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ERRORS AND CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK: WHAT DO STUDENTS THINK ABOUT BEING CORRECTED?

by

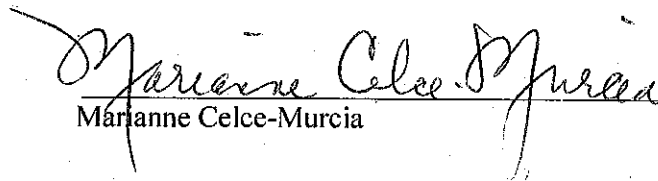Anna Maloyan

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Abstract

The present paper describes and analyses the patterns of teacher feedback to students' errors and learners' attitude and preferences towards error correction and examines feedback techniques used by the teacher over a nine-week period in two adult intermediate level English classes of the American University of Armenia (AUA) Extension Program. The study also investigates students' perception of corrective feedback and teacher response to students' errors in an adult Armenian EFL classroom. The database consists of a questionnaire and of 6 hours of videotaped interaction between the teacher and 21 students. The classroom interaction was videotaped and transcribed according to Lyster and Ranta's corrective discourse model (1997). While analyzing the questionnaire results, it was found that, overall, students liked to be corrected, and they were sure that the teacher's corrective feedback helped them to improve their oral production. The videotaped data revealed that grammatical errors were the error types most frequently treated by the teacher in this study, and they were also the ones that the students felt needed the most correction. It was also found that recast was the most widely used feedback type in this study.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Why do we make mistakes? Should they be corrected? How should they be corrected? Who should correct them? What is the best time to correct students? These are only a few of the questions that require answers when learning/teaching mastery of a language skill. How does one learn to cook, play a game, or master a sport? By making mistakes and learning from those - at first from big and more frequent ones, then by gradually decreasing their number and by profiting from those mistakes and the feedback obtained from the environment, one makes more successful attempts to reach the desired goal. Learning a language is no exception. All learners go through the same process of first producing unacceptable forms of the target language and then correcting them before they reach better mastery of the target language. Their not making mistakes "indeed will even impede that process if they do not commit errors and then benefit in turn from various forms of feedback on those errors" (Brown, 1994, p. 204).

Speaking a foreign language inevitably entails making errors and their number depends on students' proficiency level and the stage they are at while studying. Therefore, making mistakes is a healthy part of the learning process. If making mistakes is part and parcel of learning, then error treatment and feedback are inseparable parts of the teaching process. As teachers, we believe that errors made by students should be treated in some way and our attitude towards error treatment depends upon our own beliefs and teaching principles, upon the goals and objectives of a certain course, and also on students' needs and expectations from the language course they are taking. As Doff (1988, cited in Ancker, 2000) argues "... with error correction there is no best way: teachers must be flexible and sensitive in their approach, taking into account the ability of each student". Recent theory on language acquisition and

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teaching methodology supports the position that not all errors should be corrected and the ones that are corrected should be corrected with care in order not to traumatize learners but help them get rid of those errors instead (Krashen, 1985; Nunan and Lamb, 1996; and Ur, 2001).

"Error correction remains one of the most contentious and misunderstood issues in the second and foreign language teaching profession" (Ancker, 2000, p. 20). The role error correction plays in foreign language teaching and learning has remained controversial and variably treated at different times and by different teaching methodologies. The emphasis has shifted depending on the learning objectives, the educational and cultural background of a learner, and the approach and teaching methodology utilized by the teacher. For example, in the natural approach where there is an emphasis on creating a "classroom atmosphere that is interesting, friendly, and with low affective filter learning" (Nunan, 2001, p. 188), teachers are not supposed to correct students' errors. For this approach, where students may respond in either the first or second language, "their errors are not corrected" (Krashen, 1985, p. 14). In contrast, the direct method utilizes the target language use in the classroom and "focuses on grammatical accuracy and uses heavy error correction" (Krashen, 1985, p. 14).

Do teachers always take students' opinions into consideration when considering the issue of error treatment? The students' sensitivity towards being corrected is a very delicate question. Is there any discrepancy of the views between what teachers think is useful in terms of error treatment and what students think is beneficial for them? It is natural that different students react differently towards being corrected: some do not like to be corrected; others demand that teachers treat every single mistake. On occasion when discussing error correction and feedback with my students, they have asked for all their mistakes to be treated, presumably assuming that the more a teacher treats their errors, the fewer errors they will make and the

more correct their oral production will become. What do students actually think about feedback and error correction and what do we teachers know about their attitude towards corrective feedback?

This study set out to investigate whether or not students like to be corrected in class by their teacher, the effectiveness of different types of corrective feedback and students' preferences regarding corrective feedback types. The examination of these issues through the results gained from a questionnaire eliciting students' responses to different techniques of error treatment and the analysis of the data obtained from video-recorded lessons provide important information on the extent to which corrective feedback is justified in students' opinion, and which errors are more serious and need to be addressed from their view point.

In this paper I will explore the following questions: What are the error treatment and feedback techniques that I currently use? What is the rationale behind these techniques? How do students respond to them? Are these techniques beneficial for students? What do they learn from them? Are there other techniques that should be used?

My main objectives are, first, to have the students think and give me feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of certain error correction techniques, second, to analyze my teaching behavior in the classroom in terms of corrective feedback and, third, to use this knowledge in trying to better monitor the feedback techniques I use in the process of instruction.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with different questions closely related to error correction and feedback. First, it will describe what an error is and why students make errors. Second, it will address the question of why learners make errors. Third, it will discuss what feedback is. Next, it will examine the questions of which errors should be treated and who should treat them. It will then go on to review recent research on providing feedback to learners' oral errors. The chapter will conclude by posing the research questions that encouraged this study.

2.1 Definition of errors

Words most commonly used to define students' mistakes are slips, lapses, errors, attempts and mistakes. Some of these terms are closely related to each other. The definitions given by three researchers Brown (1994), Edge (1989, cited in Harmer, 2003) and Ellis (2003) are reviewed here.

Brown (1994, p. 205) makes a clear distinction between a slip, a mistake and an error. A mistake "is a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly". In other words a mistake is a divergence from an acceptable form in Standard English. Making a mistake of this kind does not imply the student did not know the correct equivalent. All people make mistakes including mistakes in their native language. For instance, Brown (1994, p. 205) considers mistakes made by native speakers "some sort of breakdown in speech". This, however, does not imply they are unable to recognize or correct them. Slips of this kind differ considerably from errors of a second/foreign language learner. An error, in contrast, is "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner" (Brown, 1994, p. 205).

According to the definition given by Edge (1989, as cited in Harmer, 2003, p. 99) mistakes are divided into three distinct categories:

a) slips - mistakes that can be easily corrected by students themselves once they are pointed out to them;

b) errors – mistakes which students cannot correct themselves and which require explanation from the teacher;

c) attempts – occurrences when students try to say something but fail since they do not yet have the required knowledge to produce the correct form in the target language.

How can we distinguish errors from mistakes? Ellis (2003) suggests distinguishing errors and mistakes by checking the consistency of learners' performance. For example, if a learner constantly uses 'go' instead of 'went', this shows a lack of knowledge, which Ellis (2003) calls an error. However, if s/he uses 'went' sometimes and at other times 'go,' we can assume that he/she has the knowledge of the correct form and is slipping up occasionally. In this case, we are dealing with a mistake. Another way to identify whether the deviation is a mistake or an error is by directly asking learners to correct their own utterances. If they are unable to do so, then the deviations are errors, but if learners are successful, then they are mistakes (Ellis, 2003).

Errors can also be classified in accordance with their seriousness (Ellis, 2003, p. 20). Some errors are considered more serious than others. Errors that impede understanding require more profound treatment and attention from teachers. For example, if the student says 'On weekends I like to do homework." when she, in fact, means 'housework,' because right after that she goes on enumerating the chores she likes to do, then the teacher needs to correct the mistake and provide examples for both words to avoid confusion for subsequent uses. But if

the student says 'I didn't *did* my homework.' once and then goes on correcting it or says 'I didn't do my homework.' the next time we might skip his/her mistake. (Both examples are taken from my classes.)

Based on the above definitions by Brown (1994), Edge (1989, cited in Harmer, 2003), and Ellis (2003) it is possible to classify errors into two categories: a) **errors** that show gaps in the learners' knowledge, and b) **mistakes**, which reflect occasional lapses in utterance (Ellis, 2003, p. 17). The former occur because the learner is unable to utilize the correct form; the latter occur since at particular instances the learner is unable to perform what he/she knows.

For teachers it is an important task to make the distinction between errors and mistakes or errors and slips, in order to choose an appropriate technique for treating them. It is natural that we are more concerned about errors that indicate learners' lack of knowledge. However, we should also pay attention to learner attempts, to the extent that they can serve as prompts for future planning and teaching. We should be sensitive to both occurrences of mistakes made and to their types, before deciding whether to correct or not, when to correct and how to correct. As Ancker (2000, p. 9) puts it, "[e]rrors and attempts are different, of course, because students can't correct themselves, but that doesn't mean that the teacher must."

In a number of studies (King Tsang, 2004; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Panova and Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2004) errors made by students have been classified into three major groups according to their meaning: a) grammatical (utterances containing any kind of grammatical or structural errors), b) pronunciation/phonological (utterances containing errors in pronunciation, stress or intonation), and c) vocabulary/lexical (utterances containing any kind of vocabulary or lexical error). The present study has used these three classifications for analyzing students' errors.

2.2 Causes for errors

> Remember, when the student begins to speak, the individual's entire attention is directed at trying to produce, so the student cannot attend efficiently to feedback from the instructor. Thus, feedback should not interrupt a student in the middle of an attempt to express a thought. The feedback should be gentle, rather than harsh and sharp. And the feedback should be modified by a wide tolerance for errors. The instructional goal should be uninhibited communication that is intelligible to a native speaker. We want students to talk and talk and talk. Eventually, they can be fine tuned for more perfect speech.
>
> Asher (1978, p. 205)

Errors are a normal and unavoidable part of the learning process. They occur for different reasons and as teachers we think that they should be treated in one way or another. When we decide to treat students' errors, "we have to be sure that we are using correction positively to support learning" (Edge, 2001, p. 20).

Finding out the real causes of mistakes can help teachers in identifying where the mistakes come from and what is the best way to provide feedback for this or that error. Harmer (2003, p. 99) argues that there are at least two widespread causes for students' errors that most of them experience.

The first of these causes is L1 interference ('interlingual' errors). By the time learners study a foreign language they already have background knowledge of at least one language. Therefore, it is not surprising that when they rely on their previous language information to produce an utterance in the target language, L1 and L2/FL come into contact and incite errors. Lyster et al. (1999, p. 5) argue that "while a great deal of L2 learning takes place through exposure to comprehensible input, learners may require feedback on error [sic] when they are not able to discover, through exposure alone, how their interlanguage differs from the L2".

