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# What type of corrective feedback improves learners' language literacy?

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### ABSTRACT

In the realm of language teaching, corrective feedback and how to treat errors has a long and contentious history. On account of the controversial nature of this issue, whether and how to correct errors have given rise to numerous studies in this area in the domains of second language acquisition. Therefore, lots of researches have probed its role in language classrooms. This paper sheds light on various types of corrective feedbacks, reviews the main differential effects of various types of feedback, and the conditions determining the efficacy of them.

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### Introduction

There are various terms used in identifying errors and providing corrective feedback in the second language acquisition literature—the most popular ones being *corrective feedback*, *negative evidence*, and *negative feedback*.

Chaudron (1988) has pointed out the fact that the term corrective feedback entails different layers of meaning. In Chaudron's view, the term "treatment of error" may simply refer to "any teacher behavior following an error that minimally attempts to inform the learner of the fact of error" (p. 150). The treatment may not be obvious for the learner in terms of the response it elicits, or it may make a significant effort "to elicit a revised student response" (p. 150). Finally, there is "the true" correction which succeeds in modifying the learner's interlanguage rule so that the error is crossed out from further production.

Ellis (2007) asserts that corrective feedback takes the form of responses to learner utterances containing an error. The responses are initiated by others and can consist of an indication that an error has been occurred or provision of correct form of the target language or metalinguistic cues about the nature of error. Finally, corrective feedback can include the combination of all of these items. Furthermore, Ellis (2007) adds three episodes to corrective feedback strategy. Corrective feedback episodes are comprised of a trigger, the feedback move and (optionally) uptake. In the following example, the three aspects of the episode are distinguished:

T: When were you in school ?

L: Yes. I stand in the first row? (Trigger)

T: You stood in the first row. (Corrective move)

L: Yes, in the first row, and sit, ah, sat the first row. (Uptake) (p. 4)

Corrective feedback episodes can also be complex involving a number of corrective moves and further triggering moves. According to Lightbown and Spada (1999), corrective feedback can be as any hint to the learners that their use of the target language is wrong. This includes various responses that the learners receive. When a language learner says, 'He go to school every day', corrective feedback can be explicit, for example, 'no, you should say goes, not go' or implicit 'yes he goes to school every day', and may or may not include

metalinguistic information, for instance, 'Don't forget to make the verb agree with the subject'.

According to Schachter (1991), corrective feedback, negative evidence, and negative feedback are three terms used respectively in the fields of language teaching, language acquisition, and cognitive psychology. Different researchers often use these terms interchangeably.

Long (1996) offers a more comprehensive view of feedback in general. He suggests that environmental input can be thought of in terms of two categories that are provided to the learners about the target language (TL): positive evidence and negative evidence. According to Long, positive evidence is considered as providing the learners with models of what is grammatical and acceptable in the TL; and negative evidence as providing the learners with direct or indirect information about what is unacceptable. This information may be explicit (e.g., grammatical explanation or overt error correction) or implicit (e.g., failure to understand, incidental error correction in a response, such as a confirmation check), which reconstruct the learners' utterance without interrupting the flow of the conversation—in which case, the negative feedback at the same time provides further positive evidence—and perhaps also the absence of the items in the input provide more positive evidence.

According to the definitions of corrective feedback which were provided above, to facilitate successful language learning, teachers must perform a difficult task of balancing two necessary but apparently contradictory roles. They must establish positive affect among students yet also engage in the interactive confrontational activity of error correction (Magilow, 1999).

### Different types of corrective feedback

#### Recasts

A recast is defined as a reformulation of a previous erroneous utterance into more target-like form while keeping the original meaning (Nabei & Swain, 2002). The role and effect of recasts as corrective feedback have been of interest in second language (L2) acquisition research because corrective feedback is a component of form-focused instruction which many second language acquisition researchers now consider important for L2 learning.

