

**Feedback in the EFL Classroom: An Exploration of its Role in the  
Communication of Teacher Expectations.**

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**A Thesis Submitted to  
The School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa University**

**For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language (TEFL)**

**June, 2000**

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

FEEDBACK IN THE EFL CLASSROOM: AN EXPLORATION OF ITS ROLE IN  
THE COMMUNICATION OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

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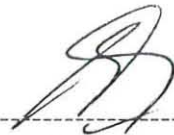
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## Acknowledgements

I owe a great debt of heartfelt gratitude to so many people for their contributions that I cannot thank them all personally, but I would particularly like to thank following.

I am deeply indebted to Professor Keith Johnson, my supervisor on the Lancaster University side, for his insightful and critical comments on the drafts of my chapters. I consider myself lucky and privileged to have done this work under his supervision.

Special thanks, too, are due to Dr Gebremedhin Simon, my supervisor on the Addis Ababa University side, for his constructive comments and constant encouragement.

I should like to thank all those teachers and their pupils who so kindly suffered my presence in the classroom and put up with the numerous questions that I had to ask during the interview and in the questionnaire.

The project would have been impossible without The British Council who financed my study in the UK.

Finally, I must thank my wife, Rahma Tirfu, for her encouragement, and our children, Fetiya, Mubarak, and Aziza for bearing my absence.

## Abstract

This study examines teacher feedback practice in a foreign language classroom in relation to the proposition in the field of general education that teacher differential expectations for students' performance may be expressed in differential treatment toward students. More specifically, the purpose of this research is to explore whether (1) the teacher provides different feedback to students whom he perceives as high and low achievers and, (2) differences can be attributed to differential teacher expectations. It also investigates whether (3) students perceive any difference in the ways the teacher works with high and low achievers as regards the provision of feedback and (4) the teacher sees his own treatment of high and low expectation students as being different.

The analysis of observational data collected on a teacher's classroom feedback behaviour revealed great quantitative differences in the feedback received by high and low expectation students on their successful and unsuccessful performances. Further analysis suggested that many of the differences are attributable to differences in performance among students although there were also several other differences (e.g. those that relate to the teacher's use of praise and failure to give feedback) that are interpretable as evidence of differential teacher treatment. In addition, the likelihood of the teacher's use of certain types of feedback (e. g. repetition and explanation of a correct answer) tended to vary with the expectation group membership of students.

As regards the students' and the teacher's perceptions, both parties demonstrated a considerable degree of sensitivity to differential treatment of high and low achievers.

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## Chapter One

### Background to the Study

#### 1.0 Introduction

The general purpose of this first chapter is to set the scene for subsequent chapters. More specifically, this chapter is intended to provide a context and a rationale for the present study. It begins by identifying aspects of teaching which serve as a context of practice the study seeks to explore. It is also the aim of the first section to discuss the conceptual framework guiding the study. The second section deals with another aspect of context concerning the setting within and about which research questions about the context of practice are posed. In particular, it looks at the foreign language classroom with special reference to its unique characteristics. The third section focuses on yet another aspect of the research context. It provides some background information about education in Ethiopia. The fourth section identifies the general objectives of the study and the assumptions that underlie its design. It also explains why the foreign language classroom needs a special study in relation to the notion of teacher expectations as well as the importance of such study in the context of Ethiopia. The final section previews the following chapters of the dissertation.

#### 1.1 The Context of Practice: Theoretical background

In this section I will briefly discuss notions, issues and findings related to the practice investigated in the present study. These are teacher expectations and their effect (1.1.1.), and teacher feedback behaviour (1.1.2). I propose to discuss these concepts in a more generic sense of the terms. I will look at the notion of feedback in relation to the language classroom in Chapter Three, where I review the EFL literature.

### 1.1.1 Teachers' Expectations

This subsection discusses the notion of teacher expectations. It begins with a definition of teachers' expectations, identifies major types of research on teacher expectations and the conceptual frameworks underlying such research. A more detailed review of the literature concerning teacher expectations and their effects on teachers and students appears in Chapter Two.

In the history of educational research, the late 1960's have been associated with the start of a research programme which was designed to examine whether and how teachers' expectations about their students may come to serve as self-fulfilling prophecies. Experimental evidence that teacher's expectations can affect student achievement was first documented in *Pygmalion in the Classroom* (Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968). This study presented data suggesting that teachers' experimentally induced expectations for student performance could influence student achievement. That is, students who were falsely described to their teachers as having a potential to achieve at higher levels did make significant gains in academic attainment. The investigators interpreted this as evidence of the self-fulfilling prophecy effect of teacher expectations. The statement that teachers' expectations for their students can serve as self-fulfilling prophecy has led to a considerable debate and controversy in the study of teaching (See Rogers, 1986).

In studies of teacher expectations, the term *teacher expectations* refers to inferences that teachers make about the future behaviour or academic achievement of their students based on what they currently know about these students (Good, 1995:29). Teachers may develop expectations about the behaviour and potential of their students based in part upon available data concerning students such as achievement test data, past grades, comments by previous teachers, or knowledge about the student's family (Brophy and Good, 1974). Since such data can be accessed in the absence of the student, it is in theory possible for the teacher to

develop a set of expectations regarding students even before he or she comes into contact with them. While teachers may vary in the degree to which they rely on sources outside the classroom in forming expectations about their students, prior expectations formed thus are generally shaped and modified as a result of coming into contact with them in the classroom. In addition, research shows that teachers are selective in the information they attend to in forming judgements about the academic potential of their students (Dusek and Joseph, 1983).

The expectations that teachers develop may apply to the entire class or specific individual students (Brophy and Good, 1974). Teacher expectations operating at the level of the whole class may manifest themselves in terms of the teacher's beliefs about the students' potential for benefiting from instruction, about the difficulty level of the material for the students in general, about whether or not the class should be taught as a group etc. There is also some evidence to suggest that teachers' general expectations affect their interaction with students and their instructional style (Cooper, 1985).

In contrast to the relative lack of research on teacher expectations for whole classes, the literature contains a great deal of research that has examined teachers' expectations about individual students (see Good and Brophy, 1987). Furthermore, most studies in the area have concentrated on the expectations of teachers for students' academic achievements as opposed to other student characteristics such as motivation, conduct, and social skills. Studies conducted along this line aim to establish the extent to which teachers' behaviours toward individual students are influenced by expectations.

There are a few more points that need to be made regarding expectations. First, expectations are not unique to teachers. In fact, they are common and part of people's everyday experiences of the social world; we normally engage in making predictions as to what will

happen when we enter into interactions with others (Rogers, 1986). Second, people (including teachers) differ not only in the accuracy of their initial expectations but also in the rigidity or flexibility with which they handle these expectations. Although the expectations of many people are generally accurate and are usually modified in light of new information, some people appear to be reluctant to revise their initial impressions in the light of contrary evidence and, thus, persist with rigid but incorrect expectations (Brophy and Good, 1974). Finally, it is important to note that expectations in general, and teacher expectations in particular are neither good nor bad in themselves (Good and Brophy, 1987; Brophy and Good, 1974). As Brophy and Good (1974) noted, the effect of expectations will probably vary depending on how accurate they are and how they are used.

Accurate expectations that are continually updated to accommodate current changes in students may be used as devices to help the student make academic progress. That is, the teacher can use them in planning and executing an instruction which takes into account the specific needs of the individual student. In contrast, inaccurate expectations which are allowed to persist regardless of contrary evidence can impede teaching effectiveness. While inappropriate projection of negative expectations prevents learners from achieving what they are potentially capable of achieving, inappropriately high expectations may put students in a situation where they have to continually experience failure and embarrassment as a result of being pushed beyond their current capacities.

Research on teacher expectations has examined two types of expectation effects (Cooper and Good, 1983). The first is the self-fulfilling prophecy effect, in which the teacher harbours inaccurate expectations and behaves in a way that causes the initially erroneous expectations to become true. The pioneer study by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) mentioned above (p. 2) deals with this type of expectation effect. In contrast, the sustaining expectation effect occurs when teachers hold accurate expectations which are treated

inflexibly. That is, teachers begin to treat initially accurate perceptions as permanent and unchangeable and expect students to sustain previously observed behaviour to the point that they take these patterns for granted and fail to see changes in student potential or behaviour (Good and Brophy, 1987). As a result, teachers may fail to provide effective instruction to their students by failing to notice recent changes in students' behaviour or performance. It follows that teacher expectations do not have to be inaccurate to affect students (Brophy and Good, 1974).

It is, however, noteworthy that sustaining expectation effects are more common in the classroom than self-fulfilling prophecy effects although the latter can be more powerful and dramatic when they occur (Cooper, 1979; 1985; Good and Brophy, 1987). The reason behind the higher likelihood of sustaining effects may be that teachers' expectations are generally accurate rather than being seriously erroneous as implied in the usual definition of self-fulfilling prophecies (Mitman and Snow, 1985).

Many models of teacher expectations (e.g. Cooper, 1979; 1985; Brophy and Good, 1974; Good, 1981) suggest that teachers' expectations affect students only when they are expressed and communicated to them. That is to say, it is not the mere existence of expectations which affects student outcomes. Rather, it is the actions that teachers take in response to their expectations that has the potential of affecting their behaviour in general, and their achievement in particular. As Good and Brophy (1987) noted teachers' expectations for their students may translate into a wide range of their classroom behaviour.

Research that examined the mechanisms that mediate teacher expectation effects has identified direct and indirect routes of influence on student achievement (See Brophy, 1983; 1985b; Good and Brophy, 1987). Teacher expectation effects may occur directly through differences in opportunities to learn the instructional material or through differences in

exposure to content. In the case of low expectations, direct expectation effects occur when the teacher exposes the student to impoverished curriculum by reducing the amount or level of difficulty of material which would have been presented otherwise (Brophy, 1983).

In addition to the direct effects that are attributable to variations in the amount and quality of instructional content, teacher expectation effects may be mediated indirectly through teacher behaviour which affects student attitudes and motivation . To the degree that the teacher generally gives lows less attention and treats them with less warmth, they are almost certain to be less motivated to learn and eventually suffer the consequent decline in their performance. (It is customary in the literature to refer to students the teacher considers to be high achievers and low achievers as *highs* and *lows* respectively, so I wish to follow suit and use them interchangeably). As regards feedback, forms of treatment which are thought to produce similar undesirable effects on low achievers include criticising them more often for failure, giving up easily on them rather than encouraging them to improve their responses, and providing them with less performance feedback (Brophy, 1985b:180).

Another important point to mention about the process mediating expectation effect as hypothesized by several models (e.g. Brophy and Good, 1974; Cooper, 1979) is that teacher expectation can affect students when they perceive and interpret the expectation cues communicated by the teacher through his or her behaviour. Although the various models developed to explain the effects of teacher expectations on student performance include student perceptions of teacher cues about expected behaviour as a critical variable mediating the process, the focus of much research in the area has been on documenting teacher behaviours which convey differential teacher expectations. Thus, relatively little is known about students' perceptions of differential teacher behaviours and how these behaviours affect student motivation and effort (Good, 1995).

In spite of the relative lack of research on students' perceptions of differential teacher treatment, several investigators (e.g. Weinstein, 1989; Wigfield and Harold, 1992) stress that a systematic investigation of learner perceptions of differential teacher behaviour is an important place to start in clarifying the link between teacher behaviour and student performance. It is argued that teacher expectations (both when expressed by the teacher and when interpreted by the student) influence achievement by affecting the students' self-image in the first place. Weinstein wrote,

...a child adopts a self-view in accordance with how significant others behave toward him or her. In turn, out of self-image grow self-expectations about the child's own capacity to perform. These self-expectations can come to influence a child's willingness to attend, to respond or to continue trying—all the behaviors that may affect learner outcomes on standardised achievement tests (1989:193).

Such student mediation approach to the study of teacher expectation effects is characterized by its emphasis on students' cognition as a crucial element in determining achievement and its focus on the role of the student in actualizing teacher effects on achievement (Weinstein, 1989).

Research (see Weinstein, 1985) indicates that students are aware of differences in teachers patterns of interaction with students for whom they hold high and low expectations. For example, elementary school children saw high achievers as receiving higher expectations, more opportunity and autonomy while they described low achievers as the recipients of negative feedback and teacher direction (Weinstein et al., 1982). Furthermore, studies of student perceptions (e.g. Brattessani et al., 1984) suggest that students' awareness of such differentiation are greater in high-differentiation classes (classes where students report high frequency of differential teacher treatment) than low-differentiating classes.

Next, I will look at another aspect of teaching which is closely associated with the communication of expectations in the classroom i.e. feedback.

### **1.1.2 The Feedback Behaviour of Teachers**

Teachers are constantly engaged in providing feedback to their students. A casual observation of classrooms will indicate that this behaviour is pervasive in educational settings. Research (see Rosenshine and Stevens, 1986; Brophy and Good, 1986b; Bellon et al., 1992) that examined the effect of teaching practices on achievement has also shown that feedback constitutes one of the significant components of effective instruction. Feedback also represents an essential construct for many theories of learning and instruction (Bangert-Drowns et al., 1991). Further, Annett (1969) argued that feedback (in the form of knowledge of result) is one of the key features of learning situations and serves three principal functions: as incentive, reinforcement, and information. Thus, feedback is considered to be a critical element in the process of learning in that it has both informational and motivational value.

In the context of teaching in general, feedback is information given to students about their performance in a learning task (Mayer, 1995). Teachers are observed dispensing feedback to their students on various aspects of their performance behaviour and for a range of reasons. For example, teachers provide students with performance feedback (e.g. "That's correct") where the emphasis is on the accuracy of their work. Stipek (1984) refers to this category of feedback as objective feedback in order to emphasise the absence of social comparative information and social evaluative aspects such as praise or criticism in the message conveyed to the student. It should, however, be noted that praise and criticism also constitute some of the commonest types of feedback given to students in conjunction with performance feedback.

Performance feedback given to students can promote learning by strengthening correct responses and correcting faulty ones. Information given to students in the form of performance feedback is also believed to have the added value of enhancing self - efficacy and motivation to learn (Schunk, 1989). Positive and confirmatory feedback following correct answers helps reinforce a sense of competence on the part of the student. It is argued that this kind of feedback conveys the message that the student is capable of further learning. Similarly, negative feedback in the form of correction can communicate the belief that students will perform better by using the information presented to them. Thus, both positive and negative forms of performance feedback can be used in such a way that they contribute to the learner's sense of competence and, as Pintrich and Schunk pointed out, "the belief of individuals that they are capable of learning raises motivation and leads to better skill acquisition" (1996: 337).

In addition to performance feedback, teachers often provide students with motivational feedback (e.g. "you've really got much better at this. You are doing a great job") which is designed to provide information on progress and competence; attributional feedback (e.g. "you have been working hard and you're doing well") which links student performance with one or more attributions; and strategy feedback (e.g. "you got it right because you used the steps in the right order") which informs students about how well they are applying a strategy and how strategy use is improving their work (Pintrich and Schunk, 1996).

Research (See Good and Brophy, 1987) has shown that feedback represents one of the principal mediators of teacher expectations. Evidence from studies of positive teacher expectation effects suggests that teachers enhance the achievement of students for whom they hold high expectations by providing them with more feedback about their performance (Rosenthal (1974) cited in Cooper, 1985). Furthermore, Good and Brophy (1987) reviewed research that documented teacher's behaviours that communicate negative expectations to

students, and produced a list of 17 potential mediating mechanisms of which 10 involved some form of reaction to student performance. Some of these included failing to give feedback to the public responses of lows, criticising lows more often for failure and praising them less often for success and demanding less from lows (A more complete list of the mediators appears in 2.1.4.2).

That performance feedback influences children's achievement-related cognitions (e.g. perceived competence, success expectations) has also been established by research (see Stipek, 1984). Research on children's beliefs about their own capabilities to handle academic tasks (Schunk, 1989) suggests that children derive cues about their own abilities from the feedback behaviour of teachers. What is more, this information together with similar cues derived from prior experience affect not only their beliefs about their capabilities for further learning but also their attitudes toward school in general or toward specific subject matter (Stipek, 1984; Schunk, 1989).

Stipek (1984) argued that there are developmental changes in the ways children respond to different kinds of feedback. For example, young children seem to attend more to social reinforcement-praise or criticism-than to other forms of feedback directly related to their performance. They also seem to be unaffected by comparative information regarding their performance (normative feedback) as well as failure in their past performance (negative objective feedback). However, research on children's interpretation of feedback and other developmental changes in their thinking (e.g. Wigfield and Harold, 1992) suggests that they increasingly become more responsive to objective performance feedback and normative feedback as they advance through the elementary school. For example, while younger children generally tend to accept at face value praise which is not contingent on good performance, children after the age of about 12 have been shown to interpret such praise as an index of low ability (Meyer et al. 1979).

What is more, studies of student perceptions (Brattessani et al., 1984) suggest that children utilise the information they derive from their teachers' treatment of highs and lows in forming their own expectations for performance. For example, Brattessani et al. found a strong correlation between students' own expectations and teacher expectations in classrooms where, according to student report, teachers greatly differentiated the treatment of high and low achievers. Further, it is hypothesised that children in the elementary school are most likely to have their achievement self-perceptions affected by differential teacher behaviour (Brattessani, 1984)

I now move on to describe the classroom setting in which the phenomenon in question is investigated.

## **1.2 The EFL Classroom**

The discussion so far has been concerned with issues which cut across all school subjects rather than specific domains. Thus, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that most of the issues introduced in the preceding section are also relevant to foreign language teaching because foreign language classrooms are likely to share many characteristics with content classrooms. At the same time, it would be wrong to argue that the EFL classrooms are a replica of content subject classrooms. In this section, I will attempt to identify some of the special characteristics of the foreign language classrooms. In the process, I will suggest how the foreign language classroom needs to be investigated in relation to the notion of teacher expectation effect.

Foreign language teaching appears to differ from the teaching of other subjects in terms of the role of the teacher, teacher talking time and student talking time, and learning opportunities (Sunderland, 1996). Although the traditional approach to foreign language teaching, with its emphasis on grammar and translation, resembled the teaching of other

subjects in many respects (Kyriacou, 1986), more recent approaches are characterised by their tendency to put less emphasis on the transmission of knowledge about the language and by the greater stress they place on the need to use the language for communication. Thus, one feature of modern foreign language classrooms is that they provide learners with greater opportunity for oral interaction in the target language as a means of developing their speaking skills. One consequence of such a shift is that the language teacher is faced with the responsibility to try and decrease his or her own talking time in order to maximize student talking time and facilitate language practice opportunities (Sunderland, 1996).

It is assumed that creating opportunities for learners to interact in the target language can benefit them in many ways. For example, it facilitates the development of speaking skills through intensive oral practice. Encouraging more communication in the classroom could also mean creating a range of learning opportunities in terms of providing students with a chance to test their hypothesis about how the language works. In the process, it is believed, students receive timely feedback that can be used in confirming correctly learned rules, and revising or unlearning faulty generalizations about the way the language operates. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that investigators in the field (e.g. Seliger, 1977; Allwright and Bailey, 1991; Swain, 1985) see interaction as something good to happen in the classroom although there appears to be less consensus among them as to how exactly it benefits the learner.

The increased emphasis on interaction, however, introduces a new set of challenges for the students. For many learners, speaking in a foreign language can be a potentially high risk business and an emotionally charged activity especially when it involves performing in public (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). This may be in part because their performance is likely to be subjected to closer scrutiny by the teacher and to constant evaluation by their peers (Tsui, 1996). In addition, the fact that learners are deprived of their normal means of

communication (i.e. their mother tongue) and are asked to perform in a language they are struggling to master makes foreign language learning more stressful compared with the learning of other subjects where they are likely to be allowed access to their first language (Allwright and Bailey, 1991).

Given the potential high risk associated with oral work, there is a clear need for language teachers to create a threat-free environment in which students are more willing to participate and contribute to the lesson. Teachers will also need to ensure that public exchanges between them and their students take place in an encouraging and supportive atmosphere where learners' self-concept and confidence are protected. In particular, teachers need to exercise a greater degree of sensitivity and care in the way they react to the output of their students. That is, they should guard against conveying cues which affect the motivation, self-concept and confidence of their learners and be aware of other unintended consequences which may follow from their feedback practice. For example, trying to correct every language error in students' responses will probably lead students to believe that correct language is as important to the teacher as the meaning of what is said. The consequence of such attitude may be that the student will feel more inhibited and reluctant to take risks and contribute to the lesson.

Foreign language classrooms are noted as settings where there is a high prevalence of anxiety resulting from fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation. In fact, what makes classroom language learning unique is probably the fact that learners are faced with more risks of criticism and negative evaluation than in other subjects (Tsui, 1996). This may not be surprising given the fact that the probability of making mistakes of some nature is far greater in language learning than in other subjects (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). For example, a learner may get the answer right in terms of informational content, but he or she may still make an infinite number of mistakes (wrong grammar, pronunciation, stress,

collocation etc.) in expressing it in the language he or she is learning. In other subjects, by contrast, one expects learners to make mainly errors of content and experience little difficulty in verbalising their thoughts as is the case in foreign language learning.

Given the importance attached to practice in language learning and the vastly greater likelihood of learners' being wrong in some way or another, it follows that the language teacher is confronted with more decisions involving issues surrounding the provision of feedback than is the content subject teacher. In particular, one expects negative feedback to be more dominant in language classrooms. This is because, as indicated above, some aspect of a student's answer is usually almost certain to go wrong, especially at the earlier stages of language development. Further, while teachers in content classrooms are more likely to emphasise the adequacy and accuracy of information in evaluating student response, language teachers are usually faced with the task of reacting to the language used in responding in addition to paying attention to the factual content of the response given.

The situation is complicated further by the fact that many teachers attach greater importance to correctness and their role as correctors of student errors. Such attitude on the part of teachers has implications for the whole tone of the lesson in general and the way students will behave and feel in particular. As Allwright and Bailey (1991) noted, the constant correction which emanates from teachers' stronger commitment to their role as providers of correction, may lead many students to feel that being wrong is "an open invitation to a more or less mild form of public humiliation" (p. 175). This again makes classroom foreign language learning a particularly stressful process in which the individual learners' self-concept is easily undermined and constantly challenged (Tsui, 1996).

While it is reasonable to assume that the threat to self-esteem introduced by the unique features of the language classroom, as mentioned above, is likely to apply to all learners, it

can also be suggested that the situation could be even worse for some students especially if the teacher expectation effect is at work. In fact, given the finding that feedback constitutes a major mediator of teacher expectation effect (see Section 1.1.1 above), the high prevalence of negative feedback in foreign language classrooms may lead to a greater probability of teacher expectation effects in the language classrooms. To the extent that the teacher communicates negative expectations when dealing with students whom he or she perceives as low performers, low expectation students (if aware of such practice) are almost certain to sustain a feeling of incompetence and suffer other psychological damages of that nature.

Although much of the literature on teacher expectation effects comes from content subject classrooms, one can argue that most of the findings from the investigations of such classrooms have a lot of relevance to the EFL classrooms as well. We know from our experience as learners and teachers that the mechanisms for communicating teacher expectations as documented in the literature are common in language classrooms, too. For example, it is not unusual for the language teacher to offer more chances to brighter students to self-correct while he or she is more likely to impatiently supply the correct answer following an error from a less able learner.

However, it should also be remembered that curriculum subject could be an important variable for research on classroom interaction (Sunderland, 1996) and deserves to be taken into account in investigating classroom discourse because any subject may raise different issues in addition to what it shares with other subjects. For example, the fact that there are at least two languages (the students' and perhaps the teacher's mother tongue, and the target language) in the foreign language classroom means that the teacher's choice of one language over the other in dealing with particular students can convey a certain message regarding what the teacher thinks about these students as language learners.

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While some forms of differential teacher treatment of students may be pedagogically justifiable, it can be suggested that such practice could also have serious consequences for students as language learners. For example, uneven distribution of turns where some students are ignored to the point of exclusion can mean depriving these students of the opportunity to practise the target language (Tsui, 1996). Such practice is also bound to have a far-reaching effect on the self-esteem and confidence of the student. As Tsui noted, students who are denied turns may feel ignored and may interpret the teacher's behaviour as rejection of them as worthy individuals. As a result, students may begin to lose interest in the subject and invest less in the language learning task.

As regards differential feedback, the language teacher who favours the group of brighter students in his class by providing more gentle and supportive feedback while he or she (albeit inadvertently) treats the weaker group rather harshly is likely to negatively affect the learning of the latter group by raising the 'affective filter' (Krashen, 1982). For example, teachers who frequently reprimand weaker students for failing to produce answers immediately or for making mistakes are condemning them to suffer a traumatic classroom experience. The students may also feel that they are being penalised and publicly humiliated for performing less than their peers (Tsui, 1996). The consequence of such behaviour may be that low achievers will desperately try to avoid such unpleasant experience and threat to their self-esteem by deciding to keep a low profile and withdrawing from participation, which in turn means less opportunity to practice the language or experiment with it.

In this subsection, I have attempted to describe some of the features of the research setting in terms of the domain in which the investigation was done. In the next subsection, I look at the socio-cultural setting of the study.

### **1.3 The Research Setting: An Overview of Education in Ethiopia**

This section is an account of education in Ethiopia. It begins by tracing the origin and development of the sector. This brief historical survey is soon followed by a discussion of the most recent reforms introduced in to the sector. The last subsection discusses current trends in education in the country.

#### **1.3.1. Education in Ethiopia: A Historical Perspective**

It is widely believed that modern education in Ethiopia is about a century old now. A glance at the literature on the history of education in the country also reveals that traditional education with its emphasis on moral and religious values dominated the country prior to the introduction of modern education (MOE, 1996). In addition, there is a general consensus of opinion that such traditional education has been the province of religious institutions. Perhaps, this is not surprising given the fact that the Ethiopian society has remained a predominantly religious society for several centuries.

Girma et al. (1974) described some of the features that characterise the traditional system of education in Ethiopia as follows. First, there is a strong tendency for traditional education to narrowly equate learning with rote learning. In addition, traditional education is characterised by its tendency to stress the ‘absorption of sacrosanct knowledge’ and neglect of critical and creative faculties. Further, the relationship between the teacher and the students with its emphasis on the unquestioning acceptance and obedience on the part of the student has been strictly authoritarian in nature. One important observation that can be made about these features is that they all tend to be incompatible with the principles of modern education although it is still possible to discern some of these elements in the present day schools as well.

The introduction of modern education into Ethiopia is closely associated with the opening of the first school by Emperor Menlik II in 1908, followed by a second one by Emperor Haileselassie 17 years later (in 1925). The introduction of secular education is thought to have been motivated, at least partly, by the need for educated people to communicate with the outside world and run the modern bureaucracy (See Rose et al., 1996). Thus, this phase is characterised by its narrow focus on communication skills in international languages, which is evident in the fact that the first school was a language school for teaching English, French, Italian, Arabic, Amharic and Geez (MOE, 1996).

Earlier attempts at expanding modern education and diversifying the system were disrupted by the Italian occupation which lasted for five years (1936-1941). However, such efforts were resumed following the restoration of the country's independence in 1942 and this led, among other things, to the establishment of technical and commercial schools in the mid 1940's and the founding of the University College of Addis Ababa in 1951. The primary goal of the education offered during this time was to produce teachers and various personnel for the state machinery (Rose et al., 1996).

One feature of the education system that was in place during the period covering the 1940's through 1950's is that it was largely influenced by British experts (MOE, 1996). In fact, the comprehensive system of education that was organised during this period was closely modeled on the British one. This was evident in the school structure (4+4+4), the curriculum and the textbooks that were adopted, and the London General Certificate Examination, G.C.E. that students were required to take. The G.C.E. stayed in the system for over a decade (1947-58) until it was replaced in 1959 by the Ethiopian Schools Leaving Certificate Examination, ESLCE-a nation wide examination administered to students at the end of their high school education. It is also noteworthy that English became the medium of instruction during this period (MOE, 1996:90).

The education system continued to undergo further changes under the influence of Canadians and Americans in the period running from 1952 to 1974 (MOE, 1996). Changes included a shift to the primary, junior and secondary structure (6+2+4) and the replacement of English by Amharic as a medium of instruction up to grade six in 1962 (MOE, 1996). In spite of the fact that education continued to attract more attention from the government, performance in the sector remained far below that of most African countries (Rose et al., 1996).

The fall of the monarchy and the army's seizure of power in 1974 ushered in a system of education organised along a new set of socialist principles. Under the military regime (often known as the Derg), the education system in the country aimed at expanding education services in the rural areas and disseminating socialist ideology. Reforms such as this which were inspired by the socialist philosophy led to an expansion in school and enrollment at all levels (Rose et al., 1996). In spite of reports about achievement in the sector, the whole system was seen as suffering from several setbacks. For example, it was severely criticised for emphasising quantity in measuring progress in the sector and showing little concern for the quality of the service made available to the public (See Seyoum, 1996 for example). Another related criticism was that the ambitious plan to expand education and maintain a high rate of enrollment did not have economic reality in the sense that finance and resource failed to keep pace with the rapid expansion of schools (Rose et al., 1996).

Based on several reviews of relevant studies, Rose et al. (1996), identified several factors which led to the major weaknesses of the education sector and areas of policy concern during the Derg period. Some of these included failure to introduce the mother tongue of children as a medium of instruction at the primary level, students' poor performance in English which was (and still is) the medium of instruction at the secondary level, disparities in access to education (e.g. gender, rural/urban, and inter-regional inequalities) and

Still another area that has been the subject of major reform concerns the language of instruction. The new Education and Training Policy underscores the need to reorganise education along the principles of bilingual education where two or more languages are used as a medium of instruction and the mother tongue is given priority in the initial years (TGE, 1994). The policy also commits itself to enabling children to learn another language (the official language Amharic) for wider communication among the various linguistic communities and another one (usually English) for international communication. Accordingly, the gradual introduction of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools has been going on for some time now. In 1996, for example, about 19 languages served as a medium of instruction in the primary schools (MOE, 1996).

With respect to the role of English in the system, the new education policy also commits itself to introducing the language at the earlier possible level (grade 1) as a subject and using it as a medium of instruction at all levels beyond the primary school. The policy also underscores the need to enhance the English language proficiency of children in the earlier grades in order to overcome the problems that they might face when English replaces their mother tongue as a medium of instruction at the higher levels (TGE, 1994). As part of the attempt to achieve this aim, a new curriculum has been developed and new textbooks of English have been introduced in schools.

### **1.3.3 Trends in Primary schooling in Ethiopia**

The new Education and Training Policy (1994) has as one of its aims the universalisation of a good quality primary education over a period of twenty years. This clearly indicates the priority accorded primary education in the new system. In this section, I will provide a brief discussion of the trends in education with a particular emphasis on primary schooling.

Even a cursory look at the statistics on education in Ethiopia reveals that the performance of the century-old secular education in the country has been particularly low. Measures of coverage indicate that primary education is still inaccessible to a great proportion of school age children. That is to say, there are more children outside the school system than those enrolled in it. For example, the participation rate at the primary level (1-8) was 41.8% in 1997/98 (EMIS, 1999). This indicates that about 58% of the school age children (ages 7-14) had no access to primary education for one reason or another. (Note that the official school starting age in both the old and the new system is seven years).

Although the proportion of children enrolled in primary schools is smaller than those outside, it seems that there has been a fast growth in the rate of participation at this level compared with the levels beyond. For example, statistics (EMIS, 1999) indicate that the rate of enrollment at the primary level doubled between 1992/93 and 1997/98. That is to say it rose from 19.6% in 1992/93 to 41.8% in 1997/98. In contrast, the changes in the rate of participation in the secondary and tertiary levels have been less dramatic. For instance, the figure for the secondary rose from 6.5% in 1995 to only 6.8% in 1998, showing a tendency for the participation at this level to be permanently low. This also meant that a vast proportion of the eligible population did not have the chance to go to the secondary school. A similar pattern has been observed with respect to the participation at the tertiary level.

The enormous gap between those who are in school and outside may be attributed, at least partly, to the relatively low number of schools. The latest statistics available (EMIS, 1999) indicate that there were 10752 primary schools (1-8), 382 senior secondary, and less than 20 technical and vocational schools in the country in 1997/98 with a participation rate of about 42%. It is also noteworthy that a great proportion of these schools are in the urban areas which have less than 15% of the population (TGE, 1994). Statistics also show that there is a high concentration of junior (7-8) and senior secondary schools (9-12) in the country's

medium and large towns to the point that many rural areas have been left with no school at all (TGE, 1994).

Another area in which there exists an inequitable distribution of access to education concerns gender. For instance, the figures for 1997/98 indicate that the participation rate at the primary level was 52% for boys and 31 % for girls. It was the same picture at the secondary level. The figures were 10% for boys and 7% for girls (EMIS, 1999). Perhaps not surprisingly, a similar pattern can be observed with respect to the proportion of male and female teachers at different levels. In 1997/98, female teachers constituted 27.2% of the teaching force at the primary whereas the figure is as low as 8.6% when it comes to secondary schools (EMIS, 1999). While these figures refer to a gender mix at the national level, there are significant variations across different regions. On the whole, the low national figures for female teachers appear to be in sharp contrast with the tendency in the West for the profession to be dominated by women. For example, most language teachers in the UK are women (Sunderland, 1996).

In addition to factors such as low rate of participation and educational disparity of various kinds (gender differences, rural/urban discrepancy, and gaps between different regions), the low internal efficiency in schools continues to cause a great concern among professionals and the public at large. The term internal efficiency has been used in the literature (e.g. Wanna and Tsion, 1994) to refer to the relationship between inputs (the number of pupils who start a course) and outputs (students who successfully complete a course). Two commonly used measures of internal efficiency of schools are rate of drop out and rate of repetition.

As regards the first measure, namely rate of drop out, official statistics (EMIS, 1999) indicate that a considerable percentage of those who enroll in the primary fail to persist

through the cycle. In fact, a considerable proportion of those who start school drop out early. The 1999 EMIS report shows that only 58% of those who start school reach grade two, which clearly indicates that over 40% of them leave school before they reach grade two. Moreover, the rate of drop out is higher for girls than for boys at almost all grade levels. A great percentage of the already fewer girls who enroll in school drop out in the first grade. The average length of time spent in schools by those who do not complete their primary schooling is 2.8 years and 2.6 years for boys and girls respectively (Rose et al., 1996).

A study by Rose et al., (1996) showed that repetition speeds up the rate of drop out. It was found that a larger proportion of dropouts had repeated a grade than those who reached grade six. Further, children reported that repetition in an earlier stage discouraged them from continuing their studies. This finding suggests that early failure experience could act as a major disincentive to persistence in school. Given the fact that the highest rate of repetition occurs in grade one, it can be said that a considerable number of children are faced with the risk of dropping out of school.

Data on the rate of survival of children suggest that the number of survivors in the system decreases as we go up the ladder. For example, the EMIS statistics on the rate of survival in the system for 1996/97 indicate that of a cohort of 1000 pupils, 65% survived in grade one while only 43% did so in grade six. Similarly the survival rate was shown to drop from 60% in grade two to 47% in grade five. The trend has been a matter of considerable concern. The low rate of survival has been regarded as a great wastage in the system not only because most of those who drop out do so before acquiring literacy and numeracy but also their temporary enrollment in school was at the expense of those who remained outside the system because of lack of space (EMIS, 1998).

Similar patterns have been observed with respect to the rate of repetition. A significant proportion of children repeat at least one grade in the primary school. The majority (about 50%) of those who repeat a grade at this level do so at grade one. Trends in repetition show that more girls than boys repeat a grade in all grades; that the rate of repetition increases sharply after grade six; and that grade nine has the highest percentage of repeaters (EMIS, 1998).

Given such higher rates of dropout and repetition, the number of children completing their primary education (1-6) without causing wastage to the system has been relatively small. It is predicted that it will take 50% of those of who started school in 1993/94 eight years to complete their primary schooling causing the loss of resources for the extra two years they have to stay at school (Rose et al., 1996).

It should, however, be pointed out that schools in urban and rural areas tend to differ greatly in the rate of dropout and repetition. While the dropout rate appears to be higher for all grades in the rural areas of the country, the proportion of students who repeat grades in schools based in urban areas exceeds that of repeaters in rural schools. This pattern suggests that children in urban areas are more likely to continue schooling after repeating a grade while those in rural areas are more likely to drop out altogether (Rose et al., 1996).

There have been some attempts to examine the factors that influence the rate of enrollment, persistence and performance (e.g. Wanna and Tsion, 1994; Segid et al., 1991; Rose et al., 1996). A more comprehensive survey by Rose et al. (1996), for example, has led to the identification of several socio-economic factors which have a bearing on the three measures mentioned above. Thus, their investigation of the reasons underlying the poor performance of the system revealed that economic problems played a critical role in determining the trends observed in schooling. The economic factor took two forms: direct costs of schooling

and indirect opportunity costs of schooling. The evidence in the study suggested that lack of money to pay for school expenses (direct costs) and the demand for the child's labour in the household or on the farm (indirect costs) were the most important factors preventing the child from going to school in the first place. The same reasons are also believed to lie behind the high rate of dropouts and low performance of those who had the opportunity to go to school.

Another important factor which seems to have a strong influence on children's opportunity to go to school, their level of performance once they are there, and their likelihood to persist through the school system concerns their socio-economic status. Rose et al.'s study showed that poor families are more likely to face difficulty financing the schooling of their children, and what is more, they are the ones who are more likely to need the labour of children to supplement the income of the family. The fact that the socio-economic status of the children who were enrolled in school was higher than those who have never been to school is also suggestive of the strong link between family background and schooling opportunity. Another element of socio-economic status which has been found to influence a child's access to and performance in schools relates to parental background and support. Children who come from educated and more qualified parents have been shown to have greater chances of going to school and enjoying parental support in their schooling experiences than those whose parents are illiterate.

Although the above discussion of the factors underlying the current trends in schooling in Ethiopia is based on one study for reasons to do with the recentness and comprehensiveness of the report, there have also been other studies (e.g. Wanna and Tsion, 1994; Segid et al., 1991) that were conducted with similar aims. Most of the results produced by such studies are in harmony with the study by Rose et al. Another important point to mention though is that these studies provide some evidence on school-related factors in addition to the socio-

economic factors identified earlier in the discussion. For example, in examining gender disparity in education, Segid et al. (1991) looked at two sets of factors- i.e. contextual factors that are external to schools (e.g. demand for child labour and cultural beliefs, urban/rural environment etc.) and school factors (e.g. school size, shifts, teachers etc.). They found that certain school characteristics tended to affect the performance and degree of persistence of pupils. For instance, their results showed that girls' persistence in school was associated with the length of teachers' experience. That is the longer the experience the greater female persistence is likely to be. In addition, girls appeared to persist longer in situations where there is greater demand for schools and where there are larger schools to respond to such demands.

It is clear from the discussion so far that a host of economic, and social factors determine whether or not a child is sent to school in the first place, and how likely a child is to stay in the system and succeed once he or she is in it. It is equally clear that there is a great deal of social pressure operating against children having access to schools, performing better and persisting through the school system. Given the high rate of dropout and repetition among students who start school, it can be argued that a clearer understanding of the problem requires investigating the experiences of children as pupils with a view to establishing the role played by the school and classroom environment in determining their fate as students. In particular, it would be interesting to examine teacher classroom practices to determine their role in the process because what happens to children in the classroom has the potential of exacerbating the already worrisome situation by acting as a disincentive, to the say the least.

The low socio-economic status of the majority of children and the high opportunity cost have implications for how they will respond to the demands made by school and its environment. Given the fact that the opportunity cost increases as pupils get older, it will not take long for pupils in the late elementary and beyond to decide that their work and the

money they make is more important to them than staying in school, especially if what happens in schools and classrooms conveys to them the message that they are less likely to succeed in their schooling because they do not possess the qualities needed for success in school. For example, negative expectations conveyed by teachers in their dealings with students are likely to undermine the development of a healthy self-concept and positive attitude and motivation towards school and what school has to offer. The ultimate effect may be that students will decide to opt out of school in order to avoid failure and preserve their sense of self-worth and look for something that is more rewarding for them both psychologically and financially. In fact, the thrust of the argument which forms the basis of the present study is that the actions that teachers take have strong implications for how students approach learning, their performance and the level of persistence they are likely to show.

#### **1.4 The present study: objectives, rationale, and approach**

The high rate of dropout and repetition continues to cause much concern. Given the low level of economic and social development in which the country finds itself and the resultant scarcity of resources, it becomes extremely important to ensure that those who start school are provided with a supportive environment in order to be able to succeed and persist through the school at least until they get to the next earliest possible exit level. This is particularly important because it helps to avoid wastage associated with students discontinuing their studies before gaining the knowledge and skills that are prescribed for a particular cycle.

As indicated in Section 1.3 above, there have been some attempts to identify the causes for the slow performance of the education sector over the decades. Moreover, such attempts have to a greater degree concentrated on factors which operate external to school. While it is true that factors such as socio-economic status and home conditions are a strong influence

on student achievement, it could be argued that there are also within school factors which deserve equal attention because of the potential they have in influencing achievement and in contributing to the existing trends in education. In particular, it is argued that teachers are a strong influence on student achievement and achievement motivation.

The teacher is a significant figure in the classroom. It follows that the actions the teacher takes can have a strong impact on pupils. While individual behaviours of teachers are likely to have little effect on students, patterns of teacher behaviour can and do affect student performance and motivation to learn (Bellon et al., 1992). A particular aspect of teacher behaviour which appears to be an important influence on pupils' motivation relates to the expectations that teachers communicate to their students through their behaviour. As indicated in 1.1 above, the negative expectations communicated through patterns of teacher behaviour can have serious consequences for the performance, motivation, self-concept and persistence of students especially when these expectation cues are perceived and internalised by them. Thus, examining the daily experience of children in the classroom for evidence of counterproductive elements that may reinforce the external factors could be a worthwhile undertaking. Although such an investigation does not purport to provide direct evidence on why students fail or drop out, it is likely to contribute much to the broader understanding of the problem.

The present study seeks to investigate the extent to which EFL teachers in primary classrooms use feedback to communicate their expectations about the ability of individual students and identify the specific ways in which they use this aspect of classroom interaction in differentiating between students for whom they hold high and low expectations. The study also explores the relationship between observed teacher feedback behaviour and the perceptions held by students and the teacher regarding the phenomenon in question. The decision to include students' account of teacher behaviour is informed by the finding that it

is not just what teachers do but their perceptions of it that relate to their sense of self-worth and performance in school (Wigfield and Harold, 1992; Weinstein, 1989). Given the fact that English replaces children's mother tongue as a medium of instruction after grade six, their perception of their own ability in English is likely to have a stronger impact on their confidence to handle other subjects taught in it at later grades. As regards teacher's perception, the motivation for including teacher's point of view is to find out the extent to which teachers are aware of their own feedback practices and establish the degree to which they rely on their perceptions of students' ability in making choices about how to react to students response or lack of it. (A discussion of the theoretical considerations which framed the design of my study will be presented shortly).

The study addresses the following basic research questions:

**RQ1.** Does teacher feedback differ for students for whom the teacher holds high and low expectations?

**RQ2.** If so, what is the different nature of the feedback accorded high and low expectation students, and to what extent can the difference be attributed to the teacher's differential treatment?

**RQ3.** Do students see the teacher as providing different feedback to students he or she regards as high or low achiever?

**RQ4.** Does the teacher see himself as providing different feedback to students he or she considers to be high and low achievers?