Making this type of error is especially frequent with beginning and intermediate level students. As they attempt to construct their ideas in the target language they use whatever

language knowledge they have and, of course, this is going to be the L1. According to Littlewood (1984, p. 25), who calls this 'transfer', "the learner uses his previous *mother-tongue* experience as a means of organizing the second language data".

Interlingual errors can be universal (errors that all learners make despite their mother tongue), for example, before learning to form the negative correctly learners might say 'I *no/not* pen', 'I haven't *wrote* my homework'. (Examples taken from my classes.) Almost all learners at the beginning or intermediate levels make this kind of error. Interlingual errors can also be *local* (typical for native speakers of a certain language). For instance, at the phonetic level the sounds /f/ and /θ/ are a constant cause of mistakes for Armenian learners. The Armenian language has both sounds but the way they are pronounced is different and students replace them with Armenian equivalents, such as, /fri/ instead of /ðri/, or /væt/ instead of /ðæt/. For Armenians studying English, the interlanguage can be either Armenian or Russian depending on the language of instruction at school. An Armenian learner whose interlanguage is Armenian may pronounce /too'nel/ (with aspirated 't') for 'tunnel' and the one with Russian interlanguage will say /'t'ʌnel'/(with light 'l') instead of /'tʌnl/. (Examples taken from my classes.)

A second cause is developmental (intralingual). Studies of L1 and L2 have revealed certain similarities between errors children make while acquiring their first language and FL learners studying a new language. This phenomenon is also known as 'over-generalization' (Littlewood, 1984, p. 25). FL learners go through the same developmental stages and make the same kinds of errors as children when they learn to speak their mother tongue (Ellis, 2003; Harmer, 2003; Littlewood, 1984). Usually after learners have acquired a rule, they go on applying it to other instances, not realizing that they are overgeneralizing, thus making a

mistake. For example, once learners know the rule for forming plural nouns they can overgeneralize and produce an unacceptable form like 'mouses' instead of the correct form 'mice'. (An example taken from my own classes.) Therefore, the next step for him/her is to learn the plural exceptions.

It is crucial to be sensitive to interlingual/developmental errors since this type of error can easily lead to fossilization – "halting of acquisition before the native-speaker level is reached; may be due to insufficient input, and/or acquisition of deviant forms" (Krashen, 1992, p. 101). Learners being aware that a particular form is acceptable in their L1, are positive that it can also be used in the target language. When responding to errors we should help students to reshape this process and whenever possible provide an explanation that takes into account the source of the mistake.

2.3 Definition of feedback

> Feedback is any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect. This includes various responses that the learners receive. When a language learner says, 'He go to school everyday', 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 example, 'Don't forget to make the verb agree with the subject.'
>
> Lightbown and Spada (2002, p. 171-172)

One of the main duties of language teachers is to give feedback to students' production (both oral and written), which quite often takes the form of error correction. First, a clear distinction should be made between the terms feedback and error correction. Lyster et al. (1999) have suggested the terms feedback on error, corrective feedback or error treatment as opposed to error correction. Based on the observation made by Long (1977, as cited in Lyster, Lightbown and Spada, 1999) what the teacher can do is to provide information to the learner, but it is the learner who will (or will not) eventually correct the error.

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Chaudron (1988) argues, "the provision of feedback is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy of both their formal target language production and other classroom behavior and knowledge" (p. 133). He has also pointed out the fact that the term corrective feedback incorporates 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 evident to the student 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 eliminated from further production (p. 150).

Based on the above mentioned considerations, the terms corrective feedback or feedback are used in this study to identify the teacher's moves to indicate to students that the utterance was wrong and the term error correction is used for students' moves when they actually correct the pointed out mistake. Both terms seem to be more applicable because it is the teacher who points out the error and it is the student who corrects it.

The teacher's feedback moves can be classified into different categories based on the clues (ignoring the error, interrupting the student, showing negation of the utterance, and prompting the correct form, among others) he/she gives to help the student to correct the mistake. The two classifications discussed here are taken from Chaudron (1988) and Lyster and Ranta (1997). According to Chaudron (1988) there are 31 types of feedback moves made by the teachers (p. 146-148). Some of them are:

a) Ignore – Teacher (T) ignores Student's (S) error.

b) Interrupt – T interrupts S utterance following error.

c) Negation – T shows rejection of part or all of S utterance.

d) Acceptance – Simple approving or accepting word.

e) Repetition – T repeats S utterance with no change of error.

f) Repeat – T requests S to repeat utterance.

g) Reduction – T utterance employs only a segment of S utterance.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) have suggested another framework for coding teachers' feedback moves, which classifies them into six categories: (1) recast; (2) explicit correction; (3) elicitation; (4) clarification requests; (5) metalinguistic feedback and (6) repetition.

1. Recast. This involves the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error. Recasts are generally implicit in that they are not introduced by phrases such as *You mean* and *You should say*. That is, the teacher would not indicate nor point out that the student made an error, but merely give a correct form.

2. Explicit correction. This refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. As the teacher provides the correct form, he or she clearly indicates that what the student has said was incorrect. (*No, what you said was wrong,* or *You can't say this*) On occasion, the wrong form is identified along with providing a correct form in the teacher's turn.

3. Elicitation. This refers to techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the student by asking questions, for example, "How do you say that in English?" One technique is that teachers elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to *fill in the blank* as it were. The other technique that teachers use is asking questions to elicit correct forms. Either way, teachers do not provide the correct form in their turn.

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4. Clarification request. These are in the form of questions such as *Pardon?* and *I'm sorry?* or attempts to reveal the intended form of the error with the rising tone. This type of corrective feedback is used when there are linguistic problems in the learner's turn, and also when the learner's utterance is not comprehensible. Unlike explicit correction or recasts, clarification requests can refer to problems in comprehensibility.

5. Metalinguistic feedback. This contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. It points to the nature of the error but attempts to elicit the information from the student. This kind of corrective feedback makes the learner analyze his/her utterance linguistically.

6. Repetition. This refers to the teacher's repetition, in isolation, of the student's erroneous utterance. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation so as to highlight the error.

From the comparison of these two classifications it is evident that most of the categories identified by Chaudron (1988) and Lyster and Ranta (1997) overlap. For example, recast shares common characteristics with Chaudron's (1988) repetition with change (T simply adds correction and continues to other topics), explicit correction is similar to negation, or repetition overlaps with several types of repetition (repetition with no change, repetition with change and emphasis, among others) in Chaudron's (1988) description. Therefore, to identify the teacher's feedback moves in the present study, it was decided to use all six categories of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model and one category, acceptance, from Chaudron (1988) classification, since the latter does not overlap with any of the categories and several occurrences of this feedback type were identified in the process of data analysis. Thus, seven types of feedback techniques were used to identify the teacher's moves in this study. It is worth

mentioning that many of the successive studies on corrective feedback, such as, King Tsang (2004), Panova and Lyster (2002), and Suzuki (2004) among others, have followed the framework suggested by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

2.4 Frequency and mode of corrective feedback

We have just given instructions for some communicative task and are now ready to listen to the students and right away we hear a mistake. What to do? Should we ignore it or provide correction and explanation immediately? Or maybe it is better to draw everybody's attention to it later, when everyone has finished talking. The outcomes of both ignoring and providing feedback can be controversial. Schachter (1984, cited in Pica, 1994) has noted that lack of feedback may imply to a learner that a non-target like utterance was accurate which in its turn can result in the fossilization of a mistake. On the other hand, if we stop and provide feedback in mid-speech when the learner is in the process of constructing and producing an utterance, we might disturb the flow of thought and discourage the student from continuing.

Pointing out the error at the end of an activity when we are out of context does not sound that useful either. In a situation like this corrective feedback may not serve the purpose we want it to. Therefore, it is important that we set our priorities from the beginning: is emphasis to be on fluency or on accuracy? In the first case the feedback can be simple, in the form of unnoticed interventions by the teacher. In the second case, the teacher may provide heavy feedback, including explanations.

It is well known that during communicative activities it is not advisable to interrupt students in order to point out a grammatical, lexical or pronunciation error. By doing so we simply do not let the student fully construct and produce an utterance of his/her own. Lynch (1997, cited in Harmer, 2003, p. 105), for example, is against even 'gentle correction'. In

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Lynch's words, "the best answer to the question of when to intervene in learner talk: as late as possible." (Lynch, 1997, cited in Harmer, 2003, p. 105)

Conversely, there are certain classroom situations when the feedback is not only necessary but also desirable, as in cases when we focus on form and accuracy while doing a grammar exercise, or when the task to be completed requires correct usage of target vocabulary or a conversational pattern. Even though we might focus on corrective feedback in these instances, we should not overdo it. "What is certainly true is that excessive correction is unlikely to be productive" (Harmer, 2003, p. 104); it is time consuming for the teacher and often intimidating for the student.

Traditionally, the teacher provides oral feedback but such feedback can be elicited from the student who made it (self-correction) or by asking for other students' assistance (peer correction). It is sad, however, that we very rarely resort to peer or self-correction. A survey conducted by Tedick (1998) revealed that students remember their mistakes better when they are asked to correct them themselves or when the teacher directly elicits the correct response from them.

2.5 Recent research on feedback and error correction

Studies of error treatment have focused on a number of issues: the effectiveness of language used by teachers to treat errors (Fanselow, 1997; Long, 1977, as cited in Crichton, 1990) and the respective roles of the teacher and student with regard to feedback and error correction. They found that the language used by teachers was often ambiguous, and that their treatment of error was frequently inconsistent. Chaudron (1988) focused on the differences between the way native speakers correct each other and the roles expected of teachers when giving feedback to students. He found that error correction in language classroom differs

significantly from correction between native speakers. Crichton (1990) analyzed samples of problematic correction to discover any factors that may have made them unusually difficult and concluded that a range of factors affected the process of correction; such as, students' proficiency level, their personality type, the level of confidence the teacher has. An increasing number of studies have been devoted to examining the relationship between feedback and L2 learning, e.g., Tomasello and Herron (1989, cited in Tataway, 2004). King Tsang (2004), Lyster and Ranta (1997), Panova and Lyster (2002) and Suzuki (2004) concentrated mainly on patterns of corrective feedback and learner uptake in adult ESL classrooms. The findings of all these studies confirmed that recast was the most frequent type of corrective feedback provided by teachers.

It can be seen that research on error treatment and correction is quite comprehensive. However, relatively less research has focused on finding out what students themselves think about oral error correction and, moreover, on learners' views about receiving feedback, which types of feedback they find particularly useful and how they respond to the feedback. One of the few studies that raised such questions asked: What do students think about being corrected? and What feedback techniques are mostly used by teachers in an adult EFL classroom? These are presented in Ancker's (2000) article focusing on the issue of students' attitudes towards oral error correction and feedback. Two further articles by Lyster and Ranta (1997), and Beretta (1989) respectively address the questions of learners' reaction to error correction, types of feedback received from teachers and learner responses to feedback in oral speech.

