

An Analysis on Problems of Teacher Feedback in English Teaching

Shiqin Ren

China West Normal University, China

Abstract

Teacher feedback is an essential component of classroom communication, optimizing the teaching process, and achieving harmonious unity between teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers should timely update their teaching concepts, adopt different feedback modes in order to cultivate students' learning interests, enhance their learning motivation, establish their confidence, stimulate their potential, and promote their comprehensive development. Based on an overview of the definition, types, and functions of teacher feedback, this paper analyzes the problems of English teacher classroom feedback in China and proposes corresponding optimizing strategies, including improving teachers' feedback knowledge literacy, enhancing feedback usage ability, embodying the concept of "student-centered" and so on.

Keywords

Teacher feedback; English teaching; problems; optimizing strategies.

1. Introduction

In many classroom studies, teacher discourse and teacher-student interaction have always been the central issues. Teacher discourse is crucial for classroom teaching organization and the process of second language acquisition (Nunan, 1991). The quantity and quality of teacher discourse in language classrooms can affect or even determine the success or failure of classroom teaching. Teacher feedback is a form of teacher discourse. Teacher feedback plays a supportive role in students' second language acquisition. In the teaching process, the interaction between teachers and students can promote students' acquisition of a second language, as well as help students understand their own learning situation and clarify their following learning plans (Cullen, 2002). However, although some teachers may provide feedback in the classroom, most of them are simply praising or correcting mistakes, making it difficult to help students acquire knowledge. Some students even choose to remain silent because they are afraid of the teacher's criticism and dare not express their thoughts. Therefore, it is necessary to study the feedback language of English teachers.

2. Problems identification

This part includes an analysis of the existing problems in English teacher feedback.

2.1. Lack of theoretical knowledge and reflective awareness in feedback language

In the current English teaching situation, some teachers have limited knowledge of the types, strategies, and functions of feedback language, resulting in feedback language being too general and mechanical, lacking specificity and language artistry. Some teachers focus more on teaching tasks and objectives, and rarely consider whether the use of feedback is appropriate and effective, which is closely related to their mastery of theoretical knowledge of feedback language (Wang Xi, 2021).

Some English teachers are aware that feedback plays an important role in the teaching process, but they have not been able to reflect it in order to achieve teaching objectives. In the process of lesson preparation or post class reflection, some teachers focus their attention on teaching knowledge rather than the effective use of feedback. Even if they realize that their classroom feedback language has shortcomings, they will not spend time thinking and improving, resulting in the inability to fully utilize the role of feedback language in actual teaching, and thus unable to improve teaching effectiveness.

2.2. Lack of feedback language reserve and attention to students

In the process of English teaching, if the teacher's feedback is monotonous and lacks discipline and artistry, it is difficult to stimulate students' learning motivation, which can easily lead to negative emotions towards learning and ultimately result in low self-efficacy among students, making it difficult to improve the effectiveness of English learning through classroom creation (Zheng Yan, 2015). When students answer accurately, some teachers usually provide feedback on their response behavior through simple recognition, material encouragement, and retelling, while forms of feedback such as comments, follow-up questions, and expansion are rare or even absent. Overall, the form of feedback language used by English teachers in the classroom is singular. Ultimately, it is due to the insufficient reserve of feedback language by the teachers, resulting in a lack of language resources in the production process, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' language output ability.

The main reason why teachers have problems such as improper use of feedback language and lack of timeliness in English teaching is due to insufficient attention to students and low sensitivity to classroom feedback. For example, after students answer questions, some teachers often overlook their emotional and attitude characteristics. Some students may not have good psychological qualities and are prone to nervousness. When answering questions, they may not be able to clarify their cognitive answers and only engage in simple response behaviors. If the teacher fails to analyze the information content or emotional attitudes beyond the student's answers, and fails to pay attention to the short answers of the student due to nervousness, only providing simple feedback on the student's answers is not conducive to better learning for the student, nor is it conducive to boost students' zone of proximal development (Qi Yi, 2021).

