

# The Role of Feedback: Metalinguistic and Elicitation on Pronunciation Achievement of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

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## Abstract

The main goal of this thesis is to investigate the extent to which metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback affect Iranian EFL students to improve their pronunciation achievement. Participants are Iranian students with Intermediate level of proficiency. KET (Key English Test) test was conducted to acknowledge their level of proficiency. Quantitative research was used for the purpose of this study. This study had Meta-linguistic and Elicitation group for six months. Pre-test Post-test design was conducted in order to statistically compare means of both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups before and after treatment. The result of data analysis showed that there is a significant difference between means of Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups. It was concluded that getting metalinguistic information feedback in Meta-linguistic group as a treatment effects on student's pronunciation achievement but getting elicitation feedback in Elicitation group does not have a significant effect on student's pronunciation achievement.

**Keywords:** Metalinguistic- Elicitation- Pronunciation

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In the field of language teaching, pronunciation with its different aspects is considered as a subcategory of speaking skill and a central factor which contributes to intelligibility, yet its study has always been marginalized. In fact, Baker & Murphy (2011) recognize that "an overall neglect of pronunciation teaching has been observed in teacher preparation programs" (p. 30). This lack of awareness seems to have some influences on teachers, learners and to a lesser extent the development of English where this language has got the status of a foreign language. Iranian students might be considered as an example in case.

During last decades, the importance of error correction in Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) inquiries has often been associated to feedback notion which is seen as a facilitator to enhance L2 learning; therefore, there has been a growing interest in research on Corrective Feedback (CF). In the late 1970s, CF was defined as 'any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance (Chaudron 1977, p. 31). Most importantly, it is defined as 'responses to learner utterances containing an error' and it is explained theoretically as a complex phenomenon with several functions.

Responses to foreign language learners' non-target like production form CF as indication of an error has been committed, replying correct form of target language and meta-linguistic explanation of the error or any combination of these feedbacks (Ellis, 2009). Errors are recognized as 'global errors' affecting overall sentence construction, word order, missing or wrongly placed connectors; and 'local errors' in single morphological/grammatical elements (Ellis, 2009). Ellis (2009, p. 6) underlines 'CF be directed at marked grammatical features or features that learners have shown they have problems with'. Loewen (2007) states that too much error correction can change the primary focus on communication to grammatical forms but a judicious use of error correction can help to provide an optimal context for L2 learning. The role of teacher reaction to learner errors has been seen as a legitimate object of a number of inquiries into classroom teaching and learning. Over the past two decades, a fruitful and often controversial line of research has evolved on teacher Corrective Feedback (CF) and its impact on Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA). Depending on the disciplinary orientation of the researchers, the issue, however, has taken on many guises (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Corrective Feedback has been known as one of the issues in second language learning which has grown to be a major concern for theoreticians. Many researchers are concerned that whether feedback has any effect on learners' development and the type of feedback which is suitable for this purpose. Teachers are also concerned which whether or not they should correct learners errors, and when and how to do it. Language learning has had an increase in the number of studies on corrective feedback. One reason for this can be the problem teachers have faced in classes. During recent years, despite the efficacy of communicative language teaching in improving learners' fluency, they have still problems with accuracy, particularly syntactic one. Many grammatical errors, which were once simple mistakes, are committed by intermediate or even advanced learners

which could be resolved in earlier stages of language learning.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

There have been some problems in researches on oral production. First, most of researches focus on fluency, whereas accuracy and complexity are considered as one aspect of fluency to be examined. Secondly, during recent years, communicative teaching method and task-based teaching method are very popular and accepted by most researchers and teachers. But, these two teaching method also take on some limitations. The most problem is that these two methods overemphasize the importance of fluency while overlook the accuracy.

Thus, there is no the detailed knowledge needed to implement systems that could use the most appropriate and effective strategy in a given situation. For this reason, it is important to carry out further research aimed at providing empirical evidence to inform the design of such systems.

Some studies show that though the corrective feedback has a positive role in improving FLL learners, it can affect them emotionally. Even when the correction takes place at one to one level between the teacher and the learner, the learner often feels embarrassed or humiliated to be corrected before their peers. The corrective feedback, though well intended, often becomes a demotivating factor in SL classrooms. Because of this it has been seen that some learners cease or hesitant to speak in the class.

