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Corrective feedback to spoken errors
in adult ESL classrooms

by

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, neither does it contain material previously published or written by another person, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text.
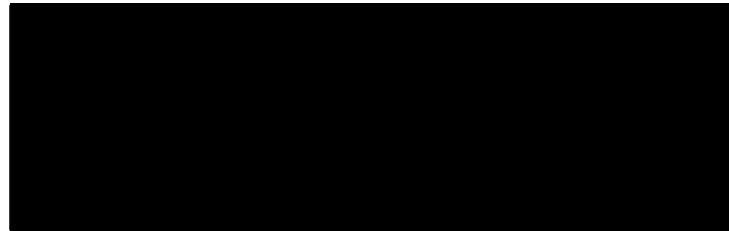
Abstract

This study investigates the attitudes and practice of second language teachers in regard to corrective feedback on learners' spoken errors. In particular, it examines frequency and types of corrective feedback to adult learners of English as a second language in a Melbourne language centre. It relates individual teachers' patterns of corrective feedback to the context of the teaching program and to teachers' attitudes to second language learning and teaching.

The study is based mainly on observational classroom data and interviews. Ten lessons, each averaging fifty minutes in length, were recorded over a period of seven months. Two kinds of classes were observed, five classes for immigrant learners and five classes for international student learners. The five teachers who taught the classes were interviewed during the period of lesson recordings. Lesson analysis is based on the *Error Treatment Sequence* (Lyster and Ranta 1997). Results of this study are compared with those found by Lyster and Ranta in their study of corrective feedback in French immersion classrooms. The key similarity of the two studies lies in the proportion of different types of feedback. In particular, the recast occurs as the most commonly used feedback type in both studies. The key difference between the results of the two studies is in the relative frequency of corrective feedback. Learner errors are given feedback only about half as frequently in this study as in the immersion study. Possible reasons for this difference are discussed.

Detailed interviews with teachers in the study show that teachers' attitudes are mostly predictive of their classroom practice, and that teachers' background and experience can be related to their attitudes.

The study supports the revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1996) in showing that corrective feedback exists in usable form in instructed settings, and that learners make use of it.

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I dedicate this work to Achim, my supportive *compagnon de route* and to my dearest son Daniel, with love and thanks.

In memory of Julianne Gilroy
and of
Michael Xavier Jensen

Table of Contents

List of tables

List of appendices

Appendix

Chapter 1

Introduction to the study

This is what students are expecting from the teacher ...not only saying "That's terrific and fantastic!" ...We have got to help them to survive. ...It's not extra activities for elderly people. (Error correction) for them in their cultures, it's absolutely normal, that's what they expect. (Interview, Lara, May 6, 1997)

If it's a discussion type activity I don't want to interrupt their flow. What I've noticed is if I give them pair work, discussion, whatever, especially initially in a group, they'll be merrily going away and as soon as I sort of go close to them to listen and join in, they freeze. So ...if you're intervening all the time, they will just clam up. You've got to be able to stand back and let them go for it. (Interview, Susanna, February 21, 1997)

> *Ignoring correctness will inhibit the learner's communication of meaning.*
> (Jim Jenkin, TESL-L, February 10, 1999)[1]

1.1 Theoretical importance of corrective feedback

The issue of corrective feedback is of particular relevance for language theorists who argue for the role of *nurture* (which is differentiated from *nature*) in language acquisition. The *nature* argument in its contemporary form emphasizes the innate capacity of all humans for language (Chomsky 1959). Chomsky's notion is that the human brain is "hard-wired" for all human languages, and that an infant will acquire any language for which it receives input. This notion seeks to explain the fact that *all* humans learn one or more languages. Exceptions to the rule are humans with injuries to the brain acquired

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[1] TESL LISTSERV available at CUNYVM.CUNY.EDU (City University of New York).

genetically or as a result of trauma. The argument that a second language can also be acquired naturally has been put by others such as Corder (1967), Selinker (1972) and Krashen (1981).

The nurture argument considers that specific features of language input are critical in both the acquisition of the mother tongue or first language (L1) and subsequently acquired language(s) (L2). Language input consists primarily of two kinds of evidence, *positive evidence* (information about what is possible in a given language) and *negative evidence* (information about what is not possible). Negative evidence, or information about what is not possible, can be provided either *before* learners attempt to speak or *in reaction to* learners' efforts to speak. Corrective feedback responds to or is reactive to learners' errors. In the nurture argument, corrective feedback is thought to assist language development. These ideas are developed in Chapter 2.

1.2   A research agenda for corrective feedback

Establishing a link between corrective feedback and language development has proven a challenge to researchers in both first and, subsequently, second language acquisition. Research has been undertaken in both *natural* and *instructed* settings. A common example of a natural setting is the home, where babies learn to speak L1 (Brown and Hanlon 1970; Nelson 1977). Other natural settings may be the street, the schoolyard, or the workplace (Clyne 1977), where children and adults learn to communicate in L2. An

2

instructed setting is usually a classroom, where it is a teacher's job to teach language to learnerss (Chaudron 1988a).

An initial concern of researchers in the last twenty years or so has been to document the *existence* of negative evidence / corrective feedback in both natural and instructed settings (Long 1996). Do caregivers of young children react to the errors they make in their *first language*? Similarly, do teachers of *second language* learners of all ages react to the errors they make in a second or foreign language (Chaudron 1977, Long 1977, Kasper 1985, Chaudron 1986, Chaudron 1988a)? A further concern of researchers has been to evaluate the *usability* of corrective feedback. For example, they have explored in the instructed setting, whether the teacher's intention to offer feedback is recognized by the learner. They have found that learners sometimes show confusion regarding the teacher's purpose in giving feedback (Slimani 1992). The final major concern of researchers is to observe how learners make *use* of feedback in their own language development. They have tried to find evidence for the idea that corrective feedback assists the movement of learner language, or *Interlanguage,* towards native-like use (Lightbown and Spada 1990). The research findings on the existence, usability and use of corrective feedback are by no means conclusive, as we shall see further in Chapters 2 and 3.

In instructed settings, it has proven difficult to show an immediate effect for corrective feedback, owing partly to the large number of variables in the learning process. This has meant a shift to research designs based on the interaction of dyads, or pairs of speakers, in laboratory-like settings (Mackey and Philp 1998; Oliver 1995). Dyads often include

one native speaker and one non-native speaker of a language. In this situation it is easy to record how native speakers respond to language they do not understand and whether they offer corrective feedback to non-native speakers. What is not captured in dyadic and other experimental studies (Long, Inagaki and Ortega 1998) is the authentic nature of classroom interaction, including teacher feedback to learner errors. The present study sets out to capture *real* classroom interaction in the *everyday* world. In doing so, it takes as one of its main points of reference one of the very few classroom observational studies of the last few years, a study undertaken in the immersion classroom in Canada (Lyster and Ranta 1997). This immersion study has become a common reference point in recent literature on corrective feedback in second language instruction (Mackey and Philp 1998; Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen 2001).

1.3 A primary concern of language teachers

The interest in negative evidence in SLA research coincides with a primary concern of teachers, namely their role in the correction of errors (Pica 1994b). The author's experience as teacher and teacher educator confirms that error correction is a topic of keen interest to teachers. For external confirmation of this point, one has only to check the bulletin board known as *TESL-L* on the Internet (TESL-L 1999). A representative of the international, USA-based, *TESOL* Association maintains this bulletin board for teachers and other interested professionals to exchange their views. Over the last three or four years, a number of subject headings such as *The Tyranny of Correctness* have attracted messages from hundreds of English language teachers around the world. A

4

teacher from a university in New York, USA started the e-mail message exchange on *The Tyranny of Correctness* in February, 1999:

> It is so sad! I see so many students who say nothing at all rather than make a mistake...
> I hold that the urge to be correct above everything else is simply a tyranny. It destroys communication and meaning and it isolates people. Language that does not communicate meaning is actually "incorrect" language...because the purpose of language is meaning, not correct grammar.
> Teachers of the world, unite! Knock correctness off its pedestal! Tear down the oppressive rule of rules. Uplift the human spirit with meaning. Put correctness last, not first! (Anthea Tillyer, TESL-L, February 9, 1999)

This battle cry against correctness found resonance from school-teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in France to teachers of adult immigrants in English as a Second Language (ESL) in Los Angeles. Many interpreted it as an argument against *correction*, one writer inadvertently changing the discussion topic to *The Tyranny of Correction* and agreeing "vehemently" with the first writer. Eventually opposing voices made themselves "heard" on the bulletin board. For example, a non-native teacher of EFL in Argentina argued in favour of correction, emphasizing the need for learners to use "error-free" language.

> Most non-natives... have as a goal to speak the language as native-likely as possible. In many contexts (professional, academic, business) their language will be their presentation card and their gravy train. Delivering a presentation, meeting a business contact, lecturing, handing in papers or assignments, taking part in professional debates, attending a job interview, business telephoning: all of these activities need to be as error-free as possible. So the point here turns out to be not what we would like to do or is think is better pedagogically/psychologically, but what our students need to achieve their goals. (Pablo Toledo, TESL-L, February 10, 1999)

One teacher differentiated between correcting learners of EFL in Japan and learners of ESL at a Texas university, in terms of her focus on *fluency* and *accuracy*, *content* and *form*.

> While in Japan, I justified a concentration on fluency over accuracy. For one thing, I was teaching adults who did not need English in their daily lives. For another, these people had studied and obsessed over the minutiae of English grammar for years on account of the dreaded university exams. I wanted them to experience the pleasure of using English for real purposes across the board.
>
> Now I'm back in the U.S. teaching ESL at the university level. It's not so simple. Students whose linguistic level is too weak ...cannot express their ideas effectively. I feel derelict if I cannot help them find a workable balance between content and form. (Ainslie Baldwin, TESL-L, February 10, 1999)

The discussion on correctness / correction continued for well over a month, with almost daily contributions from teachers giving advice about how and when to correct. This "folksy" example came from a native speaker of English teaching EFL in the United Arab Emirates.

> Why not try to make correction a fun time? Don't frown, smile a lot, be friendly, even though your ears are grating. Try to joke around without belittling anyone. Share your own failures and successes in learning an L2. Don't raise your voice when pointing out mistakes. And always give plenty of second opportunities to get it right. This is important. Students want to get it right (Doug Jones, TESL-L 1999:February 20).

More suggestions, and questions, came from an Egyptian secondary school teacher who was studying for a PhD at the time.

> The teacher may take these questions into consideration when he/she notices an error in the production of a learner: 1- Does this error have anything to do with the pedagogical and linguistic focus of today's lesson? 2- Does it hinder communication? 3- Does this particular error occur repeatedly in that particular student's production? If the answer to these three questions is "Yes", the teacher has to correct the error immediately. But: Should the teacher interfere while the learner is speaking or should he/she wait and

6

correct all errors at the end of the class time? (Mohamed Tohamy, TESL-L , March 18, 1999)?

It can be seen from the selection of messages above that language teachers *have views* on the correct use of language and error correction. Similarly, language teachers have opinions about *when* and *how* to correct. Deciding whether to correct or not is something teachers do every day. Moreover teacher attitudes are formed to some extent by their training as teachers, and to some extent by their experience as learners, in different language teaching approaches. An investigation of the attitudes to error correction of the teachers in the study forms the basis of Chapter 7.

1.4 Error correction in different approaches to language teaching

Changes in language teaching approaches have meant changes in attitudes. Depending on when teachers last went through training courses or study programs, they will have heard different opinions about the value of error correction. Error correction was *mandatory* in the dominant methodology for language teaching over centuries: the Grammar-Translation method. This method was inherited from the "teaching of skills of grammatical analysis in the Middle Ages" (Savignon 1983:47). The languages originally taught by the Grammar-Translation method were Latin, Greek and other ancient languages. The Grammar-Translation method has survived to some extent until today, especially in foreign language teaching contexts such as TEFL in China, Korea or Japan, at least among teachers who are natives of those countries.

The Audio-Lingual method of language teaching, which became widely used from the 1960s, emphasized the *prevention* of errors. This behaviourist approach aimed to develop habits of correct language use, both in the classroom and in the language laboratory, via repetition and substitution-drills. Many present-day language teachers will have some memory of learning in the language laboratory.

The establishment of the European Common Market, also in the 1960s, resulted in a need for citizens of member countries to communicate in each other's languages in a range of contexts. An inventory was drawn up of language notions and language functions which were needed for communication (Wilkins 1976). There was a shift in emphasis in language teaching from *knowledge about* language to *use* of language, and a new language teaching approach evolved, known as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach (Littlewood 1981). This is essentially a meaning-based approach, which, in contrast to both the Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual methods, emphasizes the *tolerance of errors*.

> Errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Students' success is determined as much by their fluency as it is by their accuracy (Larsen-Freeman 1986:129).

The view of the teacher from New York City, that "the purpose of language is meaning" expresses this approach. Error correction is seen not only to impede communication, but also to inhibit the learner psychologically. Most language teachers have been influenced to some degree by CLT. They appreciate the value of meaning-based activities in the second language rather than "the oppressive rule of rules" as the teacher puts it. An aim of this study is to investigate the tolerance of errors of teachers at this stage of what may

8

loosely be termed the "CLT era". While the pendulum was swinging away from error correction in the 1980s, it seems to have swung back towards it in the 1990s. Chapter 2 shows that the idea of *Focus on Form* within CLT evolved throughout the 1990s (Long 1991, Doughty and Williams 1998), and with it has come renewed interest in error correction / corrective feedback to errors. Finding a "workable balance between content and form" is a goal shared by second language teachers around the world.

1.5   Aims of the study and research questions

The principal aim of this study is to contribute to ongoing research on the existence and usability of negative evidence in the form of corrective feedback in language instruction. It is the only known observational classroom study of corrective feedback undertaken in Australia, and one of very few such studies undertaken in the last ten years in the world. It is possibly the only one to include lesson data from classes for two kinds of adult learners (immigrants and international learners). The study is unique in its parallel investigation of the attitudes of teachers to corrective feedback, in the context of their general attitudes to the learning and teaching of second language. The purpose of this investigation is to find implications for the education and training of second language teachers. The researcher is a teacher educator, responsible for the training of teachers for adult and child learners of English as a second or foreign language. The research questions probe the everyday conditions under which teachers offer corrective feedback. They are as follows:

1. *With what frequency do teachers give corrective feedback to learners' spoken errors?*

2. *What kinds of corrective feedback do teachers give?*

3. *To what extent do learners notice corrective feedback?*

4. *To what extent do learners repair errors immediately after receiving feedback?*

5. *To what extent do teachers vary in their patterns of corrective feedback?*

6. *Are teachers' patterns of corrective feedback predictable from their attitudes to second language learning and teaching?*

1.7 The organization of the study

The study begins with an account of the theory and research which have relevance for the present investigation. Chapter 2 defines terms referred to in Chapter 1 and outlines the most comprehensive hypothesis on second language acquisition available at present, which is the revised *Interaction Hypothesis* (Long 1996). Chapter 3 traces the history of research on repair and corrective feedback and shows the need for naturalistic data on adults learning English in countries like Australia, and on the attitudes of teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL). Chapter 4 shows why a case study design is appropriate for the study of questions set out in Chapter 1. It also describes the data collection process, from the ethical approval stage to development of instruments for

10

collecting data, and finally to recording of lessons and interviews. Chapter 4 concludes with an overview of data collected, which are displayed in table form. Chapter 5 illustrates the procedure for coding of lesson data, which follows the procedures of Lyster and Ranta (1997). Chapter 6 analyzes corrective feedback and learners uptake in the Australian TESOL lesson data, and compare findings with those of Canadian immersion classes. Chapter 7 offers a profile of the attitudes of teachers towards teaching and learning a second language. It compares stated attitudes of teachers regarding correction of spoken errors to their classroom practice. Chapter 8, the final chapter, draws conclusions from the analysis of lesson and interview data, and makes recommendations for further research and for the education of teachers.

Chapter 2

The theoretical framework for the study

In this chapter, the theoretical framework for the present study is given both in outline and in detail. Section 2.1 provides an introduction to the *Interaction Hypothesis* (Long 1996), the terms of which are defined in this section and elaborated throughout Chapter 2. The derivation of the Interaction Hypothesis is traced in Section 2.2. The hypothesis attempts to explain acquisition of a second language by learners in terms of *innate* variables and *environmental* variables. The two fundamental environmental variables are *positive* and *negative evidence* about the target language. These two broad types of *input* are discussed in Sections 2.3 and 2.4 respectively. Negative evidence may be *preemptive* or *reactive*. *Negative feedback* is reactive. The Interaction Hypothesis posits a key role for negative feedback in the *negotiation for meaning* between speakers and listeners. Negative feedback may focus the *attention* and *awareness* of learners and cause them to *notice* their own non-targetlike use of L2. This noticing may force learners to revise their *internal representation* of how the target language works (see Section 2.5). Furthermore, negative feedback may push the learner to produce more targetlike forms or *comprehensible output* (2.6) which assist communication. This study is concerned with the language teaching classroom, and the kinds of corrective feedback which are offered by teachers. In 2.7 the connection between corrective feedback and noticing is explored. This connection is one kind of *focus on form*, which is a key concept in language teaching pedagogy today. Chapter 2 concludes by showing how the research aims of the study emerge from the Interaction Hypothesis (2.8).

2.1 Introduction to the Interaction Hypothesis

In the absence of an established theory of second language acquisition (SLA), Long has developed the Interaction Hypothesis. The latest version of this hypothesis proposes that:

> negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways. (Long 1996:452)

Key terms of the Interaction Hypothesis, which require some preliminary definition, are: *negotiation for meaning, interactional adjustments, NS or more competent interlocutor, input, selective attention* and *output*.

2.1.1 Negotiation for meaning

The purpose of conversation is to express meaning. Communication of meaning between different speakers is not automatic; it relies on a negotiation process. Conversation flows until trouble occurs. Negotiation for meaning is the overcoming of trouble in order to maintain the flow of conversation. It is a feature of *all* conversations, whether among speakers of the same first language (L1) or among speakers of varying competence in a second language (L2). It takes the form of interactional adjustments. In the second language classroom, negotiation for meaning is likely to rely disproportionately on interactional adjustments made by the teacher. This is because the teacher is a more competent speaker of the L2 than the learners, and her[2] professional goal is to enable her students to express themselves effectively in the L2.

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[2] In this study, the teacher is referred to as she and the learner as he, unless stated otherwise.

13

2.1.2 Interactional adjustments

Since the development of conversation analysis in the 1970s (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974), conversations have been observed between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs). The interactional adjustments which occur between speakers have been documented during this period. Interactional adjustments made by a listener refer backwards to what a speaker has just said. In this way they are "semantically contingent" in Long's explanation, which is as follows:

> Negotiation for meaning by definition involves denser than usual frequencies of semantically contingent speech of various kinds (i.e., utterances by a competent speaker such as repetitions, extensions, reformulations, rephrasings, expansions and recasts), which immediately follow learner utterances and maintain reference to their meaning. (Long 1996:451-452)

In an earlier study Long described six interactional adjustments which teachers typically make in the classroom. These are as follows:

- *Confirmation checks*: The teacher repeats part or whole of learner's immediately preceding utterance + rising intonation or + question tag.

- *Comprehension checks*: The teacher tries to establish that the learner follows what she is saying for example "Right?" "OK?"

- *Clarification requests*: In contrast with a confirmation check, there is no presupposition here that the teacher has understood or heard the learner's previous utterance. She may ask a question, e.g. "Sorry?" or make a

14

statement, such as "I can't hear "; or issue an imperative, such as "Say it again".

- *Self-repetition*: The teacher repeats or paraphrases part or whole of her own preceding utterance.

- *Other repetition*: The teacher repeats or paraphrases part or whole of a learner's utterance without altering her intonation.

- *Expansions:* The teacher supplies "missing formatives" or adds new semantic information (Long 1983).

2.1.3   NS or more competent interlocutor

Interactional adjustments may be made by all participants in a conversation, whether NSs or NNSs. The teacher in the second language classroom is either a NS or an interlocutor who is more competent in the target language than the learners. While recent classroom research (Swain and Lapkin 1998) is fruitfully investigating the adjustments made by learners themselves during collaborative work, teachers, not learners, are the focus of this study. As is detailed in Chapter 4, four of the five teachers who participated in this study are native speakers of the target language (TL), English. One of the five teachers is a competent user of the TL and a NS of Russian.

2.1.4   Input

It is a matter of dispute as to what balance exists between environmental and learner-internal factors in language acquisition. *Input* is an environmental factor in language

learning. Language acquisition theory uses this computational metaphor to describe the language heard (or read) by the learner. The term is associated in particular with Krashen's *Input Hypothesis* (See 2.2). It may take the form of *positive evidence* (2.3) or of *negative evidence* (2.4).

2.1.5   Selective attention

A further controversial issue in applied linguistics is the role of consciousness in second language learning. (Schmidt 1990) has articulated this issue and argues in favour of conscious awareness at a range of levels, especially *noticing* and *paying attention*. In his view, noticing is necessary for input to become *intake*, thus subliminal language learning (possible in Krashen's belief, for example) cannot exist. Paying attention means for Schmidt that consciousness is active and intentional in the learning process. Selective attention can come on the one hand, from the demands of a task which "focus attention on what is to be learned" and on the other hand, from the learners themselves (2.5).

2.1.6   Output

The Input Hypothesis suggested that the only role of output, or learner produced language "is that of generating comprehensible input"(Swain 1985). By contrast, Swain has argued for roles for output that are independent of comprehensible input (2.6). One function of output is simply to enhance fluency, through practice of the target language. Further functions of output identified by Swain relate more to accuracy. First, output may promote *noticing*. Second, producing output is one way for the learner to *test a*

hypothesis about the target language. Third, learners' output "serves a metalinguistic function, enabling them to control and internalize linguistic knowledge"(Swain 1995:126).

2.2 The derivation of the Interaction Hypothesis

The Interaction Hypothesis can best be understood as a response to the innatist theory of second language acquisition proposed by Stephen Krashen in the late 1970s, known as the *Input Hypothesis* (2.2.1). In this theory the acquisition of a second language is seen to be a natural process, even in adults, not unlike the acquisition of their first language by infants. A limited role for the environment is envisaged in the Input Hypothesis. This role is the provision of *comprehensible input* as a necessary and sufficient condition for second language acquisition.

Krashen did not explain how input becomes comprehensible, that is, at a level appropriate to a given learner. The Interaction Hypothesis in its earliest version (Long 1983) sought to explain how input becomes comprehensible. Drawing on data of conversations between native and non-native speakers, Long described the "negotiation of comprehensible input". The 1980s version of the Interaction Hypothesis took into account the fact that the environment does not provide a one-way flow of comprehensible input from competent speakers to learners, as suggested by Krashen. In an *interactive* and therefore two-way process, learners ensure that the input they receive is adjusted until made comprehensible to them.

Two key new notions emerged during the 1980s in second language acquisition theory. These are complementary to the Interaction Hypothesis and react also to the Input Hypothesis. One of these new notions is the concept of the learner *noticing the gap* between his own interlanguage and the target language (Schmidt and Frota 1986). The other is the notion of *comprehensible output* (Swain 1985). Krashen's Input Hypothesis had neither allowed a role for learners' consciousness (for example noticing the gap), nor for learner output. Both notions have received much attention in empirical research conducted in the 1990s and have been included in the 1996 version. In summary, the revised Interaction Hypothesis derives from attempts to operationalize Krashen's Input Hypothesis on the one hand (explaining how input becomes comprehensible) and from notions of consciousness and output on the other. Both consciousness and output are notions which emphasize the role of the learner in second language acquisition.

Pica and her colleagues conducted the first empirical test of the claim that interactional modifications lead to comprehension of input (Pica, Young and Doughty 1987). They studied the impact of interaction of learners with the NS who provided input. Two groups of NNSs were compared in their performance of a task, which was to place items on a board showing an outdoor scene. The first group received instructions which had been modified or simplified, while the second group received unmodified instructions, but had the opportunity to interact with the NS who provided the input. The second group were more successful than the first, both in selecting the correct item, and in placing it on the board. Features of their interactions with the NS, which assisted comprehension, were identified as follows: redundancy in input, and quantity of input, the latter "primarily as a

vehicle for redundancy"(Pica et al., 1987:753). Redundancy was achieved in the interaction between learners and NS, in the form of confirmation and comprehension checks, as well as clarification requests. Interestingly, grammatical complexity of the NS input appeared to make little difference in the more successful group. This is one of a number of studies, which offer support for the Interaction Hypothesis. Before developing this point, it is important to explain more clearly the Input Hypothesis, to which the Interaction Hypothesis is a response.

2.2.1 The Input Hypothesis

Krashen's Input Hypothesis is based on the innatist theory of language acquisition proposed by Chomsky. According to this theory, language is an innate capacity in humans, which is triggered by environmental factors, especially linguistic input (Chomsky 1959). Krashen distinguishes *acquisition* from *learning*.

Acquisition is subconscious, and takes place in everyday life, wherever the learner is exposed to *comprehensible input* in a second language. This is language at a level just beyond the learner's present level of language understanding *(i+1)*. Krashen has consistently argued that comprehensible input in a second language is a necessary and sufficient condition for language acquisition. Learners may pass through a silent period before producing the target language.

Learning on the other hand takes place in instructed settings, usually classrooms. It is seen by Krashen to be a mere monitor of the acquisition process and "of little use in language production and comprehension" (Schmidt 1990b). Krashen explains:

> The fundamental claim of Monitor Theory is that conscious learning is available to the performer only as a *Monitor*. In general, utterances are initiated by the acquired system - our fluency in production is based on what we have "picked up" through active communication. (Krashen 1988:1)

In regard to pedagogy, Krashen claims is that classroom teaching of languages leads to learning, not acquisition, and that learning has no impact on, or interface with, acquisition. This claim thus minimizes the role of the language teacher. Krashen goes so far as to say that "error correction and explicit teaching of rules are not relevant to language acquisition" (Krashen 1988:1). The claim that "error correction" is not relevant to language acquisition rests on the distinction between acquisition and learning. The distinction and the claim have never been proven empirically.

The present study is based on evidence that corrective feedback facilitates second language acquisition. It focuses in fact on those interactions in the classroom where teachers offer learners corrective feedback on linguistic errors. (They thus do not necessarily "correct" the errors). The research tradition in which the study occurs is elaborated on in Chapter 3.

2.3   Input: Positive evidence

Chomsky had set out in the 1950s and 1960s to explain why it is that humans acquire language. In spite of insufficient examples of a language, young children use their first language in new ways to express themselves. They can also tell with great reliability if the grammatical structure of an utterance is correct; that is, they make grammaticality

judgements based on relatively few instances of positive evidence in their linguistic environment. Chomsky posited the notion of a Language Acquisition Device inherent in human beings, which enables learners to trigger parameters of Universal Grammar when exposed to a single piece of linguistic evidence. This evidence can be positive or negative. Positive evidence is *modelling* of the language. Long explains how the environment provides target language input to learners:

> The linguistic environment for second language (L2) acquisition may be thought of in many ways, but perhaps most fundamentally in terms of the positive and negative evidence speakers and writers provide learners about the target language (TL). As positive evidence, in the process of communicating they offer models of what is grammatical and acceptable (not necessarily the same) in the L2, but also instance of ungrammatical language use at a time when learners do not know which is which. Under certain conditions they adapt their speech or writing in ways that make those models comprehensible to the learner and thereby usable for acquisition. (Long 1996: 413)

In the classroom, positive evidence can be presented in a range of ways. For example, one early experimental study found that:

> NNS comprehension is significantly better when the input is in the form of an a priori linguistically modified text or lecturette than when the input is presented in its original, unmodified form.(Pica et al. 1987: 740)

2.4   Input: Negative evidence

Negative evidence, in Long's definition, provides "direct or indirect information about what is ungrammatical" (Long 1996:413). It is:

> something in the learner's linguistic, conversational or physical environment (which) reliably provides the information necessary to alert the learner to the existence of error.

In other words, negative evidence provides a check on what is possible in a language. It is a form of information about what does not work, and may come before or after an utterance is attempted. Following the innatist language theorist, Pinker, Long argues that if it is a condition for second language acquisition, then it must be shown that negative evidence *exists;* that it exists in *usable* form ("it must be shown that learners notice the feedback, and perceive it for what it is"). It must also be shown that negative evidence is *used.* Finally, it must be shown that negative evidence is *necessary* for second language acquisition (Pinker 1989a).

2.4.1   Negative evidence in first language acquisition

There are mixed findings about the *existence* of negative evidence in research on the conversation between children and caregivers. Until the late 1980s, studies suggested that children received little or no explicit correction of their language errors, for example. As first language acquisition researchers Bohannon and Stanowicz posited:

> recent language learning theories depend on the axiomatic assertion that children are never informed about the distinction between grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. These theories assume both that adults do not present children with explicit comparisons between permissible and nonpermissible sentences and that children's productive language errors are not corrected. (Bohannon & Stanowicz 1988:684)

In their own study, these authors observed both parent and non-parent adults in conversation with children aged between two and three years old. They found in fact that these caregivers offered a considerable amount of corrective feedback, some of it *implicit.* For example, adults "were more likely to repeat verbatim a well-formed sentence than an ill-formed sentence". Of particular interest to the present study is their

22

finding that "adults were more likely to repeat with changes, or request clarification of, a sentence containing syntactic or phonological errors than well-formed sentences" (Bohannon & Stanowicz 1988: 684).

In a related study of twelve 23-month-old children and their mothers, Farrar (1992) investigated the imitations of new grammatical morphemes which were contained in their mothers' recasts. The children's frequency of correct morpheme imitation was two to three times greater than after any form of positive evidence, such as topic continuation, by the mothers:

> In a topic continuation, the parent maintains the semantic topic of conversation (e.g. Child: "The dog bark". Mother: "He sure is loud".), but does not correct or imitate any part of the child's sentence. In contrast to the negative evidence provided by recasts, topic continuations provide positive evidence because they do not correct the sentence even when the child may have said something ungrammatical. (Farrar 1992:91)

These studies provide plausible support for the *existence* of negative evidence in child-directed speech, when recasts are seen as negative evidence (see Section 2.4.3).

2.4.2 Negative evidence in second language acquisition

The *existence* of negative evidence in second language acquisition has been established only in a limited way. This is because of an evolving understanding of the concept of negative evidence. First, negative evidence can be pre-emptive or *reactive*. When negative evidence takes the form of reaction to non-targetlike utterances in L2, this is called *negative feedback*. Reactive, or negative, feedback occurs in conversations between native and non-native speakers, as well as in classroom instruction. Negative

23

feedback from teachers in instructed settings is arguably *corrective* in its intention; *corrective feedback* therefore is the type of negative evidence, which is found mainly in classrooms. The present study aims to add to the evidence that negative evidence does indeed exist in the adult ESL classroom setting, in the form of *corrective feedback*.

A number of early studies (reviewed in Chaudron 1977; Chaudron 1988a) restricted themselves to the description and categorization of "overt oral error correction during classroom lessons or written feedback on student writing" (Long 1996). More recent studies have moved beyond the classroom and focused on NS feedback to NNSs in "natural" (that is non-classroom) settings (Brock, Crookes, Day and Long 1986; Oliver 1995). At the same time, classroom studies have broadened their scope from the study of overt oral error correction to that of negative feedback in general, including implicit negative feedback (Lyster and Ranta 1997). More detail of all of these studies are presented in Chapter 3. Implicit corrective feedback is discussed briefly in Section 2.4.3 below; again, the *recast* of a learner's utterance is an example of this.

On the question of *usability*, Long comments on the difficulties of establishing whether negative evidence is provided in a form that the learner is indeed able to use:

> The problem here is that much negative evidence takes the form of partial repetitions, and such repetitions also serve as expressions of agreement, confirmations that a message has been understood, and other functions in the same conversation. The fact that an utterance is intended as a correction, therefore, does not necessarily mean that a learner will perceive it that way. (Long 1996:432)

He goes on to point out that

> Even if a learner correctly perceives an utterance as a correction, there is still the problem
> for any kind of cognitive comparison or hypothesis-testing theory of whether a learner
> can hold both the original errorful utterance and the interlocutor's response in memory
> long enough to compare them, and if that is (sometimes) possible, the additional question
> of whether the identity of the error will be clear. (Long 1996:433)

Long reviews a number of studies in second language acquisition which have investigated whether negative evidence is *usable* and in fact *used*. These studies, too, are discussed in Chapter 3.

2.4.3 Recasts as positive and negative evidence

One argument of the innatists against negative evidence is that a common kind of "utterance containing correction simultaneously provide(s) positive evidence of the item concerned" (Grimshaw and Pinker 1989). This kind of utterance is called a *recast*. Long's definition of a recast is an utterance that:

> rephrase(s) a child's utterance by changing one or more sentence components (subject,
> verb, or object) while still referring to its central meanings.(Long, 1996:434)

Implicitly, the recast provides negative evidence. He distinguishes the simple recast, with one component changed, from the complex recast, in which two or more components have been changed. He concurs with Nelson in seeing an advantage for recasts over models (a form of positive evidence), while accepting that both recasts and models have been shown to improve children's language performance. He further sees an advantage for recasts of the children's utterances over those of the researcher's. He cites Nelson's suggestion that what is useful for the child is "the opportunity for cognitive

comparison by the child of his or her own utterance with the semantically related adult version". Simply *hearing* new forms in the input is not enough.

2.5   Selective attention

The revised Interaction Hypothesis, it may be recalled, states that "negotiation for meaning...facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways" (Long 1996:452). Thus far the role of input in the process of second language acquisition has been considered. The role of *selective attention* in SLA is now reviewed. The next two sections show that attention and consciousness generally were not recognized as important in early formulations of SLA theory. In Sections 2.5.3 and 2.5.4 the role of various aspects of attention and consciousness are reviewed.

2.5.1   Emphasis on the unconscious in language acquisition theory

The complex and ubiquitous nature of unconscious mental processes described by Freud pre-occupied cognitive psychologists throughout much of the twentieth century. In the language field, Chomsky's idea of a mental grammar, by definition unconscious, has been widely accepted for decades (Gardner 1985:28). According to Schmidt (1990b), the ideas not only of Freud, but also of the more recent behaviourist psychologists, have led to the belief in many thinkers, that consciousness plays no causal role in human life. Writing in particular about innatist theories of language acquisition, Schmidt claimed that:

> it is virtually an article of faith that what is acquired is an implicit (i.e. unconscious)
> mental grammar that is most clearly reflected in learner intuitions about sentences, less

directly in learner performance, and least directly in learners' conscious beliefs and statements about their use of language. (Schmidt 1990b:130)

Krashen's notion of second language *acquisition* (as distinct from *learning*) expresses such a belief. For Krashen, acquisition is unconscious. His assumption that learning cannot become acquisition calls into question the value of instruction. Another theory developed in the early 1980s, at about the same time that Krashen was articulating the Input Hypothesis, was based on the observation of developmental sequences in language learning (2.5.2). Since these sequences occur naturally and unconsciously, it might seem from this fact that consciousness has no role in language learning.

2.5.2 Developmental sequences theory

Developmental sequences theory maintains that there is a natural and fixed sequence for learning of syntax and morphology. Children learning to speak have been shown to follow the same broad stages in the given L1, regardless of which L1 is being acquired. This theory has been extended to second language acquisition (Meisel, Clahsen and Pienemann 1981; Pienemann 1989). Their evidence shows that beginning learners of English, for example, never express negation by using the auxiliary plus verb form, ("I don't speak English"). At beginner level learners simply front a statement with "No". ("No speak English"/ "I no speak English"). If all learners must pass through such a stage in English, what influence can consciousness have? Long (1996) accepts the evidence for developmental sequences. In his argument for the Interaction Hypothesis, he concedes that "processing constraints will always limit the evidence, positive or

27

negative, from which a child or adult learner can benefit"(Long, 1996:433). Bearing this in mind, he nonetheless emphasizes the role of selective attention.

2.5.3   Noticing the gap

Krashen's idea that language learning is somehow "unconscious" began to seem implausible in the 1980s for several reasons. One of these reasons came from a landmark diary study.   In this study, Schmidt and Frota showed the importance of the consciousness of learners in "noticing the gap" between their own use of the target language and that of native speakers (Schmidt and Frota 1986). The study describes and analyzes the development of conversational ability in Portuguese by Schmidt during a five-month stay in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The two basic issues considered in the study were: the kind and amount of language that was learned in order to communicate with native speakers; the ways in which both instruction and conversational interaction contributed to learning the language. The authors found a high correlation between forms of the language which were *noticed* and recorded by the learner (Schmidt) in his journal, and forms that were subsequently *used* by the learner in tape-recorded conversations.

Schmidt and Frota responded to Krashen with this modification of the input hypothesis: for acquisition to occur, acquirers need to notice a difference between their current form or competence *(i)* and the new form or structure *(i+1)*. While this noticing may be subconscious for Krashen, for Schmidt and Frota it must be conscious "'noticed' in the normal sense of the word" (Schmidt & Frota 1986:311). What happens in Schmidt and

Frota's view, when corrective feedback occurs, is that this "juxtaposes the learner's form i with a target language form $i+1$ and the learner is put in an ideal position to notice the gap" (Schmidt & Frota 1986:313). They point out that this solves the problem of accounting for the fact that non-native speakers are not always able to recognize the gap between two forms or constructions.

2.5.4 Theorizing "Noticing the gap"

Schmidt later developed the thesis that

> conscious processing is a necessary condition for one step in the language learning process, and is facilitative for other aspects of learning. (Schmidt 1990:131)

The "one step" in the language learning process is *storage (Figure 1)*. The evidence from the 1986 study conducted with Frota, led Schmidt to consider the history of psychological theory and research in relation to the broad question of whether second language learning can be unconscious. Krashen's Input Hypothesis clearly saw language learning as an unconscious process. Schmidt and Frota's study, however, suggested that it was a conscious one. Schmidt finds support for the claim that noticing is a necessary condition for storage in psychological studies "in which the focus of attention is experimentally controlled". He describes studies based on shadowing tasks, "in which a subject repeats word for word (shadows) the information to one ear". These studies show that:

> people are very good at focusing attention on one channel, and the information presented to the unattended channel is simply lost. (Schmidt 1990b:141)

Such studies are conducted within an information-processing model of memory. Schmidt proposes a "composite representation" of information-processing models in *Figure 1*.
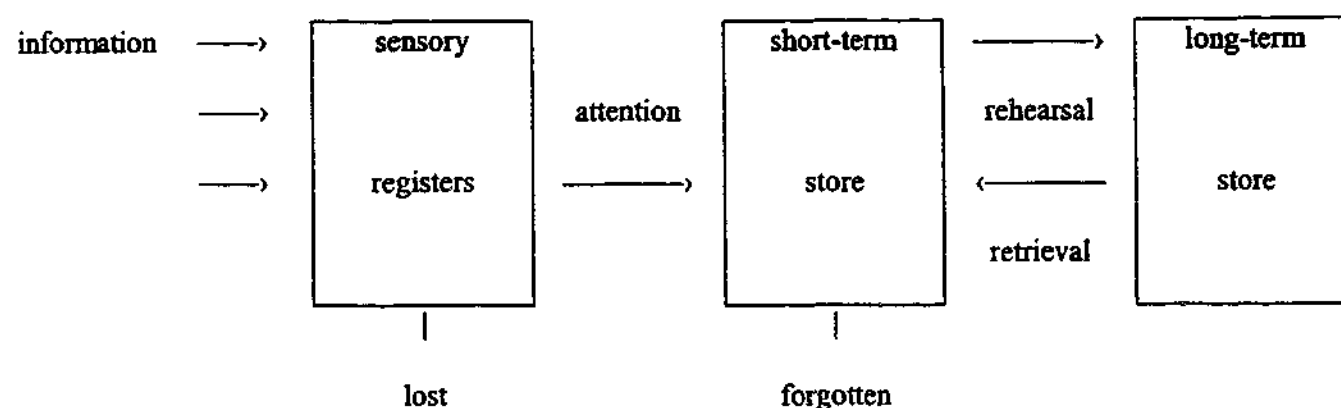
Figure 1: Consciousness in a multistore model of memory
(after Kühlstrom (1984))
Schmidt (1990b:135)

Figure 1 suggests that information that is heard (registered by the sense of hearing), but not attended to (or *noticed*), will not be stored in short-term memory. Furthermore, information that enters short-term memory will only enter long-term memory if it is subsequently processed (for example *rehearsed* or *retrieved*) in some way. While Schmidt concedes that *Figure 1* simplifies the differences between competing models, he highlights two points of agreement among them. The first is the identification of short-term memory with consciousness. The second is "the claim that processing in short-term memory is necessary for permanent storage" (Schmidt 1990b:136).

