

Minimising Same Error Repetition and Maximising Progress in SLA: An Integrated Method

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Abstract

Alderson teaches us that, “progress should be the aim of all learning”. With the purpose of ensuring progress and enhancing first year students’ learning of Italian as a second language, research into feedback and repair was undertaken at The University of Western Australia.

The research – funded by the UWA Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning – was inspired by the Italian 1403, 2013 teaching cohort. 1403 is an upper-intermediate level of Italian in which students, despite their good knowledge of the language, kept repeating the same errors. Students also claimed to be overwhelmed by the myriads of corrections they received in different forms, which translated into little to no definitive repair.

While corrective practices have been studied for a few decades now and there is a substantial body of research on feedback and repair in second language acquisition (Chaudron, 1998; Bangert-Drowns et. All, 1991; Kluger and DeNisi, 1996; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Lyster and Mori, 2006), not much is known about the effect of isolated purposeful feedback on recurring errors.

The integrated method which was tested in different units of Italian between 2013 and 2015 aims to enhance students’ learning by giving students targeted formative feedback on recurring errors in order to maximise definitive repair and, subsequently, progress in learning Italian.

Keywords: second language acquisition, targeted formative feedback, recurring errors, repair

1. Introduction

Alderson teaches us that, “progress should be the aim of all learning” (Alderson,2005: 1). It should also be the aim of all teaching, and the aim of all teaching and learning-based research. It is with this concept in mind that I approached research on the curriculum development of different units of Italian at The University of Western Australia between 2013 and 2015. My research, funded by the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning of UWA,¹ focuses on feedback in second language acquisition and aims to minimise same error repetition and increase progress in the learning of a foreign language.

In recent years the teaching of Italian as a second language in tertiary education has been revolutionised, both in Australia and around the world. Higher education has been re-evaluated in the light of a new cohort of students, and particularly in terms of the content and delivery of tertiary courses. This brought to the implementation of New Courses and Broadening Units, which drastically changed the nature of the teaching of Italian, as well as other foreign languages, in Australia. The impact of the changing environment brought about a necessary revision of the syllabuses and methods to be used (Brown and Caruso,2013 39).

It is in light of all these changes in the student cohort, unit programmes and approaches to foreign language teaching, that my research on feedback in SLA can be situated. The research was inspired by the cohort in which my teaching took place in 2013: a first-year intermediate unit of Italian, Italian 1403. Students of 1403 had a more than satisfactory level of Italian. However, they carried over some errors from their previous learning experience in high school or in their Italian-descent families. In order for the students to repair the errors they carried over, it was vital to find a method which would identify problematic areas to ensure progress in their learning of Italian. Students in 1403 also complained that, in their previous learning experience, they had been “bombarded” with corrections. In many cases, this translated into poor retention and unrepaired errors which would be carried through in students’ production in L2. In other words, the higher the number of corrections they received, and the more difficult it was to reach definitive repair.

The method I studied and tested in different units of Italian at the University of Western Australia aims to enhance learning through the use of isolated targeted feedback on recurring errors. The purpose of this work is to demonstrate how the method can effectively be used in units of foreign language to decrease the incidence of recurring errors.

Brief Literature Review

This section explores how notions of error, feedback and repair evolved across the history of second language teaching and learning and how they are understood in the present work. It then focuses on the most recent studies on error type and feedback type used in the foreign language classroom, which have been used as a starting point for the Italian 1402, 2015 case study.

¹ This research was funded by grants from the Teaching and Learning Committee of The University of Western Australia – 2014 PhD Candidate Teaching and Learning Publication Project. I gratefully acknowledge the generous cooperation and help of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, in particular Dr Lee Partridge and Ms Sally Jackson, as well as the participating teachers – Dr Simon Tebbit, Ass. Prof. Marinella Caruso, Dr Fausto Buttà – and students. I am also indebted to Prof. John Kinder and Ass. Prof. Marinella Caruso, who supervised the study.

