ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



# *"FEEDBACK HELPS IN NOTICING MY MISTAKES WHEN I SPEAK"*:STUDENTS COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH TEACHERS' CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

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## Abstract
*The present study examines cognitive processes of undergraduate EFL students who receive teacher feedback on oral presentations in Communication and Presentation Skills courses of Pakistani universities. Based on a qualitative design, 50 students were involved in the study and comprised of level-two courses in three universities and the data was obtained through observations, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, stimulated recall, and verbal report. Three aspects of cognitive engagement were analyzed, including depth of processing, cognitive processes, and metacognitive processes. Results obtained showed that students engaged themselves in processing the feedback by comprehension, error identification, reflection, recall, and future performance strategic planning. Although a significant number of participants were found to be substantively noticing, reflective learning, and goal-oriented revisions, there were those who engaged inconsistently or minimally in feedback, which indicated variability in feedback engagement. The paper demonstrates the lack of feedback utilization between and among tasks in the learners and the necessity for systematic scaffolding and feedback literacy and implications on the improvement of reflective and metacognitive practices in EFL oral communication classes are discussed.*

***Key words*:** cognitive engagement, corrective feedback, oral presentations, EFL learners, higher education

## Introduction

Feedback has been well-known as a powerful means of enhancing learning and performance of students (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Good feedback helps in the learning of students as it helps to bridge the gap between the actual performance and the desired performance. Corrective feedback (CF) also referred to as comments relating to a student understanding or acquisition of a second language in terms of accuracy or appropriateness. The study of feedback is an immensely dynamic research field in the second language acquisition (SLA). The earlier studies were focused on the types of feedback and their effectiveness (Ellis, 2010); Lee, (2017a); Lyster et al., (1997); Truscott, (1996)). However, in present research, the focus has changed to how students engage with teachers' feedback in their social and contextual interactions, which is consistent with the socio-constructivist perspective that the ultimate function of feedback is to develop the self-monitoring and self-regulatory capacity in students (Nicolás-Conesa et al., (2014); Handley et al., (2011)). Keeping this in view, the studies of student engagement with corrective feedback have become a significant research agenda (Wang et al., 2022), although research on written CF research has significantly surpassed oral CF. There is still scarcity of research on how students engage with corrective feedback in both oral and written form. Thus, the purpose of the study was to explore the cognitive engagement of fifty EFL learners with teacher's corrective feedback, Communication and Presentation Skills courses in three Pakistani universities. Pedagogically speaking, classroom-based feedback is mostly aimed at classrooms interpretation, which is a complicated phenomenon that includes many dimensions, including the completeness of information, language proficiency, and delivery ( Han & Riazi, 2018). Giving quality feedback therefore is a major challenge. With the introduction of feedback engagement framework in the meaning of classroom, this research allows an empirical, descriptive research on feedback practices, and

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



provides a validation and additive to the prior prescriptive pedagogical beliefs regarding the meaning of education.

**Literature Review**

Teacher feedback is also a key issue in the context of English as Foreign Language (EFL) education because in Communication and Presentation Skills (CPS) courses in universities, teacher feedback significantly influences communicative competence in students. CPS courses also require real-time performance, and higher-order skills, like argumentation, awareness of the audience, fluency, and the use of multiple modes of expression, which are not required in written assignments. On the one hand, feedback in such courses usually includes the correction of forms and pronunciation, vocabulary (form-based), and the organization and delivery, persuasion (content-based) (McCombs, 2007). This feedback would only result in meaningful improvement based on the cognitive engagement of the EFL learners with the feedback. This review provides a synthesis of the major literature on the subject of processing, internalizing, and applying teacher feedback to the students and placing it into the context of the research on feedback and engagement.

**Conceptualizing Cognitive Engagement**

Cognitive engagement is the extent to which the learners put their minds in processing and responding to feedback. (Ellis, 2010) argues that the cognitive analysis of errors and the comparison between the feedback and the already known information and the reorganization of the language output help the learners engage cognitively. (Winstone & Carless, 2019) build upon it by highlighting the concept of feedback literacy where students gain abilities and dispositions in interpretations and effective use of feedback. This is more than surface-level correction in CPS courses, and it entails reflection regarding rhetorical tactics, coherence, and performance in delivery. Based on (Ellis, 2010) and (Winstone & Carless, 2019) analytical frameworks, the cognitive engagement may be separated into the three primary subconstructs depth of processing CF, cognitive operations, and metacognitive operations.

