

INVESTIGATING THE TYPES AND EFFECT OF ORAL CORRECTIVE
FEEDBACK GIVEN TO STUDENTS IN FUJAIRAH

A THESIS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

There has been a shift in the attitudes towards the errors that language learners make. Previously they were indicators of sin or failure, however presently researchers recommend that "errors [should be] viewed as an integral part of the language learning" (Salikin, 2001, p. 29). When it comes to correcting the learner's errors, million of ways might emerge according to what the philosophy of the teacher is, what his or her attitude towards correction is, what method of teaching is being used, and a host of other variables which play a significant role in the correction process. Some teachers don't pay attention to students' attitudes toward teaching practices, however, "it is beneficial for teachers to discover their students' perceptions toward instructional practices" (Katamaya, 2007, p. 389). Those teachers experience some difficulties when treating their students' oral errors. Matching the expectations of teachers and students is important for successful language learning (Katamaya, 2007, Katamaya 2006, Lasagabster and Sierra 2005, Schulz 2001).

"Although much has been published on error taxonomies, detection, analysis, and evaluation, there is a dearth of research studies comparing teachers' and students' perceptions" note Lasagabster and Sierra (2005, p. 112). This study endeavors to fill this void. It explores teachers' choices of oral corrective feedback for high, average, and low achieving students and it investigates students' attitudes with their different levels toward oral corrective feedback patterns. It tries to answer the following questions:

- (1) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the teachers think can lead to learning? Why?

- (2) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the participating teachers in Masafi School in Fujairah use?
- (3) What difference is there, if any, in the kinds of feedback given by the teachers to high, average, and low achieving students?
- (4) What kind of oral corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?

To triangulate my findings, I used several data collection methods. The participants in my study were two teachers and their students from Masafi School for Fundamental and Secondary Education School in Fujairah. The teacher and the student populations were all female. The findings of my study indicate that the teachers used a variety of the different corrective feedback strategies identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The results show that students of different proficiency levels prefer certain patterns of error correction. High achieving students prefer their teachers to recast their errors, while average and low achieving students want their teachers to explain why their utterance is erroneous and to give them a time to correct the error themselves.

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Dedication

This thesis would be incomplete without a mention of the support given me by my parents, my husband, and my children to whom this thesis is dedicated. They were my own soul who kept my spirits up when my sky darkened my life. Without their lifting me up during my study of MATESOL, I doubt it should ever have been completed.

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

All through my experience as a teacher of foreign language, I have noticed that there was a gap between what teachers teach and focus on during lessons and what learners take and grasp from the teaching practices. I, therefore, became obsessed with a question posed by Allwright "Why don't learners learn what teachers teach?" (1984, p. 3). One of the reasons that contributes to the answer of this question is the teachers' treatment of their students' oral errors. Teachers keep complaining that students keep committing errors and don't seem to learn from them. According to Lasagabster and Sierra (2005), "a possible explanation may be the mismatch between what teachers and students consider to be effective feedback on error correction" (p. 112).

The role of error correction in foreign language teaching has been an issue for quite some time. Opinions vary among researchers regarding the most effective type of correction for students. Teachers need to be aware of these patterns and their effectiveness. Salikin (2001) points out that "Correction must always be handled with care. The teachers should be careful when correcting errors. Different learners will react to feedback given by their teachers in different way" (p. 32). Some teachers might not be aware that "different learners learn and respond to error correction moves in different ways. Some learners need visual aids, other respond to audio signals, still others require a kinetic input" (Lasagabster and Sierra, 2005, p. 126).

Only a few issues in language teaching and learning have received as much controversy as the issue of error correction. Some teachers use only one type of

corrective feedback with the students regardless of their proficiency level. Consequently, teachers might experience difficulties since not all students pay attention to teachers' utterances. In addition to that, "correcting errors is a delicate matter because everyone has a fragile ego and not everyone responds positively to unsoftened correction" (Salikin, 2001, p. 32). Therefore, students' personalities and level of proficiency need to be taken into consideration. As mentioned earlier, a mismatch between teachers' choices and practices and students' perceptions could play a vital role in the effectiveness of the corrective feedback. This latter point might be neglected by most teachers and in turn causes the failure of error treatment. Therefore, as Nunan (1995) states, "The question ought to be not Why don't learners learn what teachers teach?, but Why don't teachers teach what learners learn?" (p. 155). This issue has led me to think extensively about this topic which concerns both teachers and students.

The research questions which my study aimed to answer are the following:

- (1) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the teachers think can lead to learning? Why?
- (2) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the participating teachers in Masafi School in Fujairah use?
- (3) What difference is there, if any, in the kinds of feedback given by the teachers to high, average, and low achieving students?
- (4) What kind of oral corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?

To triangulate my findings, I used a variety of data collection vehicles. The participants in my study were two female teachers from Masafi School for Fundamental and Secondary Education School in Fujairah and their female students.

Overview of the Chapters and Appendices

Chapter one presents the introduction, the problem statement, the significance of the study, the design of the study, the participants in the study, the organization of the study, and the research questions. Chapter two includes a review of the literature done on this issue. Chapter three discusses the methodology and the procedures used to collect and analyze data. Chapter four presents the data analysis. Chapter five contains the findings of the study and discusses their implications, the conclusions and the limitations of this study. There are four appendices which include the students' questionnaire, the questions of the teachers' interviews, parental consent form, and examples of oral corrective feedback types done by the participating teachers.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Second language acquisition is a complex process. It is complex for at least two reasons. As VanPatten (2004) states:

It involves the acquisition of a complex implicit linguistic system consisting of lexical entries and their features and forms, an abstract syntactic system, a phonological system, and rules on pragmatic use of language, among other components related to language. In addition, acquisition cannot be reduced to a single process. (p. 5)

There are different processes and sub processes that form the stages of language acquisition. Input, intake, and output are some of these processes. With the integration of these elements, acquisition may occur. The classroom is a means to enhance the input and promote output and "[it] can be appropriate environment for language acquisition" (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 30). Hall and Verplaetse (2000) state that, "In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), interaction has long been considered important in language learning" (p. 1). In fact, there are some difficulties and barriers that may occur in interaction and cause difficulty in communication. Some of these difficulties involve the oral errors that students make. Some modifications and negotiations need to take place. Oral errors need to be considered and treated carefully so that they lead to learning. Studies (See later Lasagabster and Sierra 2005) showed that students prefer their errors to be treated obviously and explicitly in order to be aware of them, while teachers put in their consideration a combination of factors like time allotted and the proficiency level of the students

which control their choice. Therefore, language teachers should be aware of how and when to deal with spoken errors, help students benefit from them, and use them to promote language learning.

Input in the Classroom

Since second language acquisition has many processes, input is seen as crucial for learning to occur. According to Hall and Verplaetse (2000), classrooms are very important sites for development because many classroom activities "are created through classroom discourse - the oral interaction that occurs between teachers and students and among students - its role is especially consequential to the creation of language environments and ultimately to the shaping of individual learners' development" (p. 9). An important issue in language learning is the linguistic environment that learners are in. The two aspects of linguistic environment are "the positive and negative evidence speakers and writers provide learners about the target language" (Long, 1996, p. 413). Both kinds of evidence are crucial for learning. Positive evidence refers to the grammatical and acceptable model of the language. According to Gass (2003) positive evidence "comprises the set of well-formed sentences to which learners are exposed" (p. 225).

Negative evidence refers to evidence of the incorrectness of an utterance and it provides "direct or indirect information about what is ungrammatical" (Long, 1996, p. 413). It occurs in the form of explicit and implicit information. According to Long (1996):

This may be explicit (e.g., grammatical explanation or overt error correction) or implicit (e.g., failure to understand, incidental error correction in a response, such as a confirmation check, which reformulates the learner's

previous utterance without interrupting the flow of conversation—in which case, the negative feedback simultaneously provides additional positive evidence—and perhaps also the absence of items in the input. (Long, 1996, p. 413)

There are different characteristics of input in the classrooms. Frequency is considered a feature of input. Learners may be exposed to sudden increases in the frequency of some particular features, for example, the verb form with –ing. Frequent forms are more noticed and more learnable than non frequent forms. In addition to that, the teacher's treatment of learners' errors may increase the salience of some language features and consequently increase learnability and noticeability. Explicit information could be given to the learner in order to raise his/her consciousness. Ellis (1997) states that, "Explicitness refers to the extent to which the teacher makes use of linguistic metalanguage" (p. 108). Elaboration, deductive activities, and time given to the presentation are ways a teacher can use to make knowledge explicit to learners.

Modification is another characteristic of input in the classrooms. Input in the classroom may include opportunities that enable learners to communicate naturally like role play activities. Such activities require careful shaping of input and output. Therefore, some modification should take place in teacher talk. Modification should take place in input and in interaction. Input can be modified by simplification. A teacher can shorten his/her utterance or use less complex lexis and syntax. Input can be modified through elaboration. A teacher can use synonyms and paraphrase utterances. Generally, teachers can modify her input by using adjustment. "[The] adjustments can involve focused instructions (i.e., determining to what extent the instruction will provide negative, as opposed to, positive evidence) and unfocused

instructions (e.g., determining the extent and the nature of opportunities for thinking and communicating)" (Ellis, 1997, p. 110).

Comprehensible input is another feature of good input. It has been hypothesized that "the comprehensible input that results from input modification and, in particular, from interactional modifications facilitates the natural development of a second language" (Ellis, 1997, p. 109). There is a distinction between comprehended input and comprehensible input. Comprehensible input "implies that the speaker, rather than the hearer, controls the comprehensibility" (Gass, 1997, p. 4).

Comprehended input relates to what extent the hearer understands. Teachers can aid comprehensibility of input in the classrooms by slower rate, clearer articulation, more use of high frequency vocabulary, shorter sentences, and syntactic simplification.

Learners need to have good quality of language input in order to produce the language. The negative and positive linguistic environments that surround the learners in the classrooms should be rich enough to aid learning.

The Role of Output

Learners need to be given sufficient opportunities for language production in order to succeed in language acquisition. The role of output is seen as controversial in second language acquisition. Krashen (1985) emphasizes the role of input because language can be acquired by comprehensible input, and he minimizes the role of output in the acquisition process. Krashen (1985) "argues particularly against those who believe that output is used for hypothesis testing, a process by which the learner tries out new structures in discourse and acquires a specific rule, provided enough positive responses are received" (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 51). This led Swain (1985) to argue against Krashen. She claims that output is very essential for interlanguage

development. She emphasizes the role of output in the process of second language acquisition. Output can aid learning because it provides fields for error correction.

Swain (1985) emphasizes the role of output in giving the learners the opportunity to impose syntactic structure on their utterance. Through output, the learner goes from semantic analysis of the language to syntactic structure. Swain (1985) compares such analysis to comprehensible output which means pushing learners "toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately" (Swain, 1985, p. 249). Output is significant in two ways: hypothesis testing and automaticity. Testing hypothesis includes noticing and reflection. In order for the learner to produce his/her output, s/he needs to pay attention to specific features in the input to comprehend the message. According to VanPatten (2004), "The learner may notice that something he or she says is not the same as what was just heard in the input" (p. 13). S/he can notice the gap between the existing linguistic knowledge and his/her ability to produce it. "When the learner attempts production, using what linguistic knowledge is currently available in his or her interlanguage, the learner tests out hypotheses about the organization of the language system" (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000, p. 4). Finally, by the learner's output and the teacher's responses, the learner can reflect his/her own production and modify the language use. The second significant function is automaticity. "Automatic processes are those that have become routinized" (Gass, 2003, p. 228). It needs some practice in order to "take it from the labored production of early learners to the more fluent production of advanced second language speakers" (Gass, 2003, p. 228). Output functions can change the interlanguage system and help to internalize the target language.

Interlanguage

In acquiring either a first or second language, learners develop their linguistic system in understanding and using the grammatical structures of the language. Pitt (2005) states that, "Obviously, all additional language learners produce incorrect forms when they speak, partly because of their lack of knowledge of the grammar of the new language, and partly because their knowledge of their first language can lead them to hypothesize incorrectly about similarities in structure" (p. 6). Language should be internalized in order to be learnt. This process can be expressed by the term interlanguage. Selinker (1972) introduced the term interlanguage. Interlanguage refers to "the intermediate states (or interim grammars) of a learner's language as it moves toward the target language" (Cited in Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 41). It is considered a third language which is different from L1 and L2. "The term interlanguage is used to refer to the progression taking place within each language learner" (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 28). It is influenced by L1 and input from L2. So, learners make errors while they are trying to develop their language system. Pitt (2005) suggests that, "errors were evidence of an active internal learning process" (p. 7). Learners go through developmental stages in their journey of acquiring a second language.

Noticing

Noticing is seen as a conscious process for learners to be aware of the content of the message. Schmidt (1990) considers noticing as an important process in acquisition. The frequency factor can play a very important role in noticing. Input that is repeated frequently either in teacher talk or from form-focused instruction in the classroom can be noticed. Unusual features can be noticed because they surprise the learners. Because they cannot expect them, they will notice them, however, not every

unusual feature can be noticed. Salient features can be noticed in the classroom. As Ellis (1997) states, "certain features may be more salient than others as a result of their phonological form or their position in utterances" (p. 120). Features of input can be noticed in the interactional modification during the negotiation of meaning or attempt to deal with communication problems. The learners' linguistic knowledge development may help them notice some features more than others. "Noticing also helps to explain how simplified input facilitates acquisition" (Ellis, 1997, p. 121). This is because simplified input can help learners notice features that are ignored by the learners. So, simplified input can result not only in the comprehensibility of the message but also to the paying attention to some features in the input.

Comparing

The rules of the target language can be part of the learners' interlanguage system if they compare them to their existing interlanguage system. The comparison between the learners' existing linguistic system and the new one will help them understand L2. Noticing the gap between the learner's production and the target language will help them compare the findings between the two systems, record the target form, and shortly produce it in their output. "This may be one reason why interaction helps to facilitate language acquisition; it helps the learner to undertake the necessary comparison between output and input" (Ellis, 1997, p. 121).

Integrating

Learners must modify their interlanguage system in order to acquire the new linguistic system of the target language. This can be achieved through the revision of their hypotheses to develop their implicit knowledge or through the storage of the new features until some time when they can incorporate them in their interlanguage

system. By this way, information acquired can be part of the explicit knowledge. Intake cannot become automatically part of the interlanguage system unless incorporation of the target language rules takes place. This incorporation doesn't happen if the learner is not ready. Ellis (1997) points out that, "Integration of new material will be easier if it does not involve any restructuring of the existing system (i.e. it can be easily added to the system)" (p. 122). Thus, teachers need to ensure that students are ready.

Automatizing L2 knowledge

Both explicit and implicit knowledge can be automatized through practice. Implicit knowledge can be automatized through "practice that requires learners to make use of interlanguage knowledge under real operating conditions" (Ellis, 1997, p. 125). Learners need to know what went wrong and under which conditions in order to reach accuracy. This can be achieved through the corrective action of the errors and the retrial to eradicate these errors. Confronting the learners with the mismatch between their utterance and the model target language, and giving them opportunities and pushing them to produce the correct form by clarifying utterances for them, would help the learners to reformulate the accurate utterances. Continuous opportunities and exposure to the newly acquired system would insure its incorporation in the interlanguage system. Explicit knowledge can be practiced through traditional controlled activities. It is seen that this practice would lead learners from explicit to implicit knowledge. The successful utility and usage of the practice will lead to successful automatization of explicit knowledge. Therefore, learners pass through different processes to acquire the target forms of the language by comparing, integrating, and automatizing them through their output. In fact,

language production may involve error making. In fact, errors and their value deserve looking at.

Errors, their Sources and their Importance

What is an error? Hendrickson (1978) defines an error as "an utterance, form, or structure that a particular language teacher deems unacceptable because of its inappropriate use or its absence in real-life discourse" (p. 387). This is the definition which I use in my study. There is a difference between errors and mistakes. James (1998) distinguished between errors and mistakes. An error is defined as "being an instance of language that is unintentionally deviant and is not self-correctible by its author" (p. 78). He also defines mistake as "either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and self-correctible" (p. 78). As James (1998) pointed out mistakes can be self corrected by the person who committed the mistake if the deviance is pointed out to him or her. So this person may need a hint or an indication to self correct to avoid the deviance. However, "errors cannot be self-corrected until further relevant (to that error) input (implicit or explicit) has been provided and converted into intake by the learner" (James, 1998, p. 83).

Value of Errors

Errors are seen in different ways in teaching approaches. Some teaching approaches reject the notion of learning from errors while other approaches do not. "There is a gradual shift in classroom practices, from the immediate correction of every error in older methods based on behavioral theories of learning (e.g. audiolingualism) to a more tolerant modern approach" (Ancker, 2000, p. 20).

Learning focused on students' communication through the target language rather than focusing on students' errors by creating an encouraging atmosphere which helps

students produce well constructed utterances. From this direction, researchers like Hendrickson (1978) noticed the importance of making errors. For example in silent way, errors are seen to be necessary for language development. First language acquisition research showed that parents accept the numerous errors made by their children and they are seen as an important part in their first language acquisition. Hendrickson (1978) states that "many language educators propose that foreign language teachers also should expect many errors from their students, and should accept those errors as a natural phenomenon integral to the process of learning a second language" (p. 388). Errors should not be considered as bad habits but a beneficial source for learning a second language. Saville-Troike (2006) states that "Errors are windows into the language learners' mind" (p. 39). This is because errors provide teachers with a considerable source of the language development of a particular student and tell teachers what procedures and techniques the learner uses to make this error.

Making errors can be seen as an indicator that actual learning is taking place. In addition to that, not only do errors benefit the learner, but also they benefit the teacher. Errors can give the teachers insights about their teaching techniques. They revise by themselves and find which part of the curriculum has not been taught adequately. In this way they can decide how much time should be devoted to particular items in the syllabus. This is for day to day practice, but also it can be beneficial for future implications. Teachers can determine the best ways to teach this item in the future for other learners to avoid the gap.