While corrective practices have been studied for many decades now and a substantial body of research on feedback and repair in second language acquisition is available to researchers and practitioners in the field (Hendrickson, 1978; Chaudron, 1998; Bangert-Drowns et. all, 1991; Kluger and DeNisi, 1996; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Lyster and Mori, 2006; Harmer, 2007; Ortega, 2009), not much is known about the effect of isolated targeted feedback on recurring errors.

Before we move any further into the description of the type of feedback used in the context of this research, it is imperative to define three concepts: ‘error’, ‘feedback’ and ‘repair’. As far as ‘error’ goes, Pawlak claims that, “there is no agreement among specialists as to how the notion of error itself should be defined, and the definitions that have been put forward over the years and adopted as a point of reference in the analyses of learners’ inaccurate production are far from satisfactory.” (Pawlak, 3)

This demonstrates that, errors in second language acquisition have been puzzling specialists for many generations, as also testified by the high number of investigations put forward by specialists with diverse views and often reaching opposite conclusions. (Rizzardi & Barsi, 2006) Most specialists agree that errors are a vital part of second language classrooms and “a crucial part of the learning process”. (Harmer, 2007, 137) From a practical point of view, teachers in the foreign language classroom have always had to come up against students’ errors and mistakes.² As Pawlak puts it, “practitioners [...] are often at a loss as to whether and how to react to errors made by their students”. (Pawlak, 2014, 2), and have had to give feedback on those errors, whether recurring or not.

According to Chaudron (1984) errors are linguistic forms or linguistic content which is different differs from native speaker norms or facts. The difference between non-native and native production seems to be the axis this definition revolves around, as it occurs in many following definitions, see Lennon’s definition for example:

Linguistic form or combination of forms, which, in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers’ native speaker counterparts (Lennon 1991, 182)

Both definitions revolve around native speaker’s production and both of them lack precise criteria of definition of the reason why and how an error differs from the correct production.

Another definition at the centre of an ongoing debate in the discipline is that of feedback.

Error treatment, or feedback, has been the subject of a number of studies in the last few decades, starting with Hendrickson’s (1978, 389) and Chaudron (1980). Not surprisingly, as pointed out by Lyster and Ranta (1997) the questions identified by Hendrickson in 1978 still echo in recent publications demonstrating that, when it comes to error correction or feedback, we are still grasping in the dark. The questions around error feedback are:

² The object of this work is to analyse the incidence of recurring errors with the purpose of reaching definitive repair. Hence, only the errors which return systematically in a student’s production will be considered. For this reason, mistakes, as casual occurrences which demonstrate a failure to utilize a system correctly and can easily be self-repaired (Brown 1994, 205) will not be analysed in the present work. For an analysis of this distinction see Corder, 1967.

- Should teachers correct errors?
- When should teachers correct them?
- Which errors should be corrected?
- How should teachers correct?
- Finally, who should correct?

Canadian scholars Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster and Mori (2006) propose a classification of feedback types and analyse their efficacy in French immersion courses. This classification and the results achieved have been taken into account in this study, especially when giving oral feedback during tutorials.³

Two of these questions are particularly interesting in the light of recurring errors:

- Should teachers correct errors?
- Which errors should be corrected?

While I do agree with most practitioners and scholars in the field of SLA claiming that errors should definitely be corrected,⁴ I also agree with my students when they tell me they feel “bombarded” with corrections. Overwhelming students with corrections is not productive and can, in fact, inhibit a student’s spontaneous production, both oral and written. When overwhelmed with error feedback, students may respond by speaking or writing less for fear of making more errors. (Guenette 2012). That was my own experience when learning foreign languages as an undergraduate. Throughout the years of foreign language learning and then foreign language teaching, I have made a strong opinion on error feedback in SLA and that is that feedback is useless unless it translates into repair. On top of that, when we overwhelm students with corrective feedback, it is highly unlikely that they will repair all of the errors we bring their attention to.

While the term “repair” is often used interchangeably with “correction” in SLA (Hall 2007, 2), it is understood here as definitive extirpation of an error from a student’s production, reached through teacher’s feedback and student’s individual study. Hence the term “correction” will be used as a synonym for feedback, to describe actions taken by teachers to help learners modify their target language production (Hall 2007, 2), while the term repair will refer to the definitive correction of an error in SLA.