The question that Ancker (2000) raised in his action research, which he carried out as a teacher trainer over four years in fifteen different countries, is whether teachers' expectations toward error treatment differ from those of students'. The key question he asks is, "Should

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teachers correct every error students make when using English?" (Ancker, 2000, p. 3). The most interesting outcome of this research was that notwithstanding the increase in the number of respondents, the response percentages remained fairly consistent. The majority of teachers, (i.e. 75%) and 64% of teacher trainees were of the opinion that not all errors should be treated; whereas 76% of students thought that all errors should be treated. The reasons given by the three target groups were fairly straightforward. Teachers and teacher trainees were concerned that too frequent error treatment could have a negative impact on students' confidence and motivation and raise the affective filter - a mental block caused by affective factors: high anxiety, low self-esteem, low motivation (Krashen, 1992, p. 100).

The most frequent reason given by students for wanting to get feedback on all of their errors was the importance of learning to speak English correctly. A student from Ecuador expressed his concern in the following way, "If nobody corrects our errors, we will never learn good English" (Ancker, 2000, p. 4). The students who think in this way have some support from certain teachers. For example, a teacher from Honduras shares this student's opinion in that, "[i]f you don't correct them, the students could get confused later on" (Ancker, p. 4). However, quite a different aspect worries an Uzbek student who expresses his viewpoint in the following words: "If teachers correct every error students make, pupils will begin hating them" (Ancker, p. 4).

Another study related to the issue of providing corrective feedback was carried out by Lyster and Ranta (1997). This study revealed that research questions focusing on error correction and feedback have not changed over the past 20-30 years. Questions such as: "Should learners' errors be corrected?" "When should learners' errors be corrected?" and "How should errors be corrected?" are still on the agenda (Lyster and Ranta 1997, p. 40). This

work is of particular interest as it focuses on two aspects of feedback at once: different types of error treatment or corrective feedback and students' responses to that feedback, or 'learner uptake'.

The classroom data collected by Lyster and Ranta (1997) revealed different types of student responses to teachers' feedback. The term 'uptake' used by them was defined as "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teachers' feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teachers' intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p. 49). The data analysis of 18 hours of audiotaped class time showed that teachers provided corrective feedback for 62% of all the errors produced by students. Of all feedback utterances produced by the teachers in response to learner errors, 55%, or slightly over half, were found to lead to uptake of some type on the part of the learner. However, only 27% of the feedback utterances led to student repair. When Lyster and Ranta (1997) looked at the total number of errors produced by students and the total number of repairs they produced, they found that just 17% of the total errors made by students were repaired in some way.

The same study also produced interesting results in terms of feedback type. Lyster and Ranta (1997) identified 6 main types of feedback used by teachers (recast, explicit correction, elicitation, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback and repetition.) (For a definition of each see section 2.3.) The most frequently used feedback technique that did not lead to any student-generated repairs (repetition of the correct form provided by the teacher) was recast (36%), whereas the most productive correction technique for students was elicitation (23%), which led to 43% of student-generated repairs.

Beretta's (1989) study investigated the way that error treatment in Bangalore classrooms was realized in practice in a sample of 21 lesson transcripts. The core question of the study was, 'Do teachers attend to meaning or to form, and is such a distinction observable in classroom practice?" (Beretta, 1989, p. 283). This was a longitudinal study conducted in eight schools for the duration of up to 3 years between 1979 and 1984. The study was conducted in three stages. The first stage was to identify errors. The second stage was to categorize them as either linguistic or content errors. The third was to calculate the percentages of linguistic and content errors that were treated.

One of the outcomes of Beretta's (1989) study demonstrated that it is hard for teachers to be consistent in the choice of error treatment and that "intentionality or planning cannot be pursued with any expectation of success" (Beretta, 1989, p. 285). The study confirmed the initial hypothesis that there was a significantly greater incidence of treatment of content than linguistic errors. The descriptive analysis revealed that the majority of treatments of linguistic errors involved minimal intervention or none at all. Content errors by contrast, were treated in a wide variety of ways, indicating that more attention tends to be paid to them.

2.6 The need for error correction research

During the eight years of my working experience as an English teacher teaching mostly adult learners, I have wondered how we could, as teachers, save time on feedback and make it more effective for students, how as teachers we could help them save time getting rid of certain mistakes, and what kind of error treatment practices could work better for them to overcome an error completely, and how frequently an error should be corrected to achieve the desired result. Other questions that have intrigued me were whether we should treat all errors that students

make and whether it is justified to stop students narrating something or just expressing an idea and tell them to correct their mistakes.

Over these eight years, my personal view on feedback has changed from heavy feedback techniques (explicit correction along with explanation) to more tolerant ways, such as ignoring some mistakes, restating others, and delaying provision of feedback in certain cases. My teaching practice has also made me realize that it is not possible to treat all the mistakes students make and it cannot be useful all the time; it is time consuming for the teacher and often intimidating for the student.

Even though there has been a great deal of interesting and insightful work done inside the classroom on corrective feedback and error correction, the literature review showed few studies focusing on students' attitude to feedback and error correction. This inspired me to find out more about the issue of students' attitude and preferences on error correction. Another reason for this research was to conduct a study similar to that of Ancker (2000), Beretta (1989), Lyster and Ranta (1997), King Tsang (2004) and Suzuki (2004) to see whether the results gained from an Armenian adult EFL classroom will be similar to theirs.

The research questions I initially posed are: What do students themselves think about being corrected? Do they favor error correction or do they think it is a waste of time? Do they actually remember the correction? Which mistakes are seen as more important to correct in order to ensure comprehensibility? Do they learn from their peers' correction? Do they think that all errors should be corrected? If so, when is the time to treat the mistake? To investigate these questions a study was carried out the outcomes of which are presented in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This study follows an action research model to the extent that the main purpose of this type of research, as outlined by Jordan (1997, p. 274), "is to find solutions to problems and to enable teachers to improve aspects of teaching/learning and it is usually classroom based." The present study examines a group of students' preferences for modes of error treatment, the ways in which they behaved while being provided with feedback and the types of feedback the teacher provided. The research was carried out in two of my classes at the Extension Program of the American University of Armenia (AUA) over a nine-week period. The data for the research were collected by using three techniques: a) pre- and post- questionnaires, b) video tape-recorded lessons, and c) field notes.

This chapter, first, describes the subjects and materials involved in the study. It then describes how the data were collected and ends with the description of the procedure of the study.

3.1 Subjects

The subjects were 21 (10 female and 11 male) students, with an intermediate level of language proficiency. Their language proficiency level was determined by a placement test administered by the AUA Extension Program. Based on the results of this test, the students were placed in two intermediate level groups, Levels 5 and 6 of the Extension Program at AUA. The prerequisite for being placed in each level is either the successful completion of the previous level or taking the placement test. The students' ages ranged from 15 to 35; two were Iranian and 19 were Armenian. The AUA Extension Program has seven-levels of general English. For many years, students of these courses were mainly Armenians, but due to recent immigration to Armenia from other countries, there are also a number of foreign students from

Iran, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. Extension courses are not a part of the University's degree

programs and are offered on a non-credit basis. At the completion of each level, students get a

certificate stating the number of hours they have attended and their grade average.

Teachers working at the Extension Program are all graduates of AUA's TEFL

(Teaching English as a Foreign Language) Certificate or Master of Arts Programs and are well

acquainted with western methodologies, which they incorporate appropriately in their teaching.

3.2 Materials

Classes at the Extension Program are spread over nine weeks, three times a week for

three hours from 5 to 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 3 to 6 p.m. on Saturdays. The textbook

used for the two levels in this research is "Passages" by Jack C. Richards and Chuck Sandy

(2003). "Passages 1" is used in Level 5 and "Passages 2" is used in Level 6. The books seek to

develop both fluency and accuracy in English through a topic-based syllabus. The textbooks

cover all four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) but special emphasis is put on

maximizing opportunities for discussion, and promoting the development of both linguistic and

communication skills. Developing linguistically and grammatically correct speech has become

one of the course priorities. Class audiocassettes and a workbook that contains assignments to

be done at home accompany the textbook. Each book consists of twelve units, each unit

focusing on one selected topic (family and friends, education, cities and traveling, day and

night, among others). Each class session consists of a presentation of the new topic; it is then

followed by different language functions (describing, expressing likes and dislikes, giving

reasons, categorizing and evaluating, among others) related to that topic. It is also accompanied

by grammar and vocabulary exercises and a listening task on a given topic and concludes with

a discussion on that topic. The last two sections of each unit, the writing and the reading tasks,

are usually assigned as homework. After every three units, students take a test, which is administered in class and is graded according to the guidelines given in the teacher's manual. The units that overlap with the recordings carried out for this research were: for Level 5- (1) Unit 4: Day and Night and (2) Unit 11: On the Other Side of the World; for Level 6 – (1) Unit 6: Reading and Television and (2) Unit 11: Science and Technology.

The instructional approach of the Extension Program is communicative language teaching, with a strong emphasis on vocabulary development, speaking and listening comprehension. The classes are student-centered and are conducted in the form of discussions that are done either as pair or group work, or role plays (e.g., complaining in a restaurant), and are accompanied by short presentations on selected topics.

3.3 Data collection

Data for the study were collected through a) a student questionnaire, b) videotaping classroom interaction, and c) taking field notes over a nine-week period.

a) The questionnaire (Appendix 1) was developed by the researcher herself. It was not possible to pilot the questionnaire with the students; however, it was checked and proofread by the thesis supervisor three-four times and commented on by the researcher's colleagues. There were 15 close-ended questions in the questionnaire. The first three questions gathered information about students' age, gender and mother tongue. The remaining 12 questions were developed based on the research questions raised in this study; they elicited from the students information about the types of error they considered should be corrected, the types of corrective feedback they considered most useful, and the ways they respond to feedback.

The questionnaire was administered to each group twice – at the beginning and at the end of the nine weeks of instruction (pre- and post-questionnaires). The first reason for this

was to see whether the students' attitude towards error treatment in general changed as the course progressed. The second reason was to measure whether or not the employed error treatment techniques during the nine-week period had an effect on the students' attitudes.

Before the questionnaire was administered, the purpose of the present research and the role of subjects in this research were explained to the students. They were told that the aim of the research was to find out what students themselves think about error correction, which is why their participation was essential to the research. They were also informed that there was no risk in taking part in the research; that their names would not appear on the questionnaire; and the data obtained from the study would be used for research purposes only. The teacher also told them that, as part of the research, several classes would be videotaped. The videotaped material would be used as part of the research presentation. Students became very enthusiastic about the idea and volunteered to take part in the research. Before filling in the questionnaire, each student signed the Informed Consent form (Appendix 2).

All 21 students filled in the pre- and post-questionnaires. It took 5-7 minutes of class time. The pre-questionnaire was administered during the second week of class, after the students had gotten used to the method of teaching utilized by the teacher. The post-questionnaire was administered during the final week of class.