2.3. Lack of understanding of student needs

The preferences and expectations of students towards feedback from English teachers also reflect their learning needs. Only by meeting the learning needs of students can we promote their development in a better direction. In current English teaching, some teachers do not have sufficient understanding of students. For example, when a student answers correctly, the most expected thing is for the teacher to recognize them and evaluate their answers, accompanied by nonverbal positive feedback during the evaluation process. However, due to the limitations of classroom time, teachers simply acknowledge students' answers, making feedback invaluable. This type of teacher feedback is not sufficient the needs of students also do not meet their expectations, making it difficult for teachers to effectively respond the true function of feedback language.

2.4. Lack of target feedback

The attitudes towards teacher feedback vary among different age groups. However, in the actual teaching process, most English teachers often use conventional feedback phrases such as "Ok" and "Well done" to give similar feedback to students in all stages, without paying attention to the status of students in different stages. These indiscriminate feedback words can weaken students' learning motivation, cause them to lose interest in learning, and generate a sense of learning anxiety. For example, when new students just start school and face the pressure of a new stage, some teachers do not mainly use positive feedback to praise and

motivate them, do not fully understand the differences between students, and do not use targeted feedback to help students understand themselves more clearly. However, the elderly students are in the stage of accumulating knowledge, and some teachers have not provided inspiring, high demand and other types of feedback to help students find suitable learning methods and encourage them to steadily move forward. In addition, in situations where the learning environment and atmosphere are tense, it is important to help students stabilize their mentality. However, some teachers do not take these objective factors into consideration and provide corresponding feedback, which is not conducive to relieving students' tense emotion (Teng Bingbing, 2013).

3. Problem solutions

This part focuses on carrying out some optimizing strategies based on the existing problems above mentioned in order to fully leverage the role of teacher feedback and improving teaching quality.

3.1. Improving teacher feedback language knowledge literacy

3.1.1. Learn feedback language theory and enrich feedback language reserves

Teachers are the guides, leaders, and designers of teaching. High quality English classrooms rely on the teaching abilities of English teachers, and the development of their teaching abilities is based on mastering educational theories. Teachers should update their theoretical knowledge in a timely manner, pay more attention to relevant research on English teacher feedback at home and abroad, improve their professional abilities and qualities, fully grasp teacher feedback, and strive for excellence. Teachers can accumulate teaching feedback in English teaching competitions, training, or other high-quality online courses, and observe how other teachers flexibly use blended feedback in teaching presentations, homework feedback, and other aspects to enrich their own feedback language reserves. Although it is just a simple feedback sentence, due to the appropriate type of situation and meeting the expectations of students, it can change their views about English and lead them to engage in English learning. In addition, in the actual teaching process, teachers can also adopt a combination of various feedback methods to increase language input and output for students' opportunities.

3.1.2. Strengthen reflection outside of class and improve the quality of classroom feedback

Teacher's self reflection can effectively improve their professional abilities. If conditions permit, teachers can record their own or others' classes, analyze and summarize after class, continuously discover their own shortcomings in the use of classroom feedback language in the actual teaching process, learn from the strengths of others, and help themselves achieve greater development. Teachers should not only improve their English proficiency and educational level, but also expand their knowledge areas outside of class. Only in this way can they cope with unexpected problems more calmly in the classroom. In addition, teachers can also invite other teachers to observe their own classroom, conduct research and discussion after class, humbly listen to the opinions of others, in order to improve the quality of their classroom feedback.