One way of avoiding to overwhelm students (when giving corrective feedback) I propose here, is to only give explicit feedback on the recurring errors, rather than on all of the errors made by a student. In written production, this can be achieved by marking all of the errors in a paper or a test, as it is done conventionally, but only drawing a student’s attention to their recurring error, rather than “bombarding” them with feedback. In the context of online texts, this can be achieved by returning online tests in class and giving oral feedback only on the recurring error of each student. Of course, in order to identify recurring errors for each and every student, extensive research on students’ production needs to be carried out beforehand.

³ Lyster and Ranta’s and Lyster and Mori’s works focus on oral feedback in class. Despite the present study deals mostly with feedback on written production, their results and the concept of ‘learner uptake’ have been taken into account when giving feedback in class and will be used as reference for a future case study.

⁴ Pawlak (2014, 3-6) reminds us that error feedback is a common thread which runs through the history of language teaching methods. No matter what method a scholar belongs to, the emphasis on giving feedback on errors is there.

If we agree that errors should be corrected, one type that should definitely be corrected is recurring errors due to their being an impediment to progress in language learning. Corrective practices should aim for a definitive repair of recurring errors, for a definitive extirpation of the recurring error. Knowing that aiming to eradicate all errors in a student's production is a utopic concept, we should at least aim for a definitive repair of their recurring errors.

Case Study

As previously mentioned, the inception of this methodology for the repair of recurring errors in SLA dates back to 2013, within the curriculum development of unit Italian 1403. However, for the purposes of this work, I will focus on the 2015 case study: Italian Studies 2, Summer Session, an intensive course which took place during the summer months.

The UWA Italian 1402 unit outline describes the unit as a continuation of:

the introduction to Italian language and culture provided in ITAL1401 Italian Studies 1. Students learn to speak, understand, read and write Italian and study aspects of contemporary Italian culture in Italy and in countries of Italian migration. The unit leads to ITAL2403 Italian Studies 3.

The unit took place outside of semester along 6 weeks, rather than the traditional 13 weeks. There were 2 three-hour tutorials and 1 two-hour tutorial per week, for a total of 8 hours weekly.

The Summer Session of 1402 was chosen to be integrated in this study specifically for the purpose to test my method against an intensive course not taught in the usual 13 weeks of semester.

In the summer of 2015, the unit was coordinated by Dr Simon Tebbit and taught by Dr Fausto Butta and myself. Due to the time-consuming nature of my method, I chose to concentrate on the group of students who belonged to the group I taught. 14 students participated in the study and agreed for me to use their data.⁵

The following academic objectives and outcomes are listed in the unit outline:

- extend elementary skills acquired in ITAL1401 Italian Studies 1, in reading, writing, listening and speaking in the Italian language;
- develop further awareness of intercultural issues using Italian as an example;
- continue developing independent learning skills and develop strategies to achieve this aim;
- continue developing interpersonal communication skills in spoken and written Italian and English;
- develop awareness of the structures and use of the English language.

Students will have:

⁵ This survey has been approved by the UWA Human Ethics Committee RA/4/1/7390. The purpose of this survey is to collect information on the feedback given in the Italian unit, Italian 1402. Participation is voluntary and anonymous.

- attained basic user competency in Italian;
- the ability to understand and respond in Italian at a basic user level;
- attained written competency at a basic user level;
- the ability to understand simple texts on more difficult topics than treated in ITAL1401 Italian Studies 1;
- furthered their interpersonal communication skills including the ability to work effectively in pairs and small groups;
- attained a fair amount of understanding of intercultural issues relating to Italian culture by reading and analysing simple texts in their cultural context;
- further developed formal and independent learning skills;
- further developed awareness of the English language; and
- attained a standard equivalent to Level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

As far as the assessment of 1402 is concerned, the below table summarises the weighting for all assignments included in the unit.

