Content and Language Integrated Instruction: An Investigation of Oral Corrective Feedback in the Chinese Immersion Classroom

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Abstract : Content and language integrated instruction provides second language learners instruction in subject matter and language, and is greatly valued, particularly in the language immersion classroom where a language other than students' first language is the vehicle for teaching school curriculum. Corrective feedback is an essential instructional technique for teachers to integrate a focus on language into their content instruction. This study aims to fill a gap in the literature on immersion—the lack of studies examining corrective feedback in Chinese immersion classrooms, by studying learning opportunities brought by oral corrective feedback in a Chinese immersion classroom. Specifically, it examines what is the distribution of different types of teacher corrective feedback and how students respond to each feedback type, as well as how the focus of the teacher-student interactional exchanges affect the effect of feedback. Two Chinese immersion teachers and their immersion classes were involved, and data were collected through classroom observations interviews. Observations document teachers' provision of oral corrective feedback and students' responses following the feedback in class, and interviews with teachers collected teachers' reflective thoughts about their teaching. A primary quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data revealed that, among different types of corrective feedback, recast occurred most frequently. Metalinguistic clue and repetition were the least occurring feedback types. Clarification request lead to highest percentage of learner uptake manifested by learners' oral production immediately following the feedback, while explicit correction came the second and recast the third. In addition, the results also showed the interactional context played a role in the effectiveness of the feedback: teachers were most likely to give feedback in conversational exchanges that focused on explicit language and content, while students were most likely to use feedback in exchanges that focused on explicit language. In conclusion, the results of this study indicate recasts are preferred by Chinese immersion teachers, confirming results of previous studies on corrective feedback in non-Chinese immersion classrooms; and clarification request and explicit language instruction elicit more target language production from students and are facilitative in their target language development, thus should not be overlooked in immersion and other content and language integrated classrooms.
Keywords : Chinese immersion, content and language integrated instruction, corrective feedback, interaction
Conference Title : ICMELT 2016 : International Conference on Multilingual Education, Learning and Teaching
Conference Location : London, United Kingdom
Conference Dates : January 18-19, 2016