Although teachers give feedback, their feedback on form and content are not often clear, contradictory, unsystematic and inconsistent. This leads to various reactions by students including frustration, confusion and inattention to comments. Many teachers still tend to respond to their students' written works by using the traditional method of correcting all grammatical errors. (Seedhouse, 1997)

### **1.3 Significance of the Study**

Corrective feedback has long been known in education and psychology, but has been much important in recent years, especially with the advent of form-focused instruction. Great many studies have been done to investigate the efficacy of the corrective feedback and its types in the process of language learning and teaching. The purpose of this paper is to study the efficacy of elicitation and metalinguistic clues as two types of feedback. Corrective feedback is an extremely needed for students and learning sittings, but controversial issue in FLL today. This study is going to provide data for EFL teachers, English teachers, professors and researchers to gain better understanding of corrective feedback and which type is more effective for learner accuracy and retention. After almost 20 years of research and exploring error correction and communicative language teaching, researchers are still asking the same five questions: 1. Should learners' errors be corrected? 2. When should learners' errors be corrected? 3. Which errors should be corrected? 4. How should errors be corrected? 5. Who should do the correcting? (Lyster & Ranta, 1997)

It is understood that, in our specific context the English Department at the University of Iran and certainly in other academic environments in Iran, teaching pronunciation is neglected while teaching grammar and vocabulary is important. This is generally based on the belief that pronunciation is just a pretty musical note used to make speech sound beautiful. This restricted understanding of pronunciation leads to the neglect of teaching it properly. As a consequence, Iranian learners of English cannot develop and enhance their pronunciation skill in this language. It is precisely why the authors have decided to pay a special attention to pronunciation, stress and intonation in particular and interpret the correlation between the improvement of students' intelligibility and pronunciation when using these supra-segmental features. The present study focuses on two types of feedback Metalinguistic Information and Elicitation. Its main objective is to interpret their impact on Iranian EFL students' spontaneity in speech, intelligibility and communicative competence.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- 1) Does metalinguistic feedback have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement?
- 2) Does elicitation feedback have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement?
- 3) Is there any significant difference between two groups of learners regarding their achievement on pronunciation?

### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

Based on the research questions the following hypotheses are generated:

- 1) Metalinguistic feedback does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement.
- 2) Elicitation feedback does not have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement?
- 3) There is not any significant difference between two groups of learners regarding their achievement on pronunciation.

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

**1.6.1 Pronunciation:** Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing words; utterance of speech, a way of speaking a word, especially a way that is accepted or generally understood, and a graphic representation of the way a word spoken, using phonetic symbols.

Further Pronunciation definition taken from Oxford Dictionary states pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is spoken. If one is said to have "correct pronunciation", then it refers to both within a specific dialect." A word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors, such as: the area in which they grew up, the area in which they now live, if they have a speech or voice disorder, their ethnic group, their social class, or their education.

**1.6.2 Metalinguistic feedback:** Lyster and Ranta (1997, p. 47) define metalinguistic feedback as "comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the learner's utterance" ("You need present tense."), which affords only, negative evidence. It contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form.

**1.6.3 Elicitation:** refers to at least three techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from students. First, teachers elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to "fill in the blank". Second, teachers use questions to elicit correct forms. Third, teachers occasionally ask students to reformulate their utterance.

## 2. Review of the Related Literature

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

During recent years, most English Iranian learners attempt to achieve language proficiency in the four language skills including speaking, listening, reading and writing. Although most learners consider the development of these four-language skills necessary, many learners would see English-speaking ability as being the most relevant and purposeful. For many learners that are likely to meet and have contact with other English speakers during their life, developing their English speaking skills is seen as being possibly the most important aspect of second language acquisition. For this reason learners of English language as a second language try to make their speech more intelligible and comprehensible, therefore that they can be more like native speakers. Many English second language learners encounter considerable difficulties in developing and perfecting their speaking skills to this level. Iranian English learners in particular encounter pronunciation problems, some of which are related to unfamiliar sounds found in the English language. This study investigates repetition as corrective feedback and its effect on learner uptake and language acquisition, and examines teachers' and learners' perceptions of repetition as a corrective feedback type. This chapter presents background information from previous studies on corrective feedback, types of corrective feedback, uptake, and the relationship between feedback types and their contribution to uptake and language development.

### 2.2 The importance of pronunciation learning on learner's improvement of Speaking Skills

The most important part of learning a second language rests on pronunciation Pennington, thus speaking is so important in acquiring and using a language (Dan, 2006). Dan claims that language competence covers many aspects. Phonetics both in theory and practice constitute the basis of speaking above all other aspects of language and pronunciation is the foundation of speaking. Good pronunciation may make the communication easier, more relaxed and more useful. Within the field of language teaching, ideas on the value of teaching pronunciation are often at variance. Some believe that teachers can do little to influence the natural course of English phonological development with its often less than satisfactory results.

Gilbert (1994, p, 38) claims that "Pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world. Why has pronunciation been a poor relation? I think it is because the subject has been drilled to death, with too few results from too much effort. Most of the literature on pronunciation deals with what and how to teach, while the learner remains a silent abstract in the classroom".