**i)Depth of Processing of CF**

According to Ellis, (2010), cognitive engagement is the extent of attention of the learners to the corrective feedback (CF). Attention has been said to be a very significant factor since it allows the learner to recognize the distance between the producer of their language and the target-like forms; an important part in the process of interlanguage development. Although CF might not be observed and processed in the manner in which intended by the teachers, its written and enduring nature enables the learner to process the feedback at their own speed, and it is therefore more manageable as compared to the oral feedback. The input framework developed by (Gass, 1997) indicates that the quality of noticing affects significantly revisions and retention of correct forms (Qi & Lapkin, (2001); Sachs & Polio, (2007); Storch & Wigglesworth, (2010)). Indicatively, Qi & Lapkin (2001) differentiated the substantive noticing where learners not only observe but also give justifications to CF and perfunctory where learners acknowledge CF but do not give justifications. Their results revealed that substantive noticing was more useful in revisions. In the same way, Sachs & Polio, (2007) established that the uptake was higher among the students who verbalized their errors when subjected to think-aloud protocols, particularly when they made metalinguistic explanations. Storch & Wigglesworth, (2010) discussed the process of collaborative revision and classified the engagement of the process into extensive (including explanations, suggestions, and counter-suggestions), limited (reading the feedback only), and no engagement. They discovered that the greater the involvement the greater the uptake and retention of delayed tasks thus more comprehensive cognitive processing of CF emphasizes development of L2.

**ii) Cognitive Operations**

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL

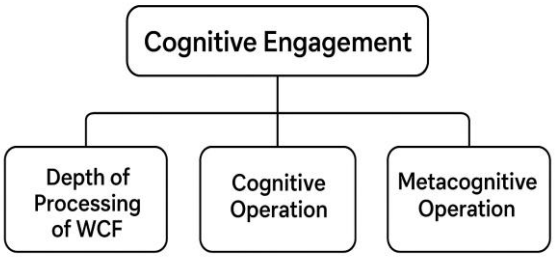


Though observing is a major factor in a cognitive activity, it does not describe how learners respond to mistakes and react to CF (Han, 2016). To explain this, scientists study cognitive processes, or how students apply the intellectual resources to make sense of feedback. According to Oxford, (2011), cognition refers to the mental power of knowing which covers awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment. There is low research on cognitive operations in relation to CF. As an example, Ferris et al., (2013a) examined revision activities of English learners who were either raised in the U.S or had immigrated at a young age. Their results revealed that revising of texts was usually done by learners using intuition as well as rereading techniques, instead of applying the rules of grammar in a systematic manner as they had been taught earlier. This indicates that the cognitive methods of feedback by learners might not be as analytical and more intuitive and that the role of cognition in feedback revision processes should be further explored.

**iii) Metacognitive Operations**

Fredricks et al., (2004) broaden the idea of cognitive engagement to refer to attention as well as thoughtfulness and the desire to invest effort in learning difficult skills and concepts. This expanded sense is related closely to the metacognitive strategies, required by the learners to control their own thought. These strategies can involve concentration of attention, tracking progress or making plans on how to improve (Oxford, 2011). Metacognitive operations, in the CF situation, entail the active management, monitoring, and evaluation of cognitive interaction with feedback in learners. Although this aspect has received fewer studies in L2 writing studies, Han, (2016) developed a taxonomy of metacognitive processes regarding CF. They are planning (deciding how to utilize the feedback), managing cognition (focusing where to revise to), monitoring (checking the progress during revising) and evaluating (evaluating the result of the revision). The activities demonstrate the importance of the self-regulation process and the strategic awareness in the processing and application of feedback in learners.

Figure 1. Subconstructs of Cognitive Engagement




**Feedback and EFL Oral Performance**

The importance of teacher feedback in oral performance situations has been long discussed in the research. According to Hyland & Hyland (2006), oral feedback is usually immediate and dialogic and thus provides the learners a chance to negotiate meaning. This immediacy, in EFL presentation courses, increases the cognitive engagement because the students are required to judge their performance instantly. Nonetheless, Ellis, (2017) asserts that, unless adequate scaffolding is provided to them, students can concentrate on more surface-level mistakes (grammar, pronunciation) and neglect more high-order cognitive skills such as the development of arguments and connecting with the audience. The various types of feedback stimulate the minds of the learners differently thus influencing the level of processing and application of the teacher input. These differences are very important in CPS classes, where

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



students must strike a balance between accuracy in language and the rhetoric of oral and written communication.

1. **Direct vs. Indirect Feedback**

Direct feedback gives the learner the proper linguistic structure in real-time (e.g. the teacher rewriting a linguistically incorrect sentence as he goes to class every day). The method eliminates the thinking burden since the students are not required to guess about the correction. As an example, in a CPS presentation assignment a teacher will write directly on the speech script of a student: Use past tense here: I attended the seminar last week. Indirect feedback, on the contrary, points out the error but does not provide the correction (e.g. underlining or circling the incorrect verb). This will make the students to be involved in problem-solving through retrieving rules and testing hypotheses. As an example, a student who is presented with text underlined as He go to class every day has to employ earlier knowledge to automatically correct himself or herself. Studies indicate that indirect feedback is more likely to lead to more cognitive processing because it challenges learners to think and appraise their own language production instead of depending on the teachers solution only (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