Error Sources

Why do students make errors? There are several reasons behind making errors. Two major factors cause errors; interlingual and intralingual factors. According to Saville-Troike (2006), interlingual error results from negative transfer or interference from L1. Intralingual errors are considered developmental errors and often represent incomplete learning of L2 rules (p. 39). Ancker (2000) states that learners make errors because they have "incomplete knowledge of the target language...[and the] complexity of the target language" (p. 21). Herron (1981) believes that some teachers' practices induce errors:

e.g., not giving clear directions and cues for drilling; not keeping to minimal changes (one at a time per sentence) in drills; not using the target language consistently; not planning a positive emotional climate with lots of rewards and positive reinforcement; not providing enough varied practice to insure overlearning; not avoiding tension and fatigue by changing skills, by providing physical breaks, by using visuals. (p. 9)

Teachers need to be trained to know the differences between the two languages (L1 and L2) and apply instructional techniques to avoid producing such errors. They can drill the grammatical differences between the two languages and compare and contrast sound correspondence and intonation between the two languages.

Overgeneralization, performance errors, markers of transitional competence, and strategies of communication and assimilation are some sources of errors. Overgeneralization refers to errors caused by extending one rule of language to others where they are not applied. For example; learners may overgeneralize the rule of the past –ed to verbs which are irregular like goed, dranked, and puted.

Performance errors are caused due to memory lapses or fatigue and they are caused because of the carelessness of the student. Herron (1981) believes that "Markers of transitional competence are errors that result from a natural and perhaps inevitable developmental sequence in the second language learning process" (p. 10). For example, some students may hesitate and make errors when they are asked to repeat dialogue sentences. Strategies of communication and assimilation are errors which are caused when the learners are trying to communicate in the target language without having sufficient grammatical competence for the communication. Such errors occur frequently in free conversational activities.

Importance of Feedback

Errors should be treated to benefit the learners. According to Krashen (1995) "When error correction "works", it does so by helping the learner change his or her conscious mental representation of a rule" (p. 117). So, error correction affects learned competence and aids learners to learning. Error treatment has several advantages. Herron (1981) points out that "It appears that correcting oral errors improves second language learners' proficiency more than if their errors remain uncorrected" (p. 7). Language learners need someone who is more proficient than them. By this way the students notice the limitation of their speech and produce better utterances by this assistance.

Error treatment can be of a great help for learners since it "might help [them] to make inferences about the target language and aid them in fixing information in their long-term memory" (Herron, 1981, p. 8). So, instead of teachers correcting mistakes, they can guide the students by giving the rules and leaving the students to correct themselves.

When to Correct Errors?

One of the most difficult matters that faces teacher in the classroom is to determine when to correct students' errors and when to ignore them since "there appears no general consensus among language methodologists or teachers on when to correct student errors" (Hendrickson, 1978, p. 396). Researchers like Herron (1981) believe that teachers have to consider the whether or when to correct students' errors. The question is how many times should the teacher correct and when? The answer according to Herron (1981) depends on four things: the adequacy of information about the error, the importance of correction, the ease of correction, and the characteristics of the students. Herron (1981) points out that "basic information about the sources of errors is important" (p. 11). The teachers need to know basic information about the error. They need to know what was said or done and by whom. So, a teacher needs to know what was meant by the error and perhaps what the native language equivalent is in order to choose the appropriate error treatment.

Factors Affecting Teachers' Choices' of Feedback

The teacher's treatment of errors may depend on the characteristics of the students. There are a lot of students' characteristics which can affect the treatment of correction. The first factor is individual differences like "personality type, first language, culture, cognitive style, intelligence aptitude" (Cohen, 1975, p. 416). The second factor is the past history of the student for example, the students' academic record, errors previously observed, and treatment types previously used. In addition to, Gass (1997) points out that, "in looking at feedback and in conversational structures in general, a number of variables will be considered, among them task type, status, ethnicity, proficiency level, gender, and topic knowledge" (p. 114). The third

factor is the current state of the student and it contains the students' motivation, anxiety level and fatigue. Considering these factors, the teachers can correct the errors immediately or transfer them to the end. They can ask the student to correct him/herself or ask another learner to correct the error. Cohen (1975) believes that:

The teacher's approach may depend largely on the nature of the students (e.g., their reaction to correction), the teacher's personality and cultural background, and the nature of the curriculum. Some teachers may wish to handle correction mostly on an individualized basis, while others may wish to concentrate more on total class correction. (p. 421)

Which Errors Should Be Corrected?

Not every error needs to be corrected in the classroom because the students learn better in a supportive classroom environment which gives them self confidence without any threat. Hendrickson (1978) states that, "foreign language educators generally agree that tolerating some oral and written errors helps learners communicate more confidently in a foreign language" (p. 390). Since over correction threatens the students and destroys their self confidence, teachers need to know when to correct students' errors to instill the feeling of success for them. In addition to that, Hendrickson (1978) agrees that "The so-called fossilized errors should be corrected based on their degree of incomprehensibility and unacceptability as judged by native speakers" (p. 392). Such errors can occur in grammatical, phonological, and lexical forms which are produced frequently by the learner of the second language. Hendrickson also believes that high frequency errors should receive the priority in correction. According to Krashen (1995) generally some consideration should be taken for which errors to be corrected "such as frequency, contributions to

communication, and irritability" (p. 118). High frequency errors need to be corrected since correction over minor errors may annoy the learner and waste class time.

Sometimes errors affect intelligibility. According to Hendrickson (1978) "An increasing number of foreign language educators suggest that errors that impede the intelligibility of a message should receive top priority for correction" (p. 390). If the learner makes a lot of grammatical errors, it would be difficult for the listener to follow the message content of the speaker. In addition to that, communicative errors, or global errors, deserve correction more than non communicative errors or local errors. Global errors refer to the errors that interfere with the meaning of the learner's message because they affect the comprehensibility of the student's message. Correction needs to be given to global errors which affect and impede communication like wrong order, inadequate lexical knowledge, misuse of prepositions, and wrong connectors. Such errors have stigmatizing and irritating effects. Consequently, communication would be impaired. Local errors refer to errors in pronouns, nouns, articles, lack of subject-verb agreement, and auxiliaries that don't prevent communication.

Cohen (1975) states that, "the importance that a teacher attributes to an error may depend on the objectives of a particular lesson" (p. 415). This means that if the error has a relationship with the pedagogical objectives it needs to be clarified and corrected. The ease of correction can be one factor behind correcting errors.

How Should Errors Be Corrected?

According to Krashen (1995) error correction is positive if errors "are limited to learnable and portable rules...are corrected under conditions that allow monitor use...[and] allow the learner time to refer to his or her conscious knowledge" (p. 119).

There are two major ways of error correction: direct (explicit) correction or indirect (implicit) correction. To correct the students' errors directly a teacher may stop and ask them to identify and correct the mistake. In the indirect way, the teachers themselves correct the mistake. Generally, a teacher has to correct errors effectively by "us[ing] correction techniques that bring about improvements in accuracy and us[ing] techniques that are efficient, in the sense of requiring the least effort to carry out by the teacher and to register by the learners" (James, 1998, p. 249). There is no evidence shows that either the explicit or the implicit correction is the best. James (1998) believes that "The effectiveness of different feedback types will depend on individual differences and on some group factors such as the learners' level of attainment in the FL" (p. 249).

Many teachers provide their students with the correct form by stating the answer explicitly. However, this approach is seen ineffective because students would not know their mistakes. So students need to follow a discovery approach in which students make inferences about their production and compare their production with the target language. By using this approach students would fix their information. Teachers can make hints for the learners in order to help them to reach the correct answer. Cohen (1975) states that, "in this way the learner will be using the process of discovery, whereby he makes inferences, formulates concepts, and alters his hypotheses" (p. 417).

There are different techniques a teacher can follow to correct student's errors. One technique is using a "tape recording of student conversations; then each student edits his own tape for errors" (Hendrickson, 1978, p. 394). If the learner doesn't recognize his/her mistake then it might be that s/he hasn't learnt the target language. A

wait time of five to ten seconds is necessary for the error maker in order to help him/her produce the correct answer as James (1998) points out. "In oral work, the teacher should try to extend the wait-time between hearing the pupils' erroneous utterances and they themselves correcting them" (James, 1998, p. 250). If the student doesn't provide the correct answer then careful drilling is very important such as "rephrasing of the question, cueing the learner with a word or phrase, or giving a full or partial sample sentence" (Cohen, 1975, p. 417).

Error correction should be non-threatening. "As for the correction of spoken errors, the more sensitive the learner, the more gentle should be the correction" (James, 1998, p. 251). Nonthreatening can be established through lowering the affective filter so that the learner can note the error and avoid it next time. Another way for non-threatening correction is to pose the correction to the whole class not only singling it to an individual student. "It is advisable whenever possible to engineer correction to be peer correction rather than teacher correction" (James, 1998, p. 251). Another technique is to ask students indirectly to repeat their utterances. By this approach, the student is not sure if the teacher didn't hear what is said or if the teacher is asking about correction. Another means of indicating an error without saying so verbally is, "by pointing to an x which is prominently displayed on a card attached to a bulletin board in the classroom" (Cohen, 1975, p. 418). This indicates that the learner should correct him/herself if s/he can.

Another technique is to pinpoint to the error, that is "repeating it with focused emphasis, lengthening the segments of the utterance or a questioning tone" (James, 1998, p. 251). James (1998) finds that this pinpointing cannot be recognized by all students since "the problem is that the low-proficiency learners might not spot the

local lengthening and interrogative intonation and consequently might take this corrective repetition as accepting and confirming their own version" (p. 251).

One of the most important elements in error treatment is that teachers should make sure that correction matches the student's preference according to James (1998). Student's preference for feedback should not be ignored. A useful study was done (See Kaufmann (1993)) to investigate the students' feedback preference. Teachers and students were given a questionnaire with a scale of 12 feedback types from explicit to implicit feedback. The results showed that while teachers use implicit feedback, students preferred explicit feedback. Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) believe in the importance of taking the students' views about the best way to learn a language; "with this in mind, we want to discover whether students make any effective use of the strategies they already possess, and, also whether they find teachers' corrections in the classroom efficient" (p. 113). They think that the beliefs of teachers and students are very important in understanding the process of learning because they can help "prevent those conflicts that may augment frustration, anxiety and lack of motivation on the part of the student, or even their giving up the learning of the foreign language" (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005, p. 122). More details about this study will be discussed later.

Who Should Correct Errors?

Who has the responsibility of correcting errors? It might be "a teacher, but not always: he or she may be a non- teacher, a helpful native speaker, a fellow learner, or even the learner him or herself, in which case we speak of self-correction" (James, 1998, p. 236). Hendrickson (1978) believes that "although teacher correction of learner errors is helpful to many students, it may not necessarily be an effective

instructional strategy for every student or in all language classrooms" (p. 396). Peer correction and self correction can be beneficial for some students because "such an approach might also improve the students' ability to recognize errors" (Cohen, 1975, p. 419). "When they would correct one another's spoken utterances, the students would concentrate on function words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs" (Hendrickson, 1978, p. 395). In oral correction, students pay more attention to the lexical mistakes rather than the grammatical ones. Peer correction is very important and it aids students to the accuracy in their production. Self correction is very effective since they are aware of their own errors. According to James (1998), "self-correction is an intriguing phenomenon in that for some inexplicable reason we seem to be more capable of spotting other people's errors than our own, as anyone who has done some proofreading will testify" (p. 236).

Generally, correction can be seen in three senses. The first one is "informing the learner that there is an error, and leaving them to discover it and repair it themselves" (James, 1998, p. 236). This refers to feedback which learners are given to see whether their utterances are right or wrong. The second one is "providing treatment or information that leads to the revision and correction of the specific instance of error (the error token) without aiming to prevent the same error from recurring later" (James, 1998, p. 237). In this way the corrector can give hints and clues, and suggest how and where to correct the mistake. The third one is "providing learners with information that allows them to revise or reject the wrong rule they were operating with when they produced the error token" (James, 1998, p. 237). In this way, learners are given the chance to revise their mental representation of the rule.

Feedback Options and Classrooms Studies

"Feedback obtained during interaction has been demonstrated to have a facilitative role in L2 learning" (Oliver and Mackey, 2003, p. 519). There are two main options for the teacher to use in order to elicit different learners performance: overt and covert. Overt feedback "consists of explicit corrections of learner errors; the feedback is direct in the sense that the main illocutionary force of the utterance is to draw the learner's attention to a specific grammatical [or any other linguistic] error" (Ellis, 1997, p. 79). Covert feedback occurs mostly in conversations between the learner and the teacher. There are a lot of studies which showed the effectiveness of these different types of feedback (Lyster and Ranta (1997), Lyster and Mori (2006)).

Corrective feedback has gained prominence in the studies of second language acquisition. There are a large number of classroom studies which investigate the relationship between feedback patterns and their contribution to language learning. Some of them showed the effectiveness of explicit, or overt feedback, patterns, while others showed the effectiveness of implicit or covert feedback patterns. One of the most important studies was done by Lyster and Ranta (1997). It was carried out in four French primary immersion classes in Canada where French is the medium of instruction. Such classes used a communicative language approach. This study covered 18.3 hours of classes. It was conducted by four teachers and they were audio taped. The focus of the study was to find the different types of corrective feedback and their uptake.

Lyster and Ranta analyzed six types of corrective feedback (See table 1 below).

Table 1: Types of Oral Corrective Feedback

<i>Type of Corrective Feedback</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Explicit correction	The teacher corrects the student's mistake by informing that it is wrong by saying "No. It's wrong". In this kind of feedback, clear indication to the error is given to the student that his or her utterance is ill-formed.
Recast	An implicit corrective feedback in which the teacher corrects all or parts of the learner's utterance using correct form in an unobtrusive way.
Clarification request	The teacher indicates that s/he doesn't understand the learner's utterance by saying 'I'm sorry', 'I don't understand'
Metalinguistic Cue	The teacher indicates that there is a problem and asks if the learner can correct it. The cues can be comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance.
Elicitation	A corrective feedback that prompts the learner to self-correct. Elicitation can be established when the teacher pauses and lets the student complete the utterance, when the teacher asks an open ended question, and when the teacher requests a reformulation of the ill-formed utterance for example 'how do we say it in French?'
Repetition	The teacher repeats the student's utterance by making a high intonation on the error itself to highlight it

Source: Lyster and Ranta (1997)

The study showed that recast was the type most used in the classes (55% of the feedback) but it was the least likely to result in a successful correction.

Metalinguistic feedback and elicitation were the most successful. Lyster and Ranta (1997) clarified that the reason for the teachers' preference of recast as a corrective feedback was the students' low level of proficiency. In their study, the explicit type of feedback was the most beneficial for low achieving students.

Panova and Lyster (2002) conducted a study in an adult ESL classroom in Canada for students aged between 17 to 55 years old. The students were from different nationalities, but all of them spoke English and French. They were placed in level 2 ESL which is an early intermediate level. The students were taught in a communicative approach. The aim of the study was to "examine the error treatment patterns, involving the relationship between feedback types and how learners respond to them, in an adult ESL classroom" (Panova and Lyster, 2002, p. 578). Also they wanted to see if Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model of corrective feedback was applicable in another instructional context. Panova and Lyster (2002) chose adults because they interact more in the classroom than children, recast may be more salient for adult learners than children, and they predicted that a high rate of uptake would result from recast. They wanted to see which feedback led to the greatest amount of uptake. They observed 18 hours of classroom interaction during three weeks.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) use the word uptake to mean that a learner has recognized that the teacher's speech is intended to be a correction of an error. Uptake can be with a repair or uptake can indicate the need for a repair. Uptake needs a repair doesn't result in correction for an error. It includes acknowledgment, different error, same error, hesitation, off target, and partial repair. Uptakes with a repair are "those types of repairs that students produced in direct responses to the feedback provided by the teacher" (Tedick, 1998, p. 4). Uptake with repair includes repetition or incorporation of the correct forms provided by feedback pattern and self or peer repair after the feedback pattern.

Panova and Lyster (2002) depended mainly on Lyster and Ranta's Model of types of corrective feedback and added one more category which was translation.

Translation can be seen as a feedback pattern "when it follows a student's unsolicited uses of the L1" (Panova and Lyster, 2002, p. 582). There is a difference between recast and translation since recast is a reformulation of an ill-formed utterance in L2 and translation is a response of well formed utterance in L1. The results of this study showed that recast was the most frequently used type of feedback. However, it resulted in only 13 % of students' repairs. Translation was the second common feedback type used. Repetition was the least used feedback type, but it resulted in the highest rate of repair move. Only 65% of the students' uptake included learner repair. Explicit feedback patterns led to successful repair. "This means that the teacher strongly preferred to use reformulative techniques, such as recast and translation, rather than feedback types that prompt students to self-repair" (Panova and Lyster, 2002, p. 588). The authors explained the frequent use of implicit feedback in relation to the low proficiency level of the students. The teacher used implicit feedback rather than inviting the students to participate in the negotiation of meaning because their level proficiency in English was low. This indicates that there is a relationship between individual readiness and the ability to notice recast. The authors inferred that more advanced students notice the negative evidence in recast more than less advanced students. Moreover, Panova and Lyster (2002) state that "corrective techniques that promote negotiation of form by allowing students the opportunity to self-correct or to correct their peers resulted in the highest rates of uptake" (p. 591).

Lyster and Mori (2006) classified patterns of corrective feedback into three main categories: 'explicit correction' in which the teacher supplies the correct form of the error, 'recast' in which the teacher reformulates all or part of student's error, and 'prompts' in which the learner is pushed to self-repair the error. Prompts include four

types of feedback which are elicitation, metalinguistic cue, clarification request, and repetition. "By prompting, a teacher provides cues for learners to draw on their own resources to self-repair, whereas by providing explicit correction or recasting, a teacher both initiates and completes a repair within a single move" (Lyster and Mori, 2006, p. 272). The authors differentiate between recast and prompts. Recasts can facilitate the delivery of the complex subject matters because they "provide supportive, scaffolded help, which serves to move lessons ahead when the target forms in question are beyond the students' current abilities" (Lyster and Mori, 2006, p. 273). Also they can be seen as positive evidence. Prompts elicit modified output and assist the learners to modify their interlanguage system to the target language.