<i>Assessment Details</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Marks</i>
3 Class Tests	1. Week 2 – Thu 15 January 2. Week 4 - Thu 29 January 3. Week 6 - Thu 12 February	30
Listening Comprehensions	10 listening comprehensions (ongoing)	10
Online Activities	3 Assignments 1. Un Viaggio in Aereo – Wed 14 January 2. Personaggi Famosi – Wed 28 January 3. Cercasi lavoro - Wed 11 February	10
Conversazione	Week 5 – Wed 4 February	10
Written examination (two hours)	Formal examination period	30
Contribution and participation	During semester	10

Table 1 - 1402 assessment

As you can see, the unit features a number of online activities and online listening comprehension quizzes, to enhance students' participation outside of the classroom environment and taking advantage of the more free time students have during the summer months, when semester is off.

In order to gather as much data on students' production as I possibly could, both oral and written production were analysed. Specifically, students' production in the 1402 group was tested:

- in class during lessons;
- in their in-class tests.

The in-class tests were planned to diagnose students' progress at the end of each fortnight of teaching. The first one served the purpose of identifying recurring errors and comparing errors appearing here to errors in oral production in class. The second and third tests served the purpose of assessing whether definitive repair of the recurring weaknesses previously identified had been reached or not.

2.Methodology

The purpose of this study is to enhance students' learning by giving them targeted formative feedback on recurring errors in order to minimise error repetition, maximise definitive repair and, ultimately, progress in second language learning. The method consists in an analysis of students' written and oral production with the purpose of identifying recurring patterns. Students are then given targeted formative feedback on their recurring errors to reach repair by the end of the course.

As previously mentioned, Test 1 was used to identify students' recurring errors. The errors students made in Test 1 were compared to those made in oral production in class. Subsequently, errors made in Tests 2 and 3 were compared to Test 1 to check if the identified areas were repaired and the purpose of this study reached.

All of the students received their Test 1 marked conventionally. They also received isolated targeted feedback on their recurring error, both in oral and written form. A small number of students did not receive any targeted feedback on their recurring error after Test 1 because:

- they did not make any errors in the test;
- they made many errors but they did not show any recurring patterns.

These categories identify two types of students on opposite poles of the scores scale: the first type scored extremely high scores consistently over the course, while the second type scored consistently low scores from the beginning to the end of the course.

According to the method, written tests are marked conventionally. However, students' attention is drawn exclusively to the recurring error, both graphically and with an oral comment the tutor gives on the test, as shown in the below picture.

25/40
Alcald

ITAL1402 (SUMMER SESSION): TEST 1

STUDENT NAME _____ TUTOR NAME Anna e Simon

A. MULTIPLE CHOICE. CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER. [8 VOTI]

1. Vorrei provare quegli stivali. Sono proprio belli. bel
bello
bei
bell
bella
bagli
belle

a) quelle b) quei c) quelli **d) quegli** ✓

2. Spero che sarà un bello luglio ma di solito fa troppo freddo. bell
bella
bagli
belle

a) bello b) bell' c) bello **d) bel** ✓

3. Aldo e Gina hanno due figli ma non ci saranno alla festa. ✓

a) vengano **b) ci saranno** c) aiuteranno d) faranno

4. Io mangevo quando sono arrivati i miei ospiti. -1

a) studiavo b) dicevo c) abbiamo studiato **d) mangevo**

5. Quando erano giovani, venivano a trovarci tutti i weekend. ✓

a) ~~eramo~~ ~~eravano~~ **b) erano** c) ero d) avevamo

6. Stamattina ho prenotato un albergo a Roma. Io e mia moglie ci andremo a dicembre. ✓

a) ho prenotato b) abbiamo prenotati c) prenotavo d) trovavamo.

5/6

B. PLACE THE APPROPRIATE VERBS GIVEN BELOW IN THE FUTURE TENSE. EACH VERB CAN ONLY BE USED ONCE. [12 MARKS]

~~torpare~~ ~~fare~~ ~~prenotare~~ ~~passare~~ ~~restare~~ ~~andare~~
 torpare fare prenotare passare restare andare

L'anno prossimo Luigi e sua moglie andranno un viaggio in Italia, ma i loro figli passeranno a Melbourne dai genitori di Luigi. Luigi prenoterà un albergo a Milano. Dopo una settimana a Milano, Luigi e sua moglie Lisa farà tre giorni in Calabria dove vivono alcuni cugini di Lisa. Luigi tornerà in Australia il sei giugno ma sua moglie resterà in Italia altre due settimane. -1

7/12

CAREFUL!
 PASSERANNO
 PRENOTERÀ
 TORNERÀ
 RESTERÀ
] ARE VERBS IN THE FUTURE TENSE!