It should be mentioned that both the pre- and post- questionnaire results were viewed and analyzed after the nine-week course was over in order not to influence the results of the research.

b) Videotaping. The main purpose of the videotaping was to find out which feedback techniques the teacher used most and how the students responded to the techniques used. Of interest was the preferred time for error treatment and whether corrective feedback was

followed by explanations. During the nine-week period, each group was video-taped three times. Each recording lasted for an hour and a half (though lessons were longer). However, only 4 of these recordings were actually transcribed and analyzed since I could not use one of the recordings for each group because of technical problems. As each videotape session lasted an hour and a half, there was a total of 6 hours of videotaping. Since the researcher was also the English teacher of the class, the concern was to make sure that the process of data collection would not be compromised, especially by videotaping. To minimize this, the dates for videotaping were set randomly by the thesis supervisor. For the same reason, the videotaped material was transcribed and the error types were noted after the course was over. (For the transcripts of video-recordings, see Appendix 3.)

As mentioned above, the days when videotaping was carried out were decided randomly and neither the students nor the teacher knew about it in advance. The video camera was placed on the teacher's desk facing the class before the lesson started, the teacher turned it on for a specific part of the lesson and it stayed fixed at the same spot all the time. It was decided not to video tape those parts of the class that contained teacher explanations, providing instructions and other activities not including student talk. Therefore, the videotaping included those oral activities, when students were talking: such as, performing different language functions (describing daily routines and habits, comparing and contrasting customs), analyzing the target vocabulary (making up sentences or situations on the given words), and discussing a topic (talking about sleeping habits, interpreting dreams, telling about a travel experience).

Some of the students felt uncomfortable during the first 10-15 minutes of videotaping; they started making jokes about being videotaped for the first time in class and not wanting to

be seen by others, but soon they got used to the presence of the camera in the classroom and started to ignore it and concentrated on the lesson.

c) **Field notes** (Appendix 4) were taken to record some of the repeated types of errors made by the students and to obtain additional data to further analyze the video recording and also to support the data gained via videotaping. Taking notes of students' errors is part of a classroom practice, since I usually take notes of students' errors in order to provide an explanation after a particular discussion activity or oral task is over. The notes used in this study were taken during the nine-week course. The most often repeated mistates were selected and used for this research.

Since the notes taken for this study differed from the usual notes I take in class (I had to put down exactly what the student said and the feedback the teacher provided), they took longer to record. To avoid drawing students' attention to note taking while they were speaking, the notes were taken either after the student finished talking or during the break, which is why I was only able to record a limited number of the errors students made. These notes served as an additional source for types of mistakes made by the students and for fixing the type of feedback provided by the teacher.

3.4 Analysis of data

The present study used the tradition of discourse and conversation analysis methodologies in order to explore the characteristics and functions of feedback in error treatment in an adult Armenian EFL classroom. The research instrument used for this study was the one designed by Lyster and Ranta (1997), an error treatment model, "which was developed in content-based L2 classrooms to describe teachers' reactions to errors and learners' immediate response (i.e., uptake) to this feedback" (Spada and Lyster, 1997, p. 789).

The Lyster and Ranta (1997) model is presented in the form of a flowchart (See Appendix 5), which permits a turn-by-turn analysis of error treatment sequences in teacher-student interaction. This model shares some characteristics with the discourse analysis traditions in the classroom since this type of research requires precise explanation/account of classroom interaction in order to fully describe the linguistic behavior of teachers and learners. Another reason for using this research instrument is that it is "a useful tool for those whose research goals are to closely examine a specific feature of linguistic interactions between students and teachers" (Spada and Lyster, 1997, p. 789).

The data analysis was carried out in three stages; first the responses to the pre- and post-questionnaires were tallied and the results were tabulated, next the videotaped interactions were transcribed and analyzed, and third, the results from the field notes were analyzed. The results obtained from the questionnaire, the video-transcripts and the field notes were subjected to descriptive statistics.

In coding the types of feedback utilized by the teacher in the video transcripts and field notes the present study follows the research identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997). Using the framework designed by these two researchers and the characteristics specified by Chaudron (1988), the teacher's feedback moves were coded into seven categories: (1) recast; (2) explicit correction; (3) elicitation; (4) clarification request; (5) metalinguistic feedback; (6) repetition and (7) acceptance. Definitions of the first six types of feedback techniques in this study follow the ones described in the Lyster and Ranta (1997, p. 49) study and the last one, 'acceptance', follows the description given by Chaudron (1988, p.148).

The analysis of the video-transcripts focused on teacher-student interaction and included the parts where there were errors. The transcriptions of the lessons were, first, coded

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for students' errors and, then, for the feedback provided by the teacher. It should be mentioned that the total number of turns made by the students or the teacher was not counted, because it was considered that the total number of turns made either by students or the teacher had little relevance to the question of investigation in the present study, as the overall purpose was to find out the possible relationship between students' attitudes to error correction and feedback techniques used by the teacher.

The field notes were recorded in such a way that contained the student's error and the teacher's feedback to it. After all the recorded errors were reviewed and the repeated mistakes were selected, they were analyzed in the same order as the video transcripts; that is, first they were coded for students' errors and then for the feedback provided by the teacher.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports on the findings of the research on error correction and whether students like to be corrected. The chapter provides details on the analyses of the questionnaire, video transcript and field note results, and concludes with a summary of findings.

4.1 Pre- and post-questionnaires

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the same questionnaire (Appendix 1) was administered twice: at the beginning and at the end of the nine-week course. The pre- and post-administrations of the same questionnaire (Pre-Q and Post-Q respectively) aimed at measuring whether or not the employed error treatment techniques during the nine-week period had an effect on the students' attitudes. The responses to 12 questions (4-15) were grouped into three categories: a) students' attitude towards corrective feedback (Questions 4, 6, 11, 13, 14, and 15); b) students' attitude towards error treatment techniques used by the teacher (Questions 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12); and c) students' perceptions of types of error (Question 7).

A number of questions elicited responses to students' attitude towards corrective feedback and their feelings when being corrected. The results of the responses are presented in Tables 4.1a and 4.1b. From students' responses to Question 4 (Q4) (Table 4.1a), it is evident that students like to be corrected and believe that they learn from being corrected (Q6). All 21 students (100%) responded positively to both questions and their responses did not vary across the pre- and post- administration of the questionnaire. Even though 14 students (66%) indicated experiencing some difficulty if corrected mid stream in the Pre-Q, only 2 (10%) of them indicate they still had difficulty continuing with what they are saying in the Post-Q (Q11). Most students also believe that they learn from the corrections of other students, with 86% of the students responding affirmatively to Q14 in the Pre-Q and 90% responding

affirmatively in the Post-Q. However, not all the students appear to appreciate the use of humor when being corrected (Q13), with 29% responding negatively to this question in the pre-questionnaire and 33% in the post-questionnaire.

Table 4.1a: Student attitude to error correction.

Questionnaire Item N = 21	Pre-questionnaire		Post-questionnaire	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
4. Do you like to be corrected when you make a mistake?	100%	0%	100%	0%
6. Do you feel that teachers' corrections help you improve your speaking skills?	100%	0%	100%	0%
11. After being corrected by a teacher do you have difficulty to continue your speech?	66%	33%	10%	90%
13. You like it when teachers use humor to correct your mistakes.	71%	29%	67%	33%
14. Do you think you learn from the corrections of other students?	86%	14%	90%	10%

Students not only believe that they learn from corrections (Q6) but they are also unanimously convinced (100%) that they are attentive to corrections and can remember them afterwards (Q15). From their responses to this question presented in Table 4.1b, it is evident that none of the 21 students changed their opinion across the Pre-Q and Post-Q.

Table 4.1b: Student attitude to error correction.

Questionnaire Item N=21	Pre-questionnaire			Post-questionnaire		
	a.	b.	c.	a.	b.	c.
15. When being corrected by teachers you:	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%

Key: a= pay attention to and try to remember the correction;
b= pay attention but forget afterward;. c= do not pay attention

The second group of questions focused on students' attitude towards different error treatment techniques utilized by the teacher. The summary of their responses to the questions

can be found in Tables 4.2a and 4.2b. Q5 should be looked at as a continuation of Q4, which asks if students like to be corrected. Even though all 21 students (100%) indicated that they liked to be corrected (Q4) in both Pre-Q and Post-Q, only 57% of the students in the Pre-Q thought that all mistakes should be corrected (Q5) and 43% were of the opinion that some of the mistakes can be corrected. In the Post-Q the percentage of 'all' responses decreased to 48% and the percentage of 'some' responses increased to 52%. None of the students, however, agreed that mistakes should never be corrected.

From students' responses to Q9 in the Pre-Q it is clear that 9 students (43%) believe that corrections should always be followed by explanations and 12 students (57%) think that explanations can sometimes be provided. In the Post-Q a slight change of opinion is noted in their responses: 8 students (37%) responded 'always' and 13 (63%) 'sometimes.' None of the students chose 'never' to respond to this item in either questionnaire. Although students liked the idea of being given an explanation of their mistakes (Q9), not all think that teachers should take notes of their mistakes and give explanations later (Q10). Only 5 students (24%) favored always having explanations and 14 (67%) responded sometimes in the Pre-Q. Their opinion showed a modest increase in the Post-Q: 7 students (33%) favoring always having explanations and 13 students (62%) thinking that sometimes explanations can be provided later to all students at once. Nevertheless, two students (9%) in the Pre-Q and one student (5%) in the Post-Q indicated that the teacher should never use this practice.

With respect to being given time for correcting their own mistakes (Q12), students responded positively with the exception of one student (5%) in the Post-Q. For 7 students (33%) in the Pre-Q and 14 (67%) in the Post-Q, this practice is acceptable for all errors. The

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rest of 14 students (67%) in both questionnaires prefer to correct their own mistakes only sometimes.

Table 4.2a: Teacher treatment of errors.

Questionnaire Item N = 21	Pre-questionnaire			Post-questionnaire		
	a.	b.	c.	a.	b.	c.
5. Do you think that teachers should correct?	57%	43%	0%	48%	52%	0%
9. Do you believe that corrections should be followed by explanations?	43%	57%	0%	37%	63%	0%
10. It is a good idea when teachers take notes of students' mistakes and provide explanations to all students later.	24%	67%	9%	33%	62%	5%
12. You like it when teachers stop you and give you time to correct your own mistakes.	33%	67%	0%	28%	67%	5%

Key: a= always; b= sometimes; c= never

What should be noted for Table 4.2b is that none of the students in either questionnaire wanted the teacher to ignore their mistakes (Q8). The majority of the students (81% in the Pre-Q and 71% in the Post-Q) were of the opinion that teachers should treat mistakes only after the student has finished talking. For a small percentage of students (19% in the Pre-Q and 29% in the Post-Q) it was acceptable to stop a student and treat his/her mistake at once.

Table 4.2b: Teacher treatment of errors.