Schmidt discusses three questions related to the role of consciousness in the processing of second language input. The first is the *subliminal learning* issue. Schmidt argues that noticing is necessary for input to become intake, thus subliminal language learning (possible in Krashen's belief, for example) cannot exist. *Intake*, as Schmidt points out, is

an unclear term in second language acquisition theory, identical for Krashen with input; for Schmidt, however, Chaudron's distinction between preliminary and final intake is valid (Chaudron 1985), and preliminary intake is by definition *noticed* by the learner. "Noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for converting input to intake" (Schmidt 1990b:129). He refers to his own diary study, mentioned above, as evidence that noticing is a necessary condition for storage. While subliminal *perception* does indeed seem to exist, he concludes that subliminal *learning* is impossible (Schmidt 1990b:142).

The second question related to the role of consciousness is whether it is necessary to consciously pay attention in order to learn: the *incidental learning* issue. Schmidt points out that:

> the existence of natural order and developmental sequences may be seen by some as eliminating any role for learner controlled attention in second language learning.(Schmidt, 1990:142)

He argues that while natural sequences may constrain the role of "selective, voluntary attention", they do not eliminate it. He gives five grounds for a close relationship between what he calls "availability for noticing" or "noticeability", and stages of L2 development.

- The *expectations* of the learner determine the perceptibility and noticeability of input. These may be innate universals, or they may be based on features of the target language, or of the learner's L1. Instruction could help to establish such expectations.

- *Frequency* of morphemes increases the likelihood of their being noticed.

- *Perceptual salience* makes linguistic items more or less noticeable to the learner. For example, the contraction of grammatical morphemes such as [d] in *who'd* makes the morpheme less salient, is ambiguous and gives difficulty. (*Who'd* could mean *who had, who did* or *who would*).

- The *skill level* of the learner will make items more or less available for noticing. Skills are not to be confused here with proficiency in the target language. They include both the automaticity of processing ability, and the "individual's acquired skill at dividing attention between competing tasks".

- *Task* demands are very powerful in determining what is noticed (Schmidt 1990:143).

These constraints mean that language learners are "not free to notice what they want whenever they want", but they can choose to direct their attention in one area rather than another, for example towards linguistic form or towards information content. While children appear to learn language incidentally more easily than adults, Schmidt argues that even adults learn incidentally, when they are forced by task demands to allocate their attention to particular features of the target language.

The third question related to the role of consciousness is "whether learner hypotheses based on input are the result of conscious insight and understanding or an unconscious process of abstraction (the *implicit learning* issue)" (Schmidt 1990:129). On the one hand there is the perspective from generative linguistics which seems to leave no role for conscious understanding. In this view:

> Language learners are often said to be engaged in the sophisticated enterprise of constructing a theory of the language they are learning, starting with certain innate assumptions about the abstract representation of language, looking for certain crucial data, and adding, deleting and reorganizing rules (...) Since there is no evidence that

> learners are consciously engaged in such an abstract enterprise, it is assumed that such
> reasoning goes on unconsciously, in an inaccessible code. (Schmidt 1990:145)

On the other hand, one tradition in cognitive psychology has it that there is no learning without awareness. Schmidt finds that there is little convincing evidence for either point of view.

Other researchers, Green and Hecht (1992), have pursued the question, asking "How is getting the language right related to explicit rule knowledge?" They clearly demonstrate that more than fifty per cent of 300 young German learners of English know how to correct errors in the target language without being able to produce a rule for their corrections. This is also true for a control group of 50 English NSs. Learners who can produce a correct rule, however, nearly always get it right. Green and Hecht caution that this does not necessarily mean that these learners *need* the rule to get it right.

In summary, Schmidt concludes that:

> subliminal learning is impossible, and that noticing is the necessary and sufficient
> condition for converting input to intake. Incidental learning, on the other hand, is clearly
> both possible and effective when the demands of a task focus attention on what is to be
> learned. (...)The implicit learning issue is the most difficult to resolve. There is evidence
> for it, as well as for a facilitative effect for conscious understanding, but accounting for
> implicit learning may entail abandonment of the notion of unconscious 'rules' of the type
> usually assumed in applied linguistics. (Schmidt, 1990:129)

2.6 Comprehensible output

The revised Interaction Hypothesis gives a key role to learner output, a notion introduced to SLA theory by Merrill Swain in the early years of the Input Hypothesis:

> Although comprehensible input (Krashen 1981b, 1982) may be essential to the acquisition of a second language, it is not enough to ensure that the outcome will be nativelike performance. In fact I will argue that while comprehensible input and the concomitant emphasis on interaction in which meaning is negotiated (e.g. Long 1983a) is essential, its impact on grammatical development has been overstated. The role of these interactional exchanges in second language acquisition may have as much to do with "comprehensible output" as it has to do with comprehensible input. (Swain 1985:236)

It can be seen from these statements that Swain accepts Krashen's view of the necessity of comprehensible input, and yet, like Long, she argues that comprehensible input is not a sufficient condition for "nativelike performance". She agrees with Long's 1983 assessment that:

> there are relatively few exchanges in classroom discourse motivated by two-way exchange of information where both participants - teacher and student - enter the exchanges as conversational equals. (Swain, 1985:247)

Swain, however, interprets the value of such exchanges differently from Long. In the earlier version of the Interaction Hypothesis, the key function of the two-way exchanges of information was to trigger comprehensible input for the learner. Swain argues that what the exchanges provide first and foremost is an opportunity for learner output. In contrast to Long, Swain claims that the very production of the target language is the trigger that forces learners to pay attention to the language needed in order to successfully convey their intended meaning.

2.6.1   Rationale for the notion of comprehensible output

Swain and her colleagues at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education had been studying the development of bilingual proficiency in Canadian school children since the

introduction of the immersion program in the 1960s. In a number of studies, they had found that children were achieving a high level of proficiency in L2, especially in fluency. Particularly in grammatical accuracy, however, NNSs lagged behind NSs. This was also true of findings in the study which led to the articulation of the comprehensible output hypothesis. This study (Swain 1985) compared the performance of English-speaking grade six children in a French immersion program with French speakers of the same level. The English-speaking children had been taught entirely in French for their first two years at school and had gradually moved to a program of fifty per cent French instruction by grade six. A set of oral and written assessment tasks were administered to both groups, which aimed to measure three traits, namely their grammatical, discourse and sociolinguistic competence in French. While the immersion students "in some respects reached a high level of target language proficiency" when compared with the native speakers, their grammatical knowledge was significantly different (Swain 1985:244). Examples of test items for which native speakers scored significantly higher than immersion students were, for example, use of syntax, prepositions and verb forms in French.

Swain established that the immersion students had been receiving comprehensible input in French throughout their seven years of schooling. As evidence, she cites the achievement of the English speaking (anglophone) immersion students in subjects such as mathematics, science and geography, for which the language of instruction had been French. As in previous studies (Swain and Lapkin 1982) this achievement did in fact match the achievement of students in the regular English program. She cites further

evidence in the performance of the anglophone immersion students in tests of listening comprehension in French; this performance has been shown to be equal to that of French native speakers at a similar (grade six) school level.

What Swain wanted to explain was why, if comprehensible input was a necessary and sufficient condition for SLA, these students were not more accurate in their use of French. She points out that immersion students have spent years developing strategies to make themselves understood by teachers and peers in the classroom situation. There is neither social nor cognitive pressure to be more comprehensible, and no *push* to analyze further the grammar of the target language. In fact, "their current output appears to succeed in conveying the intended message". She argues that what is missing for learners in the immersion classroom is first the opportunity to use the target language, and second, being *pushed* in their output. Her conclusion from this argument is that:

> Negotiating meaning needs to incorporate the notion of being pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately. Being "pushed" in output, it seems to me, is a concept parallel to that of the i + 1 of comprehensible input. Indeed, one might call this the "comprehensible output" hypothesis. (Swain 1985:249)

Swain's emphasis on the role of comprehensible output in interactional exchanges was subsequently integrated in the revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis, as has been shown above in Section 2.1. The functions of output, noted in Section 2.1.6, have been elaborated in Swain's more recent work. Repeating these briefly, they are first, that output may promote noticing. Second, producing output is one way for the learner to test a hypothesis about comprehensibility or about well-formedness of language. Third, learner output "serves a metalinguistic function, enabling them to control and internalize

36

linguistic knowledge" (Swain 1995:126). We see from the first function that output and noticing are closely connected.

The notion of comprehensible output has prompted other research in the field of second language acquisition. For example, it has prompted a new hypothesis that the locus of the effect of output is in the transition of declarative to procedural knowledge (de Bot 1996).

For Swain it has led to consideration of Vygotsky's idea that "cognitive processes arise from the interaction that occurs between individuals" (Swain 1995:135). She presents data from the French immersion classroom, where two thirteen-year-old boys talk about language form. She points out that the learners reflect on the form (*tracasse*, *tracassent* or *tracassons*), "trying to make sense of the meaning it serves" (Swain 1995:136). She refers to recent studies on collective scaffolding and of conscious reflection on output and shows the way forward for insights based on a new kind of data source. These data are "the dialogues themselves that learners engage in with other learners and with their teachers". From a Vygotskyan perspective, "it must be that a close examination of dialogue as learners engage in problem-solving activity is directly revealing of mental processes" (Swain 1995:142).

2.7 Focus on form

Focus on form is a feature of *instruction* in a second language (Long, 1991). It is a pedagogical application of the understanding that there is a role for consciousness in second language acquisition.

2.7.1 Focus on form and CLT

The term Focus on Form *(FonF)* has come into use in reaction to the trend in foreign and second language teaching to emphasize the communicative use of the target language in the classroom. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an eclectic set of methodologies which favour meaning-oriented tasks over tasks which focus on the linguistic system as an end in itself (Larsen-Freeman 1986). CLT has become a kind of orthodoxy in second language teaching, overturning traditional structural approaches such as grammar-translation and the audio-lingual methodology of the immediate post-war decades. The immersion program in Canada has shown the advantages (and the disadvantages) of content-based teaching of the second language (a CLT approach) for more than thirty years (Barik and Swain 1976).

Support for Communicative Language Teaching has been provided by SLA theorists who favour a "Natural Approach" consonant with the belief that learning a second language is like learning one's mother tongue. Further support has come from developmental

sequences theory. The existence of developmental sequences in second language learners shows that "learners do not move from ignorance of a form to mastery of it in one step". This fact is attested to, in hundreds of studies of the development of L2 learner language *(interlanguage)* (Long 1991:44).

Just as there are sound theoretical and practical reasons to focus on meaning in CLT approaches, so too are there just as sound reasons to focus on form. As Doughty and Williams explain:

> Current interest in focus on form is motivated, in part, by the findings of immersion and naturalistic acquisition studies that suggest that when classroom second language learning is entirely experiential and meaning-focused, some linguistic features do not ultimately develop to targetlike levels. ...This is so despite years of meaningful input and opportunities for interaction. (Doughty & Williams 1998:2)

2.7.2   Focus on form vs. focus on forms

Focus on form means "to attend to language as object during a generally meaning-oriented activity" (Long 1996). This is explained further:

> Although there are degrees of attention, and although attention to forms and attention to meaning are not always mutually exclusive, during an otherwise meaning-focussed classroom lesson, focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features – by the teacher and/or one or more students – triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production. (Long & Robinson 1998: 23)

It contrasts with the idea of *focus on forms*. Focus on forms, according to Long,

> involves a predominant, often exclusive, orientation to a series of isolated linguistic forms presented one after another, as in a structural syllabus, with meaning and communication relegated to the sidelines. (Long 1996:429)

39

Focus on form may draw learners' attention to language as object, but it does this in context. This sounds a straightforward distinction, but it has proven itself confusing, as evidenced by a profusion of terms such as *grammar instruction, formal instruction, form-focused instruction* (Spada 1997), and an oppositional contrast set up with the term focus on meaning (Doughty and Williams 1998).

Examples of context in a broad sense may include the mathematics lesson in an intensive ESL program in a language centre for newly-arrived immigrant children in Australia. Or it might be an immersion class in Canada. Or an intensive English program for adult immigrants to Australia, where a lesson is based on *Telephoning for a job interview*, or *Writing a résumé*, rather than on, for example, the *simple present perfect tense*.

Doughty and Williams stress that:

> focus on formS and focus on form are *not* polar opposites in the way that *form* and *meaning* have been considered to be. Rather, focus on form *entails* a focus on formal elements of language, whereas focus on formS is *limited* to such a focus, and focus on meaning *excludes* it. (Doughty & Williams 1998:4)

2.7.3 Ways of focusing on form

Long and Robinson (1998) give three examples of how focus on form may be achieved pedagogically. In the first example, pairs of learners may be given a task in which they have a problem to solve, such as reading more than one text on economic growth, and transferring the information into a graph format. If the texts all use similar vocabulary or structures, the frequency of this input (*or* its salience) is likely to ensure that the pairs of learners use these items in their graph.

40

In the second example, learners at a low level of proficiency are involved in a similar problem-solving task. The teacher may notice that one kind of error, for example, a word order error, occurs frequently. When the teacher judges that this problem is remediable for learners at this level, she may offer *explicit* negative feedback to the whole group of learners.

In the third example, the teacher offers *implicit* negative feedback to individual learners, particularly in the form of recasts. In their 1998 definition, *recasts are* "corrective reformulation of a child's or adult learner's (L1 or L2) utterances that preserve the learner's intended meaning" (Long & Robinson, 1998:23). Parents and caretakers of young children often recast the child's utterances and research shows that grammatical information in recasts is more likely to be noticed than other corrective feedback (Long & Robinson 1998:25).

2.7.4 Corrective feedback, noticing and focus on form

We can see from the above examples that corrective feedback is one kind of focus on form. The second and third examples above are both examples of focus on form; they are also both examples of corrective feedback in the second language classroom. What the teacher is doing in each case is to provide opportunities for learners to notice the gap between their own use of the target language (their interlanguage) and the target language

41

as it is used by native speakers and other competent users. The teacher is providing negative evidence about the target language.

The Interaction Hypothesis is illustrated in these two classroom events. The teacher and learners are engaged in negotiation for meaning in classroom interaction. The teacher provides input in response to the learners' output, drawing on their own capacity to attend to the linguistic forms they have incompletely mastered, pushing them to review their output and to move closer to the target language (Long 1996:452).

2.8 How the research aims of the study emerge from the Interaction Hypothesis

The current study is based on the idea that environmental factors have a role in second language acquisition. It aims to document the existence of one of these factors, negative evidence, in adult ESL classrooms in Australia. Negative evidence in this context is known as corrective feedback. The study aims to show that this evidence is usable, and that it is used.

The study aims to demonstrate empirically the elements of the Interaction Hypothesis. It aims to show when and how learners express their meaning imperfectly, triggering interactional adjustments by the teacher. It aims to show when and how the input from the teacher provides the opportunity for learners to notice the gap between their interlanguage and the target language. It further aims to show when and how this noticing pushes learners to produce comprehensible output.

2.9 Conclusion

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework for the study, the Interaction Hypothesis for second language acquisition (Long 1996) has been introduced. The conceptual elements of the hypothesis have been defined and the history of each element has been traced. Detailed reference has been made both to the phenomena which gave rise to each concept and to its relevant theorist. These conceptual elements are firstly: *input* (positive and negative evidence); secondly, *focus on form* (corrective feedback), which promotes *attention* and thirdly, *output*.

In Chapter 3, a survey of studies on corrective feedback is presented. This survey aims to be as comprehensive as possible and includes studies which precede or do not refer to the revised Interaction Hypothesis.

Chapter 3

Overview of studies of negative feedback to second language learners

This chapter presents an overview of studies of negative feedback to child and adult learners of L2 which have been undertaken from different research perspectives in the last fifteen years or so. The first two sections of Chapter 3 provide background to the studies. Section 3.1 begins with a review of the research perspectives already referred to in Chapters 1 and 2, with the addition of the *discourse analysis* perspective and the notion of *repair*. The ideas of *error* and of *correction* are discussed, along with issues relating to errors, such as how they have been categorized, and what significance they have been seen to have. Aa brief history of relevant studies up to 1980 follows. In Section 3.2, models of corrective feedback are presented, with emphasis on the *error treatment sequence* of Lyster and Ranta (1997). This model is used in the analysis of lesson data in Chapter 6. The main body of Chapter 3 surveys studies of negative feedback since 1980. These are organized separately into studies of *interactions between native and non-native speakers* (3.3) and studies of corrective feedback in *second language classrooms* (3.4). Where research questions, design features and findings of studies are relevant to the present study, these are highlighted. The final section of Chapter 3 summarizes the evidence for the *existence, use* and *usability* of corrective feedback in second language learning, and argues the need for the present study (3.5).

3.1 Four perspectives on negative feedback

The Interaction Hypothesis integrates four historically different approaches to negative feedback, three of which were identified by Schachter as *pedagogical, linguistic theoretical* and *psychological* perspectives (Schachter 1991). As we have seen in Chapter 2, the term *corrective feedback* "is found in the pedagogical field of second language teaching/learning". Negative data, or *negative evidence* is a term from the field of language acquisition. *Negative feedback* is a term from "the psychological field of concept learning":

> As they are commonly used in their respective fields, they have to do with externally provided information to the second language (L2) learning student, first language (L1) learning child, or the experimental subject (as the case may be), either (1) that the production or activity of that student, child, or subject was in some way anomalous, unacceptable or deviant, or (2) that the activity produced had not achieved its goal. (Schachter 1991:89)

The fourth approach is from *discourse analysis*, where *trouble* prompts *repair*. Since the notion of repair has relevance to the present study, it is elaborated in the next section.

3.1.1 Repair

The term repair was introduced by conversation analysts Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977). It was used to describe corrective activity in informal discourse among native speakers. In analysing the structure of conversation, Schegloff et al. (1977) refer to their notion of *adjacency pairs* of utterances. The first utterance, or *turn,* is followed by a response, or second turn. As Levinson explains:

> not all the potential second parts to a first part of an adjacency pair are of equal standing: there is a ranking operation over the alternatives such that there is at least one **preferred** and one **dispreferred** category of response. ... The notion of preference is a structural notion that corresponds closely to the linguistic concept of **markedness**. In essence, preferred seconds are **unmarked** - they occur as structurally simpler turns; in contrast dispreferred seconds are **marked** by various kinds of structural complexity. (Levinson 1983:307)

Repair in conversation analysis is a device for "the correction of misunderstandings, mishearings or indeed non-hearings" (Levinson 1983:340). We see from this that the relationship of speakers is generally assumed to be an equal one in terms of status. In contrast, the three approaches detailed by Schachter (1991) assume "a novice-expert relation between the student, child or subject, and the teacher, parent or experimenter". Logically, repair is a *dispreferred* and *marked* category of response. Repair is triggered by *trouble* or communication difficulty caused by the utterance of one speaker.

According to Schegloff et al. (1977), there are four types of repair. This categorization has been adopted in the model of the error treatment sequence proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The four types of repair are:

- self-initiated and self-repair

- other-initiated and self-repair

- self-initiated and other-repair

- other-initiated and other-repair.

In their empirical analysis of conversations between fellow native speakers of the same first language, Schegloff et al. (1977) established that in this situation there is a clear preference for the first type, that is, self-initiation and self-repair.

Van Lier expands the definition offered by Levinson (1983):

> repair can potentially cover a wide range of actions, including statements of procedural rules, sanctions of violations of such rules, problems of hearing and understanding the talk, second starts, prompting, cluing and helping, explaining, and correction of errors. (van Lier 1988:183)

He follows Schegloff et al. (1977:363) in distinguishing the generic term *repair* from the specific instance of *correction*. Van Lier's brief definition of repair is "the treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use" (van Lier 1988:183). He reiterates that in NS-NS conversation, most listeners leave it up to the speaker to do something about it when they make an error of *fact*, or of *reasoning*, or of *language*. That is, they avoid overt correction and expect the speaker to do self-repair.

Faerch and Kasper (1983) were among the first researchers to apply the term repair to conversations between native speakers and non-native speakers, whose relationship, they point out, unlike that of NSs, is *assymetrical*. They investigated the influence of learners' proficiency level on their own and their NS interlocutor's repair behaviour. While the conversation analysts aimed to show repair as a feature of the structure of conversation, they sought an explanation for its existence. They were the first to explain that the motivation for repair was to save face (Kasper 1985).

47

In the second or foreign language classroom, the relationship is again assymetrical, since the learners are by definition not yet fully proficient in the second language and have a novice relationship to the expert, the teacher. Further to this point, van Lier highlights two particularities of classroom talk. The first is that its orientation is pedagogical. The second is that talk takes place among members of the classroom community, and this community "has its own rules as to what is appropriate and what constitutes face threat" (van Lier 1988:184). He adds that roles in classrooms "are clearly defined, and it is the learner who has the trouble, and the teacher who resolves it" (van Lier, 1988: 186). He avoids the trap, however, of defining all talk in the classroom as being quite different in nature from informal discourse. After all, he says, "We cannot exclude from consideration the things that native speakers do in conversation, since they too may occur in the L2 classroom" (van Lier 1988:187).

This is a consideration of importance in a study by Kasper (1985), who investigated repair in foreign language teaching, in the context of grade 10 learners of English in a Danish gymnasium. She compared repair patterns in two different phases of the language lesson, which she defined as *language-centered* and *content-centered* phases. This distinction is useful for the current study. As Kasper states:

> It is typical of language-centered phases that the main learning *object* is the FL as such, rather than related aspects such as the societies where FL is used, or the cultural products realized in it. At the same time, FL can be used as a *means of communication* in language-centered phases, for example for metacommunicative purposes and for classroom management. (Kasper 1985:203)

48

While the language-centred phase focuses on language as object, and so on accuracy of forms, "the content-centred phase aims at developing the learners' ability to express their ideas about some content matter in FL" (Kasper 1985:209).

In video data from one lesson, Kasper found similarities and differences in the repair found in both phases of the lesson. In the *language-centred phase*, she found that the most typical features were as follows:

- Trouble sources occur in the learners' utterances.

- These trouble sources are identified by the teacher.

- They are repaired either by the same, or more frequently, by another learner.

- The repair-completion is confirmed by the teacher.

In the *content-centred phase*,

- While self-initiated and self-completed repair is preferred by both learners and teacher, other-initiated and other-completed repair are "strongly represented".

- The teacher as other both initiates and completes the repair.

- Interruption is avoided.

- Learners do not initiate other-repair of their utterances but appeal for assistance from the teacher instead.

Kasper concludes that the *teaching goal* of each lesson phase is "the decisive factor for the selection of repair patterns" (Kasper 1985:214).

Van Lier, like Kasper, considers the goals, or *purposes* of the participants in a language lesson. He defines three kinds of language functions: *medium-oriented, message-oriented* and *activity-oriented. Medium-oriented* means that there is a focus on the forms and/or functions of the target language. This corresponds with Kasper's language-centred phase of the lesson. *Message-oriented* implies "a focus on the transmission of thoughts, information, feelings, etc." This corresponds with Kasper's content-centred phase. Van Lier's third function is *Activity-oriented.* This implies "a focus on the organization and structure of the classroom environment, rules for the conduct of activities, etc." (van Lier 1988:188). It has also been called the language of classroom management. Turns in L2 discourse, according to van Lier's summing up:

> are not as uninterruptable by other-initiation and other-repair as turns in general conversation are. ...They are generally allocated by the teacher, and this allocation remains in force until it is cancelled out. (van Lier 1988:204)

3.1.2 Definitions of errors

As a preliminary observation it is worth stating that even native speakers are imperfect users of their own language. NSs typically make *performance errors.* Performance errors are those errors, which are made in the everyday use of language, particularly spoken language. They include "slips of the tongue, false starts, changes of mind and so on" (Corder 1981: 18).

Spoken language is indeed so different from written language that a detailed transcription reveals features of language which might appear to the untrained eye or ear as "errors". For example Brown and Yule in their classic description of spoken language show how,

in relation to written language, native-speakers use much repetition and redundancy, vague time and place references, hesitation markers, fillers and incomplete sentences (Brown and Yule 1983).

Neither performance errors nor standard features of spoken language are counted as *errors* in the present study, nor indeed in other studies discussed in this chapter. What do we understand by the term *error* in studies of second language acquisition?

Fanselow (1977) defined error in two ways. The first way was to look at the response of the teacher to student utterances: when "a teacher treated part of a response as incorrect, the treated part was labelled incorrect". Other errors were "judged on an absolute scale". Examples given do not make this part of the definition at all clear. (For example, substitution of a phoneme; omission of verb and article in the sentence *I holding glove*) (Fanselow 1977:584).

Hendrickson (1978) pointed to the derivation of the English word *error*. *Errare* in Latin means "to wander, roam or stray". In the context of foreign language teaching in the emerging era of communicative language teaching, Hendrickson defined 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" (Hendrickson 1978:387). We see from this that Hendrickson followed the first of Fanselow's definitions.

By the mid 1980s the Richards, Platt and Weber dictionary definition of error was "the use of a linguistic item in a way, which, according to fluent users of the language indicates faulty or incomplete learning of the TL". This was the definition adopted by Brock, Crookes, Day and Long (1986), whose study is discussed below. We can see that there has been a shift here from error as something which a teacher responds to, towards error as something which in the judgement of NSs, or even "fluent users of the language", suggests a learning problem.

For Lyster and Ranta (1997) more than a decade later, errors were "nonnative-like uses of French" (the target language), whether they were responded to by the teacher or not. It is worth noting that in counting errors, these researchers chose not to count "absolute numbers of errors produced by students but rather the number of student turns containing at least one error or use of the L1" (Lyster and Ranta 1997:51).

The definition of error used in the current study is *nonnative-like uses of (Australian) English*. Following Lyster and Ranta, each learner turn containing at least one error is counted.

3.1.3   Categories of errors

There appears to be some consensus on broad categories of error in the second or foreign language classroom.   Chaudron (1977:32) makes a first division between three categories, namely *linguistic, content* and *classroom interaction and discourse* errors.

52

Linguistic errors include phonological, morphological, and syntactic ones. *Content* errors are errors of fact or knowledge. (Chaudron loosely places lexical items at the end of content errors, whereas it may be argued that they are linguistic errors.) *Classroom interaction and discourse* errors include speaking out of turn, taking up the wrong question in the lesson, using L1, failing to speak, and not speaking in complete sentences. On this last point, we may recall that incomplete sentences are in fact a feature of native speech. Chaudron's broad categories of error correspond to van Lier's (1988) three language functions in the second language lesson (3.1.1).

Lyster and Ranta (1997) consider only learner errors of the *linguistic* type. However, these include use of L1, gender, grammatical (to include morphology and syntax together), lexical, phonological and multiple errors. This categorization is followed in the present study.

3.1.4 The significance of errors

Two contrasting positions on the significance of errors have been held in the last few decades. The first position is based on behaviourist psychology, and its focus on the development of desired behaviour by drilling and practice. In language teaching this position was expressed by the orthodoxy of the 1950s and 1960s, audiolingualism. Hendrickson (1978:387) quotes a supporter of audiolingualism, Nelson Brooks, who in 1960 declared wittily: "Like sin, error is to be avoided and its influence overcome, but its presence is to be expected". Teachers who practised audiolingual methods attempted to

53

prevent learners using non-target like forms altogether. They believed that *practice* (of correct forms) *makes perfect*. Correspondingly, any reinforcement of wrong forms would set these forms forever in memory.

By the late 1960s a second, more positive evaluation of errors had emerged, due to new understandings from transformational-generative grammar, first language acquisition, and "especially cognitive psychology" (Hendrickson 1978:388). A mechanistic view of learning had given way to a more humanistic one.

Corder (1967) was one of the first to argue that errors provide an insight into processes of language acquisition. Errors:

> are regarded as useful evidence of how the learner is setting about the task of language learning, what 'sense' he is making of the target language data to which he is exposed and being required to respond. The making of errors, in this approach, is seen as an inevitable, indeed a necessary part of the learning process (Corder 1981:66).

The role played by errors in the learning process is crucial, according to Corder (1967). Errors allow learners to test their hypotheses about the target language. For the teacher, errors also provide feedback on what learners have learned or need to learn. This has led to the present view that errors are simply part of a learner's *interlanguage*.

The term *interlanguage* was coined by Selinker in 1972 and was used to describe the systematic and yet developing language of the L2 learner, as it moves towards the language of native speakers. Pit Corder offered the alternative term *transitional dialect* (Corder 1981:18) (see 2.5.2). Alongside his arguments for the positive evaluation of

54

learner errors, Corder rejected earlier views that learner language was *deviant, erroneous,* or *ill-formed (ungrammatical).* He argued that *deviant* implies deliberateness. Thus a poet, in his reasoning, is deviant, "since the writer is assumed to know the conventions of a social dialect and ...deliberately chooses not to follow them". The sentences of the second language learner are not *erroneous,* but rather "idiosyncratic precisely because the rules of the target dialect are not yet known". Native speakers, as has been noted above, experience failures of performance, and their failures may be called erroneous. Corder claimed that learner language cannot be called ungrammatical. This claim is based on the idea that each learner's interlanguage has its own grammar. It is understood that this grammar may have different rules from those of native speakers of the target language.

Interlanguage and *hypothesis-testing* are ideas which continue to this day to be associated with learner error. Errors, as part of learner interlanguage, are a window on the L2 learning process. In this process, learners form and test hypotheses about the target language.

3.1.5 Definitions of correction

Chaudron (1977:31) offers four definitions or *conceptions* of correction. All involve the location of error as a first step. The first one is "only those treatments which, after correction of a given item, succeed in establishing the learner's consistent correct performance, and his autonomous ability to correct himself on the item". This conception is an extreme view of what Schegloff et al. (1977) call "other-initiated and

55

self-repair" however, as Chaudron points out, it is "obviously nearly impossible" to find in a given period of instruction.

The second conception is that "a correction occurs when the teacher is able to elicit a corrected response from the committer of the error or from one or more of his classmates". This matches two of the types of repair identified by Schegloff et al. (1977), namely "other-initiated and self-repair" and "other-initiated and other-repair" respectively. The first of these two types is defined as learner *uptake* by Lyster and Ranta (1997). In other words, uptake is immediate repair of an error which a learner has had pointed out to him by the teacher or by another learner.

The third conception "simply includes any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner's utterance." It focuses on teacher behaviour; the response of the learner to this behaviour is not considered. Early studies which focus on explicit teacher behaviour and reflect this conception are described in 3.1.5. As Chaudron points out, teacher reactions include both *explicit* and *implicit* corrections. As we have seen in Chapter 2, one kind of implicit correction is the recast.

The fourth conception, dismissed by Chaudron, is described as "very narrow and excluding". This sees correction as positive or negative reinforcement. This matches teacher behaviour in the audiolingual / behaviourist language classroom.

Corrective feedback in the current study corresponds to the second and third conceptions of correction as defined by Chaudron (1977). This is seen more clearly in the model of the error treatment sequence developed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) (see Section 3.2.2).

3.1.6 Studies of error correction up to 1980

Early observational studies were undertaken by Fanselow (1977), and by Bruton and Samuda (1980). A "structural model for observing and describing the effectiveness of teachers' corrections of linguistic errors" was developed by Chaudron (1977) (see 3.2.1).

Hendrickson (1978) concluded from his review of the literature on error correction in the foreign language classroom, that three *absences* warranted attention. The first absence is that of *standards* "on whether, when, which, or how student errors should be corrected or who should correct them". Second, "there are few widely-accepted *linguistic criteria* of grammatical and lexical correction in foreign language teaching". Thirdly, "*empirical experimentation*" was missing from the literature, since published studies were till the late 1970s mostly speculative ones. Hendrickson (1978) set an agenda for empirical studies based on the following five "fundamental" questions:

- Should learners errors be corrected?
- If so, when should learners errors be corrected?
- Which learner errors should be corrected?
- How should learner errors be corrected?
- Who should correct learner errors? (Hendrickson 1978:389)

Fanselow (1977) compared the treatment of error in oral work of eleven experienced

teachers of ESL, who "were given the same lesson plan and materials, and asked to teach the lesson to one of their regular classes". The learners in the eleven classes seem likely to be of high school age, though this is not mentioned. The lessons were videotaped, transcribed and analyzed according to "types of errors treated and the treatment used". The four major types of tasks in these lessons (set by the researcher) were "question-answer drills with 'Wh' questions, repetition of words or patterns, substitution drills, and question-answer drills with yes/no or either/or questions" (Fanselow, 1977: 584-585). Not surprisingly in such a teacher-fronted classroom, learners initiated less than three per cent of their responses.

Fanselow found that all eleven teachers showed a marked preference for treating errors of meaning over errors of grammar, and that the most frequently used treatment was that the teachers gave the right answer. He noted, among a range of discussion points, that "Hypothesis testing, experimentation with language rules, seemed absent; congruence with teachers' expectations seemed to be the rule" (Fanselow 1977: 586).

Hendrickson (1978:389) had asked *Who should correct learner errors?* One of the first studies to document the fact that learners are capable of correcting each others' errors in a non-teacher centred classroom was the study by Bruton and Samuda (1980). A group of adult learners of ESL in a week-long intensive language course at the University of Lancaster were videoed as they engaged in "a variety of problem solving tasks". Problem solving tasks were seen to "give rise to meaningful communication between learners"; breakdown in communication led learners to give each other feedback. The

authors conclude however:

> Learners can take responsibility for the treatment of 'minor' product-centred errors but
> this must be balanced by the teacher's focus on 'major' process-centred errors. (Bruton &
> Samuda 1980:62)

3.2   Models of corrective feedback

Studies such as the early observational study of Fanselow (1977) showed the need for a standard model of the corrective feedback process. Of the various models, which have been proposed for the description of corrective feedback, only those which form the basis of a number of recent studies are discussed here. These are Chaudron's model (1977) and its simplification by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

3.2.1   Chaudron's Flow Chart Model of Corrective Discourse

The complex *Flow Chart Model of Corrective Discourse* (Chaudron 1977) *(Appendix 1)* represents:

> a synthesis of the descriptive system for classroom discourse developed by Sinclair and
> Coulthard (1975) and of Allwright's (1975) suggestions for the basic options open to the
> teacher in corrective reactions. (Chaudron 1977:33)

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) had described classroom discourse in terms of moves; Chaudron's (1977) model includes three of these moves, *Opening, Answering* and *Follow-up*, later known as *Initiation, Response* and *Feedback*. (IRF) In this model, the teacher generally initiates the sequence with an *Opening move* such as an elicitation, the

59

learner makes an *Answering move,* and the teacher's feedback is a *Follow-up move* to this. The sequence may be repeated a number of times (Chaudron 1977:37).

The learner's answering move may be *partially correct* (e.g. the content is correct), or contains an *error.* As we have seen in 3.1.3, types of error are: phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical (Chaudron 1977:43).

The teacher's follow-up move, according to Chaudron's (1977) model, consists of over 30 possible steps. (This assumes that the learner does not take the initiative to self-correct). In essence these are as follows:

- The teacher (T) ignores the student's (S's) error. In this case the sequence finishes here. (It is the first of several possible exit points.)

- T chooses to wait (*delay*) or to *interrupt* S's turn.

- T expresses *acceptance* of the student's (S's) answer, or

- T offers a new opening move, either requesting the S to *repeat* his utterance, with "intent to have S self-correct", or offering a *prompt* or a *clue* to the student, again to have S self-correct.

- T offers an *explanation,* providing information as to cause or type of error, or

- T catches the *attention* of the student(s) and / or simply expresses *negation* (i.e. the teacher (T) shows rejection of part or all of the learner's (S)'s utterance).

- T *provides* the correct answer, or

- T negates by *repeating* the learner's incorrect answer, with or without *change* and *emphasis.* (Chaudron 1977:37-38)

The learner's answering move here is again either correct or partially correct, or in error. If not correct, this may prompt a further follow-up move by the teacher.

3.2.2   Lyster and Ranta's Error Treatment Sequence

Lyster and Ranta (1997) offer a simpler model of the process of corrective feedback, which they call the *Error treatment sequence (Appendix 2)*.   While these authors acknowledge the importance of investigations based on Chaudron's (1977) model, they also integrate into their coding categories "certain categories from the COLT Part B coding scheme (Spada and Fröhlich 1995) with certain categories from Doughty's (1994) analysis of fine-tuning feedback" (Lyster & Ranta 1997:44).

As first step in the process they identify learner language which is non-targetlike, called *learner error*. As has been mentioned, *form* (linguistic error) in this model is in focus, rather than *meaning* (content or interaction errors).

The second stage of the process is *teacher feedback*. If there is no response to learner error, the topic of the lesson continues. Teacher feedback is classified into one of the following six categories: *explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation* and *repetition*. These categories are defined as follows:

Explicit correction	refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. As the teacher provides the correct form, she clearly indicates that what the learner had said was incorrect.
Recasts	involve the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a learner's utterance, minus the error. Recasts are generally implicit.
Clarification requests	indicate to learners either that their utterance has been misunderstood by the teacher or that the utterance is ill-formed in some way, and that a repetition or a reformulation is required.
Metalinguistic feedback	contains either comments, information or questions related to the well-formedness of the learner's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form.
Elicitation	refers to at least three techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the learner.
Repetition	refers to the teacher's repetition, in isolation, of the learner's erroneous utterance. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation so as to highlight the error.

(Lyster & Ranta 1997:46-48)

Examples of these categories, which use data from the present study, are found in Chapter 5.

The third main stage of the process is topic continuation or learner uptake. If the learner does not respond to the teacher's feedback, again the topic is simply continued. When the learner immediately responds to teacher feedback, this is named *learner uptake*. (As is

described below, however, Gass and Mackey (1998b) point out that uptake need *not* be immediate). Lyster and Ranta (1997:49) draw on speech act theory and define uptake in their model:

> Uptake in our model refers to a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance (this overall intention is clear to the student although the teacher's specific linguistic focus may not be). A description of uptake, then, reveals what the student attempts to do with the teacher's feedback.

Learner uptake is divided into learner utterances which *need repair*, and those which are in fact *repaired.* Utterances which need repair, include *acknowledgement of the feedback, different error, same error, hesitation, off-target utterances,* and *utterances which include partial repair.* Again, examples are given for these in Chapter 5.

Repair includes *repetition* by the learner of teacher feedback, *incorporation* of the feedback, *self-repair* and *peer-repair.* This model *(Appendix 2)* serves as the framework for analysis of the data on corrective feedback in the present study, because of its clarity and relative simplicity (Lyster & Ranta 1997:44).

In this section the models proposed by Chaudron (1977) and Lyster and Ranta (1997) have been presented in some detail. It is shown that they, and particularly Chaudron's earlier model, have been used as the basis for analyzing negative feedback in a range of studies on second language learning and teaching. In the next section, studies of negative feedback in conversations between native and non-native speakers are described, and research questions, design features or findings of relevance to the present study are highlighted.

3.3 Negative feedback studies: NS-NNS conversational interactions

Long (1996) quotes Allwright (1975) when he argues that conversational, that is non-classroom studies are more revealing than classroom ones. His main concern about classroom studies is that it is difficult for the researcher to ascertain what is going on in a lesson:

> Inside classrooms, the fast pace of typical language lessons means that teachers understandably fail to notice many errors, ignore others if they are not the current pedagogic focus, and (paralleling the L1 acquisition findings) often "correct" those to which they do respond inconsistently and also ambiguously (e.g. by using exact repetition of the target utterance both when confirming a correct student utterance and correcting an incorrect one). (Allwright (1975) in Long (1996:438))

The main finding of early conversational (or interactional) studies (see Section 3.3.1), was that NSs offer little *explicit feedback* in conversations with NNSs. As is seen in Section 3.3.2, however, more recent interactional studies, suggest that *recasts,* which are *implicit negative feedback* are present and do in fact assist second language development.

3.3.1 Little negative feedback in NS-NNS social conversations?

Chun, Day, Chenoweth and Luppescu (1982) investigated conversations between adult NS-NNS in social settings. They reported on what NSs correct and how often they correct NNSs' errors. They found that "only a small percentage (8.9%) of NNS error were corrected by NSs." NSs were more tolerant of errors of syntax and omission than they were of errors of fact, of discourse and vocabulary.

Design features of the study limit the credibility of these findings, though the study is often quoted. Design features worth comment include the data collection method, the lack of comparability of participants and the tasks set, and the discrimination in the analysis between *on-record* and *off-record* comments. The conversations, of 15 to 20 minutes each, were recorded by 20 volunteers who were adult ESL learners at both advanced and beginning levels in specialist language programs in Hawai'i. At first glance this seems to be an ideal way of gathering data outside the classroom. Participants were at two very different levels of ESL proficiency, however, and the tasks set for all the volunteers were not the same. There were in fact two data sets.

In the first set, the ESL / NNS learners at advanced level chose their friend and topic(s) for the conversations. These learners also played a communication game with their partner. In the game, the NNS described an object to the NS, who had to identify this object from a number of similar ones depicted on a sheet of paper.

In the second set of data, the learners at beginner level were simply assigned in pairs to talk with a volunteer NS student on informal topics. There was no communication game. In spite of these differences, the authors combined the two sets of data, claiming that "there were no differences in types and strategies of error correction in the two data collection methods" (Chun et al. 1982:539).

