# Corrective Feedback in English Class for Adult Learners

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*Abstract*

*The focus of this study was corrective feedback by the tutor in correcting learners' speaking performance in the Small Talk program that is held at PT United Tractors, Tbk Balikpapan collaborated with the Foreign Language Academy of Balikpapan for 3 months. This study identified occurrences of the correction of speaking performance learner errors including using proper grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and the way the tutor performed the corrective feedback. This study was descriptive qualitative research with participants numbered 15 learners and data were presented and analyzed inductively in terms of features and facts of the tutor's teaching process. The result of the observation showed the tutor applied recast, elicitation, classification request, direct correction, metalinguistic, and repetition to respond to learners' pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical errors during the learning process and based on the interview of two participants attended, they unanimously stated that in teaching and learning activities at the Small Talk Program, feedback is mostly needed in the form of corrections to errors made by participants*

*Keywords: Corrective Feedback, English Class, Adult Learners*

## INTRODUCTION

English as an international language is crucial for workers to master. It is considered effective workplace communication involves using English, not only in communicating verbally with colleagues abroad but also in having correspondence. Besides, it is also often used in

guidebooks for goods imported from abroad as the language of instruction, meaning that English language skills are considered very important and must be mastered in this era.

Unfortunately, the importance of the ability to speak English is inversely proportional to the ability of the field workers. Apart from the fact that most of the workers at PT United Tractor, Tbk are not native speakers, they mostly have familiar with practical English, but theoretical English knowledge is still poor. Therefore, to improve the English skills of the workers at PT United Tractor, Tbk, especially in Balikpapan, the company held a program called Small Talk.

Unlike the learning process in a formal school, the Small Talk Program is like a discussion class for adult learners, especially employees at PT United Tractor, Tbk. In this class, the participant is free to ask questions, practice, and discuss in English with tutors and among participants. The tutor's role is only as a facilitator who supports participants and corrects their errors during discussion. Therefore, the relationship between the tutor and participant in adult learning is more multi-communicative.

The adult learning lends to the andragogy concept refers to five assumptions, namely that adult learners are self-directed, they bring experience to the learning environment, they are ready to be in a learning environment, they are ready to learn, they are oriented to learn in a problem-centered environment, and the internal factors motivate them. (Chinnasamy, 2013) Besides, adult learning is a process in which adults engage in methodical and planned activities to enhance their knowledge and learning (Kapur, 2019). In this case, he explained that adult learning has been understood as the field that makes provision of educational facilities to adults, who could not undergo the regular course of formal education, during their school years.

To make the learners more active in the learning process and fix them understand the materials, it is necessary for the tutor in providing feedback during the discussion process. There are several reasons why providing corrective feedback is crucial for the tutor when carrying out the duties. Firstly, to create a conducive learning atmosphere that can involve learners in every discussion Secondly, to help learners achieve their learning goals by correcting their responses of them to the material being discussed to produce the same perception among learners. Thirdly, to get responsible for the understanding captured by the participants. The understanding of discussion participants can be measured by providing an evaluation through corrective feedback

Feedback is considered an important response that give the potential impact on future practice and identity development as learners. (Ekawati & Aminudin, 2020).The statement clearly states that feedback is a tool that plays a role in developing learners' abilities through a constructive response and to confirm the extent of the participants' involvement in the discussion and ensure the accuracy of the participant's understanding of the topic being discussed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## FEEDBACK IN GENERAL

As it is previous mentioned that feedback is assumed as a crucial tool that plays a role in developing learners' abilities through a constructive response. As sequent, it enables learners to compare their work and provide motivation for them achieving the work standards. "Feedback is a process whereby learners obtain information about their work in order to appreciate the similarities and differences between the appropriate standards for any given work, and the qualities of the work itself, in order to generate improved work."(Suchankova, 2017)

### Corrective Feedback

Corrective feedback as a verbal response which is used by a tutor or addressee to correct erroneous pronunciation or utterances of speaker. It fundamentally seeks to correct phonological, syntactic, semantic, or functional incorrectness that may present in the speech of speaker.(Alsolami, 2019). It is a clear that it aims to provide justification or correction to the speaker's words, both in terms of pronunciation, selection of diction and its functions, as well as correction of other language elements. Corrective feedback plays a central role in learning as it highlights the mistakes made by a learner enabling them to eradicate such errors in the future.