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Recasting has been frequently observed in various interaction contexts; in native speakers and non-native speakers' interaction studies, for instance, recasting was called 'modification' and 'completion or elaboration' (Pica, Holliday, Lewis, & Mortgenhaler, 1989). In classroom interaction studies, other terms such as 'paraphrasing' (Spada & Fröhlich, 1995), 'repetition with change' and 'expansion' (Chaudron, 1977) were used. From the interactionist perspective of language acquisition, the recast is viewed as useful feedback. According to the interaction hypothesis proposed by Long (1996), feedback that occurs during interaction and negotiation processes is considered to facilitate language learning. From a sociocultural perspective, it provides an 'opportunity to learn' (Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

Corrective feedback as recasts can take different forms. For example, they may or may not include prosodic emphasis on the problematic form; they may be performed with rising intonation (i.e. as a confirmation check) or with falling intonation (i.e. as a statement); They may be partial (i.e. reformulate only the erroneous segment in the learner's utterance) or complete (i.e. reformulate all of it); They may involve correcting just one or more than one feature. Thus, depending on the particular way the recast is realized, it may be implicit or much more explicit (Ellis, 2007)

#### **Explicit correction**

Explicit correction is another type of corrective feedback. In this type, a teacher supplies the correct form and clearly indicates that what the student had said was incorrect. Here an example for this type of feedback is provided (Tedick & Gortari, 1998, p.10):

S: [...] *le coyote, le bison et la gr...groue.* (phonological error)

[...] the coyote, the bison and the cr...crane.

T: *Et la grue. On dit grue.*

And the crane. We say crane.

#### **Elicitation**

Another type of corrective feedback is elicitation. The teacher directly elicits a reformulation from students by asking questions such as "*Comment qas'appelle?*" or "*How do we say that in French?*" or by pausing to allow students to complete teacher's utterance, or by asking students to reformulate their utterance (Tedick & Gortari, 1998, p.13). An example of this type is provided below:

S: *...Ben y a un jet de parfum qui sent pas très bon...*

...Well, there's a stream of perfume (lexical error) that doesn't smell very nice...

T: *Alors un jet de parfum on va appeler a un...?*

So a stream of perfume, we'll call that a...?

#### **Metalinguistic cues**

Metalinguistic cues account for another type of feedback. Here the teacher provides comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance (Tedick & Gortari, 1998, p.15). Below is an example of this type:

S: *Euhm, le, le éléphant. Le éléphant gronde.*

Uhm, the, the elephant. The (multiple errors) elephant growls.

T: *Est-ce qu'on dit éléphant?*

Do we say the elephant?

#### **Clarification requests**

Another type consist clarification requests. The teacher uses phrases such as "Pardon?" and "I don't understand?" By using phrases like "Excuse me?" or "I don't understand," the teacher indicates that the message has not been understood or that the student's utterance contained some kind of mistake and that a repetition or a reformulation is required (Tedick & Gortari, 1998, p.17). The following example clarifies this type of strategy:

S: *Est-ce que, est-ce que je peux faire une carte sur le*

*...pour mon petit frère sur le computer?* (multiple errors)

Can, can I made a card on the ...for my little brother on the computer?

T: Pardon?

Pardon?

#### **Repetition**

The last type of corrective feedback is repetition. The teacher repeats the student's ill-formed utterance, adjusting intonation to highlight the error (Tedick & Gortari, 1998, p.20). The following example illustrates that:

S: *Le...le girafe?* (Gender error)

The...the giraffe?

T: *Le girafe?*

The giraffe?

#### **Differential effects of various types of feedback**

In the literature, corrective feedback strategies have not been viewed as equally effective. A better look at the studies reviewed in the literature reveals that those techniques which need reformulation, such as clarification requests and comprehension checks, have been more effective than those which do not, such as recasts (Lyster, 2001; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). While the Doughty and Varela's study (1998) indicates that recasts are beneficial for interlanguage development, it does not provide evidence that recasts alone have that positive effect. As determined in the Doughty and Varela study, recasts, always delivered with falling intonation, were preceded by repetition of the learner's error with rising intonation. Such an amalgamation of recasts and paralinguistic signals increased the importance of recasts and, as a result, their impact was much more apparent than had been previously detected. In other studies (Lightbown & Spada, 1990; White, 1991), it also has been found that corrective feedback was most effective when accompanied by metalinguistic cues.

Chaudron (1988), moreover, pointed out the fact that in order for corrective feedback to have its desired effect, corrections must be kept clear and consistent within a focused domain of the types of error. More recently, Seedhouse (1997) has recommended direct and overt correct feedback. He believed that direct, unmitigated repair by the teacher marks errors as unimportant and unembarassing and thus should be preferred to recasts. Chaudron (1988) emphasized that feedback that elicits self-correction is more likely to improve learners' ability to check their own utterances. Corder (1967), in previous researches, advocated the position that forcing learners to rely on their own resources was more beneficial than simply providing them with the correct form. Actually, the majority of earlier studies of error treatment recommended pushing learners in their output rather than simply providing them with the correct form. According to those studies, providing the learners with time and opportunity for self-correction clearly benefits L2 development. Pica (1988) and Pica *et al.* (1989) agree on this base and assert that corrective techniques, such as clarification requests, elicitation, and confirmation checks that lead to modified output and self-repair are more likely to improve learners' ability to monitor their output and lead to interlanguage development.