The strategies of correction are described as being of two types, which the authors name as *on-record* and *off-record* corrections, depending on the intonation of the NS. *Off-record* corrections seem to include what was later called recasts:

> An on-record correction occurs when the NS, in response to a NNS error, supplies correction with declaratory intonation; it has only one interpretation or meaning – that of correction. ...An off-record correction is ambiguous; it may be interpreted in at least two ways – as a correction or as a continuing contribution to the conversation. (Chun et al. 1982:544)

Brock, Crookes, Day and Young (1986) similarly studied the informal conversation of adult native speakers and non-native speakers of English. Twenty-minute conversations were recorded by 23 adult ESL learners in Hawai'i, at a range of levels of proficiency, with their NS friends. Their research questions were:

- What types of NNS error lead to what types of NS response constituting negative input available to the NNS?
- What relationship exists between type of NS response and subsequent NNS speech in a given conversation? (Brock et al. 1986:230)

Two raters agreed on what would be counted as errors; inter-rater reliability was established at a coefficient of 0.95. The researchers found that "an extremely small proportion of errors receive any kind of response that is potentially destabilizing" (Brock et al. 1986:234). Of this small proportion, the errors most likely to lead to NS feedback were lexical. Lexical errors were more likely than morphosyntactic errors to trigger a side sequence for clarification by the NS. Above all, Brock et al. found that: "Whether repetitions or cases of productive use, few effects of the NS response were observed on subsequent NNS conversation".

Since so little negative feedback was offered by NSs, and since there was so little effect observed in NN speech subsequently, the researchers were unable to answer the second research question. They concluded that the implications of their results "run contrary to a theory of SLA based on concepts of hypothesis testing, or the need for NS feedback". They noted however that the *task*, here, informal conversation, might have had an effect on their results. A different task, for example communication games, might have had a different result.

3.3.2 An effect for corrective recasts

Long (1996) gives emphasis to two small-scale studies of conversational interactions between NSs and NNSs which define corrective feedback more broadly to include corrective recasts. In doing so, these studies find an effect for this kind of feedback.

The first study by Richardson (1993) examined several 15-minute free conversations by three adult NS-NNS dyads. The author found that the NNSs were more likely to imitate the correct grammatical morpheme after a *corrective recast* (negative feedback) than after three other responding moves (positive evidence). Positive evidence consisted of *non-corrective recasts*, topic continuations and topic changes. The other finding of interest in this study is that NSs provided fewer recasts when *multiple errors* occurred in NNS utterances, and NNSs were less likely to use them when they occurred. This matches findings in first language acquisition research.

In the second study Oliver (1995) examined negative feedback in the conversation in English of eight dyads of NS and NNS children, matched for age (8 to 13) and gender. Her research questions (c.f. Grimshaw and Pinker (1989); Long (1996)) were as follows:

- Do child NSs provide negative feedback to their NNS peers?
- If negative feedback is found to exist, in what form does it occur, as negotiation strategies or recasts, and if both, in what proportion do the two occur?
- Do NNSs use this feedback, and in particular, do they incorporate recasts into their subsequent speech production?

The NNS children had all arrived in Perth, Western Australia, within 12 months of the time of the study. The pairs were engaged in two picture description tasks, which took about twenty minutes each to complete. The tasks were "selected from commercially produced materials so that they would be typical of activities encountered by students in ESL classes" (Oliver 1995:466). In the first, one-way task, the NNS had to give instructions to the NS to draw a simple black outline picture. In the second, two-way task, the NNS and the NS had to work together to complete a picture of a kitchen by placing cut-out objects. Each partner already had half the information required, the other partner had the rest. This is a Jigsaw task based on an information gap, a classic task of the meaning based Communicative Language Teaching approach and would seem to be the kind of task suggested by Brock et al. (1986).

The conversations were recorded (audio and video recordings) and transcribed. An analysis was made of the first 100 utterances of the transcripts for each pair for each task. These utterances consist of a three-part interaction sequence: NNS initial turn, NS response and NNS reaction. The researcher found that 283 of NNS initial turns (55%)

contained errors. Of these error turns in the corpus, 39% were ignored by the NSs. A substantial 61% of error turns, however, received *implicit negative feedback* of some kind. This implicit negative feedback came in the form of recasts (22%), or negotiation, (39%) such as clarification requests and confirmation checks. Error types triggered different responses from the NSs:

> For example, negotiation appears to be prompted by such errors as the incorrect use or omission of auxiliary or copula, pronoun, word order or choice, word omission or subject omission. In contrast, errors in singularity or plurality and subject-verb agreement were more frequently recast. (Oliver 1995:471)

NNSs were found to correctly incorporate a native speaker recast 9.93% of the time in the corpus. This figure was found to be much higher (more than a third) when the transcripts were closely examined for possibility and/or appropriacy of incorporation. If, for example, the NS recast was in the form of a yes/no question, the NNS would reply *yes* or *no*. This was an appropriate response. A complete sentence incorporating the recast contained in the question would *not* have been appropriate. The researcher concludes that child NSs "do indeed provide implicit negative feedback to their NNS peers". Negative feedback was not only found to *exist*, but to "exist in a form and in proportions that made it *usable*". She further makes the case that the feedback is also *used*. This case is based primarily on the finding of correct incorporation 9.93% of the time, which has been mentioned above. This would be *self repair* as a form of *uptake* in Lyster and Ranta's terms (1997).

Oliver also puts forward a number of arguments to show why "the evidence is consistent with the claim that learners use this feedback in their subsequent interlanguage

production" (Oliver 1995:477). The first of these arguments is that, given the developmental constraints of the learners (Meisel, Clahsen and Pienemann 1981), only those recasts which are within their learnability range can be usable. The second argument is that for study design purposes, "production was taken as sole evidence of acquisition" (Oliver 1995:476) and that this definition is constraining. She argues that "It needs to be acknowledged that acquisition may, in fact occur throughout earlier stages, some time before it becomes evident in production". The third argument is that "for a recast to be scored as incorporated it had to occur in the learner's next turn", and that this scoring procedure inevitably limited the number of incorporations which were recorded.

Since the publication of the revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1996), a number of dyad and/or experimental studies have explored the effect of the recast on L2 development. These include those by Mackey and Philp (1998), Long, Inagaki, and Ortega (1998), and Mackey, Gass, and McDonough (2000).

The starting point of the study by Mackey and Philp (1998) was the Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1996). Their research questions focused on the effect of recasts as follows:

- Do learners who participate in task-based interaction with intensive recasts show an increase in developmentally more advanced structures?
- What is the role of the learner's response to the recasts?
  (Mackey & Philp 1998:343).

Question forms, (c.f. Spada and Lightbown (1993)) were chosen as the measure for development. Participants were 35 adults who were enrolled in intensive ESL programs in two private language schools in Sydney, Australia. On the basis of a pretest the

learners were rated according to Pienemann and Johnston's (1987) six stages of development in relation to use of question forms then assigned randomly to five groups. The study compared four groups under different treatment conditions along with a fifth control group over five weeks.

Learners engaged in negotiated interaction in NS-NNS dyads in 15-25 minute sessions, for five daily sessions in the first week, and for one session each in the third and fifth weeks. The pairs of learners completed tasks such as spotting differences in pictures, sequencing pictures and drawing pictures. All tasks required the NNSs to ask questions in order to complete them. NS partners had been trained to offer feedback on ungrammatical language, with a particular emphasis on recasts. Two of the four groups (the *Recast groups*) "received intensive recasts of their non-target like utterances as they carried out tasks in pairs with a NS interlocutor". The other two groups (the *Interactor groups)* "performed the same tasks but did not receive such recasts". The control group did not take part in the paired interactions, but completed both the pre- and posttests (Mackey and Philp 1998:346).

The results of three posttests using "Spot the difference" tasks conducted in Weeks 1, 2 and 5 of the study revealed:

> learners at higher developmental levels who participated in interaction with intensive recasts showed a greater increase in structures at higher developmental levels than learners who participated in interaction without intensive recasts (Mackey & Philp, 1998:350).

This finding for a positive effect for recasts on interlanguage development was in spite of, or independent of, the fact that learners tended to continue on task without modifying their responses. When all turns without opportunities for responses were eliminated, "67% of learners continued on task and only 6% modified their original utterances". This finding was accounted for by their suggestion that the effect of recasts need not be *immediate*.

Long, Inagaki and Ortega (1998) set out to compare the effects of two kinds of implicit negative feedback, models and recasts. Two experiments were conducted: The first experiment involved 24 university learners of Japanese as a second language, while the second involved 30 university learners of Spanish as a second language. Both learner groups consisted of speakers of American English. The research questions of the study, which have been extrapolated from their hypotheses (Long et al. 1998:360) are as follows:

- Will learners who hear models of target L2 structures show greater ability to produce those structures, than learners not exposed to the structures?
- Will learners who hear recasts of target L2 structures show greater ability to produce those structures, than learners not exposed to those structures?
- Will learners who hear recasts of target L2 structures show greater ability to produce those structures, than learners who hear models of those structures?

"Greater ability to produce those structures" was measured either by post-test scores or pretest-posttest gain scores. The structures in Japanese were adjective ordering and a locative construction. The structures in Spanish were direct object topicalization and adverb placement. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups (model or recast) and a control group.

In a laboratory-like setting, each participant played a communication game with the researcher, who sat on the other side of a screen. Prompts for both models and recasts were pre-recorded and delivered through headphones. The model group received their model before they spoke; the recast group received a prompt, then spoke; following this, the researcher repeated correct answers and recast incorrect answers. The adjective ordering task involved repetition of a phrase and retrieval of the item referred to on the tape e.g. *akakute ookii kami* (= "a large red piece of paper"). The locative task involved positioning of four dolls by the participant, and description to the researcher of where particular dolls were seated in a room. The direct object topicalization task used cutout pictures of objects and people which were manipulated by participants according to the taped prompt, e.g. (Recast group) - Prompt: *La guitarra*; Participant: *La guitarra la tiene Pedro.* (= "Pedro has the guitar"). The adverb placement task also used cutout pictures, this time of a girl and of food and drink items, e.g. Prompt: *A veces* (= "sometimes"); Participant: *Elena toma a veces café* (= "Elena sometimes drinks coffee"). No significant difference was found, however, between gain scores of either the model or recast groups. Furthermore, neither treatment group scored significantly better than the control group.

Mackey et al. (2000) explored learners' perceptions about interactional feedback by videotaping the completion of tasks by dyads of NNSs and NSs / near-native speakers and playing the tape back to the learners for their comment. They specifically investigated "the extent to which (..) feedback is in fact perceived as such by learners and whether their perceptions about the target of the feedback are correct" (p.477).

73

Learners were adults learning ESL and Italian as a Foreign Language (IFL) in the US. Different patterns emerged in the two groups of learners. On the one hand:

> The number of feedback episodes in the ESL data in which the learners perceived the target of the feedback differed according to the feedback type. Whereas learners' reports indicate they often recognized the feedback for lexis and phonology (83% and 60% respectively), they generally did not indicate that they recognized the target of morphosyntactic feedback (13%) (Mackey et al., 2000:488).

On the other hand, IFL learners perceived morphosyntactic feedback, i.e. feedback to errors of morphosyntax, more frequently for what it was than the ESL learners (24%), but more often perceived it as being about lexis. Their recognition of feedback to errors of lexis was high (66%), though not as high as that of the ESL learners. The IFL learners received little phonological feedback, and when they did, only recognized it as about phonology 18% of the time. The types of feedback offered by the NS interlocutors were all *implicit*, consisting of recasts and *negotiation*, for example clarification requests, or combinations of recasts and negotiation.

It is interesting to note that for both groups of learners, while they received a high rate of feedback to morphosyntactic problems in the form of recasts (75% for the IFL group), their recognition of the *reason* for feedback was low. This has implications for the interpretation of data in the present study.

3.4 Negative feedback: classroom studies

It is true that interactional studies of NS-NNS dyads, or of groups of learners in experimental conditions, present advantages to the researcher. The effect of a given

74

variable such as the corrective recast can be traced with more certainty in a controlled and possibly artificial environment. It is correspondingly true that observational classroom studies, for all their chaos of detail, nonetheless have the advantage that they take place in an authentic environment. Classroom studies which include some degree of experimentation do at least take place in an environment where participants take on their everyday roles in a known setting.

In the next two sections, a number of studies of corrective feedback in second language classrooms are described. The classroom studies range from observational studies of classes (as is the case in the present study) to quasi-experimental ones. The first studies to be discussed all focus on child learners (Section 3.4.1). They include studies by Chaudron (1986); Lightbown and Spada (1990); Spada and Lightbown (1993); DeKeyser (1993) and Lyster and Ranta (1997). All but one of these studies were conducted in Canada, where the target language is either French or English. This reflects the willingness of the Canadian government to fund research which throws light on the efficacy of its bilingual language policy.

3.4.1 Classroom studies of children learning L2

Chaudron (1986) undertook a pilot study of classroom interaction in a French immersion program at grades 8 and 9 level in Ontario, Canada. His research questions were:

- How much are learners' L2 linguistic errors corrected in either French or other subject classes, relative to errors of other sorts?
- In what ways are errors corrected? (Chaudron, 1986:65)

Answers to these questions, it was suggested, would help first of all to clarify what teachers' instructional priorities were. Second, they would show the balance between instruction of language and of content in immersion classes. Third, the answers might help shape a comprehensive model of teachers' corrective reactions to oral errors and finally, they might reveal some of the strategies which learners use in rectifying their errors.

Six real 1/2 hour lessons were audio-recorded and transcribed, two lessons for each of three teachers. The first lesson was recorded in October (Time 1) and the second in April (Time 2) at the end of the same school year. Errors were classified as phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, content and discourse errors. It was found that, proportionately, teachers corrected lexical, content and discourse errors more than any other. Not only for subjects such as mathematics and science but also for French language, content errors were more frequently corrected than linguistic ones. "Language instruction is indeed subordinated to the subject matter - even in French class" (Chaudron 1986:81).

In an attempt to investigate teachers' awareness of their demonstrated correction behaviour, they were asked, after Time 2:

> to listen to the tapes of their own lessons at that time and indicate.. the errors made by
> their students and the purpose and structure of the corrections they provided, if any.
> (Chaudron 1986:65)

When the teachers listened to the lesson recorded in Time 2, they did not select all instances of error which the researchers had located in the transcript. The researcher suggests three reasons why teachers only selected a limited number of errors. One teacher stated that she had selected representative errors only, since there were so many errors overall. Furthermore, the teachers and the researcher did not share the same understanding of what an error was. A last reason given by the researcher was that teachers listened only once to the tapes, while researchers had the opportunity to listen more closely to repeated playings.

Chaudron reports a number of other features in the selection by teachers of learner errors. First, all three teachers primarily selected those instances of errors which they had previously "corrected" or reacted to. Two teachers indicated errors in content lessons that they had consciously avoided correcting; they said this was in order not to distract from the progress of the lesson. Second, in proportion to their occurrence, morphological errors were the least selected, possibly because they were the least noticed. Third, teachers selected a high proportion (69%) of learner error sequences where teacher corrections had elicited correct responses from the learners. Chaudron suggests that the salience of these errors was a reason why teachers selected them. He concludes that overall, teachers' statements about their priorities in error correction matched their classroom practice to a considerable degree (Chaudron 1986:80-8).

Lightbown and Spada (1990) stated the need to isolate and to examine form-focused instruction in communicative language teaching (CLT). They chose to investigate the

effects of form-focused instruction and error correction on the acquisition of English as a second language by 100 French Canadian children. Their study looked at the acquisition of the following specific structures: plural -s, progressive -ing, adjective-noun order, and possessive determiners eg *his/her*. These structures were chosen because they are known to present difficulty to francophones.

The 10-12 year old children were studying in an intensive English language program for five months during grades five and six. (In the remaining five months of the year, the children studied other subjects such as mathematics in their mother tongue, French.) The authors emphasize that the children who took part in the study had very little knowledge of English at the start of the program, and had minimal exposure to English outside the classroom during the five months of the study (Lightbown and Spada 1990:437). The authors used a modified version of the Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) (Spada and Fröhlich 1995) to analyze lesson observation data. This allowed them to conclude that instruction was meaning-based and that classroom activities were communicative, in all the four classes which they observed.

Tests of listening and reading comprehension were administered at the end of the five months. The authors report:

> Substantial between-class differences were found in the accuracy with which students used such English structures as progressive –ing and adjective-noun order in noun phrases. (Lightbown & Spada 1990:429).

Examination of the lesson data led to the following conclusion: teacher input was the factor that accounts for differences in accuracy between the four classes. In their conclusions, the authors note:

> certain teachers seemed to have a particular set of structural features on which they placed more emphasis and for which they had greater expectations for correct use. Such focus seems to have been effective in some cases, and less so in others. Teachers in these programs rarely presented a grammar lesson, but tended instead to react to errors or difficulties as they occurred. (Lightbown & Spada 1990:443)

In other words, the fact that a given class used some forms with greater accuracy in the test than the other classes, was related to the class teacher's pattern of expectation of accuracy in those forms. When a given teacher expected accuracy in a particular form, she frequently corrected the learners' errors in use of that form.

Spada and Lightbown (1993) pursued their interest in the effect of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback in a further study involving young Francophone subjects aged 10-12, learning English intensively under the same conditions as are described above. The research design for this study involved two experimental classes and one comparison class. In the experimental classes, learners received nine hours of instruction over two weeks on the use of interrogative structures. All three classes completed pre- and posttests of their use of these structures. The first test was administered prior to the two-week period of instruction (for only two of the classes), the second test immediately at the end of the period of instruction. A short-term follow-up test was given five weeks later, on completion of the five-month intensive English program. A long-term follow-up test was given at the end of the school year, five months later. In the test, learners completed a task based on four pictures, one of which was

chosen by the experimenter. Learners asked at least fifteen questions about the chosen picture, in order to work out which picture of the four it was. The data from the test were analyzed in two ways, for accuracy and to determine the developmental stage of each learner, as defined by Pienemann and Johnston (1986).

All three classes showed increasing improvement in accurate question formation from each test to the next. This was particularly striking in view of the fact that the long-term follow-up test took place after a five-month period where almost no instruction in the target language had taken place. A comparison of results on tests showed:

> the comparison group started out at a much higher level of accuracy on the pretest than the experimental group, ...ultimately achieving higher levels than the experimental group. (Spada & Lightbown 1993:212)

The higher level of accuracy of the comparison group in posttest and follow-up tests needed explanation, since the comparison group had been selected on the basis that their general English ability was the same (beginner level) as that of the experimental group. An analysis of the lesson tapes showed that the teacher in the comparison group had, throughout five months of instruction, *consistently corrected learners' use of grammar, including question forms.* She did this to a much greater degree than either of the teachers in the experimental group. This finding indicated, in an unexpected way, that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback do indeed contribute to the development of interrogative constructions in the oral performance of ESL learners. Furthermore, the substantial progress of the experimental classes / group from pretest to posttest and beyond could be best explained by the focus on form and corrective feedback

on interrogative forms during the two-week period of instruction. This was established by an examination of tape-recordings of teacher talk during the two-week period.

The progress of learners in both the experimental and comparison groups was also analyzed according to developmental stages in the acquisition of interrogatives. A comparison of pre- and posttest data revealed:

> The overwhelming majority of students in the experimental group either advanced at least one stage or continued to produce questions at the highest stage on the pretest. (Spada & Lightbown 1993: 212)

In a study conducted in French second language classes in Belgium, DeKeyser (1993) found that error correction did *not* have an overall effect on learner proficiency in L2, but that it *did* interact with learner variables. These included foreign language learning aptitude, extrinsic motivation and French class anxiety. For example, "learners with low extrinsic motivation did better on oral accuracy and oral fluency post-test measures after systematic error correction" (DeKeyser, 1993:511). DeKeyser (1993) highlights the number of variables present in second language acquisition and the difficulty of separating out the single variable of error correction and its association with learner interlanguage development.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) studied the frequency and distribution of corrective feedback in relation to learner uptake in six French immersion classes in the Montreal area in Québec, Canada. Their research questions were as follows:

- What are the different types of corrective feedback and their distribution in communicatively oriented classrooms?

- What is the distribution of uptake following different types of corrective feedback?
- What combination of corrective feedback and learner uptake constitute the negotiation of form? (Lyster & Ranta 1997:42)

The study aimed to develop "an analytical model comprising the various moves in an error treatment sequence", (see Section 3.2.2) and to apply the model to an existing database. This consisted of 100 hours of audio-recordings of lessons in four grade four and two grade six classrooms, of which 18.3 hours were used for the study. The lesson included 14 subject matter lessons and 13 French language arts lessons. There were no formal grammar lessons in the 18.3 hours. The learners were anglophone Canadians who had been in either an early immersion program in French from grade one (total immersion), or a middle immersion program from grade four (partial, that is 60% immersion).

Lyster and Ranta (1997) found that more than one half of all corrective feedback by four different teachers came in the form of *recasts* (55%). This compares with less frequent use of *elicitation* of correct responses (14%), *clarification requests* (11%) *metalinguistic feedback* (8%), *explicit correction* (7%) and *repetition* (5%). (For examples of each feedback type, see Chapter 5.) In Chapter 6, this study compares its findings in adult ESL classrooms to those found in their immersion classrooms.

Following Doughty (1994) they use the definition from the L1 literature of a recast as "the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error". They point out:

82

> Recasts are generally implicit, in that they are not introduced by phrases such as "You
> mean," "Use this word," and "You should say." However, some recasts are more salient
> than others in that they may focus on one word only, whereas others incorporate the
> grammatical or lexical modification into a sustained piece of discourse. Recasts also
> include translations in response to a student's use of the L1. (Lyster & Ranta 1997:47)

The study set out to show which forms of feedback led to learner *uptake*, whether in the

form of repair utterances or utterances needing repair. It was found that the recast was

the feedback type *least* likely to lead to uptake (31%). *Explicit correction* was somewhat

more likely to lead to uptake (50%). *Elicitation* led in 100% of cases to learner uptake,

closely followed by *clarification requests*, (88%) *metalinguistic feedback* (86%) and

repetition (78%).

This led the writers to conclude:

> The feedback-uptake sequence engages students more actively when there is negotiation
> of form; that is when the correct form is not provided to the students - as it is in recasts
> and explicit correction - and when signals are provided to the learner that assist in the
> reformulation of the erroneous utterance. (Lyster & Ranta 1997:58)

The writers encourage the use of feedback types other than the recast for two main

reasons, firstly to promote active learning by learners, and secondly to eliminate

ambiguity. Ambiguity comes from two things. On the one hand recasts are not always

noticed by learners. On the other hand, the recast does not clearly signal the nature of the

learner's error, whether it is one of meaning or of form.

Their view that recasts do not lead to immediate uptake is seen however as a "red

herring" by Mackey and Philp (1998), who question the value assigned to immediate

learner uptake by Lyster and Ranta (1997). They refer to the caution of second language acquisition researchers such as Gass (1991) that "factors such as instruction, focus on form, and interaction may have delayed developmental effects". They continue as follows:

> In previous research, learner "uptake" (Lyster 1998b; Lyster and Ranta 1997) has been considered the crucial factor in determining whether or not recasts are used. The present study suggests that, provided the level is appropriate, recasts may be used eventually by some learners, regardless of their immediate response to the recast. (Mackey & Philp 1998:338)

3.4.2 Classroom studies of adults learning L2

Long (1996:437-442) surveys classroom studies up to the early 1990s and draws attention to two contradictory sets of findings. On the one hand, studies such as that of Slimani (1992) show that even "metalinguistically mature adult classroom learners ...often do not perceive" corrective feedback or other form-focusing devices. On the other hand, however, "Most (other) researchers report students not only noticing corrections, however, but benefiting from them – in the short term at least". These include Herron and Tomasello (1988) and Tomasello and Herron (1989). These researchers developed their so-called "Garden Path technique" in a study of adult learners of French as L2. Learners were *induced* to make errors by overgeneralizing from examples of certain structures. Learners who then had errors explicitly corrected achieved better mastery of relevant grammatical rules than learners who only ever saw correct examples / models of the same structures.

Nicholas, Lightbown and Spada (2001) comprehensively survey studies which are specifically about recasts as feedback to language learners. Of particular significance to the present study is Doughty's (1994) observational study of university students learning French as a foreign language. In six hours of lessons focusing on interactional activities, teachers' most common feedback type was the recast, and students repeated the recasts more often than other types of feedback, thus showing what is called *uptake* by Lyster and Ranta (1997). Nicholas et al. (2001) further report on observational studies of the late 1990s, with a main focus on corrective feedback. These include a study in adult ESL classes in Montreal (Panova 1999), German FL classes in Belgium (Lochtman 2000) and adult EFL classes in Austria (Havranek 1999). Another study of relevance investigates focus on form in communicative lessons for adult ESL learners in Auckland, New Zealand (Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen, 2001). A common finding of these studies is the preference of teachers for recasts as feedback and a relatively low level of noticing/uptake of such feedback by learners.

Nicholas, Lightbown and Spada (2001) comment in relation to the study by Doughty (1994) and indeed most L2 studies:

> Like most L2 studies, this one does not distinguish between recasts with emphasis and those delivered with more neutral sentence stress, nor is it possible to determine whether recasts, but not repetitions, were accompanied by some nonverbal cue as to their purpose. (Nicholas et al., 2001:738)

They go on to question the assumption of L2 researchers that all recasts automatically provide negative evidence. They suggest that *recasts given with emphasis* (for example sentence stress and / or nonverbal cues) are more noticeable than recasts given without

85

special emphasis. This contradicts the previous categorization of recasts as implicit (Long and Robinson 1998). The degree of implicitness and/or noticeability of the recast is a consideration which will no doubt influence the design of feedback studies in the near future.

3.5   Conclusion

In this chapter, feedback studies of the last twenty years have been presented against a background of different research perspectives. The difficulty of establishing common ground to allow comparison of findings emerges as a salient feature of the review. The problem of comparability of classroom studies past and present has been recently highlighted in a recent meta-analysis of studies on the effectiveness of L2 instruction in general (Norris and Ortega 2000). These authors point out that different research questions, different definitions of error and of feedback, different procedures, and finally, different results are typical of studies in L2 instruction.

In corrective feedback studies undertaken before the mid 1990s, whether dyad or classroom studies, only the notion of *explicit* feedback was explored. Encouragingly, recent feedback studies are tending more and more to use common categories of error, feedback and noticing of feedback. The categories are continuing to evolve, however, which has immediate implications for the design of new studies. A contentious issue at present is the usability of recasts as corrective feedback when they can be seen as both negative and positive evidence.

As is seen in the coming chapters, the design of the present study has some things in common with several recent ones. It would seem that, along with the work by Panova (1999), this study is one of only two observational classroom studies of corrective feedback in adult ESL settings. It is set in a context which appears to have been unexplored till now, namely the adult ESL context in Australia. Furthermore, it makes what appears to be a unique attempt to explore the attitudes of teachers as well as their classroom practice.

Chapter 4

The research design and methodology for collecting data

Chapter 4 outlines the research design chosen for the study, reports on the methodology for data collection and gives an overview of data collected. It explains what is meant by an instrumental case study is, and it also presents an overview of the domains of inquiry of the study. These include the behaviour and attitudes of teachers and learners in regard to corrective feedback in adult ESL classrooms.

The greater part of this chapter focuses on the methodology used for collecting different kinds of data. Ethical considerations are also discussed in Section 4.3. The development of instruments for collection of data is then described. Procedures for collecting data both inside and outside classrooms are outlined in Section 4.5. The scope of the data collected in this study is detailed in the final section of this chapter, which serves to introduce the participants in the study, both teachers and learners.

4.1   The research design: a case study

This is a qualitative case study, that is, it is a study of the kind where "qualitative inquiry dominates, with strong naturalistic, holistic, cultural, phenomenological interests" (Stake 1994:236). Of the three kinds of case study defined by Stake, it is an *instrumental case study*: a "particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or refinement of theory". The particular case is adult ESL classes at upper-intermediate level at a language centre in Melbourne. The issue is teachers' corrective feedback on spoken

errors, or in everyday terms, error correction. This issue is at the same time both a theoretical one and a practical one. It emerges from the theory of second language acquisition known as the Interaction Hypothesis, but it also relates to the everyday pedagogical decisions of second language teachers (see Chapter 2). As Stake explains:

> With its own unique history, the case is a complex entity operating within a number of contexts, including the physical, economic, ethical and aesthetic. The case is singular, but it has subsections, ...a concatenation of domains – many so complex that at best they can only be sampled. Holistic case study calls for the examination of these complexities. (Stake, 1994:239)

The aim of a qualitative approach is to explore a complex phenomenon at some depth and in context. A number of different inter-connecting factors are closely identified in an effort to ensure reliability of interpretation. As is commonly the case in qualitative research, where the triangulation of data is a classic research procedure, in this study three complementary data sets have been collected. The data sets are drawn from three linked domains: the classrooms, the teachers and the learners. In this way they can be seen as a "concatenation of domains". They are based on different research tools and / or procedures.

The first set of data consists of real lessons recorded on audiotape and / or videotape *inside* the classroom. The second set of data comprises a series of interviews individually recorded *outside* the classroom with teachers and learners. The third set of data comprises documents, aiming to make interpretation of lessons as rich and reliable as possible. These documents include class lists, curriculum and assessment guidelines,

field-notes made by the researcher during lessons, and brief teacher and learner journals completed after lessons. Thus the information in both the second and third data sets has been gathered outside the classroom. It is about the background and attitudes of teachers, and to a lesser extent of learners, and has as its aim to relate these to observed classroom behaviours. The process of relating background and attitudes of teachers to their classroom behaviour seeks to explore the key question of the study: *Are teachers' patterns of corrective feedback predictable from their attitudes to second language learning and teaching?*

A primary concern of the study is to document the existence of corrective feedback in real adult ESL classrooms. To achieve this involved both qualitative and quantitative techniques - not inconsistent with a qualitative approach to research, although a qualitative approach to research is often contrasted with a quantitative approach. Thus the study involves some quantification of data. Three kinds of turn in classroom discourse are counted in Chapter 5. They are learners' spoken errors, instances of feedback by teachers, and immediate responses by learners to feedback.

The case study is based on a small number of teachers and lessons. What the study approach gains in depth is offset by its lack of breadth. Because the data sample is restricted in size, the generalizability of its findings are limited. However, case study procedures generate a descriptive account which is valuable in its own right. Further, case studies based on small numbers and which use qualitative methodology may be externally valid from the point of view of the reader (Stake 1985). According to Stake,

the researcher tries to provide the elaborate information on which readers decide the extent to which the researcher's case is similar to (and thus likely to be instructive about) theirs (Stake, 1985:280).

If the readers of such a study generalize the findings to their own experience or to similar settings they have known, then they may "infer particularistic understandings not necessarily mediated by general rules"(Stake, 1985:280) and thereby gain a better understanding of their own situation.

The study makes no claim to be an ethnography. Together with a number of salient design and methodological features, the research questions have been identified before data collection. Ethnographic studies often display an open attitude to a phenomenon, seeking the questions to be asked as well as the answers to them. The ethnographer searches the "swamp" (see below) for salient features and patterns in order to do this. What the qualitative approach taken in this study shares with an ethnographic one, however, is a keen interest in the details of the physical and cultural environment in which the study takes place. Without such details, the human dimension of the topic is lost.

Of course the disadvantages of the qualitative approach must be weighed up against its advantages. For example, any attempt to isolate one feature of real-life events risks confusion of that feature with others connecting to it. Schön's metaphor of the swamp (Schön 1983) is a powerful one for the classroom. When so many forms of life visibly

interconnect, how can observers distinguish one form from another? Furthermore, how can they distinguish a causal relationship from a correlational one?

A problem inherent in a qualitative approach is often described as the "observer's paradox". Unlike the birdwatcher in the hide, classroom researchers cannot disguise their presence from the objects of their interest. The mere presence of a researcher may influence or even change the behaviour and attitudes of the participants in the research. In order to minimize this influence, the observer needs to be as inconspicuous as possible. The documentation of the authentic, everyday, life of the classroom requires an unobtrusive role on the part of the observer. The observer's paradox may have an ethical dimension as well, which is discussed in Section 4.3.

4.2   Advantages of the case study

Observational classroom studies which are empirically based are few in number and more are needed. In particular, there are very few negative feedback studies which investigate the learning of adults in intensive language instruction programs.

The approach taken by the present study differs from the somewhat artificial approach taken by many of the studies reported on Chapter 3. Both naturalistic and artificial studies describe and analyze patterns of interaction between real-life native speakers and non-native speakers. However, the experimental studies described, (Long, Inagaki and Ortega 1998; Mackey and Philp 1998; Oliver 1995) are based on data from pairs of speakers (dyads) in more or less contrived conversations. The methodological advantage

of dyad studies is that they allow some control of the number of variables in NS-NNS interactions, such as proficiency level, age and gender differences, all of which may have an impact on whether errors are corrected or not. The methodological disadvantage of dyad studies is the gap between the situation studied and a real-life one. If the circumstances in which such data are collected are contrived, how reasonable is it to assume that verbal behaviour in these conversations replicates 'natural' conversations? In other words, are the findings of the laboratory transferable to the real world? While common sense may suggest that they *are* transferable, it is difficult to prove this.

To date, the attitudes and motivation of second language teachers have been largely disregarded in negative feedback studies. Most studies have observed negative feedback and its consequences without exploring *who* the participants are and *why* they act as they do. One exception is Chaudron's study, which sought to tap teachers' awareness of *when* and *how* they chose to offer corrective feedback (Chaudron 1986). In general, the questions of *existence, usability* and *use* of negative feedback have been explored at the level of NS and NNS behaviour. The social and psychological expectations of NSs and NNSs are most often not considered. By contrast, the present study attempts to take a wide range of contextual features into account. It does this by considering *who* the teachers are, and to a lesser extent who the learners are, and *what* these two groups expect in the language learning classroom.

The present study aims to fill a gap in the research literature, which is to investigate the learning of adults in an intensive language teaching program in English as a second language in Australia. The case study focuses on the *behaviour* and *attitudes* of five

teachers in adult ESL classes. While teachers are not the only source of input in the classroom, they are an important one; teachers are assumed here to be the most likely source of corrective feedback.

Since a key aim of the research is to contribute to what is known about what teachers *do*, empirical data from the classroom are required. The specific aim is to contribute to what is known about teachers *giving corrective feedback*. Only a discourse analysis at the level of speakers' utterances can reveal patterns of feedback.

The *attitudes* of several teachers towards their role in second language instruction, and in particular their attitudes towards focus on meaning, focus on form(s) and error correction are also investigated. The study aims to relate these attitudes to the teachers' classroom behaviour. Where teachers' corrective feedback patterns in the classroom require interpretation, teachers' own statements may offer a way of understanding these patterns.

In summary, this is a case study, which adopts an approach which is both empirical and qualitative. The major advantage of this approach is that the data collected represent what *actually happened in the classroom*. There is no question about their transferability, which stands in contrast to data collected in a laboratory-like setting. Findings from such data may or may not be transferable to the classroom setting.

There is a limit to the amount of data that can be collected and analyzed in a single study conducted by a single researcher. The present case study acknowledges this limitation by

choosing to undertake a case study of five teachers and their classes at one language centre.

4.3   Ethical considerations

Collecting data in real-life settings involves a number of ethical considerations, which relate to the researcher's access to information about participants and potential misuse of that information.

It is a preoccupation of qualitative researchers to reflect the real conditions of the participants in the study. This means that they may observe or hear about matters which are essentially private, such as the family circumstances of the participants, or the personal likes and dislikes of individuals. In such a situation, it is important for the researcher to include only that information which relates to the purposes of the study and which risks no harmful repercussions for the participants. It is also important to respect the privacy of participants by the use of codes and / or pseudonyms. Care has been taken in this study to observe these conditions.

When researchers are participants in the classroom, they may exercise some power over other classroom members. For example the researcher may be in a position to pass or fail a student at examination. This was not the case in this study. If anything the reverse was true, since the researcher depended utterly on the availability and willingness of individual teachers and learners to participate in the study. For example, two teachers left

95

the study after five weeks because of staffing changes at the language centre. A number of learners left or entered classes during the period of data collection for various reasons. These individuals were suddenly no longer participants in the study. While the language centre management approved in general of the presence of the researcher, it was left to the teachers to negotiate with the researcher when classes could be observed and recorded. On two occasions teachers withdrew permission for use of the video-camera in a given lesson at short notice. On another occasion a teacher showed surprise and mild concern half-way through the lesson when she realized the camera was on, although she had agreed to this the week or so beforehand.

To ensure that the rights of participants were respected, the approval of the Monash University Standing Committee for the Ethics of Research on Humans was required before the study could begin. In November 1996, the researcher made a detailed application to the committee, which was approved in December. The application had to satisfy the committee that all participation by teachers and adult learners was voluntary, and the research would not harm participants in any way, neither during collection nor after the results were made known. The researcher had to ensure that individual participants were *informed* about what would be required of them during data collection and that they gave their written *consent* to this. Accordingly, all learners were provided with a spoken and written explanation about the research *(Appendices C and D)*.

Learners' level of English was sufficiently high to understand the explanatory statement and as adults they were clearly capable of giving their consent. Consent forms

(Appendices E and *F)* were signed by teachers and learners at the commencement of data collection in their particular classes during 1997. These will be held in a safe place by the researcher, for at least five years, as required by the committee.

While the study was not planned as a collaborative research project, the researcher actively sought a co-operative relationship with participants. In an effort to reciprocate the favour awarded by the language centre staff and management, the researcher offered a workshop to teachers at the end of Term 1, which aimed to raise their awareness of the advantages of different techniques of corrective feedback. She accepted an invitation to observe Level 5 ELICOS learners performing interactive speaking tasks for their formal assessment in Term 1. She subsequently volunteered to take part during Term 2 as interviewer, in the formal assessment of a group of Level 6 ELICOS learners who were not part of the study. At the request of one of the teachers, she provided material for a teacher reading group. Videotapes of her lessons were made available to the teacher who requested this. Similarly, in regard to learners, she offered written feedback on learners' writing and offered language learning encouragement and suggestions during interviews. It was clear to the researcher, however, that the generosity of individual participants outweighed these small efforts of gratitude.

4.4   Development of instruments for data collection

In this section, the development of instruments for collecting data about teachers and learners is described. These instruments consist of interview schedules and journal pro-

formas. A cloze test was also prepared with the intention of comparing ESL learner performance early in Term One with that displayed late in Term Two.

4.4.1 Teacher interview

Questions for the teacher interview were based on the experience of the researcher, who had taught ESOL in a range of countries and contexts for over fifteen years, and taught in a postgraduate TESOL program for about five years. It is clear that there is a particularly wide range of experience and qualifications of teachers in the adult ESL education sector in Australia. The interview schedule for teachers needed to reflect this. The reason for this wide range is that there have been a number of possible routes to employment in the absence of national accreditation procedures for adult ESL or EFL teachers. The existence of two kinds of adult ESL programs, (for immigrants and for pre-tertiary international learners) has resulted in two separate routes for language teacher education and / or training, at least until recent years. Adult Multicultural Education Program (AMEP) teachers are required to have qualified as teachers and to have completed a fifth-year-level postgraduate diploma in TESOL at a university. English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) teachers in 1997 were not required to have qualified as teachers, but were instead expected to have completed a brief and intensive training course in teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults (for example The UCLES/ RSA Cert. TEFLA).[3]

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[3] The University of Cambridge Local Examination System / Royal Society of Arts (UK) *Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults*, often called the *RSA* by English language teachers.

An initial research question was: "What effect does teacher education and training have on teachers' patterns of corrective feedback?" In order to probe this question, the interview schedule was designed to include questions about the teachers' experience and qualifications, as follows:

Teaching experience

- What is your current position? (Full-time? Sessional or one-year contract?)

- How long have you been at this centre?

- How long have you been teaching adults English as a second/foreign language?

- Have you done any other kind of teaching?

- What made you interested in working with migrant/ELICOS students?

Qualifications

- Have you ever learned a second or foreign language?

- Have you ever travelled or lived in another country?

- What sort of tertiary studies have you done?

- What sort of teacher qualification do you have?

- What sort of specific TESOL training do you have?

Furthermore, while all the teachers were experienced in teaching English to speakers of other languages, their widely different backgrounds meant that assumptions could not be

made about how they saw their role in the classroom. It was also not clear from the outset whether and to what degree they had theorized their classroom practice. The interview schedule also aimed to elicit teacher understandings of their role in the second language learning process. Questions ranged from philosophical/theoretical to practical ones as follows:

Philosophy/Attitude towards teaching

- What is your philosophy of teaching? (How do you see your role in the teaching and learning process?)

- What does doing a good job mean to you as an ESL/EFL teacher?

Theoretical understandings

- What are the main factors in the process of learning a second language?

Methodological approach to second language teaching

- Would you describe your approach to second language teaching as communicative?

- What does communicative mean for you?

Spoken interaction

- Do students speak a lot in your classes? (During which kind of activities?)

- Do your classroom activities focus more often on meaning or on form?

- How do you provide Focus on Form for your students?