### The types of corrective feedback

In the application of Corrective Feedback, that was cited by Thiri (2022), Nassaji (2018) explained seven types of corrective feedback, including:

1. Recast

Recast is "an approach that corrects a speaker's incorrect utterances by changing one or two components without changing the meaning of the phrase." (Alsolami, 2019). The implementation of this feedback is the tutor quickly reformulates learners' flaws into rectified speech. Meanwhile, another researcher puts the tutor directly mentions the correct form of the word or phrase without saying that those words or phrases are incorrect. Thus, the tutor implicitly reformulates the student's error or provides the correction (Rahmi & Batusangkar, 2017)

2. Elicitation

In this type of feedback, the tutor elicits learners' self-correction by repeating the incorrect utterance and by leaving a gap where learners make an error. (Thiri, 2022). Furthermore, learners are expected to fill the gap with possible corrected forms. The tutor directly elicits the correct form from the student by asking questions such as "How do we say cuti tahunan in English?"), by pausing to allow the learner to complete the tutor utterance (e.g. "It's …..") or by asking the learner to reformulate the utterance (e.g. " say that again"). Elicitation questions differ from questions that are defined as metalinguistic clues in that they require more than a yes / no response.

Rahmi (2017) also has a similar statement to Thiri about elicitation. In her work, she mentions that the teacher just leads the students to form the correct word themselves by saying "how do we say this in English; which one is correct…? Furthermore, the use of elicitation is also a technique that can be used by the tutor in responding to the use of inappropriate words in a sentence. Moreover, elicitation is the opposite of direct correction. When tutor uses this style of corrective feedback, they do not express the corrective feedback by supplying the proper form themselves, but rather by asking and allowing the other learner to generate the correct form of a phrase or a word. Therefore, the tutor utilizes phrases such as "How do we say this in English, which one is correct?"

The use of elicitation is also different from recast. In the use of recast, the tutorreplaces the wrong word by repeating the sentences spoken by the participants in the correct form, but in the use of elicitation, the participants must actively seek justification for the incorrect words they previously said

3. Direct Correction

Direct correction is "an explicit error correction method where teachers point out learners' errors directly and give correction at once." (Thiri, 2022). This statement indicates that the learners' utterance was inaccurate; the tutor does not provide the learners with keys or hints to fix their mistakes; instead, the tutor will deliver the proper form straight. Furthermore, the tutor will provide them with the correct form while clearly indicating what is being rectified. Moreover, the tutor could use the word: not X but Y to express this type of corrective feedback.(Sheen & Ellis in Rahmi, 2017)

4. Clarification Request

A clarification request is an elicitation of a reformulation or repetition from the student. This type explains that feedback doesn't provide learners the correction, but gives them a chance of self-correction. (Rahmi, 2017). There are several phrases that could be used to provide this type of corrective feedback such as Excuse me?, sorry, I don't understand and pardon me. (Lyster & Ranta in Rahmi, 2017)

5. Metalinguistic

Metalinguistics is a technique in corrective feedback with giving the clue related to the incorrect words or phrases which the learner expressed. The tutor does not directly give the correct form. The tutor uses this technique to cope with vocabulary problems that cause errors in word selection, as well as pronunciation issues that have an impact on the accuracy of grammar in speaking. (Damaiyanti, 2021) stated that there are five types of grammatical errors in speaking such as omission, over-regulation, mis-formation, mis-order, and addition. The omission is an error in omitting the subject, the verb to be, ending in s and es, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, and articles. While over-regulation is the application of a principle of regular change to a word that changes irregularly, for example using the word "comed" instead of "came". Mis-formation errors are recognized by the usage of the incorrect form of morphemes or structure. It occurs when a learner provides information that is wrong. Mis-order is the error of putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order. Meanwhile, an addition error is an error that adds an item that should not be in an utterance. is wrong in

using the tense when talking about a subject or in other words, grammatical errors occur with the type of mis-formation

6. Repetition

On this type of corrective feedback, Han (2002) as cited by Alsolami (2019) said that "Repetition is yet another effective strategy whereby the teacher repeats the pronouncements of the learner correcting the mistakes. The mistake is highlighted through emphatically stressing the word."