Lyster and Mori (2006) wanted to compare the effect of different interactional feedback, uptake, and learner repair in two different instructional settings. The first one was a French immersion setting for English speaking children in Quebec and the second one was a Japanese immersion setting for English speaking children. They used the model of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model of error treatment and uptake and Spada and Frohlich's (1995) communicative orientation to language teaching (COLT). The study was done over 33 hours in four French immersion classes and three Japanese immersion classes. In both settings recast was the most frequently used type of feedback, then prompts, and finally explicit correction. So, it seems that in immersion settings recast is used most because it suits content-based L2 instruction, keeps student's attention focus on content, and keeps the flow of communication. In the study, Japanese immersion children responded accurately in their uptake with repair more than French immersion children.

Uptake with repair in the Japanese immersion setting followed recasts, while it followed prompts in the French immersion setting. In the Japanese setting uptake with repair was twice as uptake followed prompts in French setting and vice versa.

According to Lyster and Mori (2006) the reason behind that is that in the Japanese immersion classrooms the emphasis is on "accurate oral production, apparent in various activities involving repetition of teacher models, which likely served to prime Japanese immersion students for repeating their teachers' recasts" (p. 291). However, in the French immersion classroom there was no form of repetition or choral activities so elicitation for the students' production was predominant there.

Lyster and Mori examined the different contextual variables that influence the learner's biases towards one kind of interactional feedback over the other. They introduced the 'counterbalance hypothesis'. "Instructional counterbalance refers to interventions that differ from the instructional activities and interactional feedback that otherwise typify the communicative orientation prevailing in a given classroom" (Lyster and Mori, 2006, p. 294). This hypothesis predicts that recasts are effective for learners in a communicative instructional classroom. Activities such as repetition and choral activities urge the learners to be biased toward recast since they notice the gap between their output and the teacher's utterance as they pay attention to the form. The counterbalance hypothesis predicts that prompts can be effective for learners in immersion orientation which doesn't include controlled production practice. In such a context learners shift their attention to form and benefit from being pushed to self correct errors. The authors suggested that further research is needed to investigate the relationship between the learners' level of proficiency with some variables such as readiness, aptitude, and test performance and the counterbalance hypothesis.

The Effectiveness of Recasts as Feedback

Recast is one of the feedback patterns that has been the subject of much empirical research. It is seen as controversial since there are a lot of different functions of recasts. At the same time, "recasts can take many different forms and perform a variety of functions (not all corrective), which makes definition difficult" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 575). The different kinds of recasts differ, when corrective, in explicitness of their corrective strategy and in their negative or positive evidence. In addition to that, recasts' role in acquisition is controversial since researchers have not clearly distinguished its accurate role in acquisition. "One reason [for the controversial role of recast] is that recasts generally occur with great frequency in interactions with second language (L2) learners, especially if they occur inside a classroom" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 576). The other reasons are theoretical. Recasts receive much attention because they involve two issues in second language acquisition. The first one is the role of positive and negative evidence in SLA. Some researchers agree that negative evidence can develop the learners' linguistic knowledge but not the acquisition of competence. But others claim that the positive and the negative evidence are connected and go from declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge. The second issue is that a recast can be seen as both implicit and explicit correction of feedback.

Long (1996) in his Interaction Hypothesis argued that recast is implicit and it can lead to acquisition because it focuses on form and meaning at the same time without any corruption of the flow of communication. In addition to that, recast can help learners compare their erroneous utterances with the target form in language context. He argues that explicit feedback types are not effective because they interrupt

the flow of communication and they treat the language as an object so they don't promote acquisition. Some other researchers like Ellis (1993) claimed that explicit correction is more effective than recasts because it raises the students' attention and they contribute in a direct or indirect way to the development of interlanguage system. In contrast to explicit correction, implicit correction can not be seen as corrective in the teaching situation.

The studies of recasts have different results because there is no consensus on the definition of recast that can be used in all the studies. So, it is difficult to compare their results. For example recasts can include two moves in which the teacher repeats the erroneous utterance with emphasis on the error word itself and the second move is the reformulation of the learner utterance done by the teacher. This kind of recast is called full recast. Partial recast occurs when the teacher repeats a short erroneous part of the learner's sentence in a well formed way. There are also single or multiple recasts. For example the teacher can repeat the recast. In addition to that, recasts can be in one signal negotiated interaction or extended negotiated interaction, simple or complex.

Ellis and Sheen (2006) state that:

Lyster [1998b] recorded the recasts from Lyster and Ranta (1997) in terms of four types: isolated declarative recasts (a reformulation of an utterance with falling intonation and no additional meaning), isolated interrogative recasts (a reformulation of an utterance with raising intonation and no additional meaning), incorporated declarative recasts (a reformulation of an utterance with falling intonation and additional information), and incorporative recasts

(a reformulation of an utterance with raising information and additional information). (p. 582).

Other researchers have defined recasts differently, however, "their definitions of recasts would permit the inclusion of reformulated utterances from interactions that arise in traditional, form-focused lessons" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 581).

Studies were conducted to measure the extent to which recasts are noticed (See Philp (2003). Studies showed that low proficient students don't notice recasts. Ammar (2008) believes that the noticeability of recast refers to the learner's level of proficiency. He states that "the noticeability of recasts indicated that learners' ability to notice recasts is quite limited especially when provided in reaction to morphosyntax or/and to low proficiency level" (p. 185). Another study was done by Mackey and Philp (1998) to show the effects of recasts in relation to learner proficiency. This study showed that participants who were more ready to acquire the target form benefited from recasts more than those who were not ready.

How Implicit Are Recasts?

Recasts are seen as an implicit form of corrective feedback by some researchers. However, some researchers dispute its implicitness. Some recasts can be overt for the learners. The teacher can repeat the student's utterance and stress the erroneous words. Then s/he repeats the utterance correctly. "This procedure was specifically designed to make the corrected items salient to the learners" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 583). There are some cases in which recast can be quite explicit. This can be clear if the recast is a single word with a falling intonation, repeating recast twice, and by using emphatic stress to show that there is a correction. According to Ellis and Sheen (2006) "Recasts can lie at various points on a continuum of linguistic

implicitness-explicitness" (p. 583). How can learners view recasts? There are two ways to know that. The first way is "by examining to what extent the recasts result in greater metalinguistic awareness" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 583). The second way is to ask [the students] directly about their perception of feedback moves.

Do Recasts Supply Positive or Negative Evidence?

"Negative evidence is information about what is ungrammatical or unacceptable; it is available not only through feedback but also through explicit grammar teaching" (Ellis and Sheen, 2006, p. 585). The question of positive or negative evidence is problematic. If the learners are not aware of the corrective role of recast, then recasts are seen as positive evidence. If the learners interpret them as corrective, then they can be seen as negative evidence. According to Ellis and Sheen (2006) to answer this question "[it depends] on [recasts] characteristics, they can constitute positive evidence alone (i.e., their corrective force is not recognized by the learner) or both positive and negative evidence" (p. 586). And this doesn't mean that only positive evidence of recasts can lead to acquisition, it might be that negative evidence can lead to acquisition.

Prompts Versus Recasts

"The relative effectiveness of different types of feedback continues to attract attention in the field of second language acquisition" (Lyster and Izquierdo, 2009, p. 454). A great body of research discusses the effectiveness of recast as mentioned earlier. Its effectiveness is constrained by a wide range of variables like the setting and teachers' intentions and students' perceptions. For example "recasts of phonological and lexical errors are more noticeable than recasts of errors in

morphosyntax as are recasts that are short and contain minimal changes" (Lyster and Izquierdo, 2009, p. 454).

An alternative type of corrective feedback for recasts that had received much attention is prompts. "They provide signals that prompts learners to self-repair rather than providing with a correct reformulation of their nontarget utterance, as do recasts" (Lyster and Izquierdo, 2009, p. 455). Prompts include repetition, metalinguistic cues, elicitation, and clarification request. Several studies showed the effectiveness of prompts like a classroom study of adult ESL students of Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006). They compared the effect of recast and prompts on students' use of past tense. They found superior effect of prompts over recasts in posttest measure.

Another study was done by Lyster and Izquierdo (2009) for adult second language learners of French to explore which combination is more effective: negative and positive evidence; recasts, or in the case of prompts which is negative feedback without positive evidence but with opportunities to self-repair. This study revealed equal effect of both types of feedback. "Learners in the recast group benefited from repeated exposure to positive exemplars in the form of recast that were made salient by the discourse context of interaction between a learner and a researcher" (Lyster and Izquierdo, 2009, p. 485). Learners in the prompts group benefited mostly from "opportunities to produce modified output" (Lyster and Izquierdo, 2009, p. 485). In addition to that Nassaji (2009) investigated the effect of two categories of interactional feedback, recast and elicitation, on learning linguistic forms. This study investigated the effect of the implicit and explicit forms of each type immediately and after two weeks on 42 adult ESL learners. It showed that "in both cases the more explicit forms of each feedback type led to higher rates of immediate and delayed

postinteraction correction than the implicit forms" (Nassaji, 2009, p. 411). So, recast and elicitation is very beneficial for language learning according to their degree of explicitness.

Corrective Feedback and the Level of Proficiency

There has been a noticed increase in the studies which examined the effect of different corrective feedback. This includes research "examining a wide range of variables (e.g., type and amount of feedback, mode of feedback, learners' proficiency level, attitudes toward feedback)" (Ammar and Spada, 2006, p. 544). Some studies linked the effectiveness of corrective feedback to learners' proficiency level. For example some corrective feedback can be facilitative when learners' proficiency is taken into consideration. A study was done by Ammar and Spada (2006) which investigated the effect of two corrective feedback recasts and prompts for learners of different proficiency levels. 64 grade six students from Montreal participated in this study. They were divided into three groups one received feedback in the form of recasts, the other in the form of prompts and one control group. The grammatical rule that had been investigated was third person possessive determiner his and her.

The results showed that the three groups benefited from the instructional intervention with the two groups of feedback benefiting most. "In particular, high-proficiency learners benefited equally from both prompts and recasts, whereas low-proficiency learners benefited significantly more from prompts than recasts" (Ammar and Spada, 2006, p. 543). They identified two reasons behind the effectiveness of prompts for low-proficiency students. The explicitness and clarity of this kind of corrective feedback and the opportunities that are given to them to produce the target form are two important factors. This indicates that the salience of corrective feedback

and the push to self repair benefited low-proficiency learners more. They need assistance from the teacher to help them notice the gap between their erroneous utterances and the target form of the language. On the other hand, high-proficiency learners benefited from both types because "their knowledge of the target language might not be particularly affected by the nature of the techniques used to draw their attention to the formal properties of the language" (Ammar and Spada, 2006, p. 563). They concluded their study that "there is not one corrective feedback technique that is ideal or, as the title of this article suggests, one size doesn't fit all. The effectiveness of any corrective feedback technique needs to be evaluated in relation to learners' proficiency levels" (Ammar and Spada, 2006, p. 566).

Another study was done by Mackey and Philp (1998) to examine the effectiveness of a corrective feedback, recast, in relation to learners' proficiency level. The study focused on the production and the formulation of question forms. It compared groups of learners receiving modified input and the other receiving the same input containing intensive recasts. Results showed that more advanced students benefited more from interaction with intensive recasts than from interaction alone. According to Mackey and Philp (1998) "this study suggests that it may also be important to take into account the developmental level of the learners" (p. 354). In this study, recast ready group noticed recasts more than unready groups. This supports Lin and Hedgcock's (1996) claims that high achieving students are very sensitive to feedback by "making efforts to modify their evolving grammars" (p. 571). Whereas low proficiency students are not sensitive to corrective feedback because "their hypothesis modification mechanisms are somehow short-circuited or disabled" (Lin and Hedgcock's, 1996, p. 571).

Students' preference of corrective feedback versus teachers' perceptions

There is a great body of research concerning types of corrective feedback however, not much has been said about the corrective feedback and learners' attitudes. Only few studies discussed the perceptions of students regarding error treatment and corrective feedback (Ammar and Spada (2006). Some researchers like Schulz (2001) support the view that matching the preferences of learners and the practices of teachers is important for successful language learning. So it would be better for teachers to know the perceptions of their students regarding their teaching techniques. Hawkey (2006) points out that, "There is no doubt that the more we know about what is perceived to be happening in the classroom, the better our chances are of improving the quality of language learning and use" (p. 249). In addition to that, "the extent to which learner beliefs are variable over time, from person to person, and setting to setting needs to be explored" (Horwitz, 1988, p. 291). This implies that learners' beliefs change over a course of language instructions. Actually there are a lot of factors influencing students' beliefs and perceptions. Horwitz (1988) states that, "As the language teacher is likely to be viewed as "expert" about language related matters, his or her views—whether expressed explicitly in class or implicitly by teaching practice—could have a strong influence on the students' own beliefs" (p. 291).

Salikin (2001) points out that, "there is a great need to hear what the learners think of oral correction" (p. 28). One of these studies which explored students' versus teachers' perceptions of error correction was complemented by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005). In their study, Lasagabaster & Sierra involved 21 informants: 11 students and 10 experienced teachers. After watching an excerpt from a commercially produced teaching video twice, they were asked to detect the error correction moves

made by the teacher, classify them, judge their efficiency, and record their opinions individually and in groups. The study showed that teachers and students agreed that the most efficient correction occurs when more time, longer explanations, and use of different strategies were effective. According to Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) efficiency in error correction depends on two issues: the learner has to be aware of being corrected, and he/she must understand the nature of the correction.

Learners might come to classrooms with views and beliefs that are far different from their teachers' perceptions which by its turn make the learning process difficult. Nunan (1995) clarified some reasons behind the mismatch between teachers' perceptions and students' beliefs. He states that, "it is a mistake to assume that learners come into the language classroom with a natural ability to make choices about what and how to learn. I believe that there are relatively few learners who are naturally endowed with the ability to make informed choices about what to learn, when to learn, and how to learn" (p. 134). He suggests some solutions to narrow this gap. He proposes that learners need to be aware of the goals and content of the learning program and learners need to be involved in selecting goals and content. Since students come to classrooms with different minds, points and focuses, Nunan (1995) argues that "at the very least, teachers should find out what their students think and feel about what and how they want to learn" (p. 140).

Katayama (2006) investigated the attitudes of 249 university students enrolled in Japanese classes in USA regarding their attitudes of error correction, their preference for correction of different types of oral errors, and their preference for particular correction methods. The results showed positive attitudes towards error correction. The students favored their teacher to correct their mistakes because they

wanted to improve their accuracy in Japanese. The majority of those students agreed that they need their teacher to correct all errors that learners make in speaking. For those students, peer correction was helpful, however, they were more favorable towards teacher correction than peer correction. In addition to that, the majority of them wanted their grammatical errors and vocabulary errors to be corrected always. The explicit forms of the corrective feedback are favorable for those students. The most favorable one was that in which the teacher explains to them why the students' utterance is incorrect. They liked to be correct by prompts first, then by recast, and after that by a teacher giving them hints and options. Moreover, they hated their errors to be ignored and not corrected.

Katamakaya (2007) replicated her study on 588 EFL students at several Japanese universities exploring the focus of her previous study (2006). She used a five-point Likert scale questionnaire which she used it in her previous study (2006). The results of this study indicated that students held positive attitudes towards teacher correction of errors. Pragmatic errors over other kinds of errors were preferred to be corrected. The most favorable method of error correction was when the teacher gives a hint which enable students to notice the error and self repair.

In his attempt to explore the students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the role of explicit grammar instructions and corrective feedback, Schulz (2001) administered a questionnaire to 607 Colombian FL students and 122 of their teachers as well as 824 US FL students and their 92 teachers to see if there is cultural differences in the perceptions of students and teachers. Results showed high agreement between students as a group among the two cultures and teachers as a group as well. Also some discrepancies appeared to be clear between students and

teachers from the same culture. Generally "the data provide evidence of a strong positive belief on the part of the students of both cultures that explicit grammar study and corrective feedback play a positive role in FL learning" (Schulz, 2001, p. 254). There is a discrepancy rate between the two Colombian groups and the two US groups regarding the desirability of error correction inside the classroom. According to Schulz (2001) the strong positive attitudes toward explicit grammar and error correction can be attributed to three main factors: perceptions could be a result of the way FL learners are taught or tested, perceptions could be a result of a myth that has been moved from generation to generation regarding the usefulness of learning grammar, or perceptions can be a result of personal experiences.

Another study was carried out by Yoshida (2008) to explore teachers' choice and students' preferences for corrective feedback types in Japanese foreign language classrooms. He used audio recording and a stimulus recall interview with each participant. The study indicated that:

Teachers chose recasts because of the time limitation of classes and their awareness of learners' cognitive styles. They also chose corrective feedback types such as elicitation or metalinguistic feedback when they regarded the learners who made erroneous utterances as being able to work out correct forms on their own. (Yoshida, 2001, p. 78)

On the other hand, most learners preferred to be given an opportunity to think and provide the correct form of the target language before receiving the correct form by recasts because providing students with chances to self correct gives them a sense of achievement and confidence. Teachers used recasts because they needed to "complete particular tasks in the allotted time" (Yoshida, 2008, p. 88) which put more

pressure on the teachers to complete the syllabus on time. The second reason was that "they preferred less intimidating feedback for the learner" (p. 89) since they didn't want to correct their errors explicitly or force them to self correct in front of the whole class. They also admitted that they didn't use prompts because they feared that the learners would not be able to self correct, however, they believed that self correction and provision of corrective feedback would facilitate learning.

