

Report On

Providing Feedback to Young Children

An internship report submitted to the Department of English and Humanities
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Executive Summary

This report is based on the internship experience of the writer of this paper in Academia School. To accomplish her under graduation degree in ELT& Applied Linguistics she had to do this internship. The focus of this report is on the feedback giving process to the young children. In this report it has mentioned that how the writer of this paper tried to provide feedback to her students by applying different teaching techniques, methods that she learned in different ELT courses. She was assigned to take classes of elementary level students who were not mature enough. Hence, her main concern was to handle them properly and give them feedback in a very easy, positive and suitable way. This report also includes different types of feedbacks. Some challenges and obstacles that the writer faced during the internship period have also been mentioned in the paper. Along with that she has given some recommendations regarding some issues which she found to be corrected.

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Chapter: 1

Introduction

London and Smither (2002) claimed that strong feedback culture is that where individuals use formal and informal feedback and this is linked to effective performance, continuous learning and career development. Feedback is always important both for children as well as adult learners. However, feedback works as a way of reinforcement that helps to improve own performance. Feedback guides, motivates, and reinforces effective behaviors and reduces or stops ineffective behaviors (London, 2003, p.1). Feedback has a great influence on individual behavior and it increases effective learning in classroom.

The objective of this paper is to accomplish my under graduation degree in ELT& Applied Linguistics. To execute my degree I had to do my internship in any academic institution. So I applied and got the chance to work as an intern teacher in the school named Academia School. It was one of the reputed schools and the location was suitable for me so I chose this school to work in.

The school authority assigned me under a supervisor and also chose me to take classes of junior sections. I had to take classes of standard 1, 2 and 3. I was very nervous as I rarely had any experience of teaching students of this age level. But when I started to observe and take classes I have faced few challenges and learned many things. I had to change my way of talking with children while taking classes as they are quite different than adults. In this paper my focus will be on my the feedback giving process to this age level of students by applying different teaching techniques that I learned in different ELT courses.

Chapter: 2

Literature Review:

This chapter discusses about the theories regarding feedback giving to children and the impacts. Besides, it talks about some reviews given by scholars related to the feedback giving process and their saying about how feedback works for development of students. Lastly, it includes some discussion about feedback.

2.1: Feedback to Children

2.1.1: What is Feedback?

According to Hattie and Timperley(2007) feedback is a very powerful influence when it comes to learning and achievement. They also think that feedback's impact can be positive or negative. Feedback can work as influence on learning and it can also work as achievement for students. The outcome of that feedback is improvement. Feedback and improvement are interrelated. Whenever we get any feedback, we try to work on it and this is how we improve. Now feedback can be both positive and negative. Feedback that individuals receive has affective consequences: It makes people feel good or bad (Fishbach, Eyal& Finkelstein, 2010, p.523).

2.1.2: Why Does One Needs Feedback?

Clynes and Rafter (2008) discussed about the benefits of feedback which are confidence, motivation, and self-esteem and enhanced interpersonal skill. Getting feedback is always very important for students. They can find out his/her weakness through getting feedback from teachers. Drew (2001) found that for students, feedback is not just important for performance in essays or exams but in all aspects of progress. The students who are doing better academically, they also need feedback because it will help them to do better in future. For students feedback works as a source of motivation sometimes. As like motivation, if a student has lack of confidence then feedback can work as motivation for him/her.

The quality of feedback information and the way in which the study was conducted will affect

the recorded outcomes (Darby, 2006, p.9). The combination of specific and difficult goals with feedback makes satisfaction contingent on high performance, so increasing task effort, focus and persistence (Visser & Coe, 2003, p.4).

The more support for learning and development, including the availability of behaviorally-oriented feedback, the more the individual is likely to develop a positive orientation toward feedback (London & Smith, 2002, p.8).