2. **Form-focused vs. Content-focused Feedback.**

Form-based feedback concentrates on linguistic precision, and it aims at grammatical, vocabulary, or pronunciation mistakes. An example that can be given is the teacher commenting after a presentation, paying attention to subject-verb agreement in your introduction. Such form of feedback attracts the attention of learners to the details of language at the micro level. Conversely, content based feedback would give students the motivation to think about meaning, logic and rhetoric techniques. As an example, a CPS teacher can say, Your point is clear, though that you should provide more evidence to prove you have a point about cultural diversity. With such feedback, higher-order cognition is triggered, which makes students evaluate the persuasiveness and structure of their ideas (Yu & Lee, 2016). Linguistic accuracy is essential in CPS courses, and the development of content would make the process more effective. A learner giving a group presentation, say, may have both a suggestion about his or her use of articles (a vs. the) and an observation about how the student can use supporting examples to enhance the interest of audience.

3. **Oral vs. Written Feedback.**

Oral feedback is usually in real time, usually during an act or right after an act. Oral remarks like, *try to slow down here so the audience can follow* by a teacher in CPS courses induce students to make instant changes in delivery, which facilitates the negotiation of meaning. Oral conversation can also permit clarification and questioning and is an effective tool of instant intellectual involvement. Written feedback on the other hand is permanent and reflective. An oral message such as Your conclusion does not discuss your main points effectively will ensure that the learners have time to think, to plan, and to revise. Notably, a hybrid strategy is the most beneficial one. As an illustration, in cases where the teachers tape the feedback on students presentations, and the teachers pause to comment on the accuracy of the linguistic skills, as well as the delivery, learners can access the feedback severity on several occasions. It is found out that such multimodal feedback improves immediate uptake and long-term retention by cognitive and metacognitive engagement with students ( Han & Hyland, 2019a).

**EFL Learners' Cognitive Processing of Feedback**

A study of cognitive processing of teacher feedback among EFL students reveals a dynamic sequence of stages: notice, uptake, reflection and strategy use, and transfer of tasks. These are recursive processes which are not linear and their effectiveness is determined by the quality of feedback as well as the feedback literacy of learners. The cognitive processing of a

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



learner can be a major determinant of the performance outcomes in Communication and Presentation Skills (CPS) classes where feedback is usually concentrated not only on the accuracy but also on the structure and the manner of delivery.

**a) Noticing and Uptake**

The Noticing Hypothesis by (Schmidt, 1990) provides that the development of the second language needs the conscious knowledge of the language inputs. At the feedback level, it entails that the students would have to view an error and the correct response first before they are able to assimilate the same. As one might think, in CPS courses, students whose annotated feedback on recorded presentations (such as highlighting fillers such as uh or um) is provided by the teacher can become aware of the patterns that they can otherwise overlook during live performance (Zhang & Hyland, 2018). There is empirical evidence to the significance of paying attention to uptake. Qi & Lapkin, (2001) differentiated between substantive and perfunctory noticing (recognition and explanation by why feedback was received in the first place and superficial recognition, respectively). Students who practiced substantive noticing did better revision and had better command of correct forms. On the same note, (Sachs & Polio, 2007) concluded that higher uptake occurred among students who verbalized errors when using the think-aloud protocols. Oral CPS Replaying recordings with teacher commentary has been demonstrated to enhance the noticing of language errors and delivery weaknesses amongst learners (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010); (Loewen & Sato, 2018).

**b) Reflection and Strategy Use**

It is not enough that one notices and then goes beyond that through cognitive elaboration and metacognition. The model of feedback as a self-regulation provided by Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, (2006) implies that students are required to engage in an active process of feedback interpretation, revision planning, progress tracking, and the evaluation of the results. Self-reflection journals, peer debriefings and progressive rehearsal activities are commonly applied in the context of CPS where learners can further process feedback outside of the classroom (Y. Han, 2017); (Yu & Lee, 2016). As an illustration, once they have been provided with feedback regarding voice projection, the students can record themselves and rehearse, making conscious volume changes and contrasting them with the results to use the strategies in the future. Mahfoodh, (2017) demonstrated that EFL writers, who were involved in metacognitive reflection, expressed increased confidence and accuracy. Likewise, Han & Hyland, (2019) established that emotional reactions of students to corrective feedback affected the depth of reflection in which positive feedback promotes greater engagement. The strategic use of feedback also involves the application of the learning strategies, like consulting the grammar resources, practicing the pronunciation exercises, or asking peers clarification (Oxford, 2011). Research infers that students who integrate teacher feedback and self-regulated strategies show a higher level of cognitive engagement and a more positive change in the long-term (Ferris et al., 2013b); (Winstone & Carless, 2019).