7. Non-verbal Feedback

Thiri (2022) defines non-verbal feedback as "an implicit error correction method where teachers hint learners about their errors by using paralinguistic features such as frowning, shaking head, etc." In the application of this type of feedback, the tutor uses non-verbal communication to the learners as a sign that there is a need for self-correction of sentences, phrases, or words that are wrong and require correction. The communication can be in the form of frowning, shaking head, or other codes that are done non-verbally. For example, when a learners say, "I sorry." The tutor will notify them nonverbally, for example, by shaking his or her head as a sign that the sentence is incorrect and needs improvement from the learner.

In the observation tends to six types of feedback: recast, elicitation, direct correction, clarification request, metalinguistics, repetition because the teaching learning process is conducted in online way.

## ADULT LEARNING

Adult learning, is a process in which adults engage in methodical and planned activities to enhance their knowledge and learning.(Kapur, 2019) In this case, he defined adult learning as an organized learning concept like a learning program in formal education. The existence of an adult learning also cannot be separated from a goal, namely as a facility for learners to explore their abilities or understanding of a field. In addition, he also explained that adult learning has been understood as the field that makes provision of educational facilities to the adults, who could not undergo the regular course of formal education, during their school years. Thus, we can also say that adult learning is a program held for adults that aims to catch up on knowledge that cannot be studied in depth in formal education during their school years. So, that even though they are no longer in formal education, they can still cover the lack of knowledge today.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design in this study used descriptive qualitative research. This study applied a qualitative method since the data of this study is script dialogs. They are considered as a property that enables them to be analyzed. Gay, L.R. et al in Widjayanti (2014) maintain qualitative research involves mostly non-numeric data, such as extensive notes taken during a research site, interview data. In this case, the researcher as the advisor accompanied and directly

observed the tutor during in teaching learning process through online class. She also checked field notes or scripts and interview sheets the tutor made as approval documents to analyze inductively in terms of features and facts of the tutor's teaching process.

The researcher refers to the previous studies that discussed the same issues regarding corrective feedback by researchers: (Alsolami, 2019) who research effect of oral corrective feedback on language skills ; Silfia Rahmi (2017) who researches the types of corrective feedback used by four Lecturers on students' speaking performance; and (Vuono & Li, 2021) who research the relationship between age and feedback.

Based on the result of observations the researcher carried out, she would like to elaborate:

1. What are the types of corrective feedback used by the tutor in English Class?

2. How the way does the tutor perform the corrective feedback?

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the classroom observation, the writer found that the tutor did corrective feedback when the learners were performing their conversation as recast, elicitation, classification request, direct correction, metalinguistic, and repetition. The types of feedback that the tutor did during teaching and learning in the Small Talk Program as follows:

**Recast**
The implementation of tutor's recast or reformulation of a learner's incorrect utterance in a content-based communicative classroom can be seen in the script as follows.
(1) Learner: "The boy **have** many flowers in the basket."
    Tutor: "Yes, the boy **has** many flowers in the basket."
In the script above, the tutor tries to reformulate the word "have" into "has" directly, without directly indicating that the learner's utterance was incorrect**.**
(2) Learner: You and I will walking-walking together.
    Tutor: Exactly, you and I will go for a walk?
    Leaner: You and I will go for a walk together.
In the case above, the tutor changed the word "walking-walking" to "go for a walk" without intentionally mentioning that what the participant said was incorrect. By responding using the method above, learners will realize that what they have mentioned before is wrong, and the justification for what has been said by the tutor. So that at the same time, when participants get justification, they also get new vocabulary that they didn't know before or recall vocabulary that has not been used for a long time.