It may be observed from the questions listed above that no direct question was asked such as: "What is your attitude to error correction?" Instead, teachers were asked about this indirectly, via questions on the communicative approach to language teaching, speaking

activities, form versus meaning, and Focus on Form. The researcher chose not to reveal the focal point of the research, *negative feedback / error correction*, so early in the study. It was anticipated that explicit mention of error correction might prejudice the findings of lesson recordings, which were supposed to be as authentic and routine as possible. In hindsight, the indirect approach proved to be of some disadvantage, since the teachers commented in varying degrees about error correction. A pilot study using the interview schedule might have avoided this problem, though the dilemma of revealing the purpose of the research before collecting data could not have been resolved completely.

While the teacher interview was based on a number of set questions, there was some flexibility allowed for follow-up of particular answers that were given. This meant that the interview took about an hour to conduct. A second, unstructured interview was conducted at a later stage with three teachers, in order to find out more about the curriculum and assessment of the classes. Of these teachers, two were level leaders at Level 6, the highest level in each program, one from the AMEP and one from the ELICOS.

4.4.2   Teacher journal

A simple teacher journal pro-forma was drawn up, in order to validate the researcher's field-notes and assist in the interpretation of lesson transcripts. These were adapted after trial in an ELICOS class, as follows. Teachers were asked to make written comments immediately after a lesson which was recorded. Comments were about:

101

- What went well in this lesson

- What didn't go well this lesson

- What I want to pay attention to in coming lessons.

For an example of a teacher journal, see *Appendix G*. Journals took precious time from teachers and were completed only after some of the lessons.

4.4.3   Learner interview

While the focus of the present study is on the attitudes and behaviour of teachers, the learners themselves formed a significant variable in the investigation of corrective feedback. As adult learners they brought a range of experiences of life and of schooling to the ESL classroom. This needed to be taken into account. A qualitative approach to research requires information to be gathered in a variety of ways. The researcher's experience as teacher of adult learners of ESL in Australia and other countries was the basis for the design of the learner interview. The interview aimed to establish who the learners were, why they were in the language classes, and what their learning styles were, especially in as much as this related to the question of error correction. A follow-up interview with several of the learners was largely unstructured. It focused on their sense of progress in English during the period of the study and on their plans for future study and work.

Because the learners came from many different language backgrounds, it was not feasible to interview them in their own first languages. At intermediate and advanced levels of

English proficiency, however, the learners in the study were able to express themselves well in English. Questions asked in the first interview are:

- Which country are you from?

- How much English did you know before you came to Australia?

- How important is it to you to speak English well?

- What chance do you get to speak English outside the classroom?

- How important is it to you to write English well?

- What do you think of the language teaching methods used here?

- What would you like to do more often in the classroom?

- Do you like your teacher to correct your errors? Tell me more about this.

- What would you like to do less often in the classroom?

- What will you do next (after this English course is over)?

- What is your long-term aim in your life in Australia / in your country?

4.4.4 Learner journal

In the learner journal, learners answered two questions within a day or so of a recorded lesson. These were:

- What things in this lesson helped you the most to improve your skills in English, especially in speaking?

- Can you suggest some useful things which this lesson needed to include?

For an example of a completed learner journal see *Appendix H*. On the whole learners lacked the metalanguage to express their own learning preferences. They also chose

mostly not to comment unfavourably about activities included in or omitted from their lessons. For learners from countries such as China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea and Thailand for example, this may derive from a cultural attitude of respect towards teachers.

4.4.5 The cloze test

A short article about things to see and do in St Kilda was selected from a tourist brochure about Melbourne, on the basis that the content was interesting for new arrivals in Melbourne, whether immigrant or international students. The level of difficulty was judged by the researcher to be appropriate, though this proved not to be the case, as local knowledge or lack of it made the text in fact quite difficult for the learners. Thirty items were deleted at random, including function words and vocabulary items. *(Appendix I)* Learners were asked to complete the text in class early on in Term One and again towards the end of Term Two. The intention was to measure general progress in ESL using this integrative test. Changes in class membership however during the two terms meant that comparative results for only twelve learners were obtained. Furthermore, it was clear that while learning could be demonstrated to have taken place for these learners, *(Appendix J)*, no causal or even correlational link could be established between this progress and the lesson variables of the existence and usability of corrective feedback. The cloze test proved a weak link in the overall design of the study.

4.5   The process of data collection

The process of data collection involved a number of stages, which are described in this section. These are: choice of location for the research, familiarization with equipment, location and participants, the recording of lessons and interviews.

4.5.1   Choice of location

There are dozens of centres and colleges in Melbourne where adult learners undertake instruction in English as a second language. The language centre was selected for a number of reasons. First, it is one of the most established ESL centres in Melbourne, with a reputation for professionalism and a relatively long history. At the time of the study, government-funded English classes for adult migrants had been offered continuously by the centre for nearly thirty years, since 1968. The centre had been offering English classes on a full fee-paying basis to international students for about seven years.

Further, the centre was easy to travel to for all concerned, including the researcher. Located on at least two sites in the central business district of the city, the centre was one of several which attract adult ESL learners residing throughout the greater Melbourne area, which has a population of four million people. The railway system facilitates travel towards the city centre and back outwards to different points on the radius of suburbs which surround the city.

At the time of data collection this language centre offered classes to both immigrant and international learners at intermediate levels and above. This made it an interesting choice of location.

The choice was also a pragmatic one. The researcher was known to some members of staff at the language centre where she had been employed some years beforehand. This made it easier to approach management with the request to undertake a study relating to the teaching of speaking skills. A preliminary and in-principle agreement was made during 1996.

4.5.2 Familiarization with equipment, location and participants

A pilot study using the video equipment was organized at the language centre during their summer holiday program in January, 1997. The researcher also visited the language centre on several occasions to become familiar with the physical layout of classrooms. Classrooms were in three different buildings in the central business district and were up to four city blocks apart. Each building was different in layout and the light-source in each classroom was also different. Some rooms were on the ground floor, with no natural lighting, while others were several storeys up, with dramatic city landscapes visible through huge picture windows. Blinds were adjusted for the comfort of teachers and learners and this affected the light available to the camera.

At the end of 1996 the researcher met with AMEP and ELICOS team leaders for Level 6, which was the highest level of class at the language centre. Both team leaders were

106

teaching at both Levels 5 and 6, and agreed that the researcher could come into their own classes immediately for a trial observation. All classes at the centre were shared by two teachers, one teacher for three days a week and another teacher for two days a week. The team leaders arranged for the researcher to visit the classes that they would teach during Term One (February to April) and Term Two (May to July), 1997. These two ten-week terms seemed particularly suitable because learners who started at Level 5 in February were likely to continue through to Level Six. At the end of 1996, co-teachers and classes were still under discussion for Terms One and Two, 1997.

4.5.3   Lesson recordings

About fifteen lessons were recorded in 1997, mostly during Term Two (May to June). Recording of lessons resulted from negotiation between the researcher and the various teachers. This section outlines the way the lessons were recorded.

Equipment used in recording of lessons consisted of an electrically powered audiocassette tape recorder and video camera, both of which were operated by the researcher. Operating the equipment herself enabled the researcher to choose the timing and location of audio and videorecordings. It was also the least expensive option.

Both audiotape and video equipment recorded the teacher's voice when she faced the class and to a large extent when she moved around the room. In retrospect, it would have

107

been better to attach a wireless microphone to the teacher's clothing to capture all the interactions she engaged in.

Learners' voices were generally recorded clearly in whole class interactions, however group work presented a challenge. The tape recorder was generally located near a power outlet, while a lead ran from the recorder to an unobtrusive flat microphone. This was laid on the table where a group of three to six learners was sitting. The researcher could turn the cassette over when it reached the end of a side without disturbing the learners.

The video camera was set up on a tripod and was initially focused on the teacher, though it could swing sideways, up and down if required. The fixed setting on the tripod allowed the researcher to make simple field-notes about, for example, the learners' seating arrangement at the start of the lesson, the position of the camera and / or microphone, and details of published materials used by the teacher. The field-notes also record the start-time of different stages of the lesson, and salient examples of language use. They contain comments on the circumstances of the lesson, for example the lesson is the first one after a long weekend, or the lesson is the last one before a test. If it had been possible to engage a video-camera operator this would have resulted in a more professional video, capturing more interactions between learners, or learners and teachers. It would also have left more time for the researcher to make field-notes of a more inferential type.

Learner handouts were attached to the field-notes, and teacher and learner journals were collected after each lesson, so completing the record of each lesson.

4.6   The scope of the data

The data for the study included information about the organization of classes and their teachers, recordings of particular lessons, as well as details about individual teachers and learners. These are displayed in tables below, which are explained by the accompanying text.

4.6.1   Organization of classes in the study

Table 1 shows classes who took part in the study as well as the distribution of teachers.

Class	Program	Level	Term	Teachers	Number of students enrolled	Number of students who continue
			All terms last ten weeks	*Teacher in bold on the left teaches 3 days a week; teacher on the right teaches 2 days a week*		*to next level the following term*
Class 1 A5a	AMEP	5	1 (Feb – April)	**T1**, T2	20 *(13 attend regularly)*	11
Class 2 A6	AMEP	6	2 (May – July)	**T1**, T6	17	-
Class 3 E5	ELICOS	5	1 (Feb – April)	**T3**, T7	13	7
Class 4 E6	ELICOS	6	2 (May – July)	**T4**, T5	18	-
Class 5 A5b	AMEP	5	3 (Aug – Oct)	**T2**, T8	21	-

Table 1 A summary of classes in the study

It can be seen from the table that five distinct classes were involved in the study in three different terms, of which three classes were in the AMEP (Adult Multicultural Education Program) and two were ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students).

Classes are coded for type and level. Thus AMEP / immigrant classes are coded **A**, while ELICOS / international classes are coded **E**. Level 5 classes are at intermediate to upper-intermediate level, while Level 6 classes are at upper-intermediate to advanced level. Thus A5 is an immigrant class at approximately intermediate level, while E6 is an international class at a more advanced level. Classes were offered at each level for one term, that is ten weeks, on an intensive basis (20-25 hours per week). Teachers are identified here by number (T1 – T5) for convenience of tabling. All classes consisted of between 13 and 18 adult learners, though the AMEP classes had up to 21 learners listed on the roll. This is because some immigrant students attended class rather infrequently, owing to the pressures of settling themselves and their families in the new country.

Class 2 (Level 6 AMEP) included eleven learners (of a total of 17) who had previously been together in Class 1 (Level 5 AMEP). This is as close as the researcher could get to following an intact group of learners over twenty weeks, or two terms. Of the original group of 13 learners in Class 3 (Level 5 ELICOS), seven continued on in Class 4 (Level 6 ELICOS) the following term.

The main purpose of recording Class 5 (Level 5 AMEP) in Term 3 was to allow observation of T2 in the classroom. It had become clear to the researcher by this time that T2 had strong views on error correction and the original research design had not allowed observation of this teacher during Terms 1 and 2.

A total of eight teachers worked with the five classes. Those who participated in the study were T1 and T2 in the AMEP classes and T3, T4 and T5 in the ELICOS classes. Participation depended on a range of factors. Both AMEP teachers (T1 and T2) agreed to participate when the request was made directly by the researcher, who was known to them. The ELICOS team leader (T3) initially responded to a request made by the researcher through the management of the language centre. She only taught the Level 5 ELICOS class for a few weeks, however. T4 and T5 were approached directly by the researcher in Term 2, when it became clear that a number of students from Level 5 ELICOS were now in their shared Level 6 ELICOS class.

4.6.2   Recordings of lessons

The following table shows the ten lessons selected for closer analysis of discourse features.

Lesson number	Teacher	Class name[4]	Length of lesson (in minutes)	Main activities of lesson
1	T1	A6	50	Listening (*Behind the News* video program recorded off-air) Vocabulary work on transcript of part of video Worksheet on transcript of video
2	T1	A6	63	Grammar revision of three topics: *Wh-* questions, Reported speech + modals, Relative clauses
3	T1	A6	60	Pre-writing: discussing vocabulary and using link words in two cartoon stories *The picnic, Married couple by the cliff* and a diagram *Pyramid of economies*
4	T2	A5	45	Pre-reading: teacher-fronted class discussion of learners' plans for study and work Reading newspaper article *On course for a career*
5	T2	A5	47	Grammar revision: choosing simple past or past continuous for narratives Jazz chant: *Personal questions* using past continuous Teacher-fronted class discussion: cultural appropriateness of personal questions
6	T3	E5	45	Vocabulary presentation: *Phobias* Speaking task: small group surveys of learners' phobias Listening: taped lecture on phobias, answering multiple choice written questions
7	T4	E6	36	Small group discussion: *Which six people should be saved for a post-nuclear society?*
8	T4	E6	47	Pre-listening: teacher fronted discussion about body language Listening: taped lecture *Kinesics*
9	T5	E6	47	Teacher instructions Practice of three oral presentations Learner's assessed presentation *History of my university*
10	T5	E6	67	Brainstorm: Language of *giving an opinion, agreeing, disagreeing* Pronunciation practice of new phrases Small group discussion: *Who should have the heart transplant?*

Table 2 Overview of lesson data

[4] Initial letter indicates type of course, i.e. A = Adult Multicultural Education Program (AMEP); E = English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS). Number indicates class level, i.e. 5 = intermediate / upper intermediate; 6 = upper intermediate / advanced.

Of the fifteen or more lessons observed, the ten lessons in the table above have been selected for analysis, because of their relative clarity of recording. At least five lessons were discarded after the tapes were found to be unsuitable. This was either for technical reasons, for example the recording equipment had not functioned, or because the activities in the classroom involved too much movement and noise. In one lesson, for example, the learners were engaged in a "running dictation" activity and their speech could not be understood.

While the lesson data consist primarily of lesson recordings, they also include field notes made by the researcher at the time of the recordings, as well as some comments written by individual teachers soon after the conclusion of their lesson. Ten lessons have been selected, totalling more than eight hours of real time (about 500 minutes); the average length of each lesson is 50 minutes. Chapter 6 examines these lessons in detail.

4.6.3 Introduction to the teachers

Data gathered about the teachers in the two programs included lesson observations, interviews, teacher journals. Information on the teachers' backgrounds is summarized in *Table 3* below. Teachers gave this information about themselves in interviews with the researcher.

Teacher	L1	L2	*Qualifications*	English language teaching experience *at time of interview*	Other teaching experience
T1	English	Spanish, Tok Pisin	B A, *Postgrad Dip Ed (secondary),* additional unit in TESOL, *M A (Applied Linguistics)*	12 years TESOL, (adults) Australia, 3 years EAP, Papua New Guinea	Secondary school teaching (Remedial English, English, Geography)
T2	Russian	English, Molda-vian	2 Bachelor degrees from Russia (Russian literature, English and German literature), *M Ed TESOL* from Australia	4 years adult TESOL in Australia, 15 years secondary school TEFL in Russia	Part-time teacher of Russian to adults in Moldavia
T3	Italian, English	Spanish	*Teaching certificate* (primary), *B A, Postgrad Dip (Special Education), RSA Cert TEFLA*	5 ½ years adult TESOL	2 years primary teaching, 9 years special education
T4	English	French, Italian	*B A, Postgrad Dip (secondary), RSA Cert TEFLA*	1 year adult TESOL	Several years secondary teaching
T5	English	French, Greek	*Teaching certificate* (primary), *B Social Work, B Special Education, RSA Cert TEFLA*	3- 4 years adult TESOL	7 years primary teaching, several years community education

Table 3 Five teachers of ESL to adult learners

All five teachers were female, and in the age range 35-50 years old. As the table shows, all were trained and experienced teachers at the time of interview, with a range of tertiary qualifications. Three of the teachers were born and raised in Australia by English-speaking families (T1, T4 and T5). T2 was born and raised in the former USSR and came as an adult to Australia, several years before the time of the study. Her L1 is Russian, and she has studied in English (L2) at post-graduate level. T3 was born in Italy and came to Australia at the age of five. A balanced bilingual in both spoken Italian and spoken English, T3 said at interview that her literacy skills in English were more developed than they were in Italian. All the teachers had some formal and some informal experience of learning a second or foreign language. All had lived for periods of months or years in countries where a language other than English was spoken. The teachers varied in the amount of specific TESOL training they had completed, as well as in the number of years they had taught English to adult speakers of other languages. Details of their training and experience in TESOL follow.

The two AMEP teachers (T1 and T2) had specific TESOL qualifications obtained as part of a university course, and both had recently completed Masters degrees (in TESOL and in Applied Linguistics respectively). All three ELICOS teachers had completed an intensive short course of training, the RSA Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to adults (TEFLA), before gaining employment at the language centre. The difference in specialist qualifications of AMEP teachers and the ELICOS teachers reflected the employment criteria of the time in the two TESL sectors.

The two AMEP teachers (T1 and T2) had the longest experience as specialist teachers of English language, with 15 and 19 years respectively. While T1 had mostly taught adult ESL in Australia, T2 had mostly taught secondary school EFL in the former USSR. Of the three ELICOS teachers, T3 was the most experienced language teacher, with a total of five and a half years of adult TESOL experience. Like the two other ELICOS teachers, however, T3 had extensive professional experience in another area. In her case this was special education. While T4 had worked primarily as a secondary school teacher (English and History), T5 had been a primary school teacher and had also worked for some years in both special education and social work. It can be seen that this was a group of qualified and experienced teachers, with a range of specialist TESOL qualifications and a range of specialist TESOL experience. In Chapter 7 the relationship of these factors to the teachers' practice of corrective feedback to spoken errors is more closely examined.

It is worth commenting here on the funding arrangements of the two programs, which affect the assignment of teachers to classes. Until 1998 the Australian Federal Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) funded all English classes for adult immigrants to the country. At the end of 1996, the AMEP program at the language centre was in the middle of its third year of a triennial funding cycle. Most AMEP teachers were on contracts for twelve months or longer and teachers' names were able to be put forward for classes in 1997. (DIMA funding was subject to a tendering process in mid-1997 and the language centre tendered unsuccessfully for the next funding

cycle. This had a dramatic effect on the centre from 1998. It could no longer offer classes to adult migrants and was forced to cut its staff numbers drastically.)

While AMEP teachers at the centre enjoyed relative stability in the years prior to 1998, ELICOS teachers were on contracts as short as five weeks, with little certainty for the future. In the parlance of ELICOS teachers, the ELICOS *industry* is funded by its private fee-paying *clients*. International students generally arrived at the centre (and indeed in Australia) for a test held just before classes commenced. ELICOS students could join or leave a class every five weeks. Because classes are run according to demand, staffing decisions have to be made with flexibility for the employer. This means that teachers may be "waiting for the phone to ring", as T4 put it, right up to the last minute before a class runs. Because of planning uncertainties, for example, it was not possible for the researcher to make contact with co-teachers or studentss before Term One, 1997.

4.6.4 Introduction to the learners

Data gathered about the studentss in the two programs included lesson observations, interviews, learner journals, the cloze test and samples of students writing. Information on the learners' backgrounds is summarized in *Table 4* below. Teachers made this information available to the researcher in the form of class rolls, which they marked each day for attendance. In order to understand something about the learners in each class, the following table shows numbers of male and of female studentss, and the countries from which they had come to Australia.

	M	F	Indo-nesia	Japan	PR China	South Korea	Viet-nam	Other Asian	Horn of Africa	Russ-ian Fede-ration	Other (not Asia)
A5a (n = 20)	11	9	-	-	5	-	3	4 Phil. 2 SriL 2	3	5	-
A6 (n = 17)	9	8	-	-	4	-	1	2 SriL 2	2	5	3 Pol 1 Turk 1 Venez 1
E5 (n = 13)	3	10	2	2	1	5	3	-	-	-	-
E6 (n = 18)	9	9	2	4	4	4	2	2 Thai 2	-	-	-
A5b (n = 21)	14	7	-	1	8	-	2	2 Burm 2	2	5	1 Iraq 1

Table 4 Gender of students and their countries of origin

It can be seen from the above table that in the AMEP classes, particularly at Level 5, there were comparatively more men than women. This possibly reflects the fact that immigrant families often take turns to study English. In more traditional families where the main breadwinner is the husband, he will attend classes first and / or at higher levels such as Levels 5 and 6. Meanwhile his wife will take care of the family, either waiting her turn for an English class or foregoing the chance to learn English formally. If the wife is less educated than the husband, she may attend classes at a level below Levels 5 and 6.

During Term 1 at least two of the female studentss in AMEP Level 5 discontinued their classes because of family responsibilities. Women who stayed throughout Terms 1 and 2 in these higher level classes tended to be either single and without children, like Yelena, a young woman from eastern USSR, and / or highly educated, like Linda, who had completed a doctorate in PR China. Three of the women who joined Level 6 AMEP in Term 2 were atypical of the broader AMEP group in that they had become integrated to some extent in the dominant Anglo-Australian society. Nobuko and Mercedes had both recently married Australian men, with whom they mostly spoke English. At the time they did not have children, so were free to plan further study and careers. Olga and her family, on the other hand, had chosen to live in an outer suburb of Melbourne where there were no other speakers of Russian, so that they could integrate more into mainstream society.

In the ELICOS classes the gender balance was reversed at Level 5 (Term 1), with more women in the class than men. By Level 6 (Term 2), the numbers of men and women were exactly even. It is not clear whether this was due to anything other than chance. One possible reason is that international students who are male mostly aim to go from Level 6 directly into tertiary study in Australia. They are keen to minimize their language learning in favour of vocationally-oriented studies. Female learners, on the other hand, are more likely than men to study language for its own sake. Families in Asian countries such as South Korea are clearly prepared to invest in the future of their daughters, by sending them to an English-speaking country such as Australia to improve their English language skills. While most international students are funded by their

119

immediate family to study English, at least two members of the ELICOS class throughout Terms 1 and 2 appeared to be paying their own way, one of whom received help from her employer.

It can be seen from *Table 4* above that learners in these AMEP classes come from countries all over the world, usually countries where there have been political and economic crises. They include immigrants or refugees from the Horn of Africa, the Middle East, the Philippines, the People's Republic of China, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. In Chapter 5 brief extracts of their interviews and of their writing samples tell more of their reasons for emigration and their experiences of moving to a new land.

4.6.5 Key informants

At the request of the researcher a couple of studentss in each class volunteered to take part in a 20-40 minute interview outside their regular class time. A summary of these key informants is given in *Table 5* below. There were seven key informants in the AMEP. The first four of these attended classes held in the first half of the year: Ali, Mercedes, Yelena and Yuri. The remaining three attended classes in the second half of the year. These were Hui, Nobuko and Olga. The four ELICOS students who agreed to be interviewed were Ahn, David, Kim and Phuong. (All real names have been changed).

Class/Classes[5]	Name of learner (Pseudonym)	L1	Interview dates	Number of writing samples collected[6]	Cloze Test 1[7]	Cloze Test 2[8]
A5a, A6	Ali	Hararic	March 13 + 20, June 10	J4, W1, WA2	Feb 13 0	June 17 +2 *(+5)*
A6	Mercedes	Spanish	June 25	J3, W5, WA3	-	June 17 12 *(24)*
A5a, A6	Yuri	Russian	June 20	J4, W6, WA2	Feb 13 0	-
A5a, A6	Yelena	Russian	Feb 28, June 13	J5, W2, WA 2	Feb 13 6	June 17 +7 *(+16)*
A5b	Hui	Chinese	August 26	J2, W2	-	-
A5b	Olga	Russian	Sept 9	J3	-	-
A5b	Nobuko	Japanese	Sept 9	J2	-	-
E5, E6	Ahn	Vietnamese	March 20	J5, W1	Feb 11 5 *(8)*	June 18 +3 *(+8)*
E5, E6	David	Chinese	March 27, June 10	J6, W5	Feb 11 9 *(13)*	June 18 +6 *(+10)*
E5, E6	Kim	Korean	March 20, June 10	J5, W1	Feb. 11 14 *(19)*	June 18 +2 *(+5)*
E5, E6	Phuong	Vietnamese	March 20, June 25	J6, W1	Feb. 11 10 *(17)*	June 18 +2 *(+3)*

Table 5 Key learner informants

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[5] AMEP=A, ELICOS=E
[6] (Journals = J, Writing samples = W, Written assessment task = WA)
[7] Date of first attempt, number of correct items: Exact replacement *(Acceptable alternative in italics)*
[8] Date of second attempt, number of additional correct items. For example +2 = additional two items (exact replacement of word in text); *(+ 5) = additional five items (acceptable alternative to word in text)*

121

As mentioned above, most of the learners said that they saw the interview as useful practice in speaking English with a native-speaker. Most learners, especially the international studentss, had few opportunities to speak with English-speaking Australians. This surely reflects the subtle apartheid of Australian society in the era of "Hansonism"[9] and support for exclusionist immigration policies of the Liberal Party government. Notable exceptions were two female studentss who had married English-speaking Australian men. These were Mercedes and Nobuko.

4.6.6 Overview of documents collected

In addition to teacher and learner journals, a range of more formal documentation was gathered during the data collection stage throughout 1997. This included national and local curriculum and assessment documents, statements of teacher goals written at the language centre, lesson handouts for students and samples of learner writing. The purpose of gathering these documents was to explore the context in which the research issue, that is corrective feedback, was embodied.

Learners in both AMEP and ELICOS classes were initially placed according to tests devised at the centre. Speaking levels were measured at interview, with reading and writing skills measured on a pencil and paper test. These tests were not made available to the researcher, but the rating scale used was readily available. This was the *Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale* (or ASLPR) (Ingram and Wylie 1982).

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[9] In the late 1990s, the leader of the *One Nation* party was Pauline Hanson, who has become known for her opposition to Australia's official policy of multiculturalism in favour of Anglo-Celtic monoculture.

AMEP and ELICOS classes followed different curriculum frameworks. Two documents articulated the differently emphasized goals of learning and the different assessment of learner achievement as follows. The AMEP classes at Levels 5 and 6 followed the *Certificate in Spoken and Written English*, Stage 3 (CSWE 1993), while the ELICOS classes at Level 6 followed the *English for Academic Purposes curriculum* developed at the language centre (EAP 1996). While the CSWE focuses on the development of competencies that are needed for social, vocational and study goals, the EAP curriculum is primarily focused on the development of academic, university-level study skills. Precise matching of lesson stages to curriculum goals is discussed in Chapter 6.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter the choice of a qualitative research design has been discussed. The issue-focused case study presents a number of advantages. In particular it draws on authentic classroom situations and real-life participants in adult TESOL. Chapter 4 has also described how instruments of data collection such as interviews were developed, and how the researcher went about the process of gathering data inside and outside the classroom. The chapter ends with an overview of data collected. Data include lesson recordings and field notes, both of which capture the behaviour of teachers in regard to corrective feedback in adult ESL classrooms. They also include interviews with teachers and students and journal entries from both groups. Table summaries in this chapter introduce the classes, the lessons, the individual teachers and key informants among the students.

In the following chapter, the processing of the data is discussed, and in particular, the coding of lessons to identify patterns of corrective feedback, and the ways in which teacher attitudes are identified for analysis.

Chapter 5

Methodology for processing the data

Chapter 5 describes the process of transcription of lesson and interview data, and gives examples of these. In the second and major section of the chapter, the procedure for coding of lesson data is outlined. Categories of learner errors, of teachers' corrective feedback and of learner uptake are defined. Examples from the lesson data illustrate how decisions have been made in the categorization of errors, feedback and uptake. The chapter concludes with comments on the usefulness of the model used for categorization.

5.1   Transcription of lesson and interview data

Since a key aim of the research was to establish the existence and quantify the frequency of different types of error, feedback and uptake, it was decided that lessons needed a full orthographic transcription. While transcription needed faithfully to follow all audible sections of lessons, the fine grained notation required by present-day conversation analysts (for example split-second timing, intonation and word stress) was judged unnecessary.

The system of transcription is a version of that developed by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and which has been modified by the researcher. Broadly, the system aims to capture all audible utterances of teacher and students. Teachers are indicated by T. Learners are generally named as **MS** (Male student) or **FS** (Female student). Where

125

their voices are unambiguously identified, the initial of their pseudonyms is added to this code in the transcript (for example MSD = Male student, David).

Where pronunciation features were very marked, these were noted. Pauses of more than three seconds (...) were marked on the transcript. These were usually a sign that students were unable to respond to a teacher's elicitation or question, and this fact could be due to a lack of understanding or another reason. Syllables given marked emphasis were underlined. Emphasis is sometimes used by the teacher to focus on form. Overlapping utterances are connected with square brackets and indicate that a second speaker interrupts the turn of a first speaker. The first speaker may appear to ignore the interruption, yet later respond to it in a subsequent turn. An example of a section of transcript follows in Section 5.1.1.

Some time after the lesson[10], the researcher viewed the videotape. For eight of the ten lessons, a videotape was available. This was to note the principal stages of the lesson, and to confirm the seating plan and identity of the learners whose talk had been clearly recorded. It was also to note non-verbal behaviour of teacher and learners where possible. All audible sections from the audiotape were then transcribed. Where the tape was unclear, a second audiotape was made of the soundtrack of the video, and clearly audible sections of this were transcribed as well. About ten of the original fifteen tapes were transcribed by the researcher, while the remaining five were transcribed by research assistants and checked by the researcher.

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[10] The amount of time varied from one week to several months after the lesson, depending on outside pressures.

Teacher and learner interviews were also transcribed in full by the researcher or an assistant following the same procedures. While it was less obviously necessary to transcribe everything in the case of the interviews, it was decided that a written record was easily viewed and useful for further organization and analysis. This written record forms the basis of data overviews presented in Chapter 4, and for further analysis elsewhere (see Section 5.1.2).

5.1.1 Example of a lesson transcript

This is the initial stage of the lesson. The teacher (Susanna) is presenting new vocabulary with the help of pictures of creatures likely to arouse a mild level of fear in some learners.

T   Okay this is a very big spider, I think it's a tarantula.. is that a tarantula-

FS   No (I don't know?)

T   -I think? It's a very big spider. I don't think it's poisonous. It can't kill you! Um.. I'll just go through the vocab. Spider.. What's this little animal?

FS   Can't see

FS   This one?

T   This one here? You know when in winter when women wear fur coats?

FS   Mm. Mink.

T   Mink.. it's a mink or something similar.. there are many like that. Ah isn't he <u>beautiful</u>? What's this? Number four?

FS   bat

T   bat.. he's <u>beautiful</u>! A special kind of bat.. you know Dracula?

FS   Yes (?) *(laughter)*

T   What's Dracula? What is he? He's not a person. He's a… vampire

Ss   Oh

T   A vampire is someone who drinks.. blood. This kind of bat, I think, is a vampire bat.. they have them in Africa? And when you're sleeping they come on to you.. they're very quiet.. you don't know they're there.. and they drink.. blood. They can be dangerous with very small babies. I saw a show on this once. They're

	only little, they don't hurt you when they drink blood, but if you're very little.. or very old, it could be dangerous.. *(writes on board?)* vampire bat.. okay? And I think the other one of interest is.. number five?
FS	crocodile?
T	[crocodile
MS	[crocodile
T	We have crocodiles in Australia, what do they have in America? Looks the same but it's a little bit different? Alligator!
Ss	Alligator
T	and.. oh! Isn't he cute? Number three!
MS	mouse?
FS	mouse
FS	rat?
FS	rat?
T	I think it's a rat. It's too big for a mouse. A rat. D'you understand *cute*?
FS	Yes
T	What's cute?
FS	pretty
FS	nice
T	pretty.. cute.. Ooh! *(laughter)* He's cute! D'you think he's cute?
FS	[Yes
FS	[No
T	No? *(laughs)* And ah this one is beautiful
Ss	O-oh!!
T	Yeah.. it's a spider.. I think it's a python.. yeah rat and python.. Now I'm interested in.. how do they make you feel? Imagine, this woman has a spider on her hand, imagine you had this spider on your hand
Ss	ah!
T	.. how do you feel?
Kim	It makes me.. allergy?
T	Allergic?
Kim	Yeah

Lesson example 1 Lesson 6, lines 101-152

128

5.1.2 Example of a teacher interview transcript

Some background information has already been elicited on the experience and training of this ELICOS teacher.   In this section of the interview, the teacher (Susanna) is responding to the interviewer's question on when and how she intervenes when learners use L2.

S   The other thing with intervention is ...speaking activities.   It's a fine line between when you should.. if you're practising a structure with them and you'd say to them from the beginning I want a hundred per cent accuracy ...you know we might play a little five-minute game where they're practising the future perfect. I make it clear I want 100% accuracy. (Yes) Then I'll intervene if they're making a mistake.[And correct them.

I   [How'd you do it?

S   I wait till they finish their sentence and then I'll model it for them....
        Actually what I do say er I I just... I have a little signal with them where I do this... *(slaps back of own hand)* a little slap on the hand which means You've made a mistake and they have to then stop and think about what they've said.. and correct it themselves

I   So you don't sa you don't speak at this point, you just slap your hand

S   [well tap it

I   [at least theoretically

S   um yeah. Well I try and do that. Other times I may say you know uh uh. Where I *(laughs)* remember, when I'm not really pushed for time, I try and get them to correct their own mistakes. I mean, we also do that in writing to a degree.

I   So do other people supply it, or do they themselves tend to pick it up?

S   Often they themselves often tend to pick it up or if not there's always a student who's willing to sort of jump... correct them

I   Mmm

S   I find that works better because they have to stop and think about the mistakes they've made. And.. if all else fails if they still can't get it, then I model it. With discussions, if it's a free sort of speaking activity I try not to intervene. Occasionally I will sort of... if they've said a sentence and it's something that...

it's a sort of a key sentence to what they want to say and they've got it wrong I'll... wait till they've finished then I'll model that sentence for them.

I   So you do it orally?

S   [Orally

I   [on the whole

S   If it's a speaking activity.

I   If it's a speaking activity.

S   Often they'll write down the correct sentence I've said (yeah?). But I never interrupt them in a sentence, I try and wait till they've... finished.

I   Why is that?

S   Well I think again it in.. it interrupts. If it's a discussion type activity I don't want to interrupt their flow (yeah). What I've noticed is if I give them pairwork.. discussion.. whatever, especially initially in a group, they'll be merrily going away and as soon as I sort of go close to them to listen and.. join in, they freeze... So it you have to be very careful that if you're intervening all the time, they will just clam up. You've got to be able to stand back and let them go for it.. and if you are going to intervene it's not.. I don't think it should be seen as I'm correcting a mistake. It should be sort of "You did really well, but this sentence.."

I   But you're the native speaker and you you know that it was a mistake. Do you find that students sometimes say "I want you to correct every mistake"?

S   Yeah, ah. Well if they say if... I don't think that's productive.
      [As I said if I'm asking for accuracy

I   [but do they ever ask you?.. "Teacher.. correct my mistakes"?

S   Sometimes when we do um.. Yeah they do

I   They do?

S   But I say to them if I'm asking you for accuracy I'll tell you.. and then I'll correct your mistakes. If it's a discussion I'm not going to correct every mistake.. because (yes) then.. you wouldn't be speaking (yes) ..you wouldn't get a chance to speak. And the idea a lot of.. with the Asian students, a lot of them do a lot of grammar, reading, writing back home they do very little speaking. (Yes) So when they come here they are quite intimidated by speaking. And I say to them your speaking.. it won't be perfect, you're not a native speaker (yeah) but if you're not going to speak because you're afraid to make a mistake you're never going to get the practice in.

Interview, Susanna, February 21, 1997

5.2   Coding of lesson data

An opportunity in 1995 to hear the work in progress of the authors motivated the researcher to pursue the research area and to follow the coding system of Lyster and Ranta (1997). The system seemed clear and manageable. The publishing of their error treatment sequence in 1997 and of their findings in the immersion classroom have led to comment and criticism that continues till the present time. This means that the model and its accompanying coding system are still interesting and worth replicating in different contexts, such as adult ESL in Australia. Any coding system for real-life language events is necessarily complex, and decisions are made on the researcher's best attempt to match reality to code. Learner turns were first manually numbered and counted on a printed copy of the transcript of each lesson (for example ST1, ST2 and so on). Turns with error(s) were then further numbered and counted (for example E1, E2 and so on). *(Appendix M)*

5.2.1   The coding grid

A coding grid was devised, which set out the following information for each learner turn which contained one or more errors:

- Class, teacher and date of lesson

- Number of turn

- Line number in transcription

- Error type

131

- Corrective feedback (Y/N)

- Feedback type

- Student uptake (Y/N)

- Uptake type

Ten learner turns were coded on each sheet to facilitate counting of total numbers of each category. *Appendix N* illustrates this procedure. The rationale below explains how decisions were made regarding the learner turn with error in line 501 of the transcript of an AMEP lesson at Level 6 (Lesson 1, see *Table 1* in Chapter 4).

T	They're talking about Pauline Hanson[11] in Perth and they said that the protest.. ahm.. got out of hand. What does that mean?	
FS	They <u>cannot</u>.. handle	*Error – grammatical*
T	Yes the poor police <u>couldn</u>'t keep <u>it</u> under control any more. All right and finally Mr Howard said that… Pauline Hanson is out of excuses.	*Feedback – recast*
		Teacher continues topic

Lesson example 2 Lesson 1, lines 500-504

Coding

The coding for the above example includes what kind of error, feedback and uptake are present in the interaction. The female student has clearly understood the meaning of *The*

protest got out of hand, when she offers the interpretation *They cannot handle*. There is however at least one error of tense in her turn, so it is coded as *Error - grammatical*. In fact the learner

- does not define *they*
- uses the present tense *cannot* instead of matching the past simple tense of the teacher's question with *could not*
- omits an object such as *it* or *the protest*

The teacher appears to accept the student's answer to her question, since her first word is *Yes*. It seems likely from this that the teacher is accepting the content, but not the grammar, of the answer. She promptly recasts the answer however, offering implicit corrective feedback in the process. She

- interprets *they*, and substitutes *the police* as subject;
- models the auxiliary verb *could not* in the correct tense;
- supplies the object pronoun *it*.

The teacher continues the topic, which allows no chance for the student to show uptake.

5.2.2 Categorizing errors

Once learner turns with errors were identified, they were categorized further into errors of *form* or errors of *content*. Formal errors were divided into type, namely L1, gender, grammar, lexis, phonology, multiple (*Lesson example 14* above). There were almost no examples of use of L1 or of wrong gender recorded, which was a different finding from

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[11] Pauline Hanson was at that time the leader of the controversial One Nation Party, a right wing political party with a racially based immigration policy for Australia, one which played on xenophobic fears.

Lyster and Ranta (1997). The infrequent use of L1 can be explained in two ways. First of all, since immersion students have a common L1, it is not surprising that they resort to it from time to time. Learners who speak a number of different L1s are more likely to express themselves in L2, except in private asides to fellow native speakers. This was clearly the case in this study. Secondly, the level of proficiency in L2 of the immersion students was lower than that of the adult learners in this study. The marking of gender in French is a salient feature, one which gives difficulty to French as a second language (FSL) learners whose mother tongue is English, where few objects or creatures are identified by gender. Since marking of gender is used in a limited way in English (for example for personal pronouns), it is not surprising to find few instances of wrong gender in the adult ESL data.

The most common categories of error in the data were grammatical, lexical and multiple. Phonological errors were rarely commented upon by the teachers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that experienced language teachers may grow accustomed to the non-native accents of their students and accommodate to phonological difference, at least during the time of instruction.

5.2.3 Errors of content

Learner errors of *content* were noted in the coding grid, but were finally not counted in the total number of errors. This follows Lyster and Ranta (1997), who argued that content errors did not elicit corrective feedback focusing on *Form* or *forms*. The number of

134

content errors was very small. Furthermore, the elimination of these errors enabled comparison with results for other studies. What is a content error? In the following sequence for example, the class is looking at one section of a diagram, which is in the form of a pyramid, and are trying to identify the kind of economy in this country.

T	Okay, well we'll have a look at the exports. What sort of thing are they exporting?	
MS1	The people	*Error – content*
MS2	Ooh	*Peer feedback – unclear intention, probably disapproval*
T	No, not the people	*Comment on truthfulness of answer*

Lesson example : Lesson 3, lines 829-838

Coding

The student's answer in line 830 *The people* is wrong in its *content* and he receives feedback from two sources to tell him so. Another student responds with an exclamation (of disapproval?) *Ooh,* while the teacher rejects the truthfulness or content of the answer with *No, not the people.* The teacher goes on to try to elicit a correct answer from the class with a more specific question. This produces a cacophony of answers from students, in response to which she gives or repeats the correct answer *(rice, bananas).* The teacher then asks a further question to work towards the goal of describing the economy represented in the pyramid.

5.2.4 Categorizing corrective feedback

Following Lyster and Ranta (1997) instances of corrective feedback in the data were categorized according to the following six types: explicit, recast, clarification, metalinguistic, elicit and repetition. Their definition for each of these types is quoted first, together with an example of each type from the data. To make sense of each example, it is located in a complete interaction, which may involve many turns. These turns include initiations, responses or feedback of different types.

5.2.4.1 Explicit correction

Explicit correction refers to the explicit provision of the correct form. As the teacher provides the correct form, he or she clearly indicates that what the student had said was incorrect (e.g. "Oh you mean.. ," "You should say…")(Lyster & Ranta, 1997:46).