Yoshida (2008) states that there is a gap between teachers' choice and learners' preferences of corrective feedback. He indicates reasons of this gap as Allwright (1989, 1996) stated: social and pedagogical pressure in language classrooms. There is a conflict between social events and pedagogical events. For example, from a pedagogical perspective, a learner might prefer to be given time to self correct despite the embarrassment factor if s/he could not repair the error. From a social perspectives, this persons' preference of receiving correct answers immediately after their errors might avoid the social embarrassment if not being able to present the proper answer. However, from pedagogical perspective most of the students preferred to be given time to think of the correct form because this could push them to improve and develop their interlanguage. Yoshida (2008) concluded the study saying that:

The teachers used recast frequently due to the limited time available in classes and because of their desire to avoid socially embarrassing the learners. On the other hand, from a pedagogical purpose, learners preferred receiving an opportunity to work out correct forms of their own after their erroneous utterances. (p. 90)

To conclude, much has been said about the importance of oral error treatment in the literature review. It was agreed that over-correction may disturb learners and

hinder target language acquisition. However, in order to be effective, teachers need to make sure that the correction matches the student's preference. Some studies showed the effectiveness of overt feedback while others showed the effectiveness of covert patterns of corrective feedback. So far, there is no consensus on which the way is the best. It was indicated that a lot of variables can contribute to the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback like the students' level of proficiency. Some studies were conducted to prove this issue. These studies indicated that more advanced students may benefit from recasts however low proficient students benefit from being pushed to self correct. In addition, the students in all the studies preferred to be given time to work out the error themselves.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The aims of this study were firstly to discover the patterns of oral corrective feedback, either implicit or explicit, used by the participating teachers and the teachers' rationale behind such choices. Secondly it aimed to investigate the point of view of teachers and students in a government high school in Fujairah regarding the most effective type of oral corrective feedback. It sought to answer the following questions:

- (1) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the teachers think can lead to learning? Why?
- (2) What kind of oral corrective feedback do the participating teachers in Masafi School in Fujairah use?
- (3) What difference is there, if any, in the kinds of feedback given by the teachers to high, average, and low achieving students?
- (4) What kind of oral corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?

To answer the research questions and for the purposes of triangulation, data were collected from a variety of sources that included videotapes of three lessons for two teachers from Masafi School for Fundamental and Secondary Education School for Girls, a students' questionnaire (see Appendix A), and a teachers' interview (see Appendix B). Three lessons were observed for two teachers and videotaped. The two teachers were interviewed after the three observed lessons. One of the teachers taught grade 9 English. The grade 9 UAE English Skills UAE curriculum is divided into skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar and vocabulary. The other

teacher taught grade 12 English which has a main focus of preparing the students for the Common English Proficiency Assessment (CEPA).

Students were given a questionnaire to fill in. Students' questionnaires were filled in by 50 students, 29 students from grade nine and 21 students from grade 12. They provided me with a clear picture of their preference of oral corrective feedback. I also conducted interviews with the two teachers. I used interviews as a qualitative method for collecting data. This method, as Schwarzer, Bloom, and Shono (2006) point out, emphasizes rich, thick, and detailed information. They add that this method allows the actual voices of the participants to be heard, and it makes room for the researcher's voice as well. The teachers were cooperative and answered the questions about the issues raised. I limited my study to female teachers with their students because, as a female teacher, it was not easy for me to get access to male students in the UAE context. Adopting mixed methods, observations, surveys and interviews enabled me to get rich data set about types of corrective feedback given to students and students' preferences.

Data Collection

I collected my data over a two month period. I observed three lessons for each teacher. Teachers were videotaped with their permission. Students' permissions were taken to video tape the lessons by signing consent forms and a parental permission letter (See Appendix C). I analyzed the six video-taped lessons to explore patterns of corrective feedback given to different types of students.

In April 2009, I administered the students' questionnaires. I informed the students about the purpose of my study which posed no risks whatsoever for them. Following Berg's (2001) advice that their responses "would be kept in strict

confidence" (p. 58), I made it clear that their responses would be reported collectively and anonymously. I was available myself when they answered the questionnaire in order to clarify any problem. The questionnaire was translated into their mother tongue, Arabic. Their written language was in Arabic to make sure they clearly understood the questions. The clarifications of any point in the questionnaire were in Arabic as well. The students were given the questionnaires to fill in during one free period in the school day.

The teacher interviews were conducted in May because teachers' responsibilities were few in this month since their students took final exams. The interviews were held in the English Club of Masafi school. Each interview took about half an hour. The interviews were held individually with each teacher. The teachers answered all questions freely. The interviews were audiotaped after taking their permission. In line with Richards (2003) who points out that "a good interviewer is a good listener" (p. 53), I listened more and talked less explaining and clarifying as needed.

The Characteristics of the Researcher

Because I have been a teacher of English for nine years in the UAE, I am aware of the UAE learning context. I have taught, so far, a series of syllabi and have attended lots of seminars on teaching principles and presented many times in local seminars in Fujairah. A good balance of experiences in teaching practices was the aid for me to develop myself professionally. I have dealt with a variety of students during my teaching experience and I am aware of the students' points of view regarding successful language learning. I am sensitive to the needs and the interests of both my students and my colleagues. I show a deep respect for all language teachers in the

learning enterprise and I work with them for the best of the students. I was objective in collecting data and analyzing them. I am a good listener and I can develop good rapport with my students.

The Participants

The participants were two teachers of Masafi School for Fundamental and Secondary Education for Girls and their students in grades nine and 12. Both teachers, Khawla and Helala, have a long experience in teaching ESL students. They attended seminars and working sessions in different teaching issues. They held workshops in Fujairah about different teaching principles and practices. Table 2 summarizes some general background about their teaching experiences.

Table 2: Teachers' teaching background

	<i>Khawla</i>	<i>Helala</i>
<i>Age</i>	29	43
<i>Teaching experience</i>	8 years	17 years
<i>Grades taught throughout teaching experience</i>	From grade 2 to grade 10	From grade 1 to grade 12
<i>Grades taught now</i>	Grades 6 and 9	Grades 11 and 12

The number of students who participated in the study were 50. Grade nine students were 29, while grade 12 students were 21. Grade nine were aged between 14-15 years old. Grade 12 students were aged between 16-18 years old. All grade 12 students were locals. Only two students were non locals as table 3 shows. Grade 12

students have been studying English for 12 years but grade nine students have been studying English for nine years.

Table 3: Students' background

	<i>Grade 9 students</i>	<i>Grade 12 students</i>
<i>Age</i>	14-15	16-18
<i>Local students</i>	27	21
<i>Egyptian student</i>	1	—
<i>Syrian Student</i>	1	—

Questionnaire data were collected by using a Likert scale. Students were given three options: "agree", "not sure", and "disagree". All students answered the whole questionnaire without leaving any questions blank.

Data Collection Technique

This study was mainly designed to explore the participants' opinions and attitudes regarding treatment of oral errors. To gather information from the participants involved, to answer my research questions, I collected data in three ways: classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews.

Observations

I observed three different lessons for each teacher. The classes were videotaped. Students were not videotaped when they were doing writing exercises since the focus of the observation was to concentrate on students' speaking activities and oral error correction. I stood at the back of the class to videotape the lesson in order not to confuse the teacher or the students. Students' permissions were taken for

videotapes and teachers as well. Teachers were aware of the study's focus but the students were not.

Questionnaire

I designed one questionnaire for students (See Appendix A). It is divided into three parts. The first part consisted of general background information about the students in terms of their age and their mark in English. The second part consisted of their preferred oral corrective feedback type. It required students to express their agreement or disagreement on 13 statements (1-13) given in the questionnaire. This questionnaire explored the students' preference regarding teachers' treatment of their oral errors. In order to answer my question, "What types of corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?", the statements expressed the patterns of oral corrective feedback types. Some statements expressed the explicit ways of teacher's treatment of oral errors, and some others expressed the implicit ways. Other statements expressed some teachers' techniques in correcting students' oral errors. The third section of the questionnaire consisted of the rationale behind their choices. It consisted of open-ended questions which asked them to write if they want their teacher to correct their errors or not. They were asked to write the best way they thought is effective and preferable from their point of view. They were asked to write the way that they didn't want their teachers to treat their errors. The last question asked them to list their teachers' treatment for their errors. The questionnaire was in both Arabic and English.

The questionnaire was distributed in colored sheet of papers for high, average, and low achieving students. High achieving students got blue colored sheet, average students got orange sheets, and low achieving students got white ones. When

distributing the colored questionnaires, I distributed them randomly, however, I put in my mind their level of proficiency.

Interview

I held structured interviews with both teachers (See Appendix B). The interviews were conducted to explore their beliefs and rationale behind oral error treatment in order to answer research question one. I conducted each interview individually during school time. The interview was divided into five sections. The first section outlined the teachers' beliefs about error treatment in general. The second section explored teachers' rationale behind choices of the observed oral feedback types. The third section outlined teachers' points of view of their students' preferences. The fourth section clarified the results of students' preferences. The fifth section explored factors affecting teachers' choice of corrective feedback.

The interviews consisted of 13-15 questions. I developed a variety of strategies that could "facilitate the interview process while at the same time ensuring the trustworthiness and integrity of the research" (Shono, 2006, p. 298). First, I made my questions straightforward and to the point. I also avoided asking questions which might reveal something about the intended responses. Following the techniques recommended by Shono (2006), I asked open-ended questions, and asked for concrete details to consolidate their answers. I did my best to build rapport with my interviewees and establish a good understanding of them during the interviews. In line with the techniques mentioned by Shono (2006), I listened not only to the substance of the interviewees' responses, but also practiced active listening by paying attention to the interviewing process in terms of the amount of time that passed the energy they demonstrated. The interviews were conducted in a friendly atmosphere and the

teachers responded actively to all questions. I tried to be as friendly as possible with them and I assured them that their responses would be used for research purposes only. No coercion was enforced on them.

In conclusion, collecting data in these three ways enabled me to get a plethora of data about the topic to be analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter describes the analysis of the data, and reports the results. It is divided into four main sections. The first section presents the introduction to the data analysis. Section two presents patterns of oral corrective feedback used by the teachers. Section three discusses students' preferences of oral corrective feedback. Section four outlines the teachers' beliefs and rationale behind error treatment.

Patterns of oral corrective feedback used by the teachers

The analysis of this section answers two of the research questions, "What kind of oral corrective feedback do the participating teachers in Masafi School in Fujairah use?" and "What difference, if any, in the kinds of feedback given by the teachers is there between high, average, and low achieving students?" In order to organize my data, the level of the students was identified by the two teachers, Khawla and Helala, according to their oral marks and their level of participation in class discussions.

Table 4 illustrates the number of high, average, and low achieving students identified by both teachers. The number of high achieving students is bigger than the number of low achieving students in both classes. However, the majority of Khawla's students were high and average achieving.

Table 4: Numbers of High, Average, and Low Achieving Students as Identified by the Teachers.

<i>Types of Students</i>	<i>Khawla</i>	<i>Helala</i>
<i>High</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Average</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Low</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>

The video-taped observations of three lessons for two teachers, Khawla who is teaching grade 9 and Helala who is teaching grade 12, helped me to organize and classify types of oral corrective feedback given to students. As expected, most of the talk and discussion roles were taken by high achieving students. Low achieving students took only a very small role in class discussion. In addition to that, most of the teachers' focus was on high achieving students. Thus, much of the data to be analyzed is feedback given to high achieving students.

The lessons I observed had a main focus on speaking skills. Both teachers included a variety of activities which encouraged students to take roles and participate in pair work, group work, and follow up discussions. Both teachers started with warm ups, presentation, application, and evaluation. Helala used activities from the CEPA textbook. I attended Helala's three lessons in different periods, the fourth, the third, and the second periods. Khawla's three lessons were observed three times in the fifth period. The analysis of this section indicated that both explicit and implicit ways were used but differently by both teachers in the observed lessons. Different types of corrective feedback were found given to different learners' types in the observed lessons.

Types of oral corrective feedback used for high achieving students

The data that was collected from the videos revealed that there is a difference in the type of oral corrective feedback given to high, average, and low achieving students. Table five illustrates this point between the two teachers.

Table 5: Distribution of Oral Corrective Feedback Types Given to High Achieving Students.

	<i>Khawla</i>	<i>Helala</i>
<i>Types of oral corrective feedback</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Recast</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Explicit Correction</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>—</i>
<i>Clarification Request</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>—</i>
<i>Elicitation</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>—</i>
<i>Metalinguistic Cues</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Repetition</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>—</i>
<i>Ignoring</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Others</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>

All types of corrective feedback discussed in the literature review were used by Khawla, while Helala depended mainly on one type of corrective feedback and used only three in all. The implicit way in treating high achieving students' errors was used and preferred by both teachers. Recast was the most frequent used feedback type for high achieving students in both teachers' lessons. The teachers rephrased the students' errors in a correct way without giving the students the chance to correct their error. Khawla used recast 32 times to treat her students' errors and most of the recast was used in the third lesson. Helala used recast 12 times to treat her students' errors.

Khawla's second most common type of corrective feedback was prompts (including elicitation, metalinguistic cues, repetition, and clarification request). In this kind of corrective feedback, the teacher draws the students' attention to the errors to reach the correct answer. She used elicitation, metalinguistic cues, clarification

question, and repetition. Elicitation was used ten times to treat students' errors. A metalinguistic cue was used nine times and repetition was used five times to treat high achieving students' errors. Clarification request was used the least. Five errors were ignored by the teacher. Those errors were grammatical errors. The least preferred corrective feedback for Khawla was explicit correction since she seldom pointed to an error by students and corrected it herself.

In the observed lessons Helala depended heavily on the implicit way. The other types of prompts like repetition, clarification request, and elicitation were not used at all to treat high achieving students' errors. Only one error was ignored.

Types of oral corrective feedback used for average students

In both classes average students' participation was less than high achieving students. Therefore, the opportunity to view error treatment was limited. The following table clarifies the types of oral corrective feedback given to average students by both teachers.

Table 6: Distribution of Oral Corrective Feedback Types Given to Average Students.

	<i>Khawla</i>	<i>Helala</i>
<i>Types of oral corrective feedback</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>Recast</i>	6	2
<i>Explicit Correction</i>	1	—
<i>Clarification Request</i>	1	—
<i>Elicitation</i>	9	—
<i>Metalinguistic Cues</i>	4	1
<i>Repetition</i>	2	—
<i>Ignoring</i>	—	1
<i>Others</i>	—	—

Helala used the same types of corrective feedback as noticed with high achieving students. She used only recast, metalinguistic cue, and once ignoring. Helala preferred to treat average students' errors implicitly since recast appeared to be the most frequently used corrective type. Khawla preferred to use prompts in treating average students' errors. Elicitation was the most frequently used corrective feedback type. It was used nine times. The implicit way (recast) in treating their errors was the second most common corrective feedback type. The other types of prompts were the third most common corrective feedback types since metalinguistic cue was used four times to treat average students' errors and repetition was used only twice. The least frequent corrective feedback types used were clarification request and the explicit correction. None of the students' errors were ignored. Khawla used multiple feedback when treating her students' errors. She used for example elicitation, then repetition. Sometimes she used metalinguistic cues then elicitation in one error treatment turn.

Types of oral corrective feedback used for low achieving students

Low achieving students received corrective feedback immediately after their errors from both teachers. The following table illustrates the types of corrective feedback used for low achieving students by both teachers.

Table 7: Distribution of Oral Corrective Feedback Types Given to Low Achieving Students.

	<i>Khawla</i>	<i>Helala</i>
<i>Types of oral corrective feedback</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Low</i>
<i>Recast</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Explicit Correction</i>	—	—
<i>Clarification Request</i>	—	—

<i>Elicitation</i>	4	9
<i>Metalinguistic Cues</i>	1	1
<i>Repetition</i>	1	1
<i>Ignoring</i>	1	—
<i>Others</i>	—	—

As it is clear from the table, Helala tended to treat low achieving students' errors implicitly. Recast was the most frequently used corrective feedback type. However, Khawla tended to use prompts with low achieving students. The most common type was elicitation since she used it four times. In contrast, Helala's second most common feedback type was prompts. She used elicitation nine times to treat their errors. The second most frequently used corrective feedback used by Khawla was recast. It was used three times to treat their errors. The other types of prompts like repetition and metalinguistic cues were used quite similar between the two teachers. One error was ignored by Khawla, however, no errors were ignored by Helala. Both teachers preferred not to treat low achieving students' errors explicitly.

To sum up different types of oral corrective feedback (See Appendix D for examples) were given to high, average, and low achieving students. There is a difference in the usage of prompts, explicit way, and implicit way in dealing with those types of students. Khawla preferred to use the implicit way in dealing with her high achieving students. She preferred to use prompts in treating both average and low achieving students. The other teacher, Helala, preferred to use the implicit way in treating all her students' errors regardless of their level of proficiency.

Students' oral corrective feedback preferences

Do students of different levels prefer to be corrected in certain ways? The questionnaire which I constructed helped me to answer the fourth question of my

study, "What kind of oral corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?" The students' questionnaire revealed that high, average, and low achieving students prefer certain kinds of oral corrective feedback (See Appendix E).