There are a few points that need to be made about the basic research questions identified above. To start with, the formulation of the questions reflects an attempt to investigate the phenomenon from multiple perspectives. Thus, the study represents an attempt to paint a more complete picture of the feedback behaviour of teachers by looking at it from differing points of view, namely an observer, students and the teacher. By doing so, the study attempts to capture both an outsider's and insider's account of the issue. In addition, the

multiple perspective approach can serve the methodological purpose of enhancing the reliability of data through triangulation. Finally, the questions are intended to generate data concerning the observable behavioural aspects of the phenomenon as well as the invisible cognitive aspects of it.

At this point it would be in order to look at the theoretical assumptions that underpin the whole design of the study. Traditionally, the study of teaching involved relating what teachers do in the classroom (the process of teaching) with what students do or what happens to students (the product of learning), hence the process-product research (Dunkin and Biddle, 1974)). Research that was conducted along this line was based on the assumption that assessment of teacher behaviour provides an effective means of describing teaching and learning. Furthermore, such a program is based on a unidirectional model of influence (Shulman, 1986) and underscores the centrality of the teacher in the study of teaching and learning. Thus, the focus is on what the teacher does and little consideration is given to the role of students in the process. Although there is no denying that the teacher has a key role to play in the process, one can make a good case for including students in the investigation, as will be explained shortly. The process-product research, with its emphasis on teacher overt actions and with its tendency to break down the complex act of teaching into competencies, has been closely associated with the behaviourist view of teaching which regards “teaching as doing” (Freeman, 1996; Shulman, 1986).

The behaviourist view of teaching has been criticised for its tendency to oversimplify teaching by not paying enough attention to the role played by the understanding held by the participants in the process and thus failing to take account of the “messy” nature of the enterprise (Freeman, 1996; Shulman, 1986). The realisation that teaching is more complex than the picture painted by research within the process-product paradigm has led investigators to ask different sets of questions aimed at achieving deeper understanding of

the process by expanding the scope of investigation to include the invisible aspects of it. It is argued that a more complete understanding of teaching requires an approach that tries to relate overt actions to the thought processes that shape and accompany these observable behaviours (Clark and Peterson, 1986; Freeman, 1996).

The cognitive view of teaching looks at teaching as thinking and doing (Freeman, 1996:94). Research conducted along this line concentrates on the cognitive dimension of teaching in an attempt to capture the complexities of the classroom. Such a cognitive orientation is also consistent with the view that regards human behaviour, including teaching, as intentional and purposive. Further, researchers operating within the cognitive view of teaching make a strong case for placing teachers' perceptions of what they do (including their reasoning, beliefs and intentions) at the centre of research efforts to understand teaching fully (Freeman, 1996; Clark and Peterson, 1986).

Researchers following the process-product tradition have also been criticised for assuming a direct relationship between teaching and student outcomes (Shulman, 1986). Recently, however, there has been a growing emphasis on the role of student thought processes as mediating between teaching and learning (Knight and Waxman, 1991; Wittrock, 1986). While the process-product paradigm regarded teaching as the stimulus that causes direct learning responses from students, the student mediating paradigm is grounded on the recognition that how students perceive and react to instruction and classroom environment is a strong influence on students' academic achievement (Knight and Waxman, 1991). Explaining the assumptions surrounding the centrality of student cognition as suggested by the student-mediating program, Shulman wrote:

The learner responds to the instruction as transformed, as actively apprehended. Thus, to understand why learners respond (or fail to respond) as they do, ask not what they were taught, but what sense

they rendered of what they were taught. The consequence of teaching can only be understood as a function of what that teaching stimulates the learner to do with the material... Teaching is mediated by the sense the learner makes of the social context of the classroom situation- the way turns are distributed, the character of praise and blame, ... (1986:17).

The above quote highlights the argument that the meaning students attach to the events in the classroom is a critical variable in determining the effect of instruction on them.

The student-mediating paradigm also assumes that classroom processes that students experience may be quite different from those intended by the teacher or those observed by the researcher (Knight and Waxman, 1991; Block, 1996). This is because students are constantly engaged in an active interpretation of their teachers' behaviour. The recognition of this fact has led researchers (e.g. Weinstein, 1989) to conclude that student interpretations may be more important in explaining outcomes than observed behavior as the former appears to influence achievement more than the latter. While the jury is still out on the reliability and validity of student perceptions as measures of classroom processes, as Knight and Waxman (1991) argued, "students' perceptions, whether valid or not, affect their performance and therefore merit investigation" (p.242).

Before ending the discussion in this section, I would like to return to my study and briefly outline some of its major features in order to place it in a broader theoretical context. The first thing to mention is that it employs a more cognitive-oriented conceptualisation of teaching where teacher's actions are studied in conjunction with the thought processes that shape them as opposed to exclusive focus on overt behaviour. In addition, the stress on the cognitive side of teaching is evident in the attention given to student perception in the design of the study. This must be clear from the way the basic research questions have been framed.

While RQ1 and RQ2 focus on overt teacher behaviour, RQ3 and RQ4 address teacher and student interpretation of the actions.

In addition to focusing both on the observable and the less observable aspects of teaching, the study allows for an exploration of the phenomenon of interest in a way that combines both participants' and outsider's perspective. While questions asked about students' and teacher's perceptions (RQ 3 and RQ4) are intended to develop the emic perspective (i.e. the viewpoints of the participants), the questions aimed at generating behavioural data (RQ1 and RQ2) are meant to provide etic perspective (i.e. the researcher's perspective). Further, the multiple perspective approach adopted in the study permits the exploration of commonalities and points of contrast in the perceptions of three observers (Evertson and Green, 1986; Also see Block, 1996 for a similar approach).

With regards to the controversy surrounding the value of qualitative and quantitative forms of research on teaching, the present study dissociates itself from any extreme view which favours one to the point of ignoring the other. Instead, it commits itself to the view that calls for a qualitative-quantitative merger on the grounds that each serves a different purpose and the two seemingly opposite approaches can in fact produce different yet complementary pictures of the observed phenomenon (Evertson and Green, 1986). In addition, it adheres to the more pragmatic view which emphasises the need to match a specific research approach to the purpose of a given study and the research questions asked.

The present study investigates the issue of differential teacher treatment which in principle is likely to manifest itself both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Given this fact, it would be imprudent to show preference for one approach over the other as doing this would certainly constrain the study in some way. Thus, the study looks at the issue by adopting both

quantitative and qualitative stances. Moreover, it makes use of these two forms of inquiry both at the level of data collection and data analysis (Allwright and Bailey, 1991).

### **1.5 Organisation of the Thesis**

The following is a brief description of the contents of the remaining chapters.

#### *Chapter Two-Literature Survey I: Teacher Expectations*

In this chapter I discuss relevant works in the literature from the field of general education and educational psychology. In particular it reviews research on (a) teacher expectation effects and b) students' perceptions of differential teacher treatment of high and low achievers.

#### *Chapter Three-Literature Survey II: Feedback in EFL classrooms.*

This chapter is basically a continuation of the preceding chapter in that it also reviews related literature. Unlike the second chapter, however, Chapter Three confines itself to the discussion of the role of error correction in language classrooms. It presents a survey of the literature on (a) corrective feedback in natural conversations, and (b) correction in the language classroom. The chapter then identifies gaps in the literature surveyed both in Chapter Two and Chapter Three and identifies areas of investigation of the main study.

#### *Chapter Four: Data Collection*

This chapter discusses the methodological aspect of the study. It describes the research procedures employed in addressing the research questions asked in the study. In addition, it describes the pilot study and presents background information about the school, the teacher and the students involved in the study.

#### *Chapter Five: Data Analysis*

This chapter identifies the analytical frameworks used. It provides a description of the process involved in the construction of a coding system as well as the resultant observation

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system that was employed in analysing the behavioural data. It also provides a brief account of the type of analysis conducted on the questionnaire and interview data.

*Chapter Six- Observed Feedback Behaviour: Findings.*

This chapter presents the findings for the teacher behaviour research questions (RQ1 and RQ2).

*Chapter Seven-Student Perceptions of Differential Teacher Feedback: Findings.*

The findings for the research question which focuses on students' understanding of their teacher's feedback behaviour are given in this chapter. It discusses both the quantitative and qualitative data from the questionnaire and the interview.

*Chapter Eight-Teacher Perceptions of Differential Feedback: Findings.*

This chapter gives an account of the teacher's understanding of his own feedback behaviour. It reports findings based on interview and questionnaire.

*Chapter Nine-Summary, Discussion and Interpretation of Findings.*

This chapter discusses findings in the preceding chapters both in relation to each other and in relation to findings reported in previous studies. Besides, it discusses commonalities and conflicts in the accounts given by different observers of the phenomenon in question.

*Chapter Ten-Conclusion.*

This chapter begins with concluding remarks regarding the relationship between the findings pertaining to the behaviour of the teacher, his perceptions as well as students account of it. This is followed by a brief evaluation of the research process. Finally, implications for practice and further research are discussed.

## Chapter Two

### Literature Survey I: Teacher Expectations

#### 2.0 Introduction

In this section I wish to briefly discuss notions, issues and findings related to the practice investigated in the present study. In particular, I will discuss the notion of teacher expectation effect (2.1), and student perceptions of differential treatment (2.2). I propose to discuss each topic in a more generic sense of the terms. A survey of the literature that focuses on language teaching and learning appears in the second part of the review, namely Chapter Three.

#### 2.1 Teacher Expectation Effect

In this sub-section, I will discuss the origins of the study of teacher expectation effects, identify issues addressed, and trace more recent developments in the area.

##### 2.1.1 The start of research in teacher expectation effects

There appears to be a very high level of consensus among investigators (see for example, Brophy and Good, 1974; Good and Brophy, 1987; Rogers, 1986; Nash, 1976) as to when and how teacher expectation emerged as an area of research in education. This may not be surprising given the fact that it is now only about thirty years since the inception of the area as a line of inquiry that may be followed in attempts to understand and improve teaching.

It is widely acknowledged (see Rogers, 1986) that the start of the teacher expectation research is closely associated with the publication of a widely-publicised pioneering study by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968). It was an experimental study that was designed to address the hypothesis that teachers' expectations for their students could serve as self-fulfilling

prophecies. Pupils in this study were given an attainment test and their teachers were told that the test enabled the identification of certain pupils who were likely to make marked intellectual gains during the coming academic year (when, in fact, the pupils were randomly chosen). The results of a test that was given one year after the initial test showed that the students who were previously identified as intellectual boomers did indeed make greater gains in their scores than their peers. The authors interpreted the increased gains of the pupils in the experimental group as evidence of the self-fulfilling prophecy effect of the teachers' expectations for their students. Subsequent discussions, however, indicate that the study suffered from several methodological flaws making the findings suspect in many respects (See Rogers, 1986).

Hammersley (1986:xiii-xiv) in his introduction to *Case Studies in Classroom Research* summarised the criticisms of the study as follows. One of the major criticisms of Rosenthal and Jacobson's study was that the findings claimed by the study were based on artificially induced expectations rather than expectations that teachers naturally develop as a result of coming into contact with their pupils and working with them. (A more detailed discussion concerning the distinction between induced and naturally formed expectations appears in section 2.1.2). In addition, the study was criticised for failing to show the mechanisms by which teacher's expectations might affect pupils' academic performance. A third weakness of the study was that it emphasised only one dimension of teachers' expectations of their pupils with the result that it ignored other equally important dimensions such as the teachers' concern with pupils' classroom behaviour. In retrospect, such criticisms of the original study led to attempts to fill some of the gaps identified above (e.g. Hargreaves et al., 1986; Brophy and Good, 1970; 1986; Rist, 1986).

It is also worthy of note that responses to this pioneer work took various forms (criticisms of it being one of those, of course). For example, numerous attempts were made to replicate

the Pygmalion study (See Rogers, 1986; Good and Brophy, 1987). It also attracted a considerable amount of attention from researchers and it soon proved to be significant in terms of providing a promising area of research and a plausible hypothesis for examining the relationship between teaching and achievement.

In spite of the enormous interest the Pygmalion study was able to generate among researchers, it remains a fact that subsequent studies produced mixed results (see Rogers 1986). One might argue that the significance of the original study lies not in its capacity to provide answers to long standing questions concerning the complexities involved in the teaching -learning process, but in its success in terms of creating a major area of research which still continues to be of great productivity. There is also evidence to suggest that this avenue of research represents one of the fast growing areas of research in education. For example, the number of published papers that examined the teacher expectation effect was estimated to be somewhere between 300-400 for the period covering 1968 and 1985 (Meyer, 1985). Meyer speculated that at least another 400 studies existed that had not been published for one reason or another when he wrote the article *Summary, Integration, and Perspective* that appeared in Dusek (1985). It still continues to be an active area of research and more recent research in the area is characterised by the diversity of the issues addressed by investigators in the field.

I now move on to the discussion of the types of teacher expectations and their effects.

### **2.1.2. Types of Teacher Expectations and Expectation Effects**

The literature (See reviews by, for example, Mitman and Snow, 1985; Rogers, 1986, Good and Brophy, 1987) suggests that two types of teacher expectations have been used in studies of teacher expectation effects. These are induced and naturally formed teacher expectations. Induced expectation is thought to occur when teachers are provided with false information

in which a randomly selected subset of students are presented as having obtained high scores on measures of academic skills or academic potential. In contrast, as the self-explanatory nature of the term might indicate, naturally formed teacher expectations are free from researcher manipulations and refer to the expectations formed by the teachers as a result of their daily interaction with their students. While the first type is associated with experimental studies of teacher expectation effects (an example of which may be the pioneer study by Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) described above), the second type seems to dominate correlational studies in the area (See Mitman and Snow, 1985).

Although there are several potential student dimensions (e.g. motivation, etc.) of the expectation phenomenon that can be examined, the focus of research in the area seems to have been limited to expectations about academic performance (Brophy, 1985a). It is also worthy of note that there appears to be some variation in the ways in which studies used the academic focused criteria in trying to obtain a measure of teacher expectations. One source of difference relates to variations in the conceptions of teacher expectation and teacher expectancy effects (see Cooper, 1985).

The literature contains numerous operational definitions of the term “teacher expectations” that have been employed in studies dealing with the notion of teacher expectations. A more comprehensive review of the conceptions of teacher expectations and other related concepts in the area appears in Cooper (1985). The definitions of the term fall into four general classes as loosely categorised by this reviewer. These conceptualisations in brief are as follows: The first type of definition is aimed at obtaining measures of ability or achievement expectations by asking teachers to rate their students according to their general competencies or their performance in a particular achievement domain. Achievement and performance expectations are thought to be similar in that they both contain a large ability expectation component. They are also similar in that they both focus on present competence

as teachers are asked to rate their students as they presently appear to be not to extrapolate about their future performance as the word expectation seems to suggest.

The second conception of teacher expectations refers to measures of expected improvement. The focus of this type of measure is on expected change in students' competence as teachers are asked to make predictions about the amount of academic progress their students will make over a given period of time. Unlike the first conception, this conception of expectation appears to be similar to the typical meaning of the word "expectation" as used in everyday language.

The third type of definition which is commonly used in experimental studies of teacher expectation involves manipulated expectation. As pointed out earlier, in this type of measure of expectation, the experimenter tries to induce artificial expectations on teachers by providing false information about students' ability or potential improvement. The idea is to create a clear gap between teacher perceptions of student ability and the student's actual level of competence or potential.

Finally, there is the operational definition that treats expectation as a measure of the natural discrepancy that exists between the teacher's perception and a student's performance. This type of measure tries to establish the extent to which the teacher over or underestimates a student's performance. This may be viewed as the naturalistic analogue to manipulated expectations as used in experimental studies.

Along with the four definitions exist two types of expectation effects (Good and Brophy, 1987) the distinction of which is crucial in terms of deciding which operational definition of teacher expectation is suitable for a certain study. Self-fulfilling prophecy effect exists when an initially false information leads to some behaviour which makes the originally false

information come true (Good and Brophy, 1987). In other words, a self fulfilling prophecy effect occurs in the classroom when a teacher holds wrong expectation about a student's potential, treats this false belief as correct by acting in accordance with it, which in turn evokes student behaviour which matches the initially wrong expectation. The second type of teacher expectation effect which is known as the sustaining effect occurs when the teacher works to maintain the existing level of student performance by ignoring changes in student performance that may have resulted from other sources. This kind of effect doesn't imply an initially wrong expectation. In fact, for it to be a sustaining effect it is important that the teacher has a fairly accurate expectation (Cooper, 1979; 1985).

I will now turn to the discussion of the issues associated with measuring teacher expectations.

### **2.1.3 Measuring Teacher Expectations**

One of the methodological issues involved in studies of teacher expectation effect concerns the measurement of teacher expectations for student performance or achievement. In experimental studies, (as indicated above) the typical procedure followed requires the experimenter to provide participating teachers with false information indicating that a certain subset of their students showed a superior performance on tests designed to measure the academic skills or potential of students (Mitman and Snow 1985; Rogers, 1986). Thus, the experimenter randomly chooses certain students from the experimental group and falsely describes them as intellectual bloomers in order to induce positive expectation on the teacher. The assumption underlying such a procedure is that the teachers will adopt the expectation inducing information they receive from the experimenter.

However, it is still doubtful if teachers actually do adopt the expectations intended by the experimenter. In fact, it is hard to expect teachers to stick to the experimenter induced expectations ignoring the information they derive from their contact with their students and

the classroom behaviour of their students which may be at odds with the status implied by the experimental treatment. This problem has often undermined the validity of experimental studies of teacher expectation effects (see Mitman and Snow, 1985).

Other studies especially correlational studies have overcome some of the shortcomings associated with experimental manipulations by collecting data on measures of naturally formed teacher expectancies. The focus of such studies is therefore on describing the state of nature rather than manipulating it (Mitman and Snow, 1985). This approach has the added advantage of widening the scope of the investigation in the sense that it makes it possible to look at both negative and positive expectation effects. This is in sharp contrast with the experimental approach where considerations of ethical matters force the investigator to concentrate on positive expectation effects only.

One of the most common ways in which studies that used teachers' naturally formed expectations attempted to measure expectations was to ask teachers to rank order their students on a presented list according to some criteria, usually expected overall academic achievement. While it is in principle possible to use more specific criteria for ranking, in most studies the criteria is stated broadly in order to encourage teachers to base their ranking on global perceptions (see Rogers, 1986; Mitman and Snow, 1985). In addition, some investigators (e.g. Brophy and Good, 1986a) chose to keep the instructions for ranking deliberately vague in order to allow teachers to use 'their own complex subjective criteria in making judgments' (p214). The resultant ranking is then used to identify groups of students with different levels of expectation. For example, the high and low expectation groups may be selected for special study by taking the top and bottom students (Brophy and Good, 1970).

Several advantages have been claimed for the use of ranking in measuring teacher expectations. Mitman and Snow (1985) summarised the advantages of the method as follows: One advantage is that it is not prone to many of the response bias problems inherent in alternative procedures such as rating. Another advantage is that it offers a more reliable and accurate way of measuring teachers' perceptions as teacher rankings and student actual scores have been shown to correlate very much. A further advantage is that teacher's ratings of the same students are stable across time.

The procedure is not, however, without shortcomings. One defect relates to the argument that the ranking method may not have a reality in the teacher's mind. Mitman and Snow (1985) argued that the ranking method "forces students onto an ordinal scale, whereas teachers may perceive students as being grouped in a few categories"(p116). It is argued that teachers generally tend to think of their students in terms of a few ability-based groupings rather than making finer distinctions between students' ability as the ordinal scale might suggest. This is probably evident in the way they talk about their students' potential; they often use a limited number of labels in describing students with a wide range of abilities. In view of such observations, one could hypothesise that teachers are more likely to refer to these broad categories rather than the more differentiated hierarchy suggested by the ordinal scale in planning and delivering instruction as well as in making interactive decisions in the classroom.

At this point it would be in order to point out that there has been some variation among studies of teacher expectations in terms of the number of expectation groups that are used. While some studies (e.g. Wenstein, 1976) dealt with three expectation groups namely high achievers, middle achievers and low achievers, several others (e. g. Babad, 1990; Brophy and Good 1970, 1986a) concentrated on two expectation groups, typically highs and lows. Part of the thinking behind the use of two groups representing the two extremes relates to

the contention that these two groups appear to be more salient in the classroom compared with the group in between. It is also generally felt that the middle group are less prominent compared with the other two groups who seem to stand out in the impressions held by teachers of students in their respective classes. Brophy and Good (1986a:225) wrote:

... the middle group is less salient in the classroom than the high and low groups, and teachers are usually more detached and unemotional when dealing with them. Middles tend not to make so strong an impression on teachers as highs and lows, and they do not provoke so much emotional response from the teachers.

This observation is also consistent with the argument that the teacher's feedback practice has the strongest impact on the perceptions of the two extreme groups (Cooper, 1977).

Another crucial issue in the measurement of teacher expectations relates to the time of the school year when measurements of expectations are taken (Cooper, 1985; Dusek and Joseph, 1985). The issue of time becomes crucial when one considers the fact that the passage of time will affect the nature of the expectations teachers form about their students and the degree to which they are committed to their perceptions of their students' characteristics (Hargreaves et al., 1986). Moreover, one would imagine aspects of teacher expectation such as the sources, amount and quality of achievement-related information to change as school year progresses. There is also evidence to suggest that the process of expectation formation involves several stages which occur at various points in the school year (Hargreaves et al. 1986; Rist, 1986).

Research has identified four periods of the school year which have some bearing on the nature of the expectations that teachers form about their students' potential (see Cooper, 1985:141). The first week of the school year appears to be characterized by the unstable and ill-defined nature of the expectations. This is also the stage where teachers tend to be more

open -minded and flexible in terms of gathering information that could potentially lead to the modification of earlier expectations. In studying reading group membership in first grade classrooms, Weinstein (1976) observed that stratification in to reading groups was ‘an evolving process, with the largest percentage of change occurring during the first few weeks of school.

The second period runs from the second week through the second month and is thought to be the period during which teacher expectations may have their greatest impact on student performance. Cooper (1985) argued that the potential for self-fulfilling prophecy type of effect may be greater if inaccurate expectations are allowed to last through the first couple of weeks of the school year.

The next period, according to Cooper, covers the period between the third through eighth month. During this time the potential for inaccurate expectations which may lead to the self-fulfilling prophecy effect is thought to decline dramatically. On the other hand, this period is assumed to be very significant in terms of the greater likelihood of the sustaining effect of teacher expectations as opposed to the self-fulfilling prophecy effect. This is because it is hard for the teacher to harbour inaccurate expectations for more than two or three months in the face of evidence suggesting a contradiction between his or her expectations and actual student behaviour. Similarly, a congruency between expectation and student behaviour may also result from the student changing his or her behaviour to confirm to the expectations communicated by the teacher without requiring the teacher to alter the original perceptions.

Finally, the ninth or final month represents another period in the school year which is thought to be sensitive in terms of the communication of teacher expectations. This is particularly true of within-class expectation effects as opposed to between-class expectation effects. Cooper and Good (1983) observed a decrease in within-class expectation effects but

some increase in between-class expectation effects in this final period. In this final period teachers seem to be more concerned about the progress of their students as a group relative to other groups. For example, teachers may begin to think about their pace of instruction with the class in general and decide to quicken it if they feel the group can accomplish more than they already have or if they realise that they are falling behind the schedule in terms of finishing the prescribed material for the particular level they are teaching.

#### **2.1.4 More Recent Developments: Major Themes/Issues**

One finding that became increasingly clear from research in the area of teacher expectations is that teachers do, indeed, form expectations for student performance and social skills (see Braun, 1976; Dusek, 1985). This in turn has led to the hypothesis that teachers may positively or negatively influence the education of children (Rist, 1970). Given this possibility, research efforts have been increased as the issue of teacher expectation took on a more practical orientation. Investigators interested in the area have raised several issues and addressed numerous fundamental questions. In this sub-section I propose to sketch the areas of emphasis within the teacher expectation research in terms of identifying some of the major themes, issues and concerns that are prominent in the literature.

##### **2.1.4.1. Bases of Teacher Expectations**

One distinct line of investigation within the area of teacher expectation effects concerns the issue of how teachers form expectations for student achievement. Researchers interested in this issue have examined the contributions of individual difference variables such as social class (Rist, 1986) to the expectancies teachers hold for students. In addition, they sought to assess whether and to what extent information such as previous teacher's estimates of likely success, test scores, and family background information were used by teachers as a basis for developing their expectations for students' achievement (Dusek and Joseph, 1983; 1985).

Dusek and Joseph (1985) conducted a meta-analysis of research aimed to assess the types of information which serve as a basis for teachers when forming expectations for student academic performance, social relations and personality development. They considered 77 studies in their review. The meta-analysis revealed that the bulk of research into the bases of teacher expectations was directed at one of the of the following ten potential influence on teacher expectancies: physical attractiveness, student classroom conduct, cumulative folder information, social class, gender, one-vs. two-parent family situation, older sibling's previous performance, sex-role behaviour and name stereotypes. The conclusions drawn from the meta-analysis indicated that of the ten potential sources or student characteristics, five (attractiveness, student conduct, cumulative folder information, race and social class) were related significantly to teacher expectancies, two (gender and one family situation) were not while the data were equivocal for the remaining three (older sibling's previous performance, sex role behaviour and name stereotypes).

Furthermore, the results of the meta-analysis suggested that teachers are selective in the type of information they attend to in forming expectations. They rely on academically relevant sources in developing expectations for their pupils' academic achievement. For example, of the five bases related to teacher expectancies, folder information and student conduct, are thought to be more objective and academically relevant sources. Thus, it may be argued that teachers use information obtained from such dependable sources in program planning for students and assessing the individual student's needs. These types of information are also regarded as highly reliable (Cooper, 1979).

However, teachers may resort to information about socio-economic status and race when forming initial impressions in the absence of more academically relevant sources. Interestingly, gender failed to relate to teacher expectancies although findings from studies

of classroom interaction (e. g. Brophy and Good, 1970; 1974) suggest that there are gender differences in student-teacher interactions.

While the finding about the formation of expectations is not unique to teachers and may best be regarded as an extension of what is practised outside school (Rogers, 1986), the possibility that teachers may positively or negatively influence the achievement of some children has led several investigators to examine the nature of the process, and the hypothesised causal relationship. In the following sub-section, I discuss the ways in which teacher expectations may influence teacher behaviour, student achievement and other aspects of student behaviour.

#### **2.1.4.2 Teachers' Expectations and Students' Achievement**

Since the publication of the results of the Pygmalion study in 1968 (see section 2.1.1 above), the area of teacher expectation effect has attracted a good deal of attention from theorists and researchers. One major goal of earlier work within this area was to document the existence of teacher expectation effects on student achievement. Research that set out to achieve this goal abound the literature (See reviews by Braun, 1976; Brophy, 1983; Brophy and Good, 1974; Cooper, 1979). The findings in this literature were summarised by Brophy (1983) as follows. The first finding to emerge was that teacher expectations can and sometimes do have self-fulfilling prophecy effects on student achievement. However, the effects are limited in magnitude. In fact, effects are believed to be small accounting for about 5% of difference in performance. This is because while the self-fulfilling effect of teacher expectations occurs when teachers harbour inaccurate perceptions and cling to them, teachers generally hold accurate perceptions of their students' ability and constantly update and correct them in the light of new information. That means a greater degree of self-fulfilling prophecy effect is less likely as the situation that gives birth to it is more or less non-existent in most classrooms.

Another finding is that individual differences among teachers will affect the size of teacher expectation effects. Since teachers differ in their susceptibility to inaccurate perceptions, significant self-fulfilling prophecy effects are noted in classrooms of teachers whose expectations are frequently inaccurate yet rigidly held. A further conclusion drawn from the survey of the literature is that most teacher expectation effects are negative and manifest themselves in terms of reduced achievement rather than enhanced achievement. Finally, it is hard to predict the ultimate effects of a particular teacher expectation on the basis of its existence only. Apart from knowledge of the expectation itself, such prediction requires information about what actions the teacher takes in response to his expectations and about how the students respond to the actions taken by the teacher.

Another line of inquiry followed by researchers interested in the teacher expectation phenomenon involved the investigation of the mechanisms that mediate teacher expectation effects and their relative size. In particular, research conducted along this line has been concerned with the examination of teacher-student interactions with a view to documenting the ways in which teachers interact with students who are perceived by the teacher as differing in their levels of achievement (See Brophy, 1985b). A key assumption underlying such studies is that once teachers have formed differential expectations for different students, they communicate these expectations through their behaviours towards them. Thus, the emphasis of studies in this category is not on the existence or strength of teacher expectation effects, but on how they are mediated when they occur (Brophy, 1985a).

Studies of how teachers communicate expectations (reviewed and referenced in Good and Brophy, 1987) indicate that teachers can communicate their expectations in a variety of ways. On the basis of several literature reviews, Good and Brophy suggested that the following behaviours sometimes indicate differential teacher treatment of high and low achievers:

- Waiting less time for lows to answer questions before giving the answer or calling on someone else;
- Giving lows answers or calling on someone else rather than trying to improve their responses by giving clues or repeating or rephrasing questions;
- Providing inappropriate reinforcement (e.g., rewarding inappropriate behaviour or incorrect answers by lows);
- Criticising lows more often for failure;
- Praising lows less often for success;
- Failing to give feedback to the public responses of lows;
- Paying less attention to lows or interacting with them less frequently;
- Calling on lows less often to respond to questions or asking only easier, nonanalytical questions;
- Seating lows further from the teacher;
- Demanding less from the lows (e.g., teaching them less content: accepting lower quality or even incorrect responses from lows; providing excessive sympathy or unneeded help);
- Interacting with lows more privately than publicly, and monitoring and structuring their activities more closely;
- Grading tests or assignments differently (e.g., highs not lows are given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases);
- Engaging in less friendly interaction with lows, including less smiling and fewer other nonverbal indicators of support;
- Providing briefer and less informative feedback to questions of lows;
- Using less eye contact and other nonverbal communication of attention and responsiveness (forward lean, positive head nodding) in interactions with lows;
- Using less effective and time-consuming instructional methods with lows when time is limited;

- Accepting and using lows' ideas less often; and
- Exposing lows to an impoverished curriculum (e.g., limited and repetitive information, emphasis on factual recitation).

These findings point to the possibility that teacher expectation effects can take two basic forms: direct and indirect (Brophy, 1983; 1985b). Effects that manifest themselves in terms of influences on opportunity to learn the material may be viewed as direct mediators of teacher expectation. On the other hand, the effect can be mediated indirectly through influences on student attitudes and motivation. Next, I discuss the various models proposed by different researchers to explain the process.

#### **2.1.4.3. Models of Teacher Expectation Effect**

In addition to attempts to establish the mechanisms that mediate teacher expectation effects, researchers have also focused their efforts on theory building. In particular, several investigators (e.g. Brophy and Good, 1970; Cooper, 1979; see also Cooper ,1985; Brophy, 1985b for a comprehensive review of models proposed by different researchers) have tried to provide conceptual models for explaining the hypothesized effects of teacher expectations on teacher behaviour and aspects of student behaviour including achievement. While a detailed discussion of the efforts made by researchers and theorists to develop conceptual models of the teacher expectation effects falls outside the scope of this chapter, a brief account of some of the prominent models in the literature would be in order.

One such model comes from Brophy and Good (1970; 1974). This model involves the following major steps: (1) The teacher forms differential expectations predicting specific behaviour and achievement for each student: (2) because of these expectations, the teacher behaves differently toward each student; (3) this treatment informs each student about the behaviour and achievement expected from him/her; (4) if teacher treatment is consistent over

time and if students do not actively resist or change it, it will likely affect student self-concept, achievement motivation, level of aspiration, classroom conduct, and interactions with the teacher; (5) these effects generally will complement and reinforce the teacher's expectations, so that students will conform to these expectations more than they might have otherwise; (6) ultimately, this will make a difference in student achievement and other outcomes, indicating that teacher expectations can function as self-fulfilling prophecies.

As Cooper (1985) noted, the theoretical contribution of the Brophy and Good model resides in its recognition that teacher expectations affect student performance only when they translate into consistent patterns of behaviour and when students incorporate this information into their self-concepts. The authors were also quick to point out that not all teachers treat high and low expectation students differently and teacher expectations do not necessarily translate into behaviour. In addition, many of the differences in teacher treatment are not necessarily indicative of inadequate teaching. In spite of the theoretical advances in it, the model was also limited in at least two ways (Brophy, 1985b). First, by limiting its focus on achievement and related outcomes it failed to take in to account other dimensions (e.g. student conduct, motivations). Second, it failed to address the complexities introduced by individual differences in perception and interpretation of behaviour.

While the Brophy-Good model offered a conceptualisation of the process in terms of a sequence of steps underlying the expectation communication, an alternative model presented by Rosenthal (1974) cited in Cooper, 1985) identified four general factors (climate, feedback, input, and output) which might subsume a range of specific behaviours involved in the communication of expectations. In particular, the four-factor model focuses on positive self-fulfilling prophecy effects and suggests that teachers could enhance student achievement by:

1. creating particularly warm social emotional relationships with their students (climate).
2. giving them more feedback about their performance (feedback).
3. teaching them more and more difficult material (input).
4. giving them more opportunities to respond and to ask questions (output).

Broadly speaking, Rosenthal's model contains four general hypotheses that correspond to the categorization employed in conceptualising the process. To the extent that teachers provide highs with warmer social climate, more informative feedback, more and quality instructional material, and more opportunities for interacting in the classroom, the highs are very likely to make more progress than lows.

Another useful but more complex model has been proposed by Darley and Fazio (1980). Although Darley and Fazio's model was developed to explain the expectation effects in general social interaction, it has been paraphrased to specifically account for teacher expectation effects on students as follows: (1) The teacher forms a set of expectations about the student using information derived from the student's status characteristics, past behaviour or accomplishments, and observations of present behaviour or accomplishments. (2) These expectations influence the way the teacher interacts with the student. (3) The student interprets the meanings of the teacher's behaviour. If and to the extent that the student perceived the behaviour as resulting from factors specific to him or her (rather than being attributed to the teacher's general predisposition or typical responses to situations that the student happened to be in), the student will come to expect similar treatment from the teacher in the future. (4) The student will respond to the teacher's behaviour in accordance with his or her interpretations of the teacher's behaviour. Thus, he may respond in ways that confirm the teacher's expectations (especially if the expectation cues implied in the teacher's actions match the student's self-image) or behave in ways that disconfirm them where the signal is considered unacceptable. (5) The teacher interprets the meaning of the student's

response. Given the tendency for people to like to maintain their expectations once they have been formed and their bias against dropping them too easily, student responses which are congruent with the teacher's expectations are taken as confirmation of initial perceptions while those that contradict the expectation are attributed to situational factors rather than being taken as evidence of the initial expectations being incorrect. It may well be the case that it will take repeated and salient disconfirmation to change an entrenched expectation. (6) Finally, the student engages in interpreting his or her own response to the teacher and the inferences drawn from these actions will increase the students awareness of what he or she is like. Where students respond in ways that confirm the teacher's expectations, their self-image will also grow to follow the direction implied by the teacher's expectation.

Darley and Fazio's model shares several features with the model suggested by Brophy and Good (1974). For example, both try to explain the phenomenon by focusing attention on the cause-and-effect mechanisms involved. In addition, both represent conceptualisations in terms of a sequence steps underlying expectation effects. It must, however, be noted that there is a more explicit focus on causal attributions and subjective interpretations in the model proposed by Darley and Fazio. In addition, this model has tried to overcome the shortcomings of Brophy and Good's model in that it addresses some of the complications associated with individual differences in students (Brophy, 1985).

Another widely publicised contribution comes from Cooper (1979) who proposed a model in which findings relating to three factors (climate, feedback, and output) are systematically integrated to account for differential treatment of highs and lows in terms of their implications for the teacher's personal control over classroom interaction. It is argued that teachers concern about losing control of classroom interaction causes them to treat low achievers in ways that undermines their achievement motivation which in turn eventuates in the decline of their performance. The steps in Cooper's Communication Model are as

follows: (1) Variations in student ability and background lead teachers to form differential expectations for student performance. (2) These expectations, in conjunction with interaction context, influence teacher perceptions of control over student performance. Interactions initiated by low-expectation students, especially in public, are found least controllable and less likely to succeed. (3) Teacher perceptions of personal control influence classroom climate and choice of feedback contingencies. Teachers may be increasing personal control by creating a negative climate and feedback pattern for lows, and thus inhibiting low initiations. That is to say lows are more often praised and criticised for control purposes (external to student performance) and highs are more often evaluated with effort as the criterion (a personal cause). (4) Negative climate and feedback patterns may decrease student initiations. The negative patterns employed with low-expectation students then result in increased teacher control over interaction content (what the interaction is about), timing (when it occurs), and duration (how long it lasts). (5) Feedback contingencies also may influence student effort-outcome covariation beliefs. If lows are praised and criticised for reasons independent of their personal effort and for control purposes, they will probably see little link between personal effort and success although a belief in personal efficacy is a prerequisite for achievement motivation. (6) Finally, effort-outcome covariation beliefs may influence student performance. Noncontingent reinforcement was seen as causing negative affect and attitude, less persistence at tasks, and more frequent failure. The belief that reinforcement is not contingent on personal behaviour could lead to performance deterioration. (Cooper, 1979: 406).

Cooper (1979, 1985) was quick to point out that the model does not assume that teachers try to avoid low expectation students and make their environment free of effort or failure. It was also suggested that the systematic differences in feedback contingency choices were not the result of conscious decisions on the part of the teacher as their reactions to student performance were frequently spontaneous.

Another useful model comes from Good (1981) who suggests that teachers can cause the achievement of lows to decline progressively by behaving towards these students in ways that induce passivity in them. He identifies two mechanisms through which lows may be forced into non-participation. First, many of the behaviours of teachers towards lows force lows to adopt a coping mechanism that emphasises the need to maintain self-respect at the expense of achievement. For instance, the classroom practice where teachers call on lows less frequently, wait less time for them to respond (even though these students may need more time to think and to form an answer) criticise them more per incorrect answer, and praise them less per correct answer than they do for high students, may lead students to adopt a strategy where they would neither volunteer nor respond when called on. Thus, the very behaviours of teachers could encourage them to remain silent rather than risk unpleasant experience by taking chances under these threatening circumstances.

The second condition that is likely to impose passivity on low achievers concerns the high variability of teacher behaviour they have to cope with. There appears to be more variation between teachers in the way they interact with lows than highs. For example, teachers seem to differ greatly in the amount of criticism per incorrect answer and praise per correct answer they dispense. Some criticise lows more frequently and praise them less often while others prefer to do the opposite. In contrast, there are more similar patterns in the behaviour of different teachers towards highs. Lows are also more likely to be treated in an inconsistent manner by the same teacher over the school year than are highs. This may be because teaching lows requires more experimenting and adjusting of instructional strategies. The variability factor in conjunction with the risk reducing strategy mentioned above will ultimately force low achievers to seek refuge in silence to the detriment of their achievement. As Good noted, “as long as students feel there is more risk in making errors than there is pay off in learning, they will remain passive learners” (Good, 1981: 419).

There are some observations that can be made about the models proposed to explain the teacher expectation phenomenon. The first thing to say is that they are diverse and numerous (see Good and Brophy, 1987 for more models). The diversity and multiplicity of models may be suggestive of the complex nature of the phenomenon in question. The situation may also be indicative of the fact that the area of teacher expectation has been provocative and thus attracted many researchers as a fertile site for theorising (Dusek, 1985). The other thing to notice is that the models differed both in their focus and the theoretical propositions upon which they are based. This may be because each represents an attempt to understand and explain the phenomenon from differing angles. So, it would be wrong to view them as rivals competing with each other for acceptance.

Despite the fact that much seems to have been done with respect to providing researchers with theoretical framework that may be used in conducting research in the area, the majority of studies have concentrated on only a few aspects of the models available in the literature. That is to say while there is a considerable amount of research focusing on the aspect of the phenomenon which relates to the communication of expectations (see Good and Brophy, 1987), other aspects (e.g. the effects of teacher expectations on and behaviour upon student achievement, motivation, attitude etc) have received little research attention (Good, 1981). This is not, however, to suggest that no work has been done on the other components of the models. It is, for instance, interesting to note that there has been a growing interest among researchers to investigate students' interpretation of differential teacher treatment of highs and lows (see Weinstein, 1985, 1989). A review of research in the area appears next.

## **2.2 Student Perceptions of Differential Teacher Treatment**

Traditionally, studies of teaching have looked at the relationship between teacher behaviour and student achievement (See Brophy and Good, 1986b). This approach assumes that there is a direct link between teaching and learning. Recently, however, it has been argued that

teaching influences achievement through student thought processes (see Wittrock, 1986; Knight and Waxman, 1991). This approach, sometimes known as the student mediating paradigm, assumes that teaching is best understood by examining its effects upon the learners' thoughts that mediate achievement. Wittrock wrote,

In contrast to research that studies how teachers or instructional processes directly contribute to student achievement, research on students' thought processes examines how teaching or teachers influence what students think, believe, feel, say, or do that affects their achievement....the distinctive characteristic of the research on students' thought processes is the idea that teaching affects achievement through student thought processes. That is, teaching influences student thinking. Students' thinking mediates learning and achievement (Wittrock, 1986: 297).

Consistent with this perspective, investigators have examined the teacher expectation phenomenon through the eyes of students in the classroom (see Weinstein 1985 for a review). It is clear from the literature reviewed in the preceding section that several of the models that have been put forward to explain the teacher expectation effect highlight the important role played by the student in determining the outcomes of the differential expectations communicated by the teacher through his behaviour. The student mediation of classroom expectation effect emphasizes the hypothesis that teacher cues about expected achievement can influence a student's achievement and other student outcomes (e.g. self-view) only when perceived as well as understood by the target (Weinstein, 1989). In addition, it is assumed that teacher expectation effect can best be understood by examining its impact upon the learners' thought processes because the student plays a critical role in actualising teacher effects on achievement.

Part of the interest in the student mediating process was stimulated by some puzzling findings in mainstream studies of teacher expectation effects. Weinstein (1976) examined the

expectancy process and reading group membership in three first-grade classrooms. In this study, she found no consistent bias towards members of the highest reading group although the results showed that performance differences between reading groups widened over the first five months of the school year. Instead, she observed a tendency for the teacher to favour lows by dispensing more praise and less criticism to them. Yet, qualitative evidence in the data indicated that the teacher's comments addressed to highs reflected the teacher's favourable assessment of their ability. In addition, there were qualitative differences in the kinds of praise accorded the highs and the lows. This led to the general hypothesis that the solution to this riddle may lie in the cognition of students (Weinstein, 1989).

Weinstein and Middlestadt (1979) investigated whether students perceived differential treatment by teachers of high and low achievers. They developed a student questionnaire (the Teacher Treatment Inventory) to explore student perceptions of such treatment. In this study, Weinstein and Middlestadt asked two groups of children, Grades 1-3 and Grades 4-6, to rate 60 teacher behaviours as descriptive of a fictional male high or low achiever. In comparing the treatment profiles of the two types of students, it was found that students perceived differential treatment across one-quarter of the teacher behaviours studied.

The students saw the teacher as having high expectations and high academic demands for male high achievers. They also perceived high achievers as enjoying more privileges than their low achiever counterparts. In contrast, the children saw the male low achievers as receiving fewer chances to perform in class but greater teacher concern and vigilance. Students also reported that some behaviours such as giving clues and praise were accorded similarly to male high and low achievers. Overall, Weinstein and Middlestadt concluded that students do perceive some differential treatment by the teacher of male high and low achievers. Furthermore, they observed that this awareness of differential treatment was shared by students who differed in terms of sex, grade level, or self-concept of academic

attainment although it was also clear that perceptions were moderated by characteristics of the perceiver.