In Lesson 6 below, students are about to listen to a taped lecture on the topic of phobias. During the lecture they will be required to take notes. Before they listen, the teacher checks their understanding of vocabulary items that they will hear.

T	Right well.. what does <u>recap</u> mean?	
FS	*Inaudible*	
T	The very last word in that column	
MS	Recap.. recap..	
T	Junko?	
MS	[<u>Recover</u>.. recap..	*Error - lexis*
FS	[<u>Summary</u>?	*Error - grammatical*
T	If we go through a whole list of reasons.. in a discussion	*To MS:*
	about an issue.. <u>to recap is just to quickly go over them</u>	*Feedback – explicit correction*
	<u>again</u>. Okay? Let's <u>pick out the main points again</u>. Okay	
	so probably this man.. at the end of his lecture.. he's going	*To FS:*
	to <u>recap</u> and he'll <u>go through all the main points</u> of what he	*No feedback*
	has.. spoken about.	*(Appears not to hear FS)*
MS1	Like <u>review</u>?	
MS2	<u>Summarize</u>?	
T	Yes, like <u>a summary</u>. Let's <u>recap</u>, let's <u>summarize the main</u>	
	<u>points</u>.	

Lesson example 4 Lesson 6, lines 258-271

Coding

In the above example of an explicit correction, the teacher responds to the first student who attempted an answer to her question *What does recap mean?* Because *recover* is lexically incorrect, the teacher provides an example, then an explicit definition of the form *to recap*. She reinforces her explanation of the meaning of *recap* by using *recap* and its synonyms *go over/pick out the main points* in a further example. When the second male student offers *summarize* in the infinitive form, the teacher recasts (see below) this lexical item as a noun with *like a summary*. Perhaps this is because *recap*,

137

like *review*, has the same form as both noun and verb. She then goes on to give a new example of *recap,* in verb form, however.

5.2.4.2 Recasts

Recasts involve the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error. ...Recasts are generally implicit in that they are not introduced by phrases such as "You mean...," "Use this word," "You should say...," etc. However, some recasts are more salient than others in that they may focus on one word only, whereas others incorporate the grammatical or lexical modification into a sustained piece of discourse.
(Lyster & Ranta 1997:46-47)

In the presentation phase of the same lesson, the teacher seeks further student responses to her original question: *What happens to people when they see something they have a phobia about?*

T	Now.. um anything else?	
FS	Goosebump?	*Error - grammatical*
T	Goosebumps? Okay, get goosebumps. *(Writes on board).*	*Feedback – recast*
	Good word! Goosebumps. What are goosebumps? ..	
	Little...	
FS	[Hair	
T	[bumps, and your hair stands up, yeah. Ergh!	

Lesson example 5 Lesson 6, lines 274-278

Coding

When a female student suggests *goosebump*, the teacher appears at first to repeat the student's answer with rising intonation. What she does in fact is to *recast* her answer, in two stages. First the teacher recasts *goosebumps* with plural *–s*. The recast adds one morpheme. Next she supplies the collocatory verb *get goosebumps*, which not only re-emphasizes the *–s* but also shows how to use the new word *goosebumps*. She then checks that students understand the meaning of the word. When a student offers *hair* as a definition, the teacher *incorporates* this word into a new recast, showing by this response that the student has made a relevant, if not entirely accurate, contribution. The teacher's *yeah* and her exclamation of disgust *Ergh!* seem to reinforce her acceptance of the answer and at the same time to show empathy with the students.

5.2.4.3 Clarification requests

This is ... a feedback type that can refer to problems in either comprehensibility or accuracy, or both. We have coded feedback as clarification requests only when these moves follow a student error (Lyster & Ranta 1997:47).

In the same lesson as the one in the previous two examples, the teacher refers to her own unnamed phobia. This quickly becomes a game; the students are trying to guess what kind of phobia the teacher suffers from. A problem in *comprehensibility* arises here.

T	There is only one thing I have a phobia about.. and I might tell you later, you might think it's very very stupid, but I can actually get quite sick.. do you <u>want</u> me to tell you?	
Ss	Yeah. Yeah.	
FS	We can guess.	
MS	*(Softly)* Of course!	
T	Okay, guess! Come on.. fifty dollars! *(laughter)* Just guess what I'm..	
MS	<u>Any key words</u>?	*Error - lexis*
T	Sorry?	*Clarification request*
MS	Give us <u>key words</u>?	
T	Give you <u>a clue</u>?	
MS	[Clue	
FS	[Clue	
T	Okay.. it's an insect..	

Lesson example 6   Lesson 6, lines 288-302

Coding

It seems that the teacher has not heard or has not understood the student's request for *key words*. She requests clarification. This is a comprehensibility check rather than a response to the lexically inappropriate *key words*. In fact the teacher offers corrective feedback after the student repeats his request more audibly. That is, the teacher recasts the lexical item *key words* as *a clue*. If the teacher had heard the error the first time, she would no doubt have recast *key words* immediately.

5.2.4.4 Metalinguistic feedback

Metalinguistic feedback contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form. Metalinguistic comments generally indicate that there is an error somewhere (Lyster & Ranta 1997:47).

In the next example, the teacher is revising modal verbs from a worksheet.

T	Could you tell me how long *I must sit* in the waiting room? I wonder how long *I'll*..	
MS1	<u>Be able to wait</u> for you	*Error - lexis*
T	No no not be able to. Be able means	*Feedback -*
MS2	[Can	
T	[<u>To have the ability to but we're not asking that. We're asking</u>	*- metalinguistic*
FS	Just how long	
MS	Just how long we're waiting	
T	Yeah you're just asking.. how long do you have to wait for so	
MS1	[I'll..	
MS2	[I won..	
T	I wonder how long I'll have to wait. That's the simplest answer. Anything else?	

Lesson example 7 Lesson 2, lines 613-626

Coding

In the above example, students are asked to give the future form of the modal verb *must*. The first student to attempt this chooses the future form of a different modal, *can*. The teacher provides metalinguistic feedback by pointing out that there is a change of meaning with *can*. She does not provide the correct answer. Students show understanding of the original task and attempt to give the future form with *I'll* and *I won..* (=I wonder). The teacher completes their answers, finally providing the form she had hoped to elicit: *I wonder how long I'll have to wait.*

5.2.4.5 Elicitation

Elicitation refers to at least three techniques that teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the student. First, teachers elicit completion of their own utterance.... Second, teachers use questions to elicit correct forms. ... Third, teachers occasionally ask students to reformulate the utterance (Lyster & Ranta 1997:48).

The example below illustrates the first technique. In this stage of the lesson, the teacher wants students to ask her about different members of her own family, using the past continuous tense. It is interesting to note that this native speaker of Russian repairs her own grammatical error in English (omission of article) in her first instruction to the students. Thus *about kids* becomes *about the kids*.

142

T	You want to know about kids about the kids	
FS	What were your kids..?	*Error – grammatical*
		(incomplete)
T	What were...	*Feedback - elicit*
Ss	What were your kids doing?	

Lesson example 8 Lesson 5, lines 275-284

Coding

The teacher repeats the first two words of the student's attempt at forming a question in the past continuous. She indicates with this feedback that the answer was not complete, thus *eliciting* a repair by the student herself. Elicitation seems to be a well-rehearsed feedback type in this class, since the whole group of students, in chorus, provides the correct form.

5.2.4.6 Repetition

Repetition refers to the teacher's repetition, in isolation, of the student's erroneous utterance. In most cases, teachers adjust their intonation so as to highlight the error (Lyster & Ranta 1997:48).

143

T	*(to individual pair of Ss)* Okay, how does that picture make	
	you feel?	
FS	Small spider on your hand.	
T	Uh huh, on your hand.. how does it make you feel?	
FS1	[Scared	
FS2	[Terrible	*Error – lexical*
T	Terrible?	*Feedback – repetition with*
		rising intonation

Lesson example 9 Lesson 6, lines 80-89

Coding

In this example, the student's choice of *terrible* is appropriately negative as she tries to explain the effect of the picture on her feelings. It is however rather imprecise, and the teacher repeats the word with rising intonation to show her that this requires refining, or some elaboration.

5.2.4.7 Combined feedback

Instances of combined feedback were common in the data. Some guidance was provided by the definitions of Lyster and Ranta (1997). For example, explicit correction could be a combination of recast plus metalinguistic feedback:

As soon as the teacher's provision of the co₁rect form is somehow framed metalinguistically, then the characteristics of a recast, along with its condition of implicitness, no longer apply ...this was coded as "explicit correction"(Lyster & Ranta, 1997:48).

144

In the example of this combination given below, the teacher models an expression of agreement: *You can say that again.*

T	You can say that again or I agree. Do you think..	
MS	You can say that again.	*Error – phonological*
T	You can say that again. For emphasis.	*Recast plus metalinguistic = explicit*

Lesson example 10 Lesson 10, lines 278-280

Coding

When the student repeats the expression without the necessary word stress, the teacher models it again, marking the stress more audibly. She adds an explanation about the purpose of the stress.

5.2.4.8 Non-verbal feedback

As Nicholas, Lightbown and Spada (2001) point out, corrective feedback may also be *non-verbal*. In order to count instances of non-verbal feedback, the lesson videotapes would need close scrutiny, and not all instances may be visible. Although instances of non-verbal feedback have not been counted, an example is given below. In this stage of Lesson 5, the teacher is giving students practice in question formation, using the past continuous tense, by means of an impromptu substitution drill.

145

T	But if you ask about a member of a family not you but about for example your husband? So, the question, Rimma?	
FS1	What were...?	
T	'Scuse me? Your husband?	
FS1	What were.. you doing at six o'clock?	*Error - multiple*
T	*sighs*	***Feedback - non-verbal***
FS2	What was..?	
FS1	Er What was you doing?	
Ss	*Laugh*	

Lesson example 11 Lesson 5, lines 248-263

Coding

The first female student (Rimma) has not understood the instruction to substitute *you* with *your husband* in the drill. With her *sigh*, the teacher indicates that something is wrong. The second female student understands this *non-verbal feedback* and prompts Rimma with a partial repair. Missing the point, Rimma changes the auxiliary verb but not the subject of the sentence. Other members of the class *laugh* – more *non-verbal feedback,* this time from peers.

5.2.5   Categorizing uptake

Learners may give no sign of noticing corrective feedback, which is coded as *ignore.* When learners have no opportunity to respond, can it be said that they ignore the feedback? (See Section 5.2.5.1). If they *do* respond, their answers may need repair or do

146

repair. Uptake which needs repair can take six forms in the categorization of Lyster and Ranta (1997). These are: acknowledgement, different error, same error, hesitation, off-task, partial repair. Three kinds of uptake needing repair occur in Sections 5.2.5.2 and 5.2.5.3 below. Uptake which does repair includes repetition, incorporation, self repair, peer repair (Lyster and Ranta 1997:49-51).

5.2.5.1 No opportunity for uptake

Lyster and Ranta (1997: 54) comment that "it is evident that the recast, the most popular feedback technique, is the least likely to lead to uptake of any kind". One reason for this to happen is that the topic may continue after the teacher has given feedback in the form of a recast. When the topic continues, there is no opportunity for the student who made the error to show uptake of the feedback. This is seen in the following example. In Lesson 7, student groups are reporting back to the teacher on their choices for six people to start a new civilization.

T	Masao, who's your first choice?	
MS	A man of religion	
Ss	Ah! *(laughter)*	
T	Why? Why did you choose a man of religion?	
MS	Er... he is the only person who can heal <u>our heart</u>.	
T	Okay. The only person who can heal <u>our hearts</u>.	**Recast**
FS	Maybe he will be very old.	**Topic continuation**

Lesson example 12 Lesson 7, lines 594 - 599

The teacher recasts *our heart* as *our hearts*. A female student makes a new point, about the age of the man of religion. It is not clear whether her intention is to support Masao's

147

choice or not. Either way, Masao has no opportunity to repeat, acknowledge or otherwise show uptake of the teacher's feedback. It is impossible to guess from the data whether he registered the recast as corrective feedback, or as a repetition of his original answer, which would have indicated that the teacher found it correct.

5.2.5.2 Uptake needing repair: different error

In Lesson 6 already cited above, the students are trying to guess the phobia of the teacher.

T	There is only one thing I have a phobia about.. and I might tell you later, you might think it's very very stupid, but I can actually get quite sick.. do you <u>want</u> me to tell you?	
Ss	Yeah. Yeah.	
FS	We can guess.	
MS	*(Softly)* Of course!	
T	Okay, guess! Come on.. fifty dollars! (laughter) Just guess what I'm..	
MS	<u>Any key words</u>?	
T	Sorry?	Clarification request
MS	Give us <u>key words</u>?	*Uptake – needs repair – different error*
T	Give you <u>a clue</u>?	
MS	[Clue	
FS	[Clue	
T	Okay.. it's an insect..	

Lesson example 13 Lesson 6, lines 288-302

Coding

The male student in this example responds to the teacher's request for clarification by rephrasing his earlier question. He changes *Any key words?* to *Give us key words?* He has understood that there is a problem, but tries to repair the first part of his question, so making a *different* error. The teacher then treats as an error the lexical item *key words*, which she recasts as *a clue*.

5.2.5.3 Uptake needing repair: partial repair plus acknowledgement

While it is likely that learners' uptake of corrective feedback is not limited to the time frame of the lesson, it seems reasonable to see it as an operationalization of *noticing*. The following example of uptake which needs repair demonstrates how the student has become conscious of a new lexical usage.

T	First of all, where <u>is</u> the husband? What is he doing while he's thinking all this, where is he?	
FS	He <u>is lying over</u> the car	*Error – lexis*
T	Yes. <u>Leaning against</u>..	*Feedback – recast*
FS	<u>Lean. Uh huh</u>.	*Uptake - needs repair -partial repair plus acknowledgement.*
T	Do you know leaning against? *(Pause 12 seconds while T writes on board).* Okay.	

Lesson example 14. Lesson 3, lines 267-273

5.2.5.4 Uptake which does repair

In Lesson example 15 below, the teacher successfully elicits uptake / repair from a number of students who answer in chorus.

T	You want to know about kids about the kids	
FS	What were your kids...?	
T	What were...	*Feedback - elicit*
Ss	What were your kids doing?	*Uptake – peer repair*

Lesson example 15 Lesson 5, lines 275-284

Coding

Here, a female student attempts to form the question which the teacher requires, but fails to complete it: *What were your kids...?* The teacher offers feedback by repeating the first two words of the question, *What were..*, showing that something is wrong. Repair is done by a group of peers, who understand which question form the teacher wants to hear.

5.3   Comments on the usefulness of the Error Treatment Sequence

The *Error Treatment Sequence* (Lyster and Ranta 1997) provides a clear model for categorizing learner errors, teacher feedback to errors and learner uptake of feedback. Data can satisfactorily be grouped according to their detailed advice. At times however, their categorization of feedback types seems pragmatic rather than based on a totally

rational approach. This is most evident in their decision to consider even a simple "No" as metalinguistic feedback (p.47). While some linguists would consider "No" as explicit feedback[12], the authors of the *Error Treatment Sequence* do not. In their definition, explicit feedback includes the provision of the correct form by the teacher (p.46). No is categorized as metalinguistic feedback, because it gives information to the learner that what they said is incorrect. "No" could however be a response to the content, or truth value, of what the learners said. Responses to errors of content, as has been noted, are not counted in their feedback data.

The authors of the *Error Treatment Sequence* do not give information about the technical quality of their data. Technical quality of data was an issue for the present study. At times the researcher had to make a categorization decisions based on interpretation of a tape which could not be heard clearly. A judgement was made to include all data where teacher feedback was clearly audible, even when the preceding learner utterances were somewhat less audible.

The strength of the *Error Treatment Sequence* is its relative simplicity in the face of complexity in classroom discourse relating to corrective feedback. The definitions of categories are clear and the examples from the French immersion classroom are illuminating. The fact that it has become a common point of reference in corrective feedback research in the last few years gives an opportunity to compare findings of one study with those of another.

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[12] Dr Heather Bowe, personal communication.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the process of transcription of lesson and interview data is described and examples of transcription are given. Chapter 5 defines categories of errors, feedback and uptake which are based on definitions from Lyster and Ranta (1997). These categories are illustrated with examples from the lesson data. The chapter concludes with a brief evaluation of the *Error Treatment Sequence*.

Chapter 6

Patterns of corrective feedback in the lessons

This chapter focuses on the lessons at the centre of the investigation into the existence and usability of corrective feedback in the adult ESL classroom. It comprises five sections, beginning with an account of how the lessons relate to the curriculum at the language centre. The transcriptions of ten lessons are then closely examined for a number of features. Essentially these are the frequency of occurrence of learner turns and of corrective feedback (or the *existence* of negative evidence), and of types of feedback which appear to be noticed by learners (*usability* of negative evidence)(Long 1996:430). Instances of teacher feedback are counted and shown as a percentage of the number of learner turns with errors. Noticing of corrective feedback is observed and quantified as instances of learner uptake. Uptake (Lyster and Ranta 1997:49) includes responses by learners to corrective feedback by teachers, which either *do*, or *need*, repair. Results are compared with those of Lyster and Ranta (1997). Similarities and differences between the findings of both studies are discussed, and explanations for differences are offered.

6.1   The relationship of the lessons to the curriculum

Lessons exist in the context of a curriculum, and this section locates the selected lesson data in the context of the two curriculum frameworks in which they were situated. These curriculum frameworks were designed for two groups of students with differing needs.

153

Classes for adult immigrants followed a competency-based syllabus, the *Certificate in Spoken and Written English*, which was adopted nationally by the Australian Adult Multicultural Education Program (CSWE 1993). Classes for international students at higher levels followed a study skills based curriculum, which was developed by the language centre (EAP 1996). The lessons presented in summary form in *Table 2* tend to reflect the priorities of each curriculum, as will be explained next.

6.1.1 The AMEP curriculum

Lessons 1 to 5 are based on the curriculum for the *Certificate in Spoken and Written English, Stage 3* (CSWE, 1993) for immigrant students. This curriculum document is competency-based, which means that it is based on the teaching and assessment of language use in defined tasks according to a set of *performance criteria*. The following example illustrates a task completed by learners in A6:

CSWE Stage 3, Competency 11

Syllabus strand:	English for Study
Competency:	Can write short essay relevant to further education/training contexts
Domain of competency:	Writing
Description of task:	Students write a short essay (at least 200 words) discussing the advantages and disadvantages of immigration (CSWE 1993:55).

For examples of learner writing for this task, see *Appendix O*. According to the team leader at Level 6, teachers in the AMEP had agreed to teach and assess competencies in *speaking* and *listening* during the ten weeks at Level 5, and to focus on competencies in

154

reading and writing during the ten weeks at Level 6. Thus A5 lessons were more likely to focus on speaking and listening activities and A6 lessons to focus on reading and writing activities.

6.1.2 Lessons 1-5 in the context of the AMEP curriculum

How does the content of the five AMEP lessons in *Table 2* relate to the CSWE Stage 3 curriculum? The goals and level of the curriculum need first to be explained. It can be seen in the sample task given above, that the syllabus strand chosen in A6 classes is *English for Study* (rather than *English for Work*). This shows that the goal of learners at this level is entry to tertiary study programs. This could be either at a college of technical and further education, or at a university. Despite the fact that a number of the students in A5 and A6 have already graduated from a university in their country of origin, they frequently need new local qualifications gained in the country of immigration, Australia. In fact CSWE Stage 3 by itself does not indicate readiness for tertiary study in English. It is well below the required English level for entrance to universities in Australia, which is normally a band score of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). A band score is an average score for tests taken in all four macroskills, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. CSWE Stage 3 is equivalent to a band score of 5 in IELTS, on a scale from 1 to 9.

It is noticeable that two lessons at Level 6 (Lessons 3 and 5) focus on grammar revision. While grammar revision is not a stated goal of the CSWE syllabus at Stage 3, the reality

of immigrant classes is that a thorough knowledge of grammar cannot be assumed even at this relatively advanced level. In Lessons 3 and 5 therefore, language itself is the object of learning. The lessons focus on *forms* (Doughty and Williams 1998).

In contrast to Lessons 3 and 5, Lesson 2 is clearly a direct preparation for a written task similar to the tasks in the example from the CSWE given above. In Lesson 2, pairs of students collaborate on the telling of a story, *The Picnic*, from a cartoon sequence. Later, in small groups, they tackle a more complex retelling, this time of a politically informative diagram of a pyramid of three different kinds of economies. These speaking activities practise vocabulary and structures at both sentence and discourse level, which students will need in the writing task to follow. Of the five lessons, it is Lesson 2 which most directly mirrors the assessment tasks of the CSWE.

The remaining two lessons, Lesson 1 and Lesson 4, consist of listening and reading activities which engage the students to lesser and greater degrees in spoken interaction. Their topics are real world topics, presented via a popular television current affairs program for schools, *Behind the News* and a daily Melbourne newspaper, *The Age*. These topics, the materials, and the activities which are generated by them, are typical in my experience of the kind which are very often used in the adult ESL classroom. They are usually of interest to students and motivate them to practise a range of language skills.

6.1.3   The ELICOS curriculum

The curriculum followed by the international classes is an *English for Academic Purposes (EAP)* curriculum, which was devised at the language centre by specialist staff. The overall objectives of this program are listed as follows:

- To prepare students to meet the language requirements of study at Australian universities.
- To provide students with an introduction to study skills required at university.
- To help students develop individual learning strategies and strategies for success.
- To initiate students into the culture and behaviour of the university community.

(EAP 1996:2)

From the overall objectives given, it can be concluded that the goal of international students at this level is entry to a university course at either undergraduate or postgraduate level.   The EAP Curriculum at Level 6 includes a number of ongoing assessment tasks, and culminates in a final test of all four macroskills after ten weeks of intensive instruction.   With an overall score of 75 % in the final test a student is awarded the Advanced Certificate of English of the language centre, which is accepted by the host university as a measure of readiness to study in English, and an alternative to IELTS. The continuous assessment tasks include two ten-minute oral presentations.

Written tasks for assessment in the EAP curriculum include a 1,000-1,500-word essay and a report based on a student-conducted survey on a topical issue, or an issue of interest

to the student. These are much longer pieces and more complex writing tasks than the competency-based tasks of the immigrant learners. Their level of difficulty approximates to that required by the tertiary study goals of the international students.

6.1.4   Lessons 6-10 in the context of the curriculum

How do the recorded ELICOS lessons relate to the EAP curriculum? Lesson 6, which starts with a discussion of phobias, leads on to an informal classroom survey by students of each other's phobias. This lesson is taught to an international class at Level 5 (E5), and prepares the students for listening to a taped lecture on the psychological problem of the phobia. Like Lesson 6, Lesson 8 also offers students practice in listening to a lecture in order to locate the main points of information, this time on the subject of body language, or kinesics. Both taped lectures have been recorded for the purpose of training EFL learners in academic listening skills.

Lessons 7 and 10 are based on problem-solving tasks involving small group discussion. All four ELICOS lessons are taught at Level 6 (E6). They clearly aim to "provide students with an introduction to study skills required at university", one of the stated goals of the curriculum. Lesson 7 captures the performance by students in the task of deciding *Which six people should be saved for a post-nuclear society?* Lesson 10 on the other hand captures both a pre-performance phase as well as student discussion on *Who should have the heart transplant?* Before engaging in the small group task, the teacher and students "brainstorm" on the language they will need to express their opinion, and to

agree or disagree with the opinion of others. Items are drilled in chorus with a focus on stress and intonation features of pronunciation. Lesson 9 relates directly to an assessment task of the EAP curriculum, since it features students' rehearsing (and performing) their ten-minute oral presentation. Students chose their topics for the oral presentations, and all topics relate to some interesting feature or features of their home countries.

The context of the lessons has been established within the two different curriculum frameworks and the findings of the study now follow. In the following section, 6.2, the frequency of corrective feedback in the ten lessons is reported.

6.2   Corrective feedback by teachers: frequency

As can be seen from *Table 6* below, instances of corrective feedback are aggregated for each teacher in the column on the right. This aggregate in itself is unrevealing, since the lessons taught vary in length from 35 to 67 minutes each and the data include as few as one and as many as three different lessons taught by the same teacher. Each lesson has an unpredictable number of learner turns. T1 for example, teaches three lessons, totalling 173 minutes in length, during which 661 learner turns have been counted. T4, on the other hand, teaches only two lessons totalling 83 minutes in length, during which 753 learner turns are counted. In half the time, students in T4's class deliver noticeably more turns than do students in T1's class. This is surely an effect of the activities or tasks in each lesson. For example, watching a video in Lesson 1 (T1) may not allow students to

speak much, while small group discussion as in Lesson 7 (T4) is likely to allow frequent learner turns.

What makes it possible to compare the behaviour of teachers is the relative frequency of corrective feedback to learner turns which contain errors, expressed as a percentage. The number of turns with errors is relative to the number of turns taken by students in a given lesson. This is also expressed as a percentage.

Each learner turn has been counted, then coded as having one or more errors, or no error. Monosyllabic learner turns are counted as having no error, even if the potential for error is little or non-existent. Only errors of *form*, such as non-target like grammar and lexis, have been counted. Errors of pronunciation have only been counted if reacted to by the teacher. Errors of *content* were originally counted, but found to be fairly rare in the lessons recorded. The adult learners, being at intermediate level and above, seemed to understand well the tasks that they were asked to do. Their answers rarely showed a lack of content knowledge. One reason for this might be that they were too shy to offer answers, which might reveal their ignorance. Whatever the reason was for the few errors in content, there is an advantage for this study in focusing only on errors of form. This allows a direct comparison with results found in the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

Teacher	Total length of lesson(s) in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs repair	Teacher turns with feedback
		(average no. of learner turns per minute)	(% of total learner turns)	(% of total errors)
T1	173 min.	661 (3.8)	204 (31%)	115 (56%)
T2	82 minutes	489 (6)	134 (27%)	82 (61%)
T3	47 minutes	186 (4)	49 (26%)	36 (73%)
T4	83 minutes	753 (9.1)	226 (30%)	27 (12%)
T5	114 minutes	628 (5.5)	129 (21%)	9 (7%)

Table 6 Frequency of learner turns with errors and of teacher feedback

161

We can see at least two facts from the above table. The first is that in this set of data, learner turns take place more or less frequently in different situations. The teacher in whose class there are the most learner turns per minute is T4 (an average of 9.1 learner turns/minute), while both the classes of T1 and T3 show an average of around 4 learner turns/minute). This phenomenon can perhaps be explained by the activities which take place in the individual lessons in the data set. Let us look firstly at the lessons where students take many turns. T4's lessons include a small group discussion *Which six people should be saved for a post-nuclear society?* and a listening task (Note-taking from a taped lecture on *Kinesics*). While the small group discussion allows many learner turns, the note-taking exercise does not. Students are generally silent as they listen to the tape. There is only a small amount of teacher-fronted discussion in these lessons, which, it might be supposed, would facilitate learner turns (in teacher-student interaction). If activity type alone is the biggest determining factor for frequency of learner turns, and for frequency of teacher feedback, we would expect a very different pattern of activities in the lessons taught by T1 and T3. They are after all the lessons with the lowest frequency of learner turns.

There is however a large degree of overlap with T4's lessons in the kind of activities found in the lessons taught by T1 and T3. For example, T1's lessons include a lengthy listening activity (watching *Behind the News* for 25 minutes of a 50-minute lesson segment) which approximates to T4's *Kinesics* listening activity). T1's discussion activity based on cartoons and diagrams is similar to T4's post-nuclear society activity, in that it is based on small group discussion. T1's ambitious revision of three different

162

points of grammatical form (Lesson 2) is not replicated in T4's lessons, however. This revision involves a fair amount of teacher talk. Learner turns are mostly limited to the following: students reading aloud sentences (for example *Wh*- questions written in class, the use of modals in reported speech written for homework); or students transforming sentences on the spot in class if not done for homework). In this lesson, turns are allocated mostly by the teacher, which *de facto* limits the number of learner turns. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that T1 spends approximately the same amount of time (about 60 minutes) on the small group discussion activity (Lesson 2) and the grammar revision activity (Lesson 3). The number of learner turns, if activity-based, should even out in these two lessons.

In T3's lesson, students undertake pre-listening activities (vocabulary presentation and small group surveys on phobias) that generate many learner turns for the first half of the lesson. The survey activity is similar in type to the small group discussion (post-nuclear civilization) in T4's lesson. The listening comprehension activity (taped lecture on *phobias*) is similar to that in T4's lesson (taped lecture on *kinesics*). The proportion of time spent on these activities is similar. While T3 spends nearly half of the 47-minute lesson on the listening activity, T4 spends almost half the time of the lessons (which total 82 minutes) on a similar listening activity. Learner turns occur principally in pre-listening and small group discussion activities.

Apart from the grammar revision activity then, we find a similarity of type of activity (and proportionate time spent) in lessons taught by teachers T1, T3, and T4. We observe

nonetheless a higher average number of learner turns per minute in T4's lessons than those taught by T1 and T3. How does this relate to frequency of corrective feedback?

The second fact to be observed from *Table 6* is that Teachers 1 - 3 had much higher rates of corrective feedback than Teachers 4 and 5. At one extreme, T3 gave corrective feedback to 73 % of learner turns with errors, while at the other, T5 gave corrective feedback to only 7 %. Allowing for the fact that the sample for T3 was based on a relatively small total number of learner turns with error (49) and that for T5 was much bigger (129), so possibly more representative / reliable, the difference between T3 and T5 is startling and needs to be accounted for.

One factor has been hinted at already, namely the purpose of the task with which the class is engaged during a particular activity in a lesson. Is that purpose to encourage fluency, or accuracy? Or is it simply to assess the performance of students, as is the case in the second stage of T5's Lesson 9? Another factor is the pattern of each individual teacher to offer corrective feedback or not. Where teachers have been observed in more than one lesson, it is possible to compare the proportion of feedback to errors, across lessons given by the same teacher. This is shown in the following table, *Table 7*.

Lesson no. Teacher / Class / *Lesson times in minutes*	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors
1. T1					
A6 - *50 min.*	101	43	43%	32	74%
2. T1					
A6 - *63 min.*	231	69	30%	42	61%
3. T1					
A6 - *60 min.*	329	92	28%	41	45%
Total T1	**661**	**204**	**31%**	**115**	**56%**
4. T2					
A5 - *45 min.*	236	80	34%	47	59%
5. T2					
A5 – *47 min.*	253	54	21%	35	65%
Total T2	**489**	**134**	**27%**	**82**	**61%**
6. T3					
Total T3	**186**	**49**	**26%**	**36**	**73%**
7. T4					
E6 - *36 min.*	548	174	32%	13	8%
8. T4					
E6 - *47 min.*	205	52	25%	14	27%
Total T4	**753**	**226**	**30%**	**27**	**12%**
9. T5					
E6 - *47 min.*	136	36	27%	1	3%
10. T5					
E6 - *67 min.*	492	93	19%	8	9%
Total T5	**628**	**129**	**21%**	**9**	**7%**

Table 7 Patterns of individual teachers' corrective feedback

What *Table 7* shows clearly is that teachers appear to be relatively consistent in their rate of corrective feedback to learner turns with errors. Over three lessons, T1 responds to 71, 61 and 45 % respectively, averaging a rate of 56 % corrective feedback. T2 shows a similar average rate over two lessons (61 %). In her one lesson, T3 offers feedback to a high percentage (73 %) of learner turns with error. The next two teachers are equally consistent in offering much *less* feedback. T4 responds to only 8 % of learner turns with error in one lesson, and a modest 27 % in the other, her average being 12 %. T5's average rate is lower again, at 7 %. In the following chapter the statements of teachers at interview will be examined with the aim of matching their attitudes to their classroom practice, particularly in relation to corrective feedback. Attitudes may explain the tendency of teachers to offer more or less corrective feedback. How such attitudes have been formed will also be explored in Chapter 7.

Table 7 shows that individual teachers in this study vary in the frequency of their corrective feedback. The following table, *Table 8*, compares the frequency of corrective feedback of the whole group of teachers with that of another teacher cohort. As a cohort, the five teachers in this study in Australia give much less corrective feedback than the four teachers in the Canadian study (Lyster and Ranta 1997), as the following comparison shows.

Teacher cohort	Total learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors
Jensen (2001)	2717	742	27%	259	35%
Lyster and Ranta (1997)	3268	1104	34%	686	62%

Table 8 Frequency of corrective feedback in two teacher cohorts

The number of learner turns in this study is comparable with that in the Canadian study. The proportion of learner turns with error is also comparable at around 30% (27% against 34%). There is an outstanding difference however between the frequency of corrective feedback by teachers. While the teachers in French immersion classes in Canada offer corrective feedback to 62% of learner turns with error, the teachers in Australian adult ESL classes offer corrective feedback to only 35% of learner turns with error. As a group, the teachers in this study offer a little over half as much corrective feedback.

How can this be explained? As mentioned above, the background and attitudes of the teachers in Cohort 1 will be explored in the next chapter. This may give some

explanation for the group's overall smaller percentage of corrective feedback. Another reason might be the obvious difference between students in the Canadian and Australian studies, namely their age; while the French immersion students are about eleven years of age, the ESL students are adults. Yet the age of the students does not offer an immediately obvious reason for different teacher behaviour. There is no evidence that the level of the two student groups is very different. If the level were much lower in the immersion classes, this might be a reason for higher frequency of corrective feedback. As it is, both student groups appear to be at a comparable level of second language proficiency.

6.3   Corrective feedback by teachers: types

Bohannon and Stanowicz (1988) changed the understanding of researchers in first language acquisition when they documented the use of recasts by caretakers of young children. Where previously it had been thought that young children received little negative evidence via corrective feedback, it was now seen that the recast had a corrective function, and was indeed a form of negative evidence. As has been outlined in Chapter 2, the recast has increasingly been seen as an important feature of interaction in second language acquisition (Doughty 1994, Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen 2001). The following table confirms the dominant role of the recast in the lesson data for the present study. It also shows the relative importance of other types of corrective feedback, as the types are defined in Chapter 5.

	T1 (n = 115)	T2 (n = 82)	T3 (n = 36)	T4 (n = 27)	T5 (n = 9)	TOTAL (n = 269)
Recast	49 (43%)	30 (37%)	18 (50%)	22 (85%)	2 (22%)	121 (45%)
Elicitation	13 (11%)	14 (17%)	3 (8%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	32 (12%)
Clarification request	6 (5%)	11 (13%)	8 (22%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)	27 (10%)
Metalinguistic feedback	17 (15%)	18 (22%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	1 (11%)	38 (14%)
Explicit correction	26 (23%)	9 (11%)	2 (6%)	1 (4%)	4 (44%)	42 (16%)
Repetition	4 (4%)	0 (0%)	3 (8%)	0 (0%)	2 (22%)	9 (3%)

Table 9 Distribution of feedback types

Although teachers vary in the amount of corrective feedback they offer, all teachers in the study except T5 use *recasts* as their most common form of feedback. Recasts average 45 % of all corrective feedback for the cohort of teachers. This is particularly noticeable in the case of T4 (85 %). The second most used type of corrective feedback is *explicit* correction (average of 16 %), which is T5's most frequently used type (44 %) (though the instances of use are in fact very few). *Metalinguistic* feedback is the next most used corrective feedback type, averaging 14 % across the cohort of teachers. Metalinguistic feedback is T2's second most preferred type after recasts. In descending order of use over the whole group of teachers are elicitations (12 %), clarification requests (10 %) and repetitions (3 %). While the small percentage of repetitions might surprise the reader, it is worth pointing out that the categorization of feedback types follows Lyster and Ranta (1997). In their categorization, repetitions are only counted as such when they exist on their own. If a repetition is followed by, for instance, a request for clarification, it is *counted* as a request for clarification.

Teachers clearly differ in their use of different corrective feedback types. T1 for example makes much more use proportionately of explicit corrective feedback (23 %) than do other teachers. While "No" by itself is counted as metalinguistic feedback (Chapter 5), "No" or other negative statements *plus a recast* is counted as explicit correction (Lyster and Ranta 1997: 48-49). T1 uses this combination regularly, while T3 and T4 use explicit correction hardly at all (6 % and 4 % respectively). T3 shows a much greater preference for clarification requests (22 %) than does any other teacher.

It is interesting to compare the group patterns of feedback types in this study with patterns in the French immersion study in Canada. The following table summarizes these patterns.

	Jensen (2001)		Lyster and Ranta (1997)	
	Total ($n = 269$)	Percentage of each feedback type	Total ($n = 672$)	Percentage of each feedback type
Recast	121	45%	365	54%
Elicitation	32	12%	93	14%
Clarification request	27	10%	71	11%
Metalinguistic feedback	38	14%	58	9%
Explicit correction	42	16%	49	7%
Repetition	9	3%	36	5%

Table 10 Distribution of feedback types in two teacher cohorts

What is striking about the two summary tables is the similarity in the relative percentages. Corrective feedback types are used by both cohorts of teachers in the same descending order of frequency, from recasts down to repetitions. There is a slightly greater preference for recasts (54 % of all feedback types) in the Canadian teacher group than in the Australian one (45 %). This is compensated for by an even slighter preference for the Australian teacher group to offer metalinguistic feedback and explicit correction (14 % and 16 % respectively). This is noticeably different from the Canadian teachers, who offer only 9 % of metalinguistic feedback and 7 % as explicit correction. The two groups offer very similar proportions of requests for clarification of form (10 % and 11 % respectively) and of repetition (3 % and 5 % respectively). It is plausible to explain the greater use of metalinguistic feedback and of explicit correction by the teachers in this study as due to the age of the learners. Because of their cognitive development and previous learning experience, adult learners may be able to make better use of awareness-raising information than child learners. In the scaffolding process described by Vygotsky (1978), teachers tune in to the learning needs of their students to offer the help they are able to use to develop their understanding and, in this case, *use* of L2.

6.4 Learner uptake

Mackey and Philp (1998) have warned against a simple view that learner uptake following corrective feedback by teachers is proof of the *useability* of negative evidence. Learner uptake is a short term follow-on from corrective feedback and is no guarantee of long term effect. It is however the most easily observable and documentable evidence that students have *noticed* the corrective feedback, or that they have *not noticed*. For this reason it was thought useful to quantify instances of learner uptake in the lesson data. Learner noticing may take place at the simple level of acknowledgement (for example the learner says "uh huh") with no attempt at repair, or at a range of levels up to self repair. Following once again the categorization of Lyster and Ranta (1997), responses by learners in this study to corrective feedback by teachers have been counted as follows in *Table 11* below.

	Uptake $n = 161$		No uptake $n = 108$
	Repair $n = 42$	Needs repair $n = 119$	
Recast ($n = 121$)	14 (12%)	28 (23%)	79 (65%)
Elicitation ($n = 32$)	2 (6%)	25 (78%)	5 (16%)
Clarification request ($n = 27$)	5 (18%)	21 (78%)	1 (4%)
Metalinguistic feedback ($n = 38$)	6 (16%)	23 (60%)	9 (24%)
Explicit correction ($n = 42$)	13 (31%)	17 (40%)	12 (29%)
Repetition ($n = 9$)	2 (22%)	5 (56%)	2 (22%)

Table 11 Uptake following feedback from five teachers

In the lesson data, it is clear that the corrective feedback type leading most often to repair by the learners is explicit correction; 31 % of explicit correction turns by the teachers lead to repair. This is followed by repetition (22 %), of which there are only 9 cases overall, then clarification requests (18 %), and metalinguistic feedback (16 %). Recasts are much less likely to lead to repair (12 %) and elicitations even less so (6 %). While

the last result is counter-intuitive, it is again worth remembering that the category of explicit correction includes "no" plus elicitation.

At the other extreme, it is striking to note the high percentage of feedback turns, especially recasts, that lead to no uptake at all. This may be because there is no opportunity for learners to comment, since the teacher frequently continues the topic after repeating the learner utterance minus the error (6.4.1). 65 % of teacher recasts are followed by no uptake. The other possibilities are that learners do not notice the recast, that is they ignore it, or simply fail to acknowledge it verbally. Other corrective feedback types in the data, which often lead to no uptake, are explicit correction (29 %), metalinguistic feedback (24 %) and repetition (22 %).

Explicit correction is particular in that its effects on uptake are rather evenly distributed: 31 % leads to repair, 29 % to no uptake, and 40 % to learner efforts which still need repair. This is not altogether astonishing, however. Because the teacher raises the learner's awareness that something in his utterance is wrong does not mean that the learner has the knowledge required to correct his use of L2. 40 % of responses to such teacher turns need repair. These responses include a number of types of learner uptake: acknowledgement of the teacher feedback, repetition of the same error, different error, partial repair. By pushing the learner to notice the error, the teacher offers the learner a chance to make his output comprehensible in the classroom. It is likely however that a time factor is involved here. In other words, some learner utterances that need repair in the immediate time frame of the lesson, are later reviewed and repaired by the learner (or

his peers), *after* the lesson has finished. The personal experience of the researcher is that such feedback can remain vividly in memory, with the result that repairs happen over and over in retrospect, particularly if the social importance of the feedback is significant!

