

## **Effect of Corrective Feedback on the Development of Vocabulary in the Acquisition of Second Language at Secondary Level**

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### **Abstract**



*Effect of corrective feedback on the development of vocabulary in the acquisition of second language at secondary level was the main purpose of this study. The study utilized an experimental design, specifically a (pre-test post-test equivalent group design). Sample consisted of 30 students in each group, selected on their pre-test scores. Experimental group received corrective feedback during an eight-week period, while the control group followed the same lessons but with the conventional teaching. Results also indicated that application of corrective feedback strategy was beneficial for the vocabulary development of experimental group contrarily to control group. These findings implied that integrating “corrective feedback” a type of feedback in language teaching practices can effectively enhance students' language proficiency in public sector schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Therefore, the study recommends that language teachers in public sector schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should adopt corrective feedback strategies into their teaching practices to improve their students' overall language proficiency, including vocabulary development.*

**Keywords:** Corrective Feedback, Vocabulary, Second Language, Achievement

### **Introduction**

Second language acquisition (SLA) is under the debate among researchers for several decades. SLA refers to the process of acquiring a new language after one's first language has been learned. In a study conducted in Saudi Arabia, the effectiveness of using the first language (L1) in EFL classrooms was examined, revealing that L1 use can positively impact students' motivation and comprehension (Albalawi, 2021). Another study investigated the correlation between motivation and achievement in Chinese EFL learners, demonstrating a positive relationship between the two (Bao & Liu, 2020). Skill acquisition theory is an important aspect of SLA, and DeKeyser (2019) provides a comprehensive overview of this theory with respect to language learning. Factors influencing second language acquisition, such as age, motivations, and language input, are analysed in detail by Ellis (2020). Gass & Mackey (2015) offers a collection of essays covering the current state of the field and various research topics in SLA.

Krashen's input hypothesis is a prominent theory in the field of SLA, proposing that language acquisition occurs through exposure to understandable input (Krashen, 2018). Long (2017) provides an overview of instructed second language acquisition (ISLA), examining the various geopolitical and methodological challenges that arise in the context of second language teaching. The techniques and methodologies used in language teaching can significantly impact SLA, and Richards and Rodgers (2014) offer an overview of several language teaching methods. Spada (2015) critically examines the relationship between SLA research and language pedagogy, exploring potential misconceptions and misapplications of research findings in language teaching. Additionally, Swain and Lapkin (2015) discuss the importance of interaction in SLA, highlighting how social interaction and communication can contribute to language learning.

The process of acquiring a second language involves various aspects, such as age, driving forces, and input (Larsen-Freeman, 2018). In a study by Gass and Selinker (2020), the significance of input and interaction in L2 learning was highlighted. They suggested that learners should be exposed to comprehensible input, which is language that they can understand with the aid of context and other

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cues. Additionally, they recommended that learners should have opportunities to interact with native speakers or more advanced learners to expand their language competence. Moreover, they emphasized the role of feedback in second language acquisition, stating that learners require corrective feedback to improve their accuracy and fluency. Therefore, it is essential for language teachers to provide appropriate input, promote interaction, and give feedback to facilitate second language acquisition.

In another recent study, Wong and VanPatten (2021) examined the importance of attention and awareness in second language acquisition. They argued that learners need to pay attention to relevant linguistic features and form hypotheses about language rules to acquire a second language. Furthermore, they suggested that explicit instruction can enhance learners' awareness of the language system and promote their learning. However, they also recognized the limitations of explicit instruction and the importance of implicit learning through exposure and practice. Thus, language teachers should adopt a balanced approach to instruction, providing both explicit and implicit learning opportunities to facilitate second language acquisition while keeping in mind the significance of attention and awareness in the process.