Long (1996) believed that recasts provide learners with the correct target forms in a context that establishes form-meaning connections and are non-intrusive; In other words, they do not interfere with the flow of communication which Long sees as important for acquisition. Lyster (1998) pointed to the efficacy of output-prompting strategies because they enable learners to

increase control over linguistic forms that they have partially acquired.

#### **Impact of positive vs. negative evidence on language acquisition**

There is a debate on the nature of the strong force behind SLA, i.e., whether it is positive evidence or negative evidence that has the greater impact. According to nativist theory, advocated by Chomsky (1975), negative evidence hardly plays any role in language acquisition. This is due to the fact that, for the nativists, what makes language acquisition possible is Universal Grammar (UG), “the system of principles, conditions, and rules that are elements of properties of all human languages” (p. 29). In other words, in this view of language learning, what makes the acquisition of language possible is UG, and the innate linguistic mechanism that is available to all humans. UG advocates have argued that instruction, including negative evidence, has little impact on forms within UG anyway, since it will temporarily change only language behavior and not interlanguage grammars (Cook, 1991).

In this view, changes in the interlanguage grammar are the result of positive linguistic evidence. In addition, Krashen (1982) believes that SLA is the result of implicit processes operating together with the reception of comprehensible input. Conscious learning can only be considered as a monitor that modifies the output, after it has been started by the acquired system. From this, it follows that explicit data, whether in the form of negative evidence or in the form of explicit instruction, can only affect the learning rather than the acquisition of the target language.

Krashen’s input hypothesis formulates that it is subconscious acquisition that gains significance, and that learning cannot be converted into acquisition, even though adults can both subconsciously acquire languages and consciously learn about languages. Shortly, for Krashen, as for the nativists, negative evidence has a barely related effect on SLA.

Krashen’s views and theories of language learning have been questioned based on the fact that while comprehension is essential for language acquisition, such acquisition does not entail unconscious or implicit learning processes; and that *noticing* is rudimentary for the acquisition process (Ellis, 1991). According to the noticing hypothesis, in order for input to become intake for L2 learning, some degree of noticing must occur, and that it is corrective feedback that initiates learners’ noticing of gaps between the target norms and their interlanguage, and thus culminates in more grammatical reformulations. According to Schmidt (1990), unconscious language learning is impossible, and that intake is what learners consciously notice. This requirement of noticing is applicable to all aspects of language but language learners, however, are limited in what they are able to notice. The main determining factor is that of attention. Schmidt points out that while the intention to learn is not always crucial to learning, attention to the material to be learned is always necessary. Attention, in addition, “also controls access to conscious experience” (p. 176), thus allowing the acquisition of new items to take place.

Gass (1988), moreover, has argued against the notion that learners, with the only presentation of comprehensible input, would convert it to intake and subsequently to output. According to her, for learners to be able to internalize input for successful acquisition process, they must not only comprehend this input, but also must notice the mismatch between the input and their own interlanguage system. She points out that “nothing in the target language is available for intake into a language

learner’s existing system unless it is consciously noticed” (1991, p. 136). Corrective feedback, for Gass, functions as an attention getting device. She further argues that without direct or frequent corrective feedback in the input, which helps learners to detect disparities between their learner language and the target language, fossilization might happen. Gass and Varonis (1994), moreover, point out that “the awareness of the mismatch serves the function of triggering a modification of existing L2 knowledge, the results of which may show up at a later point in time” (p. 299). Similarly, Ellis (1991) shares the view that the acquisition process includes the steps of noticing, comparing, and integrating.

There is further evidence of the role of corrective feedback in the hypothesis testing models of acquisition. In hypothesis testing models, the learner is assumed to formulate hypotheses about the TL, and to test these hypotheses against the target norm. In this model of learning, corrective feedback, or negative data, plays a significant role (Bley-Vroman, 1986). Ohta (2001) takes corrective feedback a step further by showing that if the correct form is provided, learners may have the opportunity to compare their own production with that of another. In this way, corrective feedback may stimulate hypothesis testing, giving the learner the opportunity to grasp with form-meaning relationships. Corrective feedback that does not provide the correct form, on the other hand, may force the learners to use their own resources in constructing a reformulation. In either case, corrective feedback may facilitate L2 development.