Table 12 compares the results for uptake in the present study (in bold) with those in the Canadian study by Lyster and Ranta (1997).

		Instances of feedback	Uptake		No uptake
		n	Repair	Needs repair	
Recast	**Jensen 2001**	**121**	**12%**	**23%**	**65%**
	L & R 1997	365	18%	13%	69%
Elicitation		**32**	**6%**	**78%**	**16%**
		93	46%	54%	0
Clarification request		**27**	**18%**	**78%**	**4%**
		71	28%	59%	13%
Metalinguistic feedback		**38**	**16%**	**60%**	**24%**
		58	45%	41%	14%
Explicit correction		**42**	**31%**	**40%**	**29%**
		49	37%	14%	49%
Repetition		**9**	**22%**	**56%**	**22%**
		36	31%	47%	22%

Table 12 Uptake following feedback in two learner cohorts

While the frequency of corrective feedback turns (*n*) is three times higher in the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997), as has been discussed above, the percentages of repair, needs repair and no uptake for each feedback type are comparable, as *Table 12* shows above. The two most similar results for uptake in relation to feedback type in the two studies are the results for uptake in relation to *recasts* and *repetitions*.

For recasts, repairs are low in number (12 % / 18 %) while a much larger percentage (65 % / 69 %) lead to no uptake. If a teacher supplies the correct answer in a recast, it is not entirely surprising that the learners are disinclined to provide it themselves. It may be that the topic continues, as has been stated previously, or it may be that the learner has not noticed the recast. Another reason for no uptake is that there is no motivation in a primarily meaning-focused interaction to repeat the formally correct version of an utterance as recast by the teacher.

When teachers repeat the utterance with error of a learner, often with rising intonation, this leads in both studies to a comparable percentage of repair (22 % / 31 %). No uptake results are identical in both studies (22 %). Around half the feedback in each study leads to acknowledgement or some other form of *needs repair* (56 % / 47 %). Repetition is a technique that is mostly *noticed* by the learners, it seems from these last figures, but it tends not to lead to repair.

177

An interesting contrast appears in the two studies for the feedback types *elicitation* and *clarification requests*. Elicitation leads in a very small percentage of instances in the present study to repair (only 6 %). On the other hand, when teachers in the Canadian study elicit a correct response, the immersion students oblige with a repair 46 % of the time. With $n = 93$ this seems unlikely to be a chance result. How can this difference be explained? Elicitation is only successful when learners know what the answer is; it may be that the immersion students, because of the habits of their teachers, or because of their age, or level, do structural drills in their lessons, which provide them with the correct answer when pushed. It is the researcher's experience as a teacher educator that very little structural drilling takes place in adult ESL classrooms in post audio-lingual Australia. Less use is made of memorization of forms *at all levels* than may be the case elsewhere. Elicitation leads to considerable confusion in the Australian data (78 % *needs repair*), but less confusion in the Canadian data (54 %). Could the presence or absence of rote learning and/or substitution drills account for this?

Clarification requests similarly lead in the data for this study to 78 % of learner responses needing repair. In the Canadian study considerably fewer learner responses (59 %) still need repair. The rate of repair following clarification requests is correspondingly lower in this study (18 %) and higher in the Canadian study (28 %). No uptake is comparably low (4 % / 13 %).

The remaining two categories of corrective feedback are metalinguistic feedback and explicit correction. Both are proportionately more represented in the adult ESL data, as

has been shown above. It has been suggested that this relates to the age and cognitive maturity of the adult ESL learners. If that is the case, it is sobering to note that the adult learners are pushed to repair in only 16 % of cases where metalinguistic feedback is offered. The child learners repair much more frequently (45 %). If anything, the adult learners show a fairly strong tendency towards no uptake (24 %), particularly when this is compared with the children, who show a smaller proportion (14 %) of no uptake. In the category *needs repair*, metalinguistic feedback shows a stronger result in the present study (60 %) than in the Canadian study (41 %). This may be viewed positively, since *needs repair* indicates that the feedback has been noticed, that it is useable.

Explicit correction leads to fairly even distribution of uptake in the present study: 31 % of errors are repaired, 40 % need repair and in 29 % of cases there is no repair. This is a more promising result than that found by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The learners in their study were able to repair errors to a comparable degree (37 %), but their utterances needing repair were much fewer (14 %) and there was a high level of no uptake (49 %). We may conclude that adult learners of a second language show a greater capacity to notice and, to some extent, to *use* explicit correction in the short term of the lesson, than do child learners.

6.5   Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the lessons in the research study. The lessons are all located in curriculum frameworks which aim to develop study skills, but the AMEP lessons have

more modest academic goals than do the ELICOS lessons. This is particularly evident in the assessment requirements for the writing skill.

The five teachers in the study vary considerably in the frequency of their corrective feedback to learners' spoken error. On the whole, corrective feedback is more frequent in the AMEP lessons than in the ELICOS lessons (*Table 6*). Of five teachers it is however an ELICOS teacher, T3, who shows the highest overall rate of corrective feedback to learner errors (73 %). This may be because the single lesson taught by T3 is atypical, however, all other teachers show consistency in rate of feedback over two or more lessons (*Table 7*). Compared with the cohort of four teachers in Quebec immersion classes, the cohort in this study offers much less feedback (*Table 8*). This cannot be readily explained from the known facts in the two studies such as age and level of learners, curriculum goal or lesson activities.

Teachers in the study also vary in the types of corrective feedback they give students (*Table 9*), though four out of five teachers use recasts much more often than other types. This preference for the use of recasts matches the results of other studies, and in particular the results of the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) *(Table 10)*.

Different kinds of uptake are quantified in the study and patterns which can be observed in the whole learner cohort match to a high degree the patterns observed among learners in the immersion study by Lyster and Ranta (1997). First, there is a high percentage of no response to feedback, particularly implicit feedback in the form of a recast. Second,

180

the rate of learner uptake is low when compared with the number of instances of corrective feedback by teachers. This is particularly true of learner uptake which *repairs* the original error. There is a very low rate of learner self repair following teacher feedback.

There is therefore a close match in patterns of feedback and patterns of uptake in the two studies, despite the fact that they have been carried out in two quite different contexts. What is surprising is the difference in patterns of feedback among teachers within the present study. In Chapter 7 the reasons for this difference among teachers are explored further.

Chapter 7

Matching teacher attitudes and teacher practice

Chapter 7 discusses the relationship of teacher attitudes to teacher practice. In the first part of this chapter, the explicitly stated attitudes of each teacher[13] to the correction of *spoken* errors are presented. Terms repeated a number of times by each teacher serve as the key(s) to her attitudes. Where a teacher has also stated her attitude to *written* errors, this complementary information is included. In addition, other attitudes of each teacher, which have an implication for error correction, are summarized. All these attitudes were expressed in response to questions asked by the researcher at interview. Questions were asked about specific TESOL teacher training, teachers' beliefs about what is important in second language acquisition, their methodological approach, their view of their role as a language teacher, their relative focus on meaning or on form(s) (see Section 4.4.2). Answers to these questions incidentally revealed different attitudes to the importance of grammar, and different levels of ease with grammar rules on the part of the teachers themselves, which will be commented upon by the researcher. An assessment is made of each individual teacher's position on focus on forms versus focus on meaning, and on her preference to intervene or not to intervene when students are talking in L2. This assessment is based on what the teachers say.

The second part of the chapter looks at the correspondence between what each teacher has said about her beliefs and attitudes to TESOL and what she does in the lessons

recorded. The lessons taught by individual teachers are firstly reviewed as to *frequency* and *types* of corrective feedback. The activities of the lessons are considered briefly. Patterns of correspondence or lack of correspondence between attitudes and practice of each teacher are traced. In Chapter 7, teachers are referred to by pseudonyms, so that the reader is reminded that they are real human participants operating in authentic contexts. T1 is referred to in this chapter as Rachel, T2 as Lara, T3 as Susanna, T4 as Yolande and T5 as Meg. By contrast, codes T1 to T5 were used to describe the teachers in discussion of the lessons in Chapter 6. The anonymity of codes allowed a focus on the main issues in Chapter 6, namely the frequency and types of corrective feedback in the classroom.

7.1   Teacher attitudes

A short profile of each of the five teachers follows the next table, *Table 13 Teacher attitudes*. The profiles are in the form of relatively concentrated vignettes. These vignettes locate each teacher's attitudes towards corrective feedback in the context of her own experience of language learning and teaching. Words used by each teacher a number of times throughout the interview identify the broad teaching approach taken. According to her own statements, each teacher is rated in terms of two dimensions. The first dimension is her *emphasis on meaning or form* respectively. A clear preference to focus on meaning is represented as 1, while a clear preference to focus on forms is represented as 5. The second dimension is her *attitude towards corrective feedback*, ranging from (1) non-interventionist to (5) interventionist.

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[13] For details of teachers' background see *Table 3*

	Explicit statements re error correction	Teacher training emphasis	Beliefs about key factors in SLA	Approach to language teaching	Teacher's role	Focus on meaning / form	Teacher's interest in grammar	Teacher's confidence with grammar	Comments
T1 Rachel	*Eliminate* errors. Discuss / *negotiate* alternative possibilities	*Topic- based* language learning.	*Confidence* leads to success. Everybody can achieve *success*. Own experience *terrifying*.	Task-based / *problem-solving* approach. Wants to facilititate *independent* learning.	*Empower*, give confidence, set language goals.	Greater focus on *meaning* builds confidence.	Systematic approach at lower levels, (complex writing skills at higher level)	Not referred to.	Emphasis on *independent* learning, more than one correct answer, or *open endedness*
T2 Lara	*Supports* error correction, *does it a lot.* Students *expect* it. Learner confidence not an issue.	Foreign language teaching requires *profound knowledge* of L2 (all macro-skills)	Learners need to develop *strategies. Conscious* learning important. Trust / *respect* for teacher necessary. Was corrected as a learner.	Language class an opportunity to speak L2, to gain information about *real life,* to develop learning *strategies.*	Help students *survive* via strategy training, e.g. guess rather than rely on dictionary	*Knowledge* of and about language essential.	Through communic-ation you learn grammar.	Confident using and teaching English grammar. Very experienced teacher of EFL and Russian SL.	Emphasizes *conscious* learning and *knowledge.*
T3 Susanna	*Against interrupting* except when focus is *100% accuracy.*	Maximise learner involvement *Key the students in.* (RSA)	Desire, or *need, to communic--ate* leads to practice and use of L2.	*Practice* in speaking most important.	Impart *information,* facilitate *process* of language use.	*Flexibility* needed according to purpose of lesson.	*Context* needed for language forms. Times when *exact structure* is required.	Expresses some *uncertainty* re grammar (of Italian).	Rich vocabulary describes *ease* or *discomfort* of L2 speakers.

T4 Yolande	Concerned not to stop learner *fluency*.	Doesn't mention. (RSA)	*Comfort* important. Remembers *frustration* of inability to distinguish words.	Teaching an *adventure / voyage*. Communication a *two-way process*.	Help students *reach goals* (further education). Work hard to *make students free* to ask questions.	*Meaning* tends to dominate.	Students *need grammar to write well*. Teacher's job to choose which items.	Jokes that she'd *probably fail* a grammar test set by the researcher.	Emphasizes the *adventure* of teaching and learning and *responsibility & commitment* of the teacher.
T5 Meg	Uses students' written errors to elicit correct responses. Very concerned to save learners' face in spoken error correction, always waits till later.	Elicit learners' existing knowledge. Controlled to less controlled practice of language items. Teach language in context. (RSA)	Need to *survive* motivates L2 learners. Need for *expressive* skills comes next.	*Setting goals from broad to specific* is necessary. Tasks / activities give *practice*, in and outside the classroom.	Teacher *passes on skills. Facilitates, empowers, researches* students' needs, *offers feedback, evaluates* success of program.	Strives to *balance form and meaning*.	Uses a *code system* to identify grammar errors in students' writing.	Says her grammar was and <u>is</u> *terrible*.	Stresses that students are *buying* something, i.e. language skills. Teacher needs to *partialize* information in order to pass on these skills, without *demeaning* the learners.

7.2.1 T1 / Rachel: An *open-ended* approach

With well over a decade of experience as a teacher in the Adult Multicultural Education Program (AMEP), Rachel displays an eclectic and pragmatic approach in terms of TESL methodology: "I believe in anything that's effective". She defines her teaching approach as "task-based, problem-solving", and generally in line with the competency-based assessment procedures used in AMEP / immigrant classes in Australia. She emphasizes the independence of the learner and the fact that there is usually more than one correct answer to a question. She uses the term *open-ended* to refer to her approach in general but also to learners' choice of language in answering a given grammar question. She talks about *negotiating* all possible correct answers with the class. She believes that a systematic approach to teaching grammar is necessary at lower levels, but that at higher levels, complex writing skills need to be developed, and treatment of grammar can only be cursory.

She talks about *eliminating* errors, which seems to mean preventing them from happening in the first place. She says she does this by teaching students "the sort of structures (they) need, to ...master a more complex analytical approach to (their) writing". At first glance, this attitude to "elimination" of errors suggests the *audio-lingual* approach, which stressed the development of accurate forms by substitution drills, often undertaken in the language laboratory. It was thought that drills formed good habits, which in turn

prevented errors. However, Rachel does not mention drilling at all. In fact she expresses

disgust about hours spent in the language laboratory doing exercises in Spanish.

Another recurring word in the interview with Rachel is learner *confidence*. Rachel

emphasizes a positive approach to language learning, which develops "habits" and

"facility" in learners' use of language. She sees her teacher role as that of a *facilitator*.

By this she means the teacher should develop learners' confidence and feeling of *success*

in using the "little bits" of L2 knowledge they already have. She takes care to point out

that learners already know a lot of grammar at Levels 5 and 6. She sees her task as

planning problem-solving activities, which require the use and revision of structures

already introduced in lower levels. Classroom tasks are "open-ended" enough that

various learner responses are likely to be correct. In this way, a number of students can

feel success. Rachel acknowledges that students do not always appreciate their own

experience of success. She laughingly points out that one of her students in fact

complained that "a bit too much success" was allowed in her class.

Rachel's own experience as a learner of Spanish as a second language at university has

strengthened, and possibly motivated, her belief that doing a good job as an ESL teacher

means giving learners confidence. She states that she has never recovered from the lack

of confidence she felt in Spanish classes:

> *It was an absolutely terrifying process where you had to go in each morning and the lady*
> *would flick her finger at you and you had to produce whatever it was that you were*
> *supposed to do for homework the night before and I... found that so daunting.* (Interview,
> Rachel, February 27, 1997)

187

Confidence and success will translate, she believes, into students developing "independent learning skills". She gives examples of students who bring unexpected strategies to the classroom. A student from Somalia astonished her by his successful performance in assessed writing tasks; she had not seen him taking notes about structures and vocabulary introduced in class. She concluded that he had developed such a memory for information delivered orally, that he was able to use that information when required, in written form. Another student from Vietnam was amazingly skiliful at Scrabble, both in his use of English words and his rapid calculation of points earned. She learned that he had spent five years in a refugee camp honing his Scrabble skills, without access to an English class.

Rachel's emphasis on success in L2 learning matches her attitude to her social role as an ESL teacher. Her early experience in Papua New Guinea had given her enjoyable interaction with people from many countries, which she sought again in her work in multicultural Australia. As a teacher of refugees and immigrants she can see people develop in six months from cautious, inadequate language users to individuals "who have enough confidence to negotiate the system in Australia". The teacher can "empower people in a relatively short time".

	1	2	3	4	5	
Meaning	X					Form
Non-interventionist	X					Interventionist

Table 14 Attitudes - Rachel

7.2.2   T2 / Lara: A *conscious* approach

Lara is the only one of the teachers to have learned English as a foreign language and to have taught EFL (and Russian as a second language) language for many years before her arrival in Australia. By the time of the interview she had lived in Australia for about five years. She had taught ESL in the AMEP most of this time, not a typical scenario, and had done further studies in Australia. This meant that two quite different traditions had influenced her approach to teaching.

Lara had graduated from and later taught at a specialist school in Moldavia, where most of the curriculum was delivered in English, L2. (Geography and history, for example were however taught in Russian L1). Despite this experience of contextualized language learning, she became convinced of the necessity for what she calls *conscious* learning and sound language skills. She made it clear that students at the specialist school started by learning the grammar of L2, which involves a conscious process. Conscious learning for Lara entails an active role for the teacher in offering corrective feedback. She says that she "supports" error correction, does it "a lot", and believes the students expect it:

> *This is what students are expecting from the teacher, ...not only saying "That's terrific and fantastic!" ...We have got to help them to survive. ...It's not extra activities for elderly people. [Being corrected] for them in their cultures, it's absolutely normal, that's what they expect.* (Interview, Lara, May 6, 1997)

Knowledge is a term used by Lara a number of times at interview. This seems to mean formal study in general, as well as both knowledge *of* and knowledge *about* language.

She describes how she and her colleagues selected children at the age of six for the specialist English language school in Moldavia on the basis of language aptitude. Selection was made on the basis of the children's "visual memory, their pronunciation in Russian language, and they had to be good readers in Russian already". The selection process continued throughout ten years of education in EFL. Forty students would start in the first grade, with fifteen students lasting the full ten years. Those students who survived, and Lara herself had been one of them, developed a "profound knowledge of English language", which meant in all skills, though she says that their knowledge of vocabulary was not always comprehensive enough.

In a society where knowledge enables movement to higher social status, the teacher commands respect as a provider of knowledge. Lara has a strong sense of her role as a professional deserving *respect* and *trust*. She is aware of the previous level of formal education of her students and speaks respectfully of those with professional training. Not unreasonably, she expects learners to trust her judgement on the process of language learning. She describes the difficulty she had to persuade one student that using a bilingual dictionary was not the best strategy for acquiring a new vocabulary item. Lara expressed impatience that the student had initially refused the teacher's advice. Her impatience seemed to be aggravated by two facts, one, that the student shared Lara's mother-tongue (so should have shared her culture of respect for the teacher), and secondly, that the student only had ten years of school education.

Lara's own experience of immigration to Australia has forced some changes in her approach. While language knowledge is essential, using the language "in real life" is the main goal. Explaining the idea of survival, she points out that adult learners at Levels 5 and 6 in the AMEP are often professionally qualified, and need a high standard of English in all macro-skills to function in their professions. "It's through communication you learn grammar, you learn *everything* and not vice versa".

Teachers can offer students information, but more importantly, they can teach them strategies for getting the precise information they need. She believes that adults who were raised under political regimes, which offered citizens more guidance and fewer choices have a great need for such strategies. She illustrates what she means by strategy training with a speaking activity based on the health system in Australia. Cue cards supply vocabulary items and questions designed to get learners to exchange practical information. The place of feedback in this activity was not discussed.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Meaning			X			Form
Non-interventionist					X	Interventionist

Table 15 Attitudes – Lara

7.2.3 T3 / Susanna: "Keying the students in"

Of the three ELICOS teachers, Susanna has had the most experience (more than five years) as a language teacher, including some time in the AMEP early on in her teaching career. Like the other ELICOS teachers, however, she brings a rich experience in education outside the language area. After nine years in special education, working with emotionally disturbed and disabled children, she undertook the intensive Cambridge / RSA certificate course. In addition to her experience and training in language and special education she is the only one of the teachers to have grown up in Australia in a family speaking a language other than English (Italian).

It is perhaps not surprising that Susanna emphasizes the *desire to communicate* as a key factor in second language acquisition:

> *If you're having a discussion, you have an idea, you want to communicate it. You'll find*
> *a way. It may not be grammatically correct but you'll find a way to communicate.*
> (Interview, Susanna, February 21, 1997)

As a language teacher, her approach seems to correspond very much with that of the *Communicative Language Teaching* approach as outlined by classic writers such as Larsen-Freeman (1986). This is in spite of the fact that she claims not to recognize the phrase *Communicative Language Teaching*. The expression she uses many times during the interview, is *keying the students in*. She learned this expression during RSA teacher training and paraphrases it in a number of ways. The chief meaning is to "maximize

192

student involvement in any activities". She explains that by this she means to make activities interesting and to get students involved "even on a physical level":

> *If you're doing a reading for example to not just flick this bit of paper at them and expect them to read it... to key them in the subject first. The RSA was really great in terms of being creative with even...cutting the reading text up, getting them to do activities in pairs first* (Interview, Susanna, lines 318 ff).

Susanna spells out later in the interview that language should be presented in context. "You don't just walk in and say right, we're going to talk about the future, you *key them in*". Susanna reports the reaction of students when she has announced that they are going to practise future forms: "They all groan and say *we've done this!*" By contrast, she may choose to say "Let's talk about time machines". In this case, students will be intrigued and motivated to talk. It should be pointed out here that language forms presented in meaningful context are *forms* nonetheless. The notion of Focus on Form in an immersion or content-based lesson is *not* what Susanna is talking about. Susanna reflects the training of the RSA when she emphasizes teaching language structures / forms in a meaningful context.

On the topic of corrective feedback, Susanna makes a clear distinction between classroom activities which are form / accuracy focused and those which are meaning / fluency focused. She gives the example of a quick game where students practise forms such as the future perfect. "I make it clear I want 100% accuracy. Then I'll intervene if they're making a mistake. And correct them". She outlines a number of ways in which she offers corrective feedback. The first way is a hand signal (slapping the back of her own hand) which forces students to stop and think, and possibly repair their own error.

193

She encourages students to correct each other's mistakes during accuracy focused activities. She says that when students are unable to correct their own, or each other's mistakes, she will model the correct language item. Susanna is eloquent on the subject of not intervening in fluency focused activities:

> If it's a discussion type activity I don't want to interrupt their flow. What I've noticed is if I give them pairwork, discussion, whatever, especially initially in a group, they'll be merrily going away and as soon as I sort of go close to them to listen and join in, they freeze. So you have to be able very careful that if you're intervening all the time, they will just clam up. You've got to be able to stand back and let them go for it. And if you are going to intervene... I don't think it should be seen as I'm correcting a mistake. It should be sort of "You did really well, but this sentence..." (Interview, Susanna, lines 439 ff).

Susanna's reluctance to intervene seems very different from the attitude expressed by Lara that students expect correction. It is clear that she expresses this view in the context of fluency-based tasks in the classroom. It is noticeable, however, that she is uncomfortable about using words like "correct" and "mistake" with students. Susanna goes on to explain that part of her reluctance comes from the fact that most students in her international class have learned English in their home countries via grammar exercises and reading and writing tasks. As a result, she finds that ELICOS students, when newly arrived in Australia:

> are quite intimidated by speaking. And I say to them your speaking won't be perfect, you're not a native speaker, but if you're not going to speak because you're afraid to make a mistake, you're never going to get the practice in! (Interview, Susanna, lines 463 ff).

Susanna reports that the students, particularly more mature students, respond well to her encouragement to take the risk of speaking. One of her measures of success in teaching

194

is whether students at the end of a term are more confident speakers and writers, and "willing to tackle more difficult reading tasks".

	1	2	3	4	5	
Meaning			X			Form
Non-interventionist			X			Interventionist

Table 16 Attitudes – Susanna

7.2.4 T4 / Yolande: *Adventure* and *Responsibility*

Two words recur in the interview with Yolande. Language learning is an *adventure*, in which the teacher has the *responsibility* to provide a safe environment for the students to achieve their goals in further education. After an unspecified period as a secondary school teacher, Yolande seemed happy to have found a new career in ELICOS, working with students whom she loves. She applies the metaphor of *adventure* to the situation of teachers and students alike. She also uses the term *voyage*. She says that learning:

> really is a voyage. Every time it begins, you never quite know where it's going to go or, I mean you know what the goal is, but the way it goes. *(Interview, Yolande, June 10, 1997)*

Like Rachel, she describes some unhappy memories from her own language-learning experiences. She had lived in a French-speaking country for four years and remembers:

the frustration of having a cacophony of sound, in which I couldn't decipher individual words.. and I remember crying, out of frustration. So I think the students here are just amazing, they just take my breath away (Interview, Yolande, lines 159 ff.).

Yolande's earlier experience of frustration seems to inform her attitude to her role as a teacher. While her main goal is to enable students to qualify for entry to further study or employment, she takes delight in the level of *comfort* students learn to feel with her. She wants them to be able to tell her when they do not understand something. She also emphasizes her own responsibility to check that students *do* understand.

Yolande readily accepts the label "communicative" as appropriate for her approach to teaching. She defines communicative as *two-way*, and as *getting ideas across*. She states that her classroom activities tend to focus more on meaning than on form. The EAP curriculum sets out a number of concepts such as *cause and effect* that students need to express in their writing at Level 6; it is up to the teacher, she says, to choose language items which express the concepts. Students believe that they know all the grammatical structures by this level:

At Level 6 they think they do not have to study grammar. They've got it all under their belt, they do not have to study, and every time you give them a grammar test, it's apparent that they do need grammar (Interview, Yolande, lines 385 ff.).

She admits (in jest) to some uncertainty in her own knowledge of grammar and it is hard to know how seriously she means this.

Yolande is cautious about giving corrective feedback on spoken errors. "If you pick them up on every spoken error you're just going to stop the fluency" and says she will

196

correct some, but not all, errors in each lesson. She tends to respond to a particular student's "recurrent error" if it is "noticeable". She mentions pronunciation errors:

> *I'm always telling (students) that words are delicious, and.. they'll often say that before I have a chance. They say oh it's delicious, or isn't it beautiful? And so we'll all practise without trying to. I'm very conscious of that, that if you pick on someone, they're simply not going to open their mouths again. But you can't let them go on making terrible mistakes.* (Interview, Yolande, lines 422 ff.)

An example of a terrible mistake might be "leaving the s's off the end of words". It is not clear what this might refer to, as it could mean leaving off plural –s, (*two week*), third person singular present tense –s, (*he work*), possessive –s, (*Tom computer*) and so on.

Yolande stresses the importance of correcting mistakes in students' writing, since many in her ELICOS class will start tertiary studies in Australia, some at postgraduate level, the following year. At the researcher's request, she later provided samples of these (*Appendix P*).

	1	2	3	4	5	
Meaning		X				Form
Non-interventionist		X				Interventionist

Table 17   Attitudes – Yolande

7.2.5 T5 / Meg: The *partializing* approach

It is perhaps Meg's initial training as a generalist primary school teacher which has led to her understanding that language teaching involves *partializing* information in manageable components, so that broad goals are achieved when broken down into specific parts. This is a word she uses a number of times. The example she gives comes from her later role as a social worker working with disabled people. A client with severely impaired vision:

> wanted to learn how to use a little money machine that you can put notes in and measure them and tell (the denomination) by the size and the feel. And then I made a big one for him and he learned to use that and then I narrowed it down to smaller, it's much more specific and partialized *(Interview, Meg, June 10, 1997).*

The application of this approach to language teaching is not described in this interview, perhaps because Meg was still making the switch from her earlier professional experience. In a somewhat self-deprecating way, Meg describes her own knowledge about English grammar as "terrible". She readily agrees that she was of the generation who did not get taught grammar at school, and says that she developed awareness of this gap when she started her certificate course in teaching English as a foreign language to adults.

Like Susanna and Yolande, Meg brings a rich range of experiences to her role as a language teacher, including a year of teaching and windsurfing in Greece. She describes

learning to speak enough Greek in order to buy bread at the baker's and to do other necessary tasks for survival. When asked about the conditions for SLA, survival is the first word she mentions. She says that she studies in detail the forms that students complete when they first enroll in their study skills-based English course. She does this in order to become acquainted with her students' precise goals and to plan a suitable range of tasks to match the set syllabus and to develop the skills they need.

Her recall of her training in the Cambridge / RSA course is precise. Like Susanna, she talks about teaching language forms in context. She emphasizes the need to elicit students' existing knowledge before presenting, then practising, new language forms. Practice moves from a more controlled stage, e.g. drilling, to a less controlled / free production stage. She sees the teacher's role as multi-faceted. Essentially the teacher is a facilitator who empowers students to reach their goals. This echoes Rachel's views. More precisely however, she sees the teacher as a researcher of students' needs, someone who offers feedback, and an evaluator of the success of a language teaching program. She points out the commercial basis for English language intensive courses for overseas students (ELICOS), that students are purchasing something. She stresses her obligation as a teacher to offer students the opportunity to develop their language skills.

Meg accepts that her approach to language teaching is a communicative one. She defines communicative in this way: "Whatever the skill being taught, I use maximum opportunities to have students use their expressive skills, particularly spoken". She comments that the Cambridge / RSA training course she took part in was based on

modelling communicative teaching behaviour, rather than lecturing about it. This comment summarized for the researcher the chief strength of this particular teacher-training program, (which does not aim to deal with theoretical or research issues at any depth). Meg finds the decision to correct spoken errors is a difficult one:

> Whilst students say that they really want to be corrected, they find it <u>does</u> interrupt them and it <u>is</u> disruptive and it spoils the chain, the flow of what they're trying to say. So generally I must admit I don't do it on the spot and I also think it's a bit demeaning and can be a bit embarrassing even though they ask for it. *(Interview, Meg, lines.619 ff.)*

Meg is the only one of the teachers to discuss the fact that students ask for correction, stressing that this was true in her early TESOL days rather than at the time of the interview. Her main solution to the dilemma of whether to interrupt students is to listen to them talking and to record errors as she hears them. She follows this up with different kinds of feedback. One way is to come back later to the group of students to tell them about the recorded errors. Like Susanna, she is concerned to introduce such corrective feedback with a positive comment. She illustrates this by saying "There was some very good expression but there were some other things that were a problem".

The other kind of feedback she describes is setting up a game in a later class, which aims to revise a particular grammatical point which students have used incorrectly in speaking. She concludes that these kinds of feedback are meeting students' need for correction. This conclusion is based on the fact that students no longer ask her to correct their spoken errors in the way they had done when she first started adult TESL.

Regarding the correction of written errors, Meg likes to set students the task of finding each other's mistakes. She is aware that some students may feel offended that their errors are being looked at by others, and asks them first if they mind. She also cuts up copies of the students' work to give individual writers more anonymity. She mentions two other strategies. The first one is that she writes coded feedback onto students' written work, such as " ^ for word missing and punc. (punctuation), sp for spelling". The second strategy is a pre-emptive one, recalling Rachel's error "elimination". This is the setting up of agreed criteria for writing tasks, based on content and on structure. After marking students' work, the teacher comments to the whole class in a general way, about how they have met the criteria in their writing.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Meaning		X				Form
Non-interventionist			X			Interventionist

Table 18 Attitudes – Meg

7.2.6 Summary of teacher attitudes

Table 19 below plots the stated preferences of each of the teachers to emphasize more the *meaning* or the *form* of L2, and to lean towards *non-intervention* or *intervention* when learners make errors while speaking L2.

	Meaning	Form	Non-intervention	Intervention
Rachel	1		1	
Lara		3		5
Susanna		3	3	
Yolande	2		2	
Meg	2		3	

Table 19 Summary of teacher attitudes to meaning vs form and non-intervention vs intervention

It can be seen in *Table 19* that within this group of teachers, the two AMEP teachers, Rachel and Lara, are the ones to differ most radically in their stated views. While Rachel definitely emphasizes meaning, Lara takes a middle position between meaning and form. Rachel is very keen not to intervene during students' speaking activities, while Lara is strongly of the view that the teacher should intervene, and that adult learners expect and want intervention. It is possible that this disparity in stated views by the two teachers of

immigrants echoes their cultural experience and training. Rachel's experience and training have been chiefly situated in Anglo-Celtic Australian culture, while Lara's early experience and training were situated in Russian culture of the communist era, her more recent ones in Australia. Added to this difference is that of their dominant early background in TESL (Rachel) and TEFL (Lara) respectively. The TESL/TEFL difference is possibly more significant than any other variable. Corrective feedback is not mentioned as significant either in Rachel's teacher training or in her adult immigrant teaching. It was salient however in her experience of learning Spanish L2, in a *negative* way. On the other hand, Lara's EFL experience and TEFL training both created an expectation of corrective feedback. Although Lara says her views on the balance of meaning and form have undergone change since her studies and experience in Australia, her views on corrective feedback do not reflect this change.

Susanna is the teacher who is explicit about *balance* in both the dimensions of meaning / form and non-intervention / intervention. It is perhaps of significance here that Susanna's experience and training, like Lara's, span the TESL and TEFL areas, but that her early experience as both as learner and as teacher were predominantly in English as a *second* language.

The other two teachers in the study, Yolande and Meg differ slightly in the relative importance they give to meaning and form. While Yolande emphasizes meaning over form, Meg, like Susanna, talks about *balance* between the two. All three ELICOS

teachers have completed the Cambridge RSA Cert. TEFLA. An awareness they share is of the importance of presenting and practising language in a *meaningful context*.

The influence of RSA training on their attitudes to corrective feedback is less obvious. All three ELICOS teachers are explicit about the dilemma of whether to interrupt students when they make spoken errors. They all comment about the possibly negative effect of "on the spot" correction. However Susanna and Meg qualify their reluctance to intervene. Susanna will intervene if the focus of a given activity is accuracy. Meg offers corrective feedback in a range of ways *after* the students have finished talking.

Yolande however is closest to Rachel in her reluctance to intervene. It is worth noting that both Yolande and Rachel refer less to their teacher training in this regard, and more to their own experience as learners. Yolande shows empathy for her own students as she recalls the frustration she felt as a student of French L2 in New Caledonia. This shared experience of frustration learning a language other than English might explain a shared reluctance to intervene in TESL.

By contrast, Susanna describes the emotional break-through she experienced in learning Spanish L2 in evening classes where a sociable atmosphere was established. Perhaps of significance is Meg's emphasis on her *survival* as an L2 student in Greece. Certainly Meg's own teaching experience of EFL students has also provided her with more balanced view about when to intervene or not. She comments that they used to ask her for more correction, which they no longer do.

204

In fairness to the teachers, the attitudes they expressed at interview were the ones which came first to mind. With more time to reflect, or in other circumstances, the teachers might have expressed themselves somewhat differently. *How* can only be guessed at. It remains to be seen what kind of match there is between what the teachers *said* and what they *did* in the observed lessons. This will be shown in the following section.

7.3   Correspondences between teachers' attitude and practice

In this second part of Chapter 7, the patterns of corrective feedback of individual teachers will be discussed in relation to their attitudes summarized in the vignettes above. (In this chapter, *feedback* refers to *corrective feedback*). Two tables show details of frequency and types of feedback for each teacher, as can be seen below in 7.3.1 below and in the sections following. Frequency of learner turns per minute is first calculated, and a brief explanation offered as to why there are more learner turns per minute in some lessons than in others. The purpose of this calculation is to show that the type of activities in a lesson determine to some extent the frequency of learner talk. The purpose of the activities will further determine whether the teacher is likely to offer corrective feedback or not. Frequency of feedback is counted in this section as a percentage of learner turns with error. Feedback data are compared with teachers' attitudes recorded in the vignettes. Similarities and differences between patterns of feedback and teachers' attitudes are explored further.

7.3.1 Rachel

From her statements at interview, Rachel appears to be very much *meaning-focused* and very much *non-interventionist (Table 14)*. Overall, however, Rachel shows a relatively high rate (56%) of corrective feedback to learner errors over the three lessons. This apparent contradiction with her stated attitudes needs explanation. This begins with a review of the frequency of learner turns in her lessons to show the context in which the corrective feedback occurs. Frequency of learner turns relates to the activities at each stage of a lesson. Frequency of corrective feedback to error relates to the focus of each activity, whether it is fluency or accuracy. Rachel's three lessons show some variation in the rate of frequency of learner turns per lesson. Lesson 1 has the fewest learner turns (101 turns, or 2.2 turns per minute) and Lesson 3 has the most learner turns (329, or 5.5 turns per minute). Lesson 2 lies between the others, with 231 turns, or 3.7 learner turns per minute.

Lesson no. Class / Length of lesson in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	(% of total errors)
1. A6 - 50 min.	101 (2.2/min.)	43	43%	32	74%
2. A6 - 63 min.	231 (3.7/min.)	69	30%	42	61%
3. A6 - 60 min.	329 (5.5/min.)	92	28%	41	45%
Total	661 (3.8/min.)	204	31%	115	56%

Table 20 Frequency of feedback, Rachel

206

This variation may be accounted for by the activities of the lessons as follows, with, for example, students spending half of Lesson 1 (25 minutes) practising *listening* skills while watching a video. Clearly, learner turns will be absent or rare during such an activity. In Lesson 2, students are invited by the teacher to give their answers to a number of grammar revision exercises. On the whole, students are reading aloud their *written* answers, to which the teacher responds. In Lesson 3, the students are working freely in pairs or small groups, on constructing a narrative based on a cartoon story. For example, in one cartoon by Sempé, with the title *Rien n'est simple,* a couple are having a picnic on the side of a cliff overlooking the ocean. In a "thought bubble" above the man's head is a picture of the man pushing his wife over the edge of the cliff. In a thought bubble above the woman's head, we see the woman crouching down so that the man somersaults over her back and falls over the cliff himself! Learner turns in this lesson are frequent. The teacher moves around the classroom offering feedback to individual student pairs. (Only feedback which is audible in the recording has been counted). The teacher then elicits a class narrative, with the intention of showing how to include "simple connectives" in a written text. She writes the narrative on the whiteboard, advising the students that they will be developing it as a written text in their computer session later on.

Lesson	
1	Listening (*Behind the News* video program recorded off-air)
	Vocabulary work on transcript of part of video. Worksheet on transcript of video
2	Grammar revision of three topics: Wh- questions; Reported speech + modals; Relative clauses
3	Pre-writing: discussing vocabulary of 2 cartoon stories and a diagram and using link words
	(The Picnic, Married couple by the cliff, Pyramid of economies)

Table 21 Activities in Rachel's lessons

While Lesson 1 has the lowest number of learner turns of the three lessons, it has the *highest percentage of learner errors per number of learner turns* (43%). The written text of the video program is rich in vocabulary and students are invited by the teacher to offer synonyms and paraphrases to show what they already understand of this vocabulary. It is in this lesson that T1 offers the *highest percentage of corrective feedback*, (74%).

Much of Lesson 2 is taken up with oral correction of students' written answers to grammar exercises done from the board or for homework. Students have had time to prepare their answers, unlike in the teacher-led discussion in Lesson 1, and as a result they contribute answers frequently, with relatively fewer errors.

Lesson 3 has the lowest percentage of learner errors per number of learner turns of the three lessons (28%). Can this be explained by the nature of the lesson activity? The narrative construction activity is free, and one might expect a large number of lexical and grammatical errors. The transcript does not show this; students offer in many cases short or even monosyllabic tokens where there is little or no potential for error. One might have expected a much lower rate of feedback to learner errors. How to explain this apparent contradiction? A brief look at feedback types in her lessons may cast light on this relatively high rate of feedback to learner errors. Rachel's most used feedback type in these three lessons is the *recast* (43%). Her least used feedback type in these three lessons is the *repetition* (3%) as can be seen in the next table.

Rachel A6 3 lessons	Total number of instances of feedback by type	Percentage of total number of instances of feedback
Recast	49	43%
Elicitation	13	11%
Clarification request	6	5%
Metalinguistic feedback	17	15%
Explicit correction	26	23%
Repetition	4	3%
Total	115	100%

Table 22 Feedback types in Rachel's lessons

Recasts are implicit feedback, with some ambiguity surrounding their intention. Relative to *explicit* correction, for example, they are relatively *non-interventionist*. Since Rachel's feedback almost half the time consists of recasts, this seems to correspond well with her belief that *confidence* is the key ingredient to success in SLA. More puzzling appears to be Rachel's relatively high use of both *explicit* and *metalinguistic* feedback, which together total 38%. There is consistence here however, with her statements that she likes to discuss alternatives when students offer a range of answers. The "negotiation" of alternative possibilities is bound to lead to pronouncements by the native-speaking teacher on the grammaticality of each answer offered. This leads to feedback which is either explicit or metalinguistic in nature. A typical exchange between Rachel and class members is as follows:

T	Meanwhile the wife is standing on the edge of the cliff. What is she thinking?	
Ss	*murmur*	
FS1	If..	
FS2	<u>She thinking</u> that he is trying to kill her.	*Error – grammatical.*
T	Yes and..	*Feedback – accepts content of answer, ignores error*
FS2	Therefore she will <u>take advance</u> and <u>throw him away.</u>	*Error – lexis (x 2)*
T	<u>Yes hang on but we need the right expression</u> so.. When he rushes towards her, what will she do?	*Feedback – metalinguistic*
FS1	She bob <u>she bob down</u> or how to..?	*Error – grammatical*
T	<u>She will..</u> Now we have to.. there's two expressions which you might not know. This is bending down, all right? *(Demonstrates action).* So she's not doing that one, she's bending her knees as well. So what's that action, does anyone know?	*Feedback – recast*
FS1	<u>Bobbing</u>	*Error – lexis*
T	Yes, she will <u>bob down</u>, okay.	*Feedback – recast*
FS1	<u>Down</u>	*Uptake - repetition*
T	That's when you bend your knees as well.. so not just bending down, bending's like that, bobbing's like that.. *(Demonstrates action).*	

Lesson example 16 Lesson 3, Rachel, lines 275-291

7.3.2 Lara

In the interview, Lara seemed to favour meaning and form to much the same degree. However, it was she who made the strongest statements of all the teachers on her readiness to intervene when students made spoken errors. How does her classroom behaviour match up with these statements? Lara's two lessons, each around 45 minutes in length, have roughly the same number of learner turns per lesson, (Lesson 4: 236; Lesson 5: 253), which together average 5.3 learner turns per minute. This is interesting in the light of a comment by one of her students, who told the researcher that students were very "active" in Lara's lessons, and happy to be so active. While learner turns with error are more frequent in Lesson 4, Lara shows a similar ratio of feedback to error in both Lesson 4 and 5, averaging 61%. This seems to match up well with her statements that it is important for teachers to offer corrective feedback, and that her adult students, far from feeling disheartened, *expect* such feedback.