The acquisition of a second language involves various components, including grammar, pronunciation, listening, speaking, and vocabulary development. Vocabulary acquisition is particularly significant in language learning because it plays a vital role in communication. To enhance vocabulary acquisition in second language learning, one of the most important techniques used is corrective feedback. The purpose of this study is to conduct a review of recent literature on the impact of corrective feedback on vocabulary development in second language learning. Vocabulary development is a critical area of second language learning, and numerous studies have focused on this aspect. One such area of interest in this research is the effect of corrective feedback on vocabulary acquisition. Corrective feedback is a form of feedback given to learners indicating that their language use is incorrect. It can take various forms, including explicit correction, clarification requests, or recasts, as defined by Ellis (2009).

#### **Corrective Feed back**

Recent studies have shown that corrective feedback can enhance vocabulary development in second language learning. For example, Mohammadi and Heidari Tabrizi (2020) conducted a study with 40 Iranian EFL learners. They found that providing corrective feedback on vocabulary errors through peer correction significantly improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, Wang and Zhang (2020) conducted a study with 56 Chinese learners of English. They found that providing written corrective feedback on vocabulary errors in writing assignments improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition.

Several studies have investigated the effect of corrective feedback on vocabulary acquisition among learners of different ages and language backgrounds. For example, Kormos and Csizér (2021) conducted a systematic review of studies on feedback in L2 vocabulary learning, and found that both children and adults benefited from corrective feedback, with explicit correction being more effective for adults and recasts for children. Similarly, Cho and Kim (2021) investigated the effect of self-assessment with and without teacher feedback on Korean EFL learners' vocabulary learning, and found that both types of feedback had a positive effect on vocabulary development.

Other studies have examined the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback on vocabulary acquisition. Li and Huang (2021) investigated the effect of focused and unfocused corrective feedback on vocabulary learning in EFL writing, and found that both types of feedback had a positive impact, with focused feedback being more effective.

Wang and Guo (2021) also found that corrective feedback was effective in improving EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition, and that learner's preferred explicit correction to other types of feedback. Moreover, research has shown that immediate feedback on vocabulary errors is more effective than delayed feedback. In a recent study, Darabi and Azarshahr (2022) conducted a study with 30 Iranian EFL learners. They found that immediate corrective feedback on vocabulary errors significantly improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition compared to delayed feedback.

In addition, research has shown that feedback on vocabulary errors is more effective when it is provided in a meaningful context (Yuan & Ellis, 2021). This is because the learners can better understand the correct form of the word in a context that is relevant to them. However, excessive feedback on vocabulary errors can have a negative effect on learners' motivation and self-esteem

(Ferris, 2020). Therefore, it is important for teachers to provide feedback in moderation and to use different strategies to provide feedback that is effective and motivating for the learners.

However, some studies have examined learners' perceptions of corrective feedback on vocabulary development. For instance, Shabani and Shams (2021) investigated the effect of teacher-written and peer-written feedback on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning, and found that learners had a more positive attitude towards peer-written feedback.

Xiang and Chen (2021) also investigated the effects of different types of corrective feedback on vocabulary learning, and found that learners had a preference for explicit correction and clarification requests. It was concluded on the basis of findings in literature that corrective feedback is an essential method for improving vocabulary acquisition in second language learning. The research shows that immediate feedback on vocabulary errors is more effective than delayed feedback, and feedback in a meaningful context can help learners better understand the correct form of the word. However, excessive feedback can have a negative impact on learners' motivation and self-esteem. Therefore, teachers need to provide feedback in moderation and use different strategies to provide effective and motivating feedback.

Other studies have shown that corrective feedback can enhance vocabulary development in second language learning. For example, Mohammadi and Heidari Tabrizi (2020) conducted a study with 40 Iranian EFL learners and found that providing corrective feedback on vocabulary errors through peer correction significantly improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition. Similarly, Wang and Zhang (2020) conducted a study with 56 Chinese learners of English and found that providing written corrective feedback on vocabulary errors in writing assignments improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition. Studies have investigated the effect of corrective feedback on vocabulary acquisition among learners of different ages and language backgrounds. For example, Kormos and Csizér (2021) conducted a systematic review of studies on feedback in L2 vocabulary learning and found that both children and adults benefited from corrective feedback, with explicit correction being more effective for adults and recasts for children.

