcement of wrong usage (which does not let me know how to do it properly).
- direct feedback because it ensures that the corrections are actually correct, whereas with indirect feedback, I had to guess on corrections and was not sure if I was making more mistakes.
- direct feedback because it is easier for me to internalize correct grammar, sentence structure, conventions of the language etc.
- indirect feedback because it allows me to do my own correction.
- a combination of both – direct for more complicated, isolated errors and indirect for repeating, smaller errors.
- Both are useful in relation to different tasks. Direct feedback is more helpful with short, pointed writing assignments aimed at strengthening particular grammatical skills. Indirect feedback is helpful for longer writing assignments that aim to familiarize students with the task of writing fluently in Hindi.

**VIII. Conclusion**
According to statistical index and analysis of the students’ response, the result reveal that direct feedback is more effective than indirect feedback in improvement of Hindi students’ writing ability. They find indirect feedback very helpful in the improvement of spelling errors. Mostly students prefer getting direct feedback on their written assignments because it shows the correct forms of the errors and it is easier to internalise and they can keep the records afterwards.

**References**
Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear Students,

These questionnaire are designed only for the research purposes. It would be appreciated if you can give few minutes of your precious time in completing this questionnaire.

Indirect Feedback: Indirect feedback refers to situations when the teacher indicates errors by underlining, highlighting or coding them and then letting learners do corrections.

Session: Fall 2014

Please select any one appropriate option to give your response.

1. Indirect feedback was not satisfactory for me.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

2. After following indirect feedback for a while, I felt pretty competent in writing.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

3. It was important to me to do well in my writing.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

4. I felt pressured while getting indirect feedback on my assignment.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

5. I didn’t really have a choice except indirect feedback.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

6. I think that indirect feedback is useful for improvement of my writing ability.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

7. I think I did pretty well in writing by getting indirect feedback, compared to other students.
   - Agree, Strongly agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree

Please write your opinion about the following questions in the space provided below.

8. What do you think about indirect feedback used for your writing?

9. were there any errors you could not correct by yourself? What were they? Why could not you correct them?

10. What did you do in case you did not know how to correct the underlined mistakes by yourself?

11. Do you prefer direct feedback or indirect feedback for your writing? Why?

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation!

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