### 2.3 Pronunciation learning strategies

Based on Oxford's (1990) definition of learning strategies, pronunciation learning strategies can be taught as steps taken by students to enhance their own pronunciation learning. While there appear to be no published studies that deals with pronunciation learning strategies separately from other study, a few investigations have looked at pronunciation as one of a number of skills associated with learning style use.

According to Oxford's (1990) strategy classification system, direct and indirect strategies, the pronunciation learning strategies and tactics that learners used in learning pronunciation were categorized and documented. Peterson (2000) later investigated Oxford's study and condensed it into 12 basic pronunciation learning strategies which provide a wider range of specific pronunciation learning tactics than had been previously documented.

Learners reported they used these pronunciation learning strategies and tactics to improve their

pronunciation learning. Strategies are plans or methods to obtain a specific goal and affect the overall pattern; tactics are maneuvers, details that affect particular ways to control a situation. Pronunciation learning strategies have been useful in planning the teaching of pronunciation as well as analyzing the data reported from teachers and students in this study.

## **2.4 Models of Oral Proficiency Task**

Oral proficiency task should be considered as a practice for students for a long time to be proficient and to be evaluated after this practice, so it is important for students to get involved in different tasks during this study before they would be assessed.

Brown (2000) explains that speakers should first anticipate and then produce the expected patterns of any given discourse situation. They should also manage discrete elements such as turn-taking, refreshing, providing feedback, or repaying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement.

### **2.4.1 Interactive Role-Plays**

This way puts two or more students together and gives them a handout sheet, which they can, first, read and study, taking time to look-up unknown words and asking their friends about meanings and pronunciation. Teacher gives them a little more time to practice speaking, with everybody in the room reading aloud to get a feel for the role they will be playing and get used to the words sounds, phrases and the rhythm of the language.

### **2.4.2 Group work Discussion**

Group discussions can be used to serve a variety of purposes, but the main objective in this research is used to assess student's oral proficiency. Group discussions form a part of such techniques as Brainstorming and Focus groups, and these will be discussed in turn.

### **2.4.3 Oral narrative story-telling tasks**

Typically used in oral proficiency interview to elicit learners' speech. In the first task, learners are asked to retell the story they have heard few minutes ago. Learners are given approximately fifteen minutes to tell story to each other.

## **2.5 Definition of Feedback**

Feedback is defined as teacher's input to a writer's composition in the form of information to be used for revision. It is also defined as information provided by teachers to help students trouble-shoot their performance. I would define it as teacher's response to students' writing in the form of oral or written comments that aim to help them improve their writing performance (Keh, 1990).

Feedback may be either written or oral in form. Written feedback usually takes the forms of direct correction, indirect correction and coding. Direct correction is when the teacher corrects students' errors on their scripts by writing the correct structural or lexical form. Indirect correction is when the teacher indicates that there are errors in students' writing by underlining errors or circling them without providing corrections. Coding is when the teacher uses codes to indicate the location and type of error without correcting the error. Other forms of teacher written feedback are marginal comments, content comments and meta-linguistic explanation. (Keh, 1990).

Teachers assumed that students would see their errors, correct themselves and understand why their writings were marked in red. Yet, according to Grabe and Kaplan (1996), this system of response confused students. The process approach, however, has changed the way responses to students' writing have been handled as more methods of feedback have been developed. For example, teachers have encouraged their students to re-draft their writing and have also discovered different strategies in giving feedback to students. The emergence of the process approach to L2 writing resulted in a shift in focus in feedback methods from product to process, encouraging teachers to provide feedback to writers during the writing process through multiple drafts.

## **2.6 Types of corrective feedback**

Corrective feedback can be classified into several types: explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic clues, elicitation, and repetition. Loewen and Nabei (2007) classified different types of feedback, The following is the definition of different types of feedback:

Explicit correction: The teacher supplies the correct form and clearly indicates that what the student had said was incorrect. Recasts: The teacher reformulates all or part of the student's utterance without pointing out that the student has made an error.

Elicitation: The teacher directly elicits a reformulation from the student by asking questions such as "How do we say that in French?" or by pausing to allow the students to complete the teacher's utterance, or by asking the student to reformulate his or her utterance.

Metalinguistic clues: the teacher provides comments or questions related to the student's utterance.

Clarification request: the teacher uses phrases such as “Pardon?” and “I don’t understand” following learner errors to indicate to students that a reformulation is required.

Repetition: the teacher repeats the student’s ill-formed utterance, adjusting intonation to highlight the error.