In a later study, Weinstein et al., (1982) examined student perceptions of teacher treatment toward male and female high and low achievers. A sample of 234 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders from 16 classrooms were asked to rate the frequency with which 44 teacher behaviours were accorded hypothetical male as well as female high and low achievers. The results provided further support to the earlier investigation. Students perceived lows as the recipients of more negative feedback and teacher direction, more work and rule orientation than high achievers who were described as receiving higher expectations for performance and success, more freedom of choice and greater opportunities. Such perceptions of differential treatment were observed regardless of the sex of the target student rated.

Brattesani et al., (1984) looked at student perceptions of their own treatment from the teacher. A sample of 101 third, fourth, and fifth graders in seven classrooms were asked to indicate how often their teacher worked in the ways described in a 44-item Teacher Treatment Inventory. In addition, they were asked to describe the treatment received by high and low achievers in their class. Again low expectation students described themselves as the recipients of more negative feedback and teacher direction, less opportunity and choice than did high expectation students. Further, students in perceived high-differential treatment classes appeared to be more likely to report such differences in the teacher's behaviour toward self than were those in low-differential treatment classes. This led Brattesani et al. to conclude that students' perceptions of their own treatment from the teacher appeared to match the expectation that their teacher holds for them in classrooms where student reports indicate greater availability of differential achievement clues from the teacher. Perceived differences in one's own treatment were also found to be congruent with student perceptions of differential treatment accorded high and low achievers (1984:245).

In a second study that examined the effect of teacher expectation on student expectations for achievement and on year-end achievement, Brattesani et al., (1984) found that student perceptions of differential treatment at a class level moderated the relationship between teacher expectations and student achievement. In classrooms with perceived low differential treatment, teacher expectation accounted for 1% to 5% of achievement variance while it explained an additional 9% to 18 % of the variance in student achievement in classrooms where greater availability of differential teacher treatment were reported. In other words, while the students in classrooms where the teacher was perceived as communicating little information about the differential student ability continued to perform at about the same level relative to their peers, students in high-differential treatment class showed a certain degree of variation in their performance. This finding is consistent with the student mediation model of teacher expectation effects mentioned earlier in this section.

A subsequent study by Weinstein (1989) confirmed these findings. In this study, Weinstein investigated the perceptions of older elementary school children from fourth through six grades. The participating students were all drawn from one age group in order to allow for a more systematic exploration of the effects of learner characteristics on perceptions. The findings from earlier studies (Weinstein, 1982; 1984) were replicated. The children did see difference in the way the teacher worked with highs and lows. Furthermore, this perception was shown to be shared by children who differed both in gender and ability.

The study also demonstrated that teacher practices provide children with clues about their ability. When asked about how they learned about their own level of achievement in school relative to their classmates, they referred to teacher practices (66% of the clues) as the source of information, as compared to self-evaluation, peer, or parental behaviour. It is also of interest to note that 79% of the teacher cues cited involved some form of feedback from the teacher. The study also reported a greater congruence between children's own

expectations and the expectations of the teacher in classrooms where children saw more ability-related cues from the teacher. This finding suggested that this information may be utilised by children in forming their own expectations for performance (1989:205).

Replicating and extending Weinstein's (1989) work on student perceptions, Babad (1990) carried out two experiments. While the first experiment involved comparing students' perceptions of their teachers' differential behaviour with the perceptions of the teachers themselves, the second one examined the effects of an experimental intervention in which teachers received feedback on areas of difference between their own and their students' perceptions. The results from the first experiment indicated that students and teachers were in agreement about lows being the recipients of more learning support (e.g. giving more wait time, explain mistakes and how to correct them, providing help) and less pressure (e.g. addressing difficult questions). However, they failed to reach consensus with respect to the provision of emotional support. While students felt that high achievers received more emotional support (e.g. praise, attention), the teacher saw himself as giving lows more such treatment than highs.

As regards the second experimental study, teachers were informed about the conflicts in perceptions demonstrated in the first study. In fact, the intervention involved a feedback session with each participating teacher where gaps in opinion were identified and their nature discussed. A post test questionnaire which was identical to the one used in the first study was administered three months after the first questionnaire. The results showed *slight* changes in the teacher's behaviour concerning emotional support. In addition, although the gaps between the perceptions of the two parties appeared to close slightly, there still continued to exist conflicting perceptions of emotional support.

Similar gaps exist between the perceptions of students and the findings from observational studies. For example, Weinstein and Middlestadt's (1979) finding that teacher behaviours such as the giving of clues and praise were perceived by students as accorded similarly to highs and lows (as indicated above) contradicts the finding from a study of teacher-student interaction by Brophy and Good (1970). As Weinstein and Middlestadt noted, part of the explanation for this may lie in the fact that students make subtle distinctions between specific teacher behaviours (e.g. praise) which are not captured by the coding systems used to assess the behaviours.

To conclude, the literature on student perceptions of teacher behaviour contains the following major findings as summarised by Weinstein (1985:338). First, students attend to both verbal and nonverbal cues from the teacher and are capable of making subtle distinctions between various functions of teacher behaviour. Second, they are aware of the differences in the teacher's treatment of highs and lows. Third, there are variations among classes in terms of the extent of perceived differential teacher treatment, which is great in some classes and minimal in others. Further, there is a tendency for students to underreport differential treatment when they are asked directly about their awareness of differential teacher treatment toward highs and lows or about their own differential treatment relative to others. Finally, there is a mismatch between students' perceptions of interactional frequencies and observed ratings of frequencies in certain areas. In contrast, it appears that student perceptions of such frequencies match teacher judgement.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

The literature reviewed so far comes from the field of general education and, as indicated at the beginning of the chapter, the issues introduced in the chapter have been treated at a more general level and are to be understood inclusively. Thus, given the similarities between different classrooms, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that most of the discussion in this

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chapter applies to a wide range of classrooms in the sense that the same questions can be asked about all subject classrooms based on the theoretical framework introduced in the chapter. At the same time it would be unwise to expect these questions to produce the same results in all classrooms. This is because subjects may have their own unique features as illustrated in Chapter One. One consequence of such speciality is that we have a distinct set of subject-specific literature in some domains.

The next Chapter, Chapter Three, looks at the literature on language teaching and learning with special reference to the notion of feedback.

## Chapter Three

### Literature Survey II: Feedback in Language Classrooms

#### 3.0 Introduction

The notion of feedback has remained at the heart of research efforts aimed at understanding the process of language learning as it occurs both in natural settings and in the classroom. This is because feedback has been regarded as a critical variable in language acquisition research. Part of the interest in feedback emanates from the assumption that feedback represents one of the language environments to which the learner is exposed (Dulay et al., 1982). In language acquisition research, feedback has been broadly defined as the listener's or reader's response to the learner's speech or writing. While this broader conceptualisation of feedback encompasses elements such as approval (positive feedback), correction (negative feedback) and expansion (modification of learner's speech), much research attention seems to have been devoted to correction and expansion (Dulay et al., 1982).

Research in the area of correction has been conducted with several aims and in various contexts. While there is a great deal of research which deals with teacher correction of students' errors (see Chaudron, 1988; Allwright and Bailey, 1991), not all studies of correction have been conducted in the context of language instruction. There have been several studies (e.g. Shegloff et al., 1977; Jefferson, 1987) which examined the phenomenon in the context of natural conversations occurring outside the classroom. The primary goal of such research has been to determine the nature and organisation of correction in normal conversations. Although the original motivation for such research has little to do with language instruction, it can be argued that this line of inquiry has been shown to make considerable contributions to our understanding of the phenomenon as it occurs in the context of language classrooms (See Van Lier, 1988, Kasper, 1985 for example).

The purpose of this particular chapter is to discuss relevant background issues to the study of error correction and briefly review research in the area including studies of correction conducted in the context of out-of-class talk. The chapter consists of three sections. The first section looks at studies of error correction in conversations outside the classroom. The second section looks at the role of error correction in language learning. In addition, it discusses research that examined teachers' reactions to errors made by learners. The last section locates a niche for the present study in the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the present one.

### **3.1 Corrective Feedback in Conversations Outside the Classroom**

Research into the nature of corrective activity in conversations that happen in social settings outside the classroom involved at least three kinds of context: NS-NS (native speaker-native speaker) conversations (e.g. Schegloff et al., 1977), NS-NNS (native speaker-nonnative speaker) conversations (e.g. Gaskill, 1980) and NNS-NNS (nonnative speaker-nonnative speaker) conversations (Schwartz 1980). This section provides a brief discussion of the general features of the corrections that occur in these three contexts.

#### **3.1.1 Correction in Native Speaker-Native Speaker Conversations**

Studies of correction in natural conversations have been conducted with the aim of determining the general nature of the phenomenon as it occurs in ordinary conversations involving people with different social and linguistic background. One such study comes from Schegloff et al., (1977) who explored the phenomenon using data obtained from conversations of adult native speakers of English. They found that correction may be done by the speaker of the problematic utterance or by a co-participant in the conversation. Further, their study revealed that correction is generally preceded by its initiation -i.e. noticing that there is a problematic item or a trouble source. The initiation may be done either by the producer of the error or by other interlocutors.

Such a characterisation of correction has led to the identification of four options that are available to the participants once an error occurs: (1) *self-initiated, self-completed repair* in which the speaker responsible for the trouble source notes the breakdown and fixes it himself or herself; (2) *other-initiated, self-completed repair*, in which the interlocutor identifies the trouble source and initiates the repair while the actual fixing of the trouble is done by the producer of the trouble himself or herself; (3) *self-initiated, other-completed repair*, where the participant responsible for the trouble source notices the problem and initiates the repair while the actual fixing of the trouble is done by the interlocutor; (4) *other-initiated, other-completed repair*, in which the interlocutor performs the task of identifying the trouble and providing the correction.

Schegloff et al. also observed that there is a preference for self-initiation and self-completion of repair in native speaker conversations. This led them to conclude that conversation is organised in such a way that it provides for self-correction before other corrections. Further, other-initiated other-completed repair has been shown to be a rare phenomenon in natural conversations. This is of course contrary to what happens in the language classroom where there is a high prevalence of other-initiated other-completed repair, especially in situations where language represents the main focus and content of the interaction (Kasper, 1985). The difference in patterns of repair in the two settings may at least partly be accounted for in terms of the linguistic knowledge of the participants. That is to say, while the conversation of native speakers involves participants who are linguistic equals, the classroom conversation takes place in a situation where linguistic knowledge is typically asymmetrically distributed between the teacher and students (Kasper, 1985).

In fact, Schegloff et al. were quick to point out a possible exception to their finding regarding the limited occurrence of other-corrections in conversations. They explained that this finding was based on conversations involving participants who did not differ much in

their level of competence in the language and social status (as they were all native speaker adults). Thus, they hypothesised that other-correction may be less infrequent in interactions where there is no symmetry between the participants' level of competence in the language. Examples include conversations between parent and child. However, they also argued that the change of pattern associated with conversations involving people with differing levels of competence may be because other-correction ceases to be an alternative to self-correction and begins to serve a different purpose-i.e. as a device for teaching the novice.

The hypothesis that people's correction behaviour may vary according to the level of competence attained by the individual participants in the conversation is of particular relevance to the present study. That is to say it is not hard to imagine certain parallels between natural conversations and the different types of interaction that unfold in the classroom. The teacher who is supposed to be the most knowledgeable person in the classroom may decide to offer greater opportunities for self-correction to students whom he considers to be competent in some areas while he may wish to concentrate on other-correction when dealing with the not-yet competent ones.

A study by Jefferson (1987) also provided useful descriptions of the correction process involved in natural conversations. In his analysis of NS-NS conversations, Jefferson suggested that correction as a device for repairing a problematic item in an ongoing talk could take two distinct forms, namely exposed correction and embedded correction. Exposed correction occurs when correction is accorded the status of interactional business in the conversation to the effect that whatever has been going prior to the offering of a correction is discontinued and utterances are occupied by the doing of correcting. Embedded correction, on the other hand, involves incorporating the correction into the ongoing talk without allowing it to emerge to the conversational surface or causing interruption to the flow of the interaction. Another feature of the correction that is done

outside the classroom is that the prior speaker may accept or reject the correction suggested by the next speaker.

In view of the findings from studies in natural conversations, it can be suggested that the correction that takes place in the classroom is characterised by the preponderance of exposed correction which the student has to learn not to reject. The asymmetrical nature of the classroom discourse and the special status of the teacher lead to a pattern of interaction in which correction emerges as an interactional business in its own right. Again applying the findings to the notion of teacher expectations one could speculate that teachers may provide different amounts of exposed and embedded correction to students whom they perceive as differing in their level of proficiency. I now turn to the issue of correction in NS-NNS conversations.

### **3.1.2 Correction in Conversations Involving Nonnative Speakers**

Given the gap that exists in the linguistic knowledge of non-native speakers of a language as well as the potential for a greater number problems of comprehension and production, one would logically expect NS-NNS conversations to exhibit a pattern of repair quite different from that reported in Schegloff et al.'s (1977) study. Put differently, one would expect NS-NNS conversations to resemble the teacher-student conversation in the classroom more than the natural conversation between two native speakers. In an attempt to explore the nature of correction in NS-NNS English conversation, Gaskill (1980) analysed data collected from the conversations between a non-native speaker (Iranian) and several native speakers. The main focus of the study was on *other-corrections*, which was broadly defined as the righting of both linguistic errors and errors pertaining to matters of content contained in the utterances of another speaker.

Surprisingly enough, the results of the analysis were consistent with the findings of the study by Schegloff and his colleague in the sense that *other-corrections* were relatively infrequent. Furthermore, the study produced evidence to suggest that *other-corrections* occur in specific environments and are often modulated. When they were not softened, Gaskill argued, they generally came after modulated corrections or following disagreement. A subsequent study by Day et al (1984), however, failed to discover similar restrictions in the use of unmodulated other-corrections.

Chun et al., (1982) examined the nature of the corrective feedback non-native speakers received from their native speaker counterparts in conversations that took place in social settings. More specifically, the study aimed to establish the types and frequencies of errors which native-speakers of English corrected during conversations with their NNS friends who were studying English as a second language. The study demonstrated that native speakers of English corrected only about 8% of the error made by their NNS friends. (Phonological errors were excluded from the study).

As to the types of error corrected, errors of factual nature were most often corrected followed by errors of discourse and vocabulary. Grammatical errors attracted the least correction from the native speakers. Another striking observation reported was that the percentage of errors corrected appeared to decrease as the level of student proficiency increased. For example, while they corrected 13.4% of the errors made by beginners, they did so with only 3 % of those committed by advanced learners.

Using the same data, Day et al. (1984) examined the strategies native speakers used in providing correction to their non-native speaker friends. Two strategies were identified: the use of on-record and off-record corrective feedback. An on-record correction was defined as a straightforward correction which occurs when the native speaker, in response to an

error, supplies correction with a declaratory intonation. Thus, an on-record correction had one unambiguous meaning or interpretation i.e.- that of correction. In this case, the likely reaction of the non-native speaker was often to repeat the correction or simply acknowledge it.

On the other hand, off-record corrections were ambiguous and thus could be interpreted in at least two ways: as a correction or as a continuing contribution to the conversation. Thus, they were indirect and implicit ways of providing corrective feedback and often involved the use of questions or statements aimed at sorting out the problem at hand. (The distinction made between two types of strategies corresponded to Jefferson's (1987) dichotomous classification of corrections as exposed and embedded). Comparing the frequency with which the two strategies were used, the study showed that native speakers used on-record (direct and unambiguous) corrections more often than they did off-record (indirect and ambiguous). In addition, the study suggested that there was a tendency for native speakers to use significantly more on-record strategies when responding to the errors made by beginning and intermediate subjects than they did when handling errors coming from advanced subjects.

It is widely assumed that correction benefits second language learning by providing learners with metalinguistic information that may go some way into their interlanguage development. Brock et al.'s (1986) study set out to establish the extent to which this assumption was valid. They used data from Day et al's (1984) study to examine the effect of corrective feedback supplied by native speakers on the subsequent output of non-native speakers. In particular, they investigated the relationship between certain types of native-speaker response to errors and subsequent alterations in non-native speaker speech in a given conversation.

Contrary to the general expectation that error correction aids language learning, the study failed to show any significant improvement in the subsequent speeches of the subjects as a result of the correction they were provided. The authors pessimistically concluded that corrective feedback has very little role to play in the process of language acquisition. However, as the authors acknowledged, the absence of short-term observable effect does not necessarily rule out the possibility of long term effects of corrective feedback. In fact, evidence from studies like Schmidt and Frota (1986) suggest that some native speaker corrections can have some value as an aid to acquisition, if only in the long run.

As mentioned in the opening paragraph of this section, the third context in which research into the nature of corrective feedback was carried out in non-educational settings involved conversations where all the participants were non-native speakers of English. For example, Schwartz (1980) analysed data collected from six nonnative speakers of English as they conversed in pairs. The results showed that, as in native speaker conversations, second language learners gave the speaker responsible for the trouble source repeated chances to repair his or her own speech. The study also produced some evidence to suggest that second language learners can benefit from the negotiations involved in *other-corrections*, which often seemed to occur when some kind of linguistic incompetence was causing the trouble.

Much of the research on correction comes from studies of language classrooms and other classroom-oriented studies. In the following section, I discuss such research and identify major theoretical issues in the area.

### **3.2 Feedback in the Language Classroom: Introduction**

One aspect of classroom interaction that has been a central point of interest for both language teachers and researchers relates to the notion of error treatment. A number of terms have been used to refer to this aspect of classroom interaction: 'feedback', 'repair',

and 'correction'. Although some times used arbitrarily in the literature, the choice of one term over the other seems to reflect considerations of the scope of the meaning covered by each term and the range of behaviours investigated. In reviewing the literature on error treatment, Ellis (1994) noted that the term feedback is generally used in a more inclusive fashion and refers to the information provided by listeners on the reception and comprehension of messages. Such use of the term corresponds to the broader definition of feedback given at the beginning of the chapter.

'Repair', on the other hand, is a narrower term used to refer to attempts to locate and fix communication problems including those that arise from linguistic errors. van Lier (1988) argued that repair may be viewed as a generic term covering 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, clueing and helping, explaining, and correction of errors. Correction is, therefore, one type of repair and is often associated with linguistic errors. It often involves replacing an error by a correct form or drawing learners' attention to the errors they have made.

Apart from the distinctions based on the scope of the meanings the terms cover, some authors argue that some terms are more appropriate than others. Allwright and Bailey (1991), for example, proposed the replacement of the term 'error correction' by 'error treatment' as the former implies a 'cure' in the sense that the learner, as a result of the treatment, will get something right in subsequent performances in a more sustained fashion. While the choice of one term over another is motivated by the desire to clearly understand and explain the phenomenon, the multiplicity of the terms used in the literature seems to indicate that one of the issues in the area is terminological.

The literature on error correction has addressed several fundamental questions. In the following subsections, I look at these questions in turn. It has to be pointed out at this stage that I will not commit myself to one single term in referring to the reaction of teachers to learner errors. Thus, I will be using the terms ‘error correction’ ‘error treatment’ and ‘corrective feedback’ interchangeably. I will, however, point out special uses of the terms as I go along.

### **3.2.1 The Role of Error Correction in Language Learning**

In this section, I discuss theoretical arguments and research evidence regarding the role of correction in promoting language acquisition. I will first look at arguments in favour and against the proposition that error correction facilitates language learning. While the discussion in the first subsection is mainly speculative in the sense that it just outlines theoretical propositions without making reference to specific studies, the second one looks at particular studies that were conducted to lend empirical support to some of the theoretical claims identified in the first subsection.

#### **3.2.1.1 Theoretical Arguments**

The idea that correction facilitates second language learning has been in the field of language teaching for quite a long time. Several arguments in favour of error correction have been documented. For example, after reviewing research in the area, Hendrickson (1978) concluded that correcting errors produced by second language learners improves their proficiency in the foreign language more so than when their errors remain uncorrected. This position seems to be in line with language acquisition theories (e.g. Schachter, 1984) which regard hypothesis-testing as a major phenomenon in the process of learning a language. The assumption is that learners will utilise the information available in corrective feedback to confirm, modify or reject their own hypothesis about how the language functions (Chaudron, 1988).

The idea of feedback as a vehicle for learning is also consistent with the view of language as a skill (Johnson, 1988; 1996). In this particular view of language, feedback is regarded as one of the main sources of information which guides learners in their attempts to improve their own performances. The information that potentially contributes to the learning process can be obtained from external sources such as teachers or other providers of models (extrinsic feedback). It is also possible that the information will be inherently available in the outcome of the behaviour itself (intrinsic feedback). In the context of second language classrooms, however, it seems that the teacher is the single most reliable provider of extrinsic feedback (Johnson, 1992).

Another justification for error correction concerns the desirability of metalinguistic input - i.e. "information provided to the learner that her utterance was in some way insufficient, deviant, unacceptable or not understandable to the native speaker" (Schachter, 1986:215). The sources of metalinguistic input according to Schachter (1984) are the whole set of responses ranging from explicit corrections at one end of a continuum, through confirmation checks and clarification requests to (recognised and unrecognised) failures to understand. It is argued that providing the learner with access to meta-linguistic information on what is impossible helps the learner to develop the appropriate constraints on his or her emerging grammar. What is more, information of this nature is thought to go a long way toward saving the learner from facing the dilemma of trying to figure out which non-occurring sentences could not occur (Schachter, 1986).

A further argument in favour of correction relates to the notion of input enhancement or consciousness-raising (Sharwood Smith, 1993). Although many current approaches to language teaching emphasise the need to provide learners with varied comprehensible input, some researchers still argue that it is still doubtful if only such naturalistic input will be enough to enable learners to achieve the desired level of competence (Schmidt and Frota,

1986; Schmidt, 1990). It has been argued that conscious attention to the linguistic input plays a crucial role in the processing of it.

One beneficial effect claimed for input enhancement is that it helps learners to ‘unlearn’ incorrect analysis of the L2 by supplying negative evidence, that is, information about forms which are not possible in the target language (White et al., 1991). Studies like Tomassello and Herron (1989) suggest that input enhancement in the form of negative evidence plays a crucial role in L2 acquisition in the classroom by enabling the learner to disconfirm wrong utterances resulting from incorrect generalisations or L1 transfer. White et al. (1991) argued that it is impossible to correct or disconfirm faulty utterances like these on the basis of the positive input. Furthermore, Sharwood Smith (1993:17) pointed out that “while input enhancement would simply make more salient certain correct forms in the input, negative input enhancement would flag given forms as incorrect, thus signaling to the learner that they have violated the target norm”. Thus, it is argued that one of the ways in which corrective feedback could benefit second language acquisition is by making the learner consciously attend to features of the language which he or she has not mastered.

It would be in order to point out at this stage that not all investigators agree on the role and desirability of error correction in second language learning. A notable exception is Krashen (1982) whose second language acquisition theory stipulates that comprehensible input is the single most important factor in the process. Thus, one way of facilitating acquisition, he argued, is by creating a learning environment in which the ‘affective filter’ is kept lower and the learners are open to the input. According to Krashen, some of the conditions that encourage acquisition include focusing on meaning rather than form, not insisting on early production (before the student is ready), not attempting to correct errors (especially in beginning stages and when using the spoken medium).

Krashen (1982) argued that focus on the code system and error correction are anathema to language acquisition in that they are bound to put the learner on the defensive. Trying to correct errors discourages acquisition by forcing the student to adopt a counter-productive strategy where he or she will try to avoid mistakes, take fewer risks and focus less on meaning and more on form. Another objection to the idea of using correction as a major technique of language teaching relates to the distinction he makes between learning and acquisition. One difference claimed between the two is that while learning deals with one's conscious knowledge of rules, acquisition takes place subconsciously. According to this model, acquisition (which is gained via comprehensible input) is responsible for most second language performances; one relies on one's acquired system to initiate utterances. It is therefore argued that error correction has a very limited role in the process because it contributes only to one's learned system which unfortunately is not capable of turning into acquisition.

In spite of the lack of consensus among educators concerning the efficacy of correction, it still remains true that error correction is one of the most common practices in language classrooms. Moreover, it appears that the provision of feedback continues to be regarded as an integral part of language teaching. In fact, Long (1977) reported that providing corrective feedback was one of only two characteristics found by Krashen and Seliger common to all language teaching methods known to be successful. While the popularity that correction as teaching tool enjoys may be suggestive of its perceived value in enhancing language learning, popularity may not be a reliable criteria for judging the worth of a technique. Thus, the validity of such popular perceptions needs to be established through research. In the next subsection, I briefly review research conducted along this line.

### 3.2.1.2 Empirical Research

In contrast to the large number of studies that investigated the nature of feedback in educational and social settings (cf. Ellis, 1994; Allwright and Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988), it appears that there have been fewer studies that examined the effect of corrective feedback on learning. This is not, however, to suggest that no significant research has been done in this direction. In fact, the literature contains several interesting studies that confronted the task of establishing empirical evidence on the potential effectiveness of corrective feedback on language learning.

Carroll and Swain (1993) conducted an experiment to determine the role of negative feedback on learning grammar. The study was an attempt to establish not only the extent to which corrective feedback helped learning but also the relative effects of explicit and implicit forms of feedback. The study demonstrated that the performance of learners who received negative feedback (both explicit and implicit) was superior to the performance of those in the 'no-feedback' comparison group. Another interesting finding was that explicit metalinguistic feedback in which errors were directly pointed out to learners and explanations of the generalisation in focus were given led to better performance. Feedback behaviours like simply telling students that they were wrong or other forms of indirect feedback such as providing the right forms was shown to be less effective than the explicit metalinguistic information. As Carroll and Swain noted, this is, of course, inconsistent with the claim that learning about the language has very little role in the process of learning the language.

The finding that error correction facilitates the learning of grammar is in harmony with the results of an earlier study by Tomassello and Herron (1989) who also found a beneficial effect for feedback, especially in terms of learning exceptions to overtly taught grammar rules. Tomassello and Herron (1989:392) claimed that "students learn best when they

produce a hypothesis and receive immediate feedback because this creates maximal conditions under which they may cognitively compare their own system to that of mature speakers” (p.392).

Whereas the above two studies were carried out in a classroom context where the focus of instruction seems to have been on language structures, other studies (e.g. Spada and Lightbown, 1993; Lightbown and Spada, 1990) examined the effect of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback in programs that were primarily communicative. Lightbown and Spada (1990), for example, conducted a study to establish the effects of form-focused instruction on learners receiving communicative instruction. Children in this program received instruction whose focus was on the use of meaning-based activities, the negotiation of meaning, and the provision of comprehensible input. However, the analysis of learner language data revealed that the performance of students was influenced by the individual teacher’s behaviour concerning form-focused instruction. That is to say teachers differed in terms of the total amount of time and attention they devoted to form-focused activities, which in turn led to differences in the accuracy with which learners used the structure in spontaneous speech. The study also showed that learners in classes where the teachers spent some time on specific structural items in their instruction or in correcting errors achieved greater accuracy in their production of some structures. This led the authors to conclude that corrective feedback can have a beneficial effect on learners’ language acquisition especially when given in the context of meaningful interaction.

In contrast to the studies which yielded results favouring the corrective practices in the classroom, other studies failed to uncover a clear positive relationship between correction and language learning. For example, in an experimental study that involved the learning of generalisations regulating suffixation in French, Carroll, Roberge and Swain (1992) found mixed results. While correction seemed to facilitate word learning, it was at the same time

shown to be of little value when it comes to the learning of structural generalisations related to word formation rules.

There have been some attempts to account for the inconsistencies in the results reported by several studies. Some researchers (e.g. Dekeyser, 1993; Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994) have argued that the degree of effectiveness of correction varies as a function of individual differences. In a study that attempted to determine the effects of error correction on L2 grammar knowledge and oral proficiency, Dekeyser (1994) found that correction does not lead to an 'across-the-board improvement' in second language achievement although it seemed to benefit some learners. The study also demonstrated that error correction interacted with factors like previous experience, aptitude, and anxiety in the sense that some individuals did better with and some without error correction.

It appears that after many years of research into the various aspects of language learning and teaching, there still remain several fundamental questions to which no definitive answer is available. The issue of whether or not to correct learner errors is by no means an exception. In spite of the relative lack of empirical evidence as well as the inconclusive nature of the research evidence produced so far, it is clear from our experience as teachers and learners that error correction continues to be one of the most popular classroom practices. Given such popularity, the issue for researchers has been to document the nature of the correction that students receive in the classroom. This has led them to raise a series of related questions which they confronted in their research. The next subsection looks at a few more of the issues addressed in the literature on error correction.

### **3.2.2 Further Issues in Error Correction**

In this section, I discuss a few more fundamental issues in the literature of error correction. Following other reviewers (e.g. Hendrickson, 1978; Chaudron, 1988; Allwright and Bailey,

1991), I have organised the content of this section into several parts that correspond to the fundamental questions addressed in the literature. These include: when should learner errors be corrected? (3.2.2.1); which learner errors should be corrected? (3.2.2.2); how should learner errors be corrected? (3.2.2.3); who should correct learner errors? (3.2.2.4).

### **3.2.2.1 When Should Learner Errors be Corrected?**

Research on error treatment (Allwright, 1975; Chaudron 1977; Long, 1977) has shown that once the teacher has decided to treat an error, the next major task he or she faces involves decisions about when to treat it. The teacher has at least three options at this stage (Long, 1977; Chaudron, 1977): (a) to deal with it immediately, which often means interrupting the student in the middle of an utterance, (b) to delay treatment which means waiting until the student finishes with the utterance or the message (c) to postpone treatment, which also includes treatment in future lessons. Thus, it can be said that the question of when to treat errors is ultimately a question of whether or not to interrupt the speaker in the middle of an utterance in order to correct faulty forms in the speaker's output.

Hendrickson (1978) argued that there are both affective and cognitive justifications for tolerating errors produced by language learners. It is argued that while tolerating some errors encourages students to take risks and develop more confidence in using the language, trying to correct each minor error is likely to destroy their confidence and erode their willingness to take risks. Further, Krashen (1982) argued that error correction can be detrimental to learning as it is likely to raise the affective filter. In fact, he claimed that it is a sure way of putting learners on the defensive, which in turn results in less acquisition from the input available to them.

Moreover, Hendrickson (1978) suggested that reserving error correction for manipulative grammar practice and tolerating more errors during communicative practice can have a

beneficial effect on the feelings and performance of learners. This claim is supported by the finding that students reacted negatively when a teacher tried to correct all their errors in response to their demand for such treatment (Cathcart and Olsen, 1976). These students complained that the constant correction that they received from their teacher prevented them from thinking coherently and producing longer chunks. In view of the undesirable effect associated with trying to correct errors indiscriminately, one wonders what to do with the errors and how best to deal with them when they occur. This issue is addressed in the next subsection.

### **3.2.2.2 Which Learner Errors Should be Corrected?**

It is an obvious fact that errors occur in the process of language learning. It is equally true that the quantity of errors that occur in the classroom is enormous. Krashen (1982), citing a study in which he was involved, pointed out that the rate of errors in compositions written by ESL learners was approximately one error for every five words. When the level of proficiency was considered, the ratio was one error for every ten words for the “better” student whereas the output of the least proficient student contained about one error for every two words. This rate refers to the written output and one expects the rate to be far higher in the oral output.

There is evidence to suggest that a considerable number of errors pass without any comment in the language classroom (Fanselow, 1977; Chaudron, 1986). There are a number of reasons for this. To begin with, the sheer amount of errors makes it impossible for the teacher to attend to all the errors that occur within the space of a lesson period. Another reason which is particularly true of non-native speakers refers to the gap in the teachers' knowledge of the target language. That is to say, as Allwright and Bailey (1991:102) pointed out, “a non-native speaking teacher's own target language grammar may not include the phonological, lexical, syntactic or discourse rules needed to recognise and treat all the

errors in the learner's output". Furthermore, a teacher may decide to ignore errors on the grounds that the learner is not ready in terms of his or her interlanguage development to make use of the correction provided. Finally, considerations of the pedagogic focus at the moment of error commission and the teacher's perception of the likely outcomes of treatment in terms of the error-making student's aptitude, personality, ability and sociometric status are also among the factors responsible for the existence of untreated errors in the classroom (Long, 1977).

In addition to those that are allowed to pass without correction due to the reasons mentioned above, a great number of errors still wait to be treated by the teacher. One likely consequence of the abundance of errors competing for treatment is that teachers will have difficulty deciding which errors to treat and which ones to ignore. Therefore, it becomes necessary for teachers to have a principled basis for a hierarchy of errors which they can use to determine what is important to correct (Burt and Kiparsky, 1974).

In response to the need for establishing pedagogical priorities, researchers (e.g. Hendrickson, 1978; Burt and Kiparsky, 1974) have proposed a variety of criteria for judging the relative importance of errors. Hendrickson (1978), for example, suggested that the following three types of errors deserve the greatest attention in the language classroom: "errors that seriously impair communication, errors that have stigmatizing effects upon the listener or reader, and errors that students produce frequently" (p.396). Others (Burt and Kiparsky, 1974) have suggested that errors that render communication difficult (global errors) should have priority over those that affect single elements or constituents (local errors). While frequency may not always be a good guide in deciding which errors to correct, the criteria which focus on the effects of communication are appealing.

In spite of the relative agreement among educators concerning the seriousness of errors that impede communication, research shows that teachers differ in terms of their perceptions of the relative seriousness of different kinds of errors (Green and Hecht, 1985; Hughes and Lascaratou, 1982; Kobayashi, 1992; Khalil, 1985). For example, Hughes and Lascaratou's (1982) study suggests that native speakers are more likely to base their judgements of error gravity on considerations of the effect of the error on the intelligibility of the utterance than their non-native speaker counterparts. Furthermore, research on error gravity shows that non-native speakers of a target language are less tolerant of learner errors than native speakers (See Ludwig, 1982).

### **3.2.2.3. How Should Learner Errors be Corrected?**

Several researchers have attempted to describe the feedback behaviours of language teachers and the options that are available to them once they have detected an error in a learner's utterance (Allwright, 1975; Fanselow, 1977; Chaudron, 1977; Long, 1977). For instance, Allwright (1975) identifies seven basic treatment options together with a further nine possible features. The basic options open to the teacher include: to treat or to ignore completely; to treat immediately or delay; to transfer treatment or not; to transfer to another individual, a sub-group or to the whole class; to return or not to original error maker after treatment; to call upon or permit another learner (or learners) to provide treatment. The aspects of treatment which he refers to as features deal with the purposes of treatment such as indicating the commission of an error; identifying the type of error committed; locating the error etc. Similar models have also been proposed by other researchers (e.g. Chaudron, 1977; Long, 1977).

Studies of the treatment of learner errors in the classroom have revealed several important features of teachers' feedback behaviour. Nystrom (1983) found that teachers differed in the way they reacted to learner errors depending on their teaching styles, their views of what

language teaching entails and what they considered as their responsibilities as language teachers. More importantly, however, research has also shown that teachers' feedback behaviour suffers from lack of clarity and inconsistency (Allwright, 1975; Fanselow, 1977).

In his study of teacher feedback on errors in oral work, Fanselow (1977) videotaped eleven experienced teachers giving lessons on the same grammatical structure. The analysis of the verbal and non-verbal behaviours of teachers revealed that teachers used a combination of different types of treatments, some of which were ambiguous. For example, there were instances where teachers said "fine" and at the same time "shook" their heads.

Another source of ambiguity concerns the multifunctionality of teacher feedback. A casual observation of the classroom reveals that certain feedback acts can serve different purposes (Chaudron, 1988). An example of a feedback act with multiple functions is repetition. Repetition following a learner error could be interpreted as a negative feedback intended to alert the error maker to a certain problem. It is also a normal procedure in the classroom for teachers to try to show approval of a student's utterance by repeating it. Although the intonation and other contextual features are likely to help make intentions clear, there is a potential confusion resulting from the use of repetition as an implicit feedback.

Another problem in the feedback behaviour of teachers concerns the inconsistency with which they react to errors that occur in the classroom (Allwright, 1975). For example, Fanselow (1977) found that teachers accepted incorrect responses in one part of a lesson and did not accept them in other parts of the lesson. Opinions on the desirability of such inconsistent behaviour are divided. While Long (1977), for example, calls for more consistency in teachers' feedback behaviour, Allwright (1975) believes such inconsistency is pedagogically justifiable in that it helps to tune feedback to the needs of individuals. In fact,

Allwright argues teachers have the obligation to be inconsistent in terms of being more sensitive and responsive to the needs of individual students.

Finally, teachers have been shown to be imprecise in the way they provide feedback. An example of a feedback act which suffers from the imprecision in the location of error is modelling. Leo (1986) points out that when the teacher provides models, he or she gives the grammatically correct form of a pupil's incorrect utterance in its entirety. It is likely that students will have a lot of trouble locating the error and remedying it, as this kind of feedback doesn't indicate where in the statement the error occurred. Barnes (1997) argued that the value of modelling or reformulating as a correction technique is quite limited. He pointed out that learners tend to regard the reformulated versions as alternative ways of referring to what they were talking about rather than as correction. As a result, he made a strong case for a more explicit correction of errors to avoid the potential ambiguity inherent in less direct and implicit forms of correction.

#### **3.2.2.4 Who Should Correct Learner Errors?**

Once the teacher has decided to treat learner error, a further issue in the series of questions involved in the decision making process leading to treatment concerns the question of who should correct a noticed error. The teacher has three choices here: to give the error maker the chance to self-correct, to call on other learners to provide correction, or to do the correction himself or herself (Long, 1977).

Many researchers tend to favour self-correction for various reasons (Horner, 1988; Holley and King, 1974; Allwright and Bailey, 1991). To begin with, self-correction seems to be a more appropriate way of training students to monitor their own target language speech (Chaudron 1988). Since the ultimate goal of instruction is to enable the student to operate independently, allowing the learner to correct his or her own errors could be one way of

helping the learner to be able to stand on his own foot outside the classroom (Horner, 1988). Self-correction has also the further advantage of being less threatening, more motivating and cognitively more engaging for the learner (Van Lier, 1988).

Krashen (1982) argued that the efficiency of self-correction is likely to vary according to the conditions in which the correction is done. It seems that the more learners' attention is focused on form, the more likely they are to successfully edit their output. On the other hand, the rate of successful correction is likely to fall when the focus is on communication and no attempt is made to draw learners' attention to form by alerting them to the existence or location of an error or by pointing out the rules broken.

Peer correction is another possibility. Allwright and Bailey (1991) speculated that more actual learning may result from a substantial proportion of the corrective task being carried out by the learners themselves-i.e. either the learner who erred (self-correction) or another member of the class (peer correction). There is also some research evidence supporting the claim that learners are capable of correcting each other's errors (Bruton and Samuda, 1980; Schwartz, 1980). Bruton and Samuda discovered that their subjects employed a variety of treatment strategies which turned out to be similar to those used by teachers. Furthermore, the authors claimed that their subjects rarely miscorrected one another.

In spite of the findings which favour peer correction, some researchers appear to be sceptical about its value as a source of corrective information. One argument against peer correction is that the learners may not be up to the task in terms of their linguistic competence (Johnson, 1992). Given their limited knowledge of the target language, it is less likely that learners will carry out the correction successfully, especially when it comes to the provision of some kind of expert information or extrinsic feedback (Johnson 1988). Even if they do, there will always be some students who will question the credibility of the correction they

receive and look for confirmations from the teacher. In fact, Leki (1991) found that learners prefer teachers' involvement in the error correction process.

### **3.3 Studies of Feedback in Ethiopia**

At this point a brief discussion of studies of error correction conducted in the context of Ethiopian classrooms would be in order. A quick review of the studies of feedback carried out in this context reveals that although there have been relatively fewer studies of teacher feedback, the few studies available have addressed both written and oral feedback. For instance, the studies by Getnet (1993) and Tesfay (1995) were concerned with teachers' response to students' written work. While the former examined the nature of the feedback accorded students on their compositions, the latter was concerned with the investigation of the effect of different kinds of feedback on students' performance. One of the major findings of Tesfay's study was that procedures which invited students to self-correct were associated with improved student performance. A more recent study by Italo (1999) also compared the effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback in improving student written performance and found that both techniques led to comparable results.

As indicated earlier, a few studies (e.g. Wondwossen, 1992; Teshome, 1995) examined teacher feedback in the context of oral work. Consistent with the literature elsewhere, such studies suggest that teachers are busy correcting student errors. Wondwossen (1992), for instance, found that teachers spent a considerable proportion (29%) of class time providing feedback.

It is interesting to note that the local studies of teacher feedback on students' written work were conducted in the context of university classrooms. Equally interesting may be the fact that the studies that investigated teachers' feedback in relation to oral work were carried out in the secondary schools. I am not aware of a study that investigated the phenomenon in

primary or junior classrooms. This goes for both written and oral feedback. Thus, very little is known about the feedback behaviour of teachers at this level. This is therefore one of the gaps I intended my own study to partially fill.

### **3.4 Gaps in the literature**

The purpose of this concluding section is to identify *possible* gaps in the literature that I see my study as going some way towards filling.

Research discussed in Chapter Two suggests that feedback is a critical variable in the process of communicating expectations. That teacher feedback in the form of error correction is pervasive in the foreign language classroom has also been established by studies reviewed in this chapter. What appears to be missing from these two sets of studies however is thus a specific investigation of the feedback behaviour of the EFL teacher in relation to the notion of teacher expectations. This is particularly important because, as indicated in Chapter One, the language classroom has certain unique characteristics, one example being the fact that two languages are used. This is then the first gap I intended to fill.

Moreover, it appears that most studies of error correction in the language classroom emphasise the researcher's perspective. Although what teachers actually do, according to an unbiased observer, is important, equally important may be the instruction that students experience as individuals. It is clear from the discussion in Chapter One and Chapter Two that the meaning students attach to the behaviour of the teacher plays a critical role in influencing the outcome of teaching. In the same vein, it can be argued that better understanding of the correction behaviour of teachers can emerge by knowing teacher intentions and the personal philosophy that underlie the behaviour. Thus, the present study intends to include student and teacher perspectives in exploring the feedback behaviour of teachers.

As indicated above, it seems that only a limited number of studies of error correction have been conducted locally. In particular, the apparent lack of research on the feedback behaviour of primary school English teachers would appear to be an enormous gap in the literature. Thus, this study is hoped to contribute towards filling this gap by investigating teacher feedback practice at this level.

Apparently, much of the research on both error correction and teacher expectations comes from the developed world. In contrast, there appears to be a scarcity of studies that investigated these phenomena in the context of the developing world. The present study is thus intended to partly fill the gap that arises from changes in instructional settings.

Given the gaps identified above, research questions were formulated with a view to generating the desired data. I have indicated the research questions in Chapter One. I will, however, revisit the research questions and match them to the research procedures in the next chapter, where I look at the methodology.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Collection**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter I will discuss methodological issues as they relate to studies of teacher expectations in general and my study in particular. I will also describe major issues that arose in the process and point out how they were resolved. As will be clear in the following sections, I have drawn on four sources in tackling methodological issues in this study, namely the literature, insights from a pilot study, my personal experience as a teacher, and my familiarity with the local context.

The chapter starts off with an introductory section in which the research questions asked in this study are matched to specific research procedures (3.1). This is then followed by a discussion of the pilot study that was conducted to test the research procedures (3.2). In the third section, I look at the main study where I discuss the methodological aspects of the study in more detail (3.3).

