University of Nottingham

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Moving the Centre to the periphery: Examining the corrective feedback practices of EAP teachers in Sino-British University.

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Project Purpose

- The nature and focus of CF in an EAP setting.
- Students and teachers' beliefs about CF
- Contrasting teachers' beliefs and practices

- The focus of this presentation is where CF and errors fit within a WE/ELF paradigm
  - Whether CF is a relevant practice in ELT?

What is an error?

- Distinguished errors from mistakes (Corder, 1967)

- Defined as ‘deviations’ from norms which embody socially acceptable notions of correctness (Bartsch 1987)
  - British and American English
  - Standard English
  - Native English

- ‘nowadays nobody would seriously think of designating the differences between, say, British English and any of the 'colonial’ varieties of English as 'errors’s’ (James, 1990)

When is an error is not an error?

- Distinction between error and deviation (Kachru 1991)
- Distinction between error and innovation (Bamgbose 1998; Li, 2010)
- Distinction between error and language variant (De Costa and Crowther 2018)
- Errors – ‘possibly not an ELF compatible way of thinking about language’ (Cogo and Dewey 2012)
- Language not fixed: an emerging system - process not an object (Ortega, 2014, Larsen-Freeman 2012)

Methodological Weaknesses (Mackay and Goo 2007; Li 2010; Lyster, Saito and Sato 2013)

- ❑Has to be over a short period
  - Difficult to conduct long term study
  - Control variables
  - Not reflective of real classroom environment
- ❑Measuring
  - Immediate uptake + delayed post tests
  - Use of grammatical judgement test
  - Use of control groups – can't control learning only teaching
  - Neglect social environment
- ❑Topic of analysis
  - Overt focus on CF types
  - Overt focus on grammar
  - Tendency not to consider first language of participants

EMI Universities

- UNNC – 1 of 7 Sino-foreign University partnerships
- Around 8,000 students – 90% Chinese nationals, marketed as an ‘International University’
- This study is of students in preparatory year

- ‘Marketed as International University’ (Hu, Li and Lei, 2014, Jenkins, 2014)
- Language policies orientated towards monolingual Standard English ideology
- Day to day practices dictated by standard of English of lecturers and students (Hu, Li and Lei, 2014, Hu and lei, 2014)

Data Collection

- Across 4 Listening and Speaking in Academic Contexts (LSAC) classes in semester 1 2018/2019.
- Chinese monolingual classes
- Preparatory Year.
- Teachers recruited through questionnaire.

• Weeks 3-4	15 focus groups
• Weeks 3-11	Around 55 hours of classes
• Weeks 10-11	45 Student Interviews
• Weeks 10-11	4 teacher Interviews

19.10.2018 - 15:23-18:54

S1: er::::: I want to talk about something that the situation when you are studying or to do some research and guess you can't use your form(phone?) or to do something erm to do something other (.) that will make you to erm make you can concentrate on the main point

T1: Ok (.) you shouldn't (.) you shouldn't use those devices because it harms your concentration

19.10.2018 - 13:43-14:45

S2 : which is erm distract your focus and met your (.) efficient (money or bar?) I think someone who (.) who have a good control of his brain and from better multi-tasking (3.0) it's usually reside in high efficiency and then I need to er I have er (2.0) I have already read some research about it but a little (xxx)

T: Okay well (.) keep going so you know (.) you each know what you're gonna to talk about (.) yeah (.) so (.) boy (.) you know what you'll talk about as well

T1 interview

R: ok (.) what, what's the most important factor or criteria you take into account

T1: em I think it's a (.) I think it's communication (.) you know (.) I think it's fair enough to (.) er (.) disregard some pronunciation errors if it doesn't impede the meaning of what they're trying to get across (.) em yeah (.) I mean (2.0) you're in that position as well though (.) as an EAP teacher (.) you know your students a little bit more (.) you can know what they are trying to say (.) so sometimes you have to (.) sometimes you have to (.) step back and say I know what you mean I know what word you mean (.) but you mispronounced it (.) erm (.) and sometimes you can be in danger of just letting them go (.) but if it was a real world situation (.) maybe people wouldn't have that (.) so (.) maybe there's a reason to correct then but yeah (.) I'd say I'd say it comes down to communication.

T1 interview

T1: Like we want to be teaching our students to be able to communicate effectively if you notice they are you doing it in a way that a native speaker wouldn't understand them

R: does it matter if a native speaker

T1: I think so (.) because, er

R: there's lecturers here who aren't who are Indian or different, different, erm you know, speaking a different types of English not necessarily

T1: I'm not sure, not sure, I could second guess who would be able to understand them and who wouldn't

R: right (.) ok

T1: and I think you probably just, er on the side of correcting things which have ambiguity (.) your aiming to teach and speak in the way that anyone can understand

T2C13. 18.10.22 – 13.40-1535

- Boy5: (xxxx) I don't know if it's the correct idea (.) I said *poultry banana by immigration* (2.0) (xxxx)
- T2: Is it a song?
- Boy5: N[o
- T2: [No (0.5) can you say it one more time?
- Boy5: Mmm poultry banana my immigration
- T2: Portray banana my immigration?
- Boy5: Yeh (1)
- T2: Is it *restrict*?
- Boy5: Yeh
- T2: OK so what do what's the first word?
- Boy5: Mmm (0.5) I don't know maybe I'm wrong (.) I said *poultry* hhh.
- Teacher: Maybe (.)
- Boy5: @@
- T2: Do you mean *police* or:::?
- Boy5: No
- T2: No portray
- Boy5: (xxxx) (speaks to Boy6 in Chinese)
- Boy6: Poverty
- T2: Ahhhhh! Ah OK so yehyehyeh so poverty (.) so er *poverty restricts immigration*? (1) Ok? (0.5) Or maybe (0.5) *we need to::: banana immigration* (.) *to stop poverty*? (.) *We need to restrict immigration to stop poverty*? Maybe @@@ that one's kind of tricky (.) Ok

18.10.22 – 15.32-16.47

- T2: No? Ahh (.) what's the difference? Girl
- Girl: I love Wangyi cos they provide some commend songs for you everyday
- T2: Some commend?
- Girl: They er:: (.) they introduce some new songs-
- T2: Ahhhhh (.) ok like so if you listen to certain songs (.) it will recommend other songs which are similar?
- Girl: Yes
- T2: Ah ok yeh they have a similar thing (.) like a playlist?

T2 Interview

- T2: I feel like there's a lot of cultural things but you know if you ask a question the students really want to say the right answer (.) so I think if they said something and you say oh actually that's an uncountable noun (.) I always like to respond to what they've said, rather than the grammar of it or the pronunciation like if I've asked what do you think about graffiti and someone says oh you now It is very beautifu::l I don't know, like I want to respond what they're actually saying (.) not just correcting them (.) cos i think that's gonna encourage them to produce more and also it's like a real question (.) it's not just to correct them (.) it's also to get them engaged in the topic.

Conclusion

- Teachers had variable approaches to CF
- Unclear if their particular method is effective
- No real guidance

- While T1 asserts communication and meaning as the core, belief that intelligibility derives from native speaker
- T2 predominantly uses a strategy of clarification requests

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