According to Chaudron (1988), the information available in feedback allows the learners to confirm, disconfirm, and probably verify the hypothetical, transitional rules of their developing grammars. These effects, however, “depend on the learners’ readiness for and attention to the information available in feedback. That is, learners must still make a comparison between their internal representation of rule and the information about the rule in the input they encounter” (p. 134). Finally, Schachter (1991), with regard to the above views, mentions that it is due to the corrective feedback the learners receive that they leave their wrong hypotheses and immediately switch to constructing new ones.

With regards to the kinds of evidence which can disconfirm incorrect hypotheses about the L2, White (1991) states that positive evidence alone is not enough. Concerning whether or not L2 acquisition can progress on the basis of positive evidence alone, she further suggests that it cannot, and that “there will be cases where change from X to Y will require negative evidence” (p. 148). There are some situations, she argues, which require negative evidence, i.e., drawing learners’ attention to the fact that certain forms are not allowed in the target language. According to White (1988), negative evidence is especially required when learners utilize grammars that generate a superset of the grammars actually allowed in the target language. In other words, negative evidence is necessary when the learners need to go from a broader grammar (superset) to a narrower grammar (subset). A case in point is that there is no positive evidence that highlights that English does not permit null subjects. Corrective feedback, in cases like the ungrammaticality of null subjects in English, she argues, will help put L2 learners on the right place.

Given the considerable research on the role of corrective feedback in SLA from the various models of acquisition, it seems that there is a growing belief that interaction between innate and environmental factors is necessary for language acquisition. This leads to Long’s (1996) new interactionist hypothesis. In this model, Long (1996) proposes that environmental contributions to acquisition are linked by

selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that the resources are brought together most usefully during negotiation for meaning. Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work may be a facilitator of SL development, at least for vocabulary, morphology, and language specific syntax. According to this model of acquisition, interaction that includes implicit corrective feedback is facilitative of L2 development.

#### **Conditions determining the efficacy of corrective feedback**

One of the most significant issues challenged in the literature concerns the conditions under which corrective feedback functions most effectively. Tomasello and Herron (1988) explained about the Garden Path technique. However, there is no clear evidence concerning the generality of the effectiveness of this technique. The range of situations and structures in which this technique would be most effective is still fuzzy.

Han's (2001) studies, additionally, summarized an additional set of conditions. The first of these conditions is the fine-tuning of feedback, i.e., the achievement of compatibility at the level of the speaker's intent and the receiver's interpretation, as well as the information content in the correction and the listener's receptiveness in processing it. Such a condition provides evidence for long-term effects. In addition to the fine-tuning of feedback, Han referred to other conditions necessary for recasts to be successful. These conditions are: individualized attention to the learners; consistent focus upon one type of error at a time over a period of time; intensity of the treatment; and the learners' developmental perception and readiness (Pienemann, Johnson, & Brindley, 1988).

According to this view of learning, learners can acquire some features of the language successfully at different points in their development, while other features can only be acquired according to a built-in syllabus, or internal schedule. The recommendation then is to evaluate the learners' developmental stage and teach what is suitable for that stage. It can be seen that both perspectives—the research on developmental readiness, and that on the role of corrective feedback in SLA—suggest that the learners need to be at the appropriate developmental level to process feedback and acquire the new structure.

#### **Efficacy of oral corrective feedback**

Similar to written corrective feedback, there are various views regarding the efficacy of oral corrective feedback. Krashen (1982) referred to error correction as a serious mistake since it persuades learners to defend from themselves and because it only assists the development of learned knowledge and plays no role in acquired knowledge. But error correction directed at simple and portable rules, such as third person *s* is useful because it helps monitoring.

Long (1996) considered corrective feedback in the form of negotiating for meaning and this kind of correction can help learners notice their errors, create form-meaning connections and thus aid acquisition.

With regards to this kind of correction, teachers are faced with the choice of either correcting immediately following the learner's erroneous utterance or delaying the correction until later. Ellis (2007) believed that choice depends on whether the activity is accuracy-based (correct immediately) or fluency-based (Methodologists propose correcting later). Hedge (2000) suggested techniques for delaying oral corrective feedback. The first one is recording an activity and then asking students to identify and correct their own errors and the second one is simply noting down errors as students perform an activity and going through these afterwards.

Doughty (2001) believed that in order to change the interlanguage of the learners, oral corrective feedback needs to take place in a 'window of opportunity' and to attract 'roving attention to form' while the learner's focal attention remains on meaning. He asserted that corrective feedback involves focal attention on form and results in explicit rather than implicit L2 knowledge. Doughty's position, then, is in direct opposition to that of many teachers who believe that implicit attention should be given to form.