Questionnaire Item N = 21	Pre-questionnaire			Post-questionnaire		
	a.	b.	c.	a.	b.	c.
8. In your opinion, what is the best way to treat a mistake ?	0%	19%	81%	0%	29%	71%

Key: a= not paying attention to it; b= stopping student to correct it;
c= correcting it after student has finished talking.

The questionnaire data also made it possible to identify the type of mistakes (grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary) students find to be more serious for treatment by teachers (Q7).

The comparison of Pre-Q and Post-Q (Table 4.3) indicates that grammatical errors were as serious in the Pre-Q (71%) as they were in the Post-Q (71%). Since the students were given the option of circling as many options as they thought applicable, the results indicate that pronunciation and vocabulary, in relation to grammar, are considered to be less serious in the Pre-Q. However, the comparison of results suggests that the students began to recognize the importance of phonological and lexical mistakes towards the end of the study.

Table 4.3: Student preferences for error types.

Questionnaire Item N =21	Grammar		Pronunciation		Vocabulary	
	Pre-Q	Post-Q	Pre-Q	Post-Q	Pre-Q	Post-Q
7. Which mistakes do you find more serious to be addressed by teachers?	71% N=15	71% N=15	62% N=13	71% N=15	48% N=10	57% N=12

In general, the Pre-Q and Post-Q results show that for certain questions students' opinion did not change significantly or not at all; a noticeable change in attitude was observed in the responses of other questions. For instance, all students (100%) favored correction of all errors made by them and their opinion remained unchanged in the Post-Q (Q4, Table 4.1a). Most students (81%) preferred to be corrected after they had finished talking (Q8, Table 4.2b) and did not want to be interrupted by the teacher. Some students (43%) thought that providing explanations for all mistakes could be helpful (Table 4.2a, Q9). This can be explained by the fact that most of the mistakes made by the students can be characterized as slips, which is why many believe no explanation is required. Students did not object to the idea of self-correction either: always – 33%, sometimes – 67% (Table 4.2a, Q12). However, most did not want to self-correct all the mistakes they made. This might be explained by the assumption that students are not always sure they know the correct answer and can provide it without taking

too much time. There was also a slight change of opinion regarding the importance of type of error (grammatical, lexical and phonological) in need of treatment by the teacher (Table 4.3). The comparison of results obtained from the two administrations of the questionnaire indicates lexical and phonological mistakes gained more importance in the students' eyes by the end of the nine-week course.

4.2 Video-transcripts

As explained in Chapter 3, the teacher carried out videotaping with the purpose of finding the most frequently utilized feedback techniques. After the videotaped material was transcribed, the data analysis was carried out for two purposes: a) categorizing errors according to their type and b) categorizing the feedback types in accordance with the breakdown outlined in Chapter 3.

According to the mistake type, the students' errors were broken down into three groups: a) grammatical, b) vocabulary/lexical and c) pronunciation/phonological. Altogether, 58 errors were recorded in 4 classes, during 6 hours of recording. In descending order of frequency, from a total of 58 errors, grammatical errors were the most frequent type of errors 30 (53%), followed by vocabulary/lexical errors 15 (26%) and pronunciation/phonological 13 (21%). Table 4.4 represents this breakdown.

Table 4.4: Breakdown of error types in video- transcripts.

Error type N=58	Grammatical	Vocabulary/ Lexical	Pronunciation	Total
Video Transcripts	30 (53%)	15 (26%)	13 (21%)	58 (100%)

The video tape-recorded data confirmed the following most frequently used 6 techniques of error treatment; (1) recast, (2) explicit correction, (3) clarification request, (4) metalinguistic feedback, (5) repetition adapted from Lyster and Ranta (1997), and (6) acceptance, adapted from Chaudron (1988).

The following is a short description of each feedback type accompanied by examples from the data collected through video recorded materials. The full record of the transcribed data can be found in Appendix 3.

1. Recast (50%) involves the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error. Chaudron (1988) included such moves in the categories of "repetition with change" and "repetition with change and emphasis."

(1)   S6: It is not for the winter because in the winter we have *less sun*, uh...

           sunny days. [Error-grammatical]

       T: *Fewer sunny days.* [Feedback –recast]

(2)   S7: *It's* (alcohol) *make* you sleepy. [Error-grammatical]

       T: *It makes* you sleepy and then you don't wake up or wake up after a

           while? [Feedback –recast]

2. Explicit correction (8%) is the explicit provision of the correct form. The teacher clearly indicates that what the student has said was incorrect (e.g., "Oh, you mean," "You should say") and provides the correct form.

(3)   S: ... elbow, biceps, forearm, *thumb* [Error-phonological]

       T: "b" is not pronounced. [Feedback- explicit correction]

(4)   S8: ...popugay,   (Uses the Russian word for parrot.) *parrot.* (Pronounces like in

           French.)

T: *Parrot* in English. [Feedback – explicit correction]

3. Clarification request (8%) indicates to the student that either the utterance has been misunderstood by the teacher or that the utterance is ill-formed in some way and that a repetition or a reformulation is required. This type of feedback may also include a repetition of the error as in "What do you mean by X?"

(7)   S9: If you want to succeed you have to *preserve*. [Error-lexical]

       T: Ah... You mean *persevere*? [Feedback – clarification request]

(8)   S6: *Japan's salary* (Wrong pronunciation of both words) system based on

       this statement. [Error-phonological]

       T: What salary system? [Feedback – clarification request]

4. Metalinguistic feedback (18%) contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. Metalinguistic comments generally indicate that there is an error somewhere ("Can you find your error?" "No, not X," or just "No.")

(9)   T: No, What is a relative clause? What are we talking about?

       S13: Explanation for subject or object. [Error-lexical]

       T: That doesn't really explain what I want. [Feedback – metalinguistic]

(10)   T: I am not used to...

       S1: *Move* fast. [Error-grammatical]

       T: Are you sure you can use infinitive? [Feedback - metalinguistic]

5. Repetition (3%) refers to the teacher's repetition, in isolation, of the student's erroneous utterance. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation so as to highlight the error.

(11)   S5: I'm not sorry *with* my marriage. [Error-grammatical]

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T: *With*? [Feedback – repetition]

6. Acceptance (13%). Teacher ignores the student's error, goes on to another topic, or shows acceptance of content.

(12)   S7: It *depends* (*misses 'on'*) how much I *drink*.(*have drunk*)

T: (*Ignores both mistakes.*)

(13)   S3: I wonder why there *is no public garages* with no charge. [Error-grammatical]

T: (Ignores the mistake.) [Feedback – acceptance]

To see the number and percentage of each feedback type it is worth looking at Table 4.5. From this table it is evident that recast (50%) was the most frequently used feedback type in the video-transcripts. Metalinguistic feedback (18%) was the second, followed by acceptance (13%), explicit correction (8%), clarification request (8%) and repetition (3%) in these data.

Table 4.5: Breakdown of feedback moves for video-transcripts.

Feedback type	No. (%)
Recast	36 (50%)
Metalinguistic	13 (18%)
Acceptance	9 (13%)
Explicit correction	6 (8%)
Clarification request	6 (8%)
Repetition	2 (3%)
Total	72 (100%)

A comparison of Tables 4.4 and 4.5 shows that there were more feedback moves by the teacher than there were errors because sometimes the teacher provided more then one type of feedback for one single mistake. Thus, overall there were 72 feedback moves recorded in the six hours of video tape recording, whereas the number of recorded errors was 58.

Identification of seven different feedback types and the analysis of their frequency of distribution showed that recast was the most frequently used type of feedback, accounting for 50% of the feedback moves in the video-transcripts. This finding parallels findings obtained in other observation studies with adult language learners (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; King Tsang, 2004; Panova and Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2004). The second most frequent feedback type was metalinguistic, accounting for 18% of feedback moves. This means that the teacher strongly preferred to use implicit techniques, such as recast and metalinguistic feedback.

4.3 Field notes

Field notes served as an additional source to support the data obtained by videotaping. It was a record of students' errors and types of teacher responses. Therefore, the errors were analyzed in the same way as the errors in the videotaped material; that is, they were first broken down into (a) grammatical; (b) vocabulary/lexical; and (c) pronunciation/phonological errors, and, then, analyzed according to same types of corrective feedback techniques as discussed above. A total of 18 errors were recorded with 8 (45%) grammatical errors dominating. Table 4.6 illustrates this breakdown.

Table 4.6: Breakdown of error types for field notes.

Data Type	Grammatical	Vocabulary/ Lexical	Pronunciation	Total
Field Notes	8 (45%)	7 (39%)	3 (16%)	18 (100%)

From the analysis of field notes it is evident that 5 types of feedback techniques were identified for these data. Unlike the video transcripts, there were no occurrences of acceptance and repetition feedback types in these data. This can be explained by the fact that the teacher did not record the mistakes where no feedback was provided (acceptance of the mistake) or

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when the teacher simply repeated the mistake with different intonation to highlight the error (repetition). However, there were 6 (26%) instances of elicitation. Elicitation refers to at least three techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the student (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). First, teachers elicit completion of their own utterances by strategically pausing to allow students "to fill in the blank." Second, teachers use questions to elicit correct forms (How do we say X in English?), such as in the following example.

(14)   S11: It *depends of*...[Error-grammatical]

       T: What is the preposition after depend? [Feedback – elicitation]

Third, teachers occasionally ask students to reformulate their utterance like in the following example.

(15)   S3: I would like to travel to *another* countries. [Error-grammatical]

       T: Another countries or other countries? [Feedback – elicitation]

The number of feedback moves in this case too is more than the number of recorded errors. There were 23 feedback moves for 18 errors. As can be seen from Table 4.7, of all feedback types, recast and elicitation were the predominant corrective techniques in relation to other types in the field notes; they accounted for 35% and 26% of cases respectively.

Table 4.7: Breakdown of feedback moves for field notes.

Feedback type	No. (%)
Recast	8 (35%)
Elicitation	6 (26%)
Explicit correction	4 (17%)
Clarification request	3 (13%)
Metalinguistic	2 (9%)
Total	23 (100%)

Table 4.8 reports the total number of feedback moves for the video transcripts and field notes. Overall, it can be seen that recast (46%) was the most frequently used feedback type in this study. This finding is consistent with similar studies conducted by King Tsang (2004), Lyster and Ranta (1997), Panova and Lyster (2002) and Suzuki (2004). According to King Tsang (2004, p.196): "The frequent use of recasts is generally justified by students' unwillingness or sometimes inability to self-correct and teacher's avoidance of direct, negative evaluation with simultaneously providing the correct form." The comparison of video transcripts and field notes shows that after recast, metalinguistic feedback and acceptance were next in order of frequency in the video-transcripts, whereas for field notes elicitation and explicit correction were the other two more often used feedback techniques (since acceptance and repetition were not counted).

Table 4.8: Total number of feedback moves.