Figure 1

As you can see, the written paper is marked conventionally but the student’s attention is drawn exclusively to their recurring error, in the above case the endings of verbs in –are in the future tense. This is a common mistake for learners of Italian: differently from what occurs in other tenses, where –are verbs present forms with the letter –a in the suffix - such as in the imperfect indicative “passavo, passavi, passava, passavamo, passavate, passavano” - in the future tense, -are verbs take an –e and conjugate like –ere verbs: “passerò, passerai, passerà, passeremo, passerete, passeranno”. (Marin & Magnelli, 2013; Kinder & Savini, 2004)

The only error on the paper which is commented graphically and orally when tests are returned is the recurring error, in the hopes that the student focuses on that particular error and makes a conscious effort to repair it.

As we shall see, most of the recurring errors found in Test 1 are grammatical errors, similar to the one above, with the exception of a small number of students who needed to work more consistently on their vocabulary. When the recurring error is grammatical, in addition to signaling such error, a further explanation of the rule is given to the student together with extra exercises and tips to conquer their error.

Research on the effect of timing in the foreign language classroom (Rolin-Ianziti, 2006) made me comprehend the benefits of immediate feedback, which I provided my students with in class, right after they made their recurring errors.

In order to enhance students' intake and following on the achievements of studies carried through by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster and Mori (2006), prompts were preferred to explicit corrections in the classroom. These "withhold correct forms [...] and offer learners an opportunity for self-repair by generating their own modified response. [...] By prompting, a teacher provides cues for learners to draw on their own resources to self-repair". (Lyster and Mori, 2006, 272)

Assessment description

In order to analyse students' results in Tests 1, 2 and 3 objectively, we must briefly describe these tests beforehand.

Test 1 included some topics which were taught in Italian 1401 and then revised in the first two weeks of 1402, as well as a small number of new topics. As far as the verbal syntax is concerned, the following tenses were included in the test: *passato prossimo*, *indicativo imperfetto*, *futuro semplice*. The *passato prossimo* was in the syllabus of 1401 and put here as revision. All of these tenses were tested via multiple-choice and conjugating exercises. As for vocabulary, Test 1 included a brief composition exercise on the relatively easy topic of hobbies and pastimes, a topic the students had both done in 1401 and revised in the first two weeks of 1402. Finally, the test comprised a multiple-choice exercise on the adjectives *quello* (that) and *bello* (beautiful) and their inflections.

The level of difficulty of Test 2 was objectively higher than Test 1: students were required to write more and they had a smaller number of guided exercises. The verbal syntax included: *passato prossimo*, *indicativo imperfetto*, *futuro semplice*, *indicativo presente*, and *reflexive verbs in passato prossimo*. The direct object pronouns *lo*, *la*, *le*, *l'*, and the pronouns *Ci* and *Ne* were also assessed in this test, as well as new vocabulary on shopping, revision of the time and cultural aspects of life in Italy. Students were also required to be able to express their opinions and react to events using common expressions in Italian.

Test 3 contained a summary of all verbal tenses seen so far in the course, including the *imperative* (both positive and negative) and the *present conditional* – which were part of the last two weeks of teaching – direct and indirect object pronouns, *ci* and *ne*, as well as new topics of conversation, such as directions. Test 3 included a wider range of topics and exercises in preparation for the final exam, including some translation exercises. Test 3 is objectively more difficult than Test 2 and 1, as it is customary for final assignments in language teaching, which tend to be a summary of the entire course.