2.1.3: Giving Positive Feedback and Its Impact:

Positive feedback has been found to improve mood and satisfaction ratings in undergraduate students (Stake, 1982). Dorigo, Maniezzo and Colomi (1991) talked about positive feedback and they said positive feedback helps for rapid discovery of good solution and it also helps to accept solution in the early stages of the search process. When students come to their teacher they come with problems which they could not solve, at this point of time positive feedback can help those students to solve their problems effectively. For example, whenever a student pronounces any word correctly and the teacher smiles at him, it is the sign of positive reinforcement. Positive feedback is when a teacher compliments his/her students and say positive things about them. Sometimes using one or two word can also work as positive feedback, for example: excellent, bravo, keep it up etc. Positive feedback encourages students to do better.

In Burnett's (2002) article investigated in six rural elementary schools and the results indicated that teacher's positive or negative feedback are both related to students relationships with their teachers. In the investigation, differences were found between students who were satisfied with their classroom and those who were dissatisfied. Satisfied students received more general praise which dissatisfied students cannot receive. According to him significant age and gender differences are another two important factors of taking feedback. So feedback giving depends on the age. Children will take feedback in one way where the adult students will take feedback in another way. Adult students will think of many things than they will take the feedback where it will not happen in terms of children.

Skipper and Douglas (2012) did a research which suggests that giving students praise after success can help them deal better with subsequent failures because it encourage students to give more effort rather than their fixed ability. If teachers can encourage students by praising them or

saying positive things about them, that will help students to avoid subsequent failure and lead them to success.

Ebadi (2014) investigated on meta-linguistic corrective feedback. He tried to find out if meta-linguistic corrective feedback can contribute to reach the most appropriate ways of giving feedback in writing or not. The results of his study showed that the participants considered focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback to be a very effective method because they could learn English grammar rules from their own errors and they could become aware of their common mistakes through the teacher's constant error feedback. Meta-linguistic corrective feedback involves providing learners with some form of explicit comment about the nature of the errors they have made (Ellis, 2008, p.100). For a beginner, this kind of feedback can be effective or it can be less effective as it be difficult for them to follow the instruction given by the explicit codes without solutions. If there will the solution given then it might get easier for the students. But for other older students it is beneficial as it saves time where the other feedbacks giving process is quite detailed and time consuming. Focused meta-linguistic corrective feedback may be especially helpful in this respect as it promotes not just attention but also understanding of the nature of the error (Ellis, 2008, p.102).

Unfocused corrective feedback has the advantage of addressing a range of errors, so while it might not be as effective in assisting learners to acquire specific features as focused corrective feedback in the short term, it may prove superior in the long run (Ellis, 2008, p.102). Chandler (2003) did a research which was on how error correction should be done. He tried to found out, how a teacher should correct errors or mark errors for student self-correction. The result he found is that students prefer direct correction because it is the fastest and easiest way for them as well as the fastest way for teachers. It is direct feedback which is more appreciable to students than self correction or the indirect feedback.

2.1.4: Giving Negative Feedback and Its Impact:

Negative feedback signals, in one way or another, that the learner's utterance lacks veracity or is linguistically deviant. In other words, it is corrective in intent (Ellis, 2009, p. 3). The author said in his article that negative feedback is more corrective than the positive feedback. It helps to make students understand their mistakes more specifically than the positive feedback.

Feedback is not effective regardless of the content and manner in which it is given and regardless of the receiver's sensitivity to the information (London, 2003, p.1). Direct or explicit feedback occurs when the teacher identifies an error and provides the correct form, while indirect strategies refer to situations when the teacher indicates that an error has been made but does not provide a correction, thereby leaving the student to diagnose and correct it (Bitchener, Young & Cameron, 2005, p.193).