**c) Transfer Across Tasks**

One of the most important issues is the ability of learners to generalize feedback engagement to new and diverse tasks besides instant revisions. Lee, (2017) noticed that although students tend to use local corrections (e.g., to make a particular slide or a certain portion of a presentation better), they have difficulties in generalizing this learning to further tasks unless the process of reflection is supported. As an example, a learner that is given feedback about the use of signposts in terms of order (First, Second, Final) can only apply it in the next presentation when he or she is made to have a checklist of discourse markers. Empirical evidence points to this issue: Storch & Wigglesworth, (2010) have observed that uptake in collaborative revisions was not always maintained in delayed tasks, whereas Bitchener & Knoch, (2010) have observed that even long-term written corrective feedback did

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



not necessarily result in long-term accuracy improvement. Portfolio-based learning, feedback workshop, and guided peer review are structured tasks that have been found to enhance transfer (Carless & Boud, 2018). CPS In CPS classrooms, the retention and transfer of skills are enhanced considerably when students are asked to make comparisons between instructor feedback on several presentations and to write reflection reports.

**d) Synthesis**

Processing feedback in EFL learning is a complicated interaction of observing, contemplating and transferring. These processes are especially topical in CPS courses as the feedback is focused not on the linguistic form only, but also delivery and the structure of the content. Designing an effective instructional design thus needs: Reinforcement that helps in perceiving with obvious replicas (annotations, video replays, reformulations). Reflective (self-assessment, peer discussions, guided rehearsal) and strategic activities. Transfer (feedback portfolio, reflective checklists, longitudinal tracking, etc.) mechanisms. By scaffolding the three dimensions, EFL learners have more chances of maintaining gains in both communication competence and language proficiency.

**Affective and Motivational Dimensions of Cognitive Engagement**

Even though cognitive engagement is an intellectual phenomenon, it is shaped by the emotional dimension. Han & Hyland, (2015) demonstrate that those students who perceive feedback as helpful are more prone to putting cognitive effort in revising. Tone and clarity of teacher feedback in CPS courses (with a high occurrence of public speaking anxiety) strongly influence whether students critically evaluate or ignore comments. The authors state that a culture of trust and dialogic feedback would positively affect emotional and cognitive uptake (Carless & Boud, 2018). Even recent research underlines feedback literacy as a condition to cognitive engagement. Winstone & Carless (2019) state that students should be trained on how to decode and use feedback. This could be structured in CPS courses through guided reflection, checklists to incorporate feedback, or peer evaluation. Yu, Liu, and Wang (2019) studies have discovered that explicit training on feedback literacy led to a significant improvement in the skill of Chinese EFL students to respond critically to teacher feedback during oral communication activities.

**Cross-Cultural Perspectives on EFL Student Engagement with Feedback**

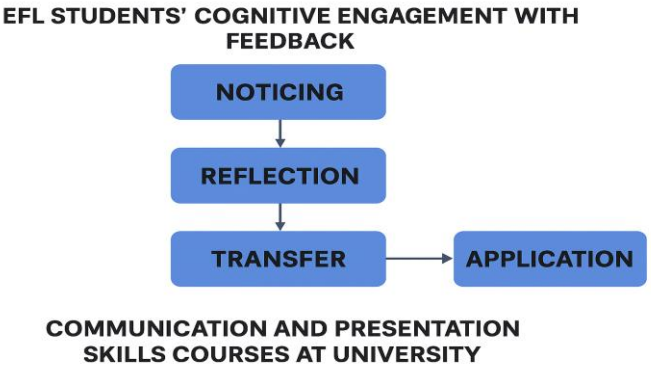
The way EFL students can take feedback is determined by the cultural background. Students can also be more teacher-reliant in collectivist settings and respond to authoritative feedback mostly, whereas in Western settings, students are encouraged to be autonomous and discuss their homework with peers (Lee, 2017a). This has its effect on CPS courses, where students in other EFL backgrounds might be different in terms of how much they would like to criticize themselves or receive negative feedback. The literature synthesis indicates that teacher feedback is an important aspect of CPS courses but its usefulness depends on the cognitive engagement of students. Research has consistently indicated that feed forward is more active when it is dialogic, multimodal and scaffolded. Furthermore, feedback between tasks can be a challenging task to EFL students, and the mediation of engagement is through cognitive reflection and feedback literacy and cultural mediation. Nevertheless, there are few gaps in longitudinal studies which follow long term transfer of feedback in EFL presentation contexts and majority of the studies are concerned with linguistic accuracy, but not much emphasis has been laid on rhetorical and audience-engagement skills. The research is scarce in terms of studying the perspectives of cognitive load on processing feedback during oral tasks. The key that leads to the achievement of EFL students in Communication and Presentation Skills classes in university is cognitive interaction with teacher feedback. Remaining effective means more than just taking corrections but seeing, contemplating, moving and responding. It has been demonstrated that in cases of timely, dialogic feedback, coupled with the presence of an express

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



training in feedback literacy, EFL students will tend to internalize the strategies that will help them to improve both their language and their communicative competence. Further studies into longitudinal engagement with cognitive engagement should be the focus of future research, and the possibilities of adapting feedback practices to cultural and technological differences should be investigated to make the most out of student learning.