Similarly, Cho and Kim (2021) investigated the effect of self-assessment with and without teacher feedback on Korean EFL learners' vocabulary learning and found that both types of feedback had a positive effect on vocabulary development. Different types of corrective feedback on vocabulary acquisition have also been examined. Li and Huang (2021) investigated the effect of focused and unfocused corrective feedback on vocabulary learning in EFL writing and found that both types of feedback had a positive impact, with focused feedback being more effective. Wang and Guo (2021) also found that corrective feedback was effective in improving EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition, and that learner's preferred explicit correction to other types of feedback. Immediate feedback on vocabulary errors is more effective than delayed feedback, as shown in recent studies.

Darabi and Azarshahr (2022) conducted a study with 30 Iranian EFL learners and found that immediate corrective feedback on vocabulary errors significantly improved the participants' vocabulary acquisition compared to delayed feedback. Feedback on vocabulary errors is also more effective when provided in a meaningful context (Yuan & Ellis, 2021) because learners can better understand the correct form of the word in a context that is relevant to them. However, excessive feedback on vocabulary errors can negatively affect learners' motivation and self-esteem (Ferris, 2020). Therefore, it is essential for teachers to provide feedback in moderation and to use different strategies that are effective and motivating for learners. Studies have also examined learners' perceptions of corrective feedback on vocabulary development.

Shabani and Shams (2021) investigated the effect of teacher-written and peer-written feedback on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning and found that learners had a more positive attitude towards peer-written feedback. Xiang and Chen (2021) also investigated the effects of different types of corrective feedback on vocabulary learning and found that learners had a preference for explicit correction and clarification requests. In conclusion, after going through literature, corrective feedback is an essential method for improving vocabulary acquisition in second language learning. Immediate feedback on vocabulary errors is more effective than delayed feedback, and feedback in a meaningful context can help learners better understand the correct form of the word. However, excessive feedback can negatively impact learners' motivation and self-esteem. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to use a balanced approach to corrective feedback that takes into account

learners' individual needs and preferences, and provides feedback way that supports their motivation, self-esteem, and language development.

### **Statement of the problem**

The acquisition of language skills, particularly vocabulary, plays a critical role in effective communication and academic achievement. Various studies have examined the use of corrective feedback as a strategy for enhancing language learning in second language acquisition research. However, there is limited information available on the effectiveness and application of corrective feedback strategies in public schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. This study aims to explore the use and efficacy of corrective feedback strategies on vocabulary development among students in public sector schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Objective of the study**

The main purpose of the study was:

- a) To investigate effect of corrective feedback on the development of vocabulary in the acquisition of second language at secondary level.

### **Hypothesis:**

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experimental and control group with respect to achievement in vocabulary.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

Pre-test post-test designs involve measuring a variable before and after an intervention to determine if the intervention is effective. While useful for evaluating interventions, these designs may be subject to biases and should be carefully designed and implemented (Bachman & O'Brien, 2019). The proposed study employed a pre-test post-test equivalent group design, in which 60 participants were selected randomly from Grade-X and then distributed into experimental group (receiving corrective feedback strategy) and control (without any corrective feedback) group equally 30 each through pair random sample technique on the basis of pre-test scores. This research design has been commonly used in previous studies to examine the effectiveness of corrective feedback strategy in language learning (Farzaneh & Tahriri, 2021). Both groups were tested with a pre-test and post-test to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. The pre-test was used to measure the students' initial vocabulary knowledge, while the post-test was used to measure their vocabulary development after the corrective feedback intervention.

#### **Population**

The entire population for this study was comprised of 433405 Grade-X students in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (EMIS, 2022).

#### **Sample**

For this study, a total of sixty male students from grade-X of (Government Shaheed Ahmad Elahi Technical Higher Secondary School) Gulbahar, No. 02, Peshawar were selected as sample through a pre-test scoring technique. These students were equally separated into two groups, (an experimental) and a (control group), through pair random sampling technique on the basis of their pre-test scores.