High achieving students' preference of oral corrective feedback

In both classes (grade nine and grade 12) high achieving students preferred their errors to be treated implicitly. Grade nine students' responses to statement nine revealed that ten students of those surveyed agreed that they feel comfortable when their teacher corrects their errors in an indirect way. Only one student was not sure. Grade 12 high achieving students shared the same point of view since eight students agreed that they feel comfortable when the teacher corrects their errors implicitly. Two students were not sure and one student disagreed (see Figure 1 below)

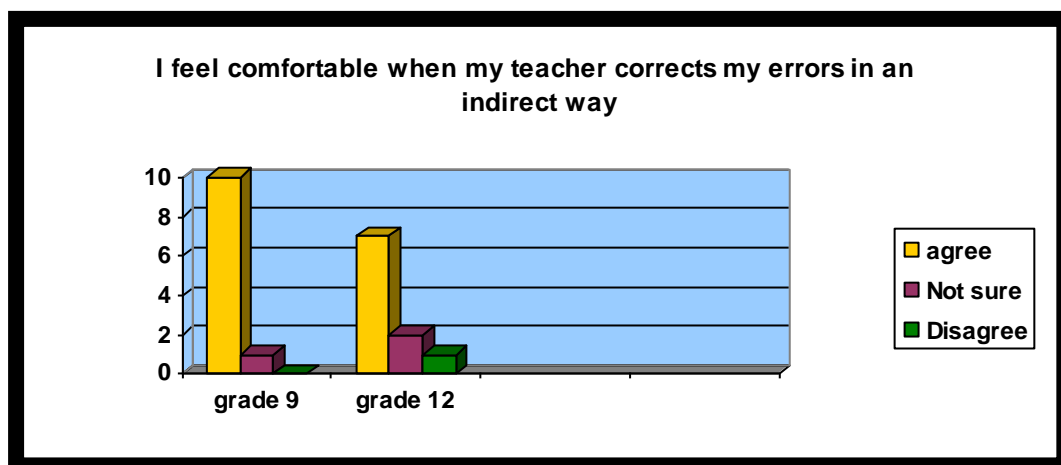


Figure 1: High achieving students' responses to statement 9 in grade 9 (n=11) in grade 12 (n=10)

In addition to that, those students noticed their errors when their teacher corrects their errors in an indirect way. Figure 2 below shows that in grade nine, six students agreed that they noticed their errors in treating their errors implicitly, three students were not sure, and two students didn't agree that they noticed their errors.

Figure 2 below also illustrates high achieving students' preferences in grade 12. Four

students noticed their errors when the teacher corrects their errors implicitly. Only three students were not sure of that, and also three students didn't notice their errors.

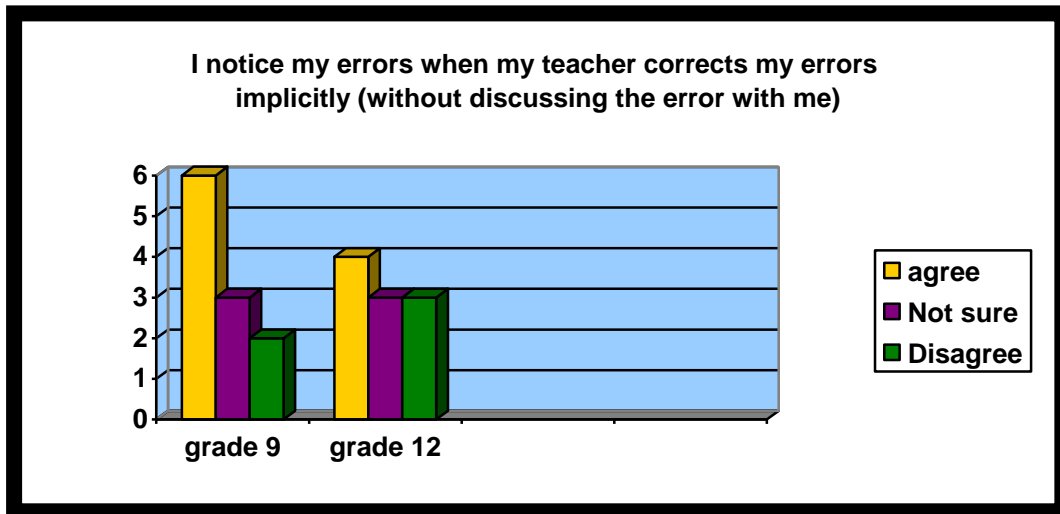


Figure 2: High achieving students' responses to statement 12 in grade 9 (n=11) in grade 12 (n=10)

High achieving students preferred their teachers to recast when giving oral corrective feedback because in their point of view they learn from it. In grade nine, eight students agreed that they learn when the teacher rephrases their errors in a correct form and only three students were not sure of that. In grade 12, seven students stated they learned better when the teacher rephrases their errors in a correct form while only three students were not sure of that (see Figure 3 below).

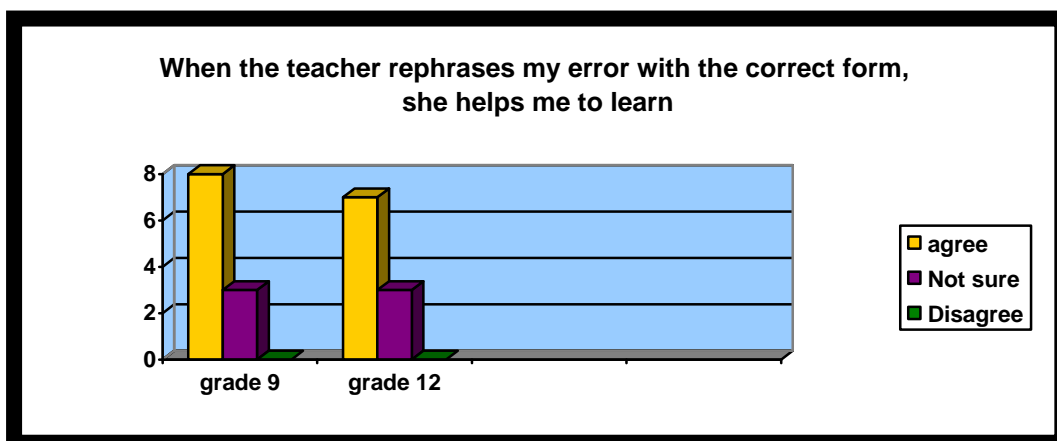


Figure 3: High achieving students' responses to statement 10 in grade 9 (n=11) in grade 12 (n=10)

The students in both classes listed their reasons for their preference of the implicit way when teachers correct their errors which was the embarrassment factor. Since they are the best students in the class, they don't want their teachers to confront their errors obviously among their classmates. Their written responses to the questions were translated from Arabic and their comments were not edited by the researcher. One student wrote, "I want my teacher to treat my errors in an indirect way in order not to embarrass me in front of my colleagues". At the same time, they didn't want other students to make fun of them since one student wrote, "I want my teacher to treat my errors in a very prestigious way in order not to give other students the chance to make fun of me". The rest of high achieving students concentrated on the techniques of error treatment. One student wrote, "The best way is when the teacher rephrases my error in a correct way". Another student wrote, "When the teacher asks me to repeat my erroneous sentence or when she repeats my erroneous sentence or when her facial expressions say I have a mistake are my favorite ways in correcting mistakes". Thus, confronting the error treatment to the whole class not to the one who made the error was one of their preferable techniques.

High achieving students really cared about their level in English since one of the students wrote, "I don't want my teacher to delay correcting my mistakes till the end of the period or to another period. I want her to correct my errors immediately". Another student said, "I don't want my teacher to treat my errors in a direct way, or quickly, or in Arabic. I need her to treat my errors in English to learn more". This clear statement from the students goes in line with Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005). They pointed out that "quick corrections are not useful, unless they are about something repeatedly worked on in class" (p. 124). They illustrate quick corrections by stating that they are "caused by fatigue, anxiety, lack of attention or some other

aspect of performance, but [students need] extended correction of errors [which] show faulty or incomplete knowledge" (p. 124). Those students were aware of their teachers' techniques in treating their errors since one student wrote, "My teacher corrects our mistakes indirectly. If we commit a mistake, she looks at our faces and smiles since then we know that our utterance is erroneous".

In spite of the fact that high achieving students preferred the implicit way, it didn't matter for them if the teacher discusses the error with them. In grade nine, seven students agreed on that, while four students were not sure. In grade 12, seven students felt comfortable when the teacher discusses their errors and only three students felt uncomfortable (See Figure 4 below).

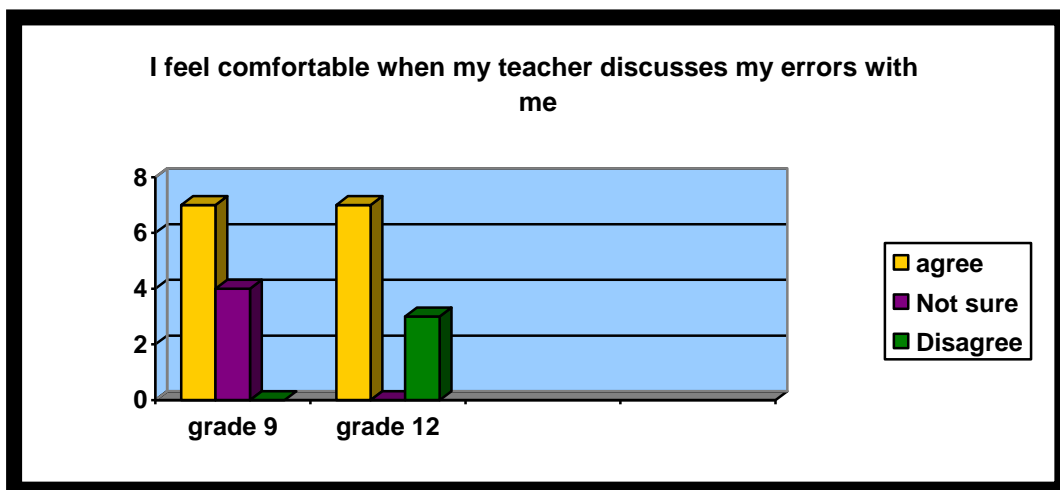


Figure 4: High achieving students' responses to statement 1 in grade 9 (n=11) in grade 12 (n=10)

At the same time they didn't want their errors to be neglected or ignored. Ten students didn't want their errors to be ignored, while one student was not sure of that in grade nine. In grade 12, all the students didn't want their teacher to ignore their mistakes (see Figure 5 below).

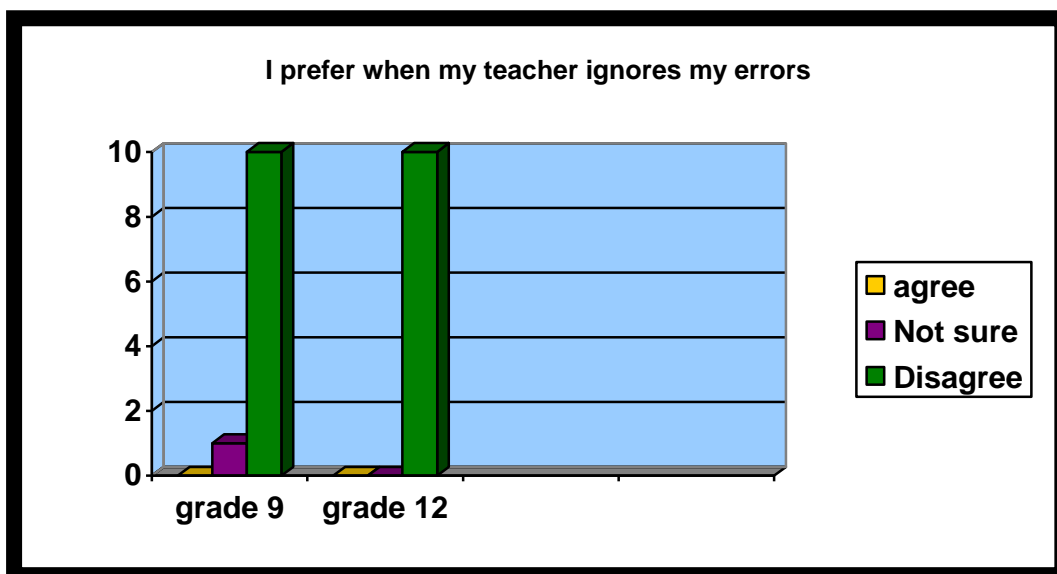


Figure 5: High achieving students' responses to statement 13 in grade 9 (n=11) in grade 12 (n=10)

Ignoring errors for high achieving students was not a preferred way since one student wrote:

If my teacher neglects my errors, I will commit mistakes once, twice, and so one. It will stick in my memory. And you know, we are human beings and every person can commit a mistake since we were not born scientists but with the accurate teaching we could be so

So, it seems that those students need to develop their interlanguage and develop their skills in English.

High achieving students wanted their teachers to correct their mistakes in speaking discussions during the class time because of its great benefit as they listed. One of the students wrote, "I want my teacher to correct me to learn from my mistakes. In addition to that, my friends will learn too". Another student preferred to discuss her errors with her teacher because as she wrote, "I benefit from my teacher's discussions since I love discussion and negotiation and I can learn from her because

she sets a good example for me". Those students see their teachers as expert in language. Other important factor which made high achieving students want to discuss their errors was "to do better in my exams" as one of the students wrote. It seems that high achieving students knew the importance of correcting mistakes and had positive attitudes toward it.

To sum up, high achieving students preferred their teachers to treat their errors implicitly. Recast was their preferred oral corrective feedback type but they accepted different techniques for error treatment.

Average students' preference of oral corrective feedback

Average students preferred their errors to be treated using prompts. One reason was that they felt comfortable when the teacher discusses their errors with them. All grade nine and grade twelve average students agreed that they were comfortable when discussing their errors with the teacher (see Figure 6 below).

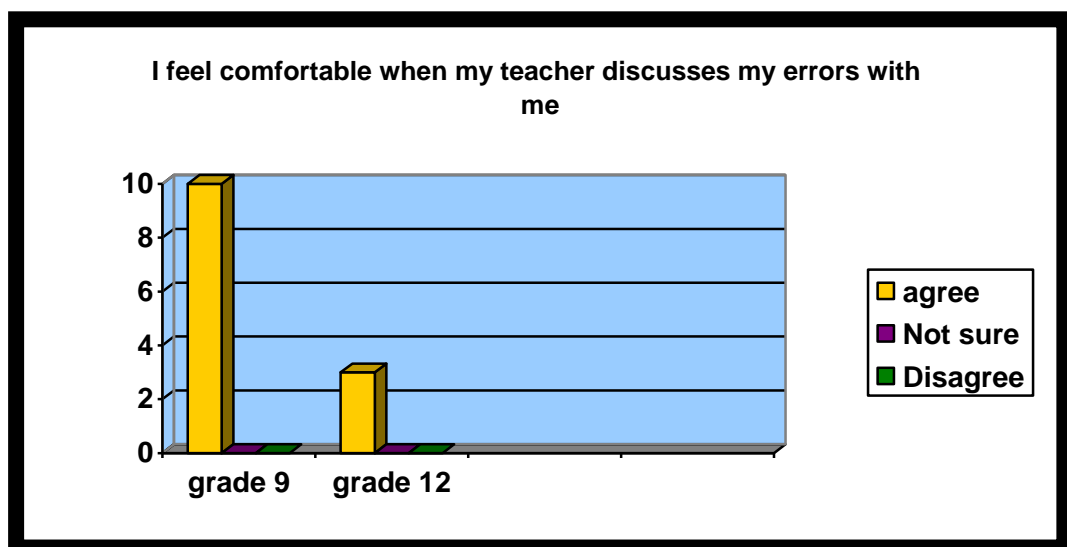


Figure 6: Average students' responses to statement 1 in grade 9 (n=10) in grade 12 (n=3)

One of the students wrote, "I want my teacher to discuss my error with me to learn from them and benefit my classmates as well". Another student clarified, "I want my

teacher to discuss my error with me to differentiate between the correct and the wrong forms of the language".

In addition to that, they knew the importance of error treatment since all average students in both classes agreed that they didn't want their errors to be ignored (see Figure 7 below). This finding is similar to the findings of the studies of Katamaya (2007, 2006) because in both studies the students' least favorable corrective feedback was when the teacher ignores their errors.

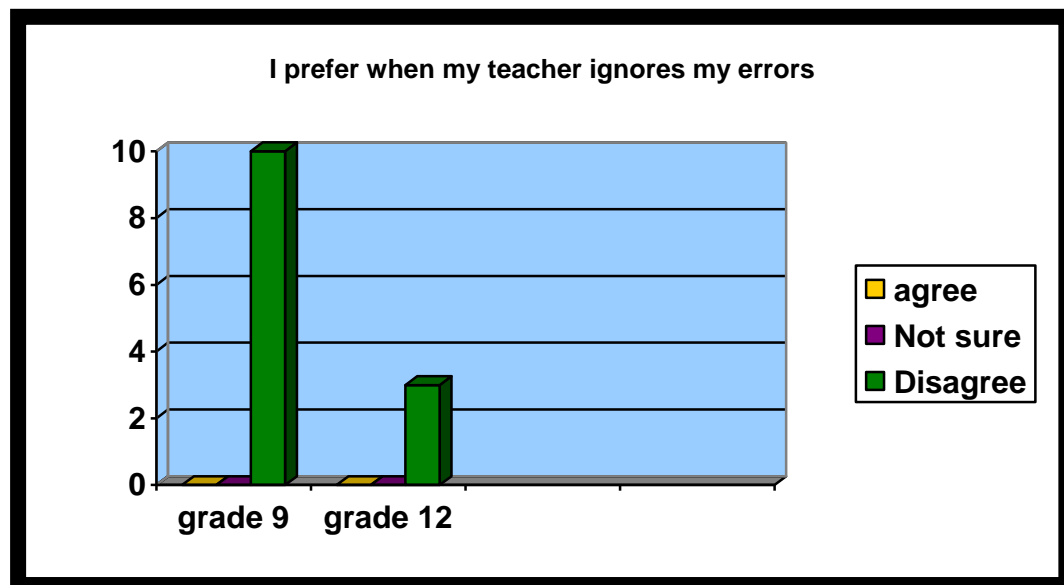


Figure 7: Average students' responses to statement 13 in grade 9 (n=10) in grade 12 (n=3)

Average students liked their teachers to give them a little help to push them to generate a correct answer. In grade nine, nine students agreed that they felt comfortable when the teacher gives them clues, hints, and suggestions to help them correct their errors, while one student disagreed with this statement. In grade 12, two students agreed with this statement, while only one student was not sure of that (see Figure 8 below).