Lesson no. Class / Length of lesson in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors
4. A5 – 45min	236 (5.2 / min)	80	34%	47	59%
5. A5 – 47 min	253 (5.4 / min)	54	21%	35	65%
Total	489 (5.3 / min)	134	27%	82	61%

Table 23 Frequency of feedback – Lara

211

Comparing Lara's two lessons, it could be asked why there are relatively more learner turns with error in the first one, when both lessons contain similar blocks of teacher-fronted class discussion (see outline below, Lessons 4 and 5). Other activities in the two lessons account for the different percentage of errors. On the one hand, the reading activity in Lesson 4 consists of loosely controlled small-group work (which allows students a high chance of error). On the other hand Lesson 5 includes much choral repetition of the lines of the jazz chant, which allows little chance for error.

Lesson	
4	Pre-reading: teacher-fronted class discussion of students' plans for study and work
	Reading: newspaper article *On course for a career*
5	Grammar revision: simple past vs past continuous for narratives
	Jazz chant *Personal questions* using past continuous
	Teacher-fronted class discussion of cultural appropriateness of personal questions

Table 24 Activities in Lara's lessons

While Lara's average rate of corrective feedback to error is high at 61%, it is not so different from Rachel's 56%. The real difference between teachers emerges from a comparison between the two AMEP teachers and the three ELICOS teachers, however. Both Rachel and Lara appear very much *more interventionist* in their corrective feedback to spoken errors, as will be seen below. One difference between Rachel and Lara can be observed when feedback types other than recasts are counted. As for all the teachers, the recast is the most used feedback type in Lara's two lessons (37%). What is strikingly

different about Lara's feedback, however, is the fairly frequent use of all *other feedback types* (except repetition), as the following table shows.

T2 / Lara A5 2 lessons	Total number of instances of feedback by type	Percentage of total number of instances of feedback
Recast	30	37%
Elicitation	14	17%
Clarification request	11	13%
Metalinguistic feedback	18	22%
Explicit correction	9	11%
Repetition	0	0%
Total	82	100%

Table 25 Feedback types in Lara's lessons

Lara uses the widest variety of feedback types of all the teachers, with elicitation (17%), clarification requests (13%), metalinguistic feedback (22%) and explicit correction (11%) totalling 63%. By contrast, her proportionate use of recasts is the *lowest* of all the teachers (37%, c.f. T1 43%, T3 50 %, T4 81%, T5 100%). The researcher can only guess at the reasons for these two facts. On the one hand, Lara uses several feedback types often, which is perhaps a legacy of her own learning of EFL and training in TEFL in the former USSR.   The chief difference between her and the other teachers which might explain her lesser tendency to recast their sentences is the fact that she is the only non-native speaker of English. Native speakers such as Yolande and Meg, who do not set out to *correct*, display an instinctive reaction to error when they recast all or part of their

students' utterances. Non-native speakers may not share their instinct, particularly if their own speech is marked by occasional absences such as articles. (Indeed Lara occasionally misses using articles where it is appropriate to do so).

A typical exchange between Lara and class members is as follows. In a question and answer revision of the *past continuous*, Lara checks that students know when to use the structure and how to form it using question word + auxiliary verb *was / were* + verb *–ing*. She then gives pronunciation practice of /w/, getting students to imitate the "kissing" sound she makes with her lips. Finally she sets up a substitution drill to give students controlled practice.

T	You want to know about kids the kids	*N.b. NNS teacher's self-repair*
FS	What were your kids...?	*Error – grammatical*
		(incomplete)
T	What <u>were</u>?	*Feedback - elicit*
Ss	What were your kids doing?	*Uptake - partial repair*
T	<u>at six pm yesterday</u>. Okay?	*Feedback – recast to include*
	What were your kids doing?	*time reference*
	Now ask questions, ask me the questions.. quickly	
Ss	What *(all speak together)*	*Inaudible*
T	Not all together! Just one. Fayez?	*Classroom management*
MS	What were you doing at six o'.. at six?	*Self-repair – Error - none*
T	Yesterday. At six pm yesterday.. I was cooking dinner. At six pm	*Feedback – recast with time*
	yesterday. *(Clicks fingers twice)* Next!	*reference*
	Next question!	

Lesson example 17 Lesson 5, Lara, lines 275-285

The tone of these exchanges puts the teacher in the centre of the action, with an authoritative role in determining the activity, who should speak, and giving corrective

214

feedback. This is consistent with Lara's view of the role of the teacher. It should be noted that the class in this lesson is beginning Level 5, which means that the students' English proficiency is overall not as high as that of students in other classes in this study. The directive role of the teacher is determined not only by her own attitudes, but also by class level.

7.3.3 Susanna

Susanna demonstrates a good overlap in this lesson with what she has said at interview. Not only does she "key the students in" to their listening task, but she also demonstrates her clear separation of fluency- from accuracy-based activities. The earlier stages of Susanna's lesson establish the context for the listening task, and there is a high frequency of learner turns in these stages which results in an average of 4.1 learner turns per minute overall. Many turns are monosyllabic or so short that there is little potential for error. The rate of error (26%) is consistent with the rate in other lessons, (31 % in Rachel's lessons, 27 % in Lara's lessons).

This teacher offers less corrective feedback (37%) in this lesson than either of the AMEP teachers do (T1:56%, T2:61%), however, as we shall see below, the other two ELICOS teachers offer even less.

Lesson no. Class / Length of lesson in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors
6. E5 - *45 min.*	186 *(4.1 / min)*	49	26%	18	37%

Table 26 Frequency of feedback, Susanna

216

Most of Susanna's feedback on spoken errors takes part in the teacher-led discussion on phobias in the first stage of the lesson. As the lesson summary shows, small group work and the listening activity follow. In small group work the teacher can only be in one place at a time and feedback is restricted to the group at hand; the purpose of such work is generally meaning /fluency-focused. The listening task involved students in selecting the most appropriate answer to a number of questions. They were reading four short sentences on a printed handout sheet as they listened, and marking the sentence which best conveyed the meaning of the taped lecture. During the feedback activity after the lecture, the students had to call out the letter (for example *a*) beside the correct sentence.

Lesson

6   Vocabulary presentation: *Phobias*
     Speaking task – small group surveys of students' phobias
     Listening to taped lecture and answering multiple choice written questions

Table 27 Activities in Susanna's lesson

The types of corrective feedback in this lesson, primarily recasts (50%) and clarification requests (22%) are consistent with the meaning / fluency focus of the whole lesson.

217

T3 / Susanna E6 1 lesson	Total number of instances of feedback by type	Percentage of total number of instances of feedback
Recast	18	50%
Elicitation	3	8%
Clarification request	8	22%
Metalinguistic feedback	2	5.5%
Explicit correction	2	5.5%
Repetition	3	8%
Total	36	100%

Table 28 Feedback types in Susanna's lesson

The teacher's least used feedback types in this lesson are metalinguistic and explicit. Again, this is consistent with her distinction between accuracy- or fluency-focused activities. This is not an accuracy–focused lesson and metalinguistic and / or explicit feedback are not to be expected. Of all the teachers, she makes most use of repetition (8%). An example of Susanna's interactive style in the early stages of the lesson follows.

T	Now I'm interested in.. how do they make you feel? Imagine, this woman has a spider on her hand, imagine you had this spider on your hand.	
Ss	*(in disgust)* Aah!	
T	How do you feel?	
FS	It makes me.. <u>allergy</u>?	*Error - grammatical*
T	<u>Allergic</u>?	*Feedback - recast*
FS	Yeah.	*Needs repair - acknowledge*

T	Oh, so you get.. itchy?	*Feedback – clarification request*
FS	Yeah I just feel…	*Error – lexis (item missing)*
T	How do you feel, sick?	*Feedback – clarification request*
FS	Yeah.	*Needs repair - acknowledge*
T	Ah okay so you feel sick *(writes allergic on board).* Sick how? In the stomach?	*Feedback 1 – recast (no chance for learner to respond)* *Feedback 2 – clarification request*
FS	No, just my skin.	*Error - grammatical*
T	Oh, really? You're allergic! Ah interesting. Remember allergy.	*Feedback – recast (no chance for learner to respond)*

Lesson example 18 Lesson 6, Susanna, lines 147-159

7.3.4 Yolande

The first of Yolande's two lessons reflects with pristine clarity two of her expressed concerns, namely to allow students the comfort and freedom to express themselves in L2, and not to stop their fluency. There is an exceptionally high frequency of learner turns per minute in Lesson 7 (15.2/minute), with a very low frequency of teacher turns with corrective feedback (7.4% of total learner errors), as the following table shows.

Lesson no. Class / Length of lesson in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors
7. E6 - 36 min.	548 (15.2 / min)	175	32%	13	7.4%
8. E6 - 47 min.	205 (4.4 / min)	44	21.5%	13	29.5%
Total	753	219	29.1%	26	11.9%

Table 29 Frequency of feedback, Yolande

Lesson 8 is less extreme, with a frequency rate of 4.4 learner turns per minute, and a higher proportion (29.5%) of learner errors receiving some form of corrective feedback. The activities of the lesson help to explain the differences between the two lessons. In Lesson 7, the teacher's role is predominantly a management one. Yolande starts the class by checking which students are present or absent, then explains the purpose of the speaking activity, which is to *make decisions* and to *justify* them. Students need to reach

consensus in each small discussion group and explain which six individuals should be transported to the only nuclear radiation free island on the planet, in order to build a new civilization. At the time of the lesson, the students responded to their task with excitement and interest, and most of the transcript of the lesson consists of the discussion in one of the groups. The teacher checks that students are on task, and asks the groups to report on their decisions, giving reasons. It is in this final reporting stage that some corrective feedback occurs (see example below). In Lesson 8, despite more teacher-led discussion than in the previous lesson, Yolande maintains a primary focus on *meaning*, with little attention to students' use of vocabulary and grammar.

Lesson	
7	Small group discussion: *Which 6 people should we save for a post-nuclear society?*
8	Pre-listening: teacher fronted discussion about body language
	Listening to taped lecture on *Kinesics*

Table 30 Activities in Yolande's lessons

It is noticeable in the table below that this teacher's far and away most used feedback type is the recast (81%), with minimal use of other feedback types. No use is made of metalinguistic feedback or repetition. Why is there such a lack of variety of feedback types here, and why is Yolande's use of corrective feedback so infrequent?

221

T4 / Yolande E6 2 lessons	Total number of instances of feedback by type	Percentage of total number of instances of feedback
Recast	22	81%
Elicitation	2	7.5%
Clarification request	2	7.5%
Metalinguistic feedback	0	0%
Explicit correction	1	4%
Repetition	0	0%
Total	27	100%

Table 31 Feedback types in Yolande's lessons

The first answer lies no doubt in the focus of the lessons. Both Lessons 7 and 8 focus on fluency rather than accuracy. Yolande made statements about her own discomfort as a learner and her concern to ensure the comfort of her students. These considerations, she said, push her not to intervene when students are trying to express themselves. The second answer may lie in the length of Yolande's experience as a teacher of English as a *second* or *foreign* language. Teaching international students was still an *adventure* for her at the time of interview, albeit an exhilarating one. Perhaps her relatively short experience in the L2 classroom (one year) explains the fact that in the interview Yolande talks little about language teaching as such, and more about establishing a warm affective atmosphere in the language classroom. It might be that Yolande has not had time to develop a variety of feedback strategies, nor to consider the usefulness of corrective feedback.

In the following extract from Lesson 8, Yolande has just introduced the term *non-verbal communication*, which is a term used in the lecture the students are about to hear on tape. Here she *negotiates the meaning* of this term in a context which is relevant to the learners' own experience. Recasts in this extract support the negotiation of meaning; their function here is surely to supply *positive evidence* rather than *negative evidence*.

T	There are a lot of ways we communicate non-verbally. Yesterday when you were giving your presentations... What happened before you gave your presentations?	
FS	Nervous	*Error - grammatical*
T	You became very nervous and when you became nervous.. what things happened?	*Feedback - recast*
MS1	[Forgot	*[Error - grammatical*
MS2	[Forgot it	*[Error - grammatical*
T	You forgot it! *(laughter)* What else happened?	*Feedback - recast*
FS	Wet hands	*Error - grammatical*
T	The palms of your hands started to sweat	*Feedback - recast*
MS	Sweat	*Uptake - repetition*
FS	And what about your heartbeat?	*No error*
MS	??	
T	Your heartbeat? Does it go down or go up?	
Ss	Go up *(laughter)*	*Error - grammatical*
MS	That means...?	*No error (question)*
T	Your speech rate. What happens when you're nervous? We have to be careful about this in the presentation.	*Feedback – ignores Ss' error. Doesn't hear male student's question, or ignores it.*
FS	Faster	*Error - grammatical*
T	Yes you start to speak really quickly and if you're very very nervous.. it just all runs into one long..	*Feedback - recast*
MS	*[Laughs noisily*	

223

T	[?? And no-one can understand	
	Your posture? Can become very stiff..	
FS	Tension .	*Error - grammatical*
T	And rigid. You know if you're standing like that *(laughter)*	*Doesn't hear FS, OR*
	it's not really good, giving a speech! *(Laughter)*	*Feedback - ignores*

Lesson example 19 Lesson 8, Yolande, lines 302-328

This extract shows how Yolande leads the students from merely describing physical symptoms of their feelings, towards a more precise understanding of non-verbal signals which may work against the verbal communication of their ideas in a class presentation. The comfort she strives to develop in the classroom is apparent here, with students responding with howls of delight to her mime of the "nervous presenter". It is clear that the focus of the lesson at this point is meaning / fluency. The teacher frequently recasts the monosyllabic answers of the students, expanding the answers in a meaningful way, reminiscent of the expansion by caretakers of two and three word utterances of young children. It is perhaps no coincidence that Yolande has already raised several children of her own.

7.3.5 Meg

Like Yolande, Meg expressed some preference for a *focus on meaning* at her interview.
She expressed a preference not to intervene *during* spoken activities, but was in favour of
offering corrective feedback *after* her students had tried to speak in L2. She said she
often couches feedback in a group correction activity to save the face of an individual
student who has made errors. Are these attitudes consistent with her behaviour in the two
lessons observed for this study? Of all five teachers, Meg was the teacher who gave least
corrective feedback, averaging feedback to only 7% of learner turns with error.

Lesson no. Class / Length of lesson in minutes	Total no. of learner turns	Learner turns with error or needs-repair	% of total learner turns	Teacher turns with feedback	% of total errors)
9. E6 - 47 min.	136 (2.9 / min)	36	27%	1	3%
10. E6 - 67 min.	492 (7.3 / min)	93	19%	8	9%
Total	**628** (**5.5 / min**)	129	21%	9	7%

Table 32 Frequency of feedback, Meg

It may seem from the above table that in Lesson 9, students made infrequent turns (2.9
per minute), especially when compared with Lesson 10. This low rate of learner turns is
in fact due to the fact that students were rehearsing their oral presentations in small

groups during this lesson. This meant that each of the few students who rehearsed had a *long turn* of five minutes or more. These turns were largely uninterrupted either by the teacher or by other students.

Lesson	
9	Teacher instructions. Rehearsal of three oral presentations. Student's assessed presentation
10	Brainstorm: Language of *giving an opinion, agreeing, disagreeing* Pronunciation practice of new phrases. Speaking task: *Who should have the heart transplant?*

Table 33 Activities in Meg's lessons

In the five-minute oral presentations in Lesson 9, students had to introduce some aspect of their home country to their audience. Regarding feedback, it is possible that the teacher was making notes about learner errors during the rehearsal stage of the students' oral presentations. This would be consistent with what Meg stated at interview, but it was not obvious to the researcher that this in fact happened. For example one presentation, by Junko, was *rehearsed* then later *presented* (for assessment) in the same lesson, without any apparent feedback being offered at rehearsal stage. At the beginning of the activity, Meg made it clear to the class that the rehearsal had three aims. These were to give the speaker *practice*, to give listeners the responsibility of giving *feedback* according to criteria given on a printed handout *(Appendix Q)*, and to fine-tune the *timing* of the talk. The criteria for ratings, which were to be made while the students listened, were grouped under the headings *Presentation, Structure[14], Content, Delivery, Language* and *Timing.*

[14] Structure included the following: clear statement of theme in introduction, use of signposting, conclusion.

226

Only the heading *Language* included reference to focus on forms with *grammatical features* and *choice of vocabulary*. The aim of the rehearsal was thus only minimally to improve the expression or grammar of the text. Errors made by Junko at rehearsal stage were not picked up. While the assessed version is different from the text in the rehearsal, changes appear to result from the pressure of performance rather than from feedback on choice of language, as the following extract shows.

Rehearsal	*Assessed version*
Just in case.. ah in case some of you don't know me.. My name is Junko Kita and I'm from Japan as exchange student between my university and this one. My presentation today will be about my university, which is Ryukoku University in Japan. My talk today will be about five minutes long... *Well firstly I'd like to talk about history.. of my university.* My university.. name is Ryukoku University well which it which means.. it's Chinese character which means it means Dragon Canyon. This name come from Buddhist. Okay.. *this university is one of the oldest universities in Japan.* It was founded founded in 1639.. for the purpose of engaging young men in the Buddhist.. spirit. Actually its origin is Ryukoku Buddhism priest or monk..	Hi! Good afternoon everybody. My name is Junko and today I would like to talk about my university in Japan. And my university's name is Ryukoku University.. which means.. Dragon Canyon in Buddhism. *Well.. I'd like to talk first.. history of my university. It was.. one of oldest university.. in Japan* and was founded in 1639 as a monk stu.. as a monk school in ah in Buddhism.
lines 168-178	*lines 446-450*

Lesson example 20 Lesson 9, Meg

Junko ran out of time in the rehearsal and has shortened her text the second time around. Her nervousness shows in the second, shortened version. Inaccuracies in the first version, such as omission of the article in " *history* of my university" are not repaired. In fact an article included in the rehearsal version "one of *the oldest* universities" disappears in the second version, "one of *oldest* university", along with plural -*s*.

As the table below shows, Meg differs from all the other teachers in the study, not only in the infrequency of her corrective feedback. Unlike the other teachers, Meg recast learners' utterances only 22% of the times that she did respond to learners' spoken errors. The most used feedback type in her two lessons was *explicit* correction (44%).

T5 / Meg E6 2 lessons	Total number of instances of feedback by type	Percentage of total number of instances of feedback
Recast	2	22%
Elicitation	0	0%
Clarification request	0	0%
Metalinguistic feedback	1	11%
Explicit correction	4	44%
Repetition	2	22%
Total	9	100%

Table 34 Feedback types in Meg's lessons

It should be noted here that only four instances of explicit correction can be found in the text of Lesson 10, and these are in three cases in response to phonological errors. The following extract shows one of these cases. Student have just completed a "brainstorm"

in small groups, during which they have compiled a list of expressions used in *giving opinions*, *agreeing*, and *disagreeing*. The teacher now supplies her own list of such expressions, asking the learners, in the same groups, to add any new expressions to the list they have just compiled. She moves around the room, offering various comments, including rare corrective feedback.

MS1	You can say that again.	*Error – phonological (sentence stress)*
T	You can say <u>that</u> again. For emphasis	*Feedback – recast + metalinguistic = explicit*
FS	*(quietly)* You can say <u>that</u> again	*Uptake - repair - peer repeat*
MS1	You can say <u>that</u> again	*Uptake - repair - repeat*
MS2	No. Absolutely no	*Error - grammatical (No T feedback follows)*
MS1	No	*No error*

Lesson example 21 Lesson 10, Meg, lines 279-284

7.3.6   Summary of correspondences

The detailed comparison reveals a good match overall for the teachers in the international student classes, (ELICOS). These three teachers, (T3-T5) tend towards a moderate position in the two dimensions. While Yolande and Meg emphasize meaning over form, Susanna comments that there are times when exact structures need to be focused on. Susanna and Meg take a middle position between non-intervention and intervention, while Yolande seems more inclined *not* to intervene. Of the three teachers, Susanna offers the most frequent and varied types of corrective feedback. Yolande offers very

little. While it is true that Meg offers even less, this is consistent with her preference not to interrupt the students while they are speaking. What is not clear is whether she *does* give corrective feedback later. During the lessons observed she could only have made very surreptitious note of students' errors made by the students. Any follow-up of these errors was not recorded in the data for the study.

There is less of a correspondence between what the immigrant (AMEP) teachers, (T1-T2) say and do. Although Rachel emphasizes success and confidence' building through meaningful communication, one of her three lessons at least is based exclusively on forms. These forms are presented in exercises at sentence level, with little or no attempt to contextualize them. (To be fair, the other two lessons are more meaning-based. They develop lexical knowledge along with listening and speaking skills respectively). Furthermore, Rachel intervenes far more often than one would expect from what she says. As teacher and as native speaker, it is she who is the final arbitrator on whether a sentence is accurate or not. After all, the target language itself is not *open ended*, even if students come up with a range of correct answers to the same question. According to the situation then, she offers fairly frequent corrective feedback in a variety of ways. The contrast between Rachel and Lara is more apparent in what they *say* than what they *do*. Lara's lessons show some balance between form and meaning, as she says she strives for. Her strong declarations about intervention are to some extent borne out, since she is the teacher with the highest frequency of corrective feedback. Both AMEP teachers show a surprisingly similar rate of frequency of corrective feedback in their lessons.

7.4   Conclusion

What emerges from the data is a complex picture of individual teacher identities which have been formed by factors including personal experience, culture, and teacher training, both general and specific. During a probing interview, teachers express attitudes which predict to a large extent the patterns of error correction in their lessons. For example, two NS teachers who emphasize the importance of opportunities in the classroom for students to express themselves fluently in a supportive environment are reluctant to intervene during spoken activities. By contrast, a NNS teacher emphasizes the need for students to use correct language and includes drills in speaking activities, even at upper intermediate level. She responds frequently to learner errors using a wide range of types of corrective feedback.   A fourth teacher, bilingual but schooled in Australia, expresses precisely her sense of the dilemma of balancing the need for correctness with the need to let learners use the second language without fear. Her classroom practice reflects this awareness and shows balance. Finally, a NS teacher expresses an attitude similar to the other two NS teachers, which is a desire to foster fluency in a supportive environment, in fact gives rather frequent corrective feedback in a range of ways.

The data show that the attitudes of individual teachers to corrective feedback match their practice to a large extent. Because their attitudes differ, the range of frequency and types of feedback is extensive. This has implications for teacher education which are discussed in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8

Summary of findings and conclusions

In this chapter the findings of the study are summarized and issues arising from the findings are discussed. The first section of Chapter 8 draws together findings in the data which address the six research questions. These are compared with those of the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The relationship of the study findings to the Interaction Hypothesis is then discussed. Issues which emerge from the data are presented in Section 8.4. The significance of the study and recommendations for teacher education courses and for further research are made in the final sections of the chapter.

8.1   Findings

In this section the findings relating to the six research questions are drawn together from the data reported on in Chapters 5 to 7. Five of these research questions relate to teacher practice as it was documented in the classroom. The sixth question compares the practice of teachers with the attitudes they expressed at interview.

8.1.1   Research Question 1:

With what frequency do teachers give corrective feedback to students' spoken errors?

Instances of both explicit and implicit feedback were totalled for each teacher and are expressed as a percentage of the number of errors of form made by learners in their

lessons. The *group of teachers* in the study gave corrective feedback to 36 %, on average, of all learner turns with error. As a subgroup, the two teachers in the Adult Multicultural Education Program (AMEP) gave corrective feedback more frequently than did the subgroup of three teachers in the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS), see *Table 6*). Of all the five teachers it is however an ELICOS teacher, T3, who shows the highest rate of corrective feedback to learner errors (73 %).

A striking finding of the study is the wide variation between *individual teachers* in their rate of corrective feedback to students' spoken errors. In descending order of frequency were Teacher 3 with the highest percentage of corrective feedback (73 %), Teacher 2 with 61 %, Teacher 1 with 56 %, and Teacher 4 with 12 %, while Teacher 5 had the lowest percentage (7 %) (see *Table 6*). In relation to the Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1996), *negative evidence clearly exists* in the data.

8.1.2 Research Question 2:

What kinds of corrective feedback do teachers give?

Instances of corrective feedback were grouped according to six categories. As a group, the five teachers used the *recast* much more often than any other kind of corrective feedback, with a total of 45 % of all feedback (see *Table 9*). In descending order of use, the group offered *explicit correction* (16 %), *metalinguistic feedback* (14 %), *elicitation* (12 %) and *clarification requests* (10 %) of the time. The feedback type least used by the

233

group of teachers was *repetition*, which was used for only 3 % of all corrective feedback. Individual teacher patterns of use are reported on in detail in Chapter 7 and further referred to below in the answer to *Research Question 5*.

8.1.3 Research Question 3:

To what extent do learners notice corrective feedback?

It is not possible to monitor all the ways in which learners notice corrective feedback, since noticing is a mental activity. One indication of noticing, however, is learner *uptake* of corrective feedback. Uptake includes learner responses which either *repair*, or make an unsuccessful attempt to repair, the original error. The latter responses are categorized as *uptake which needs repair*. They include acknowledgement of feedback, different error, same error, hesitation, off-target and partial repair.

A total of 269 instances of corrective feedback by teachers were found in the data (see *Table 6*). Across the ten lessons, 161 instances of corrective feedback (60 %) were followed by some form of uptake (see *Table 11*). 108 instances (40 %) of feedback were ignored by learners.

8.1.4 Research Question 4:

To what extent do learners repair errors immediately after receiving feedback?

While the percentage of feedback followed by some form of uptake is high, this is not so for the percentage of feedback followed by *repair*. Repair includes learners' repetition of

234

the corrected form and incorporation of the corrected form into their subsequent utterance. Learners either repair their *own* errors *(self repair)*, or the errors of their peers *(peer repair)*.

On average, learners repair 16 % of all instance of corrective feedback given by teachers in the data (see *Table 11*). This is much less than the percentage of feedback which they appear to ignore (40%) and much less than the percentage of feedback which they attempt, unsuccessfully, to repair (44%).

When learners in the study repair 16 % of errors for which they have received corrective feedback, this demonstrates that *negative evidence is used* (Long 1996). This does not imply that learner interlanguage has developed to the point where the same error will not occur again.

8.1.5   Research Question 5:

To what extent do teachers vary in their patterns of corrective feedback?

Individual teachers vary considerably in their overall frequency of corrective feedback, as has been noted above in 8.1. Frequency of feedback is expressed as a percentage of the number of instances of learner error. It ranges from 73% in the case of Susanna to 7 % in the case of Meg.

Individual teachers vary also in the *kinds* of corrective feedback they give (see *Table 9*). . Three of the teachers (Rachel, Lara and Susanna) use a variety of types of corrective feedback, while two of the teachers (Yolande and Meg) use little variety.

Four out of five teachers in the study show a clear preference for the use of recasts. This is particularly true of Yolande, who uses recasts almost exclusively (85 % of all the corrective feedback she gives).

The teacher who uses the widest spread of a variety of feedback types is Lara (see *Table 9*). Rachel and Susanna uses all types of corrective feedback to some degree, but recasts are dominant (43 % and 50 % of all feedback types respectively).

Recasts are even more obviously dominant (81 %) in the small number of instances of corrective feedback (27) for Yolande. Although Meg uses a wider spread of feedback types by comparison with Yolande, the total number is so small ($n = 9$) that this seems insignificant.

8.1.6   Research Question 6:

Are teachers' patterns of corrective feedback predictable from their attitudes to second language learning and teaching?

The findings for Research Question 6 can be summarized in two dimensions, *frequency* and *types* of frequency of corrective feedback. Frequency is discussed in the following section.

8.1.6.1 Predictability: frequency of corrective feedback

A high degree of predictability was found in the *frequency* of corrective feedback for four of the teachers. There was a lesser degree of predictability for one teacher, Rachel. For

all other teachers, frequency of corrective feedback was predictable from attitudes they expressed towards second language learning and teaching (see Section 7.3.6).

All three ELICOS teachers express a common goal as second language teachers, which is to create opportunities for students to use L2 in fluency-based speaking activities. All express awareness of the affective factors involved in second language acquisition and of the need to provide a supportive learning environment. Their attitudes to correction reflect this. In different phrases they express the belief that intervention in speaking activities will *interrupt the flow* (Susanna), *stop the fluency* (Yolande) and be *disruptive* and *embarrassing* (Meg). In the case of the last two teachers, this translates into a very low rate of corrective feedback in their lessons (to only 11.9 % and 7 % of learner errors respectively).

Susanna's attitude is more differentiated and this is reflected in the much higher rate of corrective feedback (73 %) in her lesson. Of all five teachers, Susanna expresses most clearly the relationship between the purpose of an activity or of a stage in the lesson and teacher's corrective feedback (c.f. Kasper (1985)). She reports that she lets the students know what they should expect in this regard:

> But I say to them if I'm asking you for accuracy I'll tell you., and then I'll correct your mistakes. If it's a discussion I'm not going to correct every mistake, because then you wouldn't be speaking, you wouldn't get a chance to speak. *(Interview Susanna, ll.458-461)*

Thus Susanna makes it clear that she gives more frequent corrective feedback in an accuracy-focussed activity than a fluency-focussed activity.

237

The two AMEP teachers express sharply contrasting attitudes to error correction. Of the two, Rachel's attitude is not very predictive of her classroom practice, while Lara's attitude predicts her classroom practice quite well. Rachel expresses the desire to ensure student success by setting attainable goals, and in the process, to prevent errors occurring. This attitude does not predict the fairly high frequency of corrective feedback found in her lessons (an average of 56 %). Lara on the other hand is comfortable with the idea of frequent correction, and dismisses the idea that students might find it intrusive. She argues that students are used to correction and expect it. This attitude predicts her patterns of corrective feedback quite well. In comparison with all but one of the other teachers, Lara gives corrective feedback most frequently, averaging a rate of 61 % in relation to the number of student turns with error.

8.1.6.2 Predictability: types of corrective feedback

It might be assumed that teachers who express concern about the inhibitory effect of correction on the learner will make more use of implicit feedback types, particularly the recast. This appears to be particularly true in the case of Yolande, whose attitude was assessed as non-interventionist to the second highest degree. Her preference for recasts is clear (85 % of all corrective feedback). To a lesser degree it is also true of Rachel. Nearly half of her feedback is in the form of recasts. It is she who expressed a strong non-interventionist position in her statement regarding the prevention of errors.

It is interesting to note that the three teachers with most experience of teaching a second language (Rachel, Lara and Susanna) use a greater variety of types of corrective feedback (see *Table 9*). Of these three, it is the teacher with the longest experience of foreign language teaching (Lara) who uses the widest range of feedback types. By contrast, the teacher with the least experience of teaching a second language (Yolande) uses a restricted range. Although Meg uses a wider spread of feedback types by comparison with Yolande, the total number is so small (nine instances of feedback) that this difference is unlikely to be important.

8.2 A comparison of results with those of Lyster and Ranta (1997)

The procedures and categories developed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) have been followed as faithfully as possible in the present study in order to allow a comparison of results. The total number of learner turns and the total number of learner turns with error are comparable (see *Table 8*). As a group the teachers in the present study show both similarities and differences to the group of four teachers in the Canadian study. The most striking similarities are:

- the dominance of the recast as the most used feedback type

- the low rate of learner uptake following the recast (see *Table 12*).

The most striking difference is the lower frequency of corrective feedback in the cohort of teachers in this study compared with that of the four teachers in the Canadian study (see *Table 10*). As a group, the teachers in the present study give corrective feedback to only 36 % of learner turns with errors. In comparison, the teachers in the Canadian study

give a much higher rate of feedback to error (62 %).   The possible reasons for this difference are explored below.

8.3   How the results relate to the Interaction Hypothesis

The Interaction Hypothesis, which is the theoretical framework for the study, states that:

> negotiation for meaning, and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways (Long 1996:452).

The second language teaching context in the study is teaching English as a second language to adults in Australia.   The data in this context show instances of learners triggering input in the form of interactional adjustments by teachers, specifically, corrective feedback.   Corrective feedback in the data includes both explicit and implicit feedback, and implicit feedback in the form of recasts is the kind most commonly found. The teachers in the study include both native speakers of English and a more competent interlocutor.   The data also show that learners attend selectively to corrective feedback, since in 60% of instances they indeed do show some degree of uptake.   In the data, learners respond to the interactional adjustments made by teachers with output that in 16% of cases shows some form of repair. This is a productive response.

The revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) incorporates the idea of *noticing* in selective attention.   The high percentage of uptake in the data   (60%) is evidence of noticing. If noticing is the step which allows storage in short term memory,

as Schmidt (1990) proposes, the corrective feedback given by teachers is *usable*. While the 42 instances of repair in the data are equal to only 16% of 269 instances of corrective feedback given by teachers, this 16 % provides evidence that some teacher feedback is indeed *used*.

8.4   Implications of findings

A number of issues and further questions arise from the findings of the study, which are discussed in this section under separate subheadings.

8.4.1   Reasons for relatively low frequency of corrective feedback

How can the difference in frequency of corrective feedback in the two studies be explained? As has been stated, the two studies share some common variables, such as such as the approximate number of learner turns overall, the number of learner turns with error, and so on (*Table 8*).

The level of learner proficiency is a possible reason for the difference in frequency of corrective feedback. It is difficult to compare levels of proficiency among the two student groups, since no common assessment tools have been used to establish this.   A greater uniformity of level can be assumed in the Canadian immersion data, since learners share English as their common language, are all aged around eleven years of age and have been instructed intensively in French as a foreign or second language for the same period of time.   The learners in this study vary considerably in first language, are

adults of various ages and have very diverse backgrounds in terms of first language and indeed literacy learning experiences *(Table 4)*. If it could be established that the level of language proficiency of the learners in the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) was lower than that of the learners in this study, this might contribute to an explanation of why corrective feedback is more frequent.

As the previous paragraph shows, an obvious difference between the two populations of the studies is in the age of the learners. While Lyster and Ranta (1997) studied children in grades four to six, this study focuses on adult learners. It is possible that there is an issue of face saving in the case of adult learners, in that teachers are more sensitive to the feelings of embarrassment that adult learners may experience when corrected. This is certainly raised as an issue by Meg, who talks about correction *demeaning* the learners. Teachers of children may be less concerned about embarrassing the learners. This argument is disputed however by Lara, who argues that adult learners need correction to survive in the society of the target language, that language instruction is "not extra activities for elderly people". She argues also that the learners have a cultural expectation of correction, an argument which will be taken up below.

A possible difference between the two sets of data could lie in the range of activities in the lessons. Kasper (1985) showed that corrective feedback is more frequent in the language focused stage of the lesson than in the content focused stage. A detailed comparison has not been made here of the degree to which lesson stages are focused on language or on content in the two corrective feedback studies. This affects focus on

242

accuracy and on fluency, on form and on meaning. However as far as this is possible to judge from the information given, the Canadian language arts lessons include a similarly extensive range of activities to those in the Australian intensive language programs.

Further to the above point, differences in activity types have implications for the way students group in class. In a teacher-fronted class, the role of the teacher is dominant and corrective feedback is more likely to occur. When students complete tasks in pairs or in small groups, however, the role of the teacher is less dominant, sometimes marginal. This is another element which could be examined further in explaining the difference in levels of feedback in the two studies.

A further variable to be considered is the teacher variable. The attitudes to second language learning and teaching of teachers in this study were probed at some depth. Much more information is available about teachers' personal experience, teacher training and cultural background in this study than about teachers in the Canadian study (Lyster and Ranta 1997). These factors relate clearly to differences of teachers' attitudes to the relative importance of meaning and form. These attitudes, on the whole, match well with individual teachers' patterns of corrective feedback.

How these factors, namely teacher experience of language learning, teacher training and teaching experience and teachers' cultural background, have an impact on attitudes to corrective feedback and / or teacher practice is, however, far from simple. The following

sections explore the relationship of these factors to teacher attitudes as they appear in the data.

8.4.2 The effect of teachers' experience as second language learners

The personal experience of learning a second or foreign language is reflected in the attitudes of different teachers in the study. Affective factors in instructed or natural settings are mentioned as important by all the teachers except Lara. Rachel was terrified by the flick of the finger of her Spanish teacher at university, which indicated that she was to answer a question for which she did not feel ready. Susanna on the other hand has fond memories of conversation in the Spanish course at her university, where learner fluency was helped along by wine, cheese and good company. This teacher is very aware of the inhibition learners may feel when corrected and does not want them to *clam up* or to *freeze up*. Yolande cried with frustration when she could not express herself in French in New Caledonia, where she was living. Meg does not wish to *embarrass* or *demean* her adult students.

8.4.3 The effect of teachers' cultural identity

Three out of five teachers in the study are English speakers from birth, all of whom identify as members of "mainstream" Anglo-Celtic Australian society. These are Rachel, Yolande and Meg. These are the teachers who express most reservations about giving corrective feedback. A possible interpretation of this reservation is "Anglo"

teachers in this interpretation have an attitude of *noblesse oblige*, in other words, they feel that the privilege of their situation imposes an obligation to render assistance. At interview these three teachers express appreciation of the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students and show sensitivity to their role as gatekeepers to mainstream society. It is possible they feel an obligation as empowered citizens to be *gentle* with potentially less powerful individuals, such as immigrants and international student visitors to Australia.

Mainstream Australian society was and arguably still is a predominantly monolinguistic, monocultural society. English language is a conduit to power and influence. As the child of Italian immigrants, Susanna is the only one of the five teachers in the study who was forced to push through the English language barrier as a child. At the age of five she began her bilingual and bicultural existence in Australia. It appears no coincidence that it is she who expresses the *pleasure* of communicating in L2.

> *I remember when I learnt Spanish, every Wednesday we used to have wine and cheese,*
> *now red wine, we used to be pretty much* (laughs) *pretty tipsy by the time we got into*
> *conversation class ... but hell we spoke!*
>
> Interview, Susanna 1.614 ff.

In her cultural expectation of error correction, Lara stands in stark contrast to the rest of this group of five teachers. Lara grew up in a bilingual society (Russian/Moldavian) and from early years attended a specialist English foreign language school. Later she taught in the same kind of school. She describes the rigorous expectations of the school that students would perform at a high level, and how non-achieving students were firmly

245

counselled out of the program. As a survivor of the elite programs of Communist Russian society, she is hard-headed about the job she has to do in the classroom, particularly in relation to helping students survive linguistically and socially. She is compassionate, she identifies with her students as a fellow migrant, but she is impatient with the idea that corrective feedback inhibits the learner.

> *Being from second language background, well from different.. from the countries that we are dealing with now... I know that this is what they are ready for. ...For them in their cultures it's absolutely normal.. that's what they expect.*

<div align="right">Interview, Lara, 1. 484ff.</div>

8.4.4 The effect of teacher training

Another factor of difference among the teachers is the kind of language teacher training undertaken. The three ELICOS teachers all completed the same TEFL training course, the RSA. (This course is referred to as the "RSA" because it is still widely known as the "RSA" to ELICOS teachers in Australia.[15]) Moreover, at the time of interview, the training was recent in all three cases. The distinction between accuracy and fluency is paramount in this training course. This fact is known to the researcher from two courses of RSA training undertaken in the United Kingdom in the 1980s. The training emphasizes that the appropriateness of corrective feedback depends on the central goal of an activity, and whether this is accuracy or fluency.

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[15] I am grateful for confirmation of this point to Ruth Rosen, Monash University English Language Centre. (Personal communication, November 1, 2001).

It seems no coincidence that having completed RSA training in recent years, all three ELICOS teachers are able to articulate the dilemma of when and how to correct in a way that matches their classroom practice. They do not respond to the dilemma in identical ways, however. While Susanna has taken the principle of identifying accuracy vs. fluency goals to heart, Yolande seems to have listened above all to the argument against inhibiting the learner by correction. Meg aims for a balance between form and meaning, but finds correction intrusive and avoids doing it "on the spot". What is common to these three teachers is that their attitudes have been sharpened in response to a "party line" on the distinction between accuracy and fluency, intervening and not intervening when students are talking.