Type of feedback	Video-transcripts	Field notes	Total
Recast	36 (50%)	8 (35%)	44 (46%)
Metalinguistic feedback	13 (18%)	2 (9%)	15 (16%)
Explicit correction	6 (8%)	4 (17%)	10 (11%)
Clarification request	6 (8%)	3 (13%)	9 (9%)
Acceptance	9 (13%)	0 (0%)	9 (9%)
Elicitation	0 (0%)	6 (26%)	6 (6%)
Repetition	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (3%)
Total	72(100%)	23(100%)	95(100%)

It can be also concluded from Table 4.8 that the teacher showed little (9%) acceptance (that is where the teacher provided no feedback) for students' mistakes. One explanation for this might be that the teacher did not want to interrupt the student and later, after he/she had finished, the correction was felt to be no longer useful. From this finding it can be summarized that out of 95 (100%) instances of providing feedback in only 9 cases (9%) the teacher did not

provide correction for mistakes. For the remaining of 84 instances there was some kind of feedback from the teacher. It should be noted that the teacher's behavior is in line with the students' expectation as seen from the results of Question 5 in the pre- and post-questionnaires where students indicated they did not like it when the teacher ignores mistakes (Table 4.2a).

4.4 Summary

The research findings of Chapter 4 can be summarized into three major points:

a) Pre- and post-questionnaire results show that all students (100%) favored correction of all errors made by them (Q4, Table 4.2a). This finding is parallel to that of Ancker's (2000) findings. Most of the students (81% in the Pre-Q and 71 in the Post-Q) indicated a preference to correct a mistake after the students have finished talking (Q8, Table 4.2b); most students did not have difficulty in continuing their speech after receiving corrective feedback (81% in the Pre-Q and 90% in the Post-Q); the majority of students (86% in the Pre-Q and 90% in the Post-Q) thought they learned from peer correction (Q14, Table 4.1a) and more than half of the students (67%) liked to correct their own mistakes in some instances (Q12, Table 4.2a).

b) Grammatical mistakes were rated as a more important type of error by the students compared to phonological and lexical types, and they appeared to be the most frequently treated error type by the teacher. This can be explained by the fact that both grammar teaching and attention to grammar on the students' part is still dominant in an English language classroom in Armenia.

c) Video-transcript and field note analyses indicated that recast was the most frequently used feedback technique by the teacher.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to examine the learners' perception of and preferences for error treatment in an adult EFL Armenian classroom. In particular, the analysis first centered on revealing students' attitudes and preferences towards being corrected; second, it focused on finding out the patterns of error treatment utilized by the teacher; and, third, the study tried to see whether there was consensus between students' expectations of error treatment and the actual corrective feedback techniques exploited by the teacher in the classroom.

A number of findings can be drawn from the data. These will be considered first. Then, the implications and limitations of the present study will be discussed. Finally, suggestions for future research will be presented.

5.1 Summary of findings

The research findings can be summarized in accordance with the research questions posed in Chapter 2 of this paper.

- What do students themselves think about being corrected? Do they favor error correction or do they think it is a waste of time? – The analysis of the pre- and post-questionnaire results revealed that all 21 students liked to be corrected and were sure that teachers' feedback helped them improve their speaking skills (Table 4.1a). Moreover, the students' attitude towards corrective feedback and error correction did not show substantive change over the nine-week period.

- Which mistakes are seen as more important to correct in order to ensure comprehensibility? – The students indicated that grammatical errors were the most serious as compared to vocabulary and pronunciation errors therefore needed the teacher's attention (Table 4.3). A slight change of opinion was recorded for this

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question in the post-questionnaire which leads to the suggestion that lexical and phonological mistakes started to gain more importance for students towards the end of the course.

- Do students learn from their peers' correction? – Most of the students (86% and 90%) indicate they learn from peer correction (Table 4.1a).

- Do students think all errors should be corrected? – About half of the students (57% and 48%) think teachers should treat all mistakes made by them (Q5, Table 4.2a). The rest are of the opinion that only some of the mistakes should be corrected. None of the students think that errors should be ignored and never corrected.

- When is the best time to treat the mistake? – Even though the majority of the students indicate they do not have difficulty continuing with what they are saying after being corrected (Q11, Table 4.1a), most of them think the most appropriate time to treat a mistake is after the student has finished talking. Stopping a student in mid-speech and treating a mistake right away is acceptable only for some of the students (Q8, Table 4.1b).

Based on these findings, it can be suggested that this study might serve as a good base for exploring other aspects of error correction and feedback in an adult English language classroom in Armenia. To my knowledge little has been done to explore the issue of error correction and feedback in Armenia. Therefore, this study can serve as a starting point for further research on increasing students' awareness on their mistakes. It can also help English language teachers to fully realize the role that feedback on oral errors plays in the development of learners' oral production.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

There are several implications that can be drawn from the research findings.

First, since the students indicated they learned from their peers' correction, they should be given more chances to correct each other's mistakes. Sometimes it is easier to identify other students' mistakes than one's own. By helping students correct their peers' mistakes, we help them to get rid of their own. However, this should be done with great care, in order not to make some students feel superior to others because of the correction. On the other hand, since most students (67%) indicate that sometimes they like it when teachers give them time to correct their mistakes (Q12, Table4.2a), they can be given more opportunities to self-correct.

Second, students should be informed that vocabulary and pronunciation mistakes are equally serious as grammatical ones. Students often assume that paying more attention to grammar will improve their oral production. However, they do not realize that at times using the wrong word or mispronouncing a word can cause even greater misunderstanding than a sentence with incorrect grammar.

Third, as the data analysis revealed, the teacher mostly used those feedback techniques that already provided the correction, such as recast and explicit correction. Instead, we should try to employ those feedback techniques, such as elicitation, clarification request or metalinguistic feedback, which tend to elicit the correct response from the student rather than letting the teacher prompt the correct form. This will enable students to think and self-correct, thus, making the process of correction more meaningful for them.

5.3 Limitations of the research

The first limitation of the study is that the researcher was also the teacher of both classes. Even though measures were taken from the very beginning of the study (random dates

for recording, anonymous questionnaires, and not analyzing the results until the course was over) to avoid possible bias, there were certain disadvantages for the teacher to both teach and conduct the research in the same classes. For example, it was inconvenient for the teacher to conduct a lesson and video record it at the same time.

A second limitation is that the study involved a limited number of participants (21) and one teacher. Therefore, generalization from the study is not possible because it was in two classes with a single teacher. For the results to be generalizable it would have been better to involve more students and more than one teacher.

The third limitation of the study involves using two different levels of students as subjects. Even though the comparison of results obtained from two different levels did not show differences in the types of errors the students made and the types of feedback techniques provided by the teacher, it would be more useful to verify this study with students of the same level.

5.4 Future research

There are several areas to focus on in the future. First, research can be conducted involving two or more teachers teaching students of the same proficiency level in order to compare and contrast different views of providing feedback, and also to find out whether the feedback techniques of one teacher work more efficiently and are less time-consuming than those of other teachers.

Second, further research can be done to explore and analyze students' response to the teacher's feedback. How successful are they at getting rid of their mistakes and how helpful can the teacher's feedback be? Teacher-student interaction can be tape-recorded and

transcribed and then the samples of types of student response to teacher feedback can be identified.

Third, it would be interesting to find out what students think about the mistakes they have made and how they will actually correct those themselves. For this purpose, students can be given samples of their own oral mistakes that have been recorded beforehand and try to correct them.

The exploration of students' personal beliefs and views of error correction as well as error treatment techniques and students' response to them is an ongoing area of inquiry for every language classroom. The present study explored two of the questions related to the issue of error correction, that is, what students themselves think about being corrected and what techniques teachers use to address students' mistakes. Hopefully, it helped students reflect on some of the issues related to error correction. The study helped me to gain a much better understanding of how and why I correct certain mistakes and why students respond in the way they do. The study also made me reflect more thoroughly on the feedback techniques I use in the classroom. Even though the study was small scale and the results are not generalizable due to the limited number of participants, the evidence gained from the study suggests that this is where we, teachers, should start exploring ways to improve our teaching practices. As Allwright and Bailey (1991) argue, "[t]his (error correction and feedback) is an area that lends itself particularly well to explorations by teachers themselves, in their own classrooms" (p. 112).

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Appendix 1
Survey on correcting students' speaking mistakes

1. Age_____   2. Sex _____

3. Mother tongue _____

4. Do you like to be corrected when you make a mistake?

    a. Yes   b. No (Go to Question 6)

5. If yes, do you think that teachers should correct:

    a. all mistakes made by the students?   b. some mistakes made by the students?

    c. none of the mistakes made by the students?

6. Do you feel that teachers' corrections help you improve your speaking skills?

    a. Yes   b. No (Go to Question 10)

7. Which mistakes do you find more serious to be addressed by teachers? (Circle as many as apply.)

a. grammar   b. pronunciation   c. vocabulary

8. In your opinion, what is the best way to treat a mistake?

    a. By not paying attention to it.   b. By stopping a student and correcting it at once.

    c. By correcting it after a student has finished talking.

9. Do you believe that corrections should be followed by explanations?

    a. always   b. sometimes   c. never

10. It is a good idea when teachers take notes of students' mistakes and provide explanations to all students later.

    a. always   b. sometimes   c. never

11. After being corrected by a teacher, you:

    a. have difficulty to continue your speech.   b. have no difficulty to continue your speech.

12. You like it when teachers stop you and give you time to correct your own mistakes.

    a. always   b. sometimes   c. never

13. You like it when teachers use humor to correct your mistakes.

    a. Yes   b. No

14. Do you think you learn from the corrections of other students?

    a. Yes   b. No

15. When corrected by teachers you:

    a. pay attention to it and try to remember the correction.

    b. pay attention to it but forget afterwards.

    c. do not pay attention to it.

Please return this questionnaire to your instructor. Thank you for your cooperation.

Informed Consent

Extension Program, American University of Armenia

Information for People Who Take Part in Research Studies

The following information is being presented to help you decide whether you want to take part in a minimal risk research study. Please read this carefully. If you do not understand anything, ask the person in charge of the study.

General Information about the Research Study

The purpose of the research study named *"Errors and corrective feedback: What do students think about being corrected?"* is to investigate and find out what students as learners of English think about being corrected by teachers. The present study focuses only on one type of errors, oral errors, i.e., the ones students make while speaking.

You are being asked to participate because your ideas and preferences on correcting students' speaking errors will help teachers choose better and more effective ways of treating them in class and provide more insightful feedback.

Confidentiality of Your Records

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law and only the principal investigator will have access to it.

Consent to Take Part in This Research Study

By signing this form, I agree to be videotaped as part of the research study. I have been informed that the videotape may be shown to other professionals at research meetings.

Signature of Participant	Printed Name of Participant	Date

Investigator Statement

I have carefully explained to the subject the nature of the above research study. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the subject signing this consent form understands the nature, and benefits involved in participating in this study.

	__Anna Maloyan__	12/13/ 2004
Signature of Investigator	Printed Name of Investigator	Date

Appendix 3

Video transcripts

December 15, Level 5

1. S1: It sounds like you have a success and you were never imagining you
2. Uh... would *reach on your*, uh... [Error-lexical]
3. T: ... to reach *your goal.* [Feedback- recast]
4. S1: Yes.