Figure 3 Relationships among students, teachers, and parents.




## Methodology

The qualitative paradigm is used in this study because it offers the best way of elucidating the intricacy of the interaction between learners and the feedback in Communication and Presentation Skills (CPS) classes. Several data collection strategies were adopted such as semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, reflective narratives and questionnaires to produce detailed information on the experiences and perceptions of the participants.

## Context and Participants

Participants were chosen through purposive sampling Creswell & Plano Clark, (2011) according to their knowledge of the CPS courses and the applicability of their interest to the research goals. Three universities in Lahore were sampled, including the University of Management and Technology, the University of Lahore, and the University of Central Punjab. A sample of 50 undergraduate students who are under the level-two course of English communication and presentation was used. The choice was based on the two key factors, namely, (a) the desire of students to participate, and (b) regular attendance of classes, active participation in interviews, and the performance of oral tasks and revisions.

## Teacher Participants and Ethical Considerations

The teachers participating in the study were given an information sheet and consent form. They were guaranteed that (a) their personal identity would not be disclosed, (b) they had a right to withdraw at any point and (c) their teaching practices would not be affected or changed. Ethical integrity was guaranteed by signing the consent forms and collecting them appropriately.

## Data Collection

To answer the purpose of this study of examining the level of student engagement with teacher feedback in Communication and Presentation Skills (CPS) course, the data were collected through various sources that are compatible. This triangulated strategy gave enough breadth and depth in comprehension of the experiences of the learners as well as making findings valid (Denzin, 2012). Initially, a background questionnaire was conducted to obtain demographic data, the previous experience of learners in regards to feedback, as well as their perception of the competence in communication and presentation. This contextual data were used to put subsequent analysis into context. Initial expectation, attitude, and anxieties of the students were then taken by administration of a pre-feedback questionnaire to obtain a baseline

ISSN E: 2709-8273
ISSN P:2709-8265
JOURNAL OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TESOL



of expectations, attitude, and anxieties by which they would be compared to their post-feedback reflections. Reflective reports were taken after presentations in order to capture the changing views of students. These reports enabled the students to express their instant reactions, self-assessments, and improvement plans, which was consistent with the study aim of measuring cognitive and affective inclinations to corrective reports. Semi-structured interviews were very qualitative in nature and gave comprehensive ideas on the experiences of the learners, and they were flexible enough to allow exploration of the reasoning and perception of the students, yet comparability was ensured among the participants.

In order to delve deeper on teacher student feedback relationship, the oral feedback of the teacher was recorded in audio format, and this allowed us to examine the feedback delivery process, tone and content therein in detail. This was supplemented by the classroom observations that provided information on the interactional context where the feedback was made, the non-verbal responses as well as peer involvement. Also, a written feedback rubric was created and based on the known competence frameworks but was modified according to the curriculum and personal teaching objectives of teachers. The rubric facilitated placement of organized evaluation of the linguistic, organizational and delivery ability of the students in the presentation as well as acting as a systematic means of evaluation. Lastly, the course materials, such as syllabi, instructional resources, and assessment instructions, were examined in order to put the importance of feedback into the context of the overall pedagogical structure of CPS courses. Collectively these were combined into a multi-layered dataset that amalgamated self-reported reflections, observed behaviors, and input by teachers. This qualitative method provided the possibility of an indecisive examination of the way EFL learners interact cognitively and affectively with feedback in university communication and presentation courses.

**Data Analysis**

This study was analyzed at the thematic level since the objective was not to give a fine-grained analysis of the verbal data in terms of linguistics but to examine patterns of student interpretation and reaction to corrective feedback (CF). As defined by Fulcher (2010), thematic analysis entails the methodical process of identifying some critical categories within a collection of data, and Braun & Clarke, (2006), it is also important in identifying, analyzing, and defining recurrent themes. NVivo 11 software was applied to code and manage the data, and allowed orderly organizing the codes and hierarchizing them into larger themes. The content analysis and the text analysis were both used, and the text analysis was oriented on the linguistic errors, teacher feedback, and the further student revisions. In line with the suggestion by Miles,& Huberman, (1994) that data analysis must be a part of the data collection process, field notes were made during the process. These consisted of notes of interesting events and the subjective thoughts of the researcher which were used in honing the further data gathering. The analysis of linguistic errors was performed in the frame of a continuous study, which allowed making changes in the methodology. Once data collection was done all the interviews and stimulated recall sessions (in English and Urdu) were translated to English to be analyzed. The major emphasis was to examine the affective involvement of learners in CF, especially their emotional and attitude. As suggested by Chandler, (2003), the first response was to be categorized into broadly positive or negative. The first codes were inductively derived out of words used by the participants themselves (Patton, 2002) so that the analysis was based on the opinions of the learners.