In the case of Lara, two kinds of training overlap, the training in Russia and in Australia. Her years of study and of teaching in Russia seem to be the major influence in the formation of her attitudes to second language teaching and learning, possibly because they were longer overall (more than fifteen years) than her five years of study and teaching in Australia. Lara expresses comfort with the idea of frequent correction, and dismisses the idea that learners might find it intrusive. She argues that students "in their cultures" are used to correction and expect it.

8.4.5   Reasons for differences in predictability of practice from attitudes

Individual teachers vary in the degree to which their classroom practice can be predicted by the attitudes they express, as is shown in Section 8.1.6 above. Just as a number of

elements contribute to the formation of attitudes, it is likely that these elements contribute also to the match or mismatch of attitudes and practice. Teacher training is perhaps the strongest of these elements. All three ELICOS teachers were trained in the RSA and show awareness of the issue of accuracy versus fluency, and the implications that the issue has for when and how to correct. Their attitudes match closely with their practice. When teacher training develops clear expectations of teachers regarding their role in the classroom, and in particular their role in giving corrective feedback, the match of attitude to practice is close. The corollary of this is that if training omits or downplays the issue of correction, there is more chance of a mismatch of attitude and practice. Rachel's teacher training was distant in her memory and there was no clear recall of the approach taken to language teaching in general. No mention was made of advice regarding corrective feedback. There was a degree of mismatch of attitudes to practice in her case.

Culture is also likely to be a factor in whether attitudes match practice. Lara's attitude predicts her patterns of corrective feedback quite well. From what she says, the cultural expectation of teachers giving corrective feedback was unquestioned in Russia when she was there. She believes this to be true equally true in the cultures of countries such as Korea, China, Ethiopia and Iraq, where her students come from. Learner expectation was explored in the interviews with key informants, but not reported on in this study. Learners confirmed in a general way that corrective feedback was part of the teacher's job and something they expected (see *Appendix H*). These data have not been examined in detail in the study, since the focus is on the attitudes and practice of teachers.

8.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the significance of the study and its implications for research and practice are presented below.

8.5.1 Significance of the study

The study is based on data collected from and about teachers in their daily lives teaching English as a second language to adult learners in Australia. It supports the revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) in showing that corrective feedback exists in usable form in instructed settings, and that learners do make use of it.

The study is based on the model of error treatment proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The study also emulates as faithfully as possible the methodology of the study of corrective feedback by these authors. This allows comparison of the results of the two studies. The key difference that emerges in the data for this study is much lower frequency of corrective feedback. The key similarity is that types of feedback in this study exist in similar proportions to those in the immersion study. The role of the recast as most commonly used corrective feedback form is confirmed.

8.5.2 Implications for future research

The differences in findings between this study and the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) set an agenda for future research. These may include further investigation of the

conditions under which teachers offer corrective feedback more frequently and in different ways. The differences in level, age, educational and cultural background of learners all play a role in their ability to "trigger interactional adjustments" in the form of corrective feedback.

On the basis of this study however, it is the differences in teachers' background and experience which particularly warrant further investigation. In this study it has been found that:

- teachers' attitudes are mostly predictive of their classroom practice
- teachers' background and experience can be related to their attitudes.

It is therefore of interest to find out more about the attitudes of teachers to questions of interest in SLA theory, and to study the implications of these for their classroom practice.

One issue of interest to researchers in SLA theory is the role of the recast in providing negative evidence. As has been explained in Chapter 2, the argument for the role of the environment in second language acquisition in instructed settings depends on the importance of input. Negative evidence is one form of input. Recasts are seen as both positive and negative evidence, since they may simultaneously model language and give corrective feedback. All recasts found in the data for this study have been categorized as corrective feedback and analysis of frequency and types of feedback are based on this categorization. A valuable distinction has been recently made between corrective and interactional functions of recasts (Nicholas, Lightbown and Spada 2001). Data for the present study were analyzed before this distinction was considered and for this reason no

250

attempt has been made to distinguish the functions of recasts in the data for the study. Future research needs to investigate this distinction and to test the suggestion[16] that:

recasts appear to most effective in contexts in which it is clear to the learner that the recast is a reaction to the accuracy of the form, not the content, of the original utterance.(Nicholas et al., 2001: 720)

Findings of research in on corrective feedback, and more generally, of research on second language acquisition can be of direct relevance to teachers, though as Lightbown (2000) points out, the relationships between SLA research and second language teaching are complex ones.

8.5.3 Implications for teacher education

It is no accident that the questions about error correction asked by Hendrickson (1978) were motivated by practical decisions that teachers needed to make in their daily work (see Section 3.1.5). Since research findings of the last ten or so years are indicating the value of corrective feedback, this indication needs to be conveyed to teachers in pre-service and in-service teacher education. Different ways of giving corrective feedback can be introduced to teachers who are either new to second language teaching or who are influenced by a strong version of the Communicative Language Teaching approach which stresses the inhibitory and embarrassing effects of error correction in speaking activities.

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[16] It may be argued that in the instructed setting, what the teacher does, whether unconsciously or consciously, has status. While not all recasts by teachers may be intended as corrective recasts, potentially they are all corrective, since they show the learner's more competent use of the target language.

251

In the words of the contributor to the TESL List on the Internet:

> Any form choice, whether morphological, syntactic, phonological – or whatever – is meaningful. For example, 'I work' and 'I worked' are as different in meaning as 'car' and 'bus'.
>
> Ignoring correctness will inhibit the learner's communication of meaning.
>
> (Jim Jenkin, February 10, TESL-L, 1999)

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Post Script

This thesis was planned and written over nine years. The topic has evolved considerably during that time, starting with a study of language and the law, and switching to a study of classroom-based second language learning. At one time, a teacher education focus was planned, involving the development of awareness and practice of error correction in pre-service and in-service language teachers. Five different official supervisors have been involved. Of these supervisors, only Ilana Snyder is still working at the university where the thesis began its life, Monash University.

Many students from Australia and from other countries have in the mean time completed their masters degrees in TESOL. I have taught many of these students, visited them in the workplace where they have undertaken practical placements, supervised and examined their research projects. There has been huge satisfaction in observing my students as they entered new stages of their intellectual and professional development. There has also been apprehension about how, in the face of various obstacles, I would manage to complete my own research apprenticeship: the thesis.

In nine years life can throw up unexpected pleasures and pain, and the focus on one essential task can be lost altogether. To my own relief, and to the relief of others around me, I have managed to complete the thesis. I am left with some thoughts about strengths and weaknesses of the study that has resulted from my work. I include these thoughts and reflections as a post-script. I begin with a consideration of the naming of the study.

In the end, I decided to make two changes to the title of the thesis, which until recently was: *Corrective feedback to spoken errors in adult ESOL classrooms: Teachers' attitudes and practice.*

ESL rather than ESOL

I have changed *ESOL* to *ESL* for the following reason. The term English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) was originally used because the students in the study were in

263

two groups, international and immigrant, which I then saw as equivalent in meaning to English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) respectively. *ESOL* is an umbrella term which covered both groups. I have come to understand that all the students are living in an English-speaking country at the moment, regardless of their previous living or learning experiences, or their intentions to stay in Australia. They are therefore all *ESL* students, and the title now reflects this. (Reasons for including two groups in the study are given below in the reflections on methodology.)

Shortening the title

The second change to the title is that it has been shortened to *Corrective feedback to spoken errors in adult ESL classrooms*. I have removed the second part of the original title, *Teachers' attitudes and practice*, since this may create a wrong expectation in the mind of the reader. S/he might expect that the issue of the relationship between teachers' attitudes and practices will be theorized in the thesis. This is not the case. It is true that data on teachers' attitudes are included in the study. I conducted interviews with teachers as part of my investigation into corrective feedback in classrooms, wanting to understand the context of the lessons. I also conducted interviews with students. Both sets of data offered important insights, but both could not be included given the focus of the thesis on teacher responses to student error. As I had found variability among teachers in the quantitative data, an important finding, I decided to include the teacher interview data as a separate chapter (Chapter 7). In this chapter I related what teachers had said about a number of language and learning matters, to features of their classroom practice.

The focus of the thesis

I am satisfied that, despite changes in topic and an interrupted working pattern during the period of writing, I have focussed sufficiently on the topic of *Corrective feedback to spoken errors in adult ESL classrooms*. The thesis traces the line of corrective feedback from theory, through research, to practice. My study offers modest support for a key current hypothesis within SLA theory. Specifically it offers support for the Interaction Hypothesis, as stated in the abstract, by 'showing that corrective feedback exists in usable form in instructed settings, and that learners make use of it'. The study does not attempt

attempt to validate the Interaction Hypothesis and this needs to be stated clearly early on in the thesis to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the reader. A validation study would be a very different study, well beyond the scope of this one, as it would need to look at the impact on subsequent learner production of targets of corrective feedback. This is not a longitudinal study of learner interlanguage development, but it does address an important theoretical issue.

Teachers (and even some teacher educators) may not be aware of the connection between this aspect of their classroom practice and SLA theory. The focus I have chosen may result in making teachers aware of the theoretical importance of a behaviour they know about and practise, at least to some extent. By describing variations of that behaviour in detail, I hope to promote a long term benefit for language learners undertaking second language instruction.

Critical stance in the review of the literature

In hindsight, I can see that Chapters 2 and 3 offer descriptions of concepts and of previous research studies without sufficient argument as to why each concept or study has been included, and how it bears on the present study. For example, Chapter 2 surveys the literature on all elements of the Interaction Hypothesis. Of these elements, only some are of direct relevance to the data collected for the study (2.4 Negative Evidence, 2.5 Selective Attention, and 2.7 Focus on Form). The relevance of these particular elements could be stated more strongly, and in more detail, in the summary in 2.8.

Furthermore, Chapter 3 reviews studies of corrective feedback without sufficient evaluation of what each one has added to understanding SLA and particularly the role of negative evidence. It also fails to make the case strongly enough that that the comparison study by Lyster and Ranta does indeed relate to the Interaction Hypothesis. The relationship is, I would argue, a clear one, though it must be taken into account that Lyster and Ranta's study, published in 1997, was written before the Interaction Hypothesis was set out in its revised version (1996). Their study, undertaken in Canada,

is one of the very few studies in existence which observes and quantifies teacher and learner behaviour in regard to error correction (see 3.4). I needed to argue more clearly that results of their study bear a direct relationship to the hypothesis in showing, as my study does, that corrective feedback (and hence negative evidence) does exist in usable form in instructed settings, and that learners make use of it. For these reasons I make a link between the study and the Interaction Hypothesis.

No literature review is complete, but there is a clear omission in Chapter 3 of reference to Doughty and Varela's (1998) focus on Form study. This study, carefully designed in a pre test / immediate post test / delayed post test format, measured gains made by 11-14 year old ESL students in accurate use of a specific form, the simple past tense. The context was a communicative one, the science laboratory lesson, where the teacher consistently offered corrective recasts when students made oral reports on procedures they were observing. They found that:

> Learners in the treatment group improved in both accuracy and total number of attempts at past time reference, particularly in the oral reporting of the science labs.(Doughty & Varela, 1998:137)

This US study is a landmark one in showing an effect on learner interlanguage due to teacher intervention. It is also a model study in the sense that it was conducted collaboratively by the researcher (Catherine Doughty) and the science teacher (Elizabeth Varela).

Reflections on methodology

I remain happy with the decision to study the frequency and types of corrective feedback (negative evidence) in real classrooms. Interactions between native speakers and non-native speakers have most frequently been studied in laboratory-like settings. The choice was made and clearly stated in Chapter 4 that in this study the issue would be studied in real-life classroom settings, where the relevance of the theory is after all greatest. The perils of making this choice in an adult ESL setting include the fact that teachers and especially students come and go at frequent intervals for a range of reasons. Furthermore, the interests of the researcher and the teacher are not necessarily mutual,

but cooperation is necessary. It becomes the responsibility of the initiator of the research, usually the researcher, to make sure that cooperation, or indeed collaboration, takes place.

Is this a case study or not?

I have claimed in Chapter 4 that this is a case study. I needed to be more explicit here about the fact that this is not only a case study in the strict sense, since it includes quantitative results for classroom interaction patterns, and these results are compared with those from a data set obtained in Canada. There is not a neat division here between case study data that are interpretable only in their own context and data that are typical and representative. The data set in this study shares characteristics of both case study and representative data.

The relevance of the Lyster and Ranta work generally as a model for my study could have been more strongly argued. It has in fact been the subject of discussion within the context of the Interaction Hypothesis at conferences at which their work has been presented. Referring to this fact would have helped to show why my study supports the Interaction Hypothesis as claimed. A number of specific methodological decisions described in Chapter 5 are based on decisions made in the Canadian study by Lyster and Ranta (1997). These include: counting of turns with error rather than of individual errors, restricting errors to linguistic ones and excluding content errors. I made a conscious decision to count similar features of the lessons to enable comparison between the two sets of lesson data. I should have made this point more explicit in Chapter 4. These specific methodological decisions are clearly based on the assumption that choosing the *Error treatment sequence* as a model was appropriate. Reasons for this assumption were in fact given in 5.2, where I argued that the system is clear and manageable and that the 1997 study in which it is elaborated has been referred to frequently in recent literature.

The data in this study allows comparison with the Canadian data set because of common characteristics. These include a similar number of teachers and of lesson hours, and counting of similar features of classroom interaction. (Where there is no information in the Canadian study, e.g. about teacher attitudes, these were not compared). The case for

267

comparing the two data sets could have been more strongly argued at the beginning of Chapter 6.

Reasons for including the teacher vignettes

The case for including data about teachers' attitudes and background could have been more strongly argued in the methodology chapter and at the beginning of Chapter 7.4. The teacher vignettes in Chapter 7 are there for two reasons. Firstly they help to flesh out the numerical findings of classroom patterns of error correction in the study. Furthermore, they help to explain differences between this study and the Canadian study by Lyster and Ranta (1997). It is fair to say that the ratings for the teacher vignettes in Chapter 7 are rather subjective. I needed to say *why* they were done in this way. In fact the ratings have heuristic value, and are supposed to act as an aid to the reader. The ratings in themselves are quite insignificant to the main work of relating teacher attitudes to the lesson data collected in their classrooms. They are intended as an indicator of teachers' pedagogical stance, e.g. towards fluency vs accuracy.

Use of third person in the methodology chapter

The study aims to get at the human dimension of an issue, yet I referred to myself as the researcher throughout Chapter 4. On reflection, this seems a contradiction. In future writing, I will consider using the first person when describing my research methodology.

Why two groups?

The decision to include two groups in the study gave depth to the case study, but results did not lend support to an earlier hypothesis, later discarded. The reason for including two somewhat different groups in the study was based on a hunch that different teacher practices might emerge in the two teaching programs which catered for them. These practices might relate to different curriculum goals, or different motivation in each group. After all, the international students in the ELICOS classes might have a mainly instrumental motivation in studying English to gain entry to studies at a postsecondary level, while immigrant students in the AMES classes might have a broader integrative

motivation in Australian society. Teacher error correction practices might mirror learner motivation in some way.

Above all, however, I was interested in the effects of teacher training on error correction, bearing in mind the fact that the effects of this training are not necessarily conscious or reflected in conscious attitudes. As a teacher educator, I was aware that teachers in each program tended to follow different training pathways. I wanted to know what influence the training program might have in the teachers' emphasis on meaning or form(s) in their lessons.

From the decision to include two groups, I have learned among other things, that a study by one person cannot explore all the interesting questions which come to one's attention before or after the collection of data. This was true at every level of exploration of what appears to be a technicality to non-language teachers, that is, corrective feedback to spoken errors. To see what teachers did, I needed to record and transcribe everything that transpired in a lesson, as far as it was possible to do so. Important teacher behaviour, such as recasting of students' utterance, did not look like corrective feedback until it was listened to and transcribed in detail. Working at this micro-level made it impossible to count instances of this behaviour in a data set which was bigger than a dozen or so lessons, including five or six from each type of learner group. To be manageable, the teacher sample had to be small; it ended up comprising two AMEP teachers and three ELICOS teachers. One clear finding did emerge in the two smallish data samples: all three ELICOS teachers had undertaken one training course in common, the Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults; neither of the AMES teachers had done this training. Inter-group comparison ended there, however. All five teachers had in fact undertaken a range of pre-service and in-service teacher training courses, mostly but not all in Australia. Furthermore, their language teaching (and learning) backgrounds were complex. Meaningful comparisons between teacher groups, let alone learner groups, and ones that could transfer to all AMES and ELICOS programs were limited. The decision to look at two different learner and teacher groups adds depth and richness to the case study, but raises more questions than the study can answer.

Conclusion

When it is time to submit a thesis, new thoughts cannot lead to re-writing and new reference points in the literature cannot be included retrospectively. Reflection, however, is always possible, and this Post Script has attempted to record some of the thoughts that have occurred to me, the researcher, in the months after submitting my thesis. When we were children, we would write a PS at the end of our letters, then PPS for the post post script, PPPS for the next afterthought, and so on. I have a feeling the Ps to the thesis are not finished, and above all, not yet finished on the big question of whether and / or how instruction can make a difference in second language learning.

May 23, 2002

Reference

Doughty, C., & Varela, E. (1998). Communicative focus on form. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 114-138). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

APPENDIX A

Flow Chart Model of Corrective Discourse

Chaudron (1977)

Opening Move: (Elicitation)

Answering Move: Partially correct | or in   IGNORE
                         (e.g. content is | ERROR
                         correct)

Follow-up Move: DELAY | INTERRUPT

COMPLEX EXPLANATION

ACCEPTANCE

ATTENTION | NEGATION

REPETITION with NO CHANGE

REPETITION with NO CHANGE and EMPHASIS

REPETITION with CHANGE

REPETITION with CHANGE and EMPHASIS

PROVIDE

REDUCTION or EXPANSION

T I X E

EXPLANATION (possible RED. or EXP.)

Opening Move: REPEAT | PROMPT | CLUE
                         LOOP
                         (REPEAT-implicit)   ORIGINAL QUESTION, ALTERED
                                             QUESTION, or QUESTION(s)
                                             (possible EMPH., RED., and/or EXP.)

TRANSFER

Answering Move: Correct or | or
                         partially | ERROR
                         correct

Follow-up Move: ACCEPTANCE*

                         REPETITION*   EXPLANATION*
                         (possible
                         EXP. or RED.)

Opening Move: VERIFI- | RETURN
                                                         CATION

Legend: - - - - - - - →   Optional flow

          ————————→   Mandatory flow

          [|]   Distinct exclusive types

          [:]   Optionally combining types and features

Chaudron (1977)

APPENDIX B

Error Treatment Sequence

Lyster and Ranta (1997)

Learner Error
- L1
- gender
- grammatical
- lexical
- phonological
- multiple

Teacher Feedback
- explicit correction
- recast
- clarification request
- metalinguistic feedback
- elicitation
- repetition

Topic Continuation
- teacher
- student

Learner Uptake

Needs Repair
- acknowledge
- different error
- same error
- hesitation
- off target
- partial repair

Repair
- repetition
- incorporation
- self-repair
- peer-repair

Reinforcement

APPENDIX C

Explanatory statement for teachers

February 3, 1997

Dear

The Standing Committee on Ethics in Research on Humans at Monash University requires me to write you this explanatory statement about the research we have already talked about.

As you already know I have been an ESL and EFL teacher for a number of years, in several different countries, and I am now a lecturer in TESOL in the Faculty ~f Education at Monash University. I am starting to gather data for my PhD this week at   entre for English Language Learning. I am interested in the interlanguage development ; adult learners of English as a second or foreign language. I am particularly interested in how speaking skills are developed in the classroom.

What I would like to do from this week is to come into your ELICOS classroom for two hours a fortnight during Terms 1 and 2 to observe. I will visit an ELICOS class at least once every two weeks at an agreed time, and an AMEP class (class) every alternate week. This should car*ure two somewhat different contexts for second language learning. If the timetable at   allows, I will visit each class once a week.

I would like to do the observations in the following way if possible:
1.   Come in once or twice and sit somewhere in the classroom where I can take notes. Teacher and students would have a chance to get used to me being there.
2.   Come in weekly at the same time each week (or at a time you and I agree on) thereafter, and record what happens. I plan to audio record each week and video record about once a fortnight.

The other demands I would make on you are:
1.   _Two short interviews_ (up to half an hour), one as Term 1 starts, one at the end of Term 2. I will audio-record these. They will be about the way you see what is going on for your students and about your own role as a teacher of ESOL.
2.   _Teacher journal_. Ten minutes after each lesson observed to reflect on what did and didn't work well in the session.

3.   *Professional development session.* I would like you to participate in a session which I plan to conduct during your professional development week at CELL in April, 1997.

4.   *Students' English test.* Administer a short Cloze test at the beginning and end of each term. It will take about 15 minutes, and there will be about 30 items deleted from an intermediate level text about 250 words in length. The test will test for grammatical and vocabulary items and will help me to discriminate learner language levels.

5.   *Students' consent* I would be glad if you could distribute forms to students who will be observed during the term and pass them on to me when they are completed. (See consent form).

6.   *Help me identify two or three students* in each class who are likely to stay through till the end of Term 2 and who are willing to be interviewed and to keep a brief *learner journal* (see learner journal attached) for the periods observed.

I also need to let you know the Monash University complaints cause which is printed below:

Should you have any complaint concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the Standing Committe on Ethics in Research on Humans at the following address:

The Secretary
The Standing Committee on Ethics in Research on Humans
Monash University
Clayton Vic 3168

Telephone: (03) 9905 2052   Fax: (03) 9905 1420

Participation in this study is of course voluntary.

With many thanks for your help already given and here's to a fruitful collaboration in 1997!

Yours sincerely,

Marie-Therese Jensen

APPENDIX D

Explanatory statement for learners

Tel 9905 2844
Fax 9905 2779

Students in ELICOS class, Level 5/6

February 3, 1997

Dear

I am a lecturer in TESOL in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. I am also studying part-time for my PhD. Would you please help me in my research? I am interested in how adults learn to speak a second or foreign language. I will only look at learning *in the classroom*, not outside.

What I would like to do is to come into your classroom for two hours, every second week, during Terms 1 and 2, 1997, to observe.

I would come in once or twice and sit somewhere in the classroom where I can take notes. You would then have a chance to get used to me being there. After that, I will record classroom talk on video and/or audio equipment.

I will also ask you to

- take a short English test (15 minutes) at the beginning and end of the course which will give me an idea of what you know about English.
- Write about what you learned in each lesson that I observed.

I may ask you to answer a few questions in a short interview after class. (2 or 3 students in total).

If you are happy to take part in my study, would you please sign the consent form which your teacher will hand out. If you don't wish to take part, I promise that I will not use anything you say or write in class in my study.

If you have any complaint about the way this research is conducted, please do not hesitate to contact the Standing Committe on Ethics in Research on Humans at the following address:

The Secretary
The Standing Committee on Ethics in Research on Humans.
Monash University
Clayton Vic 3168
Telephone: (03) 9905 2052   Fax: (03) 9905 1420

Thank you very much for your help.
I hope you enjoy taking part in the study!

Marie-Therese Jensen

APPENDIX E

Informed consent form for teachers

Consent form for teachers

Informed Consent Form

Project Title:

Interlanguage development of adult ESOL learners

I agree to take part in the above Monash University research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement, which I retain for my records.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

I also understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate, and that I can withdraw my participation at any stage of the project.

Name:.........   ....(please print)

Signature:....................   ....

Date:......

APPENDIX F

Informed consent form for learners

Consent form for students

Informed Consent Form

Project Title: *Interlanguage development of adult ESOL learners*

I agree to take part in the above Monash University research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read and understood the Explanatory Statement, which I retain for my records.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

I also understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate, and that I can withdraw my participation at any stage of the project.

Name:..(please print)

Signature:..........█████████...

Date:...Feb 14, 1997

APPENDIX G

Example of a completed teacher journal

TEACHER JOURNAL

Teacher's name: ...... MEG ....

Date: 26/5/97   1.30 - 2.30pm   — oral presentations
                                 — EAP class.

What went well in this lesson

Overall the standard of presentations was high & I feel confident that despite some pron. & gr. problems most will compensate with the signposting + visuals + organization techniques we've studied to pull off successful oral presentations at uni.

I asked the students about the value of the practice session. ÷ responses: some felt unnecessary others felt it relaxed them & helped polish it up. On the other hand, the 'audience' was somewhat distracted (in group practice sessions)

What didn't go well this lesson

- A couple of presentations were really disappointing in not using (some of) the language structures or presentation skills modelled & practised over the last sessions.
- Having to do them all in one 90 min block is heavy!
- It was upsetting to have some sts asking for extra time etc. when it was clear (I thought!) that today was D-day! (too many in one class?)
- I'd like to not have to do all the presentations in block but space them out over time. I'll follow this up with team leader

What I want to pay attention to in coming lessons

- Students need to get the pron. of key words they'll be using in an oral presentation right before hand. I want to think about a way to organize this for next time. Practise one the day before?
- Classroom management techniques / unclear instructions ✓ 2 group + left classroom before they got final instructions!

- may I come back   ✓ ok.
today fortnight 1.30 - 2.30pm ?
Monday June 9 - don't do anything special.   THANKS   Marie-Thérèse

yes ok, I think
Jane's right.
I probably
shouldn't have
tried to meet
every needs &
teams, sticks

APPENDIX H

Example of a completed learner journal

Learner journal

Name of student:..

Class name:......AGA......................

Date:...14/5/97......

Please write your answer to these two questions

Q.1 What things in this lesson helped you the most to improve your skills in English, especially in speaking?

A. 1   <u>Behind the news</u>

It was very good for our listening skills, and help us to understand the meaning of whole sentences, some idiomes and pronoun.

Q.2 Can you suggest some useful things which this lesson needed to include?

A.2 It should be more corrections of pronunciation

Thank you!

APPENDIX I

Cloze test

NATIVE SPEAKER

Name: Amanda   **Date:** 4/5/98

Class: GED 3823

Complete the text by filling in each gap with one word.

St Kilda

St Kilda is one of the entertainment spots of Melbourne where restaurants, clubs, a fun park, great shopping and other amusements are found. Enjoy the hustle and bustle of the market or simply relax with a seaside picnic, or take a stroll _along_ *(example)* the Pier or beach front.

To get to St Kilda _take_ (1) the St Kilda Light Rail number 96 along Bourke Street, Trams number 15, 16 along Swanston Walk or number 10, 12 along Collins Street. To ~~move~~ _get_ (2) to Acland Street take Route 16 _travelling_ (3) south along St Kilda Road, getting _off_ (4) at stop number 30, continue on the route _until_ (5) stop 32 for the St Kilda market and esplanade _?_ (6) . The Pier, marina and beach front area has a spectacular _view_ (7) and is a hive of _activity_ (8) especially on weekends. One of the _well_ (9) known attractions of St Kilda is Luna Park, one of _Australia's_ (10) first fun parks, opening in 1912 and is still _operating_ (11) today. Enjoy a ride on a ghost train, ferris wheel OR ~~rollercoaster~~ (12) the carousel and see the side shows.

On Sundays, the length of the Upper Esplanade _is_ (13) lined with people, buskers and stalls as people sell _locally_ (14) hand-made crafts, jewellery, leather _bags_ (15), clothing and wares at _the_ (16) famous St Kilda Esplanade Sunday _market_ (17).

Apart from the Esplanade area _there_ (18) are two main streets in St Kilda _where_ (19) the activity is centralised. There is Fitzroy Street, which is lined _with_ (20) take-away food shops and all-night bars, with _several_ (21) outstanding restaurants for a meal after a promenade _along_ (22) the shore. The other is Acland Street which is an all-day, seven day a week street famous for its European cake shops and delicatessens.

There is a _vast_ (23) array of cake shops, modern bistros, bars and cafes. _These_ (24) cake shops have a huge variety of European style cakes and _pastries_ (25). Among the cake shops you will _find_ (26) book shops, gift shops and clothing shops, along with many international eateries, _such_ (27) as; Hungarian, Indian, Chinese and Italian.

For those _wanting_ (28) a bit more adventurous fun, you _could_ (29) hire bikes, sailboards and rollerblades and join in with the locals.

After your shopping, dining or bike riding you _might_ (30) enjoy an afternoon in the St Kilda Botanic Gardens on Blessington Street, here you will see some of the finest rose gardens in Melbourne.

example answer: along

(not changed anything!)

APPENDIX J

Cloze test results

St Kilda cloze test results

Class E5F

Student No.	Exact word score	Acceptable alternatives	Total score/30
E1	13	3	16
E2	5	2	7
E3	7	5	12
E4	14	5	19
E5	9	4	13
E6	12	5	17
E7	5	3	8
E8	10	3	13
E9	10	7	17
E10	9	4	13
E11	10	3	13
E12			
E13	9	4	13

Class A5B

Student No.	Exact word score / (No.of qs.attempted)		Acceptable alternatives	Total score/30
A1	2	(11)	3	5
A2				
A3	5	(14)	1	6
A4	1	(4)	1	2
A5	1	(16)	2	3
A6	0	(11)	2	2
A7	1	(5)	1	2
A8				
A9	3	(13)	3	6
A10	5	(10)	4	9
A11	0	(1)	0	0
A12	6	(16)	2	8
A13	9	(20)	2	11
A14	2	(6)	0	2
A15	5	(21)	0	5
A16	0	(6)	3	3
A17	1	(5)	0	1
A18	0	(0)	0	0
A19	9	(26)	6	15 ·

APPENDIX K

Extract from the

Certificate in Spoken and Written English

AMES (1993)

Competency

11.   Can write short essays relevant to further education/training contexts

Elements	Performance Criteria	Range of Variables	Examples of Texts/ Assessment Tasks
Purpose i. has knowledge of purpose of text and can write short essays which express an argument substantiated by evidence	• demonstrates knowledge of purpose of text and main points readily understood by reader	• topic familiar/relevant • recourse to dictionary • 100–200 words in length	**Texts** • Essays • Expository texts • Discussion papers
Discourse Structure ii. can provide appropriate staging for text iii. can compose paragraphs which express coherent argument/s iv. can provide supporting evidence to substantiate a claim v. can use appropriate conjunctive links to develop an argument	• text staging appropriate eg beginning, middle and end • composes 3–4 paragraphs which express a coherent point of view or argument • provides some supporting information or evidence to substantiate claim • uses appropriate conjunctive links to develop an argument eg causal conjunctions		**Tasks** • Learners write a short essay on specified topics selected by either teacher or learner
Grammar/Vocabulary vi. can use appropriate vocabulary and grammatical forms	• uses appropriate vocabulary grammatical forms and errors do not interfere with meaning		• Learners write short essay, "Discuss the advantages and disadvantages to Australia of paying unemployment benefits"
Graphology vii. can use mostly accurate spelling and standard punctuation, legible script	• mostly accurate spelling and standard punctuation, legible script		• Learners write short essay "Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of free education"

APPENDIX L

Extract from the

EAP Curriculum (1996)[1]

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[1] All references to the identity of the language centre, its teaching staff and its students are avoided in this thesis, an attempt to protect the anonymity of individual participants in the study.

Objectives	Language/skills	Activities	Resources
1. Academic listening skills i) Sts will practise listening to monologues e.g lectures and presentations ii) Sts will be able to take notes from a lecture or oral presentation iii) Sts will be exposed to a variety of delivery styles and note-taking methods	**i) preparing to listen** recognising spoken numbers understanding spoken instructions pre-listening strategies: focus, predicting content **ii) listening to monologues** listening and note-taking: understanding the structure of a talk/ notetaking strategies identifying main ideas and supporting points or examples: verbal and non verbal clues identifying different cues/ signposts e.g description, definitions, comparison and contrast, process, cause and effect, generalisations, evidence, explanations, reformulation, summary etc strategies for asking and clarifying questions	• listening to video lectures • listening to live lectures (different styles, formal/ interactive) • pre-reading /discussion to predict lecture content. • note- taking practice/ presenting main points of lecture to group • match signposting with function • invite EAP/ subject matter lecturers to guest lecture	1.Recognising spoken numbers / Studying in Australia / Learn to Listen, Listen to Learn / Study Listening / Listening Effectively 2.Understanding spoken instructions Studying in Australia 3.Prelistening strategies:Studying in Australia/ Listening Effectively 4.Lectures and note-taking skills:Listening Comprehension and note-taking course / Learn to Listen Listen to Learn 5.Reconising the main and supporting ideas: Study Listening / Studying in Australia / Listening Effectively 6. Cues and signposting: Learn to Listen, Listen to Learn / Study Listening / Listening Comprehension and note-taking course

APPENDIX M

**Sample page of lesson transcript
coded for learner turns and errors**

	T	That's it. *(laughs)* Expensive and..?
	Ss, T	<u>in</u>expensive ST 194
	T	*(laughs) (Ss murmur)* So it's impolite, right?
600	MS	impolite ST 195
601	T	Well.. Well, and how will you answer this question? *(10 secs pause)* You (multiple) ← I would ask if the person had a brother
602	MS	Do you have a brother? ST 196 E44
	T	laughs
604	MS	and you <u>ask</u> about the…er.. brother ST 197 E 45 gr
	T	Is he <u>married</u>? *(laughter)*
606	Dida	Like er how we know his age ST 198 E 46 gr
	T	uh huh ST 198 a
608	Dida	Like er ask about ?? about the age of the brother and the difference to him and er.. E 47 multiple
610	T	*(laughs)* Okay so now.. imagine.. so if you don't want.. so we are all in a new country and sometimes we feel ?? embarrassed. We don't know to ask this question not to ask this question. And if you feel that you don't want to answer this question, right? How would you say? ST 199
	Ss	I'd rather not say.
	T	I'd rather not say. Look at this contraction- I'd rather not say.
	Ss	I'd rather not say ST 200
	T	Yes, this is a very polite form to say it's none of your business *(Laughter)*. I'd rather not say, together!
	Ss	I'd rather not say ST 201
	T	Now can we practice just questions and be very careful with all these questions
620		with special.. with positive or negative auxiliary verbs?
	MS	negative! ST 202
	T	negative auxiliary verbs. Because they show our surprise or our ?? or something like that, okay? So now practice some sounds.. Where were .. Together!
624	Ss	Where were ST 203 E 48 phon
	T	Too easy.. Wh wh, wh wh
	Ss	Wh wh, wh wh, wh wh ST 204
	T	Because you say them the same (?) they are absolutely different. Where were Where were you born? metaling. + recast
	Ss	Where were you born ST 205 repeat - repair
630	T	The next question. Where are you from?
	Ss	Where are you from? ST 206
	T	Together
	Ss	Where are you from? ST 207
	T	Again
	Ss	Where are you from? ST 208
	T	Okay. How tall are you? How old are you.. *(noise)*
	Ss	How tall are you? How tall are you? ST 209
	T, Ss	How much do you weigh?
	T	Now look here at the word weigh.. I can't hear, how do you pronounce it?
640	MS	weigh ST 210
	Ss	weigh ST 211
	T	weigh

39

APPENDIX N

Sample page of completed coding grid

Lesson: Class and date	Teacher	Turn no.	Line no. in transcription	Error type -Content -Form: L1, gender, grammar, lexis, phonology, multiple	Corrective feedback? (Y/N)	Type of feedback No, explicit, recast, clarification, metalinguistic, elicit, repetition	Learner uptake? (N) -Ignore -Needs repair: acknowledge, different, same, hesitation, off, part	Learner uptake? (Y) -Repair: repeat, incorporate, self, peer	Number of instances of feedback
A5	Lara								
2608		?	460	Content	Y	clar. (mol)		self	1
		155	476	gra (?)	Y	elicit (+)	same		1
		156	478	gra (?)	Y	recast	(no opp)		1
		168	524	gra	N	responds to content (?)			0
		185	579	gra (w.o.)	N	(" ")	?		0
		196	602	multiple?	Y	non-verbal laughs @ ...	different	keeps trying	1
		197	604	gra (t.)	N	misses the point	different	to explain *	0
		198a	608	multiple	N	" "	(no opp)		
		203	624	phon.	Y	metaling		repeat	1
		214	646	Content	N			peer	0
		10					3	3	5

* Cultural miscommunication (P.14)
re how to ask politely how old someone is.

APPENDIX O

**Example of learner's completed writing task,
CSWE Stage 3**

Syllabus strand: English for Study

Competency: Can write short reports relevant to further education/training contexts

Domain of competency: Writing

Description of task: Students write a factual report on any topic related to their field: profession, training area or study.

Task instructions for students
(incorporating range of variables/teacher assistance, if any, and time limits)

- Choose a topic related to your profession, training area or study.

- Write a report of : at least 200 words.

- Do it by yourself.

- You may redraft within the time limit.

(No teacher assistance. Time limit: 1 hour).

Painting

I ~~had~~ been working painting in Djibouti for three
years. Since 1982 - 1985 I was working private company.
The kind of painting was painting the wall ^by brush out Said and inside the hous
The payment was 20,000 Frank Djibouti currency. I was very
interested that I was painting our house my selff. I had
experince that I had been working for three years.

The main idea ~~was~~ when I was working painting. I was working
part-time Carpenter with my friends in their company.
In my opinion in Djibouti they never askd us that you have
an experince. just they ask you that your have interest
summary ~~I was~~ have been working painting private
company in Djibouti for three years. I had been working a
part-time Carpenter with my fierends company for two
years. And I got experince in Djibouti.   X

Painting

For every one who have interesting Painting. ✓
It is very interesting and easy to paint when you
complite training. And you can ~~have~~ open own business.
It's successful business if you be profitional.

was
y. When I was child. I ~~had been~~ painted with my father
       by brush.
oure houses. I was seeing what he doing
first and how to mix and how to use painting.
ily. After that when I was 12 years old I left my
country to nieghbour country Djibouti. I was
looking for a job that I have experince. I get
a job ~~with~~ Prilate Painting company. I had been worked
for three years. AND I got mor experince.
ly. When you ~~like~~ to paint. First you clean the wall and you paint
~~   ~~ white couler and then you paint what couler you
~~   ~~ like big buresh or whatever you like. It's
basice teaching that kow. It's not enagh to work in other
                                        countries.
wrth. I was work a carpenter with my friend company to
have experince and I work with them or another
companies. I had been worke carpenter for two years
~~   ~~ in Djibouti since 1980 to 1982 I would like to hav
more experince.

Summary is I been worked painting and carpenter in
Djibouti since 1980 to 1985. It is very interesting
if some one tred. I have experince, not much mor experinc
I need to study as better than I have. I suded painting
t from my father and other persons.

APPENDIX P

**Example of ELICOS student writing
with teacher corrections**

The differences of learning style

Name Yoshiharu Shirasaki
Class E 6 C
Date 22 May 1997

The style of university study between Japan and Australia is quite different, but that does not mean that one is right, the other is wrong. Both ways are just different.

First of all, there is a similarly in students' views about enrolling in university. between Japan and Australia. Most Japanese students enter university without any purpose and they choose university by the name value of the university. The former tendency is caused by social pressure. Students are usually forced to enrol in university by parents' opinions and friends' influence rather than are willing to go to university. The latter inclination results from opinion that value makes it more advantageous to get a good job. Similarly, most of Australia students enter university in the same situation. It is natural that students should enrol in university by social opinion and the same value if they have enough knowledge to pass exams. The most noticeable point is that students go to university to get a good job in the future.

However, there are also significant differences. The most important difference in these two countries is the educational surroundings. In Japan students have grown up in situations where they have few chances to ask questions and discuss issues. In other words, they do not know how to discuss. They feel studying is hard, not enjoyable because they have been taught by mechanical ways that Japanese method of teaching is to remember ways. For example, most of children are forced to go to additional school if they do not agree with it. In that school, children manage to know as much knowledge as they can to go to higher level school in the future. Therefore, students feel studying is task that they should consume, and they will never feel happy from studying. In contrast, in Australia students have been taught by active ways that let them ask and discuss issues. Therefore, students can not feel any embarrassment and hesitation when they ask questions. This makes students think the class is the place where they learn something voluntarily truly, not remember it. This way looks enjoyable and humane.

The relationship between teachers and students in both countries are also different. In Japan students can not call their teachers teacher. Teachers call their students 'you'. So there are many students who do not know their teachers university or on the street, the students ignore the teachers. What is worse, teachers wear suits to make themselves look different from students. In addition, teachers leave soon when the class finish. Teachers are not friendly. Therefore, students feel as if there were some wall between teachers and

APPENDIX Q

Oral presentation assessment sheet

Oral presentation Assessment Sheet

Name: _____

Topic: _____

CRITERIA	RATING					COMMENTS
	Excellent 5	Good 4	Fair 3	Poor 2	Very Poor 1	
Presentation *use of visual aids *appropriacy of style - awareness of audience						
Structure *introduction - clear statement of theme/ argument *use of signposting *conclusion						
Content *relevance-addressing the question/topic *clearly developed argument - sequencing of ideas *use of supporting evidence						
Delivery *pronunciation *stress, tone, speed, volume, pauses & body language *eye contact						
Language *grammatical features *choice of vocabulary						
Timing *observe time limits						

Additional Comments:

_____

_____

Satisfactory ☐   Unsatisfactory ☐   Teacher:_____