Explicit Corrective Feedback: Differential Contributions of Implicit and Explicit Knowledge

Issues in Education Volume 38, 1, 2014, pp. 139-157


Posted: 25 Jan 2015

Mandana Rohollahzadeh Ebadi
University of Malaya (UM) - Faculty of Education

Nabeel Abedalaziz
University of Malaya (UM) - Faculty of Education

Mohd Rashid Mohd Saad
University of Malaya (UM) - Faculty of Education

Chin Hai Leng
University of Malaya (UM) - Faculty of Education

Date Written: December 31, 2014

Abstract

The issue of corrective feedback remains controversial in recent years due to the different positions of interface toward implicit and explicit knowledge of ESL learners. This study investigated the impact of explicit corrective feedback in the form of metalinguistic information on implicit and explicit knowledge of adult ESL learners. The study in an experimental design conducted at the University of Malaya Center for Continuing Education in Kuala Lumpur with 91 female and male adult students at lower-intermediate level of English proficiency in two groups (control and experimental). The relative efficacy of feedback was assessed by using the Oral Elicited Imitation Test and Timed Grammaticality Judgment Test for measuring implicit knowledge; and Untimed Grammaticality Judgment Test and Metalinguistic Knowledge Test for measuring explicit knowledge in pretest and posttest sessions before and after the intervention program. To analyze the data ANCOVA and t-test have been conducted. Results of ANCOVA revealed a higher score for the experimental group; and the result of t-test revealed that students scored in implicit knowledge significantly higher than in explicit knowledge. The theoretical implication of the result suggests explicit corrective feedback has a significant effect on the learning of implicit as well as explicit knowledge of ESL learners. However, the value of effectiveness of the corrective feedback approach in different grammatical features varied. Methodologically, the study by conducting separate measurement of implicit and explicit knowledge provided fresh empirical evidence to
support the weak interface position toward implicit and explicit knowledge of ESL learners and in turn proposes that second language students could benefit more from pedagogical practices followed by researchers and practitioners adhering to this position.

**Keywords:** Second language learning; Corrective feedback; Explicit feedback; Explicit knowledge; Implicit knowledge