## 2.7 Related Studies on Feedback

Several empirical studies investigated the effects of implicit and explicit types of corrective feedback. Carrol (2001) found that those learners who received explicit corrective feedback outperformed those learners who received implicit error correction. Ellis (2006) also demonstrated that those learners who received metalinguistic feedback outperformed those who received recasts in a delayed post-test, while no difference was observed between the groups in the immediate post-test. Similarly, Lyster (2004) compared the effects of recasts with more explicit types of corrective feedback which he called prompts on French gender assignment and found that prompts were more effective than recasts. Ellis (2009) investigated the effects of recasts and metalinguistic feedback on the acquisition of implicit and explicit knowledge of regular past tense-ed. The results of this study indicated a distinct advantage for the group that received metalinguistic feedback. Other studies, in contrast, reported the beneficial effects of implicit types of feedback such as recasts and clarification requests. Mackey and Philp (1998) showed the beneficial effects of recasts on learning with respect to L2 learners' acquisition of question forms. Iwashita (2003) reported a relationship between being exposed to implicit types of corrective feedback and in particular recasts and measurable gains in the acquisition of two grammatical structures in L2 Japanese. Sanz and Morgan-Short (2004) also explained that explicit types of corrective feedback may confer no additional advantage over implicit corrective feedback.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Design

As it has been said two groups are involved in this research and both groups should be interviewed one time at the beginning of research as a pre-test and another time at the end of the research as post-test. So after giving interview for both groups at the end of period of research, results of those groups (Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups) should be compared. As far as this research is aiming to compare two means of two groups, the best choice of design is pre-test and post-test design in which means of two groups at the end of research are compared through T-test statistic formula.

### 3.2 Participant

The actual number of students who voluntarily participated in the study was 57 and seven of them were known as outliers in this study. The participant students' age ranged from 18 years old. Their native language was Persian and they used English as a foreign language. They were at Intermediate level who spent almost 3 years with Lets Go and Family and Friends books at Language Institution in Kermanshah. KET test was conducted to acknowledge their Intermediate level.

Furthermore, this present study employed quasi-experimental design which didn't require the researcher to select the sample randomly. The preference of this design was based on the campus system which did not allow the researcher to decide to which classroom the students were assigned. Therefore, the intact groups, class A and class B were taken as the subjects of the research. These two classes were relatively equal in terms of English achievement that was reflected in their Key English Test (KET) test result

### 3.3 Instrumentation

**3.3.1 KET (Key English Test):** KET is an English language examination provided by Cambridge English Language Assessment. This test was used at the beginning of the research in order to determine the student's level of oral proficiency. All aspects of language proficiency is considered in KET, so we could consider it as a reliable proficiency test. Cambridge English Key is offered in two variations: Cambridge English: Key (KET), for adult learners, and Cambridge English: Key (KET) for Schools, for school-aged learners. Both versions of the exam lead to the same qualification, the Key English Test. Both versions have the same exam format (three exam papers) – the only difference is that the topics in the ‘for Schools’ version have been targeted at the interests and experiences of school-aged learners.

**3.3.2 Interview:** This study aimed at measuring the effect of two kind of feedback such as metalinguistic feedback and elicitation on learner's oral proficiency and students got involved in speaking tasks during four semesters. Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) can be a good choice to be used one time before treatment as a pre-test for both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups and also in order to provide normality in groups and another time after treatment as post-test for both groups which takes approximately six months. In OPI, all aspects of oral proficiency including accent, comprehension, vocabulary, fluency and grammar are considered. In rating scale of OPI, all aspects of oral proficiency were considered. Numbers were assigned to those aspects of oral

proficiency on OPI in order to make OPIs comparable.

### 3.4 Procedure

Firstly, this study uses two groups, one as Meta-linguistic group another as Elicitation group. Different types of oral tasks as mentioned in following part of procedure were performed in both groups. In Meta-linguistic group student received metalinguistic feedback during four semesters and Elicitation group received elicitation feedback with a test at the end of the semester to find out whether these kinds of feedbacks in Meta-linguistic group have had positive effect on oral proficiency during four semesters in comparison to Elicitation group. During this time students in both groups were involved in speaking tasks almost for 30 minutes out of the whole session time. This situation was going on for 6 months which is four semesters and two sessions per week.

In this research metalinguistic and elicitation feedbacks have been considered as treatments which are applied just in Meta-linguistic group and Elicitation groups. During period of the treatment students in Meta-linguistic group received a feedback like metalinguistic feedback and Elicitation group receives elicitation feedback. The teacher has a great role to consider all student's improvement day by day during this period of treatment.