Another factor contributed to making Test 3 more difficult than the previous tests: no matter how hard we try to divide a language into topics and sections to suit the nature of academic assessment, topics seen and tested in previous tests will always return in following tests, making subsequent testing potentially more and more difficult. In the case of Test 3, this was planned as a preparation for the final exam.

Data Analysis

After describing the assessment used for the case study, we can move on to the data analysis. Below is a table summarizing students' progress from Test 1 to Test 3. Let us remember, once again, that these tests are increasingly more difficult. It is likely, then, but not certain, of course, that most students would score higher in Test 1 than they do in Test 3.

Student	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3
1402-1	37.5	38.3	51.4
1402-2	87.5	85.0	94.2
1402-3	85.0	80.0	85.7
1402-4	100.0	78.3	97.1
1402-5	65.0	58.3	71.4
1402-6	50.0	40.0	45.7
1402-7	62.5	58.3	75.7
1402-8	85.0	88.3	88.5
1402-9	97.5	88.3	85.7
1402-10	75.0	65.0	81.4
1402-11	87.5	88.3	90.0
1402-12	85.0	93.3	87.1
1402-13	67.5	55.0	64.2
1402-14	62.5	65.0	61.4

Table 2 - Data analysis

Contrarily to the predictions, 11 students out of 14 – hence 78.5% of the student cohort – scored higher in Test 3 compared to Test 2 (and 2 students scored gradually higher from Test 1 to Test 3). Now, while achieving higher scores does not necessarily mean that these students have repaired their recurring errors, it surely is an indication of their progress in learning Italian. The 78.5 percentage of higher scores in Test 3 testifies a greater grasp on the language at the end of the course, in which the feedback method could have played an important role.

A percentage which is more indicative of the efficacy of the method is the one obtained after the final analysis on recurring errors and thus after checking if each and every student had repaired their recurring errors. The final analysis revealed that 75.7% of the students did repair their recurring errors. The two percentages differ for obvious reasons: even though some students corrected their recurring error, they may have made other mistakes and scored lower than in previous tests, something likely to happen in an intensive course, where new topics are explained every day and where there is less time to digest new information.

If we exclude the students who did not manifest a recurring error, only 10.7% of the cohort did not repair the error that had been signaled to them. Hence, 89.2% of students who made a recurring error did indeed repair such error. Among the students who did not repair are students who scored

some of the lowest scores in the group and showed early on in the course that they had difficulties with foreign language learning in general. One student was away for part of the course and took their Tests 2 and 3 on the same day, without the possibility of getting any feedback between one test and the following.

Table 3 - Summary

As Table 3 shows, most of the recurring errors that were repaired are grammatical errors, similar to the error in Picture 1. Student number 1402-8, for example, showed both in class in the first few weeks and in Test 1 a tendency to conjugate *-are* verbs as *-ere* verbs in the imperfect indicative: “*andavemo” for “andavamo” or “*giocavemo” for “giocavamo”. The student showed proof of repair of such tendency in Test 2, where he spelled “aiutavamo” correctly.

Some other students (1402-04 and 1402-05) added unrequired accents to the imperfect tense (“*aiutavò” instead of “aiutavo”), showing confusion between such tense and the future tense, which were explained across the same fortnight and perhaps showing the limitations of an intensive course with a too dense verbal syntax programme. One of the students corrected the tendency in the following tests, the other did not.

Student	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3
1402-01	Many different errors, vocab	Many different errors, vocab	Repaired
1402-02	No recurring errors	No recurring errors	Direct and indirect object pronouns
1402-03	No recurring errors	Tenses confusion	Repaired
1402-04	No errors (100%)	Accent on imperfect	Repaired
1402-05	Many different errors	Accent on imperfect	No
1402-06	Many different errors	Conjugations	Repaired
1402-07	Imperfect endings	Repaired	Repaired
1402-08	Imperfect indicative	Repaired	Repaired
1402-09	No recurring errors	No recurring errors	No recurring
1402-10	No recurring errors	Tenses confusion	Repaired
1402-11	Future endings 3 rd p.p.	Repaired	Repaired
1402-12	Vocabulary expansion	Meaning errors decrease	Repaired
1402-13	No recurring errors	Vocabulary expansion	Repaired
1402-14	Future, tenses confusion	Repaired future, no tenses	Repaired, No