Kubota (1994) investigated on the forms of feedback that helped students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to learn grammar. he divided into five groups of 100 Japanese students, according to the type of feedback they received: (1) group A was given explicit negative feedback (2) group B was told their answers were incorrect (3) group C was given correct answers (4) group D was asked if the answer was right; and (5) group Z, the comparison group. So finally the result shows that group A and C did better than group B and D, group B experienced the least effective learning. It was being discovered that no experimental group could use negative feedback to extract linguistic generalizations. He also suggested that teaching rules explicitly and modeling with implicit negative feedback are effective in allowing learners to reformulate their linguistic knowledge. Whereas teachers who use more positive feedback develop supportive relationships with their students, teachers who use more negative feedback tend to develop conflicting relationships with students (Allen et al., 2013)

2.1.5: Peer Feedback:

A practical benefit of implementing peer assessment is that the feedback comes in much larger quantities than the teacher could ever provide alone, and becomes available much sooner (Van der Pol, Van den Berg, Admiraal & Simons, 2008, p.4). If the students are not friendly enough with their teachers, in that case they can get feedback from their classmates with a very friendly gesture. Feedback from tutors and peers provides additional information that helps challenge students to reassess their knowledge and beliefs (Juwah et.al, 2004, p.9).

Rollinson (2005) stated about students characteristics which is students sometimes do not value peer feedback as they cannot consider their peers as qualified as their teacher. Some students may feel insecure when it comes to taking feedback from classmates. It happens because they

cannot substitute their classmates with their teachers. Children believe that it is their teacher who knows everything.

By peer feedback we mean a communication process through which learners enter into dialogues related to performance and standards (Liu & Carless, 2006, p.2). Nilson (2003) suggested that instructors use peer feedback to make students do multiple assessments of their own work and this will help them to learn important skills for life time. Peer feedback refers to an activity in which students offer each other comments, critiques, and advice about each other's work (Demirbilek, 2015, p.212). None of the feedback can be considered as superior to other in terms of revision. Regarding this, Chaudron (1984) stated that between teacher's feedback and peer feedback there should not be any comparison as neither of them should be considered as superior in promoting improvement in revision.

2.2: Motivating Students:

Motivating young children are easier than the adult students. Children get motivated easily by getting a very simple compliment from their teacher. Learning is like most other tasks in that motivation is required to do your best (Buckmaster& Carroll, 2009, p.1). Deisi and Kluger (2000) stated that feedback works as an important source of motivation which leads to increased satisfaction. Feedback providers can encourage attributions of mood that increase motivation and avoid attributions that undermine motivation (Fishbach et. al., p.528).

Brophy (2013) suggested teachers to encourage students for classroom activities with motivation to learn. He also stated that it might happen that students failed to complete the classroom activity but their motivation will make them enjoy the class. Feedback can work as a motivational source for the students to do better. According to Brown (2000) intrinsic motivation has a great impact on students and teachers can motivate learners to be intrinsically motivated by designing proper classroom tasks. He also stated that in his principle no 7 that, to improve students self-confidence makes them belief in their own self teachers should give verbal and nonverbal assurance to students.

Chapter: 03

Theories into practices:

3.1: My Experience as an Intern Teacher:

To complete under graduation, the students of my university have to do internship or thesis. So I have chosen to do internship. I have always wanted to do internship as I have always been a very shy and not so interactive person. I think practical work helps students to get an idea about job life.

I started my internship in Academia School, which is situated in Gulshan. I was assigned to a female supervisor and she welcomed me very warmly. I started my internship from 15th January 2019. I entered the teachers' room and saw there are approximately 12 or 13 female teachers in the room for junior sections. By doing my internship I had experienced how a professional life feels like as I had to sit in the teachers' room with the female teachers. I used to work 4 days a week and sometimes I had to go there in weekend to attend programs arranged by the school authority. The duration of the school was from 7:30 to 2 pm. So I had to reach in the school on time before the students come. At 7:50 all the students had to come for assembly. It was mandatory for them to be present in assembly. I think this is very good practice for the students. I was never exposed to so many little learners before. So I was very nervous while interacting with the little students. Teaching little students was enjoyable and at the same I need to have patience. I was assigned to take classes of standard one, two and three. All of my students were Bangladeshi and their first language was Bengali. My supervisor used to take grammar classes so I was sure that I have to take grammar classes as well. Teaching children is quite challenging but it was easy at the same time.