It means metalinguistic and elicitation feedbacks are considered as treatment of the study to find out to what extent it has effect on student's speaking skills. As far as the main objective of the study is improving oral proficiency, different levels in oral proficiency are defined as clear as possible. In both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation group different types of speaking tasks was going on but the main point is that two kinds of feedback in Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups. This study provided situation for doing oral proficiency tasks including open-ended task and structured task.

In both tasks students are involved in speaking task, open-ended task gets students to do role play task, reacting in situation, discussing opinions and in structured task students were getting involved reading aloud, sentence repetition, sentence completion, reacting to phrase.

In OPI at the beginning (for pre-test & normality) and at the end (for comparing means of two groups), important criteria of OPI were considered and numbers were assigned to those criteria of OPI. Students should consider these criteria with using grammatical issues appropriately and suitable vocabulary in their conversation, using correct pronunciation, individual sounds, stress and rhythm intonation and linking of all words used in conversation and following cohesion and coherence rules in their conversation.

The OPI was provided during the study and as mentioned it considers all aspects of oral proficiency, so OPI was used as a pre-test for both groups and this result was compared with post-test to find out whether Meta-linguistic group receiving metalinguistic feedback has had improvement or not. Put in short, whether metalinguistic feedbacks have a significant effect on student's oral proficiency in comparison with Elicitation group.

### 3.5 Data Analysis

In this research t-test formula was conducted in order to compare means of groups. Paired Samples Statistics is used to compare means of one group at two different times, so Paired Samples Statistics was conducted for comparing means of Elicitation group before and after research time and also to compare means of Meta-linguistic group before and after treatment. Independent Samples Test is used for comparing means of two independent groups, so Independent Samples Test was conducted at the end of the research in order to show statistically whether the means of both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation group are different or not.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Overview

This study aims to investigate the functions of two types of corrective feedback, elicitation and metalinguistic. These two types are selected since they are the implicit and explicit feedback respectively. A comparative study on the efficacy of them is the next purpose of the present study. This study has two groups with one group as Meta-linguistic group getting metalinguistic information feedback as a treatment and another group as Elicitation group using gust elicitation feedback. The results of both groups are compared in different levels.

### 4.2 Addressing Research Questions

1) Does metalinguistic feedback have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement? This result showed that statistically there is a significant difference between two means, one mean for student's scores before treatment and another for student's scores after treatment. The first step of interpretation of Paired Samples Test is comparing significant level with alpha level. Table 4.8 shows Sig. (2-tailed) =0.000 which is less than level=0.05. It is concluded that student's in Meta-linguistic group getting metalinguistic information feedback had a significant improvement during research time. In Meta-linguistic group, by comparing two means of student's scores before and after treatment, it can be mentioned that students involving

in metalinguistic information feedback had a significant improvement in their pronunciation achievement and first hypothesis is rejected.

2) Does elicitation feedback have any significant effect on Iranian EFL learners' pronunciation achievement?

Here is a comparison of two means of dependent variables of Elicitation group using Paired t test before and after treatment. The means of result of two tests, one as pre-test and another as post-test, were compared in order to have significant level to be compared with alpha level which is  $\alpha=0.05$ . In Table 4.6 Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.238 was compared with  $\alpha=0.05$ , it is greater than 0.05.

So it means there was no significant difference between means of two tests. Although, based on the result prepared in Table 4.5, Elicitation Group has had an improvement during research period but it was not significant and it can be concluded second hypothesis is not rejected.

3) Is there any significant difference between two groups of learners regarding their achievement on pronunciation?

It should be explained that, there are two ways for testing hypotheses of the research based on Levene's Test: First way is to compare alpha level  $\alpha=0.05$  with p-value in Levene's Test, in Levene's Test p-value is labeled as Sig. So here we have Sig=0.000 and  $\alpha=0.05$ . It means  $0.000 < 0.05$  with which we can conclude that there is a significant difference between two means of Meta-linguistic group and Elicitation group. This result prepared by Levene's Test showed that null hypothesis was reject because p-value=0.034 is less than alpha level which is  $\alpha=0.05$ .

Second way for testing hypothesis is related to critical value and observed statistic. In Levene's Test, observed statistic is labeled as t which should be compared with critical value. There is a formula for this as follows: 1) Considering degree of freedom,  $df=28$  2) Comparing critical values of t with t  $2.048 < 11.424$ .

The result showed that metalinguistic information feedback as a treatment used in Meta-linguistic group had a significant effect on students' pronunciation proficiency. Based on Table of critical values of t and degree of freedom and observed statistic, the result showed that  $11.424 > 2.048$ . So observed statistic is much greater than critical value, it means null hypothesis for third research question was statistically rejected.