The groups were formed in a way that from each pair of equal scores one student was distributed to experimental and the other to control group. These pairs were formed from highest to the lowest and were kept in order in such a way that both the groups were almost same in all characteristics. According to Kirk (2012), pair random sampling involves randomly selecting pairs of individuals from a population and then pairing them, based on a specific characteristic. The same procedure was adopted while forming two groups; each group consisted of 30 students that were equivalent in terms of their average scores before the start of experiment.

#### **Research instrument**

Research instrument developed for the study was a pre-test and post-test. Former was administered to sample students in order to know their prior knowledge in vocabulary in the subject English of Grade X. While later was administered at the ending of experiment to measure the difference in achievement of both groups. Both tests consisted of fifty items based on vocabulary, which were selected from Grade-X, four lessons according to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Text Book Board. These items were the same in both tests. The instrument was developed by the researchers after studying previous studies; variety of literature relevant was reviewed before the construction of instrument which was the most suitable one. For this purpose, the researchers visited different websites, links such as IELTS, TOEFL British

Council etc. for the construction of a valid and reliable instrument. Additionally, the principal researcher collaborated with the corresponding author, co-author, and language experts to ascertain its validity. During the process, both groups learned same course/curriculum from Grade-X English text book. Finally, post-test was administered after eight weeks to know the achievements of both groups.

#### **Pilot-testing Results**

The researcher conducted a pilot test with forty-five students of Grade X at GHSS No. 2 in Peshawar city, KP, Pakistan. After the pilot test results and responses given by the participants, certain corrections/changes were made by the researchers in the test items. Specifically, questions in Section A, numbers 1 and 3 were found to be very easy, while questions in Section D, numbers 31 and 32, were deemed to be very difficult. Questions in Section B, numbers 11, 12, 13, and 18, were modified and corrected. Questions in Section C, numbers 27, 28, and 29, were replaced with new ones. Additionally, questions in Section E, numbers 43, 44, and 49, were deemed unsuitable for the test and were therefore discarded.

#### **Validity**

Before administering the test, validity of the test must be ensured. That's why, for this purpose, the content validity of the instrument was established by all researchers in collaboration with the approval from a team of expert researchers and language specialists. The test items were carefully selected from the Grade-X curriculum for the subject of English. In addition, subject and language experts were consulted and confirmed its validity.

#### **Reliability**

The pilot test's reliability was assessed through the split-half method. Test Items divided into odd and even. Odd questions were categorized as Test-A and even questions were categorized as Test-B. It was administered to 60, 10th-grade students in Section A of the Government Shaheed Hasnian Higher Secondary School No. 2 in Peshawar City on May 19, 2022. The researcher utilized Pearson's "r" formula to determine the test's overall reliability, which produced a value of 0.99, indicating near-perfect reliability. According to Frankel and Wallen's (2003) guidelines, the reliability coefficient for tests utilized in research studies should be 0.70 or higher, and therefore the test's high reliability coefficient resulted in its acceptance.

#### **Procedure of the study**

The researcher aimed to ensure similar teaching conditions for both groups. Furthermore, time duration; class timings; treatment length; course contents, and teachers' qualifications were almost alike. The only variation was the teachers employed to teach the experimental and control groups, who differed in age and experience. The teacher for the experimental group was 45 years old with 20 years of teaching experience, while the teacher for the control group was 46 years old with 21 years of teaching experience. Both teachers held the same position (CT) and worked at the same school (Government Shaheed Ahmad Gulbahar No.2 Peshawar). The experimental group was instructed using "corrective feedback techniques," while the control group received traditional "lecture" teaching. The treatment period lasted for eight weeks, with six periods per week, each lasting 35 minutes.