My first class was from 8:15 am of class one. In my classes there were 9 to 15 students in total. At first I introduced myself to all the students and as it was my first class so I seated in the last bench and tried to notice all the activities of the students and the teacher herself. The age of the students of class one to three was approximately 6 to 9. The students were very much unstable so

it was not easy for the teacher to control them. Hence, I tried to help the teacher to make them silent. At the first day my supervisor assigned me for roll calling and checking home work.

As I was the new teacher so students were very much interested listening to my words more than the class teacher at that time. As I have learned from my academic courses that elementary level students are more likely to learn or listen to new things, I could relate that point very clearly.

3.2: Findings Based on Classroom Observation:

In first three weeks I have observed the classes only while the class teachers were taking classes. Later they gave me some classes to take as a teacher. From my observation of classes I have noticed that as the learners were of a little age they did not sit properly, kept moving, made noises and made the class room messy with their books, notes and papers. While observing classes I used to help the teacher to maintain the classes by making the students sit properly. They demanded to draw them star and if I gave it to them, they promised to sit calmly. Even though I knew that after sometimes they would start talking and playing again but their happy faces after getting the start were worthy of anything.

Since, I had to take classes of three levels of students so I got the chance to observe three different teachers classes. In class one I noticed that the class teacher kept shouting on the kids as they were very energetic and kept asking unnecessary questions to teachers. I did understand the perspective of the teacher but shouting at these little learners could make a bad impact on them. It is true that I have also shouted at them when I failed to handle them at times but shouting all the time can really make the students to fear their teachers. One thing that I observed and really liked was, children kept asking questions for everything and I found out the fact that some teachers used to avoid their question from answering. This could discourage some of the introvert students to ask their questions again.

There were different types of students in the classroom. There were students in class who used to sit calmly and did not make noises at all, some were always sleepy in class and some kept running and kept disturbing other students. Giving feedback to these types of students was not very easy because different student demand different types of feedback. For some students it was very important to give written feedback and for some students oral feedback was enough. In class 3 the class teacher used to give feedback based on the students capacity to take that. For

example: There was a boy who was very quick learner but careless while doing homework so he frequently made mistakes in writing but when he was asked verbally he used to give the right answer. So I noticed the teacher used to give him written feedback and every day gave him task to write the class lessons. As class 3 had only 9 students so the teacher could observe all the students separately and could give effective based on the students. Another thing I noticed about the teacher was that she used to start her every class by telling story or rhyme, this made the sleepy students to keep awake to listen to those stories and rhymes. I have learned different techniques from each of the teachers. Every teacher had their own way to teaching.

However, one thing that got my attention was that most of the teachers tried to give positive and direct feedback to their student as all the students from class 1 to 3 are not capable enough to understand indirect feedback. Teachers used to give chocolates to the students whoever performed well in classroom tasks. It created a competitive environment for the students. Most of them used to read at home willingly to get that gift. So it worked as positive reinforcement. It was really rare but in some cases I saw the teacher to lose her control over the class and started scolding students just because that student did a spelling mistake and that made the poor students cry. Though immediately the teacher gave that student a sticker to make her stop crying but it worked as negative feedback at first place. The students were very little to understand indirect feedbacks. Hence, I have seen all the teachers giving direct feedback. Some of the teachers used to write all right answers of all errors they made and some teachers underlined the area where the students made mistakes.

According to their age the students were neither careful nor cautious about the corrections they used to get through teachers feedbacks. I observed that the teacher used to engage the students with peer work and peer feedback was being practiced in class as well. For example: In class 2 the teacher gave them class work to do articles. When the writing was finished she divided the class in several groups and each group contained 2 students. After that the teacher asked, all the group members to correct each other's group mate. Students tried do it like a game and it made the class joyful.