#### **4.1 Research Questions Addressed: Introduction**

As indicated earlier in Chapter One (1.4), a key assumption underlying the design of the present study is that the understandings of the student, the teacher and the observer concerning the events that unfold in the classroom may well differ (Weinstein, 1976, 1989; Block, 1996). It is also to be recalled that the main objective of the study was to investigate teacher feedback behaviour towards students differing in perceived ability and the way the behaviour is interpreted by participants-i.e. students and the teacher. In so doing, the study looked at the phenomenon from different perspectives in relation to which different research questions were asked about it. The multiple-perspective approach adopted in the study therefore led to the following basic research questions, as indicated in Chapter One:

**RQ1.** Does teacher feedback differ for students for whom the teacher holds high and low expectations?

**RQ2.** If so, what is the different nature of the feedback accorded high and low expectation students, and to what extent can the difference be attributed to the teacher's differential treatment?

**RQ3.** Do students see the teacher as providing different feedback to students he regards as high and low achievers?

**RQ4.** Does the teacher see himself as providing different feedback to students he considers to be high and low achievers?

The questions asked necessitated the following kinds of data:

- a) data pertaining to teacher's expectations for students (RQ1 and RQ2),
- b) data concerning teacher's treatment of different expectation groups (RQ1 and RQ2).
- c) data pertaining to students' perceptions of teacher treatment (RQ3).
- d) data concerning teacher's accounts of his own behaviour towards different expectation groups (RQ4).

Thus the study necessitated two types of data. The first type is observational in nature and deals with the behavioural aspects of the phenomenon in question while the other type of data is concerned with participants' mental image of it. Accordingly, data indicated by (b) concentrate on observed behaviour, while data indicated by (a), (c) and (d) are concerned with perceptions.

The research procedures that were followed to obtain the various sets of data involved teacher rating of students' ability, classroom observation, interviews with the teacher and students as well as the use of questionnaire. While the rating procedure was intended to generate data concerning the teacher's judgement of individual students' level of

performance, the purpose of the classroom observation was to collect data on classroom teacher behaviour. I depended on interviews and questionnaires for tapping both teacher and student perceptions-though with different weightings. The relationship between the research questions asked, the type of data required to answer them and the research procedures used to generate the respective data is shown in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 Relationship between research questions, type of data and procedures**

Research questions	Type of data	Procedures			
		Ability rating	Observation	Questionnaire	Interview
1 and 2	Teacher expectation	✓✓			
1 and 2	Teacher behaviour		✓✓		
3	Student perceptions			✓✓	✓
4	Teacher perceptions			✓	✓✓

\*The number of ticks in the cells signifies the weighting. While one tick indicates that the procedure was used in a supporting role in generating a particular type of data, two ticks show that a particular procedure played a major role in generating that type of data.

In the next section, I discuss the procedures that were pilot-tested and the results obtained.

## 4.2 The Pilot Study

In this section I wish to briefly discuss the pilot study. I propose to do this in two sections. In the first section, I will provide a brief description of the objectives and organisation of the pilot study. In the second section I will look at the pilot study in terms of the insights it yielded and the implications of such understanding for the main study.

#### 4.2.1 Objectives and Organisation of the Pilot Study

The aim of conducting the pilot study was primarily to assess the suitability and effectiveness of certain research procedures for the purpose of my study. These included instruments for assessing student and teacher perceptions of the feedback accorded highs and lows as well as classroom observation of lessons. However, it must also be pointed out right at the outset that not all the procedures used in the main study were tested in the pilot phase of the study as some just evolved in the process well after the pilot study was initiated. In this subsection I will describe initial design features of the study and the attempts made to test data collection procedures prior to their being used in the main study.

With regards to assessing student perceptions, two candidate methods, namely the questionnaire and the interview methods were tried out. I will discuss each method in turn.

One important feature of the questionnaire used in this study is that it constituted essentially a list of teacher behaviours (e.g. praise, criticise, supply answer) that are hypothesized to distribute differently across different expectation groups (see Weinstein 1989; Weinstein et al., 1982; Weinstein and Middlestadt, 1979 for similar approaches involving the use of the teacher treatment inventory or the TTI as it is known in the literature). Another important point to mention is that items for the teacher treatment inventory were drawn from the research literature. I turned to two distinct sources in developing the TTI. First, I drew on the literature in the field of general education for identifying broader categories of expectation-related teacher behaviours as documented by observational studies of differential teacher treatment ( e.g. Brophy and Good 1970, 1986; Good and Brophy, 1987).

The second type of literature that the items for the inventory were drawn from comes from studies of error treatment in language classrooms (e.g. Allwright, 1975; Fanselow, 1977; Long 1977; Chaudron 1977). I used this literature to identify more specific features of

teacher behaviour related to the language classroom. The result of the above stage was a questionnaire of 57 items. The areas focused on during the development of the questionnaire included the following: the extent to which errors were corrected or ignored; area of language targeted during correction (e. g vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar etc.); timing of correction (e. g. at mid utterance, at the end of utterance); likelihood of opportunity for self-correction; likelihood of other-correction; likelihood of returning to the original error maker after providing correction; and the use of specific techniques of correction. The specific items that were asked about each of these areas appear in Appendix-3).

Twenty-six students drawn from two sixth grade classes took part in the piloting of the questionnaire. In completing the 57-item inventory, the children were given a description of an imaginary student and they were asked to pretend that the hypothetical student was in their class (See 4.3.2.2.1 for justifications). Two versions of the questionnaire were used. Each of the 26 participating students was asked to complete only one version of it. As regards the difference between the two versions, in one version the items were preceded by a description of a hypothetical male high achiever while the other version described a hypothetical male low achiever. The descriptions read as follows:

**High achiever form:** Kebede is someone who does really well in English. In fact, he always gets the best grade in the class and he is considered to be a very smart boy. Everyone including our English teacher thinks Kebede is very smart.

**Low achiever form:** Abebe is someone who does not do very well in English. In fact he usually gets the lowest grade in the class and he is not considered to be a very smart boy. Everyone including our English teacher thinks Abebe is not very smart.

Subjects were asked to rate each of the 57 items in the questionnaire according to how their teacher would treat the hypothetical student. They were required to respond by marking *yes* or *no* depending on whether they saw the item as being descriptive of the hypothetical high

or low achiever. The *yes/no* format was preferred because it was thought that children might have difficulty handling other formats.

All students completed the questionnaire on the same day but not at the same time as they were divided in to two groups according to the two versions of the questionnaire. One group completed the male high achiever form while the other group did the low achiever form after the first group left the class. Thus, each pupil had access to only one of the two forms. The researcher was present in both sessions.

One methodological concern persisted through the pilot phase of the study as far as the use of questionnaire goes. This concerned the reasonableness of expecting children to understand the purpose, instructions, and contents of the questionnaire and thus provide relevant and fairly reliable information. Although the items were written in a language that was presumably a mother tongue to most of them, I thought not all participating children would be able to read and understand something written in it. In response to such concerns, therefore, it was necessary to look for ways of mitigating the potential problems associated with using children in the study.

One way forward was for the researcher to read aloud the instructions and the individual items of the questionnaire while they checked their answers. In addition, instructions were repeated at a certain interval and subjects were encouraged to seek help and clarifications whenever they ran into any difficulty. In addition, every effort was made to encourage them to ask about meanings of words they didn't understand before they gave their answers.

Further attempts to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire continued after the pupils had completed the questionnaire. Most importantly, an informal discussion that centred around the contents of the questionnaire was held with several highs, middles and lows with

a view to gaining a further check on their understanding of the questionnaire as well as the possibility of obtaining additional insight into their thinking. The procedure followed in the discussion involved randomly assigning items from the questionnaire to those participating in the discussion and asking them to say what they understood by the item. Requests to provide examples were also made as a further check of their understanding of the items. Initially the procedure was used with pupils who participated in completing the questionnaire. However, it was also repeated with other students at a later date.

Together, the two discussion sessions covered almost all items. The performance of students in such informal discussions suggested that a considerable number of the items were fairly accessible to them. Admittedly, however, there were also items which turned out to be problematic to many of those who took part in the discussion. Not surprisingly, most students found items that focused on the distinction between linguistic and content errors difficult to understand. Moreover, items which were based on the rather technical distinctions made between various aspects of language such as pronunciation, vocabulary, etc. proved to be less accessible to most students (See 4.2.2 for further discussion on this point).

Another data collection method that was used during the pilot study was the student interview. As indicated earlier, the main reason was to test the suitability of the instrument. However, it would be wrong to say this was the only reason for conducting interviews with students at this particular stage as there were also other equally important reasons for doing so. For example, it was thought that interviews with students could yield additional insights into their understanding of teacher differential treatment that could eventually be incorporated into the questionnaire for the main study. In addition, it was also my hope that such interviews would provide me with an opportunity to have a feel of the language used by children in discussing events in the classroom.

Two types of interviews, namely group and individual interviews were tried out. Students selected for this purpose differed in terms of their ability as perceived by their respective English teachers. Besides, the same students who participated in the individual interview were made to take part in the group interviews. There were three interview-groups each consisting of five to six students belonging to the same class but differing in their perceived ability. In both the group and individual interviews, open-ended questions were asked in order to freely explore their perceptions of their teachers' treatment of highs and lows. Furthermore, students were encouraged to talk about their own experiences with their teachers and/or report on the experiences of their peers. In addition, some items of the questionnaire were introduced from time to time in order to stimulate more focused discussion. Both forms of interviews were conducted subsequent to the administration of the questionnaire and the collection of observational data (to be discussed shortly).

Several observations can be made about the way the interviews were conducted. The first and the most important thing to say is that the amount of contribution that an individual was likely to make seemed to change as a result of the context in which the interview was conducted. Many students tended to contribute more to the discussion during the individual interview as opposed to the group interview. This was particularly true of non-highs (i.e. lows and middles) who appeared to prefer to remain silent or limit their contribution to providing agreement when the highs talked.

There was also a tendency for the highs to dominate the discussion in terms of contradicting non-highs when the latter came up with a comment that appeared to be less palatable to the former. This in turn seemed to discourage the non-highs from making further contributions and thus forced them to retreat into silence most of the time. More specifically, the highs seemed to be more protective of their teachers and tended to provide justifications for their teachers' behaviours when more critical comments were put forward by the non-highs. It is

also interesting to note that the hierarchy in the classroom was mirrored during the interview in that the non-highs lacked the courage to defend their point of view and easily gave in while the highs looked more confident and assertive. In addition, the non-highs seemed to think that the highs have superior knowledge in almost all areas including the issues that were raised during the group interview.

As indicated earlier (section 4.1), two of the research questions in this study asked whether the teachers' feedback behaviour varied as a function of their expectations for students. Answering these questions required data on classroom behaviour of teachers toward highs and lows. Thus, it was important that the data collection procedure allowed for the examination of the behaviour in relation to individual students. One way this could be done was through video-recording lessons. The decision to use video-recording as opposed to audio-recording reflected the need to identify who the teacher was interacting with in a given exchange. Two teachers were video recorded teaching their regular lessons.

With regards to teacher perceptions, the study required data on two aspects of teacher perceptions. The first aspect concerned teachers' perceptions of individual students' ability relative to other students in a particular class. The second aspect dealt with teachers' understanding of their own feedback behaviour. Data on teachers' expectations for students were collected by asking them to rate each student in their class as a high, middle, or low achiever based on their perceptions of the individual's relative success in learning English. The teachers were also encouraged to skip students about whose relative ability they were less certain. Thus, a list of students showing where in the three broad categories each student belonged was secured towards the end of the first semester-i.e. late January.

The collection of the second type of teacher perception was approached through the use of interviews. Thus, one of the teachers was asked to give an account of her feedback

behaviour toward students she perceived as highs and lows. While the key purpose of the interview was to probe the teacher's general understanding of this aspect of the classroom process, it was thought desirable to randomly review segments of the recorded lessons before and during the interview in order to facilitate memory and stimulate more illuminating discussions. However, it should be remembered that the focus here was not on individual episodes as such. The key aim was to draw out from the teacher the set of assumptions and principles that guided her behaviour in the classroom. So the specific events reviewed were intended to serve as an entry in to the discussion of bigger issues that could help to shed some light on the factors underlying the observed classroom behaviour in general.

This subsection has mainly concentrated on giving a detailed account of the procedures that were tried out at the pilot stage of the study. What is missing from the discussion is information about which procedures worked and which did not. Next, I will discuss the outcome of the try-out.

#### **4.2.2 'Lessons Learned'**

In this subsection I wish to outline some of the insights gained from the pilot study and their implications for the main study. In so doing, I will show the decisions taken concerning which aspects of the data collection procedure to maintain, which aspects to modify, and which ones to drop altogether. For reasons to do with parsimony, however, I will concentrate on the last two, namely aspects that needed some sort of modification and those that were totally excluded from the main study. I therefore ask the reader to assume that things that fell outside these two are those that remained more or less unchanged and thus are allowed to continue to the main study.

1) One of the most important observations to be made concerns the length of the student questionnaire. It took the subjects over forty minutes to complete a single form. Given the

difference in reading ability among the participating students, the task could have lasted even longer if students were asked to read it by themselves instead of me reading it aloud for them. In addition, as indicated earlier, there were several items which turned out to be more problematic to them. All these considerations pointed to the need to reduce the size of the student questionnaire by half by eliminating the “difficult” ones and concentrating on generic teacher behaviours. (see Appendix-3 and Appendix-4 for the original and the revised versions of the student questionnaire respectively).

2) Another major insight gained from the pilot study relates to the format of the questionnaire. As indicated earlier, the *yes/no* format was initially chosen on the assumption that children may have difficulty interpreting other rating systems such as frequency. However, data from the interview held with them revealed this was not the case. In fact, the data seemed to suggest that they were more likely to see or express differences in teacher treatment in terms of variations in frequency rather than in terms of its presence or absence in the feedback addressed to a particular group of students. Another important observation that appeared to reinforce this line of argument relates to the fact that there was little difference between their ratings of the high achiever and low achiever. As a result, it was thought more desirable to drop the *yes/no* format and rewrite the questionnaire with the dimension of frequency built in to it (see appendix-4).

3) Admittedly, no attempt was made to control the gender variable in the original version. This is evident from the fact that the description of the target student was confined to male high or low achiever only. Since gender could be an important variable affecting student perceptions, it was thought necessary to control for this variable by asking each student to rate male and female high achievers as well as male and female low achievers. This is because there were some indications during the interview that gender could be an important factor influencing their perceptions.

4) The fact that the size of each version has been reduced by half also made it possible to contemplate administering all versions separately to all subjects instead of doing it on a one student-one-form basis as was the case in the pilot study. This in turn is hoped to contribute to the reliability of the data by overcoming the problem that might arise from different students completing different versions (See 4.3.2.2.1 for details about the administration of the various forms).

5) As indicated at the beginning of this subsection, a considerable number of items were removed from the questionnaire because they sounded too technical and detailed. Once this was done, it was felt unnecessary to repeat (in the main study) the procedure that involved the use of an informal discussion with pupils to assess the accessibility of the items. This is partly because the revised version concentrated on broader and more transparent categories of feedback by avoiding the ambiguous and 'difficult' ones (see 1 above).

6) The observations about the changes in pupils' verbal behaviour in the two interview contexts (individual and group) pointed to two options. The first option was to use the group interview in the context of single ability grouping with separate interviews for each of the three expectation groups i.e. high, middle, and low. The second option was to drop the idea of group interview and depend on the data generated through the individual interview method. I decided in favour of the second alternative because I felt that a group interview was too open to generate the desired kind of data on issues such as differential teacher treatment which can be extremely sensitive. The fact that there was a tendency for the subjects to withhold information during group interviews is probably suggestive of the delicacy of the issue. This in turn points to the need to treat information provided by subjects with at most care and confidentiality.

7) With respect to the instruments for gathering data on teacher perceptions, one of the most important insights gained from the pilot study relates to the choice of a class to be rated by the teacher for their ability. While the choice of class was done randomly during the pilot study, it became increasingly clear that the use of a class for whom the teacher was a homeroom teacher could yield even better results in terms of the teacher's knowledge of students. This is because this role requires the teacher to take a roll everyday, which of course makes him better placed to get to know a particular group fairly quickly compared with the other groups he teaches.

8) The pilot was also useful in terms of suggesting the amount of time it takes teachers to form expectations about their students. Such information was crucial for making decisions about when teachers may be asked to rate their students in the main study. In spite of the finding that teachers are able to provide a ranking order of their students in about a month's time (Cooper 1985), the teachers in the pilot study seemed to have difficulty judging the ability of some of their students when they were asked to do the rating towards the end of the first semester.

Such contradiction may not be surprising given the fact that there are likely to be important contextual differences between the classrooms in the literature and those in the pilot, one potential source of such difference being class size. In the context of Ethiopian schools, a teacher is likely to have to teach an average of six groups of around sixty each day, which effectively means he will probably come in to contact with an average of more than three hundred students every day. This in turn could have implications for the time needed to get to know one's students and identify them in terms of their ability.

9) With respect to the collection of behavioural data, one of the most important issues that emerged during the pilot study relates to the focus of the video camera. Clearly it was not

always possible to get both the teacher and the student interacting with him in to the focus at the same time. Under the circumstances I had to decide to lose either the student or the teacher in the picture. I decided against losing the student. One reason for deciding thus concerns the fact that the voice of the teacher was usually quite distinct from that of the pupils. In contrast, it was quite difficult to tell even the sex of the student especially when the speaker was not in focus. Given such problems it made a lot of sense to focus the camera on the student most of the time. This was thought to be a less expensive decision in terms of losing relevant information as it was fairly easy to recover the teacher's part in the interaction. Despite these problems, it was decided to keep using video, for reasons discussed above.

10) Finally, another issue that emerged during the pilot study concerns the extent to which the purpose of the classroom observation could be revealed to the teacher without risking the contamination of data. Throughout my stay in the school during the pilot study, I decided to keep the objective of the study and the purpose of the observation deliberately vague. I did this for two reasons. One reason for keeping the participating teachers in the dark was because it was felt that revealing the actual purpose would negatively affect subsequent data collection processes given the same school was chosen for the main study, too (see 4.3.1 for details about choice of school). The second reason relates to the need to avoid the risk of data contamination arising from knowledge of objectives. So the teachers who participated in the pilot study were told that I was more interested in the participation and learning of students.

In response to such information about the objectives of the study, the teachers tended to devise classroom activities which were more likely to lead students to participate more. In fact, I discovered a couple of times that they were repeating activities or even entire lessons which were done previously for the sake of ensuring more participation of students in spite

of my appeal to them to run things as usual. While I appreciated their attempt to be helpful, at the same time I felt that I had to find ways of discouraging this from happening. One way I thought I could stop this was by attending consecutive classes, the argument being they would be less likely to continue to teach repeat lessons at the expense of their own time and the interest of their students.

In conclusion, it can be said that the pilot study proved to be a very useful exercise. It yielded insights which could not have been accessed otherwise. It was a good opportunity to alert and prepare myself to the practical problems that were likely to transpire during the main study. In the next section, I discuss the research process in the main study.

### **4.3 The Main Study**

This section discusses aspects of methodology as they apply to the present study. In particular, it describes the research setting including the participants (4.3.1), and the data collection procedures (4.3.2).

#### **4.3.1 Details of the School, the Class and the Participants**

The study was conducted in one of the primary and junior secondary schools in Addis Ababa. Combining the primary and the junior secondary levels together, the school caters for pupils in grades one through eight. The school also represents one of the oldest and highly populated schools in the city and, like many government schools in urban areas in the country, it operates on a shift system in order to be able to cope with the ever-increasing demand for schools. The first shift runs from 8 a.m. in the morning to 12:15 p.m. in the afternoon, while the second shift starts at 12:30 and lasts until 4:55. Each shift consists of six lesson periods of forty minutes each. As the shift system is not based on grade level distinctions, there are students in all grades on either shift. Teachers in the school take

teaching assignments on both shifts and are expected to teach up to 30 lesson periods per week which may be distributed across different grade levels.

The choice of this school for my study reflected practical considerations. Originally, I wanted to look at the extent to which teachers considered the ability of the student in making decisions about how to react to a student's answer, and the procedure known as stimulated recall (see Clark and Peterson, 1986) was thought necessary for gathering data on teachers' decision making processes. This procedure usually requires the researcher to review parts of video-recorded lessons together with the teacher. Thus, the availability of video equipment was a necessity in this condition. This criterion eliminated several of the schools from the list of alternative schools and thus pointed to only a handful of them simply because a primary school with a video recorder and a TV set is usually one of the things which are hard to come by in the city.

Another consideration that influenced the choice of school concerns the issue of access. Being a member of the faculty of Addis Ababa University, I was aware that there are two types of schools in Addis Ababa as far as their accessibility to the researcher and their attitude toward participating in a research project is concerned. While those that are fairly close to the university are used to visitors and usually serve as research settings for students working on their thesis, those that are situated at a distant place from the university tend to be less used to such practice. Judging by their initial reaction to a researcher's request for access, it appears that high schools generally tend to have a policy of welcoming visitors compared with primary and/or junior secondary schools. Given this situation, the issue of access was again vital.

The school that I used for my study was one of the fairly equipped few schools in the city. As it turned out, the head teacher of the school was someone with ELT background and was

very enthusiastic about research in English classes, which made access to the school relatively easy. So it was in this school that the two issues of availability and access were resolved to my satisfaction. Further, informal attempts to assess the ‘typicality’ of the school showed that the school shared many features (e.g. class size, qualification of teachers, textbook) with many of the government schools in the city.

As regards the choice of class, I used one of the four groups of sixth graders that were being taught by the participating teacher. As the teacher’s knowledge of students was crucial to the study, I chose a group to whom the teacher was attached as a homeroom teacher (see 4.2.2 above). The teacher considered this class to be one of the two weak groups he taught during that academic year (1998/99). The class had five English lessons each week (one lesson a day) and all lessons were taught by the same teacher except on Thursdays, when the class had to attend radio lessons under the supervision of their teacher. The teacher followed a centrally set syllabus and based almost all lessons on a prescribed textbook which was introduced only a couple of years ago. The group had studied English since they were in grade one.

The participating teacher had a total of thirty years of teaching experience nearly half of which was in the school chosen as a site for the present study. He taught English to eighth graders for most of his time in the school although he also taught students at other grade levels too. Clearly, he taught this subject to sixth graders during the time when data collection for the main study was undertaken. As indicated earlier, he had four groups of sixth grade students during that year, of which two were on the morning shift while the remaining two including the participating group were on the afternoon shift. In addition, he taught physical education to other groups. Together he taught 26 lesson periods a week.

There were 52 students in the class of whom 24 were boys and 28 were girls. They were all in the age range of 10 to 17, the majority (76%) being in the region of 11 and 14 years. The majority of them were in grade five last year while a few of them were there because they were made to repeat grade six due to unsatisfactory performance. The teacher considered 10 of them to be high achievers, 19 of them middle, and 22 low achievers. Eight of those whom the teacher perceived as high were girls while only the remaining two were boys. As regards the intermediate level, the figure for boys was 12 whereas only 7 of the girls were rated thus. The break down of the figure for low achievers was 9 and 13 for boys and girls respectively. The teacher was not certain about the ability of one male pupil.

I now move on to discuss the next major topic in this section-data collection procedures.

#### **4.3.2 Data Collection Procedures**

The focus of this section is on the procedures used in collecting data for the main study. More specifically, the section describes the various procedures used to generate data, the rationale for using them in this study and the issues that arose in the process of applying the procedures. (It should be borne in mind that the research questions remained the same).

The section is further divided into five subsections. In the first subsection (4.3.2.1), I discuss the measurement of one type of teacher perception, namely teacher expectations. This is followed by a description of the tools used to elicit data on the perceptions of students in 4.3.2.2. I then return to the second type of data on teacher perceptions in 4.3.2.3 and outline the procedures followed to access the teacher's account of his own lessons. The fourth subsection (4.3.2.4) looks at the procedures used to collect data on the actual classroom feedback behaviour of the teacher. The last subsection provides a discussion of the temporal relationship of the various research procedures used in the study. In terms of the organisation of the subsections, I will begin each section by identifying more general issues

that are relevant to researchers in the area as documented in the literature. This will soon be followed by a more specific discussion of the issues in relation to my own data collection.

#### **4.3.2.1 Collecting Data on Teacher Expectations**

In this subsection I will consider methodological issues related to the measurement of teacher expectations. I will begin the subsection by identifying the basic procedure followed in obtaining a measure of teacher expectations. This is then followed by a further discussion of an aspect of the expectation measurement procedure related to the issue of criteria for judging students' potential. A discussion of the timing of the procedure for measuring teacher expectations concludes the subsection.

Given the two types of teacher expectation effects in the literature i.e. self-fulfilling prophecy effect and sustaining effect (See section 2.1.2), it can be said that this study deals with the sustaining effects of naturally occurring teacher expectations. As indicated earlier (Section 2.1.3), one common way in which studies of naturally formed expectations measured teachers' expectations was by asking teachers to provide a rank ordering of their students based on the performance expectations they hold for them. In spite of the fact that the method of ranking seems to have been popular among investigators interested in the area (see Mitman and Snow, 1985), it was found to be less suitable for the present study on several counts (which I will point out shortly). Consequently, an alternative procedure was sought. The alternative approach that I opted for was essentially a modification of the procedure typically used in related works. It required the teacher to directly assign students in his class into three broad categories designating three basic ability levels- i.e. highs, middles, and lows.

The decision to use this alternative procedure reflects the following considerations. One reason relates to the argument that the ranking method may not have a reality in the

teacher's mind (See Section 2.1.3). It seems that teachers conceptualise ability differences among students in terms of a few categories rather than in terms of the fine hierarchical distinctions suggested by the ordinal scale. Thus, it is argued that teachers use such global categorisations of students in making routine instructional decisions in the classroom.

The second reason for adopting a three-tier system of measuring expectation and identifying expectation groups concerns a factor with a more practical orientation. Studies of teacher expectations that employed the ranking method of measuring expectations were conducted in the developed world where class size may be significantly smaller than is the case in Ethiopian classrooms. In view of such difference, it would be unreasonable to expect teachers in this study to rank their students in order of achievement with a reasonable level of confidence. Given the huge number of students they have to deal with each day, they would be hard pressed to carry out the task successfully as the likelihood of confusing certain students in a section with those in other sections could be very high.

In fact, this problem transpired during the pilot phase of the study. When asked to rate the students in their class in terms of the three basic levels (high, middle, low), the participating teachers admitted that they had difficulty judging the level of ability of some students. As a result, it was necessary to subsequently modify the measurement system in such a way that it allowed the teacher in the main study to indicate his uncertainties and provide information on students about whose performance he had developed a relatively firmer expectation. One way to do this was to include another category under the label "I 'm not sure" to account for the group of students whose achievement level the teacher was unable to rate with a reasonable degree of confidence. In retrospect, this modification was important in terms of enhancing the reliability of the data as it allows the teacher to concentrate on students about whose performance he can report with a reasonable degree of confidence.

Another important issue in the measurement of teacher expectations concerns the criteria used in rating students. Given the numerous conceptualisations of expectation and expectation effects available in the literature, it may be appropriate to clearly indicate which conceptualisation is at work as far as the present study is concerned. Hence, the present study employs the conception of expectation based on ability or achievement as described in Chapter Two. For the purpose of the present study, however, a measure of expectation relates to the perception of a teacher about how adequately his or her students perform in English. That is to say the domain specific version of the definition has been adopted. Although some researchers (e.g. Brophy and Good 1986a) preferred to keep instructions for ranking students deliberately vague in order to encourage teachers to use their own subjective criteria, it is noteworthy that the teacher in this study was urged to adhere to the subject-specific criteria in rating his students.

Another factor relevant to the study of teacher expectations relates to the time of the school year when measurements of expectation are taken. As regards my study, I took measures of teacher expectations at two different points in time both of which fell in the third period of school year in terms of the process of expectation formation (Cooper, 1985). The first measure was obtained two weeks after the commencement of the second semester by which time the participating teacher had stayed with the target students for over five months. The procedure was repeated six weeks after the first measurement was taken. It should be noted that the collection of observational data was over by the time the teacher was asked to provide ratings for the second time. There was a very high level of consistency in the teacher's rating on the two occasions. That is to say the teacher rated 51 students in exactly the same way on the two occasions. One student who was rated as average in the first rating was rated as high achiever during the second rating. The second rating was considered in the analysis of the data. On the whole, however, it may be said that the teacher's rating was stable at least over the six-week period.

I will now move on to the discussion of student perceptions, and look at the procedures used to elicit data on students' interpretations of classroom processes.

#### **4.3.2.2 Collecting Data on Student Perceptions**

This section looks at the procedure used to gather data on students' understanding of their teacher's feedback behaviour toward highs and lows. I depended on the use of the questionnaire and interview in trying to explore their perceptions of the phenomenon in question. Next, I describe each method in turn.

##### **4.3.2.2.1 Student - Questionnaire**

The revised questionnaire consisted of thirty items describing teacher behaviour in broader terms (see Appendix-4). The questionnaire breaks down as follows: 13 items asked about teacher response to wrong answers, 9 dealt with teacher reactions to partially correct answers, 5 with students' failure to respond and 3 with correct answers. Examples of teacher feedback behaviour associated with failure situations (incorrect answer, no response, as well as part correct answers) include supplying the answer, offering opportunity for self correction, criticising and redirecting the question. The feedback behaviours asked in relation to correct answers include praising and ignoring.

Once the content of the questionnaire was specified, the next important step in the process was to decide on the method in which the questionnaire should be presented to subjects. The literature suggested that different methods have been used to tap students perceptions of differential teacher treatment (e. g. Brattesani et al., 1984; Weinstein, et al., 1982; Babad, 1990). One method requires students to rate the degree to which they personally receive the behaviours described in the questionnaire while another directly asks students to rate the extent to which the teacher divides the behaviours described in a particular questionnaire equitably or differentially in the classroom. In addition, there is a method that requires

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students to imagine a hypothetical student in their own class and rate each behaviour according to how the teacher would use each behaviour in working with the hypothetical student.

I used the method that involves rating a hypothetical student in my study. I was persuaded to use this method by the finding that there is a tendency for students to underreport differential treatment when they are asked directly about their own differential treatment relative to others or about their awareness of differential teacher treatment of highs and lows while they are less likely to do so when they are asked about imaginary students (Weinstein, 1985; Babad, 1990).

Students were presented with descriptions of hypothetical students who differed on two important dimensions: ability and gender. While the focus of this study is on ability related differences, the decision to specify the gender of the hypothetical target is motivated by the desire to control at least one of the variables which are likely to influence the way teacher's interactions with an individual is perceived by students. Thus, the teacher behaviour items were presented to students in four forms which differed in terms of whether the hypothetical target student described was male or female and a high or a low achiever. It is important to note that the same thirty items appeared in all four versions. What kept changing across the versions was the description of the target hypothetical student whom subjects had to bear in mind when responding to the items.

The questionnaire thus consisted of four versions: two for low achiever targets (male and female) and two for high achiever targets (again male and female). As indicated above, students were asked to pretend that the students in the description were in their own class and to rate how frequently their own English teacher would work with each of these imaginary students in the way described in the questionnaire. Students responded to each

item by marking one of three different boxes labeled 'Always', 'Sometimes', and 'Never' (See Appendix-4). Each subject was made to complete each of the four versions.

All versions of the questionnaire were administered in one morning before scheduled afternoon classes as the students belonged to the afternoon shift. Of the 52 students in the class chosen for this study, 46 (19 lows, 17 middles, and 10 highs) volunteered to take part by coming during their off-shift time to complete the questionnaires. All were made to complete all versions at the same time in the same room. It should be admitted that completing all versions at one time could be quite a task even for the adult. I was, however, encouraged to proceed with this arrangement by the fact that the items were the same for all versions, and this should make the task less tiring than it appears to be. Each version appeared on separate sheets of paper and all ratings for one version were completed and responses collected before the next set was distributed. There were short breaks at the end of each version and before the next version was given out.

The order of presentation of the four types of questionnaire followed a pattern in which high achiever forms preceded low achiever forms and male forms preceded female forms. All the four versions appeared separately and it was thought necessary to deny subjects access to more than one version at a time be it before or after completing a questionnaire in order to encourage independent assessment.

#### **4.3.2.2.2 Interviews with Students**

The study also used interviews in an attempt to tap student perceptions. One important reason for using interview lies in the need to enrich the questionnaire data by probing further in to their thinking through less structured procedures. As indicated earlier, the items in the questionnaire were based on researcher derived categories of differential teacher treatment.

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A less structured interview with them was therefore thought necessary to explore their understanding of the phenomenon fairly freely.

I considered two alternatives as far as the use of interview in this study goes. One alternative was to concentrate on a select few students and engage on an in-depth interview with them. The second alternative was to involve as many students as possible in the interview and have a feel about how the class saw the phenomenon in question. I chose the second alternative mainly for reasons to do with the desire to have a further check on the reliability of the questionnaire data.

As regards the organisation of the interview, I interviewed eighteen pupils drawn from those who took part in the questionnaire task. The figure broke down as follows: nine boys (three highs, three lows and three middles) and the same number of girls representing the three expectation groups in the same manner. Interviews with all students but one were recorded, transcribed and translated. The exception happened because the tape ran out. The interviews were conducted in two consecutive afternoons.

I now move on to the procedures used to elicit the teacher's own understanding of the way he treated highs and lows.

#### **4.3.2 3 Collecting Data on the Teacher's Perceptions of Differential Treatment**

This section looks at the procedures used to obtain the teachers' side of the story (RO4). Two methods were used to try and access the teacher's perceptions of his own classroom behaviour, namely the Teacher Individual Assessment Questionnaire (TIAQ) and interviews. Next, I will describe each in turn.

#### **4.3.2.3.1 Teacher Individual Assessment Questionnaire (TIAQ)**

The questionnaire was intended to capture the teacher's interpretation of his own behaviour toward high and low achievers. Thus, the teacher was asked to complete individual assessment questionnaire on each participating child. Except for one important difference, the questionnaire was identical to the student questionnaire. The basic difference relates to the fact that he had to complete the questionnaire with actual students as opposed to hypothetical ones in mind. The instructions in the questionnaire required him to rate each item showing the extent to which he felt he generally used the described behaviour in dealing with a particular student in the class.

Thus, the teacher provided his own ratings of the ways in which he typically treated each individual student in the class by responding to each item based on what he believed was his typical behaviour toward a particular child in the kind of exchange specified in the respective questionnaire items. The teacher was asked to complete the parallel questionnaire after the students had completed their version of it. In other words, it was deliberately delayed in order to avoid possible "leakage". The teacher was given two days to do the self-assessment by completing one questionnaire for each of the 52 students in the class.

#### **4.3.2.3.2 Interviews with the Teacher**

As with the TIAQ, the main purpose of the interviews was to elicit the teacher's perspective. Hence, interviews that combined both semi-structured and freer discussions were used. It was hoped that such interviews would lead to a more complete picture of the teacher's construction of classroom reality and capture his personal philosophy. One important feature of the interviews is that they involved the use of recorded lessons as a back-up. Thus, prior to the interview, the teacher together with the researcher reviewed segments of the video-recorded lessons. The thinking behind this procedure was that the lessons would provide not

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only a visual stimulus which might facilitate recall but also a frame of reference that may potentially be made use of by the teacher in trying to illustrate his points.

It is, however, important to note that the stimulus-aided interview as employed in this particular study differed from the technique known as stimulated recall as used in studies of teacher thought processes (see Clark and Peterson, 1986). Unlike the procedure employed in the study of teacher thought processes, the questions asked did not focus on specific events and the specific thought processes surrounding these events. The focus instead was on broader issues to do with the teacher's policy and principles that guide his behaviour in the classroom. It follows that there was no need to conduct the interview shortly after a lesson was taught as is usually the case with the stimulated-recall procedures.

Two interviews which together lasted nearly two hours were conducted. Both interviews were in Amharic, the official language in Ethiopia, which the teacher has a good command of. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and transcribed for subsequent analysis.

I will now move away from the procedures for collecting data on perceptions on to issues associated with collecting behavioural data and look at the actual issues that had to be addressed in carrying out classroom observation in this study.

#### **4.3.2.4 Observing Teacher Behaviour in the Classroom**

I was able to observe the teacher teaching 12 lessons, five in the first semester and seven in the second semester. None of the five lessons observed in the first semester were video-recorded. The main purpose of the visits made during this time was not to collect data as such but mainly to familiarise students with the changed environment that would exist through out the data collection period. That is to say, this initial observation aimed primarily at acclimatizing the students with the presence of an observer, the recording equipment to be

used and sometimes the technician who would be filming the lessons. I use the word “some times” here because the technician was not present during all the five lessons although he managed to pop in and fake-film the class a couple of times during this time. The initial observation was done in December and January.

As regards the actual recording, the remaining seven lessons were all video-recorded. With the exception of the last lesson, all were recorded roughly in their entirety. As can be clearly seen in Appendix-2, however, the last lesson is considerably shorter than the rest. This is because I was unable to obtain a full record of it due to equipment malfunction. In spite of its being incomplete, this lesson has not been excluded from my data.

The pedagogic focus of the recorded lessons was either on reading or grammar. In fact, I did not come across a lesson whose focus was on something else in all the 12 lessons I had access to. Of the recorded lessons, two dealt with reading while the remaining five largely concentrated on grammar. The lesson which was not recorded fully fell into the latter category. All recorded lessons were taught in a space of four weeks i.e. between the second week of March and the first week of April. Where possible attempts were made to capture consecutive lessons to avoid problems associated with repeating lessons (see 4.2.2 above).

Once video-recordings of the lessons were made, the next task was to transcribe the lessons as the analysis was based on lesson transcripts. Audio-recordings obtained by dubbing the lessons onto audio tapes were used for the transcription. Although I was mainly interested in teacher-led whole class oral activities which involved academic exchanges, I transcribed complete lessons. This was done after the recording of all seven lessons was over. However, it has to be pointed out that I have excluded from the transcripts parts that deal with the teacher reading passages out.

Since the nature of the study also required the identification of those who spoke in teacher-led whole class activities, it was necessary to indicate the speaker. This in turn required turning back to the video-recordings as it was not possible to recognise the speaker from the audio tapes unless students were directly addressed by the teacher. I was able to recognise a few speakers from the video but this was not possible when it comes to identifying all those involved in the recorded lessons. Therefore, I had to seek the help of the ‘class monitor’ as far as this issue is concerned. Once the speakers were thus identified, their expectation group membership was indicated on the transcripts by putting the labels H (high achiever), M (middle), or L (low achiever) depending on the ratings obtained from the teacher on the expectation measure (see 4.3.2.1).

As regards the use of L2 (in this case Amharic), in the lesson transcripts, I was faced with two options. One alternative was to include the L2 words in the transcripts untranslated. While this procedure may help to retain the naturalness of the discourse, I thought this was not advisable mainly because of the sheer size of such material in the recorded lessons. That is to say there were many instances of code switching in the lessons and a considerable proportion of the discourse involved the use of L2. The result may be that longer stretches of teacher utterances would come in Amharic rendering the meaning less inferable for those who do not speak the language.

The second option and the one I found more suitable for my purpose involved translating what the teacher and students were saying into English. Thus, I included the translated version of the original discourse in the classroom transcripts. I, however, put this translated version in italic script so as to distinguish it from the untranslated one (see Appendix-2 for more details about transcription symbols).

#### **4.4 The Issue of Sequence in Applying the Procedures**

So far the various instruments discussed in this chapter have been treated independent of each other. In this last section, however, I would like to look at the data collection procedures in terms of their temporal relationships. The purpose of this concluding section is, therefore, to briefly discuss the stages of the study at which each instrument was used and show the timing relative to each instrument. I will begin this section by identifying different possible sequences and assessing their advantages and limitations. I will then describe the order in which the instruments were actually used in my study and the rationale for deciding thus.

As indicated in the preceding sections of this chapter, the data collection process in this study involved using several instruments and procedures. These included obtaining measures of teacher expectations, interviewing the teacher and students, administering student and teacher questionnaires as well as conducting classroom observations. Given the multiplicity of the procedures as well as the sensitive nature of the area of investigation involved, it was felt that the timing of the various types of data collection activities was crucial in terms of preventing distortion of data.

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, answering the research questions addressed in this study required two kinds of data: those that relate to observable classroom behaviour and those that relate to perceptions. The distinction between these two kinds of data was important in terms of deciding on the issue of sequence or timing as indicated earlier in this section. Thus, one way of looking at the issue of order was in terms of whether data on perceptions should be collected before behavioural data.

One potential disadvantage associated with the perception-behaviour order was that the procedures for eliciting data on the teacher's and students' perceptions could ultimately

affect subsequent collection of behavioural data. It was thought that by the time the administration of the questionnaire and the interviews was over, subjects would have at least some inferred knowledge about the objectives of the study which in turn makes subsequent attempts to conceal the purpose of the classroom observation pointless. Most importantly, teachers and students may change their classroom behaviour as a result of the awareness gained from participating in the interviews and questionnaires. For example, students may want to find out which of the items in the questionnaire apply to them in real life by experimenting with different behaviours. Similarly, they may be over-critical about their teacher, which they wouldn't have done if they hadn't been involved in the study—which in turn raises the issue of ethics.

As regards the teacher, the fact that he has some knowledge about what the researcher is interested in could lead him to modify his behaviour in an attempt to meet what he considers to be the expectations of the former. While the problem associated with the general tendency for people to be adaptive and responsive in their behaviour is not unique to research in teacher expectations, some observations in the literature suggest that teacher expectation could be one of those areas which are increasingly rendered transparent through procedures that seek to inquire about them (Mitman and Snow, 1985).

All these speculations led to a decision favouring the behaviour-perception order as opposed to the perception-behaviour order of data collection procedures. In other words, observing and making video recording of lessons preceded all forms of questionnaire and interview.

Once the behaviour-perception order issue was resolved, the next task was to find a more sensible order in which the remaining two types of data gathering tools (i.e. questionnaire and interview) were presented to the participants of the study. The issue again is extremely controversial and suffice it to say that following either order has both advantages and

disadvantages. As regards the way they have been used in this study, the questionnaire preceded the interviews.

There were two main reasons for deciding in favour of this order. First, it was felt that administering the questionnaire before the interview would help to expose children to some input (language and conceptualisation) that they may not have otherwise to discuss events in the classroom. Thus, the questionnaire can serve as a useful preparation for the interview and may go some way towards tackling the problem introduced by the intellectual and linguistic demands made by open-ended interviews.

The second reason concerns desire to reduce the risk of social desirability which applies to both orders in the sense that students can derive information about the focus of the study from whichever comes first and this in turn can affect whichever they do next. It was, however, felt that using the interview first increases the chances of social desirability. For example, it may be possible to detect and cross-check suspected bias arising from the effects of social desirability through cross-questioning during the interview. However, this may not be possible in situations where subjects make conscious decisions to respond in a certain way to match researcher's expectations or to protect their teachers in the context of a questionnaire.

#### **4.5 Summary**

I began this chapter by identifying the research questions that the study set out to answer and the role of the various data collection procedures in generating data required to answer specific questions. This was followed by a description of the pilot study and a discussion of implications of the insights gained from it for the main study. I ended the discussion in this chapter with a description of the data collection procedures used to generate data for the main study. Moving on a step further, I will now turn to the issue of data analysis. However, for reasons to do with length of chapter, I have decided to deal with this aspect of methodology in a separate brief chapter, the next chapter to be exact.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Data Analysis**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

As indicated in Chapter One, the study aimed at investigating classroom teacher feedback practice from differing points of view, namely the participants and the outsider observer. This task required the collection and analysis of three types of data pertaining to (a) classroom feedback behaviour of the teacher (RQ 1 and RQ 2), (b) students' understanding of their teacher's feedback behaviour (RQ 3), and (c) the teacher's perception of his own feedback behaviour (RQ 4). It will also be recalled that the study seeks to examine teacher feedback behaviour in relation to the notion of teacher expectation effect.