#### **Treatment**

Upon completion of the treatment period, a post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups to compare the impact of the given treatment. In this experimental study, two English language teachers were recruited to instruct 10th-grade students using traditional and feedback learning strategies. The experimental group teacher received three days of training on how to provide written corrective feedback to the sample students, while the control group teacher used traditional teaching methods. Throughout the eight-week English language teaching period, the researcher closely observed and supervised the experimental group, while both teachers acted as research assistants. The experimental group received daily corrective feedback throughout the forty-eight periods of the treatment period, which began on October 1, 2022, and concluded on November 30, 2022, resulting in a two-month treatment period for this study. The comparison of post-test scores allowed for an assessment of the effectiveness of the corrective feedback strategy in improving vocabulary development in second language acquisition.

#### **Data Analysis**

The collected data were analysed using the t-test for independent samples through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences program.

**Results**

**Table 1: "Comparison of Experimental and Control Groups Mean Scores on Vocabulary Achievement in Pre-Test"**

Groups	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean	Df	t-table Value	t-Calculated
Experimental	30	22.8667	5.58775	1.02018	58	1.671	.164
Control	30	23.1000	5.42885	.99117			

\*Not Significant

Significance level = 0.05

According to the study's findings, prior to the commencement of the experiment, the vocabulary proficiency of the students was comparable, and no substantial disparity was discovered between the groups at 0.05 significance level. This suggests that the two groups were homogeneous and could be deemed equivalent, ensuring that any variances observed could be credited to the intervention and not to disparities that existed prior to the study.

**Table 2: "Difference in Mean Scores of Experimental and Control Groups on Vocabulary Achievement in Post-Test"**

Groups	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean	df	t-table Value	t-Calculated
Experimental	30	39.300	5.96628	1.08929	58	1.671	10.450
Control	30	22.300	6.61842	1.20835			

\* Significant

Significance level = 0.05

Based on the findings in Table 2, the calculated t-value was observed to be higher than the table value at a 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the students who were provided with assistance and guidance through the corrective feedback strategy demonstrated better vocabulary development than the control group students who did not receive such assistance. Therefore, it is concluded from results that the use of “corrective feedback” as a means to enhance vocabulary attainment in L2 is significant.

**Discussion:**

The study results indicated that both groups before the intervention were similar and could be treated as equal. However, after the intervention, the post-test results showed that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group, and the null hypothesis was rejected, supporting the effectiveness of the corrective feedback strategy used to enhance vocabulary development. These findings align with the previous research conducted by Shabani and Shams (2021) and Xiang and Chen (2021), which demonstrate the effectiveness of corrective feedback in vocabulary learning. Shabani and Shams found that Iranian EFL learners preferred peer-written feedback over teacher-written feedback, while Xiang and Chen observed that learners preferred explicit correction and clarification requests. Thus, this study contributes to the expanding body of research on corrective feedback in language teaching, emphasizing the importance of incorporating such strategies into language teaching practices to enhance language proficiency.

**Conclusion:**

Effect of corrective feedback on the development of vocabulary in the acquisition of second language at secondary level was the main purpose of this study. The results demonstrated that the use of corrective feedback strategy can significantly enhance students' vocabulary knowledge. Specifically, the experimental group, which received corrective feedback, showed a substantial improvement in their vocabulary compared to the control group, which did not receive any feedback. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on corrective feedback and its efficacy in effective teaching and learning process. This study underscores its potential advantages of integrating corrective feedback strategy into language classrooms to improve students' vocabulary development, and the significance of providing teacher training to equip educators with effective feedback techniques.

**Recommendations**

1. The study recommends that language teachers in public sector schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may incorporate corrective feedback strategy into their teaching practices. The use of this strategy might significantly improve students' vocabulary development and will enhance their overall language proficiency.
2. It is further recommended that teachers need to receive proper trainings on how to provide effective corrective feedback to their students. These training should cover various aspects, including the types of corrective feedback, the timing and frequency of feedback, and the language level and the needs of the students.

3. It is also recommended for investigation in the long-term about its effects on students' achievement in vocabulary might also be verified for other languages. If the results of the studies will be consistent then the implementation of corrective feedback strategy might be more beneficial.

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