#### **The effect of corrective feedback on different linguistic error categories**

SLA insights (Truscott, 1996) and studies of error correction point to the fact that different linguistic categories should not be regarded as if they are similar because they represent separate domains of knowledge that are acquired through different stages and processes. All of these studies which targeted specific error categories found that there were significantly different rates of student achievement and progress across error kinds.

Ferris (1999) introduced a distinction between "treatable" and "untreatable" errors, suggesting that the former (verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, article usage, plural and possessive noun endings, and sentence fragments) occur in a rule-governed way, and so learners can be pointed to a grammar book or set of rules to find out the reason for the error, while the latter (word choice errors, with the possible exception of some pronoun and preposition uses, and unidiomatic sentence structure, resulting from problems to do with word order and missing or unnecessary words) are idiosyncratic and so require learners to apply acquired knowledge of the language to correct the error.

#### **Observations**

Based on all the concepts explained above, a lower intermediate class was audiotaped and the teacher's interactions with the students and the different types of feedbacks exchanged were observed. It is worth mentioning that the teacher of this class takes a cooperative and facilitative approach to conduct the classroom activities and she values the interest of the learners and the whole class participation. In the beginning sessions, once teacher started to talk about the messiest guy among students' family members. Then she asked all the learners who is the messiest one in your family. She asked Roger "you don't make your bed?" and he answered "almost no" instead of "almost never". Here the teacher, takes appeal to recast as the strategy for just correcting the wrong word without changing the whole meaning of the utterance (Long, 1991). The teacher said "almost never". This kind of correction is in line with the Doughty and Varela's study (1998) which indicates that recasts are beneficial for interlanguage development.

In another example, one of the learners was talking about the occasions that her husband helped her to do the household. Since her explanations were long and sometimes interrupted, at the end of her description, the teacher rephrased her words and made a summary of that which seems an efficient strategy and a type of implicit feedback that draws the learner and class attention to the correct and concise way of saying an event. Also it is very important that the teacher provided enough time for students' contemplation and decision making. Once the teacher asked them "Have you ever washed the dishes?". One of the boys said "I have to wash them when I was living alone in Tehran". Then, he realized that "had to" was the right tense in the past and he immediately changed "have to" to the past form. This is in line with Corder's (1967) opinion that, providing the learners with time and opportunity for self-correction clearly

benefits L2 development. Corder (1967), in previous researches, advocated the position that forcing learners to rely on their own resources was more beneficial than simply providing them with the correct form. This type of teacher tolerance and her intuition that the learner knows the correct form but just a mistake had happened is very precious technique that leads the learners to analyze their own resources and evaluate whether they know something and made a mistake or whether it is their error which needs more treatment.

Furthermore, in another situation, one of the learners said "I try to don't anything" and the teacher repeated the sentence in the correct form "I try not to do anything". Recasts may involve correcting just one or more than one feature. Thus, depending on the particular way the recast is realized, it may be implicit or much more explicit (Ellis, 2007). Therefore, in this example, the teacher explicitly corrected the wrong form. It seems that since the purpose of the exercise was on improving the fluency of the learners, grammatical errors were corrected immediately in order to let the stream of communication would not be interrupted.

Furthermore, elicitation was a common strategy that was used by the teacher in most of the class sessions. For example one the teacher asked "Who worries most about the expenses in your house?" then, immediately she said "expenses means?" and the students all replied "cost of living" and they teacher became confident that the learners knew the meaning of the word so she could push forward the discussion. It was a good technique used by the teacher since the involvement of the learners and their comprehension could be evaluated at the same time. We can all it the fine-tuning of feedback, i.e., the achievement of compatibility at the level of the speaker's intent and the receiver's interpretation which was met by explicitly asking the learners whether they know something or not (Han, 2001).

Moreover, when the topic was about new inventions, the teacher directed the discussion towards buying cell phones and asked the learner whether her husband bought her a new cell phone. The learners said "yes" and another classmate swiftly asked her "which mark", so the teacher quickly said "which brand". Again the use of recast was very beneficial since all the learners grasped the meaning of the new word.