Having dealt with the collection of data in the preceding chapter, I wish to concentrate on aspects of analysis in this chapter. The contents of this chapter are presented in two sections. The first section is devoted to the discussion of the analytical frameworks used with the data pertaining to the teacher's feedback behaviour (RQ1 and RQ2). The second section describes the nature of the analysis applied to the data dealing with student and teacher perceptions of such behaviour (RQ3 and RQ4).

#### **5.1 The Analysis of Teacher Feedback Behaviour**

This section looks at the analytical framework used in the analysis of observational classroom data. It consists of three sub-sections. The first one discusses the nature of the coding system that was deemed appropriate for the data in the study. The next sub-section deals with the process involved in the construction of the coding system while the last one describes the resultant coding system.

### 5.1.1 The Search for an Appropriate Coding System

Most of the analysis of the feedback behaviour of the teacher was quantitative in nature and was done from the transcripts of the seven lessons. Such analysis required an appropriate coding system in the first place. The nature of the study pointed to a coding system with the following features:

- a) Since the study dealt with teacher expectations for students' academic performance, it should concentrate on teacher-student instructional interaction as opposed to interaction involving aspects of management such as behavioural evaluation or procedural comments. However, it should also emphasise teacher reacting behaviour following student response as the focus is on feedback.
- b) It should be sensitive to differential teacher treatment in the sense that it should incorporate major findings that relate to the distribution of different types of feedback (e. g. praise, criticism, opportunity for self-correction etc.) among different expectation groups.
- c) The study seeks to examine the role of feedback in communicating teacher expectations for student performance in the context of EFL classrooms. It is, therefore, desirable that the coding system be responsive to relevant domain-specific findings (e.g. those that relate to error correction) as documented in the study of language classrooms.
- d) The system should allow for the collection of data on the teacher's feedback behaviour toward individual students as opposed to the whole class or groups of students. This is because the focus is on differential treatment of individuals. In addition, it should emphasise teacher-student interaction in public settings as opposed to teacher's private contacts with individual students

.e) It should also distinguish between different types of student responses. This is felt to be crucial for the analysis of data dealing with differential teacher treatment because it helps to maximize comparability between teacher treatment of different groups in similar environments which in turn makes it possible to separate differences attributable to student behaviour from those that may be attributed to teacher's differential expectations for students.

f) One of the characteristic features of the EFL classrooms is that there may be exchanges between the teacher and the students which do not involve the target language. Given the possibility of using the mother tongue together with the target language in the classroom, it is important that the coding system have the language component built into it. This is mainly because language may be one of the potential mechanisms available to the teacher in communicating expectations.

g) One of the objectives of the study is to find out the extent to which teacher and student perspectives of teacher differential treatment of students correlate with each other as well as with behavioural measures obtained through classroom observation. So, it is important that aspects of interaction appearing in the questionnaire also be given due attention in the observation system in order to ensure comparability of data obtained from various sources.

Guided by the specifications outlined above, a survey of two types of relevant literature -i.e. the teacher expectation literature and the language learning/teaching literature was carried out in the hope of locating appropriate observation systems. Although I came across several systems which have a lot of relevance to my study, none seemed to readily fit my purpose. Some of the systems failed to suit my purpose because they covered a range of behaviour

which were not pertinent to the focus of the present study. For example, the observation system used in the studies by Brophy and Good (1970, 1986a) had a wider scope and several of their categories (e. g. teacher-initiated procedural interactions, teacher-afforded questions etc.) fell outside the focus of the present study.

Other systems left out aspects of interaction which were of particular interest to the present study. For example, several of the models that were developed to deal with feedback in the EFL classroom were considered less suitable because they tended to emphasise negative feedback in the form of correction (e. g. Allwright, 1975; Long, 1977; Chaudron, 1977). Yet, it has to be pointed out that I found many aspects of the systems in the EFL usable. Another related point is that while the present study is concerned with a range of pupil response behaviour (correct, partially correct, incorrect, no response), the focus of these models was largely on incorrect responses. What is more, these models were not originally developed for coding teacher interaction with individuals for whom he held different performance expectations although they could be modified to serve such a purpose.

On the whole, the search for an appropriate system proved a useful exercise. In particular, it led to the understanding that my study could benefit from a synthesis of different systems. This is because most of the aspects of behaviour that my study sought to investigate constituted important components of various descriptive systems. Thus, the construction of an observation system with the features specified at the beginning of the chapter basically involved putting together categories from different taxonomies to form one coding system. In particular, I heavily drew on Chaudron's (1977) categories of moves available for teachers in error correction. In addition, I have relied on the works of Brophy and Good (1970; 1986a), and to some extent Sunderland (1996) in developing categories for teacher feedback behaviour. In addition to the already existing categories, however, several other data driven categories were also developed.

I will now move on to the discussion of the process that underlay the construction of the observation system.

### **5.1.2 The Construction of a Coding System**

The process of developing a category system involved several stages. Initially, an inventory of exchanges which were thought to contain aspects of interaction of interest to the present study was carried out. The focus of this inventory was on three kinds of interaction. These were (a) interactions containing student responses which triggered some kind of teacher feedback, (b) those that contained no overt student response but were followed by overt teacher reaction to them (c) those that contained student responses which were not accompanied by overt teacher feedback.

Since the focus of the study was on teacher feedback in the context of academic exchanges, the inventory concentrated on two kinds of dyadic contacts involving public response opportunities (Brophy and Good, 1970, 1986a). The first type refers to public response opportunities where the student is engaged in trying to provide an answer to a question posed by the teacher, and the second type concerns reading turns in which the student reads aloud from a textbook, from the blackboard or his exercise books. (I will, hereafter, use the term solicit (Bellack et al 1966) to refer to teacher's move intended to elicit a verbal response including reading aloud).

However, it must be noted that not all public response opportunities were considered. The focus again was on those that occur when a student is nominated by the teacher to respond to a question or when a student calls out and the teacher follows this up with some kind of feedback (Brophy and Good, 1986a). Thus, there were several other features of the classroom talk that were not considered in drawing up the inventory. The aspects of interaction which were excluded from the inventory and effectively from the analysis were as

follows: private talk between the teacher and students or between students themselves; call outs that were not reacted to by the teacher; answers not addressed to the teacher (as in self-talk); spontaneous reactions to a suggested wrong answer or alternatives not addressed to the teacher; attempts to answer by other students while a student is still holding a turn; choral responses; all non-academic exchanges; utterances produced while the teacher was writing something ( e.g. an answer to a question) on the blackboard; and utterances involving the teacher reading a passage aloud.

The feedback events identified through the inventory that involved all seven lessons were carefully examined for emerging categories. This led to the creation of some rudimentary categories, which were then compared with the categories in the existing taxonomies (e.g. Chaudron, 1977). This procedure was particularly true for categories that dealt with the teacher's reaction to faulty responses from the student. In most cases Chaudron's categories of teacher error correction behaviour seemed to be capable of adequately describing the subset of data that dealt with wrong student responses although some required slight modifications.

However, it must also be pointed out that not all thirty categories in Chaudron's classification were used. For example, the distinctions between different kinds of *repetitions with change* (i.e. expansion and reduction) were not retained in this study. All forms of *repetition with change* and *provide* were handled in the same category of *provide correction* for the purpose of this study. This is because it was felt that such distinction was not significant as far as the present study was concerned.

Others had to be dropped because my data did not contain the kind of data they were intended to account for (e.g. return to the original error maker after correction either by the teacher or by peers). In addition, I found it useful to collapse some of the original categories

because I felt that their frequency of occurrence was too low. For example, all the feedback types (e.g. *clue*, *repeat original question*, *alter original question*, *repeat*) which deal with teacher behaviour aimed at providing the student with a chance to try a question again or improve original answer have been collapsed and treated as one category. Finally, I found the category of '*transfer*' less adequate for my purpose as it fails to say what sort of student a solicit was redirected to. Consequently, I have split the original category in to three smaller ones indicating whether the solicit was redirected to a low, a middle, or a high achiever.

Admittedly, developing an appropriate coding system was not a straight forward task and required a lengthy process of modifying existing categories, creating new ones and testing their adequacy by applying them to the entire data. As a result, the categories had to undergo several changes. The changes involved narrowing down broader ones (e.g. simple affirmation such as 'ok' and repetition of correct answer were originally treated as *accept*), collapsing those for which there were fewer occurrences (e. g. *repeat question*, *clue etc.*) and refining and re-refining those that survived basic changes of this sort. This was true for both sets of categories i.e. those obtained from the literature and those that emerged from the data. The resultant system which was used in analysing classroom data is described in the next subsection.

### **5.1.3 The Feedback Categories**

One important feature of the coding system is that it involved recording the feedback events on three dimensions: the quality of student response to a teacher solicit, the type of teacher feedback, and the language used in the reacting move. Five types of student responding behaviour (correct, incomplete or partially correct, incorrect, undesired and no response) were considered. Another feature of the system is that the categories of feedback behaviour are organised into a kind of sub-system according to the type of student response behaviour in response to which they occurred. As regards the use of language, each category of

feedback was coded for language in terms of whether it involved L1, L2 or a mixture of both. Thus, in the coding system, 'F' refers to English, 'N' to Amharic, 'B' to both, while 'NA' means not applicable.

The following is a complete list of the categories (See Appendix-1 for examples of the categories):

### **A) Teacher feedback to correct student responses**

- I *(virtually) exact repetition or part repetition (once or more) + /- yes, right, ok, uh, etc. (F/N/B).*
- II *simple affirmation- e.g. yes, right, ok, uh etc. (F/N/B/).*
- III *praise)-(e.g. good) +/-explanation; repetition; simple approving word) (F/N/B).*
- IV *repetition and explanation -(teacher not only repeats answer but also explains why answer is correct or comments on the meaning of utterance. Code as III if it contains praise) (F/N/B).*
- V *request repetition of answer -(teacher demands a replay of student's correct answer for a reason different from lack of clarity; the student has to repeat) (F/N/B).*
- VI *no (audible verbal) feedback - (teacher just moves on ignoring the answer, or just asks the student to sit down) (NA).*
- VII *other/(meaning of feedback) unclear (F/N/B/NA).*

A response is considered correct if it is judged thus by the teacher and is therefore acceptable to him. A student response which fails to meet the expectations of the teacher in terms of formal accuracy, content, or manner of presentation does not qualify as a correct response no matter how it matches the standard use or satisfies other objective measures of that nature. Accordingly, the following types of responses do not count as correct.

a) responses which fall short of the teacher's expectations as far as manner of presentation is concerned. For example, correct responses consisting of units below the sentence level may fall into a different category simply because they violate the teacher's instruction or expectation for complete sentences.

**Example: 5.1**

T: the one in the corner  
S: collected (*correct completion*)  
T: uh?  
S: collected  
T: read the whole sentence

b) responses which fail to match the teacher's intention and the focus of the current task (e.g. a correct answer that comes in response to a teacher's request to just read a question and nothing else) may be invalidated on the grounds that it falls outside the behaviour desired at the moment.

**Example: 5.2**

T: ...just read it  
S: she carried the wood to the market  
T: she dash the wood to the market uh

b) a factually correct response to a comprehension question is not classified as correct if it is expressed in a language which is judged to be defective in some way (e.g. mispronunciation of a word) as defined by the teacher's reaction to it.

**B) Teacher feedback to partially correct or incomplete student responses**

- I *prompt* -(exact or part repetition of a student's utterance in a 'keep going, you're on the right track' tone) + / - uh (F/N/B)
- II *simple approving word only* -(e.g. right, yes, uh, indicating approval of preceding utterance with possible request to continue) (F/N/B)
- III *provide correction* -(including repeat with change and supply correct answer or

missing part. Teacher may let the student continue after the correction)

+/-ok, uh (F/N/B)

IV *offer opportunity to try again* -(including repeat question, provide clue, repeat without change, prompt, request repetition of utterance) (F/N/B)

VI *no (audible) feedback* -(e. g the teacher simply moves on to something else without reacting in any way to the students' response. Includes redirect to another student)(NA)

VII *other/(meaning of feedback) unclear* (F/N/B/NA)

Partially correct responses are responses which are considered to be relevant but which are also thought to involve error or be inadequate in some way. Largely falling in this category are correct starts which are followed by some kind of teacher reaction. These include incomplete utterances which form part of an ongoing response but which also run across a series of turns allowing the teacher to react before the end of the response. They are anticipated to ultimately lead to the desired behaviour.

Also in this category are responses which are considered to contain 'some minor' error. For example, an answer to a comprehension question may not fit the category of correct responses because it contains certain formal errors (e.g. mispronunciation of a word) which do not significantly affect the validity and accuracy of the core factual answer.

### **Example: 5.3**

T: Yohanes...it dash thirty kilograms  
S: WEIGHED (correct answer but wrong pronunciation)  
S: it weighed it weighed

### **C. Teacher feedback to incorrect student responses**

I *provide correction* -(including repeat with change; supply correct

answer) +/-negation, redirection to whole class (F/N/B)

- II *offer opportunity to try again* - (including repeat question, provide clue, repeat without change, request to repeat utterance, prompt . The student has to try. Code as III, IV, or V if teacher calls on another student after such behaviour.) (F/N/B)
- III *redirect to high* Teacher calls on a high achiever (NA)
- IV *redirect to middle*-Teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA)
- V *redirect to low* -Teacher calls on a low achiever (NA)
- VI *no (audible) feedback* -Teacher moves on to something else ignoring the erroneous response. Code as III, IV, or V if the solicitation that led to the wrong answer is addressed to another student (NA)
- VII *other/unclear* - (including criticise, accept, simple negation etc.) (F/N/B/NA)

Falling in this category are answers to exercises and reading performances which are judged by the teacher as being quite unsatisfactory or inadequate in terms of meeting the demands of the task at hand. A response may be considered incorrect by the teacher if it contains linguistic or content error or both. Examples of linguistic errors include acts of misreading, mispronunciations and grammatical errors. A content error may occur when a student provides a response to a comprehension question whose informational content is wrong.

An incorrect response may occur on its own, in the middle or end of correct performance or even precede correct performance as far as reading is concerned. So, a reading turn recorded as containing an error does not necessarily refer to the fact that the entire student output in that particular turn was wrong. While it is usually the case that wrong responses co-occur mixed with some correct output, the focus when this happens especially during reading aloud is on what the student got wrong. Each word in a material selected to be read aloud by students may be regarded as a kind of test item which the child passes by saying the

word correctly or fails by mispronouncing it or by failing to try to say it at all. For the purpose of this study, the former kind of mistake is coded as incorrect while the latter kind is classified as *no response* (see D below).

In grammar exercises, incorrect response refers to students' inability to produce the core answer as defined by the nature of the task, the accompanying instruction for doing the task and the teacher's behaviour in handling it. An observed error not treated by the teacher does not count as error unless some evidence exists within the boundary of a given lesson to indicate that the teacher chose to ignore it.

#### **D. Teacher reaction to lack of response (*no response*)**

- I *supply answer* -teacher provides the desired response (F/N/B).
- II *stay with the student* -teacher persists in getting the student to try by offering a second chance. Specific behaviours include prompting, repeating question or instructions, providing clue, and other acts aimed at persuading the student to have a go. The student has to try) (F/N/B).
- III *redirect to high* -teacher calls on a high achiever (NA).
- IV *redirect to middle* -teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA).
- V *redirect to low* -teacher calls on a low achiever (NA).
- VI *other/unclear*-(F/N/B/NA).

The category of lack of response does not deal with student response as such as no student output is involved. It is included here simply because it represents one of the common failure situations associated with question-answer exchange in the classroom. It is effectively the same as incorrect answer in that both types of student behaviour may be taken as evidence of gap in student knowledge or lack of mastery of skill.

## E Teacher reaction to *undesired* student responses

- I *stay with the student* -teacher repeats question, provides clue, repeats instruction, asks student to repeat utterance with intent to have him/her self-correct. Code as II, III, or IV if teacher calls on another student after repeating a question, or providing a clue or repeating instruction) (F/N/B).
- II *redirect to high* -teacher calls on a high achiever (NA).
- III *redirect to middle*-teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA).
- IV *redirect to low* -teacher calls on a low achiever (NA).
- V *supply answer* -teacher provides the desired answer (F/N/B/NA).
- VI *other/unclear* -teacher reacts by doing something else. Includes ‘no feedback’, accept, and ‘unclassifiable’) (F/N/B).

The category of *undesired response* refers to a student response which was judged inappropriate either because it came prematurely or was different from what the teacher wanted the student to do. This category of response was added later. Initially, the subset of data that fell into this category were treated as incorrect student responses. However, I eventually decided to treat them separately. One reason for doing this was because I felt that there is a qualitative difference between an incorrect response and inappropriate one. While a wrong answer may result from a students’ lack of relevant knowledge, inappropriate answer may not be as strong evidence of this. The second reason for including this last category of student response relates to the size of such data, which was big enough to deserve an independent treatment. For example, the data contained several instances of a student providing an answer when the teacher only expected him to just read out the question with out offering the answer.

In this section I have attempted to describe the coding system used in the study and the process through which the analytical framework was arrived at. However, it may be the case that the reader would like to find out more about the categories and how the coding was done. In this case I refer the reader to Appendix-1, where I provide a complete list of the categories together with their operational definitions and examples. I have also developed a set of procedures that served as guidelines to be followed during the coding process in order to ensure consistency of coding. The coding principles also appear in Appendix-1. In the next section, I turn to the analysis of the data dealing with perceptions.

## **5.2 The Analysis of Data on Perceptions**

The data set contained two types of data on perceptions. The first type consisted of quantitative data obtained through questionnaire. The second type was collected through interviews and was qualitative in nature. The purpose of this section is to identify the types of analysis applied to these sets of data. I will begin the section by looking at the method of quantitative analysis employed in dealing with the questionnaire data. I will then move on to discuss the approach used in the analysis of the qualitative data.

### **5.2.1 The Analysis of Quantitative Data**

As indicated (4.3.2.2.1), one of the methods employed in the study to access perceptions involved the use of questionnaire. More specifically, students were presented with a 30-item inventory of teacher feedback behaviour and were asked to rate the extent to which the teacher would show each behaviour when dealing with each of the four hypothetical students described in the four versions of the questionnaire. Each participating student was therefore made to complete four sets of questionnaire.

The responses of the 46 students who completed the questionnaire were first entered on the SPSS. This was done for all four versions. The data was then subjected to a series of

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statistical analyses. Professional help was then sought on what kind of statistical analysis would be more appropriate in terms of yielding the desired information.

Initial statistical analyses were exploratory in nature. Thus, different types of statistical analysis were applied to the data with the intent to find statistical tools which could bring out the kinds of information needed. First, the statistical method known as factor analysis was applied to the data. The aim was to reduce the 30 items into meaningful groups which share the same underlying schemata. Thus, principal-components analyses were computed separately for each of the four versions and the emergent groupings were compared across the versions.

The comparison showed that there was no consistency in the groupings that were suggested by the analysis across the four versions. The only factor which seemed to be fairly consistent across versions was the 'language' factor. That is to say items 25, 26, and 27 which deal the teacher's use of L1 and L2 in responding to student responses (see Appendix-4) occurred together forming a distinct factor in the analysis of the data pertaining to the four versions. 'Redirect' which deals with transferring solicitation to another student was another factor which appeared to show a certain level of consistency across versions. The effect of the lack of consistent factors across the various versions was that it was not possible to carry out a fairly neat comparison of the four sets of questionnaire data. This in effect meant that this line of analysis was not to be pursued.

As a result, it was decided to carry out the analysis on an item-by-item basis. This approach involved creating a measure of perceived frequency by computing the frequency score for each item. This, in turn, required assigning values to the original categories of frequency as follows: always=2, sometimes=1, and never=0. The index of frequency was then created by calculating the total value of each item for each of the four hypothetical targets rated. The

measure of frequency created thus was then used in comparing the perceptions of students. Since the focus was on the ability of the target hypothetical students rated, the combined score for male and female high achiever targets was compared with the combined score for male and female low achiever targets. Wherever the ability based indices differed, a paired sample t-test was used in assessing the significance of the difference noted.

Finally, although attempts to find statistically meaningful grouping met with little success, it was still desirable that the items be treated within certain conceptual categories. This was considered expedient especially when it comes to the discussion and presentation of data. The comparison, however, was done on an item-by-item basis. Thus, questionnaire items were conceptually categorised into 9 groups which are presented in Table 5.1 below as follows:

**Table 5.1 Categories of Questionnaire items**

Aspects of feedback	ITEMS	FOCUS
No Feedback	1, 7, 11	Teacher's failure to provide feedback
Praise	2, 6, 12	Praise in success and failure situations
Provide/correct	3, 14, 22, 29	Supplying answers in failure situations
Self-correction	4, 15, 19, 30, 8	Providing opportunity for self-correction
Criticise	5, 13, 20	Criticising students in failure situations
Redirect	9, 16, 21, 28	Redirecting solicits in failure situations
Return	10, 17, 23	Return to original error maker after correction
Explain	18, 24	Communicating additional information
Language	25, 26, 27	Use of L2 in giving feedback

As regards the Teacher Individual Assessment Questionnaire (TIAQ), the data for all students was tallied and sorted out by ability. The proportions of the self-reported treatments received by the two groups were then compared. It is also noteworthy that the categorisations indicated above also apply to teacher questionnaire as the items are essentially the same.

I will now move on to qualitative data and look at the issues involved in analysing it.

### **5.2.2 The Analysis of Qualitative Data**

The analysis of the interview data obtained from students involved several stages. First, the responses of the 17 students to specific questions asked during the interview were summarised and put together on a response inventory sheet. This procedure produced a list of responses organised along specific issues. Then, the summarised data was again organised according to the research questions it is associated with. This was done manually.

Once the data was organised in this manner, the next step was to analyse the data by applying categories that are more or less similar to those used in the questionnaire and observation system as the main focus was on establishing the relationship between perception and reality. It must, however, be pointed out that the analysis done at this stage was approached in a more open-minded fashion and with an eye to categories and new insights emerging from the data.

The same procedure applied to the data gathered from the interview with the teacher. The only exception though was that the first stage that involved compiling the responses of different individuals on an issue by issue basis was unnecessary for this subset of data as it was collected from an interview with a single teacher.

### 5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to provide a brief account of the approach employed and the process involved in the analysis of the data used in this study. Admittedly and as the reader will be well aware, there is a clear imbalance between the lengthy coverage of the analysis of the quantitative behavioural data and the relatively short account of the analysis of qualitative data. As Sunderland (1996) argued, one reason for this may be because the analysis of qualitative data and the discussion of it are so inextricable that it is often impossible to treat them separately. At the same time the imbalance is consistent with the different weighting with which quantitative and qualitative data are used in this study. While three of the basic research questions asked in this study require mainly quantitative data with the qualitative data playing a supportive role, only one (RQ4) depends primarily on qualitative data for its answer. In spite of such disparity in coverage in this chapter, the findings reported in subsequent chapters will be both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

In the next three chapters (Chapter Six, Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight), I report the findings. As regards the contents of these chapters, they deal with teacher behaviour research questions (RQ 1 and RQ 2) student perceptions research question (RQ 3) and teacher perception research question (RQ 4) respectively. The relationship between the findings reported in the three chapters is dealt with in Chapter Nine.

## Chapter Six

### Observed Feedback Behaviour: Findings

#### 6.0 General Introduction

This chapter presents the results and findings that pertain to RQ1 and RQ2. It starts with an introductory section which is intended to provide a backdrop for subsequent sections. In this opening section, I will try to show what was going on in the recorded lessons in terms of the types and frequency of the responses provided by students. This is then followed by a section which presents the results that relate to whether there existed any objective difference in the amount and type of feedback received by the highs and the lows (RQ1). The last section presents more direct evidence on whether or not the teacher treated the high achievers and the low achievers differently (RQ2).

#### 6.1 Quality of Student Response: Introduction

In this section, I will look at the distribution of different types of student responses across the three expectation groups. I have included the figures for the intermediate group because I thought this would give a flavour of what was going on in the class as a whole. The main purpose of this section is therefore to set the scene for subsequent sections.

In the seven lessons recorded, there were 656 teacher student academic contacts in which the teacher expected some kind of verbal response from individual students. The analysis, however, was based on 644 such contacts. 12 cases were excluded because they lacked certain information that was necessary in order to carry out the analysis. Examples include responses produced by an unidentified speaker and student responses and teacher feedback which contained inaudible bits. Teacher feedback behaviours which were judged ambiguous were not, however, excluded; they were instead classified as ‘*other*’ together with those that

fell outside the specific categories developed (see 5.1.3). Table 6.1 below shows the figures for different types of student responses for the three expectation groups.

**Table 6.1 Distribution of different types of responses between the three expectation groups.**

Response	Expectation group			
	High	Middle	Low	Total
Correct	86	43	36	165
Part correct	102	26	16	144
Incorrect	118	65	47	230
No response	25	18	28	71
Undesired	13	14	7	34
Unclear				12
Total	344	166	134	656

Of the 644 solicits, 573 generated four types of response from the three groups of students while the remaining 71 failed to elicit any kind of audible response from the students. In terms of the quality of the responses elicited, 165 were treated as correct. Of these, 86 came from highs, 43 from middles and 36 from lows. The number of responses which were classified as incomplete or partially correct was 144, of which 102 were produced by highs, 26 by middles and 16 by lows. The total number of responses identified as totally incorrect was 230. Highs contributed 118 of these while the figure for the middles and the lows was 65 and 47 respectively. As regards the category of '*undesired response*', there were 34 of them in total, of which 13 were produced by the highs, 14 by the middles, and 7 by the lows. In sum, it can be said that highs contributed most of the responses, followed by middles, with the lows contributing the least.

I now move on to the reaction that these responses generated from the teacher. It must, however, be noted that the focus will be on the two extreme groups (i.e. lows and highs) for reasons discussed in Chapter Two (2.1.3).

## **6.2 Patterns of Feedback: Focus on Objective Differences (RQ1)**

In this section I will look at the different kinds of feedback provided by the teacher in response to students' answers to his solicits. The focus of the analysis is on objective differences in the sense that most of the disparities reported in this section are generally attributable to differences in performance between the two expectation groups. If, for example, highs receive a greater percentage of a certain type of feedback it may be because of the fact that they are the ones who generally contribute most of the answers. Similarly, one expects the amount of feedback received by lows to be commensurate with their contributions.

The section is divided into six sub-sections. In the first five sub-sections, I will look at the feedback accompanying the five types of response behaviours (i.e. *correct*, *part correct*, *incorrect*, *no response*, and *undesired response*) in turn. The last sub-section presents data on the language used in giving feedback to the students.

### **6.2. 1 Teacher Feedback to Highs' and Lows' *Correct* Answers**

There appears to be little difference between the highs and the lows in terms of the range of feedback they received from the teacher in response to the correct answers they gave. That is to say, the teacher used all the seven categories of feedback to correct answers (see Table 5.2 below) with both the highs and the lows. There were, however, large and consistent quantitative differences between the two expectation groups, as the data in Table 6.2 clearly show.

**Table 6.2** Frequencies and percentages of the teacher’s feedback to highs’ and lows’ correct answers.

Type of feedback	Directed to highs		Directed to lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Exact or part repetition	37	69.8%	16	30.2%	53	100
Simple affirmation	6	35.3%	11	64.7%	17	100
Praise	6	75.0%	2	25.0%	8	100
Repetition +explanation	20	95.2%	1	4.8%	21	100
Request repetition	8	72.7%	3	27.3%	11	100
No feedback	7	77.8%	2	22.2%	9	100
Other	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	3	100
Total	86	70.5%	36	29.5%	122	100

As expected, highs received a greater proportion of almost every type of feedback compared with the lows. For instance, the distribution of *exact or part repetition* of answer, which was the most frequent type for both groups appeared to favour the highs more than the lows. Of the 53 falling in this category, 37 (69.8%) went to the highs while the figure for the lows was well below half of this i.e. 16 (30.2%). This meant that the teacher repeated far more correct answers coming from the highs than from the lows.

The pattern of difference was also evident in the distribution of *repetition and explanation*, which constituted the second most frequent type of feedback to *correct* answer. As the data in Table 6.2 indicate, 95.2 % of the feedback accounted for by this category occurred in response to *correct* answers from the highs (the figure for the lows was obviously 4.8%). It can then be suggested that *repetition and explanation* is more predominant in the feedback received by highs than by lows.

The pattern was similar for the other types of feedback, too. In fact, the figures were three times bigger for the highs for some categories. For *praise*, for instance, the percentages were 75% for the highs and 25% for the lows. Similarly, of the 11 instances of *request repetition* of correct answer, 8 (72.7%) were directed to the highs and 3 (27.3%) were addressed to the lows. The same level of inequality existed with respect to *no feedback*. That is to say, the teacher failed to give feedback to more correct answers from highs than from lows. Put differently, 77.8% of the total *correct* answers ignored were from the highs while the figure for *no feedback* was 22.2% for lows. This meant that the highs were the recipients of a greater proportion of *no feedback*, *praise*, and *request repetition* (e. g. *say it again*) types of feedback afforded by the teacher in success situations

A notable exception was *simple affirmation* (e. g. *.ok, yes*). This category of feedback to correct answers seemed to favour lows. For this category, the percentage was 64.7 for the lows and 35.3 for the highs. Thus, more instances of brief confirmations of correctness were observed in the teacher's reaction to correct answers from lows than from highs.

In sum, the data for teacher feedback to corrects answer suggest the following findings: Consistent with the differences in the number of answers they contributed, the highs received a greater proportion of almost all categories of feedback accompanying *correct* answers. Thus, the teacher repeated correct answers coming from the highs far more frequently than from the lows. Furthermore, the highs appeared to be praised more often for their success. There was also a marked difference between the two groups in terms of the distribution of *repetition and explanation*. The overwhelming majority of this type of feedback occurred in response to correct answers from highs. Another interesting finding is that highs received a greater proportion of *no feedback* and a smaller percentage of *simple affirmation* types of treatment, suggesting a tendency for the teacher to follow up and confirm correct performance from lows more often. Finally, a strong expectancy group

difference favouring highs was observed with respect to *request repetition*. Thus, the teacher was twice as more likely to demand a repetition of a correct answer from highs than from lows.

### 6.2.2 Teacher Feedback to Partially Correct or Incomplete Responses

There were 118 *incomplete or partially correct responses*. Of these, 102 came from the highs while the remaining 16 were from the lows. As regards the range of teacher feedback behaviour, the two groups were accorded the same type of feedback. However, they differed greatly in terms of the proportions of the feedback they received. The figures for the different types of feedback for the two expectation groups are shown in Table 6.3 below.

**Table 6.3 Frequencies and percentages of the teacher’s feedback to highs’ and lows’ partially correct or incomplete responses.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs		Directed to lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Prompt	40	88.9%	5	11%	45	100
Simple approving word	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	100
Provide correction	19	86.4%	3	13.6%	22	100
Offer opportunity for self-correction	15	88.2%	2	11.8%	17	100
No feedback	1	50%	1	50%	2	100
Other	2	66.7%	1	33.3%	3	100
Total	102	86.4%	16	13.6%	118	100

For *prompt*, which was the most frequent type of teacher feedback to *incomplete or partially correct response*, the figure was 40 (88.9%) for the highs and 5 (11.1%) for the lows. These figures are widely divergent. Such pattern of difference was also evident in the other three frequent types of feedback i.e. *simple approving word*, *provide correction*, and *offer opportunity for self-correction*. For example, the highs received 25 (86.2 %) of the

total for *simple approving word* type of feedback while the figure for the lows was 4 (13.8%). Furthermore, of the 22 *provide correction* type of feedback, 19 (86.4%) were directed to highs whereas only 3 (13.6%) were addressed to lows. Finally, there were 17 *offer opportunity for self-correction* type of feedback. Of these 15 (88.2%) involved the highs while only two (11.8 %) were directed to lows.

On the whole the highs seemed to receive a greater proportion of feedback to *partially correct or incomplete answers*. This was true for all categories of feedback but one, the exception being the category of *no feedback* which was shared equally between the two groups. On the other hand, lows generally seemed to have received far fewer of each type of feedback. In fact, the frequency counts of the six categories of feedback occurring in the context of an *incomplete or part correct response* were all less than five for the lows.

In summary, the pattern of difference that appeared to characterise the teacher's feedback behaviour in the context of *correct answers* replicated itself in the teacher's reaction to *incomplete or partially correct responses*. In fact, the differences appeared to be more pronounced for *incomplete or partially correct responses* when the proportions for specific types of feedback were considered separately. For example, the proportion for the highs was consistently very high (between 86-88%) for four measures (*prompt, simple approving word, provide correction, and offer opportunity for self-correction*), with the lows receiving a considerably lower proportion of each of these types of feedback (the range for the lows was 11.1-13.8%). In addition to this, none of the measures favoured the lows; the direction of difference was almost always in favour of the highs. The only exception was the category of *no feedback*, which had a relatively lower overall frequency. For this type of feedback the figure was the same (50%) for both expectation groups.

I will now move on to Section 6.2.3 and look at the teacher's response to wrong answers.

### 6.2.3 Teacher Feedback to Highs' and Lows' Incorrect Responses

There were 165 *incorrect student responses*, 118 from the highs and 47 from the lows. The teacher reacted to 67 of the *incorrect responses* from both groups by providing correction. Thus, of the 67 *provide correction*, 46 (68.7%) came in response to a wrong answer from the highs while this type of feedback accounted for 21 (31.3%) of the feedback addressed to the lows. Again these are not comparable. The pattern was similar for the other types of feedback, too. For *offer opportunity for self-correction*, for example, the figure was 23 (69.7%) for highs and 10 (30.3%) for lows. These figures are presented in Table 6.4 below.

**Table 6.4 Frequencies and percentages of the teacher's feedback to highs' and lows' incorrect responses.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs		Directed to lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Provide correction	46	68.7%	21	31.3%	67	100%
Offer opportunity for self-correction	23	69.7%	10	30.3%	33	100%
Redirect to high	17	68%	8	32%	25	100%
Redirect to middle	3	75%	1	25%	4	100%
Redirect to low	0	0%	1	100%	1	100%
No feedback	27	90%	3	10%	30	100%
Other	2	40%	3	60%	5	100%
Total	118	71%	47	28.5%	165	100%

There were 30 instances of *no feedback* in which *incorrect responses* were allowed to pass without any comment at all. Of these, 27 (90.0%) involved the highs and 3 (10%) the lows. Thus, the number of *incorrect responses* ignored was nine times higher for the highs. As regards redirection, there were in total 30 incorrect responses to which the teacher reacted by calling on another student to answer. Two thirds of these came from the highs and the remaining one third were from the lows. In terms of the ability of the students who were

called on to provide correction, 25 were redirected to the highs, 4 to the middles and 1 to a low achiever.

Of the 25 *redirect to high*, 17 (68%) occurred in response to a wrong answer from the highs and 8 (32%) in response to those produced by the lows. Again these figures differ widely. Of the 4 *redirect to middle*, 3 occurred in response to an incorrect response from the highs. As regards *redirect to low* the only response that was treated thus came from a low achiever. Thus, none of the incorrect responses from the highs received such treatment. *Other (e.g. criticise, accept)* accounted for 3 (60%) and 2 (40%) incorrect responses for the lows and the highs respectively.

Like the data for correct and incomplete or partially correct responses, the data regarding teacher feedback to highs' and lows' incorrect responses were also characterised by the consistently large expectancy group differences on several variables. The most notable difference exists for teacher's failure to give feedback to students' wrong answers. The data suggested a strong tendency for the teacher to ignore wrong answers from the highs more often than from the lows. Of the total of recorded instances of the teacher's failure to give any kind of overt verbal feedback, the overwhelming majority (90%) occurred in the context of a wrong answer from the highs leading to a highly significant group difference. This meant that the teacher appeared to be more tolerant of inadequate performances from highs while he was more critical of the poor performances by lows. Alternatively, it may also be said that the teacher was trying to help the lows by being more attentive to their output. A more detailed discussion of these findings will be presented in Chapter Nine, where I also discuss other related findings from subsequent chapters.

With regards to other types of teacher reaction to incorrect student responses, the category of *offer opportunity for self-correction* represented another area where the two groups

differed markedly. The data for this type of feedback showed that there was a strong tendency for the teacher to offer second chances to highs more often than to lows. It is also noteworthy that virtually the same pattern and magnitude of difference existed for *provide correction*. The teacher was observed giving this type of treatment to highs more often than to lows. In fact, the proportions for *provide correction* and *provide opportunity for self-correction* were very comparable, suggesting that the teacher was just as likely to provide correction as he was to offer opportunity for self-correction.

Another general measure on which the two groups appeared to differ concerned redirection to another student. The teacher was twice more likely to redirect a question following a wrong response from a high achiever than from a low achiever. In terms of the more specific types of redirection, the teacher redirected more questions to the highs and middles following wrong answers from the highs than from the lows. As regards *redirect to low*, the data point to a slight reversal in the pattern of redirection in that the teacher was more likely to redirect a question to a low achiever following a wrong response from lows than from highs.

Finally, lows received more *other* type of feedback compared with highs. Given the fact that this category of feedback included criticism and acceptance of incorrect answers, it appears that lows are more likely than highs to be criticised for failure and to see their wrong answers accepted by the teacher. A word of warning is in order here. In view of the fact that *other* had a very limited occurrence in the entire data, the statement about the likelihood of criticism and acceptance of wrong answers needs to be treated with caution.

Next, I will look at the teacher's reaction to students' failure to respond.

#### 6.2.4 Teacher Reaction to Students' Failure to Respond (*no response*).

There were in total 53 *no responses*. Of these 28 involved lows and the remaining 25 highs. The teacher responded to 25 such lack of response by providing the answer. Of these, 10 (40%) were directed to the highs and 15 (60%) to the lows. Thus, lows received a greater proportion of this type of treatment, which was also the most frequent type of feedback in the context of lack of response.

The next most frequent type of feedback was *stay* (*e. g repeat question*). This category of feedback occurred in response to 24.5% of the total instances of *no response*. For this type of feedback, the figure was 6 (46.2%) for the highs and 7(53.8%) for the lows. Thus, the pattern observed for *provide answer* was repeated with this category. That is to say lows were given the opportunity to try again proportionately more than highs. Table 6.5 gives the figures pertaining to teacher's reaction to lack of response from the two expectation groups.

**Table 6.5 Frequencies and percentages of the teacher's 'feedback' to highs' and lows' failure to respond.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs		Directed to lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Provide answer	10	40%	15	60%	25	100%
Stay (with the student)	6	46.2%	7	53.8%	13	100%
Redirect to high	8	80%	2	20%	10	100%
Redirect to middle	1	33%	2	66.7%	3	100%
Redirect to low	0	0%	1	100%	1	100%
Other	0	0%	1	100%	1	100%
Total	25	47.2%	28	52.8%	53	100%

The three categories dealing with redirection to another student together accounted for 14 of the teacher's response to *no response*. The figure was 9 (64.3%) and 5 (35.7%) for highs and lows respectively. This meant that there were more redirections to other students following lack of response from highs than from lows. As regards the specific categories dealing with redirection to highs, middles and lows, the figures for lows were 2 (20%), 2 (66.7%), and 1(100%) respectively. For highs *redirect to high* was 8 (80%) and *redirect to middle* was 1 (33.3%). There was no *redirect to low* for highs.

The overall pattern seems to have changed as far as teacher reaction to students' failure to respond is concerned. Unlike the pattern for feedback to correct, partially correct, and incorrect responses where highs received a greater proportion of almost every category of feedback, lows were given a larger share of the five out of the six categories of feedback occurring in the context of *no response*.

The data regarding the teacher's reaction to students' failure to respond may be summarised as follows: Consistent expectation group differences appeared for all measures of teacher 'feedback' to *no response*. Moreover, all but one favoured lows, the exception being *redirect to high*. The number of times the teacher was observed supplying answer or offering opportunity to try again in response to failure to respond was greater for lows than for highs.

The picture was a bit mixed as far as *redirect* is concerned. The combined data for the categories involving redirection to another student showed that there is a tendency for the teacher to redirect a solicit following highs' failure to respond rather than lows'. Furthermore, the data for the specific categories of *redirect* indicated that the teacher is more likely to redirect a solicit to a high achiever when highs fail to respond than when lows do so. On the other hand, the teacher appeared to call on the middle group or the lows more

frequently when the lows failed to respond than when the highs were unable to respond. In fact, *redirect to low* appeared to be closely associated with lows than with highs.

Next, I present the results that deal with the teacher's reaction to students' *undesired response*.

### 6.2.5 Teacher Reaction to 'Undesired' Responses from Highs and Lows

As indicated in Chapter Five (Section 5.1.3), for the purpose of this study *undesired response* refers to a student response which has been judged by the teacher as inappropriate either because it came prematurely or was different from what the teacher wanted the student to do. There were 20 responses that were coded as *undesired*. Of these, 13 were from highs and 7 from lows. Of the total teacher reactions to such response behaviour from highs, 4 (50%) were *stay* (e.g. *repeat solicit*), 5 (100%) *redirect*, and 4 (57.1%) *provide answer*. Table 6.6 below gives these figures. It has to be noted that instances of feedback that were coded as *redirect* included redirection to highs (3) and redirection to middles (2). However, I chose not to use the specific categories in the table in order to avoid the presence of several empty cells as none of the *undesired responses* from lows were redirected.

**Table 6.6 Frequencies and percentages of teacher feedback to *undesired* student responses.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs		Directed to lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Stay	4	50%	4	50%	8	100%
Redirect	5	100%	0	0%	5	100%
Provide answer	4	57.1%	3	42.9%	7	100%
Total	13	65%	7	35%	20	100%

Of the 7 *undesired responses* from lows, the teacher reacted to 4 (50%) by *staying* with them while *provide answer* type of feedback with the remaining 3 (42.9%) such instances. The results show that there was no difference between the number of *stay* accorded both groups although the percentage for *provide answer* was greater for the highs. There was also a significant difference between the two groups in terms of the distribution of *redirect* as the lows received none of this type of treatment and all instances of it were exclusively associated with the highs.

In summary, the data for the teacher's reaction to *undesired responses* showed that there were both quantitative and qualitative differences between the feedback accorded highs and lows when they produced *undesired responses* to the teacher's solicits. That is to say the teacher's reaction to highs' *undesired response* appeared to be more varied compared with his reaction to lows'. For example, while the teacher reacted by staying with the student, redirecting the solicit to another student, or providing the answer with highs, he either stayed or provided answer when it involved lows. In terms of frequency, while no group difference was observed for *stay*, *provide answer* appeared to occur more often with highs than with lows.

The focus of preceding sections was on the distribution of a range of teacher feedback behaviours between the two expectation groups. While the discussion so far provides information about the interaction patterns associated with responding to the performance of highs and lows, no mention has been made about the language used in giving feedback. The next subsection attempts to fill this gap.

#### **6.2.6 Teacher's Use of Language**

Three kinds of language use were expected in the teacher's reacting moves: only English (L1), only Amharic (L2), and a mixture of both (L1+L2). A total of 385 teacher reactions

were coded for language use. Clearly, there is a mismatch between the total for all types of feedback and the total for language use. This is because there were some feedback categories which did not involve language use (e.g. *redirect*, *no feedback* etc). The following table presents the figures for the three measures of language use.

**Table 6.7 Frequencies and percentages of teacher’s use of L1, L2, or both in giving feedback.**

Language	Used with highs		Used with lows		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
English	238	70.41%	100	29.59%	338	100%
Amharic	21	75%	7	25%	28	100%
Both	13	68.42%	6	31.58%	19	100%
Total	272		113		385	100%

There were in total 385 instances of feedback that were coded as involving one of the three language options identified above. Of these, 338 involved the use of L2. The teacher used L1 on 28 occasions and a mixture of L1 and L2 in 19 instances of feedback. In terms of the distribution between the two expectation groups, he used L2 in 249 (70.41%) of the feedback addressed to the highs while the figure was 100 (29.59%) for the lows. These figures differ widely.

