

Errors and strategies in language acquisition



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Mistake Correction

Why Correction is Necessary

Correction is necessary. The statement that pupils merely necessitate to utilize the linguistic communication and the remainder will come by itself seems instead weak. Students come to us to learn them. If they want lone conversation, they will likely inform us – or, they might merely travel to a confab room on the Internet. Obviously pupils need to be corrected as portion of the learning experience. However, pupils besides need to be encouraged to utilize the linguistic communication. It is true that rectifying pupils while they are seeking their best to utilize the linguistic communication can frequently deter them. The most satisfactory solution of all is make rectification an activity. Correction can be used as a follow-up to any given category activity. However, rectification Sessions can be used as a valid activity in and of themselves. In other words, instructors can put up an activity during which each error (or a specific type of error) will be corrected. Students know that the activity is traveling to concentrate on rectification, and accept that fact. However, these activities should be kept in balance with other, more free-form, activities which give pupils the chance to show themselves without holding to worry about being corrected every other word.

It is to S. P. Corder that Error Analysis owes its topographic point as a scientific method in linguistics. As Rod Ellis cites (p. 48) , “ it was non until the seventiess that EA became a recognized portion of applied linguistics, a

development that owed much to the work of Corder ” . Before Corder, linguists ascertained scholars ‘ mistakes, divided them into classes, tried to see which 1s were common and which were non, but non much attending was drawn to their function in 2nd linguistic communication acquisition. It was Corder who showed to whom information about mistakes would be helpful (instructors, research workers, and pupils) and how.

There are many major constructs introduced by S. P. Corder in his article “ The significance of scholars ‘ mistakes ” , among which we encounter the followers:

1. It is the scholar who determines what the input is. The instructor can show a lingual signifier, but this is non needfully the input, but merely what is available to be learned.
2. Keeping the above point in head, scholars ‘ demands should be considered when teachers/linguists plan their course of studies. Before Corder ‘ s work, course of studies were based on theories and non so much on scholars ‘ demands.
3. Mager (1962) points out that the scholars ‘ built-in course of study is more efficient than the instructor ‘ s course of study. Corder adds that if such a constitutional course of study exists, so scholars ‘ mistakes would corroborate its being and would be systematic.
4. Corder introduced the differentiation between systematic and non-systematic mistakes. Unsystematic mistakes occur in one ‘ s native linguistic communication ; Corder calls these “ errors ” and provinces that they are non important to the procedure of linguistic

communication acquisition. He keeps the term “ mistakes ” for the systematic 1s, which occur in a 2nd linguistic communication.

5. Mistakes are important in three ways:- to the instructor: they show a pupil ' s advancement- to the research worker: they show how a linguistic communication is acquired, what strategies the scholar uses.- to the scholar: he can learn from these mistakes.
6. When a scholar has made an mistake, the most efficient manner to learn him the right signifier is non by merely giving it to him, but by allowing him detect it and prove different hypotheses. (This is derived from Carroll ' s proposal (Carroll 1955, cited in Corder) , who suggested that the scholar should happen the right lingual signifier by seeking for it.
7. Many mistakes are due to that the scholar uses constructions from his native linguistic communication. Corder claims that ownership of one ' s native linguistic communication is facilitative. Mistakes in this instance are non repressive, but instead grounds of one ' s acquisition schemes.

The above penetrations played a important function in lingual research, and in peculiar in the attack linguists took towards mistakes. Here are some of the countries that were influenced by Corder ' s work:

STUDIES OF LEARNER ERRORS

Corder introduced the differentiation between mistakes (in competency) and errors (in public presentation) . This differentiation directed the attending of research workers of SLA to competence mistakes and provided for a more concentrated model. Therefore, in the 1970s research workers

started analyzing scholars' competency mistakes and tried to explicate them. We find surveys such as Richards' s " A non-contrastive attack to error analysis " (1971) , where he identifies beginnings of competency mistakes ; L1 transportation consequences in interference mistakes ; incorrect (uncomplete or over-generalized) application of linguistic communication regulations consequences in intralingual mistakes ; building of faulty hypotheses in L2 consequences in developmental mistakes.