In this step, we were looking for normality for our groups, it means samples should be normally distributed in Meta-linguistic and Elicitation group. The normality test result was presented in the following table:

Table 4.1

*Tests of Normality for Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups*

Groups.start	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.	
sco.pre	Meta	.172	25	.200*	.925	25	.230
	Elic	.225	25	.040	.904	25	.110

The results of the normality test using SPSS was done. In order to carry out normality for research groups, we have to consider the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test which are two important part of test normality. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is used for large sample almost more than 200 samples but Shapiro-Wilk is used for smaller samples.

In this study, Shapiro-Wilk test is considered due to the size of this research sample. According to the Shapiro-Wilk test, at the beginning of the research, significance value of the data assessment in Meta-linguistic is Sig=0.110 and Elicitation group is Sig=0.230, so the result of both groups should be compared with P value which is 0.05. In Meta-linguistic group Sig > 0.05 and in Elicitation group Sig > 0.05. The significant value of two samples were obtained, significance value > 0.05, it can be concluded that the two samples come from populations with a normal distribution. After doing normality test for following normal distribution for the groups, the result of student's scores should be compared.

As we mentioned that students' level of proficiency is Intermediate level, therefore students were set for KET (Key English Test) in order to make sure whether our samples are at the Intermediate level. Here is Table1 in which student's level of proficiency was provided.

Table 4.2

*Report of KET*

Groups	Mean	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum
Elic	52.53	25	12.00	48.00	60.00
Meta	53.06	25	13.00	46.00	59.00
Total	52.80	50	14.00	46.00	60.00

Interpretation of this Table shows Meta-linguistic group with Mean=53.0667 and Elicitation group with Mean=52.533 out of 100. The minimum of student's scores in Elicitation group is 48 out of 100 and maximum student's score is 60. The minimum of student's scores in Meta-linguistic group is 46 and maximum is 59. In KET test, student's scores among range 40 to 60 are considered as a Lower Intermediate student's

language proficiency. The result of comparison between two means was done at the beginning of the research to show that Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups at the first are the same level of oral proficiency. Here is Table 4.3 in which comparison between two means (Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups) carried out.

Table 4.3

Group Statistics for Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups

	Groups.start	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
sco.pre	Meta	25	9.93	1.335	.345
	Elic	25	9.67	1.234	.319

As you see there are two groups, N=25 Meta-linguistic group and N=25 for Elicitation group. The means for Meta-linguistic is 9.93 and the means for Elicitation group is 9.67, and also with SD=1.335 for Meta-linguistic group and SD=1.234 for Elicitation group. Following table shows that if there is any difference between means or not. Here is Levene's Test to find out whether there is a significant difference between means or not.

Table 4.4

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.251	.620	568	8	.574	.267	.469	-.695	1.228
Equal variances not assumed			.568	27.831	.575	.267	.469	-.695	1.228

For interpretation of result, P-value is compared with alpha level ( $\alpha = .05$ ), if P-value would be equal or less than alpha level, it means there is a significant difference between two means in Independent Samples Test. In Levene's Test P-value is labeled as Sig., so in table3 Sig=.574 which is so greater than alpha level ( $\alpha = .05$ ). It means there is no significant difference between two groups.

The first comparison is carried out with comparing means of two dependent variables which means two means of Elicitation group before and after treatment in order to find out how much students in Meta-linguistic group have had an improvement getting metalinguistic information and elicitation as a feedback during four semesters.

For this purpose, Paired sample t-test formula is needed as far as this formula is used when the samples are the same in one group in order to find out how much this group has had an improvement during the research time. This design is called pre-test post-test design.

Table 4.5

Paired Samples Statistics of Elicitation Group

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre.Elic	9.67	25	1.234
	Post.Elic	10.33	25	1.291

In Table 4.5, the mean of Elicitation Group in pre-test is 9.67 and the mean of Elicitation Group in post-test is 10.33. The result in Table4 shows that the means of Elicitation Group as pre-test and post-test are approximately the same. But this is not reasonable enough, significant level should be compared with alpha level in order to have a logical result.

Table 4.6

Paired Samples Test of Elicitation Group

	MM	Mean Std.Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Paired Differences		Sig. t	df(2tailed)
				Lower	Upper		
Pair 1 Pre.con - Post.con	-.667	2.093	.540	-1.826	.492	1.234	14.238

This table shows a comparison of two means of dependent variables of Elicitation group using Paired t test before and after treatment. The means of result of two tests, one as pre-test and another as post-test, were compared in order to have significant level to be compared with alpha level which is  $\alpha=0.05$ .



In Table 4.6 Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.238 was compared with  $\alpha=0.05$ , it is greater than 0.05.

So it means there was no significant difference between means of two tests. Although, based on the result prepared in Table 4.5, Elicitation Group has had an improvement during research period but it was not significant.