As regards the other measures of language use, 21 (75%) of the feedback that were addressed in L1 were directed to the highs. Surprisingly, the total number of instances of feedback addressed to the lows in L1 was only 7 (25%). This meant that the teacher used L1 in reacting to the output of the highs more frequently compared with lows. The same pattern was observed with respect to the teachers’ use of *both*. Of the total (19) instances of feedback involving the use of both languages, 13 (68.42%) were used by the teacher when responding to the performance of the highs while only 6 (31.58%) were used in the feedback

directed to the lows. The data for the use of language may then be summarised in the statement that the highs were significantly higher than the lows on the three measures of language used in this study.

### **6.2.7 Quantitative Findings of Teacher Feedback Behaviour (RQ1): Summary and Conclusion.**

Using the frequency of feedback as a basic measure, the quantitative findings so far may be summarised as follows. The most overwhelming finding is that the highs and lows seemed to differ greatly in terms of the amount of feedback they received from the teacher. Highs appear to receive proportionately more of most of the feedback types (including absence of it) occurring in the context of *correct*, *partially correct*, *incorrect* and to some extent *undesired responses*. There was a slight reversal in the pattern for *no response* where lows exceeded highs on most measures. As regards teacher's reaction to *undesired response*, there were some differences between the two groups but they did not appear to be as pronounced as they were with the feedback involving other kinds of responses. Finally, a clear difference favouring highs was observed for the three measures involving language use.

The data considered so far relate to measures of objective differences between the two groups which can not be unambiguously interpreted as evidence of teacher differential treatment of highs and lows. This is because, as indicated before, the observed differences may be due to objective performance differences among the children although it is also equally possible that they may have occurred due to differential treatment by the teacher or both. Thus, it has to be emphasised that the findings at this stage relate to the existence or absence of objective differences between the two groups which can not be unambiguously ascribed to discrimination by the teacher. Finding out whether or not the differences could have been the effect of differential teacher expectation would require a different level of

analysis. The next section represents an attempt to find out the extent to which the differences are associated with differential teacher treatment.

### **6.3 The Search for Further Evidence on Differential Teacher Treatment: RQ2**

It is to be recalled that one research question in this study was intended to generate data about the nature of the difference in the treatment received by highs and lows from the teacher. More specifically, it sought to find out the extent to which the differences could be attributed to differential teacher feedback behaviour towards the two expectation groups. In this section, I will look at findings that emerged from the analysis of the data at a level that allows for the exploration of the possibility of teacher expectation effect.

The results reported in 6.2 clearly demonstrate wider quantitative differences between the two groups. However, they do not clearly show whether the differences were the result of differential teacher expectations. This is because the group differences in interaction patterns could be attributed to several factors. However, two potential factors stand out as far as this issue is concerned. Given the differences in ability among the two groups, they may result from the responding behaviours of the students themselves. Not surprisingly, highs will contribute more during question-answer exchanges and thus create far more opportunities to have their contributions commented upon by the teacher. In addition to the differences in student behaviour, however, the differences may also be due to teacher differentiation between the two groups or a combination of the two factors.

More direct evidence on the hypothesis stating that the differences are attributable to differential expectations would require comparing data on the treatment given to the two groups in equivalent situations. This section looks at such evidence. Further, the results discussed in this section are based on measures which take in to account absolute differences

in the frequencies of the various behaviours involved. Thus, it can be said that the findings reported in this section are more qualitative in nature.

Three types of measures were used: percentages within expectation group, mean, and rank order of frequencies. The calculation of the mean was done by dividing the total for each group by the total number of highs and lows who took part in the coded interactions over the seven lessons. The seven lessons involved 10 highs and 14 lows. The ranking was based on percentages within expectation group and mean. Statistical tests of proportion were carried out to ascertain the significance of differences, wherever there were any.

The section is divided into six subsections. In the six subsections, I will look at the results of the analysis carried out in search of evidence of differential teacher treatment (DTT) in six environments, five of which correspond to the qualities of student answer identified earlier, namely students' *correct answers*, *partially correct answers*, *incorrect answers*, *undesired responses*, and *no responses* with the sixth area being language use.

I will now move on to look at each area in turn.

### **6.3.1 Evidence of DTT in the Feedback to Correct Answers.**

Feedback to students' correct answers represents the first area in which the search for any evidence of differential teacher treatment (DTT) of highs and lows was done. As indicated before, the total number of correct answers produced by both groups was 122. Of these, the highs produced 86 and the lows 36. This meant that the 'average participating high' contributed 8.6 of the correct answers and the 'average participating low' 2.57. Despite the fact that the highs gave more correct answers than did the lows, the two groups did not seem to differ greatly on the feedback which occurred most frequently over the lessons when the data were adjusted for absolute differences. For instance, of the 86 correct answers from highs 43% were followed by *exact or part repetition* of the answer by the teacher. The

figure for lows for this kind of feedback was 44.4%, suggesting that the teacher was as likely to repeat a correct answer from high as he was when it came from lows.

Following *exact or part repetition* of answer, the second most frequent type of feedback to correct answer was *repetition and explanation*. For this type of feedback, the proportion for highs was 23.3% while the figure was only 2.8% for lows. A test of proportions showed this difference to be statistically significant at the 5% level. This meant that the teacher was more likely to follow up a correct answer from the highs with explanations than he was in similar situations with the lows. These figures are shown in Table 6.8 below.

**Table 6.8 Totals, means, ranks and percentages of teacher feedback to highs' and lows' correct answers.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs				Directed to lows			
	Total	Mean	%	Rank	Total	Mean	%	Rank
Exact or part repetition	37	3.7	43	1	16	1.14	44.4	1
Simple affirmation	6	.60	7	5=	11	.79	30.6	2
Praise	6	.60	7	5=	2	.14	5.6	4=
Repetition + explanation	20	2.0	23.3	2	1	.07	2.8	5=
Demand repetition	8	.80	9.3	3	3	.21	8.3	3
No feedback	7	.70	8.1	4	2	.14	5.6	4=
Other	2	.20	2.3	6	1	.07	2.8	5=
Total	86	8.6	100		36	2.57	100	

Providing simple confirmation of the correctness of answer (i.e. *simple affirmation*) represented the third most frequent type of feedback to correct answers. The teacher did this with 7% of the correct answers coming from the highs. In contrast, 30.6% of the correct answers from the lows were followed by *simple affirmation*. A test of proportions also

showed this difference to be significant at 5% level. Taken together, the findings for *repetition and explanation* and *simple affirmation* suggest that a correct answer from highs was more likely to be accompanied by some explanation about its correctness while a similar type of answer from the lows was more likely to receive just a simple approving word.

*Request repetition* of correct answer ranked fourth in order of overall frequency across the seven lessons. Such type of treatment accounted for 9.3% of the total treatment of correct answers for highs. The figure was a similar 8.3% for lows. This difference is not significant at the 5% level. Thus, there seemed to be little difference between the two groups on this measure.

The teacher moved on without commenting on the students' correct responses on 9 occasions, of which 7 involved highs and 2 lows. The data point to a slight tendency for the teacher to let correct answers pass without any comment when they came from the highs more often than when they came from the lows. Using the measure of proportions, *no feedback* accounted for 8.1% and 5.6% for the highs and the lows respectively, suggesting that the teacher provided some form of confirmation of correctness of answer to the lows more often than he did to the highs. This difference in proportions, however, failed to reach significance at the 5% level.

*Praise* represented the second least frequent type of feedback (*other* was the least frequent of the seven categories of feedback). Looking at the percentages within expectation group, one also finds that praise was as frequent as *simple affirmation* for the highs (7%) and as frequent as *no feedback* for the lows (5.6%). Although the frequency for *praise* was three times greater for the highs, the difference ceased to be pronounced once the data were adjusted for absolute differences in the number of correct answers produced by the two

groups. Still, highs seemed to be praised for correct answers slightly more than lows (although the difference failed to be statistically significant at the 5% level).

Another way to approach the search for differences and similarities between the treatment received by the two expectation groups is to compare the different types of feedback in terms of the way they were ranked for the two groups on the basis of their relative frequency. Admittedly, the value of ranking may be limited in terms of bringing out the magnitude of quantitative differences that may exist between the treatment received by the two expectation groups. The method, however, is still useful in bringing out qualitative differences which will remain hidden if only quantitative measures (i.e. mean and percentages) are used. Next I will briefly look at the 'line up' of the various categories of feedback in relation to each expectation group.

Ranking of the feedback types produced some evidence of differential treatment although the evidence concerned only a few of the feedback categories. For example, *exact or part repetition* of answer was the most frequent type both for the highs and the lows. However, the two groups differed greatly in terms of the second most frequent type for them. The second most frequent type for the highs was *repetition and explanation* of answer while this category of feedback was the least frequent for the lows. The order was reversed for the lows. For them, second most frequent type was *simple affirmation* whereas this type of feedback came a joint fifth and sixth for the highs. This meant that highs were more likely to receive *repetition and explanation* but relatively less likely to get *simple affirmation* in response to their correct answers. Conversely, lows appeared to be less likely to receive *repetition and explanation* type of feedback but more likely to receive *simple affirmations*. Thus, earlier findings based on the comparison of percentages were confirmed in this analysis.

*Request repetition* of answer was ranked the same for both groups, suggesting little difference between the likelihood of the highs and the lows being asked for a repeat performance. The picture was not as clear for *no feedback*. While it unambiguously ranked fourth for the highs, it shared the joint fourth and fifth place with *praise* for the lows. For the highs, *praise*, shared the joint fifth and sixth place with *simple affirmation* (see Table 6.8).

On the whole it may be said that not all types were ranked the same for the two groups. Those which were ranked exactly the same were *exact or part repetition* (in first place), *request repetition* of answer (third place) and *no feedback* (fourth place). The two groups differed in terms of the way *simple affirmation*, *repetition and explanation* and to some extent *praise* were ranked for them.

Using proportions and ranking as measures, data for feedback to correct answer may be summarised as follows: The two groups did not differ much with respect to *exact or part repetition* of answer and *request repetition* of answer. There were, however, other areas in which significant differences were observed. One such measure was *repetition and explanation*. The data for this category of feedback show that correct answers from highs were more likely to stimulate explanations of answer more often than were those from lows. While it may be hard to interpret this as evidence of the teacher favouring highs over lows (as it is possible for this to have resulted from concern for lows), the teacher seems to provide more of this type of treatment to highs compared with lows.

Another measure on which the two groups seemed to differ significantly relates to the variable involving the provision of approving words. The data show that the teacher was more likely to confirm correct answers coming from the lows than from the highs. This finding also ties in with the teacher's tendency to ignore correct answers from lows less

frequently than from highs. Finally, there appeared to be a slight tendency for the teacher to favour highs over lows in praising correct answers, suggesting that lows' quality performances were reinforced less frequently than highs'.

### 6.3.2 Evidence of DTT in the Feedback to Partially Correct Answers.

The teacher's feedback to partially correct answers was another area which was searched for any evidence of differential teacher treatment (DTT). As indicated before (p. 174), there were 118 responses which were classified as incomplete or partially correct answers. Of these, 102 were from the highs and 16 from the lows. This meant that the 'average participating high' contributed 10.2 while the figure stood at 1.14 for 'the average participating low'. The above figures are shown in Table 6.9 below.

**Table 6.9 Totals, means, ranks and percentages of teacher feedback to highs' and lows' partially correct responses.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs				Directed to lows			
	Total	Mean	%	Rank	Totals	Mean	%	Rank
Prompt	40	4	39.2	1	5	.36	31.3	1
Simple approving word	25	2.5	24.5	2	4	.29	25	2
Provide correction	19	1.9	18.6	3	3	.21	18.8	3
Offer opportunity for self-correction	15	1.5	14.7	4	2	.14	12.5	4
No feedback	1	.10	1	6	1	.07	6.3	5=
Other	2	.20	2	5	1	.07	6.3	5=
Total	102	10.2	100		16	1.14	100	

Of the 102 incomplete or partially correct responses from the highs, 40, i.e. 39.2% were followed by *prompts* from the teacher. Of the 16 such responses from the lows, 5, (31.3 %) received this type of treatment. This suggests that that the teacher was slightly more likely to encourage highs than lows to improve their answers or provide more complete answers

when they gave partially correct or incomplete answers. A test of proportion, however, showed that there was no significant difference between the two percentage figures at the 5% level.

There was a similar pattern of comparability of proportions for the second most frequent type of feedback to incomplete or partially correct responses- i.e. *simple approving word*. 25 (24.5%) of the incomplete or partially correct responses that were produced by the highs were followed by *simple approving word*, and so were 4 (25%) of those which came from lows. These two virtually the same proportions seem to suggest that this type of feedback represented one of the areas which were less prone to differential distribution between the two groups.

*Provide correction* came in response to 19 (18.6%) incomplete or partially correct answers from the highs and 3 (18.8%) from the lows. Again these proportions are very comparable. This meant that the teacher was as likely to supply a more complete answer following less adequate answers from the lows as he was from the highs.

As regards opportunity for producing an improved answer, highs were offered 15 such chances (14.7% of the total treatment for them) while lows received the offer to improve answer on two occasions (12.5%) only. Thus, 'the average participating high' received *offer opportunity for self-correction* type of feedback 1.5 times while 'the average participating low' received 0.14 times. The figures seem to suggest that the teacher was more persistent in eliciting more complete or adequate answers from the highs than from the lows. In spite of such differences in mean and percentage, a more formal test of proportion showed that there was no significant difference between the two percentages.

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As regards *no feedback*, there were only two incomplete or partially correct responses which were ignored by the teacher over the seven lessons. This means that any finding based on this low level of frequency needs to be treated with caution. As far as the two instances are concerned, they came from both groups and accounted for 1% and 6.3% for the highs and lows respectively. While this proportion may suggest that the teacher is six times more likely to ignore incomplete or partially correct responses from the lows, the results of the test of proportion failed to show any significant difference between the proportions for the two groups at the 5% level.

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The pattern that was observed in proportions also re-emerged when another measure involving rank ordering of the different types of feedback was applied. Most types of feedback were ranked in exactly the same way for both groups. Most frequent for both was *prompt*, followed by *simple approving word*, followed by *provide correction*. In fourth place for both was *offer opportunity for self-correction*. *No feedback* and *other* shared a joint fifth and sixth place for lows. For highs *other* ranked fifth place pushing *no feedback* down to the bottom.

On the whole there appears to be little difference at least in terms of the proportions and rank ordering of the different types of feedback received by the two groups as far as incomplete or partially correct answers are concerned. In fact, this type of response seems to be characterised by the uniformity and consistency in the way it was responded to by the teacher regardless of whether it involved the highs or the lows.

### **6.3.3 Evidence of DTT in the Feedback to Incorrect Responses.**

The third area which was examined for any evidence of differential teacher treatment (DTT) of highs and lows concerns the teacher's feedback to incorrect answers. There were a total 165 instances of teacher feedback to incorrect student responses. Of these, as indicated

earlier in 5.2.4, highs received 118 (71.5%), and lows 47 (28.5%). Overall, the frequent type of feedback to incorrect responses was *provide correction*, which accounted for 46 of the feedback received by the highs and 21 by the lows. The 'average participating high', therefore, received this type of feedback 4.6 times. As it stands, this is in sharp contrast with the average for lows which was only 1.5, i.e. one-third of the average for the highs.

Another way of looking at it is as percentages of the total. 39% of the incorrect answers produced by the highs were followed by *provide correction* type of feedback while the figure was 44.7% for the lows. This suggests that the teacher was slightly more likely to supply answer when the lows responded incorrectly. The test of proportions, however, showed that there was no significant difference between the two proportions.

Of the total of 33 *offer opportunity for self-correction* that came following wrong answers, 23 went to highs and 10 went to lows. This meant that 'the average participating high' received three times more than 'the average participating low'. In terms of proportions, *offer opportunity for self-correction* accounted for 19.5% of the feedback addressed to highs and 21.3% to lows. These proportions failed to be significantly different from each other, suggesting that both highs and lows were offered more or less equal chance to correct themselves following a response which was judged incorrect. Table 6.10 below presents the figures for the teacher's treatment of highs' and lows' incorrect responses.

**Table 6.10 Totals, means, ranks and percentages of the teacher’s feedback to highs’ and lows’ incorrect responses.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs				Directed to lows			
	Totals	Mean	%	Ran k	Tota ls	Mean	%	Ran k
Provide correction	46	4.6	39	1	21	1.5	44.7	1
Offer opportunity for self-correction	23	2.3	19.5	3	10	.71	21.3	2
Redirect to high	17	1.70	14.4	4	8	.57	17	3
Redirect to middle	3	.300	2.5	5	1	.07	2.1	5=
Redirect to low	0	.00	0	7	1	.07	2.1	5=
No feedback	27	2.7	22.9	2	3	.21	6.4	4=
Other	2	.20	1.7	6	3	.21	6.4	4=
Total	118		100		47		100	

There were 23 incorrect responses that were allowed to pass without any teacher comment. Of these, 27 came from highs and 3 from lows. This meant that ‘the average participating high’ received *no feedback* on 2.7 incorrect responses over the seven lessons. The figure was 0.21 for ‘the average participating low’. In terms of proportion, the category of *no feedback* accounted for 22.9% of the feedback addressed to highs. For lows, the proportion was much less than this. Only 6.4% of the wrong answers they produced were ignored. The difference in proportion was significant at the 5% level.

Thus, the data for teacher feedback to student incorrect responses suggest that the teacher was more likely to fail to give feedback to an incorrect response from highs than from lows in similar situations. This result is also in line with the finding about the teacher’s tendency to supply answers when lows were unable to give the correct answer more frequently than when highs failed to do so. That is to say the relatively higher probability of the teacher

supplying answer in response to incorrect responses from lows may help to account at least in part for the less likelihood of the teacher ignoring faulty responses from them.

As regards the measure involving redirection to another student, there were in total 30 instances of solicits being redirected to another student following a wrong response. Of these, 20 occurred following incorrect responses from highs and 10 from lows. To use the measure of proportions, redirection accounted for 16% for highs and 21 % for lows. Thus, there was a slight tendency for the teacher to call on another student following an incorrect response from lows than from highs. The difference in proportions, however, did not reach statistical significance.

In terms of the expectation group membership of the target to whom the solicits were redirected, the teacher called on 25 highs, 4 middles, and 1 low achiever following unsuccessful attempts by other members of the two expectation groups in question. Of the 25 *redirect to high* 17 came following unsuccessful attempts by the highs and the remaining 8 came as reactions to incorrect responses from the lows.

Looking at it in terms of percentages, this meant that 14.4% of the feedback addressed to the highs involved redirection to another member of the class with similar perceived ability i.e. *redirect to high*. For the lows, the figure for *redirect to high* was 17%. Thus, the teacher tended to transfer more solicits following failed attempts by lows than by highs. This again may partly explain the significant difference in the rate of the teacher's failure to give feedback for the two groups, as indicated in the preceding paragraphs. That is to say the relatively higher rate of delegated corrections may to some degree be responsible for the low level of absence of teacher feedback observed with lows.

Of the four redirections to middle, three were initiated in response to highs' failure to provide correct answers and one came as a reaction to a low's failure to do so. The percentages were 2.5% and 2.1% for highs and lows respectively. These proportions were again comparable.

One surprising finding concerning redirection is that no single one of the solicits which failed to elicit correct answers from highs were redirected to lows. They usually seemed to be redirected to fellow highs although there were a few occasional redirections to the intermediate expectation group. On the other hand, the majority (80%) of the redirections that occurred following unsuccessful attempts by lows were addressed to highs. Redirection to lows and middles together accounted for 20% of the total redirected solicits for lows.

As regards the first three most frequent types for the two groups, as Table 6.10 shows, the most frequent form of treatment for both groups was *provide correction*. This was followed by *no feedback* for highs and *offer opportunity for self-correction* for lows. *Offer opportunity for self correction* was in third place for highs whereas *redirect to high* was the third most frequent form of feedback for lows. This finding again suggests that the teacher was more likely to ignore incorrect responses and less likely to provide an opportunity for self-correction when highs failed to give correct answers than when lows did so.

With respect to the other categories, fourth for highs was *redirect to high*. On the other hand, two categories of feedback, namely, *no feedback* and *other* together shared the fourth place for lows. *Redirect to middle*, *other* and *redirect to low* ranked fifth, sixth and seventh respectively for the highs. For the lows, *redirect to middle* and *redirect to high* were ranked fifth. The ranking, then, gives us a picture in which highs are presented as being more likely than lows to see their errors ignored. We also have a situation in which lows appear to be

more likely than highs to receive *offer opportunity for self-correction* and *redirect to high* types of feedback. Finally, the least frequent for highs was *redirect to low*.

To sum up, then, the differences noted earlier were confirmed. Thus, the teacher seemed more likely to ignore incorrect responses from highs than from lows. Another observation may be that lows received proportionately more (though not significantly so) of almost all of the remaining types of feedback to incorrect responses. The only exception was *redirect to middle* where the figures for the two groups were very comparable. Finally, the results of the ranking seemed to suggest that except for *provide correction*, the likelihood of the teacher using a particular type of feedback in response to incorrect answer varies for highs and lows.

I will now move on to look at the results of the search for evidence of differential teacher treatment in an area associated with the teacher's reaction to students' failure to respond.

#### **6.3.4 Evidence of DTT in the Teacher's Reaction to Failure to Respond.**

Of the 53 instances of *no response*, 25 involved highs and 28 lows. The most frequent reaction of the teacher in this kind of situation was to provide answer. *Provide answer* type of treatment accounted for 40% of the total for teacher 'feedback' to lack of response from highs. The percentage was slightly higher for lows. For this group, *provide answer* comprised 53.6% of the total teacher reaction coded for the group. This meant that the teacher was more likely to supply the answer when lows failed to respond than when highs did so.

*Stay* (e.g. repeat instruction) represented the next most frequent type of teacher reaction to lack of response from students. There were 13 instances of this. Of these, 6 involved highs and 7 lows. In terms of percentage, this form of feedback accounted for 24% of the

treatment received by highs and 25% by lows. These figures being very comparable, one can say that the teacher was more or less equally persistent in demanding a response from the two expectation groups. Table 6.11 below shows the percentages, ranking and mean of each form of teacher reaction in relation to each expectation group.

**Table 6.11 Totals, means, ranks, and percentages of feedback to highs' and lows' failure to respond.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs				Directed to lows			
	Totals	Mean	%	Rank	Totals	mean	%	Rank
Provide answer	10	1.00	40	1	15	1.07	53.6	1
Stay (with the student)	6	.60	24	3	7	.50	25	2
Redirect to high	8	.80	32	2	2	.14	7.1	3=
Redirect to middle	1	.10	4	4	2	.14	7.1	4=
Redirect to low	0	.00	0	5=	1	.07	3.6	4=
Other	0	.00		5=	1	.07	3.6	3=
Total	25		100		28		100	

The teacher called on students to provide a correct response on 14 *no response* occasions over the seven lessons. Of these, 10 were *redirect to high*, 3 *redirect to middle*, and 1 *redirect to low*. Thus, the majority of redirections involved calling on students with perceived high ability. Of the 10 *redirect to high*, 8 occurred when highs failed to respond and the remaining two followed lows' lack of response. The data would seem to suggest that the teacher was more likely to call on a high achiever in response to lack of response from the highs than from the lows

*Redirect to middle* was rather rare for both groups although the figure for lows was higher both in terms of absolute frequency and proportion (see Table 6.11). This type of teacher reaction accounted for 4% and 7.1% for highs and lows respectively. As regards *redirect to low*, none of the feedback addressed to highs involved redirection to lows. In fact, there was

only one instance of *redirect to low* and this came as a reaction to a low achiever's failure to respond.

Using the measure of ranks, the most common type of feedback for both highs and lows was *provide answer* (though the percentage was higher for lows). For lows, the second most frequent was *stay* and the third and fourth places were shared by *redirect to high* and *other* (e.g. criticise, accept), with the joint fifth and sixth places again shared by *redirect to middle* and *redirect to low*. For highs, the second most frequent was *redirect to high* and in third place was *stay*. Fourth for highs was *redirect to middle* with *redirect to low* and *other* sharing a joint fifth and sixth place. Thus, the teacher was more likely to call on another high achiever than insist on getting a response when highs failed to respond. On the other hand, *stay* ranked higher for lows than for highs, suggesting a higher probability of teacher persistence with lows.

To sum up, the data for *no response* shows that the teacher was more likely to supply an answer when lows were unable to respond and call on another student, usually the high achiever, when highs failed to do so. Furthermore, the result of the ranking would seem to suggest that the teacher was more likely to be more persistent with lows than with highs in demanding a response.

Next, I discuss the search for evidence of differential teacher treatment (DTT) in the ways the teacher handled instances of *undesired* responses i.e. those that were rejected as inappropriate (but not necessarily wrong) for some reason (See 5.1.3).

### 6.3.5 Evidence of DTT in the Feedback to Students' *Undesired Responses*.

The total number of responses coded as *undesired* was 20. Of these, 13 came from highs, and 7 from lows. This meant that 'the average participating high' produced 1.3 such responses, and 'the average participating low' 0.5. Broadly speaking, the teacher reacted to *undesired* student responses in three different ways: by staying with the student, by redirecting the solicitation to another student or by providing the desired answer.

The distribution of the different types of feedback to such response between the two expectation groups shows that the teacher chose to stay with the student by repeating the question, saying the instruction again or providing clues on 57.1 % of the occasions on which lows produced *undesired response*. On the other hand, *stay* accounted for 30.8% of the feedback to highs in similar situations. This meant that the teacher was more persistent in eliciting the desired response from the lows than he was with the highs.

As Table 6.12 below indicates, 38.5% of the teacher's reaction to *an undesired response* from highs was to move on to another student, i.e. *redirect*. In fact, *redirect* constituted the most frequent type of teacher treatment received by highs in the context of an *undesired response*. Furthermore, 100% of the redirections were in response to *undesired responses* from highs, which meant that this type of teacher reaction was more closely associated with highs than with lows in this particular response situation. These figures are given in Table 6.12 below.

**Table 6.12 Totals, means, ranks, and percentages of feedback to highs' and lows' *undesired responses*.**

Type of feedback	Directed to highs				Directed to lows			
	Totals	Mean	%	Rank	Total	Mean	%	rank
Stay	4	.40	30.8	2=	4	.29	57.1	1
Redirect	5	.50	38.5	1	0	.00	0	3
Provide answer	4	.40	30.8	2=	3	.21	42.9	2
Total	13	1.3	100		7	.50	100	

For lows, *provide answer* constituted the second most frequent type of feedback. It accounted for 42.9% of the feedback to *undesired responses* from lows. On the other hand, the figure for this type of feedback was 30.8% for highs. Thus, the percentage was the same for *stay* and *provide answer* as far as highs are concerned.

In summary, the data for teacher reaction to *undesired student responses* suggest that the teacher was more likely to react by redirecting the solicit to another student when treating to *undesired responses* from the highs than from the lows. On the other hand, the relatively higher proportion of *stay* for lows suggests that the teacher tended to be more patient with lows compared with highs in similar situations. In fact, the data show that two types of feedback characterised the teacher's reaction to lows' *undesired responses*: *stay* and *provide answer*, of which *stay* occurred more frequently.

I now turn to the last area in which the search for indices of differential teacher treatment (DTT) was done, namely the teacher's use of language.

### **6.3.6 Evidence of DTT in the Teacher's Use of Language.**

A total of 338 instances of feedback that involved the use of language were identified. Of these, 272 were addressed to the highs and 113 to the lows. For the highs, L2 and L1

accounted for 87.5% and 7.7% respectively. The figure for the lows was 88.5% for L2 and 6.2% for L1. As regards the third measure i.e. a mixture of L1 and L2, the figure was 4.8% for highs and 5.3% for lows.

**Table 6.13 Totals, ranks, and percentages of the teacher’s use of language**

Language used	Directed to highs			Directed to lows		
	Total	%	Rank	Total	%	Rank
L2	238	87.5	1	100	88.5	1
L1	21	7.7	2	7	6.2	2
Both	13	4.8	3	6	5.3	3
Total	272	100		113	100	

These figures being very comparable, it may be said that virtually no significant differences emerged between the two expectation groups in the teacher’s use of the three language options in reacting to their output.

#### **6.4 Summary of Findings of Teacher Behaviour Research Questions (RQ1 and RQ2)**

As indicated earlier, two types of measures were used in assessing differences in patterns of distribution of a range of teacher feedback behaviour between the highs and the lows. The first measure involved simple frequency counts. This measure was used in examining group differences which are generally attributable to objective differences in the students themselves. The analysis based on this approach showed several differences between the two groups in terms of the quantity of a range of feedback addressed to them. It has been emphasised that the differences discovered thus are not directly ascribable to the teacher’s differential expectation for students’ performance although such inequalities are still important in themselves.

Using the first measure, it was discovered that the two groups differed greatly in the number of times each of the majority of feedback categories were used with them. In particular,

highs exceeded lows in the frequency of nearly all of the categories of feedback associated with correct, incomplete or partially correct and incorrect responses. This trend also appeared for the feedback to *undesired* student response. There was, however, a reversal in the pattern of difference with respect to the teacher's reaction to failure to respond. Lows surpassed highs in the number of times they received most of the feedback types associated with lack of response (e.g. provide answer, stay).

The second type of measure involved controlling for differences in absolute frequency of responses produced by the two expectation groups. Thus, the search for qualitative differences between the two groups that could be interpreted as evidence of differential teacher treatment was based on the comparison of the adjusted proportions and means. This second measure, among other things, showed that the two groups differed markedly on several feedback variables including the use of explanation and simple affirmation following correct answer, failure to give feedback following wrong answers and redirection to another student in a range of failure situations.

I will now move on to Chapter Seven, where I present the data concerning students' perceptions of their teacher's feedback behaviour as discussed in the present chapter.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **7. Student Perceptions of Differential Teacher Feedback Behaviour: Findings**

#### **7.0 Introduction**

This chapter addresses the research question pertaining to students' perceptions of their teacher's feedback practice (RQ3). It is divided into two sections. The first section looks at findings that emerged from the questionnaire data. The second section presents qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews. This chapter will confine itself to basic reporting of the findings. Discussion of these findings will be undertaken in Chapter Nine.

#### **7.1 Student perceptions: Questionnaire Data**

This section looks at the data on student perceptions obtained through the questionnaire. As indicated in Chapter Five (5.2.1), the analysis of the questionnaire data required the creation of a measure of frequency for each of the behaviours described in the questionnaire. This involved assigning values to the categories of frequency (i. e. always=2; sometimes=1; never=0) and calculating the total value for each item for the hypothetical targets rated. The measure of frequency obtained thus was then used in comparing the perceptions of students. Since the focus was on the ability of the target hypothetical students, the scores for male and female high achievers were combined before any comparisons were made. This was repeated with the scores for the male and female low achiever targets. A paired sample t-test was applied to find out the significance of differences in scores where there were any. The data for the two expectation groups are presented as follows.

In presenting the data, the thirty items in the questionnaire have been categorised according to their conceptual similarity as indicated in Chapter Five. Thus, the first group of teacher

behaviours focused on the teacher's use of praise in response to three types of answers. The first variable looked at the teacher's use of praise following correct answers. The second variable was concerned with praising students for inadequate or partly correct response while the third one dealt with praise following incorrect answers.

Data for students' perceptions of their teacher's praising behaviour are presented in Table 7.1. The students saw the teacher as praising the highs more frequently than lows for giving correct answers. This was true regardless of the sex of the target rated. That is to say the students saw male and female high achievers as receiving more praise than their low achiever male and female counter parts. The scores for the two expectation groups were 141 and 104 for highs and lows respectively. This difference was statistically significant at the 5% level. It can then be said that the students saw highs as the recipients of more praise in success situations.

**Table 7.1 frequency score for praise**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Praise following correct answer (2)	66	75	<b>141</b>	50	54	<b>104</b>
Praise following partially correct answer(6)	59	58	<b>117</b>	45	44	<b>89</b>
Praise following incorrect answer(12)	27	30	<b>57</b>	29	32	<b>61</b>

The pattern of difference was also evident in their perceptions of the teacher's provision of praise in the context of a partial success. The data in Table 7.1 show that highs were perceived as the recipients of more praise in response to partially correct answers. The frequency score for highs on this variable was 117 while the corresponding figure for lows

was 89. The difference being significant at the 5% level, it could then be stated that the teacher was seen as favouring highs in terms of rewarding a partial success.

As regards praising unsuccessful attempts, there appeared to be a slight reversal in the pattern. The data suggest that praise in the context of a wrong answer was generally seen as a relatively rare phenomenon. However, the students tended to think that it came slightly more frequently for lows than for highs when it occurred. This is consistent with the students' perception of the lows as needing more encouragement and praise in order to function properly (See Appendix-5, See also 7.3.2).

Table 7.2 below displays the data for the group of items which deal with transferring a solicit to another student. A glance at the data for the individual teacher behaviour items reveals that the students saw virtually no difference between the two expectation groups in terms of the relative frequency with which the teacher called on someone else when they failed to give correct answer (121 for highs compared with 120 for lows), or when they failed to respond (128 for highs compared with 129 for lows). However, they reported a slight tendency for the teacher to redirect a solicit to another student following a partially correct answer from lows more frequently than following similar responses from highs (120 for highs compared to 126 for lows). The difference, however, failed to reach statistical significance at the 5% level.

**Table 7.2 Frequency scores for redirection**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	male	female	total
Redirection following a part correct answer(9)	68	52	<b>120</b>	65	61	<b>126</b>
Redirection following an incorrect answer(16)	70	51	<b>121</b>	58	62	<b>120</b>
Redirection following failure to respond(21)	74	54	<b>128</b>	72	57	<b>129</b>
Redirection following poor reading performance(28)	32	26	<b>58</b>	42	50	<b>92</b>

A closer examination of the data for the three items described in the preceding paragraph reveals that the students saw a considerable difference between male and female high achievers with respect to the teacher's use of redirection. The teacher was perceived as calling on another student when a male high achiever failed to provide the desired answer more frequently than when a female high achiever did so. This seems to suggest that gender was an important factor here in that the teacher was seen as being more likely to move on to another student following a male high achiever's failure to provide the desired answer while he liked to treat female high achievers differently. The issue of interaction of factors being outside the scope of the present study, future research could address the combined effect of gender and ability on students' perception.

In contrast to the similarity reported with respect to redirection following a wrong answer to a question, the students saw a considerable difference in the frequency with which the teacher redirected a solicitor in response to a poor reading performance from the two groups. They believed that the teacher called on another student when a low achiever performed badly during reading aloud activities more frequently than when a high achiever did so (92 for lows compared to 58 for highs). This difference was significant at the 5% level. This finding would then seem to suggest that students were more sensitive to differential teacher treatment in the context of reading than in question-answer exchanges.

Table 7.3 presents the data for the group of items pertaining to the teacher's provision of a correct answer in total or partial failure situations. The data show that the students saw no difference between the two groups in the way the teacher provided answers when they gave a partially correct answer (128 compared to 127) and when they produced a totally wrong response (90 compared to 89). Thus, they felt that the highs were as likely as lows to be provided with an answer when they were unable to produce a response that fully satisfied the teacher.

However, they also reported a vein of differential treatment with respect to the other two items in the group. For example, they felt that the teacher was slightly more likely to supply an answer when highs failed to respond than he was with lows in similar situations. Similarly, high achievers were described as receiving models more frequently when they were unable to read out correctly than did the lows. Thus, the measure of frequency for the highs for this type of treatment was 157 while the corresponding figure for lows was 131. A t-test showed the difference concerning failure to respond not to be significant at the 5% level although the difference regarding the provision of correct pronunciation during reading was found to be so.

**Table 7.3 Frequency scores for supplying answer**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Supply answer following partially correct answer(3)	68	60	<b>128</b>	65	62	<b>127</b>
Supply answer following incorrect answer(14)	50	40	<b>90</b>	45	44	<b>89</b>
Supply answer following lack of response(22)	43	55	<b>98</b>	47	45	<b>92</b>
Supply model following erroneous reading(29)	83	74	<b>157</b>	67	64	<b>131</b>

The next group of items focus on the teacher’s behaviour concerning the provision of opportunity to try again when students failed to perform adequately. Table 7.4 presents the list of the individual teacher behaviours and their frequency scores.

#### 7.4 Frequency scores for opportunity for self-correction

Feedback behaviour	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Offer opportunity for self-correction following partially correct response(4)	64	68	<b>132</b>	56	58	<b>114</b>
Offer opportunity for self-correction following incorrect answer(15)	66	70	<b>136</b>	66	63	<b>129</b>
Offer another chance to try following lack of response (19)	69	63	<b>132</b>	66	53	<b>119</b>
Offer opportunity for self-correction following erroneous reading (30)	74	70	<b>144</b>	67	68	<b>135</b>
Interrupt when the desired answer is not forthcoming(8)	49	21	<b>70</b>	22	23	<b>45</b>

The data for all four behaviours associated with providing opportunity for self-correction in failure situations show that the students perceived the teacher as favouring the highs in terms of offering more frequent chances to fix whatever they originally got wrong. Thus, the teacher was described as giving more opportunities to highs than to lows to correct themselves when they produced partially correct answers (132 compared to 114).

In the same vein, they reported that the teacher was more likely to offer highs than lows the opportunity to correct themselves when they gave a wrong answer (136 for highs compared to 129 for lows), or when they failed to respond to a solicit (132 compared to 119). Furthermore, they felt that the teacher favoured highs in terms of offering them more opportunities to engage in self-correction when they ran into difficulty while reading aloud (144 compared to 135). It must, however, be pointed out that none of these differences reached a level of significance although the difference that relates to the teacher's behaviour in response to partially correct response was approaching significance at the 5% level.

One related measure for which a significant difference was observed concerns the teacher's interruption behaviour. Surprisingly, the students saw the teacher as interrupting highs more often than lows when the desired response was not forthcoming. The frequency score for highs for this behaviour was 70 while the corresponding figure for lows was 45. It is also interesting to note that the teacher was seen as interrupting male high achievers more frequently than their female counterparts. In fact, a closer inspection of the data reveals that the score for the female high achievers was comparable with the score for male and female low achievers. Again these results point to the possibility of student gender exerting some influence on the way the teacher's behaviour is perceived. Thus, future research may benefit from looking at gender and ability in conjunction.

One pair of items focused on providing extra information or explanation to the whole class as a reaction to students' failure to produce the desired response. Table 7.5 below presents the data for these two items.

### 7.5 Frequency scores for providing explanations

Teacher Feedback Behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Provide clues or explanations following incorrect answer(18)	69	71	<b>140</b>	69	65	<b>134</b>
Provide clues or explanations following lack of response(24)	69	65	<b>134</b>	66	62	<b>128</b>

One item concerned the provision of explanation in response to an incorrect answer. The data for this item show that the students saw a slight difference in the way the highs and the lows were treated in terms of this particular behaviour. The students reported a tendency for the teacher to provide the class with some explanation when highs failed to give the correct answer more frequently than when lows did so (140 for highs compared with 134 for lows). The pattern was similar for the second item, which dealt with the teacher's use of

explanation as a reaction to students' failure to respond. Highs scored slightly higher than lows on the measure of frequency (134 for highs compared to 128 for lows). Although neither of the differences were found to be significant, these findings are suggestive of a potential link between explanation in the form feedback and the teacher's expectation for students.

The next set of items addressed the practice of returning to the original student who failed to provide the correct response after getting someone to provide one. The results for this group are presented in Table 7.6 below.

**Table 7.6 Frequency scores for returning to original error maker**

Teacher Feedback Behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Return to the student who originally gave partially correct answer(10)	59	60	<b>119</b>	58	54	<b>112</b>
Return to the student who originally gave incorrect answer(17)	45	51	<b>96</b>	44	45	<b>89</b>
Return to the student who originally failed to respond (23)	58	53	<b>111</b>	53	46	<b>99</b>

The students saw a slight difference in the treatment received by highs and lows as far as the behaviour of returning to the original student in the manner described above is concerned. This goes for the teacher's use of the behaviour in the context of the three types of responses listed in the table, namely, partially correct answers, incorrect answers and lack of response. However, none of the differences reached statistical significance at the 5% level. The finding that the teacher tended to return to highs more frequently than lows after securing the desired response contradicts evidence from the qualitative data which suggests the opposite (See 7.3.2). Thus, it needs to be treated with caution.

One of the variables widely discussed in the literature on teacher differential treatment concerns criticising students for their unsatisfactory performances. The questionnaire in this study also contained three items that addressed this variable. Table 7.7 below presents the data for this variable.

**Table 7.7 Frequency scores for criticising**

Teacher Feedback Behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Criticise for giving incomplete answer(5)	16	13	<b>29</b>	20	17	<b>37</b>
Criticise for giving incorrect answer(13)	9	11	<b>20</b>	20	12	<b>32</b>
Criticise for failing to respond(20)	7	9	<b>16</b>	21	27	<b>48</b>

The data for this variable suggest that criticism in the form of feedback was generally seen as being relatively infrequent in the feedback addressed to both groups. However, it is also evident from the data for the three items associated with criticism that there were consistent differences between the two groups in the amount of criticism they were believed to receive in a range of failure situations. For example, they saw the teacher as criticising lows more often for producing incorrect responses. As Table 7.7 indicates, the frequency score for lows was 32. The corresponding figure for highs was 20. A t-test showed this difference to be significant at the 5% level.

In a similar vein, they perceived the lows as recipients of more criticism associated with failure to respond. They believed that the teacher was more likely to criticise lows for failing to respond to a solicitation than he was with highs in similar situations. This perceived differential teacher treatment is evident in the statistically significant difference between the frequency

scores for the two groups. Highs scored 16 on the measure of frequency. The corresponding figure for the lows was precisely three times as high.

Lows were also seen as the recipients of more criticism in partial failure situations. For example, they were reported as being criticised for giving only partially correct answers more often than their high achiever counterparts were in similar situations (37 compared to 29). However, this difference failed to reach significance at the 5% level. In general, the finding that lows are seen as the recipients of more criticisms is not unexpected given the fact that lows are more likely to produce most of the wrong answers or fail to attempt a solicit posed by the teacher.

Table 7.8 presents the data for the three items which deal with the teacher's failure to give feedback on students' performances. Like the data for criticism, one notable feature of the data for this group of items is that the students generally felt that failure to give feedback on the part of the teacher was a relatively infrequent phenomenon (as evidenced in the consistently low scores). In spite of this, they perceived certain differences in its distribution between the two expectation groups when it occurred.

The students perceived the teacher as failing to give feedback to highs when they produced correct answers more frequently than he did when lows answered successfully (68 compared to 50). A t-test showed this difference to be significant at the 5% level. Furthermore, a closer look at the data also reveals that the teacher was seen as doing this more often with male high achievers than with female low achievers. This in turn suggests the possibility of gender being a strong influence on the process.

**Table 7.8 Frequency score for failure to give feedback**

Feedback behaviour	Measure of frequency					
	High			Low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	female	total
Lack of feedback following correct answer (1)	45	23	<b>68</b>	25	25	<b>50</b>
Lack of feedback following partially correct answer(7)	27	17	<b>44</b>	23	19	<b>42</b>
Lack of feedback following incorrect answer(11)	9	15	<b>24</b>	23	19	<b>42</b>

In contrast, students saw virtually no difference in the frequency with which the teacher ignored partially correct answers given by the two groups (44 for highs compared with 42 for lows). A closer examination of the data, however, reveals that male high achievers were higher than female high achievers on this measure (27 compared to 17). This meant that male high achievers were perceived to be more likely to see their incomplete answers ignored by the teacher than their female counterparts. Again this finding is reminiscent of earlier findings about the teacher's tendency to treat male and female high achievers differently as reported elsewhere in this section.