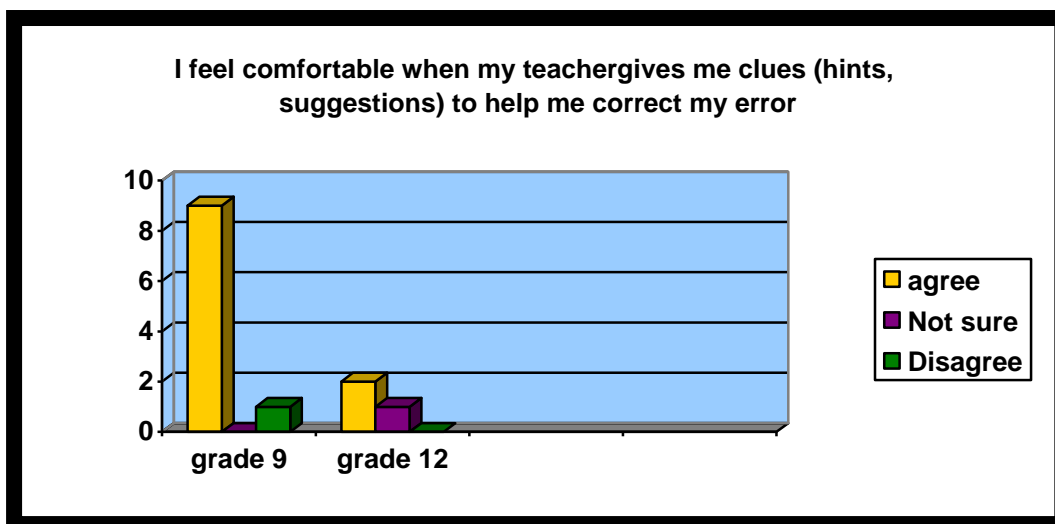


Figure 8: Average students' responses to statement 7 in grade 9 (n=10) in grade 12 (n=3)

One of the students said "I prefer my teacher to explain the error and the reason of the error in an explicit way". They agreed that some help from the teacher would push them generate the correct form as one wrote "I want my teacher to give me some examples to help me". Another student wanted to correct the error herself without any help from other student. She said, "I want to correct my error myself not my colleagues and it doesn't matter if my teacher corrects me". For some of the students in this study, they preferred self correction than peer correction. This goes in line with the findings of the study of Katamaya (2006) in which the students were more positive toward teacher correction than peer correction because from their point of view they learn better from their teachers.

Average students didn't like to be corrected in an indirect way. In grade nine, seven students felt uncomfortable when their teacher corrects their mistakes implicitly while three students were not sure of that. However all grade twelve average students felt uncomfortable when the teacher corrects their mistakes implicitly (see Figure 9 below).

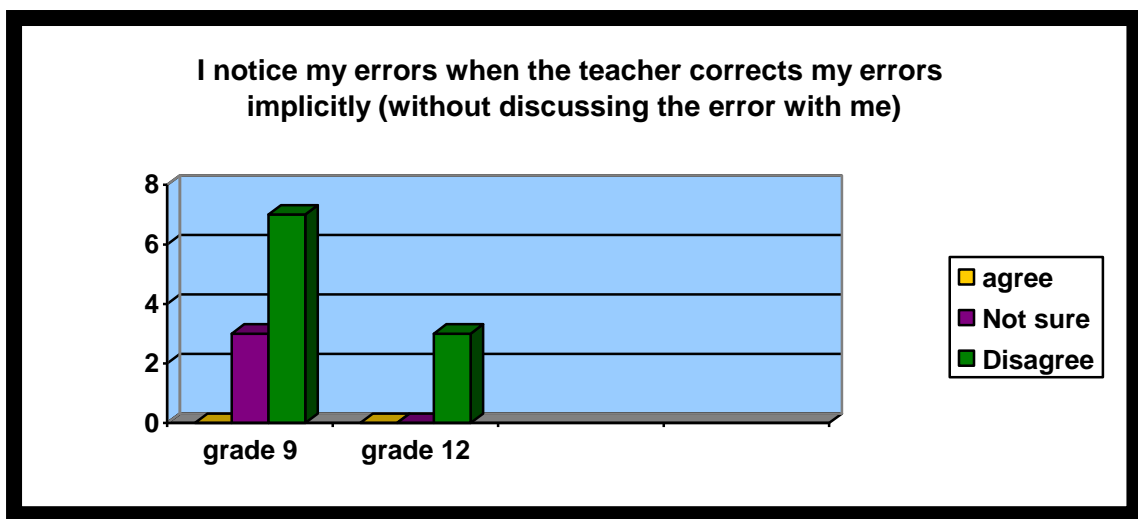


Figure 9: Average students' responses to statement 11 in grade 9 (n=10) in grade 12 (n=3)

One student commented "I don't want my teacher to rephrase my error in a correct way". Other students concentrated on error treatment techniques. One student wrote, "I don't want my teacher to embarrass me and at the same time don't shout at me". Average students shared high achieving students' their view of the embarrassment factor.

To sum up, average students, didn't want their errors to be treated implicitly. They preferred their teachers to give them hints, suggestions, clues, and questions to lead them to the correct answer because they liked to correct their errors alone. For them the most effective type of corrective feedback was prompts.

Low achieving students' preference of oral corrective feedback

In both classes, results showed that low achieving students preferred to learn from their errors by treating them using prompts. All grade 12 low achieving students benefited from their mistakes when the teacher asks them to repair the error themselves. While in grade nine, five students agreed that they benefited from this treatment. One student was not sure and two students felt they don't benefit from this treatment (see Figure 10 below).

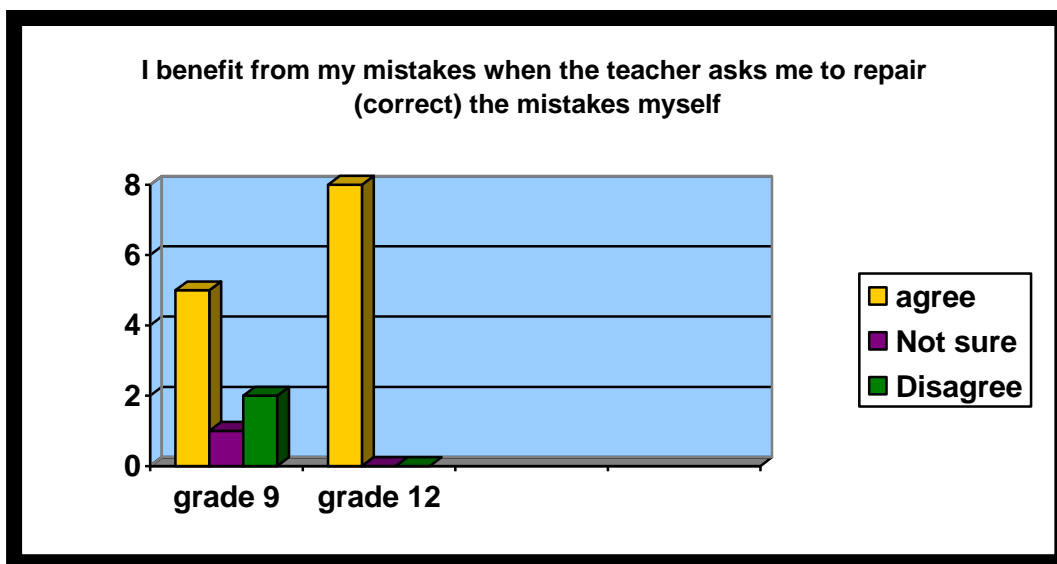


Figure 10: Low achieving students' responses to statement 2 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

In grade 12, seven out of eight students didn't want their teachers to neglect their errors. In grade nine, six students didn't want the teacher to ignore their errors while one student agreed on this statement and also one student was not sure (see Figure 11 below).

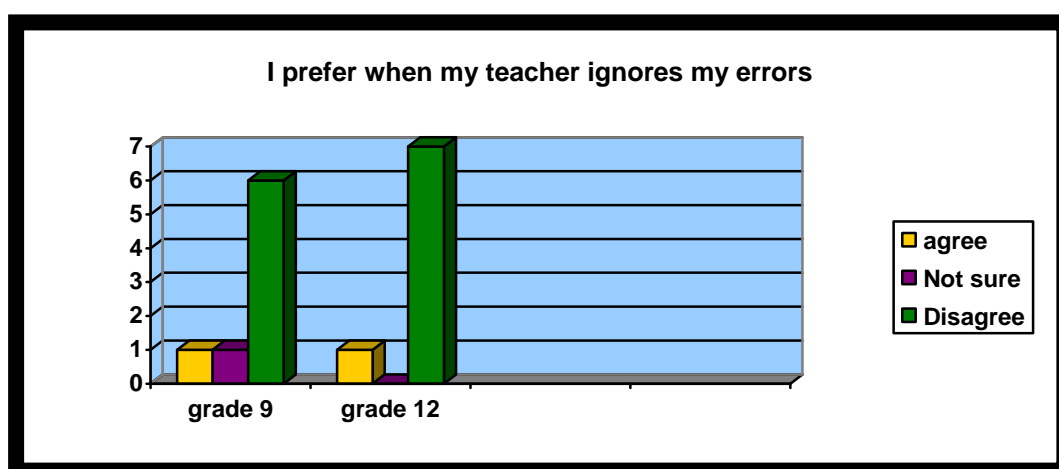


Figure 11: Low achieving students' responses to statement 13 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

Their answers indicated that they give error correction great importance. They listed the same reasons as high and average achieving students. Caring about their grades in English, caring about their development in English skills, learning from errors, and benefiting their colleagues were their main reasons. One of the students wrote "I want

my teacher to discuss me with my errors even helping me with the simplest things like reading".

Low achieving students need a little help from their teacher to guide them when correcting their mistakes. In their response to statement 7, all grade nine low achieving students felt comfortable when the teacher gives them hints or suggestions to correct their errors. One student from grade 12 was not sure of that. In contrast, seven students agreed that they benefited from this kind of error treatment (see Figure 12 below).

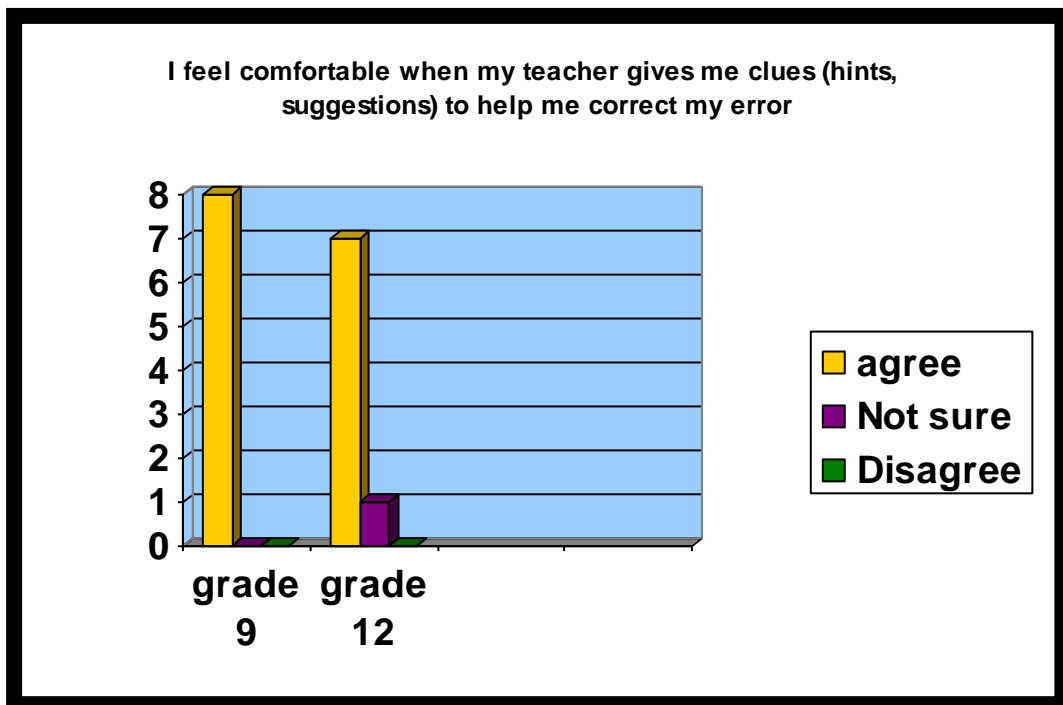


Figure 12: Low achieving students' responses to statement 7 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

Moreover, all grade 12 low achieving students felt happy, relaxed, and at ease when the teacher gives them choices to help them repair their errors. In grade nine, seven out of eight students felt happy with this kind of treatment (see Figure 13 below).

Katamaya (2006) indicates that this treatment could benefit learners and could enable students to notice their error and self correct. In addition to that, Katamaya (2007)

explained that "self-correction is easier to remember, because someone has put something right in his or her own head" (p. 298)

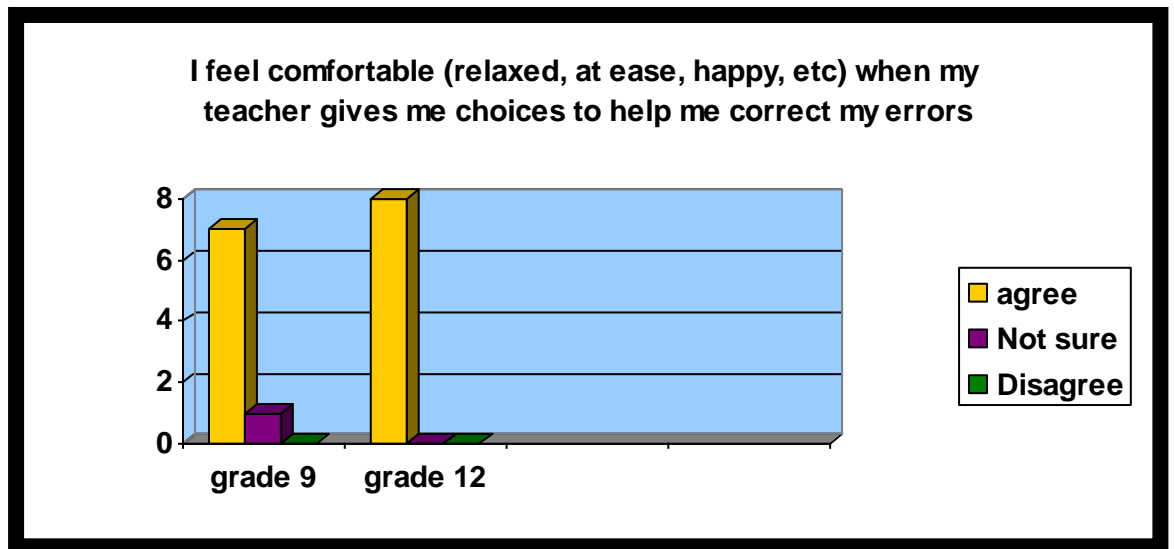


Figure 13: Low achieving students' responses to statement 8 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

Those students gave examples of the kind of help they want from their teachers. One said, "I want my teacher to give me a short time to consider my answer and think of my mistake". Another student wrote, "I want my teacher to give me hints or options to correct my mistake". They wanted to make sure that they required the correct form of the language as one wrote, "I want my teacher to test me after my error by asking me similar question to emphasize the correct answer". One of the students commented, "I don't want my teacher to correct me in a quick way but instead I want her to explain every thing to me". Quick correction was not a preferred technique for them as stated by high achieving students.

Low achieving students don't prefer an indirect way in treating their errors. In their response to statement 11, both classes shared the same results. Five students didn't feel comfortable when their errors are treated implicitly. Two students were not sure and one student felt comfortable (see Figure 14 below).

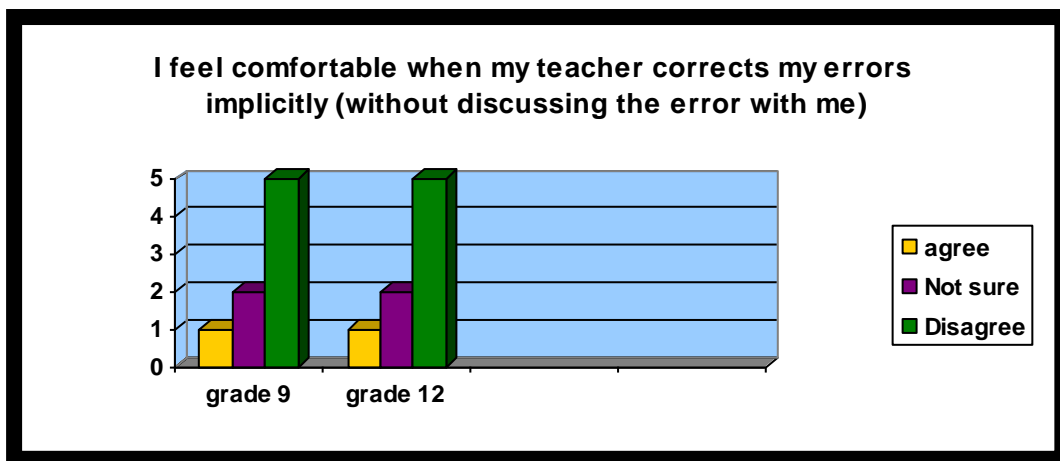


Figure 14: Low achieving students' responses to statement 11 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

One reason for this is because they didn't notice their error when they are treated implicitly. In their response to statement 12, four students from both classes didn't notice their errors when they are treated in an indirect way. In grade nine, two students were not sure, and at the same time two students noticed that. In grade 12, three students were not sure and one student noticed her errors (see Figure 15 below).