The result of this Paired Samples Test of Elicitation group during the period of research in Table 4.6 shows that Elicitation group had a sort of improvement with kind of oral proficiency tasks in which they were involved for 6 months, although this improvement was not significant.

The main point is that, in Elicitation group there was not any Metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback available for students during research.

Here we are looking for significant effect in Metalinguistic group.

Table 4.7

Paired Samples Statistics of Metalinguistic Group

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre.Meta	9.93	25	1.335	.345
	Post.Meta	14.87	25	.834	.215

In Table 4.7, we can see the scores of students in Metalinguistic group before treatment with Mean=9.93 and also the scores of students in Metalinguistic group after treatment with Mean=14.87.

By comparing these two means, we conclude that students had an improvement involving in metalinguistic information which is the treatment in Metalinguistic group. By following table, we make this conclusion logical.

Table 4.8

Paired Samples Test of Metalinguistic Group

		Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair1	Pre.exp - Post.exp	-4.933	1.792	.463	-5.925	-3.941	-10.665	14.000	

The first step of interpretation of Paired Samples Test is comparing significant level with alpha level. Table 4.8 shows Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000 which is less than  $\alpha$  level = 0.05.

This result shows that statistically there is a significant difference between two means, one mean for student's scores before treatment and another for student's scores after treatment.

By interpretation of Table 4.8, we conclude that student's in Meta-linguistic group getting metalinguistic information feedback had a significant improvement during research time.

By far, we have achieved information to find out although students in Elicitation group had a sort of improvement, however it was not enough to mention that students involving in elicitation feedback are still having significant improvement in their pronunciation proficiency.

In Meta-linguistic group, by comparing two means of student's scores before and after treatment, it can be mentioned that students involving in metalinguistic information feedback had a significant improvement in their pronunciation achievement.

Now it is time to compare two means of Meta-linguistic group and Elicitation group at the end of research period in order to find out how much Meta-linguistic group getting metalinguistic information as a treatment has had improvement in comparison with Elicitation group involving in elicitation feedback.

It should be mentioned there is no metalinguistic information for students in Elicitation group, just metalinguistic information feedback used in Meta-linguistic group, everything in both groups was the same including oral proficiency task, time of task during session time and type of task used during research time.

Next Table is Table 4.9 in which two means of student's scores of two groups (Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups) at the end of the study statistically were compared.

As far as the comparison is between two independent groups, it was needed to use Independent Samples Test.

Here is Table 4.9 in which means of student's scores of Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups are mentioned.

Table 4.9

Group Statistics for Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups

	Groups.final	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Exp	25	14.87	.834	.215
	Con	25	10.33	1.291	.333

As we can see Meta-linguistic group at the end of the research with Mean= 14.87 and SD=834 and

also Elicitation group at the end of the research with Mean=10.33 and SD=1.291. These numbers show that mean of Meta-linguistic group is greater than Elicitation group  $14.87 > 10.33$ . But this is not clear whether this difference between Meta-linguistic group and Elicitation groups is significant or not. Therefore we have to analyze Table 4.10 in order to find out whether we can reject null hypotheses or not.

Table 4.10

*Independent Samples Test for Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.995	.034	11.424	28.000	4.533	.397	3.720	5.346	
Equal variances not assumed			11.424	23.949	0.000	4.533	.397	3.714	5.352

Here there are two ways for testing hypotheses of the research based on Levene's Test (Table 10):

First way is to compare alpha level  $\alpha=0.05$  with p-value in Levene's Test, in Levene's Test p-value is labeled as Sig. So here we have Sig=0.000 and  $\alpha=0.05$  It means  $0.000 < 0.05$  with which we can conclude that there is a significant difference between two means of Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups. This result prepared by Levene's Test showed that null hypothesis was rejected because p-value=0.034 is less than alpha level which is

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

### 5.1 Discussion

In this study the treatment was metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback which were used just in Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups in order to find out how much metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback have had effect on student's pronunciation achievement in two groups so this chapter is aiming to analyze data which has been gathered from two groups to find out any effect of using metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback during period of using treatment.

In part of data analysis, T-test was chosen as a statistic formula as far as there were a bunch of numbers to be compared between Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups and also before and after treatment. Two major types of analyses were conducted: independent samples *t* tests and Paired sample *t*-test. In determining whether means of both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups differed significantly, on average, with respect to each other. First KET test was done to have homogenous groups and to determine student's level of proficiency which based on that we could consider students at Intermediate level based on KET interpretation.