5. S3: *Occasional* [Error-phonological]
6. T: *Occasional.*[Feedback –recast] Do you remember the word 'occasional?' What
7. does it mean? [Feedback- metalinguistc]
8. Ss: Sometimes, at times, seldom

9. S7: If you think *otherwise* [Error-phonological]
10. S9: *Otherwise.* [Feedback –recast]
11. S 4: There are some *suggestions* [Error-phonological]
12. Ss 1 & 5: *Suggestions* [Feedback – recast]
13. T: Suggestions. What is a suggestion? And the verb is to...[Feedback- metalinguistc]
14. Ss: (In chorus) To suggest.
15. T: So, what is a suggestion? [Feedback- metalinguistc]
16. S1: Offer.
17. T: (To Student 4) Is this a new word for you?
18. S4: *Suggestion*. (Repeats the word slowly but this time correctly.)

19. S2: I tried to lie down for two hours but I still *can't* sleep. [Error-grammatical]
20. T: You *couldn't* sleep? [Feedback –recast]
21. S 2: No.

22. S 1: It *restrict* your time. [Error-phonological]
23. T: *Restrict. Restrict.* [Feedback –recast]
24. S 1: *Restrict?*
25. T: Yes. It *restricts* your time.

26. S2: Swimming makes me drowsy. I can't go back to sleep, especially after
27. *suna, suna.* [Error-phonological]
28. T: *Suna*? What is '*suna*'? [Feedback- clarification request]
29. S1: *Sauna.* [peer-correction]
30. T: *Sauna*? OK.

31. S6: It is not for the winter because in the winter we have *less sun*, uh...
32. *sunny* days. [Error-grammatical]
33. T: *Fewer sunny days.* [Feedback –recast]
34. S6: Yes.

35. S7: *It's* (alcohol) *make* you sleepy. [Error-grammatical]
36. T: *It makes* you sleepy and then you don't wake up or wake up after a
37. while? [Feedback –recast]

38. S7: It *depends* (*misses on*) how much I *drink.*(*have drunk*)
39. T: (*Ignores both mistakes.*) [Feedback- acceptance]

40. T: What does *stands for* mean? ...*to stand for*...
41. S6: To hate? [Error-lexical]
42. T: That's when you can't stand something or somebody but this is
43. 'stand for", with preposition for. [Feedback – explicit correction]
44. Ss(9 and 1): ... makes something
45. T: "means", "means" something (provides more detailed
46. explanation on the board with and example. AUA stands for American
47. University of Armenia) It can also have the meaning of to symbolize.

Students are talking about interpretation of dreams.

48. S7: I think the person who is in the top, he succeeded , but he never
49. believed he *can* reach this. [Error-grammatical]
50. T: He *could have reached* this. [Feedback –recast]
51. S7: He could have reached this. And now, there are, ah... people,
52. uh... point uh... pointing him. [Error – grammatical]
53. T: Pointing at him. [Feedback –recast]
54. S7: And he now *understand* that he can...[Error-grammatical]
55. T: He could have done that. [Feedback –recast]
56. S7: Yes, he could do that.

57. S 6: The meaning is *not negative and not positive*. [Error-grammatical]
58. T: *Neither negative nor positive*. [Feedback –recast]
59. S6: Yes. You might have some problems but you must *search* the
60. right decision. [Error – grammatical]
61. T: Aha. [Feedback – acceptance]
62. S6: Before the man closes the door *before* you. [Error-lexical]
63. T: *Behind* you. [Feedback –recast]
64. S6: Behind you. Or he can reach you and close the door after *him*. [Error-grammatical]
65. T: *Himself.* [Feedback –recast]

66. S10: You want to do something but you don't now it's right or
67. wrong. [Error-grammatical]
68. T: *Whether* it's right or wrong. [Feedback –recast]
69. S10: We think he likes someone and *feel* he can trust that person. [Error-grammatical]
70. T: Aha. [Feedback – acceptance]

Talking about insomnia

71. T :I hope nobody has serious problems with not sleeping
72. S6: (Raises his hand)
73. T: You do? You have insomnia?
74. S6: Last month, every day.
75. T: Which means you didn't sleep a wink.
76. S6: No, I didn't sleep enough for me. I *wake* up at four o'clock or
77. at five o'clock. [Error-grammatical]
78. T: And couldn't go back to sleep. Did you try to do something

79. about it? [Feedback – acceptance]
80. S6: I *switch* on TV and...[Error-grammatical]
81. T: *Watched* it. [Feedback –recast]
82. S6: *Watched.*

83. S1: It's good to eat *an* red apple before sleeping. [Error-grammatical]
84. T: ... eat *a* red apple. [Feedback –recast]

Students are comparing the lifestyles of average Americans and Armenians

85. S4: There are many jobs and there is no favorite... *most favorites*
86. jobs. [Error-grammatical]
87. T: Yes, there is no good or bad job. All jobs are good. [Feedback – metalinguistic]

88. S7: More people are coming back to country. (misses the article the) [Error-grammatical]
89. T: Are you sure? (Ignores.) [Feedback – acceptance]

90. S2: I think Armenian people spend a lot of money on *clothings*. [Error-grammatical]
91. S5: Russian people *does* it. [Error-grammatical]
92. T: (Ignores both mistakes.) [Feedback – acceptance]

December 17, Level 6

93. S12: ... elbow, biceps, forearm, *thumb* (pronounces with 'b') [Error-phonological]
94. T: "b" is not pronounced. [feedback- explicit correction]
95. S12: ... *thumbs*, palm... (Corrects and continues.)

96. S13: These kind of publications are called international. It is for Middle East
97. countries, for people with *low charges*. [Error-lexical]
98. T: *Income*. For people with low *income*. [Feedback –recast]
99. S13: Yes.
100.　　T: For people with low *income* so that people can afford buying them. [Feedback – explicit correction]

101.　　S13: I spend a lot of time in bookshops. I don't often buy books, I just
102.　　*skim*. [Error-lexical]
103.　　Teacher: *Skim*? [Feedback - clarification request]
104.　　Ss: (In chorus) No.
105.　　S13: *Browse*. [Error-phonological]
106.　　T: Which is *browse*. [Feedback –recast] Like, look at one book, at another, at the
107.　　third one.[Feedback – explicit correction] This is just *to browse*.

108.　　S18: Of course an encyclopedia is not a book you read from cover to cover.
109.　　You just *read from cover to cover* for things that interest you. [Error-lexical]
110.　　T: No we don't *read encyclopedias from cover to cover*. We just ...[Feedback – metalinguistic]
111.　　S14: ... *deep into* them
112.　　T: So, what is *to deep into*? [Feedback – metalinguistic]
113.　　S18: To read parts of a book?
114.　　T: To read parts of it very carefully.

115. S17: I never liked history at school. I found it very hard *to look up* all that
116. boring staff about wars and revolutions. [Error-lexical]
117. Teacher: No, we don't *look up the* boring staff. If it is something boring, we
118. just ... [Feedback – metalinguistic]
119. SS: ... *wade through*.
120. T: It's something we don't like but we have to know.

121. T: A Newspaper. What do you do with a newspaper? Uh.... M...(S19)
122. S19: *Look up*? [Error-lexical]
123. T: *Look up*? Why? You know what's going on in the newspaper and you
124. look particular things up? [Feedback – metalinguistic]
125. S19: I don't read newspapers, so I don't know.
126. S16: Can we say *dive into*?
127. T: *Deep into*. [Feedback –recast]
128. S16: *Deep into*.
129. T: Yes.
130. S16: No, *dive into*. [Error-lexical]
131. T: *Dive into a newspaper*? I'm not sure. [Feedback – clarification request]
132. *(Students laugh.)*
133. T: You might sink *(Laughs.)* I don't know.
134. *(Students laugh.)*

135. T: Where do we find these: answers to exercise questions?
136. S13: *Appendix* answers exercise questions. [Error-lexical]
137. SS: *No.*
138. T: *No.* [Feedback – metalingusitc]
139. Ss: *Key.*
140. T: Good. *Appendix* never has answers to your questions. Keys have these.
141. S13: Maybe sometimes they have?
142. T: Yes? Are you sure?
143. S13: Because, for example, the word "syndrome", at first we look at the
144. appendix and then...
145. T: But you see the page where it is.
146. S13: And we can find the page.
147. T: Yes, but not the answer.

148. S17: I think its *content*. [Error-phonological and lexical]
149. T: I think the *content* [Feedback – recast] is what is on a certain page. [feedback –
metalinguistic]
150. S17: Ah, blurb.

January 13, Level 5

151. S1: Talking to native speaker friends, uh... It's more *impressive* way to
152. learn. [Error-lexical]
153. T: *Useful* way. It's a more useful way. [Feedback –recast]
154. S1: Yes.

155. S1: When you working besides that, uh...

156.   S3: Reactors.
157.   S1: Reactors, uh... it has covered by uh... two uh...
158.   S2: Doesn't matter if it explodes.
159.   S1: If it *explode*. [Error-grammatical]
160.   T: If it *explodes*. [Feedback –recast]
161.   S1: Yes, if it explodes, it will be dangerous uh... for skin and uh...
162.   S7: If they *can lets* them do. [Error-grammatical]
163.   T: *Let* them do whatever they want. [Feedback –recast]
164.   S7: *Let* them do whatever they want.

165.   S6: *Japan's salary*(Wrong pronunciation of both words) system based on
166.   this statement. [Error-phonological]
167.   T: What salary system? [Feedback – clarification request]
168.   S6: *Japan*.
169.   T: *Japan. Salary* system. [Feedback –recast]
170.   S6: Japan. (Corrects.) There are three salary systems: Japan. West,
171.   and West European. Japan's main basement is that women can never do
172.   the same work as , uh, like men.
173.   (A little later.)
174.   S6: The classic management is a *Japan* management [error-phonological]. *Japan*
175.   management. (Self-correction.)

176.   S8: Sometimes from hotel we can take, uh... pens, pencils, uh...
177.   souvenirs, uh... or postcards...
178.   T: You will take these?
179.   S8: Yeah, or uh... *matches*. [Error-phonological]
180.   T: *Matches*. [Feedback –recast]
181.   S6: *Matches*, yes.

182.   S7: When friends uh...
183.   T: ...betray...
184.   S7: Uh... betray you; it's *the most bad thing*. [Error-grammatical]
185.   T: So, it's *the worst thing*. [Feedback –recast]
186.   S7: *The worst thing*.

187.   S 9: If the *volume is very high*. [Error-lexical]
188.   T: What volume? [Feedback – clarification request]
189.   S9: Volume, uh, qanake (uses the Armenian word for 'quantity',
190.   'amount')
191.   T: Aha, if there is too much. [Feedback – recast]
192.   S9: If there is too much, you have to cheat.

February 02, Level 6

193.   S20: You can work *productively*. [Error-phonological]
194.   T: *Productively*. [Feedback –recast]
195.   S20: *productively*.