**Results and Findings**

The data analysis found that there are several aspects of cognitive involvement of the students with teacher feedback on oral presentation. Their answers also were grouped into themes by revealing the way they perceived, processed, and responded to feedback.

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**Positive Perception Towards Feedback (14 students)**

The general perception of feedback was mostly positive with most students either saying that it was good, very good, and helpful. This kind of responses indicates that feedback was not only accepted and appreciated but was not necessarily discussed critically. As an example, Fatima Ahmad Saeed stated that it was good, and Haider Ali said that "it was very good" and Abubakar Majeed highlighted that "it helped me very well".

Examples:

Haider Ali: "I feel good and more confident about the feedback that I received on my presentation."

Saira Javed: "I feel good because it's help me to improve my second presentation and mistakes."

Abubakar Majeed: "It was really helpful for me."

**Understanding of Feedback (32 students)**

The greatest number of students indicated that they could clearly decipher the comments of their teacher. They pointed out that they were made to know what was right or wrong and they were corrected. Ayman Zulifiqar gave an account of what he said, saying, "Yes, it helps me to realize what is right and what is wrong", and Yusra Mubashir said, "Yes, it helps me to realize my mistakes". This shows that the understanding of feedback was a powerful aspect in informing the learning.

Examples:

Ayman Zulifiqar: "Yes, it helps me to understand what is right and what is wrong."

Mehar Jan: "Yes, I did understand it and will implement it in my Future presentation."

**Error Recognition and Analysis (15 students).**

A vast percentage of the students mentioned the feedback as an essential component that enabled them to become aware of their weaknesses. They indicated, in particular, problems with confidence, communication, or pronunciation. As an example, Saira Javed said, "it was good to note my errors", whereas Huzaifa Ahmad thought, "I got a lack of confidence eye contact:. This theme demonstrates how feedback has been a direct contribution towards error recognition.

Examples:

Saira Javed: "It was helpful to identify my mistakes."

Huzaifa Ahmad: "I receive that lack of confidence eye contact."

Aqsa Touqir (Interview): "Mam said to me that you need to be more confident and you need to improve your communication skills."

**Feedback-based Reflection and Learning (16 students)**

Reflectively, students also indicated that they were motivated to critically reflect on their work through feedback. Others recognized that they had learnt on their own and some did not rule out emotional reactions. Syeda Javeria explained: "I thought about my errors", and Laraib told: "I thought deeply on the points that teacher gave". This theme demonstrates self-awareness as well as constructive internal dialogue after feedback.

Examples:

Muhammad Usama: "I reflected on the comments."

Laraib (Interview): "I thought deeply on the points teacher gave."

**Memory and Recall of Feedback (7 students)**

The other theme was that students were able to remember and repeat teacher comments word-to-word and this showed how powerful feedback was on the students. As an example, Meher Jan (Interview) remembered, saying, "Mam said to me that you need to work on vocabulary", and Laraib (Interview) remembered, saying, "Mam said to me that you are hiding

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ISSN P:2709-8265
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yourself behind dice". Such elaborated remembering depicts not just an understanding, but also enduring mental activity.

Examples:

Aqsa Touqir (Interview): "Mam said to me that you need to be more confident and you need to improve your communication skills."

Meher Jan (Interview): "Mam said to me that you need to work on vocabulary."

Laraib (Interview): "Mam said to me that you are hiding yourself behind dice."

**Self-Evalation and Monitoring (11 students)**

Some of the students were involved in self-monitoring which is actually a mirror of their performance as they use feedback to evaluate and appraise themselves. They explained evaluation and self-assessment. In fact, Fatima Ahmad Saeed said, "I evaluated myself", and Ahmad Raza said, "I evaluated my performance". These reactions draw out a metacognition feature of participation in which learners followed their own progress.

Examples:

Muhammad Zain Ahmad: "I evaluated myself."

Ahmad Raza: "I assessed my performance."

Laraib (Interview): "I evaluate myself through teacher's feedback."

**Strategic Planning of Future Presentations (11 students)**

Students also reported future-oriented strategies, as they revealed how they would use feedback in future activities. They scheduled advances in such aspects as eye contact, confidence, and delivery. Haider Ali said, "Next time I will ensure I make eye contact" whereas Areeb Zahra said, "I will do good/best next time". This theme depicts feedback to action goal transformation.

Examples:

Ayman Zulifiqar: "I'll try to keep it in my mind, next time before giving presentation."

Hassan: "I will improve myself by considering those feedback."