Not all research workers have agreed with the above differentiation, such as Dulay and Burt (1974) who proposed the undermentioned three classes of mistakes: developmental, intervention and unique. Stenson (1974) proposed another class, that of induced mistakes, which result from wrong direction of the linguistic communication. As most research methods, mistake analysis has failings (such as in methodological analysis) , but these do not decrease its importance in SLA research ; this is why linguists such as Taylor (1986) reminded research workers of its importance and suggested ways to get the better of these failings.

As mentioned antecedently, Corder noted to whom (or in which countries) the survey of mistakes would be important: to instructors, to research workers and to scholars. In add-on to surveys concentrating on mistake classification and analysis, assorted surveys concentrated on these three different countries. In other words, research was conducted not merely in order to understand mistakes per se, but besides in order to utilize what is learned from mistake analysis and use it to better linguistic communication competency.

Such surveys include Kroll and Schafer ' s " Error-Analysis and the Teaching of Composition " , where the writers demonstrate how error analysis can be used to better composing accomplishments. They analyze possible beginnings of mistake in non-native-English authors, and effort to supply a procedure attack to composing where the mistake analysis can assist accomplish better composing accomplishments.

These surveys, among many others, show that thanks to Corder ' s work, research workers recognized the importance of mistakes in SLA and started to analyze them in order to accomplish a better apprehension of SLA procedures, i. e. of how scholars get an L2.

STUDIES OF L1 INFLUENCE ON SLA

Assorted research workers have concentrated on those mistakes which demonstrate the influence of one ' s native linguistic communication to 2nd linguistic communication acquisition. Before Corder ' s work, interference mistakes were regarded as inhibitory ; it was Corder who pointed out that they can be facilitative and supply information about one ' s acquisition schemes (point 7, listed above) . Claude Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge (1999) is a protagonist of this construct and he mentions it in his book " The kid between two linguistic communications " , dedicated to kids ' s linguistic communication instruction. Harmonizing to Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge, intervention between L1 and L2 is observed in kids every bit good as in grownups. In grownups it is more obvious and increases continuously, as a monolingual individual gets older and the constructions of his first linguistic communication acquire stronger and enforce themselves more and more on any other linguistic communication the grownup wishes to larn. In contrast,

as respects kids, intervention characteristics will not go lasting unless the kid does not hold sufficient exposure to L2. If there is sufficient exposure, so alternatively of making a point where they can no longer be corrected (as frequently happens with phonetics characteristics) , intervention characteristics can be easily eliminated. Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge stresses that there is no ground for concern if interference persists more than expected. The instructor should cognize that a kid that is in the procedure of getting a 2nd linguistic communication will subconsciously invent constructions influenced by cognition he already possesses. These hypotheses he forms may represent mistakes. These mistakes, though, are wholly natural ; we should not anticipate the kid to get L2 constructions instantly (p. 81) .

In add-on to surveys of L1 transportation in general, there have been legion surveys for specific linguistic communication braces. Thanh Ha Nguyen (1995) conducted a instance survey to show first linguistic communication transportation in Vietnamese scholars of English. He examined a peculiar linguistic communication signifier, viz. unwritten competency in English past tense devising. He tried to find the function of L1 transportation in the acquisition of this English lingual characteristic as a map of age, clip of exposure to English, and topographic point and intent of larning English.

The influence of L1 on L2 was besides examined by Lakkis and Malak (2000) who concentrated on the transportation of Arabic prepositional cognition to English (by Arab pupils) . Both positive and negative transportation were examined in order to assist instructors place debatable countries for Arab pupils and assist them understand where transportation should be encouraged or avoided. In peculiar, they concluded that “ an

teacher of English, whose native linguistic communication is Arabic, can utilize the pupils ' L1 for constructions that use tantamount prepositions in both linguistic communications. On the other manus, whenever there are verbs or looks in the L1 and L2 that have different constructions, that take prepositions, or that have no equivalent in one of the linguistic communications, teachers should indicate out these differences to their pupils " .