3.3: Implementation of Feedback Giving Process as a Teacher:

As an observer I did learn many things from the teachers and few things which the teachers used to do wrong, I tried to implement those correctly. The first thing I wanted to keep in mind was to have patience in any conditions. Children are very sensitive and a little thing can put a bad impact about the teacher in their mind. In the first class when I went to take their classes, students were very happy to see me teaching. But as I was already a known face to them so they did not bother to stop 9 running or talking. So I needed a few minutes to bring them in my control. While giving feedback I tried to give positive feedback to all the students even if most of them did several mistakes. I tried to point out their area of mistake in a very positive manner. Some students were very upset as they did not get good marks, but I tried to motivate those students by saying good things about them and making other students to clap for them for their attempt. My target was to make them comfortable and to make them overcome their sadness. As the students were very young they needed to be managed with proper care attention, so their teaching and learning process should be as balanced as possible.

However, another thing I tried to avoid was study pressure. In my classes I used to teach them only few things. I noticed while observing classes that teacher taught them several things in one class. So it drew my attention and I tried to avoid that, though I was not a regular teacher and in the alternate classes they had to go through huge study pressures by other teachers.

In my classes I have always tried to answer all of their questions even though most of the questions they used to ask were outside of the syllabus. As I used to teach them very less in class my class used to get finished 10 or 15 minutes earlier of the given class time. So, on that time I called students to come front and made them to recite poems rhymes, stories, jokes, riddle anything they wanted to tell.

I did observe one of the students who used to keep silent and till then he could not speak English properly in class. So at first to make him talk I started talking to him using L1 and gradually he started to speak English. When he started uttering one or two English words I also started to praise his English speaking skills and asked others to praise him as well. That really helped that student to talk a little more than before in class.

3.4: Implementing Methods and Theories:

During my intern I discussed about the teaching method with many teachers what they apply in their classes. Different teachers' way of teaching was different, but I wanted to find out the most effective way to help the students. So after getting suggestions from the teachers I tried to apply the methods that I found more beneficial for students. Teacher's body language, proper way of managing the classes, maintaining positive classroom environment all these were very important factors. One thing I really wanted the students to do was Lozanov's "*Peripheral learning*". As the students were young so 10 they were learning subconsciously and later they used to ask question what they noticed through their peripheral learning. In my school I noticed that there were many posters attached with the wall. Those posters were of grammar, numbers etc. So by seeing all these students were learning subconsciously. While giving feedback I was very conscious as the students learn subconsciously so if I behaved anything unpleasant that could have a bad impact in terms of learning for the students.

However, while observing my students I noticed "*Total physical response*" to be more suitable for them. This approach is basically applicable for the young learners. This approach says that students understand better if the teachers do physical movements while teaching.

Krashen and Terrell's "*Natural Approach*" was one of the approaches which I kept in mind while taking classes of those little children. This approach includes the fact that students cannot be taught through forcing but naturally. While giving feedback I kept this in mind and tried to make them correct their mistake positively. I did not want them to force or give them punishment to correct their mistakes.

Since, giving feedback is a very important part of learning for the students so I kept in mind about giving them motivation. For example: When I was teaching the students of junior sections I needed to keep in mind that I cannot give them negative feedback as in this age whatever they learn will retain for lifetime. So if I gave them any feedback by not encouraging them that might affect their mind and for this they could also lose their interest of asking or knowing the topic sincerely. As the students were very emotional and sensitive in nature so as a teacher I needed to be more caring while giving students feedback.