Abubakar Majeed: "I always use it to improve myself and try to do best in any upcoming presentation or assignment."

**Favorable Future Perspective of Learning (7 students)**

Some of the responses were mostly positive towards feedback. Students recognized its motivational presence and accentuated constructive meaning. Hamza Saeed replied, "I accept it positively "and interview with one student demonstrated, "when the teacher stated positive things, I gained more strength". These reactions are emotional fortitude to criticism.

Examples:

Hamza Saeed: "I take it positively."

Nimra Yousaf: "If it is good then of course I feel good."

Salah-u-Din: "It gave me positive direction."

**Ignoring / Minimal Response (4 students)**

A less significant group confessed that they did not pay much attention to feedback at first or were hardly engaged with it. This brings out the resistance or selectivity in relation to teacher comments. Here, an example is when Samiya Ahmad commented "I do not pay much attention", and Adan Fatima confessed that initially she simply does not attend to that, only to become focused by the time the next test came around.

Examples:

Adan Fatima: "At first I just ignore that, by the time the next test came I do focus on that."

Samra: "Nothing in presentation in which I disagreed with teacher's feedback."

Muhammad Zain Ahmad (Interview): "I was kind of indifferent towards it."

**Constructive but Critical Awareness (9 students)**

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A few students admitted that feedback was dual in the sense it was constructive yet could be at times critical, which had an impact on confidence. They acknowledged its value as they had ambivalent feelings. Muhammad Zain Ahmad said, “It was constructive, I felt that I was also rather slow at the same time”, and the other student interview heard, “Sometimes it makes you lose confidence, Sometimes you gain more”. This theme is cognizant of the multiple effects of feedback on the learners.

Examples:

Zain Ahmed: “I was disappointed that I made a mistake. But it was that for the future, I have to focus on this point.”

Zainab (Interview): “The feedback I got was to engage the crowd more bring some humor, anecdote, story or a small pun on words … I did not take it in a negative way.”

Laraib (Interview): “I feel they all are right and I have to work on them.”

**Discussion**

The results of this paper offer useful information on the cognition of EFL undergraduates in regards to teacher feedback in Communication and Presentation Skills (CPS) classes. The findings can be placed into the frameworks of (Ellis, 2010) and (Fredricks et al., 2004) models of engagement as the findings were consistent with the three main subconstructs of cognitive engagement, namely: (1) depth of processing written corrective feedback (CF), (2) cognitive operations and (3) metacognitive operations. In general, there was active processing of the feedback by the students in comprehension, mistakes identification, reflection, recall, and strategic planning. Nonetheless, there was also some variable performance whereby not all students took it. These findings are explained below in terms of the existing scholarship.

**Depth of Processing of CF**

Depth of processing is the degrees to which students perceive and attend to corrective feedback. Feedback and errors as a phenomenon and their perception and realization were two key themes in the given study that demonstrated high levels of initial involvement. Students always explained that they are aware of their mistakes with references to the particular remarks of teachers about the lack of confidence, vocabulary, pronunciation and non-verbal communication. These reactions depict the Noticing Hypothesis by (SCHMIDT, 1990) which underlines the presence of conscious attention as a requirement to the development of a second language.

Specificity of noticing was also found. As an example, students might remember such explicit comments like, “You should work on eye contact”, “You need to work on vocabulary”. This corroborates the point made by (Qi & Lapkin, 2001) between substantive noticing (proactive interpretation of feedback) and perfunctory noticing (a simple recognition). Substantive noticing was also observed as students did not only identify mistakes but also justified their mistakes, as (Sachs & Polio, 2007) found more effective revision takes place when students did more effective processing.

Meanwhile, a section of the students acknowledged to have a small response or disregarding feedback, which echoes previous research findings that emphasize the fact not all feedback is received and/or appreciated (Hyland & Hyland, 2006); (Shute, 2008). It may be due to emotional defensiveness, low perceived relevance or English understanding. This indicates one of the most important challenges: depth of processing is not even, and educators need to design feedback in a way that would be as clear and close to the target audience as possible.

**Cognitive Operations**

In addition to the initial noticing, students were involved in cognitive processes that indicated the active thinking and internalization of teacher feedback. One of the most frequent themes was reflection and learning through feedback, where students explained how they

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reflected on errors, insights, and repositioned feedback as an aspect of development. This is in line with the model of feedback as self-regulation, whereby the learners pass through reception, to interpretation and meaning-making (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

Here, when students were asked to give examples of their reflections, examples like these show some level of reflectiveness, "I reflected on my mistakes" and "It gave me insight". These findings are similar to those made by (Boud et al., 1985) who argue that reflection helps learners to process experiences into knowledge. Equally, (Y. Han & Hyland, 2019a) discovered that affective responses mediate the engagement in cognitive activities: positively framed feedback is associated with a higher likelihood of deep reflection. It found its reflection in the theme Positive Viewpoint Towards Learning where some of the participants stressed that one had to take feedback positively and use it as a direction.