3.2. Improve the ability to use feedback language

3.2.1. Comprehensively grasp the function of feedback language

Comprehensively grasping the function of feedback language is beneficial for teachers to better carry out teaching activities. Teachers should not only evaluate whether students' answers are correct, but also guide discourse exchange and strengthen teaching interaction between teachers and students. In the actual teaching process, teachers can adopt positive and affirmative feedback with semi pause repetition and questioning to provide students with rich

language input and promote their language output in discourse reconstruction. Especially in the process of error correction, teachers should avoid directly denying students' answers or providing correct answers. They can try to provide feedback such as euphemistic negation, restatement, suggestive errors, and induction to guide students to correct by themselves. This not only protects students' self-esteem, but also encourages them to output more language in teacher-student interaction and cultivate their language expression ability. Therefore, only by comprehensively grasping the function of feedback language can teacher feedback language provide students with rich and understandable input materials and provide students with more opportunities for language production.

3.2.2. Pay attention to student reactions and provide feedback timely and appropriately

In the teaching process, although the teaching content is important, teachers should also use their keen insight to observe students, receive reactions to each information, and use effective information to provide feedback on student responses. If students are unable to answer questions due to insufficient abilities, teachers should seize the opportunity to use positive nonverbal feedback, comfort and encourage students to express their ideas boldly, and guide students to connect with past knowledge structures before answering questions. When students answer correctly, teachers should leave a few seconds of blank space to allow students space and time to continue thinking and avoid interrupting their thinking. During this period, teachers should face the respondents with a trusting and encouraging gaze, and pay attention to learning seize the opportunity for feedback, provide appropriate feedback language, and maximize the effectiveness of teacher feedback language.

3.3. Practice the learner-centered concept

3.3.1. Use effective feedback language based on student needs

The teaching concept of English teaching is people-oriented and student-centered, and the teaching goal of English teaching is to cultivate well-rounded talents. Students have different ideas, and whether their psychological needs are met or not is one of the important criteria for measuring the effectiveness of teacher feedback. Therefore, teachers should combine teaching objectives, focus on the psychological needs of students, be good at listening to their thoughts, understand the preferences of students with different personalities for teacher feedback, and conduct teaching on the basis of meeting student needs. They should truly respect student emotions, care for and care for students, make students feel a sense of belonging, stimulate their interest in learning, and improve teaching quality, promoting comprehensive development of students.

3.3.2. Respect student differences and use targeted feedback language

In the process of English teaching, teachers should use different classroom feedback languages for students of different grades and respect the differences in learning stages, which is beneficial for teachers to better carry out teaching activities. At the same time, teachers should fully consider the emotional factors of students, including their learning motivation, attitude, and self-confidence, and use corresponding feedback language for different students to help them better understand and master knowledge. For students of higher learning age, teachers should impose strict requirements on them, use feedback language with functions such as expansion and inspiration, and guide students to actively explore unknown fields; For younger students, teachers should not be limited to the accuracy of their answers, but should pay attention to their dynamic development and use more comforting or encouraging feedback to guide them to express their ideas, stimulate their interest in learning English, and improve their confidence (Zhang Jiejing, 2020).

4. Conclusion

The function of classroom evaluation is to provide feedback, correction, and encouragement, and the evaluation language used by teachers in foreign language classroom teaching is also fulfilling this function. Its overall goal is to promote student learning and development. Appropriate feedback can stimulate students' motivation for further learning and become a trigger for further learning. Feedback language involves assessing the language performance of students, and efforts should be made to make students have a positive attitude towards judgment, that is, to make them understand that even if there are errors in language behavior, these errors are also the starting point of learning and can promote learning.

Teachers should attach importance to the feedback process, as it can help students assess their language abilities, acknowledge their progress, and clarify the direction of future efforts, thereby developing their learning strategies. For foreign language classrooms in primary and secondary schools, teachers have relatively limited time for feedback, making it difficult to require teachers to provide adequate feedback on each student's activities. However, each teacher should master effective ways of feedback and strive to benefit students from it, using feedback as a source and driving force for their own development. In summary, the feedback session is a valuable classroom session. Foreign language classroom teaching should provide students with both high-quality input and opportunities for output.

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