**Elicitation**
The application of elicitation in teaching and learning activities in the Small Talk Program as follows:
(3) Tutor: Polisi
    Learner: Police
    Tutor: Tidur

> Learner: Sleep
> Tutor: Polisi tidur
> Learner: Sleeping police
> Tutor: Are you sure? How do we say "polisi tidur" in English?
> Learner: Speed bump
> Tutor: Exactly, polisi tidur in English is the speed bump

In the case above, the tutor uses elicitation in the sentence "How do we say "polisi tidur" in English?" It aims to enable participants to find out what the actual vocabulary of the "polisi tidur" is, whether it is "sleeping police" or is there another vocabulary that is actually an English word so that they can do self-correction. This self-correction adopts one of the concepts of andragogy previously mentioned by Knowles …. namely adult learners' self-concept shifts from dependence to self-direction. So that requires learners to do self-correction in line with their self-concept as adult learners, namely self-direction. Where the participant is an adult learner who can direct himself and take initiative with or without the help of others.

The use of recast and elicitation in responding to the problem of errors in word choice by participants produced results that were in line with expectations. This technique allows participants to correct mistakes that have been made as well as provide new knowledge and remind them of material that has been taught for a long time but is rarely implemented. In addition, the use of this technique also enables participants to think more critically, such as when tutors correct their mistakes using recast. This is where the question arises why they are not using "walking-walking" but instead using "go to walk", which later became the subject of a joint discussion that required them to think more critically.

These two techniques are not the only references that all problems regarding word choice errors can only be corrected using recast and elicitation techniques. Tutors can also use other types of corrective feedback such as clarification requests, direct corrections, metalinguistic, repetition, or nonverbal feedback. However, in dealing with this case in the Small Talk Program with different characteristics of participants, these two techniques are the most effective and are most often used by tutors to justify participants' mistakes in choosing diction or words when they want to express something.

**Direct correction**

The example of tutor's direct correction respond in teaching and learning activities in Small Talk Program as follows:

(4) Learner: "When I have 18 years old…"
    Tutor: "No, not have, but when I was 18 years old."

The script above shows the learners are unnecessary to think of the correct words or phrases, but the tutor delivers the correct word directly. Meanwhile, another example of this type with repeating the vocabulary that had been previously taught as follow:

(5) Tutor: Jangan cemas
    Learner: Don't sweat it □ error pronunciation: dəʊnt swit it
    Tutor: No, not swit but swet. The way we pronounce it is dəʊnt swet it
    Learner: Okay, ms. So, it is dəʊnt swet it not dəʊnt swit it, isn't it, ms?
    Tutor: Exactly

With the tutor's direct correction of this pronunciation error, it is easier for learner to understand the actual pronunciation of the word. This method is usually given by tutors when an error in pronunciation has changed the meaning of the spoken word.

The direct-correction is also one of the techniques favored by some of the learners, this is stated by one of the learners during an interview that he tends to like tutors to do direct correction, but still leaves room for discussion for participants. This also proves that the research conducted by Vuono & Li which has been described in the previous chapter is correct, that adult learners tend to like corrective feedback which is contained in the input-providing group, such as direct correction.

**Clarification Request**
The tutor uses this type of feedback as the script follows

(6) The learner: "She stories with her family in the morning."
The tutor: "I'm sorry?".

The above example, the tutor gives corrective feedback by expressing "I'm sorry?". At that time, the tutor wants to give the learner chance to make a change to the statement that previous mentioned. This type's feedback with using other expression such as pardon? Could you repeat it again? Sorry? is also the tutor's strategy to restart or reformulate participants' sentences with more intelligible sounds as tutor implicates. The following is the tutor's response to the case of mispronunciation:

(7) Tutor: In your opinion, what is the most difficult skill in learning English?
Learner: Listening and speaking (pronunciation error: listening)
Tutor: Sorry, could you repeat it again?
Learner: Listening and speaking (correct pronunciation: lɪrsnɪŋ)
Tutor: I see, so listening and speaking is the most difficult skills for you. Could you give me a reason, why the skills are difficult for you?

With the technique applied by the tutor above, learners are expected to be able to find points of error in the participants' pronunciation and do self-correction. The results of the author's observations and analysis show that this technique really brings participants to be the ability to do self-correction. Thus, it can be said that this technique is effective in bringing learners to think more critically about their mistakes. However, if the participant cannot find the point of error in the sentence, another learner will also respond to confirm the pronunciation, or at the end, the tutor will help them to correct the pronunciation if no one could find the errors.

**Metalinguistic**
This type of feedback as follows:

(8) Tutor: Could you help me to complete this sentence? I need an umbrella because it's____ right now.
Learner: I need an umbrella because it's rain right now.
Tutor: Are you sure? Remember there is an adverb for time and "right now" and we are talking about the present continuous, right?