On the other hand, some students who did not show difficulties learning the ambitious verbal syntax syllabus, showed issues with learning the vocabulary and were accordingly shown different vocabulary-building techniques. Student number 1402-12, for instance, made numerous errors that showed a lack of knowledge of the meaning of many words in Test 1 and 2. They were accordingly shown some techniques to build their vocabulary and a close eye was kept on their vocabulary in class. Despite scoring slightly lower in Test 3 (93.3% in Test 2 and 87.1% in Test 3), the student demonstrated, in both tests, to have worked on vocabulary expansion and successfully increased their Italian vocabulary.

Conclusions

From the very inception of this feedback method in 2013, I was under the impression that it was going to be more useful with grammatical errors than with other types of errors. The students who were given vocabulary-learning tips as a response to their poor show of vocabulary assimilation, then did increase their vocabulary in the final tests. Hence, they did show that they corrected their weaknesses. Nonetheless, my initial impression was confirmed by students' response to the survey completed at the end of the course. As you can see from Table 4 (below), when asked, "Where do you think the feedback helped you most?" none of them responded "expanding vocabulary"; whereas 46% of them said the method helped "correcting grammar errors". A very positive result comes from the 54% who claimed the feedback method helped with their "overall performance in Italian".

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Correcting grammar errors	6	46%
2	Expanding vocabulary	0	0%
3	Overall performance in Italian	7	54%
	Total	13	100%

Table 4 – Where do you think the feedback helped you most?

Vocabulary is indeed an area where I would like to perfect the method, so that it could become as helpful as it has proven to be in other areas, even though some of the students' comments do show that they felt the method helped also with vocabulary expansion, as one student said: "The feedback [...] helped with my grammar, my vocabulary and my Italian in general". This comment emphasises an impact which goes beyond the mere correction of grammatical errors.

Text Response
Feedback is always helpful , however I found that feedback tailored to the areas where I struggled the most was much more constructive
I found it very helpful because it was specific feedback which is something I generally don't receive in other units .
It was great, although as an engineering student, I can see how a similar approach would be amazing to use to improve teaching in engineering .
It was very useful and Anna did an extremely good job. I wish I had this type of help in all of my units and I thoroughly enjoyed this unit because of the support we were all given.
The feedback provided was extremely useful . It helped with my grammar , my vocabulary and my Italian in general! I would recommend to invest in this type of feedback in other units of Italian, it really made the difference for me.
Yes, after one of the first tests I kept on making a similar mistake, for the next test I designated a bit of time to fix it and I did not have any problems from then on.
Yes, I thought the feedback was very helpful . It definitely directed my focus toward areas I needed to improve on, which improved my understanding overall .
Yes I am really enjoy it.

Table 5 – Did you enjoy this type of feedback?

Other comments underline the helpfulness, constructiveness, and usefulness of my method (“Feedback is always helpful, however I found that feedback tailored to the areas where I struggled the most was much more constructive”; “I found it very useful because it was specific feedback”; “the feedback provided was extremely useful”; “I thought the feedback was very helpful”). Some of these comments also show the students’ comprehension of the work conducted in class, its specificity and novelty: “I found it very useful because it was specific feedback which is something I generally don't receive in other units”. Others encourage for the method to be invested in and used in other disciplines: “as an engineering student, I can see how a similar approach would be amazing to use to improve teaching in engineering”; “I would recommend to invest in this type of feedback in other units of Italian, it really made the difference for me”; “I wish I had this type of help in all of my units and I thoroughly enjoyed this unit because of the support we were all given”.

I am overwhelmed by the positive comments and feedback from the students of Italian 1402 and extremely satisfied with the results obtained in this case study. I plan to further test my method in the near future, perhaps including a new formula to be adapted to online testing. Adding recordings of oral feedback and being able to include them in a more thorough analysis, along the lines of what already achieved in studies by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster and Mori (2006), testing my method against a larger cohort and perhaps other languages, are ambitions for the future that I would definitely consider in order to perfect the method.

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