Not merely was L1 influence examined harmonizing to linguistic communication brace, but harmonizing to the type of address produced (written vs. unwritten) . Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge (p. 33) discusses the influence of L1 on speech pattern ; he notes that the ear Acts of the Apostless like a filter, and after a critical age (which Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge claims is 11 old ages) , it merely accepts sounds that belong to one ' s native linguistic communication. Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge discusses L1 transportation in order to convert readers that there is so a critical age for linguistic communication acquisition, and in peculiar the acquisition of a native-like speech pattern. He uses the illustration of the Gallic linguistic communication, which includes complex vowel sounds, to show that after a critical age, the acquisition of these sounds is non possible ; therefore, scholars of a foreign linguistic communication will merely utilize the sounds bing in their native linguistic communication when bring forthing L2 sounds, which may frequently blockade communicating.

STUDIES OF CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

Corder elaborated on Carroll ' s work to demo that the most efficient manner to learn a pupil the right lingual signifier is to allow him prove assorted

hypotheses and finally happen the right signifier (point 6, listed above) . In these stairss, Hag & A ; egrave ; ge points out the importance of ego rectification (p. 82-83) . Harmonizing to Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge, it is utile to ever execute an mistake analysis based on written trials administered by the instructor, but without informing the pupil of the intent of the trial. On that footing, self-correction is preferred to rectification by the instructor, particularly if the latter is done in a terrible or daunting manner. Self rectification is even more efficient when it is done with the aid of kids ' s schoolmates. Harmonizing to instructors, the younger the kids, the greater the cooperation among them and the less aggressive or intimidating the corrections. Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge dedicates a subdivision in his book to the importance of handling mistakes in a positive manner. In this subdivision, titled " The instructor as a good hearer " , he notes that it is useless, if non harmful, to handle mistakes as if they were " diseases or pathological state of affairss which must be eliminated " , particularly if this intervention becomes deterring, as occurs when instructors lose their forbearance because of kids ' s legion mistakes. This, of class, does non intend that corrections should be avoided ; after all it is the instructor ' s responsibility to learn the regulations of the L2. But the rectification of every mistake every bit shortly as it occurs is non recommended. The justification that Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge offers is the undermentioned: the lingual message that the kid attempts to bring forth is a sequence of elements which are mutualist ; immediate corrections which interrupt this message tend to bring forth negative effects, even to the less sensitive kids ; such effects include anxiousness, fright of doing an mistake, the development of turning away schemes, reduced motive for engagement in the schoolroom, deficiency of

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involvement for acquisition, reduced will for ego rectification, and deficiency of trust towards the instructor. Esser (1984, cited in Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge) besides made a similar point: insistent and immediate corrections, he noted, may do sensitive kids to develop aggressive behaviour towards their schoolmates or instructor. Therefore, Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge concludes, rectification must non be applied by the instructor unless mistakes obstruct communicating. This is the chief standard for mistake rectification (i. e. obstructor of communicating) presented by Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge ; nevertheless there have been surveies which examined such standards in greater item, such as Freiermuth ' s " L2 Error Correction: Criteria and Techniques " (1997) . Freiermuth accepts Corder ' s position (indicate 6) and proposes standards for mistake rectification in the schoolroom. These standards are: exposure, earnestness, and pupils ' demands.

In the instance of exposure, Freiermuth claims that when a kid creates linguistic communication (for illustration, when he tries to show an thought by utilizing a lingual signifier he has non yet acquired) , he will most likely make mistakes ; rectifying these mistakes will be uneffective because the scholar is non cognizant of them. Therefore, mistake rectification would ensue in the acquisition of the right signifier merely if the scholar has been antecedently exposed to that peculiar linguistic communication signifier.