As regards the teacher's failure to give feedback to incorrect responses, the students felt that the teacher ignored incorrect responses from lows more frequently than he did similar answers from highs. The score for lows on the frequency measure was 42 for this particular behaviour. The corresponding figure for highs was 24. A t-test showed the difference was approaching significance at the 5% value.

The last group of items addressed the issue of language use. The students perceived almost no difference in the frequency with which the teacher used L2 in reacting to partially correct responses from highs and lows (121 for highs compared with 120 for lows). These figures are given in Table 7.9 below.

**Table 7.9 Frequency score for use of L2**

Teacher Feedback Behaviour	Measure of frequency					
	High			low		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Use of L2 in responding to correct answer(25)	73	75	<b>148</b>	66	61	<b>127</b>
Use of L2 in responding to incorrect answer(26)	55	52	<b>107</b>	52	61	<b>113</b>
Use of L2 in responding to partially correct answer(27)	60	61	<b>121</b>	57	63	<b>120</b>

In contrast, the students perceived a degree of difference in the way the teacher used English in reacting to correct answers from the two groups. Thus, they saw the teacher as using English in responding to the correct answers from the highs more frequently than he did in reacting to lows' correct answers. The frequency scores were 148 and 127 for highs and lows respectively. A t-test showed this difference not to be statistically significant.

In addition, they reported a slight difference in the way the teacher used the target language in handling incorrect answers from the two groups. Interestingly, they saw the teacher as using English in responding to the wrong answers from lows more frequently than he did with highs (107 for highs compared to 113 for lows).

## 7.2 Summary of questionnaire data

The data show that students perceived differences on a considerable number of teacher feedback behaviours described in the questionnaire. For example, they saw *significant* differences on nearly a quarter of the thirty items. The highs were perceived as the recipients of more of the following types of teacher feedback compared with their low counterparts:

- praise following a correct answer;
- ignoring a correct answer;
- providing a model when errors in reading occur;
- interruptions following an incorrect answer.

On the other hand, lows were seen as exceeding highs on the following measures:

- criticism following incorrect answers
- criticism following failure to respond; and
- redirection following poor reading performance.

In addition, there were other areas in which the teacher was seen as behaving differently (although not significantly so) toward the two groups. These included providing opportunity for self correction in failure situations; praising partially correct answer; and using L2 in responding to correct answers, which were all seen as being in favour of highs. However, lows were reported to be more likely to have their incorrect answers ignored and to receive more criticism for giving incomplete answers.

### **7.3 Student Perceptions: Qualitative Data**

In this second section, I will look at the qualitative data obtained from the interviews. I have been selective in the choice of themes for this section in order to avoid overlap with the first section. I will, therefore, concentrate on issues which I thought would help to develop the picture already obtained from the questionnaire data. Thus, the focus will mostly be on how students explain their teachers' behaviour. The section has been divided in to two subsections. The first subsection deals with the perceptions of students about the way the teacher dealt with highs and lows in failure situations while the second subsection concentrates on the teacher's treatment of students in success situations.

#### **7.3.1 Teacher Treatment of Highs and Lows in Failure Situations**

In this section I will look at the students' responses to questions about how the teacher reacts when highs and lows fail to give a correct response or fail to respond at all. I will present the data in this subsection under six themes.

### a) Praising inadequate responses from lows

Several students reported a tendency for the teacher to follow incorrect responses from lows with praise. What is more, they appeared to have their own interpretations of such behaviour in terms of what it meant when it occurred in the context of a wrong answer and what purpose the teacher was trying to achieve through it. For example, it may be aimed at boosting their morale and confidence, as illustrated in the following student comment: (Please note that in the following quotes the letters (L, H, and M) indicate students' expectation group membership. Thus, L4, for instance, means the quote comes from an interview with a low achiever. It also means the full text is available under L4 in Appendix 5).

**L4:** It looks to me that our teacher praises lows quite often. May be because he wants to encourage them to work harder and to boost their confidence. This happens even when their work is far from accurate...

There appears to be a great deal of agreement among students about what meaning praise carries when it occurred in the context of incorrect answers. They all saw it as having nothing to do with the quality of the response given. Instead, they tended to put it down to the teacher's desire to protect the student who made an unsuccessful attempt from experiencing embarrassment. The following student, for example, saw the teacher as trying to prevent such feeling by saying a few nice words before redirecting the question to another student. When asked if she remembered of any situation in which the teacher praised lows when he knew the answer they gave was wrong, she said

**H6** Yeah. I think I remember of some occasions like that. He would just follow it up with some positive remarks in order to make the student feel good. He would say things like that's good I know you can do better than you appear to be. Now can anyone help him? Then he would call on another student who usually happens to be a brighter one... I think it was a good thing to do though.

This observation was shared by the following student who also felt that the teacher might use praise as a technique for eliciting an improved response from someone who gave a wrong one at his or her first attempt:

**M14** There are times when the teacher would first say a few nice words of encouragement and give the student some time to think about it. He does all this to encourage him to produce the correct answer... Yeah I mean it is a kind of moral boosting thing.

The idea of trying to boost the morale of the student and encouraging lows to work harder by praising them for all sorts of output (albeit occasionally) seems to be prominent in most of the remarks made by students. Furthermore, several students tend to think that lows need this kind of treatment more than highs. The following low achiever, for instance, interpreted the teacher's tendency to praise all kinds of responses invariably as an expression of his desire to give the confidence of lows a boost.

**L10** Well he might occasionally do this (praise) with lows. I don't remember him doing it with highs though. I think there is no need for him to do it with highs because they've already got a good performance. I think the reason he does this with lows is that he wants to boost their morale and encourage them to work harder.

Some students thought praising incorrect answers is closely linked to a history of poor performance or low level of participation in the class on the part of the student. When asked if lows are ever praised for a wrong answer, they said,

**L15** Yeah they are actually. In particular if he is someone who rarely gives correct answers or rarely participates in class he would be praised.

**M1** Yeah it happens. For example you know there are some stupid students in our class and if these students raise their hands and try the teacher would give them encouragement. He might say that's good very good or something like that even if the answer is wrong.

Some saw the practice of praising incorrect responses as being linked to a particular student's enthusiastic efforts to improve his position and make more positive contributions to the lesson. Such a strong desire to participate on the part of lows are thought to receive a favourable reaction from the teacher and may be considered as worthy of praise, as the following student comments clearly show:

**H11**... when the teacher notices some signs of enthusiasm and eagerness to contribute or participate. So if the student is seen making an effort and showing a strong desire to know more, he would be praised for it and given more encouragement even if the answer he provides is nothing like the desired one.

**M8** Yeah. Specially, being one of those weak students, if you make an effort to answer questions, you will be praised for trying. This would please him and he would be glad to see you participating no matter how wrong your answer may be.

Finally, the idea that the teacher praised lows regardless of the faulty nature of their responses was not shared by all. Some students distinguished between a response which is completely wrong and a response which contains acceptable bits. They saw the teacher as praising lows when they gave the latter type of answer. The following high achiever, for example, remarked that the teacher would never praise a wrong answer unless he saw something commendable in the answer given:

**H9** No not at all. Probably what he would do in a situation where the student has touched upon the answer is to give him more encouragement. He might say that's good and things like that.

Taken together the data for praise suggest that students clearly engage in active interpretation of the teacher's behaviour and the intentions that underlie the behaviour. In

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particular, the comments suggest that students are capable of making subtle distinctions between praise occurring in different contexts

### **b) Criticising Lows for Poor Performance**

Several students reported that the teacher tended to criticise the lows when they failed to produce the desired response or read correctly more often than he did with highs in similar situations. They thought the high level of criticism directed to lows was attributable to the low level of participation and rate of success associated with weaker students:

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**L10:** .... Considering that they are the ones who rarely participate in class, the teacher would give them a good telling off if they give wrong answers. He may even call them names.

**M17:** I think it is the group of lows that get most of this stuff. I mean if you're weak and get something wrong the teacher would be upset.

Apparently, the criticisms that were directed to lows were hurtful. The teacher could make very demoralising remarks that could shake the acceptability of the student by his peers. The following example from a low achiever illustrates this:

**L3:** The teacher would write the question on the blackboard and ask him to read it. And if the student fails to read it correctly the teacher would be cross with him. He would say how come you're here in this class I just wonder how you managed to be promoted from grade five to grade six and stuff like that.

On the other hand, the highs were seen as less prone to such nasty remarks from the teacher because they generally had a higher level of participation and contributed most of the correct answers to the questions asked. In fact, the teacher was perceived as turning a blind eye to faulty responses from highs simply because they were few and far between. One student observed,

**L10:** You don't usually see many wrong answers coming from the bright students. They are usually few and far between. I think he wouldn't pay much attention to them when they occur and he may just ignore them.

Another student thought that the teacher would respond to a failure situation by criticising the student when it involved lows while he would react to a similar situation by communicating further information about the question when it involved the highs:

**I:** Does he do this (criticise) with all students including highs?

**M8:** ...he would give more explanation if the situation involves brighter students.

One high achiever, however, thought that the low rate of criticism directed to highs could be put down to the superior performance of highs. She believed that the highs were better placed to avoid criticisms from the teacher because they were capable of avoiding the behaviours that led to criticism. She also thought that the highs were in a position to give the teacher what he was after, leaving very little chance for him to criticise or flare up. In spite of this, she still felt that the teacher was more critical of highs' behaviour. Commenting on how the teacher would respond to a high achiever's failure to read (aloud) correctly she said,

**H16:** I think he would be disappointed. And kind of scold him. However, this is not very common among the highs as they usually manage to avoid such things by practising a lot and performing well in the classroom.

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In contrast, she reported that he tended to be less critical and more tolerant towards the lows. When asked if she saw anything that was very closely associated with highs or lows she said,

**H16:** Yeah. I mean it looks to me that the teacher is more tolerant towards the lows. He doesn't scold them much. May be because he wants to encourage them to work harder and improve their position. May be he believes that any harsh treatment would discourage them from doing so. But the way I see it, the situation with the highs seems a bit different. I think the slightest mistake or misbehaviour from the highs is enough to set him off.

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The teacher was also seen as doing the right thing to treat lows with great patience and in a more friendly fashion. In addition, the teacher's criticising behaviour was perceived as having a potentially stronger negative effect on lows than on highs. Given the fact that lows produce most of the incorrect responses and fewer of the correct ones, the lows' were in a vulnerable position, while the highs appeared to be less likely to be affected by harsh treatments from the teacher. In fact, as one student pointed out, one reason may be that highs are capable of not heeding remarks which are not compatible with their overall objective performance and self-image.

**H16:** ... My guess is that the teacher thinks lows need to be treated with great care and sensitivity in order to protect their feelings and if they are to make some progress. If he scolds them or teats them in some harsh manner they may feel bad about it and this may affect their interest in the subject. But the same behaviour from the teacher is less likely to produce the same effect on highs. They know they perform well and do their work properly. So any such negative behaviour or strong words from him will not have the same power on the highs and therefore can't make them feel bad or discourage them in any way. In fact it looks to me that the highs seem to have learned not to let such remarks from the teacher carry much weight with them anyway

It seems that there was a certain level of agreement that lows were the most vulnerable group as far as criticism is concerned. This was largely attributed to the fact that the lows lacked the resources that enabled the highs to avoid criticisms. As a result, they often found themselves in an awkward and high risk situation as they were the ones who were more likely to do the very things that caused criticism to happen i.e. remain silent or give incorrect response.

**c) Not tolerating lows' failure to respond.**

Several students believed that the teacher tended to treat wrong answers from lows as the lesser evil in that he was more likely to lose patience with lows when they failed to respond than he was when they were unable to give a correct response. In fact, they saw the teacher as treating failure to respond as a more serious 'offence' compared with an unsuccessful attempt, as illustrated in the following student comment which is based on an incident in which a student showed active resistance to have a try at reading aloud:

**M1** ... They don't even try to do some reading when our teacher asks them to read. Uh uhm we had a reading lesson this afternoon and one girl refused to even try. She just bluntly told him that she couldn't read and this made the teacher absolutely furious. He just went crazy ... This was because she was not even willing at least to have a go at it.

These observations were echoed by the following high achiever who mentioned criticism as one of the reactions of the teacher in similar situations:

**H6:** This (not attempting to read) drove the teacher nearly mad. He started saying things like how come you are here in grade six when you can't even read. He made them leave the room though he let them in a while later.

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This perception seems to be shared by members of the low expectation group too. The following student, for example, expressed the same view when asked about how the teacher would respond to a low's failure to respond:

**L4:** Oh he would be very cross. It makes him feel very upset to see a student not trying at all.

Another student perceived the teacher not only as making distinctions between failure to respond and failure to produce a correct answer, but also as valuing the latter type of behaviour. He felt that the teacher treated such behaviour from lows as something acceptable. In fact, he thought it could earn the low achiever an occasional praise from the teacher. He remarked:

**L3:** When a weak student tries and gives a wrong answer, the teacher may some times say that's good, I'm glad you tried, I hope you keep it up and stuff.

These observations seem to suggest that the teacher was perceived as setting a different standard for lows. Furthermore, the students saw him as encouraging lows to participate more by setting a lower standard and by being less critical about their responses compared with highs. Any output from a low achiever seemed to be welcome and could sometimes be followed by praise as indicated earlier (See (a) above).

#### **d) Treating Highs as Providers of Model and Pacemakers.**

The majority of students perceived the teacher as treating highs as setters of an example for others especially in situations where the latter failed to perform adequately or to attempt a solicit. They reported that the teacher usually turned to highs for performance models which the non-highs including the lows were expected to closely imitate. Commenting on how the

teacher copes with students' failure to perform correctly during reading aloud activities, one student said:

**L12:** ...What he does is that he would first get brighter students to read aloud and then he would ask the averages and the lows to take over.

This view was echoed by another student who also felt that the role of highs as sources of models and correction was evident in a range of activities in addition to reading aloud. For example, he believed that the teacher treated the answers provided by highs as standard responses on the basis of which all other responses should be judged.

**M1:** .... When the bright student has read or answered correctly the teacher will turn to the student who made an unsuccessful attempt and ask him if she has noticed the difference between his response and the subsequent successful response from another student. Besides the teacher may advise the weak student to try and perform as well as the other student.

The teacher reportedly considered the highs not only as a source of correction but also as role models and setters of a good example for the rest of the class. The point about the role of highs as pacemakers is made even clearer in the following remarks by non-high achievers:

**L3:** The teacher usually praises the highs during reading lessons and if someone happens to read less correctly the teacher would say things like why don't you read as accurately as he does. You should really work harder.

**M7** If we're working on an exercise for example and some bright student gives the correct answer to a question, he would write it on the blackboard and then ask the student who gave the correct answer to read the answer again from the blackboard. I think the idea is to give weaker students a chance to hear it again. Once this is done it is the turn of the less able ones to try and read the answer in the same way as the brighter student did...

Student comments also indicate that the teacher did not expect the lows to pick up the correct answers provided by highs. Many students reported that the teacher returned to students who failed to provide the desired response to ascertain this. In so doing, however, the teacher changed the nature of the task as the students were usually asked to provide a mere repetition of the answer rather than answer a similar question:

**M5:** ...he would ... then call on a bright student to give the correct answer. Finally he would get us to read the correct answer given by the bright student.

**L10:** ... the teacher would ask the student who made the unsuccessful attempt to repeat the answer given by the bright student.

**L3:** What he would do is ask another student to try and give the correct answer and then return to the one who failed to give a response to ask him to repeat the answer.

The teacher was also reported to use answers from highs to draw non-participators (usually lows) into active participation by getting them to read the answers supplied by highs or repeat whatever was said by them. That is to say those who were not originally called on to answer a particular solicitation were also made to repeat answers obtained from highs as part of their practice in a specific area.

**H9:** Once the question is answered by a certain bright student, the teacher would turn to those who don't participate and ask them to repeat the answer given previously.

The above student comments highlight the hierarchy that exists in relation to the different groups in the classroom. Clearly, highs were seen as enjoying the highest status among the class. In fact, they were seen as performing roles which were similar to those of the teacher. They were the providers of correction and input. Although it is perfectly possible that the

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teacher was being guided by a sound pedagogical principle in doing all this, there is no guarantee that the students will interpret his behaviour as something desirable.

**e) Accusing lows of not putting in enough effort**

Many student responses contained ideas that suggest that the teacher usually urged students to practise harder and to demonstrate to the class that they were making some progress as a result. They considered this to be one of the teacher's usual reactions to lows' failure to perform to his satisfaction, as illustrated in the following comment:

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**M1:** ... Our teacher wouldn't tolerate this (reading something aloud jerkily) he would say sit down sit down and then he would sort of urge them to practise harder at home. Another thing he would do is to ask them to read the same thing on the next day to find out if they can get it right.

One student observed that the teacher not only accused lows of laziness and negligence but also put a lot of pressure on them to work harder: Talking about how the teacher would respond to a low achiever's failure to respond, she said:

**M8:** He would say things like how many times do I have to tell you to study harder and practise your reading more. In fact he would be cross with him.

**M8:** He would try to put some pressure on them. He would say stuff like why don't you participate. Surely, I'm not teaching the other students in this class privately. All of you have equal access to what I teach in the class. I just don't understand why you don't make an effort.

This observation was echoed by another student who also added that the teacher's reaction to highs in similar failure situations would be to urge them to try again *there and then* and show a more satisfactory performance.

**L12:** He would urge him (a low achiever) to study harder.

**L12:** I think he would urge the highs to try again because there are some students who don't respond even if they know the answer.

Some students felt that the teacher may go as far as issuing threats in reacting to lows' failure to perform adequately. For example, he was seen as making several kinds of admonitory remarks to pressurise lows into working harder upon witnessing a poor performance from them, as illustrated in the following student comment:

**M1:** There are times when only the weak are required to read and if they don't read properly during such occasions they certainly will be in his bad book. He will make a note of their names and tell them that he would be asking them to read the same material in the next lesson. He wants them to put in more effort into their work so he would go as far as warning them that they could be judged incomplete if they don't perform better when they are asked to read during the next lesson.

To sum up, it can be inferred from the above comments that the teacher was usually seen as unequivocally attributing poor performance from lows to negligence. The students perceived the teacher as accusing lows for not putting in enough effort when they failed to perform to his satisfaction. In contrast, they seem to suggest that highs were given the benefit of the doubt in similar situations.

#### **f) Special instruction following poor performance from lows**

Several students perceived the teacher as providing special instruction tailored to the needs of low achievers when they performed poorly. They also observed that the teacher's special assistance could take several forms. One student reported that the teacher would go as far as writing the difficult bits in the students' books when they failed to read out a text properly so that they could practise it at home:

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**M1** ...During reading lessons if a weak student is given a chance to read and has some difficulty reading the part he is expected to read, the teacher would write the bits that are causing the student trouble on the blackboard and ask him to read it for him. If the student can't read it, the teacher would again write it in the student's exercise book and ask him to practise reading it at home. This is what he would do.

Breaking down and simplifying the task was another strategy reported by students. They saw the teacher as trying to help lows brush up their word recognition skills before they attempted to read longer stretches for the second time after a failed first attempt. The following student observed,

**M14:** if you are weak and can't read the assigned part properly, the teacher would write individual words on the blackboard and get you to read them separately. Then he would put all the words together and ask you to read the combined thing.

The data in this section provide evidence that students attend to many things involved in the process of giving feedback to unsuccessful student performance in public settings. Not only are they constantly engaged in making sense of the teacher's negative feedback but also observe the teacher's behaviour with a clear sense of personal judgement.

### **7.3.2 Teacher Treatment of Highs and Lows in Success Situations**

Many students mentioned praise as the usual reaction of the teacher to correct responses from them although they appeared to be divided on the issue of which group received more praise in success situations like this. In addition, as will be clear shortly, they seemed to see the purpose of the praise addressed to lows as being different from the purpose of the praise addressed to highs.

Several students saw the teacher as praising the lows more than the highs. They also saw concern for lows' future performance and motivation as the principal reason behind the

teacher's use of praise with lows. Furthermore, lows were seen not only as receiving more praise from the teacher but also as having more need for it. The teacher was thus perceived as supplying the frequent praise that they needed in order to keep them going. One student observed,

**H11:** I think he gives more encouragement and praise to the lows in this situation. He would say good very good keep it up and that sort of stuff when they give correct answers. I think the reason he does this is because he wants them to catch up with the highs. He seems to think that they need such encouragement to do this. But he wouldn't do this with highs because they are doing well already you see what I mean? It is the group of weak students who need this sort of thing I think.

Another said,

**L4:** ... Perhaps the reason he does this is because he wants to build up their confidence.

The students saw a close link between confidence and good performance. Thus, they saw praising as one of the strategies used by the teacher in his attempt to bring about some positive change in the performance of lows. Commenting on what she considered as the typical reaction of the teacher to a low achiever's correct answer, one student said,

**H16:** ... He would use this opportunity to try and boost his confidence as he needs this to be able to perform better in future.

This was also shared by the following low achiever:

**L12:** I think it is the weak students who receive more praise. May be because he wants to boost their morale.

One middle achiever said that it made a lot of sense to her to praise lows more often than highs because praise had a more significant effect on lows compared with highs. She felt that the teacher was justified in giving more praise to lows as they were the ones who were at risk of losing confidence and giving up compared with their high achieving counter parts. Answering the question about which group received more praise from the teacher in success situations, she said,

**M17:** I think it is the lows. You know why? It is because they are the ones who are at risk of losing their potential, confidence and interest in the subject. I think it is important for them. They need this sort of stuff very badly in order to keep going. And the highs? I think the highs are well far from such risks. If you are high, chances are that you will continue to work hard and achieve more.

In a similar vein, the following high achiever felt that the teacher thought that there was no need for him to praise the highs as much as he did with lows:

**H16:** ... I don't usually see him giving the highs a build up. May be he thinks there is no need for such encouragement as far as they are concerned.

Some students saw another purpose for praise apart from its use in encouraging lows to work harder. They also perceived the teacher as using praise to confirm fact of progress being made by lows. For example, the following middle achiever thought that the teacher was more likely to praise a low achiever who showed signs of improvement. She observed,

**M8:** ...if someone who previously performed poorly begins to answer questions he would encourage him. He would say I'm glad you're making good progress.

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One low achiever articulated the existence of a close link between the teacher's use of praise and his expectations for students' performance. In particular, he believed that the reason for the teacher's praise following a correct answer from lows lies in its being unexpected.

**L10:** He would also praise him (a low achiever) and ask the class to give him a nice clap because such behaviour is rarely expected from a weak student.

Some students saw the teacher's praise of lows as having a dual purpose, especially when it occurred on occasions during which the highs were perceived by the teacher as performing unusually unsatisfactorily. First, it came as a reward to the low achiever who gave the correct answer. Second, it came as a reminder to the high achiever to work harder. That is to say, the teacher used it to create a sense of competition on the part of the high achiever who failed to show a good performance on a particular occasion.

**M8:** ...if a weak student gives a correct answer without much hesitation while one of the highs is not making an effort to answer, the teacher would turn to the high achiever and say things like the way things are going at the moment it looks as if he's going to leave you standing.

As indicated earlier in the opening paragraph of this subsection, students were not in consensus about which group received more praise from the teacher in response to a correct answer to a solicited question. Thus, there were several other students who felt that the teacher gave more praise to the highs. One student reported that the general practice involved praising highs although lows were also praised if only occasionally. It is also interesting to note that the student felt that the teacher emphasised avoidance of an unhappy situation as a reward in his remarks about the good performance of lows. He said,

**L3:** It usually comes when the highs give a correct answer. But you could see him doing the same with the lows from time to time. He would

in addition say something like you won't repeat this grade if you keep it up.

Some students put forward their own reasons as to why the teacher tended to praise the highs more than the lows. It is interesting to note that the reasons they gave differed from those that were identified by those who saw the lows as the recipients of more praise. One difference relates to the fact that the reasons for the perceived high rate of praise for the highs tended to emphasise current performance and objective differences in behaviour between the two groups. For example, one reason they gave concerned the objective difference in the frequency with which the two groups produced correct answers. One student said,

**M8:** I think it is the highs who are praised more often. I think this is because they are the ones who answer correctly most of the time.

Still another student considered the high rate of praise for the highs as being attributable to the characteristics of highs themselves:

**H11:** at the same time he seems to provide more praise to highs. This I think is because they show more interest in the lessons while several other students in the class seem to switch off most of the time.

Another saw the teacher as doing this for the benefit of the lows and out of concern for their improvement:

**M7** Yeah. That's correct. I think the reason he did this was to stimulate lows to work harder and attain the level the highs have achieved.

While the majority of students reported praise to be the most common type of teacher reaction following a correct answer from both the lows and the highs, they were also able to

identify other types of feedback that accompanied such answers. For example, one student said that the teacher's reaction to a correct answer from brighter students could be simple acknowledgement expressed verbally or by writing the answer on the black board.

#### **7.4 Summary**

The findings reported in this chapter support the finding from earlier research (e.g. Weinstein, 1989) that students are keen observers of teacher interaction patterns in the classroom. Although the findings do not say anything about how they perceive their own interactions with the teacher, there is enough evidence to show that they are highly sensitive to the way the teacher behaves toward other students in the classroom. In particular, the children in this study demonstrated a high level of awareness of the teacher's feedback behaviour toward children whom they think the teacher regarded as high and low achievers.

As regards the treatment received by these two groups, students report differences in the frequency of a range of teacher feedback behaviour addressed to them. For example, highs are seen as receiving more emotional support from the teacher than lows. They are perceived as being praised for success (including partial success) more often and criticised for failure less often compared with lows. Conversely, lows are seen as the recipients of more criticism and less praise in similar situations. In addition, they saw the teacher as being more likely to ignore correct answers, give opportunity for self-correction, interrupt following wrong answer when dealing with highs than with lows. In contrast, he was described as being more likely to ignore responses and transfer reading turns following unsuccessful attempts by lows than by highs.

Further discussion will come in Chapter Nine. In the next chapter, however, I report the findings from teacher perception research question (RQ4).

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## Chapter Eight

### 8. Teacher Perceptions of Differential Treatment: Findings

#### 8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the teacher's side of the story. The contents of the chapter appear in two sections. The first section looks at the perceptions of the teacher as accessed through the questionnaire. The data presented in this section are again presented by organising the items into nine groups as in the preceding chapter (see also 5.2.1). The second section looks at the interview data. It has to be pointed out that there is a great similarity between the issues raised in this section and those in the preceding section. This is because the nature of the study required exploring the way the same phenomenon is perceived by different participants. Another point to mention in connection with this second section is that I have left out a huge amount of data because I felt that they contained no new information in terms of building up the picture already obtained from the questionnaire data.

#### 8.1 Perceptions of the Teacher: Questionnaire Data

This section looks at the teacher's account of his own feedback behaviour. The data presented in this section are based on the Teacher Individual Assessment Questionnaire. As indicated in Chapter Five (Section 5.2.1), the teacher completed a questionnaire consisting of thirty items for each student in the participating class. The questionnaire data was therefore essentially the teacher's assessment of his own behaviour in relation to each individual student in the class.

The same procedure that was employed in assessing the perceptions of students was used with the data from the teacher. That is to say values were assigned to the categories of

frequency and a frequency score was computed for each item. The final measure of frequency consisted of the mean score for highs and lows for each item. The mean was calculated by dividing the total score for highs and lows by 10 and 22 (which is the total for the two groups) respectively. Next, I present the data for the various groups of items.

Table 8.1 presents the data for the three items addressing the use of praise. With respect to praising correct answers, the data show that the teacher saw himself as praising lows nearly twice as much as highs. The mean for the two groups was 1.00 and 1.8 respectively. This meant that the teacher felt he praised lows for correct answers almost ‘always’ (the maximum value for ‘always’ is 2) while he perceived himself as praising highs only ‘sometimes’ (the maximum value for ‘sometimes’ is 1.00).

**Table 8.1 measure of frequency of praise**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Praise following correct answer (2)	10	1.0	40	1.81
Praise following partially correct ans.(6)	10	1.0	23	1.05
Praise following incorrect answer (12)	1	0.1	14	0.64

As regards praise following partially correct answers, the mean for the two groups is comparable (1.00 for highs and 1.05 for lows). Thus, the teacher believed that there was an equitable distribution of praise between highs and lows as far as rewarding partial success is concerned. In contrast, he described lows as the recipients of more praise in total failure situations. The mean score for praising highs when they failed to produce the correct answer was 0.1 while the corresponding figure for lows was 0.64. This meant that he hardly

perceived himself as praising highs for wrong answers although he did see himself as doing this with lows relatively more frequently.

The data for redirection appear in Table 8.2. The teacher saw himself as calling on another student following a partially correct answer from lows more frequently than from highs (the mean score was 1.95 compared to 0.9). In contrast, he tended to perceive himself as redirecting solicits when highs produced wrong answers to questions or when they committed errors while reading aloud slightly more frequently than he did with lows in similar situations.

### 8.2 measure of frequency for redirection

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Redirection following part correct answer (9)	9	0.9	43	1.95
Redirection following incorrect answer(16)	20	2	36	1.64
Redirection following failure to respond (21)	20	2	42	1.9
Redirection following poor reading performance(28)	10	1	15	0.68

The data in Table 8.2 also show that the teacher saw virtually no difference between the frequency with which he redirected solicits to other students when the two groups failed to respond to his solicit. He seemed to think that redirection was one his most frequent reaction when students failed to respond regardless of the ability of the students involved. This is evidenced in the fact that both groups had the highest score on this measure (the means were 2.00 and 1.9).

The data for the items pertaining to the teacher’s practice involving the provision of answer in total or partial failure situations are given in Table 8.3. The data for the item dealing with the teacher’s use of this kind of treatment in response to partially correct responses suggest that the teacher hardly saw himself as providing highs with answers when they produced incomplete answers. In contrast, he believed that he provided lows with answers when they gave this kind of answer fairly frequently (The mean score was 1.41 for lows compared to 0 for highs). Thus, he saw this behaviour as being more associated with lows than with highs.

**Table 8.3 measure of frequency for providing answer**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Supply answer following part correct answer (3)	0.0	0.0	31	1.41
Supply answer following incorrect answer(14)	20	2.0	39	1.78
Supply answer following lack of response (22)	10	1.0	38	1.72
Supply model following poor reading performance (29)	10	1.0	36	1.64

A similar pattern of perception existed for the data involving the teacher’s use of such behaviour when students failed to respond or when they showed signs of difficulty while reading aloud. He reported that he was more likely to supply the desired response when he saw lows in failure situations of this nature than he was when he found highs in similar situations. However, the data for incorrect answer suggested a different pattern. Highs were seen as being supplied with the correct answer when they failed to give one themselves slightly more frequently than when lows were in similar situations (the mean score was 2 for highs compared to 1.78 for lows).

The next group of items dealt with the provision of opportunity for self-correction. The data for this group are presented in Table 8.4. As regards the specific behaviours, the teacher saw himself as providing lows with more opportunity to correct themselves when they produced partially correct answer than he did highs (2.00 compared to 1.00).

**Table 8.4 measure of frequency for offer to try again**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Offer opportunity for self-correction following part correct answer (4)	10	1	20	2
Offer opportunity for self-correction following incorrect answer(15)	20	2.0	39	1.78
Offer opportunity for self-correction following lack of response (19)	10	1.0	29	1.32
Offer opportunity for self-correction following poor reading performance(30)	10	1.0	15	0.68
Interrupt when the desired answer is not forthcoming (8)	10	1.0	22	1.0

In the same vein, he described himself as being more persistent in getting a response from lows when they failed to respond more than he was with highs (1.32 compared to 1.00). On the other hand, he believed that highs were the recipients of more offers to try again when they produced a wrong answer to a question or when they committed errors while reading aloud. He saw no difference in the amount of interruption he did when the two groups failed to produce satisfactory response.

There was a consistent pattern of difference between the two expectation groups with respect to the data for the behaviour involving the provision of explanation. The teacher felt

that he was more likely to provide the class with explanations on points relevant to answering a question in response to failure situations involving highs. Table 8.5 gives the figures for these behaviours.

**Table 8.5 measure of frequency of providing explanations**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Provide explanation following incorrect answer (18)	20	2	30	1.36
Provide explanation following lack of response (24)	20	2	31	1.41

The figures suggest that the teacher saw himself as providing explanations to the class when highs failed to give correct answers more often than when lows did so (2.00 compared to 1.36). He also reported the situation to be the same with respect to failure to respond. The mean score for highs for this behaviour was 2.00 compared to 1.41 for lows.

Three items in the questionnaire addressed the issue of returning to the original student who gave unsatisfactory answer or who made no attempt to answer after the desired answer was obtained. The teacher saw lows as the recipients of more of this kind of treatment. This was particularly true when they gave a totally incorrect answer or made no attempt to provide a response to a solicit. Table 8.6 presents the figures for the three behaviours.

### 8.6 measure of frequency for return to original student

Feedback behaviour (Item)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Return to the student who originally gave partially correct answer (10)	10	1.0	17	0.77
Return to the student who originally gave incorrect answer(17)	1.0	0.1	19	0.86
Return to the student who originally failed to respond (23)	1.0	0.1	21	0.95

Thus, the teacher believed that lows were asked to repeat a correct response given by somebody else if they originally failed to give the answer themselves more frequently than highs (0.86 compared to 0.1). He also perceived the situation to be the same when lows failed to produce a response (the mean score for lows was 0.95 compared to 0.1 for highs).

Table 8.7 presents the data for criticism. A quick glance at the data shows that the teacher hardly saw himself as criticising highs for lack of success. All the measures of criticism indicate that lows were more prone to such treatment from the teacher in failure situations.

### 8.7 Measure of frequency of criticism

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Criticise for giving incomplete answer (5)	0	0	21	0.95
Criticise for giving incorrect answer(13)	0	0	19	0.86
Criticise for failing to respond (20)	0	0	19	0.86

Thus, lows were seen as the recipients of criticism in a range of failure situations. These included failure to respond and giving incorrect and inadequate responses.

The next group of items dealt with the issue of ignoring student responses including correct answers. Table 8.8 presents the data for the behaviour.

**Table 8.8 measure of frequency of ignoring responses**

Feedback behaviour (Items)	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Failing to give feedback to correct answer (1)	10	1	23	1.1
Failing to give feedback to partially correct answer(7)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Failing to give feedback to incorrect response (11)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

The data show that the teacher felt he never failed to react to student responses which he judged to be defective in some way while he sometimes ignored correct answers. This applied to both highs and lows. The mean figure for ignoring correct answer was 1.00 for highs and 1.1 for lows. Again these figures being comparable, it may be said that the teacher saw no difference between the two groups in terms of the degree to which he responded to their correct outputs. This is consistent with his view that giving correction must be one of the most important responsibilities of the teacher, which he articulated during the interview.

The last group of items concerned the use of L2 by the teacher in responding to the answers of students. The data for this group appear in Table 8.9 below.

**Table 8.9 measure of frequency of use of L2**

Feedback behaviour	Measure of frequency			
	High achiever		Low achiever	
	Total	Mean	Total	Mean
Use L2 in responding to correct answer (25)	20	2	44	2
Use L2 in responding to partially correct answer(27)	10	1	22	1
Use L2 in responding to incorrect response (26)	20	2	37	1.68

The data for language use show that the teacher felt he used English when reacting to the correct answers from both groups more frequently than when responding to partially correct or incorrect responses. As regards the two expectation groups, he saw no difference in the frequency with which he used English in responding to correct answers (the mean was 2.0 for both) and partially correct answers (the mean was 1.0 for both) although he tended to perceive himself as using English slightly more often in responding to incorrect answers from highs (the mean for highs was 2.0 compared to 1.68 for lows).

In sum, the data obtained from the questionnaire data suggest that the teacher acknowledged the existence of a vein of difference in his treatment of highs and lows. It is also clear from the data that some differences in the treatment of highs and lows were more pronounced than others. For example, the teacher saw a marked difference in the ways the two groups were accorded praise and criticism. He saw lows as the recipients of more praise in both success and failure situations. At the same time they were also described as getting more criticism for failing to produce a correct answer. Further, he perceived himself as giving explanations in response to highs' failure to provide the correct answer. In contrast, he saw little difference in the way he used the target language in reacting to the performance of the

two groups. Nor did he perceive any difference in the degree to which he ignored correct and incorrect responses from them.

## **8.2 Perceptions of the Teacher: Interview Data**

This section looks at some of the issues which emerged from the interview data. Again it must, however, be pointed out right at the outset that I have been selective in the choice of issues for this section. This is partly because I wanted to avoid a possible overlap with the first section and partly because of the constraints of space. This is not, however, to suggest that I will deal with different themes in this section. In fact, I have concentrated on the same themes as in the first part.

### **a) Demanding Less from Lows**

The teacher felt that demanding less from lows was a good way of boosting their morale and maintaining positive self-esteem. He said that he was prepared to accept 'a less than perfect' answer from lows and feel encouraged by the slightest evidence of progress from them. He also believed it is prudent not to expect nor demand perfect performance from students with a low potential. This position is clearly illustrated in the following comment which came in response to a question about whether he would insist on getting a perfect answer from lows once they have produced something less than what he was after:

T: No. Absolutely not. I think I would also accept even incomplete answers or inadequately presented answers from the low achievers. I mean I wouldn't mind so long as they try and produce some evidence that they are on the right track. I really want to boost their morale by encouraging and even praising them for such performance no matter how defective it may be in some respects. I think they need this sort of stuff It is good for their self-esteem. But I wouldn't leave it at that just for the benefit of all. I would provide a more complete or expanded answer if need be after pointing out that there was something missing in the original answer. So this is how I handle the situation. Let me also add that neither do I expect nor do I demand perfect answers from such students.

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The above comment also highlights the dilemma which is characteristic of teaching in mixed ability classrooms where the teacher is torn between his responsibility to the whole class and his desire to protect the feeling of the individual student. One consequence of this awkward position is that the teacher usually throws himself into a situation where he has to act inconsistently and contradict himself. In adopting flexible standards for his students, the teacher gets caught between protecting the feeling of the low achiever who produced a less acceptable answer and his duty to the whole class who expect to be told the correct answer.

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In subsequent questions about whether the teacher would behave in the same way towards highs, the teacher said he saw no need for him to do so. He said the highs usually provided the kind of answer he was looking for. He went on to say that they were also the ones who were more likely to be given a second chance to fix the part that went wrong when they produced a less adequate response. This is because he believed that highs possess the necessary resources that allow them to engage in some kind of self-correction with a minimum guidance from him.

T: ... brighter students are quick on the uptake and when they produce something incomplete or slightly faulty they can fix it with a little bit of assistance. For example, when their answer contains an error in tense, I would tell them to watch their tenses or what tense to use and all that and they seem to generally succeed in terms of utilising the extra information provided and producing a more acceptable response.

It can then be inferred from the above comments that the teacher saw such differential treatment as resulting from differences in the students themselves. While some students are good enough to be entrusted with the responsibility of correcting themselves, others simply are not up to the task and therefore do not deserve to get such treatment.

### **b) Praising Lows for a Range of Responses**

One of the issues that emerged from the interview data concerns the tendency for the teacher to praise lows more often and for a range of responses including less acceptable ones while he praised highs for correct answers only and usually chose to deliberately keep the praise going to highs to the minimum. The teacher recounted several occasions on which he would praise students. For example, he saw himself as praising lows for giving correct answers especially at times when he was initially doubtful about the student's ability to answer a particular question correctly. Thus, lows who contradicted the negative expectations of the teacher by answering correctly or at least partially correctly stood a good chance to be praised by the teacher.

T: I usually praise students when they produce extraordinary answers or exceptionally brilliant responses. But I may also praise a student whom I perceive as low when he or she produces a correct answer although the answer may fall short of the standards I set for the highs. So I may be inclined to praise a student about whose ability to answer a particular question I was initially sceptical when he or she provides the desired answer. Just to lift his morale a bit. I think I would say that's very good, keep it up and things of that sort...

Apart from praising lows in unexpected success situations, the teacher also reacted to less adequate answers from them by praising their efforts. The basis for the praise in this case was not the quality of the answer provided. Considerations of the desire to try and concern for the motivation of the student outweigh evaluation of quality of answer in praising a student for giving a response which is only partially correct.

T: It is just the participation, the attempt to answer questions that is being valued here. He will be praised for trying to answer, simply because he is making an effort to come out of his shell and take part in public exchanges. I might also do the same when a low touches upon the desired answer. I won't treat the incomplete answer as if it is a perfect answer just for the sake of protecting the feeling of the student who produced the

answer. What I might do is just praise him for the attempt and make necessary changes to improve the quality of the original response.

The comments illustrate that he saw the effort being made to answer a question as a merit that deserves a reward as far as low achievers are concerned.

Concern for the motivation and future performance of the lows figured prominently throughout the teacher's account of his use of praise in the classroom. In the following comments the teacher makes it clear that he would go as far as avoiding explicit negative feedback to lows or even praising them when they produced totally incorrect answers in order to protect their feelings:

T: ... I might say 'that's good' following a wrong initial response from a low achiever and go on to give the correct answer myself or get one of the students to provide the expected answer. All I am trying to show by doing this is that I am pleased with the attempt he or she made. I may not explicitly comment on the incorrectness of the initial response. I would simply say good in order to encourage further contributions or participation from the same student in future. So it is a morale-boosting thing. I would then nominate one of the more able ones to provide a correct answer to the same question. Or I may just give the answer myself in away that does not emphasise the defective nature of the previous answer.

In contrast to his tendency to praise lows profusely, the teacher saw himself as praising highs sparingly. He described himself as praising the highs only occasionally and when they produced 'extraordinary answers or show exceptionally brilliant performances'. He felt that praise has a very limited value with high achievers and saw no reason for using it frequently with them.

T: It is not in my style to praise students frequently. I generally tend to praise occasionally. In particular, I see no point in praising high achievers every time they produce correct answers. Yes I know they are good and they see themselves as good students. So my praise carries little

weight with such students I think. I sometimes even go as far as denying such students opportunities to answer questions because I know they can produce a correct one if asked. For example I some times deliberately avoid the students at the back near to where you usually sit and give the chance to students who are not as good.

The teacher also seemed to be concerned about the danger associated with excessive praise. He thought highs might grow complacent and cease to invest effort in their schoolwork if they are praised every time they perform correctly:

T: ... So to come back to your question about praise, I don't usually praise bright students. I know they are really good but then I don't want to exaggerate their ability by praising them now and then.

Another striking point to emerge from the above data is that the teacher seems to be more confident about the feelings, motivation and self-esteem of the highs compared with the lows whom he wishes to treat with great care and sensitivity. This is also evident in the teacher's conscious decision to try and compensate for the superiority of highs by creating occasions where he can work with the lows alone as illustrated in the comment above.

#### **d) Confirming Correct Answers from Lows**

The teacher felt that the teacher's reaction to a correct response from a student should vary depending on the ability of the student who provided the answer. He reasoned that students differ in terms of the confidence they have in the answer they give. For example, he saw lows as needing and expecting confirmations of the correctness of their answer more than their high achiever counterparts. Thus, he considered the ability of the student as one of the factors influencing his decision about how to react to a correct answer.