196.   T: We are talking about relative clauses. But it's also like to have you help.
197.   What is a relative clause?

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198.   S13: It is optional for object.
199.   T: No, What is a relative clause? What are we talking about?
200.   S13: Explanation for subject or object. [Error-lexical]
201.   T: That doesn't really explain what I want. [Feedback – metalinguistic]
202.   S17: It gives us more information for subject or object.
203.   T: It gives us more information about subject or object and it usually
204.   describes a word in the main clause. (Gives more detailed explanation.) [Feedback-explicit correction]

The class is practicing the use of gerund.

205.   T: Something you are not used to at the age of 80. I am not used to...
206.   S3: ...*sleep*... [Error-grammatical]
207.   T: Can you use infinitive here? [Feedback – metalinguistc]
208.   S3: I am not used to sleeping a lot.
209.   T: I am not used to...
210.   S1: *Move* fast. [Error-grammatical]
211.   T: Are you sure you can use infinitive? [Feedback - metalinguistic]
212.   S3: No. *Moving* fast.
213.   S1: *Moving*.
214.   T: At times I am afraid of doing what? What is something you will
215.   be afraid of doing?
216.   S1: Afraid of *listening music*. [Error-grammatical]
217.   T: Afraid of *listening to music*. [Feedback –recast]
218.   S1: Yes, *listening* to music.
219.   T: I am excited. What's the preposition after excited, Hayk?
220.   S5: *With*. [Error-grammatical]
221.   T: Excited *with*? Can you check in the preposition list? [Feedback – metalinguistic]
222.   S5: (Checks.) *About*.
223.   T : Yes. About.

224.   S2: I will be worried about *when I am going to be dead*. [Error-lexical]
225.   T: I will be worried about *the time I am going to be dead*. [Feedback –recast]
226.   S2: I will be worried about making *too noise*. [Error-grammatical]
227.   T: Making *too much*...[Feedback –recast]

228.   T: S5, to be sorry... what's the preposition?
229.   S5: I am not sorry for.
230.   T: Sorry for doing what?
231.   S5: I'm not sorry *with* my marriage. [Error-grammatical]
232.   T: *With*? [Feedback – repetition]
233.   S5: Ah... *about* my marriage.

234.   S2: I am looking forward to exploring city and attractive places. [Error-grammatical]
235.   T: ... to exploring *the* city? [Feedback –recast]
236.   S2: Yes, *the* city and attractive places.

237.   S7: One thing I would be worried about is being late *to* the airport. [Error-grammatical]
238.   T: ... being late *for* the airport. [Feedback –recast]

239.   S8: They (French people) don't say *parrot*. (Wrong pronunciation.) [Error-phonological]

240.   T: What is *parrot*? [Feedback - clarification request and repetition]

241.   S8: ...popugay,   (Uses the Russian word for parrot.) *parrot*.

242.   T: *Parrot* in English. [Feedback – explicit correction]

243.   S8: For doing research?

244.   T: Yes, doing research.

245.   S8: Yeah. We have no other way to *make research*. [Error-lexical]

246.   T: (Ignores.) [Feedback – acceptance]

247.   S2: If I am specialist (No article.) of nuclear field I will go and work right

248.   near reactor.(No article.) [Error-grammatical]

249.   T: (Ignores.) [Feedback – acceptance]

250.   S10: I want …. If people *take* care. [Error-grammatical]

251.   Ss: *took* care [Feedback –recast]

252.   S10: Why *took*?

253.   T: Your sentence is in the past, right?

254.   S5: *Took*.

255.   S3: I wonder why there *is no public garages* with no charge. [Error-grammatical]

256.   T: (Ignores the mistake.) [Feedback – acceptance]

Appendix 4

Field notes

December 19, 2004

1. S9: If you want to succeed you have to *preserve*. [Error-lexical]
2. T: Ah. You mean *persevere*? [Feedback – clarification request]
3. S9: Yes. *Persevere*.
4. T: What is the difference between the words preserve and persevere? [Feedback – metalinguistic]

5. S17: For example it's Ok to use *mouses* for medical research. [Error-grammatical]
6. T: What is the plural for mouse? [Feedback – elicitation]
7. S17: Uh... *mice*.

January 24, 2005

8. S10: (Is talking about a CD player) It's *harm* for ears. [Error-lexical]
9. T: *Harmful*. [Feedback –recast]
10. S10: *Harmful*.

11. S10: *Scientists*. [Error-phonological]
12. T: *Scientists*. [Feedback –recast]
13. S10: *Scientists*.

14. S3: I would like to travel to *another* countries. [Error-grammatical]
15. T: Another countries or other countries? [Feedback – elicitation]
16. S8: Other countries. (Corrects the mistake)

17. S6: (Talking about people who make noise in the movies) I will *invite them out* from the movie. [Error-lexical]
18. T: *Ask out*. [Feedback –recast]

19. S8: After running you can't *breathe* (Pronounces as 'breath') [Error-phonological]
20. T: What is the correct pronunciation? [Feedback – elicitation]
21. S8: *Breathe*. (Pronounces the same way.)
22. T: (Gives examples and explains the difference in the meaning and pronunciation between the words *breath* and *breathe*.) [Feedback – explicit correction]

January 26, 2005

23. S3: I *didn't wrote* it. [Error-grammatical]
24. T: Is this correct English? [Feedback – elicitation]
25. S3: I *didn't write*?

26. S8: How can we *convince* people to pick up after their dogs? [Error-phonological]
27. T: How can we *convince*. [Feedback –recast]

28. S6: We can organize some *occupations*. [Error-lexical]
29. T: What do you mean by *occupation*? [Feedback – clarification request]
30. S6: Things.
31. T: *Activities*? [Feedback – clarification requests]
32. S6: Yes.

33. S19: My grandmother *has dead*. [Error-grammatical]
34. S: Can you say so? [Feedback – metalinguistic]
35. S19: My grandfather *was dead*.
36. Ss: ... *has died.*
37. T: Or my grandmother is dead. [Feedback –recast]
38. S19: Is dead.

January 31, 2005

39. S10: My sister works *like* a doctor. ('As' instead of 'like'.) [Error lexical]
40. T: (Explains the difference between *as* and *like*. 'E.g., He works *as* a doctor. He works *like* a
41. doctor.) [Feedback – explicit correction]

42. S11: I did all exercises *besides* this one. [Error- lexical]
43. T: Besides or except? (Explains the difference in use between 'besides' and 'except') (E.g.,
44. *'except'* means excluding, *'besides'* means including.) [Feedback – explicit correction]

45. S11: It *depends of*...[Error-grammatical]
46. T: What is the preposition after depend? [Feedback – elicitation]
47. S11: ...*on*.

48. S12: *As much* the rich the economy of the country *as much less* the population. [Error-grammatical]
49. T: The more... the less... (Writes on the board: *The more ... the less...* and explains the rule with the help of examples.) [Feedback – explicit correction]

50. S5: I wish I *would* be happier. [Error-grammatical]
51. T: I wish I *were* happier. [Feedback –recast]
52. S5: I wish I *were*.

53. S9: Shall I *divide* my book with Arpineh? [Error-lexical]
54. T: *Share* my book. [Feedback –recast]
55. S9: *Share* my book.

56. S6: I was late *to* my class. [Error-grammatical]
57. T: *For* my class. [Feedback –recast]
58. S6: *For* my class.
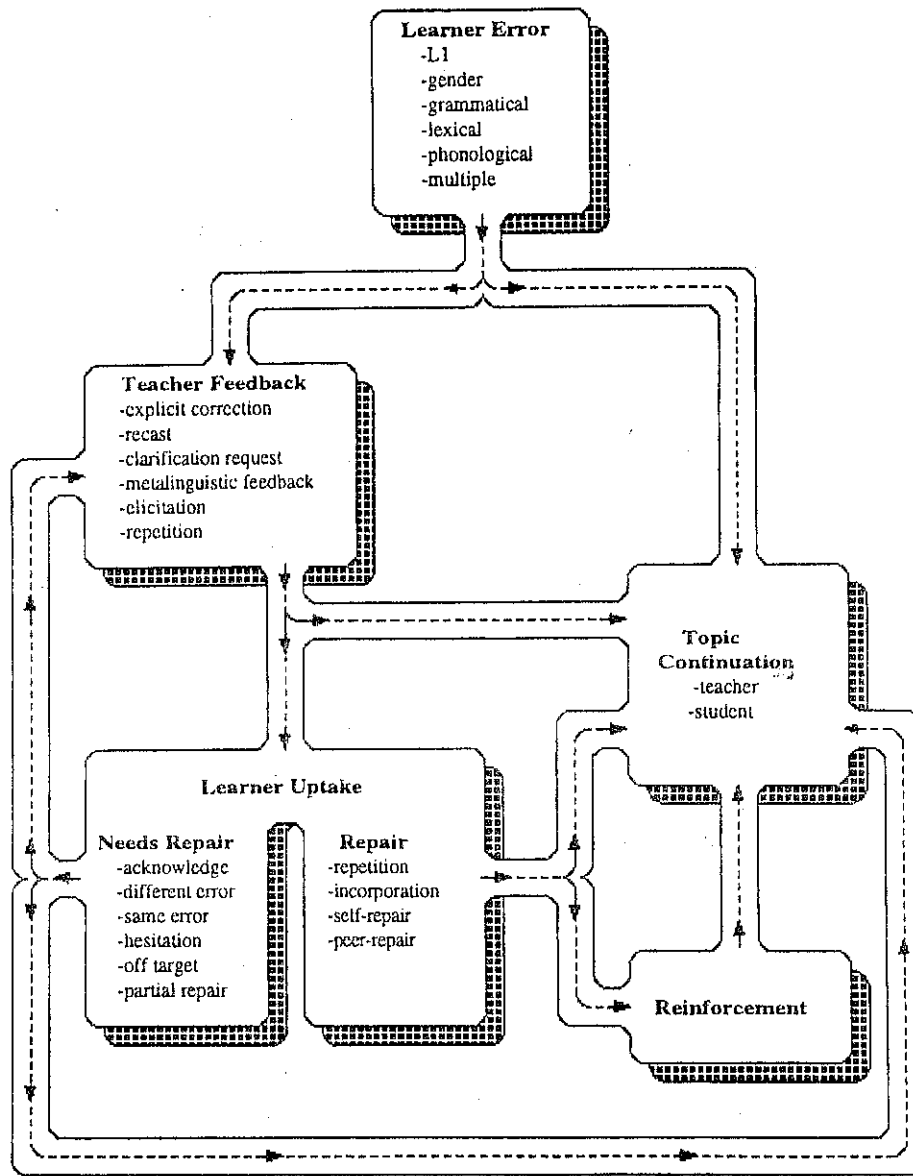
Note. Adapted from "Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake: Negotiation of From in Communicative Classrooms", by R. Lyster and L. Ranta, 1997, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 19*, 44.