As respects the earnestness standard, Freiermuth claims that the instructor must find the gravitation of an mistake before make up one's minding whether he should rectify it or non. Here Freiermuth sets a standard which agrees with that of Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge ' s: " the mistake, he states, must hinder communicating before it should be considered an mistake that

necessitates rectification ” . But what constitutes a serious mistake? Which mistakes are those which should not be corrected? As an illustration of non-serious mistakes, Freiermuth references those mistakes which occur due to scholars ‘ jitteriness in the schoolroom, due to their emphasis or the force per unit area of holding to bring forth accurately a lingual signifier in the L2. These mistakes can happen even with familiar constructions ; in that instance, they are non of serious nature and are similar to what Corder called “ errors ” . Here once more we see Corder ‘ s influence in mistake analysis, and in peculiar in the differentiation between mistakes and errors. Freiermuth goes on to propose a hierarchy of mistakes (harmonizing to earnestness) to assist instructors make up one’s mind which mistakes should be corrected: “ Mistakes that significantly impair communicating [are] at the top of the list, followed by mistakes that occur often, mistakes that reflect misconstruing or incomplete acquisition of the current schoolroom focal point, and mistakes that have a extremely stigmatising consequence on the hearers ” . He besides clarifies what can do stigmatisation: profound pronunciation mistakes, or mistakes of familiar signifiers.

Another of import standard that must be considered by the instructor is single pupils ‘ demands. The importance of this factor is mentioned in Corder, who in bend notes that this thought had been suggested antecedently by Carroll (1955, cited in Corder 1967) and Ferguson (1966, cited in Corder 1967) . Each pupil is different and therefore may respond otherwise to error rectification. We infer from Freiermuth ‘ s claim that the instructor must execute two chief undertakings: foremost, measure some specific character traits of pupils, such as assurance and linguistic

communication acquisition capableness. Freiermuth agrees with Walz (1982, cited in Freiermuth) that self-confident, capable pupils can gain from even minor corrections, while fighting pupils should have rectification merely on major mistakes. This claim agrees with Esser and Hag & A ; egrave ; Ge ' s claim that insistent corrections are likely to diminish motive ; it is sensible to accept that pupils who lack assurance will be " stigmatized " to a greater grade than confident pupils.

The instructor ' s 2nd undertaking, harmonizing to Freiermuth, is to listen to scholars ' L2 vocalizations in order to find where mistakes occur (i. e. which lingual signifiers cause pupils troubles) , their frequence, and their gravitation (harmonizing to the badness standards mentioned above) . Then the instructor can unite the result of these undertakings and make up one's mind on rectification techniques for single pupils.

A different attack to error rectification was suggested by Porte (1993) , who stressed the importance of self-correction. Porte refers to Corder ' s differentiation of mistakes and errors and points out that many pupils do non cognize the difference. It is of import, Porte notes, that pupils know how to place an mistake in order to avoid it in the hereafter. She agrees with Corder that it is more efficient for scholars to rectify themselves than be corrected by the instructor, and goes on to propose a four-step attack for self-correction. This attack consists of inquiries that the instructor provides to pupils. After composing an essay, pupils should read it four times, each clip seeking to reply the inquiries included in each of the four stairss. Therefore, in each re-reading undertaking (each measure) they concentrate on a different facet of their essay. In brief, the first undertaking asks them to

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foreground the verbs and look into the tenses ; in the 2nd undertaking pupils concentrate on prepositions ; the 3rd undertaking requires them to concentrate on nouns (spelling, understanding between capable and verb) ; eventually in the 4th undertaking pupils should seek to rectify possible personal errors. Porte besides offers some elucidation of what is meant by personal errors, in order to assist the pupils place them.

The surveies mentioned above are merely a few illustrations that demonstrate how S. Pit Corder ' s work influenced the country of mistake analysis in linguistics. The constructs that Corder introduced directed research worker ' s attending to specific countries of mistake analysis ; they helped linguists recognize that although mistakes sometimes obstruct communicating, they can frequently ease 2nd linguistic communication acquisition ; besides they played a important function in developing instructors and assisting them place and sort pupils ' mistakes, every bit good as assisting them concept rectification techniques.

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