The teachers of the school suggested me to keep my main focus on the accuracy and fluency. As I had to take the grammar class so I fully tried to focus on the accuracy along with fluency. Since

I got suggestions from other senior teachers, I tried to give suitable tasks to my students which will help them improve their accuracy and fluency. For example: To improve my students' accuracy I had to give them feedback more accurately. I tried to tell my students specifically where they needed to improve or where they did really well because I thought it will give them more clear idea.

I tried to focus on "*The Noticing Hypothesis*" proposed by Richard Schmidt. In class while giving feedback I wanted all the students to notice the area of their mistakes. I used to underline the area where they did mistakes. For example: I saw students applying 'A' where they were supposed to use "An". Even if I tried to correct them several times by saying the correct sentence verbally, still they were doing the same mistake repetitively. Then I decided to underline the area with a red pen, so that they can notice their mistakes.

Chapter: 4

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Few Negative Experiences that I had

During Internship:

My entire internship experience was quite good. Most of the teachers were very friendly. Whenever I asked them for help they helped me out without asking any further question. I got some amazing teachers who really helped me to learn and tried to make me comfortable with them. The students that I was assigned for were young learners, so understanding their psychology was very important. At the very first place I was very nervous as I had to teach the students of very young age.

As I was an intern there, so sometimes I had to take classes of some absent teachers. I had no problem with this as I consider it a positive side. Once I had to take classes of class 5 and when I went into the classroom one student was talking to me in a very bad manner, which I did not like at all, still I tried to stay calm and with a smile I asked the student not to repeat this kind of behavior. I think I felt a little uncomfortable at that point of time.

From 12 weeks of my experience I learned a lot of things and one of the best things I learned was keeping patience. While managing the students of my assigned sections I really faced trouble at the beginning. As the students were very unstable so it was tough to make them calm. But with time I did learn how to manage the class.

However, I think teachers need to be more professional about keeping their personal lives away from their professional life. Although there were obstacles, all the teachers as well as authority were very cordial, helpful and supportive.

Chapter: 5

Recommendations

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After 12 weeks of internship, I found some points which they need to improve from my point of view. So all my recommendations are given below:

1. Teachers need to put her/him in students' shoes. Students' psychology should be understood and considered, and then the teachers will easily understand what type of feedback the students should get.
2. Motivating the students in every situation is very important to overcome their shyness for asking questions in the classroom.
3. Students should feel free to talk to the teachers and teacher should always response positively.
4. Classrooms should not be overcrowded rather it should be comfortable and flexible for both the students and teachers so that they can communicate with each other easily.
5. The teachers should emphasis more on solving the problems of the weak students along with other students.
6. Teacher should give concentration on each and every students of the class to manage the sanctity of the classroom.
7. Teacher should have more patience while handling the junior classes.

8. The students should be always encouraged to come with their problems.
9. Teachers should make the students understand the feedback that they are giving to the different aged students.
10. After each lesson teacher should be more spontaneous in asking the students about their quires so that teacher can give feedback on that lesson.
11. Working environment should be more improved for the teachers themselves.
12. Teachers should also try to build good mannerism among students.

Chapter: 6

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Conclusion

Giving feedback is very important for the students and especially for the children. A teacher should know how to give young learners feedback. If a teacher fails to do it in better way, it creates chaos. Being a teacher one has to keep in mind every minor thing and when it comes to teaching young children it becomes a tougher job. Giving proper feedback can make the students more confident which will last for life long. Students' motivation to learn can be increased through a teacher's proper way of giving feedback. At a very early age students want to hear all the positive things and it is a teacher's duty to handle the students in a proficient way. Managing the ESL class in a perfect way is very complex thing, but if a teacher does it right it benefits the students. As a beginner teacher it was quite tough for me to manage class and give feedback in a proper way. Hence I tried to follow a proper method and approaches while giving feedback to children. In this report I explained the experiences that I gained through this internship. Lastly, I want to say that giving feedback will not be a challenging thing for any teacher if they have proper knowledge about various teaching methods, techniques and theories related to the area because these helps to make the class more joyful and interesting.

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