Clarification request was another strategy used by the teacher in some occasions. Once the discussion was about video games and one of the learners stated that he liked "strategy games". The teacher asked him to explain what kind of games they are. The student explained that "you play it with other people. You think about the characters. It is not a fighting game. You make a plan and a trick to win the game and you use your brain to win the game. The explanations provided by the learner were very comprehensible and any one of the classmates could catch it. It is in line with the belief that techniques which need reformulation, such as clarification requests and comprehension checks, have been more effective than those which do not, such as recasts (Lyster, 2001; Lyster & Ranta, 1997), although both of these techniques, i.e., recasts and clarification request were used by the teacher at the right time and both could improve the comprehension and production of the learners.

When the subject was about playing games, the teacher explained that she herself had not played any game before since her brother was a pet peeve for her and whenever she wanted to play, the brother was stopping her from playing. Then one of the learners said that "some people not talent and are good in other majors". The teacher corrected her argument swiftly and again she used the technique of recast to reformulate the learners phrase in line with keeping the original meaning of the

statement. Again she was very successful and from the interactionist perspective of language acquisition, the recast is viewed as useful feedback. According to the interaction hypothesis proposed by Long (1996), feedback that occurs during interaction and negotiation processes is considered to facilitate language learning. In this case also, the recast was also a device for negotiation of meaning since both the teacher and the learner were making their hard effort to come to a shared understanding of the learner's intention.

Ferris (1999) believed that grammatical errors are mostly treatable and examples like word choice are untreatable. However, in this observation the teacher handled both the treatable and untreatable ones in a way that both groups experienced a form of trigger at first, next the feedback move and f in most of the occasions what they received from their classmates and their teacher became their uptake (Ellis, 2007). All in all, in all the observations of the class, it was quite apparent that the teacher was benefiting from all types of feedback and interaction.

#### **Final remarks**

Regarding the importance of corrective feedback in SLA theory, an increasing number of studies have been allocated to examining the relationship between feedback and L2 learning. In the same line of research, experimental and quasi-experimental studies conducted in Canada report positive results regarding the effect of formal instruction and corrective feedback on improving students' accuracy in using the target language (Lightbown & Spada, 1990).

Lightbown and Spada (1990) examined the effects of corrective feedback and form-focused instruction on SLA in the context of intensive ESL programs. The general goal of the study was to investigate relationships between instruction, interaction, and acquisition. The subjects in this study were all native speakers of French enrolled in five-month intensive ESL courses in Quebec. The findings suggested that overall language skills are best developed through meaning-based instruction in which form-focused activities and corrective feedback were provided. Mainly, in these class observations, the most important emphasis was on communication and imparting the meaning in the discourse. During these meaning based interactions, students' attention was sometimes focused on forms and the formal instruction that was provided by the teacher and good results were achieved. The above mentioned study provides positive evidence for the effect of formal instruction and corrective feedback in improving the students' accuracy level on certain targeted linguistic features.

However, a general criticism to these kinds of studies are stated by Carroll and Swain (1993) who point out that such studies did not separate formal instruction from corrective feedback and that the results of the studies could be ascribed to either formal instruction alone, or to corrective feedback alone, or to amalgamation of both. In other words, those studies provide fuzzy distinction between the effect of explicit formal instruction in isolation and that of providing corrective feedback. It was therefore hard to recognize any improvement to the effect of corrective feedback alone.

Another important issue in this study was that Ancker (2000) claims that error correction remains one of the most mysterious and misunderstood issues in the second and foreign language teaching profession. But what kind of learners like error correction and what kind of learners do not? This is another important issue in the exact time of providing corrective feedback. His survey to the question 'Should teachers correct every error students make when using English?' covers

responses from teachers, teacher trainees and students in 15 countries. 25% (out of 802) of teachers and 76% (out of 143) of students support this viewpoint, while 75% of teachers and 24% of students, respectively, are against such correction.

Interestingly, 'the most frequent reason for not wanting correction was the negative impact on students' confidence and motivation, and the most frequent reason for wanting correction was the importance of learning to speak English correctly' (Ancker, 2000, p.22). Most studies that have elicited students' attitudes towards error correction have consistently shown that they favored the strategy. In particular they express a desire for more feedback on grammar. Also it was the case in the study as well. Most learners were motivated to receive corrective feedback specifically on their grammar errors and mistakes. All in all, it seemed that the teacher made avail the students of the variety of corrective feedbacks for language learning. Furthermore, her main purpose was on imparting meaning and a focus on form was part of her teaching which was very beneficial for the learners. She also considered the atmosphere of the classroom when she decided to provide the feedback for the learners. When all the classmates were motivated to receive feedback especially on their grammatical problems, she provided the feedbacks. In other situations, in order not to interrupt the stream of meaning negotiation she kept silent which helped the learners a lot.

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