Learner: Oh ya, so it must be I need an umbrella because it is raining right now. is it correct, ms?

Tutor: Exactly, the correct sentence is I need an umbrella because it is raining right now. because the structure of the present continuous tense in this case is S + to be + Ving + Adverb of time. Get it?

Learner: Yes, ms.

In using this technique, the tutor hopes that the learners will be able to recall the tenses they have previously learned and apply them in the sentences they say. From the analysis and observations made by the author, this technique really has a positive impact on the implementation of tenses in speaking.

Meanwhile, according to Lyster and Rynta (1996), as cited by (Rahmi, 2017), in this type, the tutor provides comments, information, or questions related to the incorrect utterances which the learner produced. It implies that the tutor only gives the clue related to the incorrect words or phrases which the learners expressed. The implementation of this technique is as follows:

(9) Learner: "I am here since last month."

Tutor: "well, okay, but remember we talked about the present perfect, right?"

The example indicates that the tutor gives corrective feedback by giving the learner the information that the tenses in this sentence are present perfect tense. The tutor only gives the clue, not the correct sentence directly. It is expected that the learner will realize that the sentence he or she expressed was wrong.

**Repetition**

Using this type means the tutor will repeat the learners' error and adjust intonation to draw learners' attention to it. It is to remind the learners that the words they said are wrong. For the example as follows

(10) Learner: "I **am have** many friends."

Tutor: "I **am h**ave?" with rising intonation.

That example above explains that the learner is expected to realize that the sentence "I am have" is wrong. Furthermore, according to Daughty and Varela (2010) as cited by Rahmi (2017), they state that "repetition occurs when the teacher repeats learners' ill-formed utterances without any change."

The application of these techniques in teaching and learning activities is as follows

(11) Learner: She feed her dog every day.

Tutor   : She feed her dog? Are you sure?

Learner: I am sorry, ms It must be She feeds her dog everyday. It is a simple present. So, we must put s after the verb because the subject of the sentence is "she".

Tutor: Correct, we have to add a suffix after the verb in the simple present tense if the subject is she.

The self-correction in the two techniques above is something that some learners like. This fact refers to the result of an interview with one of the learners, he revealed that he prefers it when the tutor provides corrections by only giving the clue because according to him he can describe all his opinions or statements and also practice speaking.

As in the previous problem, the use of the two techniques above is not the only technique that can be used by a tutor in responding to grammatical errors made by learners. Many other factors can influence the use of various corrective feedback techniques, such as the situation in teaching and learning activities, the level of difficulty of the material, and the mastery of the material by the participants. Thus, the application of this type of technique in responding to problems using corrective feedback is adaptive.

## CONCLUSION

Corrective feedback is implemented by the tutor in the form of recast, elicitation, direct correction, clarification request, metalinguistic, and repetition as a solution to respond to existing problems. From the observations and analysis carried out by the writer, the use of corrective feedback received a positive response from the participants and had a significant impact on the correction of errors made by the participants. Moreover, the results of the summary of the interviews with the participants, as well as the observations made by the author, which are then written in the form of field notes. In the interview that two participants attended, they unanimously stated that in teaching and learning activities at the Small Talk Program, feedback is needed in the form of corrections to errors made by participants. Based on their opinions, this corrective feedback is helpful as input that can build participants to be better in the future when using English. Apart from the results of the interview, based on the author's observations of what has been stated in the field notes, it shows that the implementation of corrective feedback in teaching and learning activities at the Small Talk Program was responded to well by the participants and made it easier for participants to refresh their previously acquired knowledge, share new expertise to fellow participants, as well as improvements made by participants are also not simply rejected, but become a new discussion material when what has been corrected by the tutor is deemed inappropriate. In conclusion, the implementation of corrective feedback in the Small Talk Program at PT United Tractor Balikpapan is considered effective and can be used as a way to respond to problems that exist in teaching and learning activities. However, the application of this type of corrective feedback in a class also needs to be adjusted to the class situation, the level of difficulty of the material, mastery of the material, and other factors. So that the type of corrective feedback that is the solution to this problem is tentative according to needs.

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