The next part of analysis was using Paired sample *t*-test for both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups. Paired sample *t*-test was used in order to show that how much students in both groups had had an improvement according to comparison of pre-test and post-test of Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups. Results of this research showed that using metalinguistic information feedback in student's proficiency can increase students' learning. When used as assessment tools, metalinguistic information feedback not only made the teacher's standards of oral proficiency and grading process in learning explicit, but also they gave students a clear perspective of what the expectations were for getting a high level of performance in oral proficiency on a given task given during learning process.

### 5.2 Conclusion

This study examined how metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback developed for oral proficiency might influence Iranian EFL student's pronunciation achievement in learning process. The result of using metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback and impact of that have also been explored. The result showed that the use of metalinguistic information feedback has exerted positive impact on students' pronunciation achievement as well as student's awareness of their learning.

When students have interpretation to get corrected in hand as they are in learning process and also they are completing an oral proficiency task, they are better able to critique their own performance, it means they are better able to find out their weakness and strength. A quality of using metalinguistic information feedback is the ability to accurately and incredibly assess one's own performance. In addition, consecutive interpreting can also be used by classmates in order to give each other feedback on their performances during learning process.

Metalinguistic information feedback helps to promote learning judgments because it continually draws the teacher's attention to each of criteria defined earlier in rubric so that the teacher is less likely to change his or

her application of the criteria from student to student during learning process. Furthermore, if there would be more than one rater to judge student's performance, the consistency across these ratings is likely to be higher when they are all considering the same detailed performance criteria.

Paired sample t-test for Elicitation group showed that the mean of students in pre-test as Mean=9.67 and in post-test as Mean=10.33. Although it showed that there was a little bit difference between means of both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups, but this difference was not enough to claim that this difference is significant based on comparison of a *level*=0.05 and *p-value*=0.238.

One more time, Paired sample t-test was used for Meta-linguistic group by comparing means of pre-test as Mean=9.93 and post-test as Mean=14.87. So there was a difference between means of student's scores in Meta-linguistic group before and after treatment, it means there was a significant difference between means based on comparison of a *level*=0.05 and *p-value*=0.000.

The last part of analysis was about comparing means of both Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups in order to find out whether there is any significant difference between two means of student's scores in Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups to reject third null hypothesis or not. The result of student's scores in Meta-linguistic group with Mean=14.87 and also the result of student's scores in Elicitation group with Mean=10.33 showed that there is significant difference between means of two groups, it means third null hypothesis was rejected. All these claims have been proven in two ways of hypothesis testing with comparing significant level with Sig=.034 and alpha level with  $\alpha=0.05$ . Put it briefly, comparison between Meta-linguistic group getting metalinguistic information and Elicitation group involving in elicitation feedback showed that metalinguistic information feedback as a treatment in Meta-linguistic group has a great effect on student's pronunciation achievement.

### 5.3 Pedagogical Implications

This study aimed to find out to what extent using metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback can have an effect on student's pronunciation achievement. The result of data analysis responded to the study's research question and help to achieve research goal. The result showed that there is significant effect of metalinguistic information feedback used as a treatment in Meta-linguistic and Elicitation groups for four semesters based on data analysis provided in previous chapter.

Based on these findings and conclusions of the research, teachers especially should be given more detailed information about the process of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback, and the objective of the study should be better explained to teacher so that improvements could be provided in assessing student's exam and interpreting results. Because the preparation of a metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback is difficult and takes time, teachers generally want to use traditional way.

### 5.4 Limitation of the Study

While well-done metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback keep students informed of their learning and make the learning process more useful, their real value is all about advancing the teaching and learning process. The best way of doing metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback allow evaluators and teachers to consider their professional knowledge about learning process and to use that knowledge in ways that the learning process doesn't get involved in personality variations or emotional hesitation. Nevertheless, a serious concern with process of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback is it appears to be a difficult task to create them, especially writing the descriptions of oral proficiency at each level. For this reason, process of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback should be developed by the teachers before coming to the class for only the most important and complex assignment or subjective assignment in order to make it objective.

### 5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

It is hoped that this research has provided approaches to design highly valid and reliable learning through defining different levels of oral proficiency as well as further investigation about the effect of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback on student's learning might inspire more teachers' interest in the use of process of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback. Some scholars also expressed their concern about the quality of metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback in research. They proposed that future studies should report how the validity of a metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback was established, and the scoring reliability, including rater training and its contribution towards achieving inter-rater reliability, and perhaps even the correlation between metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback scores and other measures of performance.

Based on result of this study, the teachers are suggested for taking advantage of this study and other similar studies by applying metalinguistic information and elicitation feedback as an tool for improving pronunciation achievement while teaching English as a foreign language because this has been proven to improve the student's awareness of learning and also student's achievement in various levels of proficiency.

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