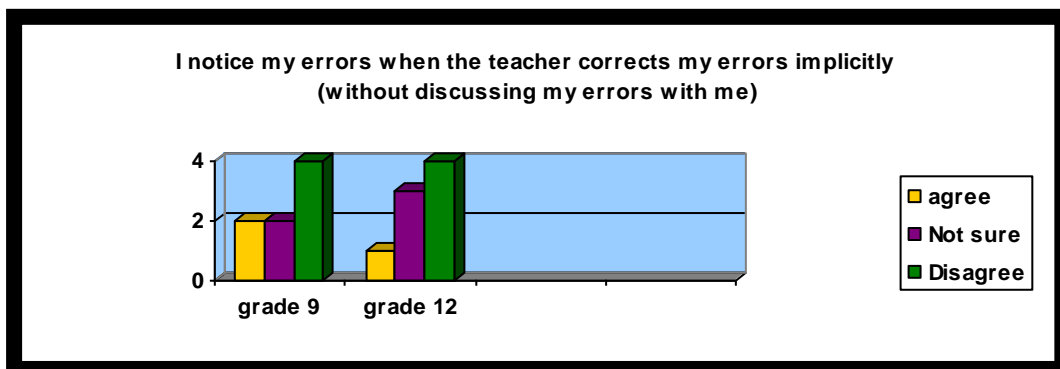


Figure 15: Low achieving students' responses to statement 12 in grade 9 (n=8) in grade 12 (n=8)

To sum up, low achieving students didn't like their teachers to embarrass them among their classmates by saying you are wrong. At the same time they didn't like their teachers to correct their errors in an indirect way, but instead they needed themselves to generate the repair. They preferred some help from the teacher by giving suggestions, hints, examples, and leading questions to reach the correct form of the language. So, they preferred prompts for their oral corrective feedback type.

High, average, and low achieving students shared views regarding teachers' error correction's techniques. All of them have positive attitudes toward error correction in line with the studies of Yoshida 2008, Katamaya 2007, Katamaya 2006, Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, Schulz 2001 and value its benefit for the development of their interlanguage. They don't want to be embarrassed among their classmates and at the same time they don't want their errors to be ignored by their teachers. They prefer to self correct and repair the error. However, high achieving students prefer their teachers to correct their errors implicitly. Average and low achieving students need a little help from the teachers like a hint, suggestions, options, comments or questions to push them to generate the repair themselves. In their point of view when teachers use this technique with them they notice the gap between their deviant form and the target form of the language and consequently, develop their interlanguage. The findings of this study don't contradict with the findings of Ammar and Spada's (2006) study. They identified two reasons behind the effectiveness of prompts for low achieving students: the clarity of this type of feedback and the opportunities which given to them to produce the target form of the language. The salience of this type which push them to self repair benefit them more. On the other hand, the knowledge of the target language of high achieving students might not be affected by the nature of the technique used.

Teachers' beliefs and rationale behind error treatment

The discrepancy in error treatment between the two teachers presents different beliefs and different teaching experiences. The interviews with the two teachers revealed different points of views. The analysis of this section helped me to answer the first question of my study, "What kind of oral corrective feedback do the teachers think can lead to learning? Why?" This analysis is divided into five sections: teachers'

beliefs regarding error treatment, rationale behind choices of the observed oral feedback types, teachers' points of view of students' preferences, results of students' preferences, and factors affecting teachers' choice of corrective feedback.

Teachers' beliefs regarding error treatment

It seems that both teachers know their practices very well. In terms of Helala, she completely knew her technique in treating her students' errors. She said, "I usually follow an implicit corrective feedback in my lessons. I repeat only the correct form of the students' mistakes". She preferred to use recast as I found in the observed lessons. Her technique was to make stress on the correct form while using recast to let students know their errors rather than showing them explicitly the error. According to her, pretending not to hear the error is the best way to inform students with their errors and leads to learning as well.

Her implicit way in treating errors, as I found, was the most common type to be used with all types of students regardless of their level of proficiency. She didn't differentiate between high, average, and low achieving students in treating their errors. Different factors control the teacher's choice in correcting errors done by students according to both teachers. The skill of the lesson the teacher is focusing on, the objectives of the lesson, the accuracy aim, and the fluency aim are some of these factors which were shared between the two teachers. For example, Helala emphasized that:

If I am explaining a grammar lesson then I should correct every single word, but if I am explaining a speaking lesson there is no need to focus on mistakes because I want to develop the fluency of the students and if you stop them on every single word they will be shy and will not speak again.

The second teacher, Khawla, has different beliefs and techniques in treating her students' errors. She thought that she used recast mostly in treating her students' errors. However, she believed that the types of corrective feedback need to be given differently for high, average, and low achieving students. As she clarified, no specific rule controls her choice but it is a combination of multi factors like the level of the students and the personalities of the students. She said that:

For example I have a student in my mind here, I don't imagine myself giving her explicit correction because directly she will flush in red of course so, it depends on the students themselves. On the other hand there are students that you have to give them clear feedback when you correct them maybe because they are low achievers even if they are average students they might not get it

Both teachers agreed that they didn't like to over-correct their students' errors.

They didn't want to correct every single mistake done by students. This clear statement goes in line with Salikin (2001). He states that "It is interesting to note that although the learners need correction, it is not acceptable to correct every error when they are speaking... because this practice destroys their confidence and forces them to spend so much effort on details that they lose to overall ability to use the language" (p. 31).

To sum up, both teachers believed that different factors affect their choice of corrective feedback like the objective of the lesson and the nature of the lesson. However, the level of proficiency was seen differently. Khawla believed that it is an important factor which forces teachers to treat students' errors differently, however, other factors might be involved.

Rationale behind choices of the observed oral feedback types

For Helala, lack of time was her basic reason for her feedback choice since she was not only teaching grade 12 curriculum, but also CEPA. She didn't have much time to consider and negotiate students' errors so she preferred to use an implicit way. This reason basically was stated by the teachers in Yoshida (2008) study. They chose recasts because of the time restrictions since they have task and activities and they have to be finished in the allotted time. Her second important reason that affects her preference was the age of the students. Because they are grown up students "they don't want to be embarrassed in front of other students" Helala clarified. The students in this study don't want their teachers to confront the errors to them in order not to embarrass them (See Yodish, 2008, for social strains and pedagogical perspectives).

Multiple feedback which is "combinations of more than one type of feedback in one teacher turn" (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p. 48) is very useful as stated by the authors. Helala clarified that this type of feedback would be effective and would help students to reach the correct answer despite the fact that she didn't use it at all in her lessons. She said, "In other classes I used many ways: sometimes self correction sometimes peer correction sometimes I draw [student's] attention [to the error] and sometimes I correct if there is no response".

As I noticed, multiple feedback was used frequently in Khawla's three lessons since she used a combination of two corrective feedback like elicitation with metalinguistic cues. She commented saying, "I was trying to be flexible with my students by giving them the first chance it might not work so this would be a second chance for them". This piece of information was very valuable for her as she admitted because she didn't even know that she used this multiple feedback because treating students' errors was a natural process for her.

According to Khawla, prompts are her preferred feedback type when dealing with average and low achieving students for the same reason. When they make an error they are not aware that they are committing a mistake so as she said:

It's better to give them a short time in order to be able to think of the mistakes that they've just committed and to see whether they will be able to correct them or not. It's better than to give them the answer myself.

Khawla believed that some students might not reach the correct form of the language, but directly seeking the help of others would solve the problem better than correcting their errors explicitly. Khawla believed in the value of peer correction for the students as the studies indicated (Katamaya 2007, 2006, Schulz 2001). In contrast, high achieving students were treated differently. Their errors were treated implicitly and Khawla linked it to their level of proficiency as suggested by Ammar and Spada 2006, and Mackey and Philp 1998. Khawla commented:

With high achieving students most of the time I am sure their mistakes were slips they can correct themselves. So when I say the thing they've been mistaken in correctly, they notice it and even I can notice that in their eyes

To sum up, Helala defended her choices of observed corrective feedback to the age of her students and the lack of time with the long curriculum, while Khawla justified her choices to the students' level of proficiency.

Teachers' points of view of students' preferences

Both teachers expressed different points of view regarding their relevance of corrective feedback and their students' preferences. Both teachers haven't ever been aware of their students' preference regarding their techniques in correcting their errors. However, it would make a difference in changing Helala's techniques if she knew her students' preferences. She would follow their preferences "to satisfy them,

and to motivate them". She clarified, "If I use the corrective feedback that they don't want, they will not answer again, they will not respond again. Then I should use the corrective feedback that they like". Helala knew the importance of taking into a consideration the students' beliefs and perceptions regarding the teaching practices to reach a successful language learning classroom. Helala's clarifications agreed with Schulz's (2001) statement "student beliefs play an important role in motivation, selection of learning strategies, and learning in general" (p. 245).

In contrast, Khawla saw that a teacher should not always follow her students' preference in correcting their mistakes. "It depends on the mistake she [the learner] committed. It depends on the situation. It depends on the activity that we are dealing with. For example if she prefers recast, recast might not be effective in all situations", Khawla clarified. She distinguished between two ideas which were how students like to be corrected and the overall benefit from error treatment. From Khawla's point of view, some students preferred to be corrected implicitly because they like it and they don't want their errors to be highlighted among their classmates, but at the same time they didn't benefit from this treatment. Her explanation agreed with Yoshida (2008) implication of the conflict between the social perspectives and the pedagogical perspectives.

To sum up, both teachers haven't ever asked their students about their error treatment techniques, however, if Helala had the chance she would follow her students' preferences to motivate them. On the other hand, Khawla might follow her students' preferences but not all the time because the objectives of the lesson and the situation itself control her choices.

Results of students' preferences

The results of the students' questionnaire were revealed for both teachers to comment on them. In terms of Helala, she justified the satisfaction of high achieving students with her technique in error correction to psychological reasons. She clarified:

They don't want to be embarrassed in front of other students. They think highly of themselves. They know that they are very excellent. If they commit any mistake, they will feel embarrassed in front of the others who are lower than them.

Average students were not completely satisfied with the feedback given to them since they preferred their errors to be treated using prompts. Helala justified this to their level and their need for things to be clear and justified for them. She pointed out that:

They are aware of their average level and they don't feel shy. Every body knows that they are not excellent. So, it doesn't matter for them to be corrected with this way or that way just to know the correct form of their error

Low achieving students had similar preference like average students. Their errors were treated implicitly but they preferred to be treated by using prompts. Helala explained that their low level in English was the reason since they need every single word to help them developing their skills in English. She noted that, "this type of students want [the teacher] to explain every single word for them because [all their utterances are] wrong. Then you should stop explaining, stop everything and explain the question and then the answer and it needs time". She emphasized that some low achieving students in her class were very low proficient students as beginners since they didn't know even simple grammatical rules. In her point of view, why should she bother herself with them when they need that much time?

In terms of Khawla's students' preference, high achieving students were completely satisfied with her implicit way in treating their errors. She found that it is the effective way because they noticed their errors directly when the teacher uses recast. However, average students preferred prompts as a corrective feedback technique to be treated as Khawla did. She commented that their level was the reason because they need much time to think and get back the original information. Regarding low achieving students they desired to be corrected by prompts. Khawla commented:

I tried to treat low achieving students' errors implicitly as you know I have eight years of experience in teaching and actually I found that it was not effective with them. They are low achievers and they lack the knowledge. They don't know how to correct themselves. They even sometimes when they commit a mistake they are not aware that they committed a mistake because they think that it is correct. So using an implicit way might not work with them. That's why I insist in clarifying everything.

To sum up, different reasons appeared which controlled the two teachers' choices of oral corrective feedback for high, average, and low achieving students. Level of the proficiency, age, embarrassment factors, and the teachers' points of view in the suitability of the given feedback type are some reasons.

Factors affecting teachers' choice of corrective feedback

Similar factors were listed by both teachers but different influences on teachers' choice of corrective feedback types were found between the two teachers. Level of students, shortage of time, students' age, students' preferences, objectives of the lesson, and cultural backgrounds of the students are some of these factors. According to Helala time of the period was very crucial since a teacher is asked to

focus on many different skills and subskills in one lesson, a teacher might use only one type of corrective feedback instead of discussing the error with every student.

Unlike Khawla who believed that the time of the period should not affect the teacher's choice of feedback. Khawla pointed out that:

I think in the 45 minutes you are not going to give many many activities. You have to be realistic when planning your lessons in order to be able to cope up with every thing: presenting your activities, practice them, and even giving feedback to your students.

However students' errors might be neglected during the last months of the semester since they were exhausted and they needed to finish up with their curriculum according to Khawla.

According to both teachers, the nature of the lesson also affects the teachers' choice of corrective feedback. They admitted that in grammar lessons the corrective feedback should be used explicitly to focus on accuracy while in speaking lessons it should be used implicitly to focus on fluency. In addition, both teachers noted that learners' personalities are one of the most important factors which should affect teacher's choice of corrective feedback. For example they preferred to use an implicit way in correcting shy students' errors. Also they preferred to be sensitive when treating highly confident students because sometimes they may feel proud of themselves and it doesn't matter if the teacher corrects their errors explicitly.

However, in some cases they might cry if their errors were highlighted among all their classmates.

The teacher's mood was one of the factors that Helala thought that should not affect her choice of corrective feedback. "If I am nervous, angry, sad, tired it doesn't affect my choice maybe my facial expressions shows that I am not happy today, but

the way of correcting their mistakes is the same", Helala clarified. On the other hand, Khawla believed that it affects the teacher's choice of corrective feedback "because when you are cheerful or active you are in a good mood. You give your students more than what you give them when you are in a bad mood". In her third observed lesson, as she said to me before that she was ill, she was not in a good mood. As a result, most of her feedback choice was recast. She justified this to her bad mood since she found that recast was the easiest one for her to use. The period of the time was a second factor that shouldn't affect teacher's choice of corrective feedback as seen by Helala either if the lesson was given in the first, second or the last period. On the other hand, Khawla believed that the period of the lesson affects teacher's choice of corrective feedback:

The teacher and the students are very active at the beginning of the day so they are trying to do their best during the lesson so, you give them more discussion about the students' mistakes. You give them more opportunities to correct themselves and longer time to think of the error they committed. But the last period I find myself that I don't have the energy so I prefer to give them the correct answer.

The most effective feedback type that should be used to treat high, average, and low achieving students depends on many things in Helala's point of view. She said, "study your students, know your lesson and your information and choose the best way which is suitable for your students. It's better to use your way to ask them about their preference to use a questionnaire". Helala admitted that if she had the chance next year, she would use this technique in asking students about their oral corrective feedback preference. According to Khawla, the most effective feedback for high achieving students was recast. The most effective feedback for average achieving

students was prompts (elicitation). The most effective feedback for low achieving students was dealing with their errors more explicitly by making their errors general statements, by not looking at their eyes, and by eliciting the correct answer from the whole class, as I found in her lessons. If she had the chance to know her students' preferences, she would not follow them because she said, "I am the one who decides the benefit of my students" plus her experience in teaching.

To sum up, the teacher's choice of corrective feedback is controlled by many factors. Not all the factors have equal importance or degree of influence. The teacher herself identifies and judges the benefit of each type.

In conclusion, the results of my study revealed that errors committed by high, average, and low achieving students were treated differently by both teachers. Some students' preference of oral corrective feedback matched the teachers' error treatment while others didn't. Teachers indicated that the level of proficiency could be one factor of their choices of corrective feedback type plus other important factors.

To answer my research question, "What kind of oral corrective feedback do the participating teachers in Masafi School in Fujairah use?", they used the different kinds of oral corrective feedback indicated in Lyster and Ranta (1997). They used the implicit way, explicit way, and prompts. For my second question, "What difference, if any, in the kinds of feedback given by the teachers is there between high, average, and low achieving students?", both teachers used corrective feedback differently for high, average, and low achieving students. However, Helala used recast most frequently with all levels of the students. Khawla used recast most frequently with high achieving students. She used elicitation with average and low achieving students. The answer to question three "What kind of oral corrective feedback do the teachers think can lead to learning? Why?" Helala has no certain effective feedback pattern for her

students since a lot of variables and factors control the teacher's choice of corrective feedback. Khawla finds that recast is the most effective type for high achieving students, elicitation is the most effective type for average and low achieving students. Recast would be beneficial for high achieving students because of their advanced level whereas, average and low achieving students want things to be more explicit to benefit from the error treatment. The final question "What kind of oral corrective feedback do students prefer? Why?" was answered from the different beliefs of the different levels of students. High achieving students prefer the implicit way because they are the best students in the class so they don't want to make mistakes in front of their classmates. Average and low achieving students prefer prompts because they want a little assistance from the teacher to push them to repair the error which in its turn can develop their interlanguage. Chapter five discusses the implications of these answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter discusses the conclusions drawn from this research and the implications of these conclusions on teachers' treatment of their students' oral errors. It has five sections: summary of the students' questionnaire results, summary of teachers' interview results, implications for EFL teachers in the UAE, the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research, and a final thought.

Summary of the students' questionnaire results

The students surveyed acknowledged the importance of correcting oral errors. This is generally goes in line with the literature review in this thesis which outlines a variety of studies over this issue. The studies included in the review (Yoshida 2008, Katamaya 2007, Katamaya 2006, Lasagabaster and Sierra 2005, Schulz 2001) were mainly designed to address the issue of oral error treatment and students' preferences. The findings of this study do not contradict what is generally known and discussed in previous studies about the topic.

The data I collected from the students' questionnaire revealed that students with their different proficiency levels have positive attitudes of error correction. They don't want their teachers to ignore their errors. They don't want to be embarrassed in front of their other classmates by teachers making their errors obvious. Moreover, they would like their teachers to perform some facial expressions to know that they committed an error. High achieving students preferred the implicit way when teachers correct their oral errors. On the other hand, average and low achieving students preferred prompts as a way to treat their errors. From their point of view, such preferred ways of corrective feedback help them notice the gap between their erroneous utterances and the target form and, as a result, develop their language.

Summary of the teachers' interviews results

The responses of the teachers to the interviews yielded interesting points in the field of teachers' treatment for the students' oral errors. The teachers are aware of their philosophy in treating their students' errors. They clearly acknowledged the importance of treating students' selective and productive errors. In addition to that, their choices of oral corrective feedback type is identified by a mixture of factors like the age of the students, the level of proficiency, the objectives of the lesson, the skills and the subskills of the lesson, and the allotted time. However, the most important factors which affected their choices of the corrective feedback in this study were the age of the students, the level of proficiency, and the time restriction.