A different mental task that was observed was the memory and the recall of feedback. The fact that students could repeat teacher comments word-to-word is an indication of meaningful cognitive encoding, which agrees with the fact that relational and dialogic feedback were more memorable, reported by (Carless, 2006). The uptake is also made easy through such recall, since it can help learners get feedback when planning and rehearsing. The self-regulated learning model offered by (Zimmerman, 2002) also focuses on memory as a constituent of the forethought stage which leads to action in the future.

On the other hand, constructive yet critical awareness is evidence of higher-order mental action. Students were both accepting teacher evaluations and criticizing the feedback context or themselves. For example, comments such as "Sometimes it lowers your confidence, sometimes you gain more", demonstrate dual processing: acknowledging emotional reactions while cognitively integrating feedback. This is in line with the concept of constructive alignment by (Biggs & Tang, 2011) in which learners balance between the external input and the internal standards. These reactions are the signs of highly developed critical thinking and intellectual maturity, which also speak to (Winstone & Carless, 2019) focus on feedback literacy, or the skill to analyze and assess feedback and take appropriate actions towards it.

**Metacognitive Operations**

The themes observed were high in metacognitive interaction in terms of self-evaluation and monitoring and planning of future presentations. These results depict the ability of students to get out of reactive correction and transition to self-regulation proactivity. One can see the effects of self-monitoring, the setting of goals, and thinking about the future when making statements such as "I evaluate myself through teacher's feedback", or "I plan my next presentation according to the mistakes pointed out". These practices align to the definition of metacognitive strategies provided by (Oxford, 2011) in which attention is managed, progress is monitored and improvements are planned. They are also a reflection of the forethought phase of learning according to (Zimmerman, 2002) where learners come up with goals and make plans using the previous feedback. The data indicate that a significant number of students could convert teacher comments into their future action plans, i. e. working on confidence or developing eye contact. Such proactive approach highlights a shift towards superficial obedience to learning behaviours that are independent. Another finding that demonstrates the importance of positive affect in maintaining metacognitive engagement is highlighted. Students who viewed feedback as helpful were more likely to make goals and strategize improvement, which proves the assertion by (Carless & Boud, 2018) that trust and positive framing promote successful feedback uptake. Conversely, the limited number of students who confessed to ignore feedback is a case of metacognitive gap, in which learners had a strategy to act on input, or they did not find it helpful. This gap needs to be tackled by explicitly scaffolding feedback literacy so that students are able to receive feedback and also be able to control their feedback.

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**Comparison with Previous Studies**

In general, the results of the study are consistent with the findings of the literature which highlight the multi-dimensional aspects of feedback that presupposes both cognitive and affective involvement. Like (Han, 2017) and (Yu & Lee, 2016), the information shows that how learners respond to feedback is both deep and superficial when they are clear, delivered, and motivated. These traces of strategic planning sound like (Mahfoodh, 2017), who had found that when teacher responses are reflected on, continuous improvement takes place instead of the single corrections. Additionally, the observation that there are students who negatively evaluated feedback relates to (Loewen & Sato, 2018), who discovered that metacognitive instruction improves the skills of the learners to make effective judgments of corrections. The idea of positive perspective fits as well with the arguments by (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012) who concluded that emotions cannot be separated in terms of cognitive involvement in feedback processes. Lastly, the issue of transfer between the tasks, alluded to by the students in their planning on upcoming presentation, is also noted by (Lee, 2017) as a sign that learners can be defined with the help of a structured reflection task, which allows them to confirm the long-term adherence.

**Implications**

The findings imply that there are a number of pedagogical implications in CPS courses. To begin with, feedback ought to be specific, clear, and actionable because when it is clear, it is comprehended and recalled better. Second, to enhance cognitive operations, teachers are encouraged to scaffold the reflective practices, such as feedback journals or peer discussions. Third, CPS curricula should be enriched with metacognitive training, which will allow tracking their progress and forming tangible objectives. Last but not least, emotional aspects of feedback are also to be examined; it is essential to maintain a favorable, trust-related climate that ensures the continuation of the engagement.

**Conclusion**

This research proves that the EFL students in CPS courses can experience multiple cognitive levels of teacher feedback, comprehension and mistake identification through reflection, recall, self-evaluation, and future planning. Most students were also engaged meaningfully, but the proportion of a minority who were only marginally or intermittently engaging in feedback literacy indicated a requirement to build more robust scaffolding. Notably, the cognitive engagement of the students was not isolated but surrounded with affective orientations, which promotes the opinion that effective feedback is more about relationships and feelings than what it is about content. Such results contribute to the already accumulating body of work that intensive, thoughtful, and metacognitive use of feedback constitutes the key aspect of learner development and communicative competence in EFL settings.

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