Implications for EFL teachers in the UAE

All the participants, teachers and students, acknowledged the importance of correcting students' errors since it facilitates students' learning of second language. Thus, teachers need to be sensitive when correcting students' errors in classrooms because as Gorbett (1979) suggests errors "must be seen not as signs of failure, but as signs of learning itself" (24). To achieve this goal, errors of students with their different levels "need to be handled carefully since students are diverse in learning styles and preferences toward instructional practices" (Katamaya, 2006, p. 1248). So, "The challenge for teachers then is to provide the learner with corrections that they both notice and understand" (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2005, p. 126).

This study revealed that students with their different proficiency levels don't always notice their errors after each oral error treatment. High achieving students preferred the implicit way when teachers correct their errors because "recasts are useful in that they show learners the correct forms without affecting the flow of conversation, and without risking embarrassing the learners by making the errors

more obvious" (Yoshida, 2008, p. 91). However, recasts may not always be the appropriate corrective feedback for all students "because learners don't always pay attention to the teachers' utterances. They may also prefer working out the correct forms themselves" (p. 91) as average and low achieving students indicated. The study indicated that the participants learn better when the teachers give them time and a little help to think and repair the error themselves.

This study explored the patterns of corrective feedback given to students for their spoken errors and revealed that from a social perspective, teachers tended to provide recast while from a pedagogical perspective some learners like to be given time to think of the correct answer themselves. Therefore, teachers need to follow Yoshida's (2008) suggestion that "it is not easy for teachers to provide many learners with opportunities to think about errors and to correct them in the limited time available, [but] they may need to give learners more opportunities to self correct" (p. 91). So, the best way is to give learners some time to think of their errors and to try to correct themselves. However, in the UAE, the time constraints imposed by a heavy curriculum may make this difficult to do.

Restructuring curriculum to give teachers more opportunities to provide learners with self correction is a very important implication that can be considered. If the curriculum is designed reasonably to suit the time limit, learners will have more opportunities to self correct. By this way the objectives of the curriculum will be achieved and learning opportunities will increase as well. Teachers will give each learner a chance to self correct and develop his/her interlanguage.

The question that imposes itself here is 'Do we, as teachers, need to follow the students beliefs, perceptions, and preferences?' Mantle-Bromley (1995) states that "Teachers must first acknowledge that some students come to them with certain

attitudes, beliefs, and expectations that may actually prove harmful to their success in the classroom" (p. 383). However, "matching students' and teachers' expectations is vital for successful language learning" (Katamaya, 2007, p. 300). Nevertheless, "we should not assume that learners' preferences for error correction must always be reliable. We should entertain the idea that learners may err in their judgment as much as they err in their production of the target language" (Lasagabster and Sierra, 2005, p. 125). In order to avoid the conflict between the teachers' and the students' perceptions, it can be hoped that teachers will take time exploring their students' preferences toward oral error treatment. Katamaya (2006) points out that:

When the situation doesn't allow teachers to incorporate students' needs and expectations into their instructional practices, they should explain their reasons for this inability to their students. Conflict in expectations between teachers and students could be at least partially minimized by such an explanation. (p. 1254)

So, this study suggests that teachers need to explore their students' preferences and they need to make sure that their perceptions are modified to avoid the conflict between the two parties because "if teachers' behaviors don't mesh with student expectations, learner motivation and a teacher's credibility may be diminished" (Schulz, 2001, p. 256).

Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

The present study explored patterns of oral corrective feedback types given to students of different proficiency levels in grade nine and 12. It investigated the teachers' point of views regarding the most effective feedback type and it discovered the students' perceptions of the most effective feedback type. This study included a small number of participants which prevents me from generalizing my conclusions. In

addition, data from three lessons for each teacher was not enough to generalize my findings. Another important limitation is that the two teachers had previously known the focus of my study which may affect my findings.

In addition to that, the data was collected from only one school and from female participants. The results of the study would have been more comprehensive if it had included more teachers and students from other schools. Moreover, having male students might have added variety to my study in the sense that having more data from various sources might have strengthened the findings. One recommendation is to investigate cross-cultural differences to find out whether learners' perceptions of error correction differ across cultures. Despite its limitations, this study provides us with useful information that may contribute to our understanding of students' perceptions of teachers' corrections of their oral errors. Since the level of proficiency is considered as a very important variable in deciding the teachers' choice of corrective feedback, longitudinal studies are needed to investigate this point. This study is one step in this direction.

Final thought

Teachers' choices of oral corrective feedback are identified by many factors which judge their effectiveness. There is not only one effective feedback type because multi variables affect their effectiveness. Students with their different proficiency level need to receive certain patterns of corrective feedback to learn the target forms. Teachers need to consider their perceptions in order to establish a supportive classroom environment. This direction would ensure successful language learning. I think that exploring students' preferences and trying to maintain them would motivate students and develop their interlanguage.

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Appendix A: Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at collecting data for my research on teachers' feedback. Your honest responses will improve the quality of my research. All information collected will only be used for research purposes.

Section 1

Background information:

Please fill in the gaps with suitable information about yourself:

-Age: _____
-Your mark in English subject: _____

Section 2

Preferred Type of Feedback

Please read the following statements carefully, then tick (\checkmark) the appropriate box. Please make sure you answer all the statements in the questionnaire. This questionnaire is related to oral communication in front of all students in the class.

<i>Statements</i> العبارة	<i>Agree</i> أوافق	<i>Not sure</i> غير متأكد	<i>Disagree</i> غير موافق
1. I feel comfortable when my teacher discusses my errors with me. أشعر بالارتياح عندما تناقشني معلمي في أخطائي.			
2. I benefit from my mistakes when the teacher asks me to repair (correct) the mistakes myself. أستفيد من أخطائي عندما تطلب مني معلمي أن أصحح أخطائي بنفسي.			
3. My teacher asks me to fix my errors myself. تطلب مني معلمي أن أصحح الخطأ بنفسي.			

4. If Yes to Question "3", When she does, I learn better. إذا أجبت بالإيجاب للسؤال رقم "٣" فإنني أتعلم أفضل عندما تفعل المعلمة ذلك.			
٥. My teacher helps me to repair (correct) my errors myself. معلمتي تساعدني في تصحيح أخطائي بنفسي.			
٦. I feel uncomfortable when my teacher discusses my errors with me in the class. أشعر بعدم الارتياح عندما تناقشني معلمتي في أخطائي في الحصة.			
٧. I feel comfortable when my teacher gives me clues (hints, suggestions) to help me correct my error. أشعر بالارتياح عندما تعطيني معلمتي تلميحات (ملاحظات، اقتراحات) لكي تساعدني في تصحيح خطئي.			
٨. I feel comfortable (relaxed, at ease, happy, etc.) when my teacher gives me choices to help me correct my errors. أشعر بالارتياح عندما تعطيني معلمتي خيارات لتساعدني في تصحيح أخطائي.			
٩. I feel comfortable when my teacher corrects my errors in an indirect way. أشعر بالارتياح عندما تصحح معلمتي أخطائي بطريقة غير مباشرة.			
١٠. When the teacher rephrases my error with the correct form, she helps me to learn. عندما تعيد معلمتي صياغة خطئي ولكن بطريقة صحيحة فإنها تساعدني لكي أتعلم.			
١١. I feel comfortable when my teacher corrects my errors implicitly (without discussing the error with me). أشعر بالأرتياح عندما تصحح المعلمة أخطائي بطريقة غير مباشرة (بدون مناقشة الخطأ معي).			
12. I notice my errors when the teacher corrects my errors implicitly (without discussing my errors with me). أنتبه لأخطائي عندما تصحح معلمتي أخطائي بطريقة غير مباشرة (بدون أن تناقش خطئي معي).			
13. I prefer when my teacher ignores my errors. أفضل أن تتجاهل معلمتي أخطائي.			

Section 3
Rationale

Please answer the following questions honestly by stating your reasons:

أجيبني عن الأسئلة التالية بكل أمانة ثم اشرحي السبب أو الأسباب وراء ذلك:

1. When you make a mistake when speaking do you want your teacher to correct you? Why or why not?
١. عندما تخطئين في المناقشات الشفوية هل تريدين أن تصحح المعلمة أخطاءك؟ لم؟ أو لم لا؟

2. A. If you do want your teacher to correct you, how would you like her to correct you?
B. What kind of corrections don't you want your teacher to do?
٢. أ. إذا كنت تريدين أن تصحح المعلمة أخطاءك كيف تريدين أن تصحح خطأك؟
ب. وما هي طريقة التصحيح التي لا تريدين المعلمة أن تستخدمها؟

3. When you make a mistake when speaking, what does your teacher usually do?
٣. عندما تخطئين في المناقشات الشفوية كيف تصحح المعلمة عادة خطأك؟

Thank you very much,

Appendix B: Teachers' Interviews

Khawla's Interview

1. What type of oral corrective feedback do you think you give the most?

2. Do you think that you choose certain kind of oral corrective feedback with high, average, and low achieving students? If yes, what are they?

3. Do you think we should correct every single mistake done by students? Why?

4. Why did you use elicitation as the most frequent used corrective feedback type for low achieving students?

5. Why did you use elicitation as the most frequent used corrective feedback type for average students?

6. Why did you use recast as the most frequent used corrective feedback type for high achieving students?

7. What was clear in your lessons that you used multiple corrections frequently and most of them were combinations of two kinds: elicitation with other types, Do you have an aim in using such corrective feedback type?

8. Are you aware of student's preference for error correction?

9. If you are aware of students' preference how much do you believe that this knowledge of these preferences should affect your feedback options? Why? Or Why not?

10. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that high achieving students are satisfied with your techniques in correcting their mistakes; they preferred to be corrected implicitly. Do you want to comment?

11. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that average students are satisfied with your techniques in correcting their mistakes; they preferred to be corrected by using prompts. Do you want to comment?

12. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that low achieving students preferred to be corrected by prompts and they wanted to generate the repair themselves. Do you want to comment?

13. In your opinion what affects teacher's choice of corrective feedback?

14. Do you think that the following factors affect the choice of corrective feedback and how:

- Time of the period.
- Nature of the lesson.
- Teacher's mood.
- Learner's personalities.
- Period of the lesson (first periods or last periods)

15. What do you think is the most effective corrective feedback for high, mid, and low achieving students? Why?

16. If you have the chance next years to discover students' preference of oral corrective feedback, would you do it and follow their preference?

Helala's Interview

1. What type of oral corrective feedback do you think you give the most?

2. Do you think that you choose certain kind of oral corrective feedback with high, average, and low achieving students? If yes, what are they?

3. Do you think we should correct every single mistake done by students? Why?

4. Actually from analyzing the three observed lessons, I found that you used only "recast" as the most frequent used oral corrective feedback type for all kinds of students, why?

5. There is one common used corrective feedback "multiple corrections" in which a teacher uses a combination of two or more corrective feedback. In your point of view do you think this kind would help students?

6. Are you aware of student's preference for error correction?

7. If you are aware of students' preference how much do you believe that this knowledge of these preferences should affect your feedback options? Why? Or Why not?

8. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that high achieving students are satisfied with your techniques in correcting their mistakes; they preferred to be corrected implicitly. Do you want to comment?

9. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that average students are not completely satisfied 100% with your techniques in correcting their mistakes; they preferred to be corrected by using prompts. Do you want to comment?

10. According to my data "students' questionnaire", it seems that low achieving students are not completely satisfied 100% with your techniques in correcting their mistakes; they preferred to be corrected by prompts, Do you want to comment?

In your opinion what affects teacher's choice of corrective feedback?

11. Do you think that the following factors affect the choice of corrective feedback and how:

- Time of the period.
- Nature of the lesson.
- Teacher's mood.
- Learner's personalities.
- Period of the lesson (first periods or last periods)

12. What do you think is the most effective corrective feedback for high, mid, and low achieving students? Why?

13. If you have the chance next years to discover students' preference of oral corrective feedback, would you do it and follow their preference?

Appendix C: Consent Form

Parental Permission Letter

Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am a *student* in the *English department (TESOL)* at The American University of Sharjah. I am conducting a research project on *teacher's treatment of student's oral error in the class*. I request permission for your child to participate.

The study consists of *videotaping your child while participating in three English lessons*. The project will be explained in terms that your child can understand, and your child will participate only if she is willing to do so. Only *I and my supervisor, Dr. Cindy Gunn*, will have access to information from your child. At the conclusion of the study, children's responses will be reported as group results only.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate will not affect the services normally provided to your child by the *school*. Your child's participation in this study will not lead to the loss of any benefits to which she is otherwise entitled. Even if you give your permission for your child to participate, your child is free to refuse to participate. If your child agrees to participate, she is free to end participation at any time. You and your child are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your child's participation in this research study.

Should you have any questions or desire further information, please call me or email me at 050-659-4544, g00024579@aus.edu. Or you can email my study supervisor, Dr. Cindy Gunn, at cgunn@aus.edu. Keep this letter after *signing* and completing the bottom portion and *returning it back with your child*.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Michigan Technological University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at 1400 Townsend Drive, Houghton, MI 49931, by phone at (908) 487-2902, or by e-mail at jpolzien@mtu.edu. This study (IRB #M000) was approved by the IRB on July1, 2004

Sincerely,

Sendeyya Al Naqbi, American University of Sharjah

Please indicate whether or not you wish to allow your child to participate in this project by checking one of the statements below, signing your name and *sending the signed letter back with your child*. Sign both copies and keep one for your records.

I grant permission for my child to participate in *Sendeyya's study on teacher's _____ treatment of student's oral errors*.

I do not grant permission for my child to participate in *Sendeyya's study on teacher's _____ treatment of student's oral errors*

Printed Parent/Guardian Name _____

Printed Name of Child _____

Date _____

Appendix D: Examples of Teachers' Error Treatment

Elicitation was used to correct pronunciation, lexical, and grammatical mistakes. For example:

Sheikha: increase (pronunciation mistake)

Teacher: Yes, what's that word, girls.

Students together: increase

Teacher: yes, increase.

Elicitation was used to correct lexical mistakes:

Hajer: light

Teacher: light. Very good. Is the word "light" or there is another word. This word means "small" what is this word?

Salam: slight

Teacher: slight. Very good. This word is slight which means small.

Elicitation was used to correct grammatical mistakes:

Teacher: What's the mistake here?

Thoraya: "showing" it should be "show"

Teacher: Show? Ok. wait a minute. Thoraya says "table 3 show" the average rainfall in Abu Dhabi. Look at this word carefully. Is it correct girls? Is it correct to say "show". Look carefully at this word. (teacher is pointing to the word "table")

Rafea'a: table 3 shows.

Teacher: why?

Rafea'a: because "table" is singular.

Teacher: excellent, because table is singular.

Recast was used as a corrective feedback type. In this type the teacher rephrases parts or all students' error in a correct way. An example is:

Aisha: table 4 show

Teacher: excellent, table 4 shows.

Another example is:

Hajer: The UAE full of petrol, so most countries buy petrol.

Teacher: Excellent. The UAE is full of petrol or is rich in petrol and most countries buy our petrol.

In repetition the teacher repeats the error by making high intonation on the error to highlight it. An example of repetition is:

Moza: the coldest months is...are (student is hesitating) is January and February.

Teacher: Ok. K. Moza, the coldest months is January and February. (the teacher changes her voice when saying 'is')

Students together: are

Teacher: are. Why 'are' girls. No, Moza will correct herself.

Moza: Because we have plural.

Teacher: Excellent.

The following example explains the use of metalinguistic cue as a way to treat students' errors:

Teacher: "Footbath" what might we add here?

Sheikha: Car park.

Teacher: car park is for street, footbath is for pedestrians. Right?

Appendix E: Students' Preferences of Teachers' Error Treatment

Grade:12
A= Agree

high=10 (High Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
1		√		√					√			√		√				√	√					√			√	√					√		√				√			√
2		√		√				√						√				√	√					√			√	√				√							√			√
3	√			√			√				√		√				√	√		√				√		√		√					√			√			√			√
4	√			√					√			√			√		√	√		√				√		√		√					√			√			√			√
5	√			√					√					√			√	√		√				√		√		√	√				√			√			√			√
6	√			√				√			√			√		√			√					√			√	√	√										√			√
7	√				√		√				√				√		√			√				√		√		√				√				√			√			√
8	√			√					√			√			√			√		√	√			√		√		√					√		√				√			√
9	√			√				√						√				√		√	√			√		√		√				√	√						√			√
10		√		√				√							√			√		√				√		√		√				√				√			√			√

Grade:12
A= Agree

average=3 (Average Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure
D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D			
1	√			√			√			√			√					√	√			√					√	√								√			√			√
2	√			√			√			√			√					√		√		√					√				√					√			√			√
3	√			√			√			√			√					√	√			√					√				√			√			√					√

Grade:12
A= Agree

low=10 (Low Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure
D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13		
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D			
1	√			√					√	√			√					√		√				√				√					√	√					
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Grade:9
A= Agree

high=11 (High Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure
D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
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11	√			√				√			√				√	√			√			√			√				√		√								√			

Grade:9
A= Agree

Average=10 (Average Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
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3	√			√				√		√				√				√	√				√				√		√		√					√			√			√
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Grade:9
A= Agree

Average=10 (Average Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure
D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
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Grade:9
A= Agree

Low=8 (Low Achieving Students' Responses to the Questionnaire)
N= Not Sure
D= Disagree

	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q5			Q6			Q7			Q8			Q9			Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13					
N.	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D	A	N	D
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8	√					√		√				√			√	√				√				√		√			√			√							√			

VITA

Sendeyya, S. Al Naqbi is an English teacher at Masafi School for Fundamental and Secondary Education for Girls in Fujairah in the UAE. She is from the UAE, where she finished her secondary education. She got her B.A. from UAE University in 2000. She got a certificate of professional development in teaching from the same university in 2001. She has been working in Masafi School for nine years teaching English as a foreign language. She attended several conferences and workshops in teaching and learning English. She also conducted five workshops and training sessions for other English teachers in Fujairah.