Given the hesitant nature of the responses given by lows, the teacher saw a lot of sense in providing reinforcement and confirmation of the accuracy of their response when lows

responded correctly. Another reason for giving lows such treatment relates to his suspicion about how the answer was arrived at. Lows are more likely to be suspected of getting at the answer through the strategy of guessing or by mere chance than are their high achiever counterparts. The teacher also mentioned the comfort and good feeling associated with the confirmation of success as another factor explaining his behaviour towards the lows.

T: What I say or do depends on several factors. For example if the correct answer comes from the less able students, I would explicitly indicate that the answer was correct. The reason I do this is that the answer could have been arrived through guessing or mere chance. Or he or she may have produced the answer in an unconfident way. So what I would do is to provide them with confirmations about the correctness of the answers they give in order to clear some potential doubts. I think one can also create a positive feeling in the student by telling him or her that what he said or did was correct. The confirmations may also be accompanied by words of praise and encouragement.

In contrast, the teacher felt that there is little learning and motivational value in treating highs in the same way as lows with respect to the provision of confirmation. This is because highs usually appeared to be more confident and gave firmer answers.

Comparing his treatment of lows with highs, he said

T: ... My view is that bright students don't need as much confirmations because they usually know the answers already and are more confident about what they say or do in response to a given task. All I'm driving at is that there is less need for confirmation and praise on the part of highs while it may be important for the lows in terms of learning and motivation.

It is clear from the above quotes that the teacher has a range of reasons for providing explicit confirmations of the correctness of what lows say or do. He thinks it makes a pedagogical sense to provide confirmations of answers received from lows because this helps to 'stabilise' learning especially when the response was not firm enough. He also

T: ... If I ever decide to give someone the opportunity to self-correct it is not just because I believe that he or she is one of the able ones. I mean if it is a question which I expect a particular student should be able to answer correctly, I would wait for him or her to engage in some sort of self-correction following an unsuccessful attempt. I have to draw on my intuitive knowledge and my experience with the students in the class in deciding on whether to insist on self-correction or not. If I am doubtful about a particular student's ability to self-correct, I wouldn't waste time. I would just give the answer myself.

It is also interesting to note that the teacher would offer the chance only when he was convinced that a particular student was capable of engaging in self-correction either because the material was very familiar or the question was within the capacity of the student.

T: ... I have to be confident that the pupil will provide self-correction. I should in the first place be convinced that he or she is capable of producing one on the grounds that the question focuses on something we previously dealt with thoroughly. But if the desired behaviour is not forthcoming, I will provide the correct answer myself.

However, the teacher saw a link between the ability of students and their enthusiasm to engage in self-correction and improve their performance once they are given reading turns. The highs were described as being keener to get a second chance after an unsuccessful attempt. On the other hand, the lows seemed to like it when the teacher is less persistent. The difference in the perceived preference between the highs and the lows was therefore one of the factors influencing the ways he reacted to students' faulty responses. The teacher gave the chance to retry to those who desired it while he preferred to call on another student or provide correction with those who showed little interest in such offer.

T: The first thing to say is that both the more able and the less able students make mistakes. The thing is while the highs are very enthusiastic and eager to have a second chance once they realize they have got it wrong, the lows seem to like being stopped. You see what I mean? They are not as eager and it seems to me that they feel sort of relieved when they are stopped. But on the other hand, you will notice a really strong desire to retry on the part of the highs. So I may respond to such

thinks it is a psychologically sound procedure in the sense that it feels good to know that what you have done is correct.

### **e) Giving Highs and Lows Equal Opportunity for Self-correction**

The provision of opportunity for self-correction following an unsuccessful attempt represents one of the areas in which the teacher saw little difference in terms of his behaviour towards all groups of students. The perception of the teacher is that opportunity for self-correction exists for all students irrespective of their ability. However, he also pointed out that the offer to try again is done in away that takes in to account differences in the characteristics of students and other contextual factors to do with the nature of the solicit posed.

The teacher appeared to think that this particular type of feedback (i.e. offering a chance to try again) did not seem to work with certain students. For example, he spoke of students who were reluctant to take the offer to try again and correct themselves simply because they tended to give up too soon. They seemed to think that if they could not get it right at their first attempt, they would never be able to put it right at subsequent attempts.

T:...But then it depends on the kind of pupil you are dealing with. Some just give up too soon. They wouldn't retry. They seem to think that if they can't get it right at first, they won't be able to do it in subsequent attempts. The only option you are left with in the circumstance is to provide the answer yourself.

Given such potential reactions from students, the teacher had to rely on his intuitive knowledge and his experience with individual students in deciding whether or not to persist in getting the student to retry. The teacher emphasised that considerations other than the student's potential influenced his decision on this issue.

enthusiasm by waiting longer and encouraging them to improve their answers...if one of the weak students have trouble reading something I would stop him and call on another student to read...

Moreover, he thought some students were better off being interrupted. Given their limited potential, the stigma and embarrassment associated with making a series of unsuccessful attempts at reading in a public setting could be unbearable. The teacher also felt that asking some students to self-correct could be a futile task and could only lead to wastage of time.

T: ... By stopping him I'm kind of avoiding the embarrassment that might result from a series of unsuccessful attempts at reading. Pressurizing a weak student to carry on in spite of a series of failed attempts would definitely make his or her life in the classroom you know miserable. Another reason is that even if I wait patiently for him or her to do word for word reading, it would mean wasting the time of others. So under the circumstances, what I would do is stop him or her and urge him or her to pay attention while another student is reading so that he will be exposed to the correct performance ...

The above quote also highlights the awkward situation in which teachers find themselves when interacting with lows, especially when they fail to perform adequately. Further, the data suggest that there are several potential factors (e.g. the feeling of the student) that the teacher has to consider in deciding how to react to a poor performance from a low achiever.

### **8.3 Summary**

The data on the teacher's perception of his own differential treatment of highs and lows suggest that the teacher was aware of the fact that highs and lows received different treatment from him and that these differences in treatment were more marked in some areas than others. As regards specific behaviours, he described himself as setting lower performance standards for the low expectation students. This was evident in his tendency to be content with any verbalisation from lows and his acceptance of less adequate answers from them. Another area where the teacher saw differential treatment concerned praise. The

teacher saw lows not only as the recipients of more praise but also as the group who had the most need for it. He also felt that there were more compelling reasons for a teacher to constantly provide confirmations of the correctness of an answer when lows produced one.

Other areas in which the teacher perceived differential treatment of highs and lows relate to the use of criticism and explanation. The teacher reported criticising lows more often than highs when they failed to perform adequately. As regards explanation, he saw himself as giving explanation to the class when highs were unable to produce the desired answer more frequently than when he saw lows in similar situations. The data for the teacher's perception about the way he distributed opportunities for self-correction were less equivocal. The teacher acknowledged that other factors other than student potential may be considered in deciding whether to persist in demanding better performance or not. Finally, the teacher saw little difference in the relative frequency with which he ignored responses from the two groups or in the extent he used the target language in reacting to their responses.

## Chapter Nine

### Summary, Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

#### 9.0 Introduction

In this chapter I will attempt to bring together the various strands of this study. I will begin by discussing the findings that emerged from the observational data (Chapter Six). In particular, I will discuss these findings in relation to the notion of the communication of teacher expectations and their implications for the (language) learner. In so doing, I will also be comparing the findings in this study with those previously reported in the literature. In the second section, I will try to juxtapose the findings from the various strands of the study, i.e. teacher behaviour (Chapter Six), teacher perception (Chapter Seven), and student perception (Chapter Eight) with a view to highlighting the nature of their relationship. I will in particular discuss the matches and contradictions between the findings. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of the reliability of the findings.

#### 9.1 Behavioural Data: Discussion of Findings

Taking the findings section-by-section, I will discuss the findings relating to the behavioural data in relation to teacher reactions to the five types of student response behaviours namely, correct answers, partially correct answers, incorrect responses, undesired responses, and no responses. I propose to discuss both the non-significant as well as the statistically significant findings for two reasons. First, any similarities between the two expectation groups are in themselves interesting. Second, differences which turned out to be non-significant with the small sample in this study may well have proved significant with a bigger sample or in another study.

The findings discussed in this section have been grouped into three subsections according to whether they relate to the feedback given in a total success, partial success and failure situations. The first subsection looks at the findings concerning teacher feedback to correct performances from students. This is then followed by a brief discussion of the findings that pertain to the feedback given to students' partially correct answers. The final subsection looks at the findings concerning the feedback addressed to students in response to their failure to produce the desired response. The findings will be discussed in relation to the communication of teacher expectations. Thus, the focus will be findings that emerged after the data was adjusted for differences in absolute frequency.

### **9.1.1 Teacher Feedback to Successful Student Performances**

As regards teacher feedback to correct answers, *repetition of answers* constituted the most frequent type of teacher reaction overall. Although there were clear quantitative differences between the two groups with respect to this category of feedback, the observed difference was attributable to differences in the students themselves rather than any conscious discrimination or favouritism by the teacher. Testing the alternative hypothesis required controlling the differences in students and comparing the treatment received by the two groups in equivalent situations. A further analysis that took in to account absolute differences in the frequencies of correct answers revealed that there was virtually no difference between the two groups. The percentage measures for *repetition of answer* for the two groups were extremely close, suggesting that the alternative interpretation that emphasises differential teacher treatment by ability cannot be sustained.

The finding concerning the lack of difference between the highs and the lows is precisely the opposite of what was expected initially. Given the fact that highs give proportionately more correct answers and less incorrect answers while the lows are usually relatively less successful, it was felt that the teacher would assume most of the answers given by highs to

be originally unknown to the lows and perhaps the intermediate group too. Conversely, it was also assumed that the teacher would take it for granted that whatever correct answer given by lows was not originally unknown to the highs. As a result, it was expected that the teacher was more likely to repeat correct answers from highs by way of consolidating the learning of the (new) material for the benefit of the rest of the class, especially the non-highs. The data, however, failed to bear this out.

In marked contrast to *repetition of answer*, where there appeared to be no difference between the two groups, the data for *repetition and explanation of answer* unequivocally showed that highs were the recipients of this type of treatment. The difference was so marked that the behaviour appeared to be virtually exclusively associated with highs while it was rare almost to the level of non-existence with lows. This would identify repetition that was accompanied by explanation rather than repetition alone as a potential mechanism for communicating the teacher's differential expectations for students. It is also of interest that this finding was consistent with the expectation that the teacher was more likely to echo a correct answer from highs as described in the preceding paragraph.

Although this finding says nothing about why the link occurred or what pedagogical aims the teacher was trying to achieve through such behaviour, one could imagine that this could have happened for a range of reasons. Since most explanations involved communicating further grammatical information (e. g. it is a third person singular) which might be accessible only to more able students, it could be suggested that the teacher was giving the highs more credit for proficiency by following up their responses with such explanations. The presence or absence of explanation motivated by such considerations could then serve the purpose of tagging students as highs or lows.

Another possible explanation may be that the teacher was trying to show more sense of responsibility and be responsive to the needs of non-highs by adding more details which could render the answer more accessible to them and thus promote better learning. A further possibility may be that he may have asked questions which he thought could turn difficult to most of the students including members of the upper group and, therefore, deserved to be followed up by some explanation in spite of the fact that a couple of highs were able to provide the correct response. While all these competing interpretations highlight the difficulty of talking about cause and effect relationships in the context of the findings in this study, a more ethnographic investigation in which the teacher is asked about his or her intentions might shed more light on this issue.

There was a clear difference between the two groups in the way the teacher used *simple affirmation* (e.g. *yes. Ok etc*) in response to their correct answers. It is of interest that the teacher followed up correct responses from lows with approving words like these more frequently than he did correct answers from highs. This finding seems to be consistent with the teacher's perception of lows as needing and expecting more confirmations of the correctness of their answers from the teacher than their high achiever counterparts (See Chapter Eight, Section 8.2). During the interview, the teacher mentioned the provision of more confirmation as a sensible procedure to be followed in handling correct answers from lows since they were usually hesitant in giving answers.

Probably one of the most surprising findings in this study concerns the infrequent nature of praise accorded students. This is in contrast to our common sense predictions about teachers' reactions to success and the emphasis given to rewarding correct performance in teacher education. While the scarcity of praise applies to both groups, highs received more praise than did lows whenever it occurred. Perhaps, this is not unexpected given the fact that

they are the ones who usually provide the correct answers. This finding is consistent with several earlier studies (e. g. Brophy and Good, 1986a; Brophy and Good, 1970).

Findings like these which are at odds with the recommendations of educators have obviously come as an unpleasant surprise to investigators in the field of teacher expectation. As a reaction to a finding in their study which showed lows as recipients of less praise and more criticism, Brophy and Good, wrote,

Because lows are successful less frequently, we assumed that a correct response from one of these children would be more significant to the teacher and more likely to elicit praise than a correct answer from one of the highs. Similarly, we expected that teachers would be less likely to criticise the lows for failure to respond correctly, because of their greater learning difficulty. However, the results were precisely the opposite. The lows were only as half likely as the highs to be praised following a correct response, and they were three times as likely to be criticised following failures. The teachers were encouraging and supportive toward the children who needed it least, but were cool and critical toward the children who most needed encouragement (1986a: 221-22).

It is interesting to note that the students in this study themselves voiced the same concern about the problems associated with unhealthy social climate and stressed the need to create a more supportive atmosphere for lows and promote learning through praise and rewards (Appendix-5).

*Request repetition of answer* was only slightly higher for highs than for lows. This is in contrast to what had been expected. Because lows gave fewer correct answers and were generally less successful, it was assumed that the teacher would be more doubtful about the correctness of what he heard upon getting a correct answer from them simply because it did not match the expectations he initially held for them. Furthermore, it was hypothesised that the teacher would be more suspicious about the source of correct answers given by lows as

he might think that they were not up to the task and whatever correct answer given must have been put in to their mouth by their peers. One also expects the teacher to be more likely to attribute a correct answer from lows to mere chance and thus look for further evidence of genuine learning in their response behaviours. However, all these expectations were not borne out by the data.

On the other hand, the relatively frequent occurrence of *request repetition of answer* addressed to highs is consistent with the teacher's desire to provide lows with models of the language. The teacher may well have wanted to give lows further chance to hear the correct answer (or performance in the case of reading). Again, there is clearly scope here for ethnographic studies focusing on teacher thinking and decision-making.

The teacher failed to give feedback following a correct response slightly more frequently in response to highs than to lows. This finding is consistent with the fact that the teacher appeared to perceive lows as needing and expecting confirmations of correctness of answer as evidenced in his greater use of *simple affirmation* with lows. In contrast, as was confirmed during the interview (See Appendix-6), he tended to believe that the highs generally gave firm answers and were usually more confident in the answers they gave, suggesting that they would not be affected much by the absence of feedback following their correct answers.

### **9.1.2 Teacher Feedback to Partially Correct Responses**

The category of response labeled *partially correct or incomplete response* was included on the assumption that the teacher's behaviour towards highs and lows in response to such behaviour would be different. The basis for this initial assumption was the finding frequently reported in the literature on teacher expectations which suggests that teachers demand less from lows (Brophy and Good, 1970; Good and Brophy, 1987). For example, teachers were

reported to accept low quality responses including incomplete responses from lows while they persisted in getting quality response from highs. Given such findings, it was thought that treating partially correct or incomplete answers in the same category as totally correct or incorrect answers would lead to some useful information being lost. Thus it was in the end decided to treat such responses independently.

In spite of initial expectations of differential teacher treatment in relation to partially correct answer, the data in this study showed virtually no evidence of this. That is to say the teacher was as likely to follow up partially correct answers from highs with *prompt, simple approving word, provide correction or offer opportunity for self-correction* types of feedback as he was when lows were in similar situations.

### **9.1.3 Teacher Feedback to Unsuccessful Student Performances**

A considerable proportion of the feedback to both groups in response to incorrect answer consisted of *provide correction*. A comparison of the proportions for the two groups, however, reveals that lows received more of this type of treatment than did highs. This finding is consistent with the findings from other studies (Brophy and Good, 1970; see also Good and Brophy, 1987). When considered on its own, this finding may suggest that the teacher was less patient with lows and was more likely to provide the answer and move on rather than encourage them to fix whatever went wrong. However, the finding that lows were also the recipients of more *offer opportunity for self-correction* type of feedback than highs shows that this was not the case.

The higher likelihood of *offer opportunity for self-correction* for lows is evident in the fact that it was ranked the second most frequent type for them while the second most frequent for highs was *ignore*. This finding concerning the teacher's tendency to provide lows with more chances to correct themselves contradicts earlier findings (see Brophy and Good,

1970; Good and Brophy, 1987). One explanation for the finding favouring lows concerns the teacher's keenness to get lows to participate more. Given the fact that the overall participation of the lows remained low, the teacher may have wanted to exploit the situation to elicit more contributions from them once they were nominated.

Another interesting finding in this study concerned the extent to which the teacher ignored incorrect answers. The data for *ignore* suggested that the two groups differed markedly on this measure. The teacher failed to give any feedback whatsoever following incorrect answers from highs more frequently than from lows. This could be for a range of reasons. Since the lows participated less in giving answers to questions in general, it may well have been that any contribution from them was more significant to the teacher and therefore more likely to be commented upon.

Another related reason may be that the teacher was being responsive to the needs of these students and trying to help them by not allowing their incorrect responses to pass without any comment. Thus, given the fact that lows' contributions were few and far between, he may have thought there was more need for him to be more attentive to their outputs whenever they occurred as he could not afford to ignore them.

A further possibility may be that the teacher chose to ignore incorrect answers from highs or pretended not to have heard them because doing otherwise would mean contradicting his expectations for them and thus contradicting himself. This last explanation particularly applies to poor reading performance from highs. Darley and Fazio (1980) argued that people are generally reluctant to drop firmly established expectations. Again it is difficult to provide an equivocal interpretation of why the two groups differed in terms of the likelihood of their incorrect responses being corrected. Finding out the thinking behind the observed practice could be a legitimate aim for future research.

As regards redirection, the teacher was slightly more likely to call on someone else following a wrong answer from lows than highs. This finding echoes findings from earlier studies (Brophy and Good, 1970; see also Good and Brophy, 1987) in terms of teachers' greater use of redirection with lows than with highs. However, it also differs from these findings in some respects. For example, while the teacher in this study was as likely to call on someone else as he was to *offer opportunity for self-correction* when lows failed to give correct answers, the teachers in the other studies were reported to be more likely to redirect the solicit to someone else than try 'to improve their responses by giving clues or repeating or paraphrasing questions' (Good and Brophy, 1987: 128).

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this study is that there appeared to be no occasion on which a low achiever was asked to correct his high achiever counterparts although there were obviously several occasions on which the converse was done. Out of the twenty solicits redirected following a wrong response from highs, not a single solicit was addressed to a low achiever. While this may be because none of the lows had their hands up when the redirection was about to occur, the possibility of differential teacher expectation effect can not be ruled out. Given the performance difference between highs and lows, it may well be that the teacher thought the lows were not capable of correcting the highs.

Feedback in the form of criticism, which other studies (Brophy and Good, 1970; Good and Brophy, 1987; Weinstein, 1976) have found to be one of the behaviours characterising teachers' treatment toward lows in failure situations was relatively rare in the present study. In fact, the frequency of its occurrence was too low to deserve a separate category. However, this is not to suggest that criticism was totally absent from the data. There were a couple of them which were treated as *other* and they all went to the lows. This points to the

possibility of a higher rate of criticism for lows in bigger samples as documented in other studies.

There appeared to be a considerable difference as regards the two expectation groups in the way the teacher reacted to failure to respond to his solicit on the part of the students. Although both groups were more likely to receive *provide answer* type of treatment when they failed to respond, lows were more likely than highs to be the recipients of such treatment from the teacher. While *provide answer* was the most frequent type of teacher reaction for both groups, the second most frequent for highs and lows was *redirect* and *stay* respectively. This gives us a picture in which the teacher was more persistent in getting a response from lows than he was from highs. Again this is consistent with hypothesis that the teacher was keener to involve lows in the lesson and, therefore, lends further support to earlier discussion. Furthermore, it could be argued that the finding that the teacher was more likely to offer lows more opportunities to try is in keeping with the teacher's perception that they had to be coaxed into taking part in answering questions (Appendix-6).

Further support for the hypothesis that the teacher was trying to encourage lows to contribute more to the lessons comes from the finding that the teacher chose to *stay* with them by repeating the question or explaining the instruction for the task etc. rather than calling on someone else or providing the answer when they produced undesired responses (e.g. giving answer to a wrong solicit). This is also in harmony with the view that the teacher was more sensitive to the response behaviours of lows than highs because their contribution was more significant to him.

## **9.2 Perceptions of Differential Feedback: The Issue of Matches and Mismatches**

This section focuses on the nature and extent of 'commonality' between the perceptions of the teacher and the students. In so doing, it revisits the findings concerning teacher and

student perceptions and identifies potential areas of agreement and conflict between the teacher and the students in terms of their account of the way highs and lows were treated in the classroom. Where possible these findings will be compared with the findings from the observational data in order to assess the extent to which they were in conformance with the empirical data.

In line with findings from studies of students perceptions of differential teacher treatment (e.g. Weinstein and Middlestadt, 1979; Weinstein et al., 1982; Weinstein, 1989; Babad, 1990), the students in this study perceived differential teacher treatment toward highs and lows on several of the teacher feedback behaviours studied. Furthermore, a comparison of the findings of students' perceptions and the teacher's understanding of his own practice revealed that there was a considerable degree of agreement between the two parties on the way students for whom the teacher held high and low expectations were treated.

At the same time, the teacher and the students failed to agree on the way certain behaviours were used. Again the lack of total congruence between the perceptions of the two parties demonstrated in this study is consistent with the findings from previous studies (e.g. Cooper and McIntyre, 1994; Babad, 1990) that compared the images of children and their teachers. Next, I will consider the relationship of the findings pertaining to student perception (RQ3) and teacher perception (RQ4) in more detail.

One major observation that can be made concerning the findings in Chapter Seven and Chapter Eight is that both the teacher and the students exhibited a high degree of sensitivity to differential teacher behaviour. However, this is not to suggest that their perception of the direction of difference was also the same. There were occasions when they gave conflicting reports as to which group was favoured with regards to the frequency of a particular behaviour. I will illustrate this shortly.

One area in which a complete agreement between the teacher and the students was observed concerns the way the teacher used criticism. The findings suggest that both parties perceived lows as the recipients of more criticism compared with highs. In fact, the teacher's ratings indicate that this particular form of feedback was exclusively associated with lows. A further comparison of the findings from the data on perceptions with the findings from the behavioural data reveals that these perceptions were consistent with the patterns observed in the empirical data collected on the teacher's feedback practice. Of course, not forgetting that the finding from the behavioural data was based on a very tiny sample.

It has been argued (Brophy, 1985a) that although teachers are usually keen to help lows, it is also usually the case that their negative affect toward these students leaks uncontrollably. The data gathered from the students, the teacher and the classroom would seem to suggest that the argument holds true for the present study too. In spite of the teacher's desire to help lows (see Appendix-6), the fact that whatever fewer instances of criticism in the behavioural data were associated with lows and that the students and teacher were well aware of this link lend further support to Brophy's argument.

As regards the teacher's use of praise following successful performance, while both the students and the teacher acknowledged the presence of differential treatment, they differed on whether they perceived the difference as being in favour of highs or lows. The students saw their teacher as praising highs more frequently than lows when they gave correct answers. In contrast, the teacher believed that the lows were the recipients of more praise in success situations like this. Evidence from the behavioural data, however, was in favour of highs (see Chapter Six Section 6.3.1). This would then suggest that there was a gap between what the teacher thought he did and what he actually did.

Another source of difference between the perceptions of the teacher and the students concerns the praise occurring in response to partially correct answer. While the teacher saw no difference in the frequency with which the highs and lows were praised in this particular situation, the students reported a bias towards the highs. It must, however, be noted that no comparison with empirical evidence was made because the behavioural data contained no such evidence. At the same time the match between the perception of students and the empirical data lends support to the argument that students' perceptions are accurate and therefore valid (See Knight and Waxman, 1991).

However, the perceptions of the two parties about the teacher's of praise in the context of wrong answers appeared to be very comparable. Lows were seen as receiving praise for incorrect answers slightly more frequently than highs. This is consistent with the findings of other studies (e.g. Weinstein, 1976; see also Good and Brophy, 1987) which showed that teachers were more likely to provide lows than highs with inappropriate reinforcement by rewarding inappropriate behaviour such as incorrect responses.

As regards the teacher's use of redirection of a solicit to another student, there was a limited level of agreement concerning redirection following a partially correct answer. Both parties believed that the teacher called on someone else when lows provided a response which was only partially correct more frequently than when highs were in similar situations. It was hard to assess the extent to which this perception had a basis in the reality of the classroom as the behavioural data contained few such instances of redirection occurring in response to partially correct answers.

Contradictory perceptions existed with respect to the teacher's use of redirection of a solicit in total failure situations. For example, while the teacher saw himself as calling on someone else in response to highs' failure to give correct answer more frequently, the students saw

little difference between the two groups. The behavioural data, however, suggested that the teacher was more likely to call somebody else following a wrong answer from lows than he was from highs.

There was also a mismatch between the perceptions of the two parties with respect to redirection occurring in the context of poor reading performance. While the students believed that the teacher stopped lows and called on someone else when they failed to read correctly more frequently than he did highs, the teacher reported that he was more tolerant with lows in situations like this than highs. It was difficult to compare these findings with the findings from the behavioural data because the coding system was not sensitive to such differences in context. Clearly, there is scope for future research here.

In spite of the conflicts in perceptions observed in certain areas, the teacher and the students were in agreement about the teacher's use of redirection following students' failure to respond. Both parties saw virtually no difference between the two groups although the behavioural data pointed to a slight tendency for the teacher to redirect the solicitor when highs failed to respond and to stay with the student when the lows did so.

Consistent with the behavioural data, the students said that the highs were as likely as the lows to receive correction from the teacher following a partially correct answer. In contrast, the teacher saw himself as doing this with lows only. As regards the provision of answer following incorrect responses, while the students again saw little difference between the two groups, the teacher reported a slight tendency for him to do it more frequently with highs than with lows. The finding from the behavioural data which suggested that the teacher was more likely to supply answer to lows than to highs failed to corroborate both the teacher's and the students' account.

The finding that the students perceived a (slight) difference between the two groups in the way the teacher provided answer when no response was forthcoming was found to be consistent with the teacher's perception. The teacher felt that he provided answer to lows (considerably) more frequently than highs when they failed to respond. Data on the teacher's actual practice was biased in the direction of these perceptions.

There appeared to be a wide difference in perceptions between the teacher and the students in terms of the likelihood of the teacher providing corrections in the context of students reading out texts in public. The students felt that the teacher provided highs not only with more corrections when they committed errors while reading but also with more opportunities to continue with their reading after the correction. In contrast, the teacher perceived him self as favouring lows as far as this issue was concerned. The findings of behavioural data again say nothing about the teacher's behaviour in the context of reading instruction in particular. Further research that takes into account such differences in instructional context could probably shed some light on the issue.

As regards the provision of opportunity for self-correction, the students reported that the teacher gave highs more chances to try again when they produced responses which were totally or partly incorrect or when they failed to respond at all. The teacher's perception matched the students' as regards his tendency to demand improved performance from highs in total failure situations involving wrong answer or erroneous reading. On the other hand, he failed to share the students' view about his tendency to be more persistent in getting a response from highs when they failed to produce a response since he saw himself as doing the opposite i.e. encouraging lows more to try and produce something.

The teacher's claim that he was more persistent in eliciting a response from lows was in conformity with the finding from the behavioural data. However, the shared perception

about the teacher's tendency to offer highs more chances to correct themselves when they produced incorrect responses was not borne out by the behavioural data, which suggested that the treatment was more or less comparable. As regards partially correct answers, the finding from the observational data appeared to be biased towards the students.

The students and the teacher were also in consensus with regard to the way in which the teacher used explanations when students gave a wrong answer or failed to respond. Both parties saw the teacher as providing the class with explanations of the teaching point or other points relevant to answering a particular question when highs failed to produce the desired answer more often than when lows were in similar situations.

There was a considerable difference between the perceptions of the students and the teacher with respect to failure to give feedback to correct answers. While the teacher thought he 'sometimes' ignored correct answers regardless of whether they were produced by highs or lows, the students saw him as ignoring correct answers from highs significantly more often. A glance at the findings from the observational data would lead one to suggest that the students' perceptions had a parallel in reality in the sense that it was consistent with the observed behaviour; the teacher was more likely to fail to give feedback to correct answers from highs. It can also be said that the teacher's observed behaviour was in harmony with the stress he placed on the need to provide lows with confirmations of the correctness of their answers during the interview (Appendix-6).

One interesting finding about the perception of the teacher is that the teacher believed that he hardly ignored responses which he judged to be totally or partly incorrect irrespective of who the source of the answer was. This finding is of interest for what it suggests about students' willingness to participate in class activities and experiment with whatever language is at their disposal. As regards the perception of the students, they also saw virtually no

difference between the highs and lows in terms of the likelihood of the teacher ignoring partially correct answers although they did not claim that it never occurred at all.

It is also interesting to note that the students' perception was at odds with that of the teacher in the sense that they believed he ignored incorrect answers from lows considerably more frequently compared with highs. This is in marked contrast with what the observational data revealed. The teacher was seen ignoring more errors coming from highs. Mysteriously, the perceptions of the teacher and the students contradicted not only each other but also the findings from observational data, leaving no room for commonality.

In spite of its failure to agree with relevant findings about the teacher's observed behaviour and perception, the finding that the students saw the teacher as ignoring incorrect responses from lows is of particular interest in itself. However, it is not clear where such finding leads in terms of implications for how the students will approach the task of (language) learning. For the lows, the understanding that the teacher was prepared to tolerate their errors could encourage them to take more risks and contribute more to the lesson (Good, 1981).

On the other hand, however, if they took the view that the teacher was ignoring incorrect responses from them because he thought what they said was not worthy of attention and thus deserved to be ignored, they would respond by investing less in the task and by avoiding situations that lead to such treatment (Jagacinski, 1992). To the degree that the students saw the teacher's behaviour as discriminatory, they would be demotivated and feel insulted. The converse could also be equally damaging. In the case of highs, while the feeling that the teacher was attending to their errors could be good for their self-image, it could also be equally damaging if they perceived the teacher as being overcritical with them. The effect in both situations could probably be to raise the 'affective filter' (Krashen, 1981).

Opinions were again divided as regards the teacher's use of the target language in responding to the output of students. While the students perceived the teacher as using English in reacting to correct answers from highs more often than he did in responding to those from lows, the teacher did not report any difference between the two groups. In fact, he felt that he *always* used the target language in treating correct answers. The empirical data was in favour of the teacher's judgement although it did not corroborate the greater level of frequency claimed by the teacher.

The teacher and the students were in complete agreement with each other with respect to the teacher's use of the target language in reacting to partially correct answers. Both parties saw no difference between highs and lows on this measure. However, they appeared to be divided on the issue involving the use of English in treating incorrect answers. While the teacher perceived himself as frequently using English when responding to highs' incorrect answers, the students' saw a slight tendency for the teacher to use English in handling incorrect responses from lows more frequently. This may sound very surprising. However, part of the explanation may lie in the fact that the teacher was seen giving clues or explanations in Amharic when he decided to elicit improved performance from highs while he usually repeated the question when he wanted to achieve the same purpose with lows. Again a more qualitative analysis of the discourse could shed light on this finding.

In spite of the slight differences reported, the overall picture that emerged from the three sources of data was that language use as defined in this study was not sensitive to differential teacher treatment. This was contrary to what was expected. Since English is a foreign language to the students, it was assumed that the teacher would use it differentially with students differing in perceived ability. It could be argued that being addressed in English was challenging and gave the student credit for proficiency in English and thus communicated higher expectation for the student involved. At the same time being

addressed in English relatively less frequently could signal the teacher's low opinion of a particular student and hence could serve as a cue for the student about the low expectation the teacher holds for him. These expectations about the language used by the teacher in addressing students being sensitive to the communication of teacher expectations were not confirmed by the data in this study.

### **9.3 Conclusion**

Before I conclude this chapter, I would like to mention a few points about the reliability of the data collected for this study, especially the consistency of the coding procedure used in classifying the feedback behaviour of the teacher. The issue of reliability is crucial in that a finding based on data of dubious reliability is doomed to be invalid.

The first thing to say is that care was taken in order to avoid unreliable classifications of the teacher's behaviour. The rigorous analysis and re-analysis of the data that was done prior to the creation of the coding system ( See Chapter Five) is hoped to have gone some way toward enhancing the reliability of the data. Besides, the fact that I had to do several coding and re-coding in the process of developing and testing the coding system must have contributed to the consistency of approach by increasing my familiarity with the data. What is more, I analysed and re-analysed the data several times with a view to ensuring the reliability of the data once the system was finalised. Further, a subset of the transcript data was submitted to two independent judges and their ratings compared with mine, which in turn yielded a high degree of inter-rater reliability.

Another factor contributing to the reliability of the data relates to the fact that several of the categories in the system required low-inference decisions. For example, categories dealing with the teacher's use of language, redirection of solicitation, supply answer etc. were straight forward and thus little amount of inference was required in coding them. While it may be

said the operational definition of a greater proportion of the categories call for minimum inference on the part of the rater, there were some categories which could be identified only in context. For example, “ok” may be classified as *simple affirmation* when it comes in response to a correct answer while it may be identifiable as a *simple approving word* intended to generate further response from the student when it follows partially correct or incomplete response.

Although the low-inference nature of many of the feedback categories together with the procedures described above are likely to have enhanced the reliability of the data, unreliable judgements could still have been made as regards the coding of the responses of students and certain aspects of the teacher’s behaviour. In particular, it was not always easy to tell whether a response was completely wrong or only partially wrong. Moreover, the fact that partially correct responses and incomplete or unfinished utterances were treated in the same category also complicated the problem. In retrospect, I am beginning to question the reasonableness of having this intermediate category in the first place. This points to the need to treat findings based on data associated with this category of response with caution.

## **Chapter Ten:**

### **Conclusion**

#### **10.0 Introduction**

In the preceding chapter I identified major findings of the study and discussed them in relation to each other as well as in relation to findings from similar studies. In this chapter, I follow up the discussion with concluding remarks regarding the matches and mismatches between the findings that emerged from data obtained from the three sources, namely classroom observation, students, and the teacher. I next briefly evaluate the research procedures used in the study. I then look at the findings in terms of their implications for practice. I conclude the chapter by identifying the de-limitations of the study and by suggesting modifications, extensions and new research that need to be undertaken to complete the picture.

#### **10.1 The Findings of the Study: Concluding Remarks**

In Chapter Nine, I considered the relationship between the findings of the study. I have shown that the relations between the three accounts of classroom process were stronger in certain areas. At the same time, I have also shown that a number of divergent stories were recounted by the three parties regarding teacher's behaviour in specific areas. In this section, I will identify possible factors which might help to account for the differences in the stories told by the three observers.

An important aspect of the study is that it tried to elicit data from different sources. One consequence of such approach is that we have a situation where only some of the findings are comparable while the rest appear to contradict each other, albeit to a varying degree. While this is not something to be ashamed of, both the similarities and differences in findings deserve to be commented upon. As regards the findings which have been shown to be

compatible with each other, one could only say that such triangulated findings are not only welcome but also desirable because they are likely to be treated with less suspicion. Given the fact that claims based on one research procedure or source are likely to trigger doubts about their validity in the reader's mind, it can be suggested that the convergent findings in the present study have the added advantage of carrying much conviction for the reader.

The diversity in the impressions given by findings that emerged from data obtained from different sources is also something to be remarked upon. The first thing to say is that the fact that there are conflicting accounts of teacher feedback behaviour is neither unexpected nor anomalous. In our daily life, we continually witness the fact that people's perceptions of the same experience can vary considerably depending on several factors. It is also consistent with the thinking that emphasises the multiplicity of reality (Erickson, 1986). Thus, it is perfectly natural for the three versions to be different (yet to remain valid).

In addition, the fact that there is no congruity between the findings should not lead to the suggestion that at least some of the findings are suspect. In particular, it would be wrong to argue that the findings regarding the perceptions of students and the teacher suffer from problems of validity on the ground that they fail to be consistent with the observed behaviour. In other words, their status as valid findings can be questioned only if there is a good reason to suspect that they do not correspond to the understanding of the participants, which hopefully is not the case in this study because much care has been taken to reduce threats to validity by way of using a range of data collection procedures and testing them prior to their administration, as indicated in Chapter Four. Thus, statements about teacher and student perceptions remain vital components of the findings in this study irrespective of whether or not they match findings based on the empirical data collected. This argument is also consistent with the premise the study started off with - i.e. what students experience in

the classroom could be different from not only from what is intended by the teacher but also from what is witnessed by an outsider observer.

## **10.2 Evaluating the Research Processes**

In this section, I reflect on the most salient aspects of the research process and briefly assess the research procedures used in collecting and analysing data. In particular, I will deal with issues associated with the collection and analysis of observational data and self-report data.

As regards classroom observation, a notable and (perhaps unusual) feature of the present study is that data on the teacher's feedback behaviour was collected in the presence of two people who were outsiders to the classroom, namely myself and the man responsible for filming the lessons. While I was aware of the effect this might have on the nature of the data collected, I was under the circumstances unable to prevent being accompanied by someone because of logistical problems. However, it should be pointed out that I tried to compensate for this difficulty by increasing our visibility in the classroom in order to enhance acclimatization of the class and the teacher to the new environment, as noted in Chapter Four. Whether I have been successful in this respect or whether the results would have been different if only the investigator was present (as I presume is the normal practice), is difficult to determine.

This is not, however, to suggest that the presence of a single observer in the classroom guarantees less contamination of data. In fact, the very practice of having an observer in the classroom can be intrusive in the sense that it can ultimately lead to the distortion of data. As indicated in Chapter Four, there were several lessons in which I was the only observer, especially those that were not recorded, and in these lessons I got the impression that my presence was having an impact on the teacher's behaviour although the teacher claimed that nothing changed as a result of my presence. For example, in one of these lessons, the teacher

came over to the back of the class (where I was sitting) after giving an answer and asked me if the way he pronounced a word was correct. However, I would like to stress that I sensed little difference in the teacher's behaviour between the lessons in which I was the only observer and those in which I was joined by another "intruder" although I suspect that certain things might have changed on the part of the students as a result of the act of recording.

Before leaving classroom observation, there is one important point that needs to be made regarding the kind of analysis that was applied to the observational data collected in this study. It is clear that the focus was largely on quantitative analysis of a range of teacher feedback behaviour. While such an approach has yielded useful information about how and in what quantity the different kinds of feedback are distributed between high and low expectation students, there is no denying that it also misses out some useful qualitative differences. Admittedly, the category system fails to be sensitive to important differences that may exist in the behaviour coming within the same class. A case in point is the behaviour classified as *redirection* in this study. With the category system used, it is difficult to capture information about whether the redirection came as part of a series of redirections that occur as a result of a series of failed attempts by different students or whether it followed a single attempt by another student. Similarly, it does not take in to account differences that pertain to teacher behaviour before the redirection was about to take place (i.e. redirections may be preceded by some form of clues or explanations that subsequently nominated student can make use of). All these problems point to the need to supplement the category system with qualitative discourse analysis—a task which I envisaged at the start of the study but eventually dropped because of lack of time.

As regards the data on students' and teacher's perceptions, given the various methodological concerns surrounding the use of self-report data (See Cohen, 1991), one of

the most thorny issues to be confronted concerned the need to ensure a reasonable level of validity and reliability of the data collected. This issue may take many forms. Most relevant to the present study, however, is the problem associated with the possibility of lack of agreement between the investigator, the students and the teacher as to the meaning attached to the labels used in describing the various categories of feedback. As Cohen (1991) noted, the problem may manifest itself in two ways: using the same terms to refer to different processes, or using the same labels for different processes. It is hard to claim that the data collected was completely free from the threat to validity posed by such inconsistency. However, it can be suggested that the decision to use the questionnaire and interview in a complementary fashion in eliciting data was a sensible procedure to follow as part of the effort to mitigate the problem arising from lack of consensus among the three parties as to the meaning of the labels used. What is more, there generally appeared to be little evidence of this during the interviews which were conducted subsequent to the administration of the questionnaire (See Appendix 5 and 6). However, it has to be pointed out that I have some reservations about the teacher's and the students' understanding of partially correct or incomplete answers in the sense that it may not have been consistent with the operational definition used in the coding system.

Another factor which in retrospect appears to have a bearing on the reliability and validity of the data on perception relates to the way measures of frequency are conceptualized. While the questionnaire required subjects to report the frequency with which the teacher used certain behaviours when dealing with highs and lows relative to each group, it is possible that some students might have based their responses on perceived absolute frequency rather than relative proportions. In view of the fact that there are considerable performance differences between highs and lows, the use of absolute frequency as a basis for comparing the two groups could be misleading. While it is hard to determine whether or not subjects

thought in terms of absolute frequency in responding to the questionnaire, the possibility of such confusion can not be ruled out.

Finally, the use of statistics in this study deserves some comments. As indicated in Chapter Five, the decision to analyse the questionnaire data on an item-by-item basis came after attempts to organise the individual items in to meaningful groups which cut across the four versions of the questionnaire failed. While the item-by-item analysis procedure turned out to be quite revealing, in retrospect one also gets the feeling that it made the task more complicated and less manageable as it required comparing the two expectation groups on all thirty variables in the questionnaire.

### **10.3 Implications for Practice**

In this section I extrapolate from the findings about differential teacher treatment, students' perceptions of it and teacher's own accounts of his behaviour to look at their possible implications for improving classroom instruction. I have drawn both on my own study and other pertinent works in discussing such implications for change in practice.

Given the finding in this study (and in previous ones) that there is a tendency for teachers to communicate negative expectations to their students by treating high and low achieving students differently, it becomes extremely important to make some intervention attempts aimed at bringing about an environment in which all students are treated fairly. Several suggestions have been made about what forms such intervention should take. According to Good and Brophy (1987), some writers have gone as far as suggesting that teachers should guard against forming any expectations at all by, for example, keeping away from sources such as students' previous teachers, cumulative records etc. Others have recommended that teachers have only highly positive expectations. However, as Good and Brophy noted, both recommendations may be rejected on the grounds that they are unrealistic. The first one

does not take into account the naturalness and inevitability of expectation formation in social interaction. As regards the second one, although it is good in terms of helping students develop positive self-concept and attitude, it fails to consider the individual differences in students' learning abilities which are likely to persist in spite of such wishful thinking.

One sensible way forward would be for teachers to try and maintain appropriate expectations which should not necessarily be high, as Good and Brophy (1987) noted. What is more, such expectations need to be followed by appropriate teaching behaviours in the sense that the teacher should plan and deliver instruction in such a way that students especially low achievers will work up to their potential and progress through the curriculum at their own pace, which may be slower than what the teacher might want to see. In other words, teachers should have flexible standards and be content to see weaker students progressing at a slower pace provided that they are moving at a steady rate.

Such individualisation of instruction requires several things. First, teachers have to be flexible and keep an open mind. This makes it possible for them to keep abreast with the changes that occur in student behaviour and thus modify their expectations accordingly. Second, they need to engage in constant appraisal of their own behaviour toward different expectation groups in order to make sure that they do not convey negative expectations through their behaviour. Third, they should remind themselves that the tone or manner in which they dispense help to those who need it could have implications for how their students see themselves as learners and how they are seen by their peers. Thus, the provision of help needs to be done in a more positive and gentle way to avoid embarrassment and other psychological damages. Finally, teachers need to have a firm conviction that they can make a difference to the learning progress of the individual student, and what they say and do can make or break children as pupils.

As documented by several studies (e.g. Weinstein, 1989) and highlighted theoretically by student-mediating models of teaching (Knight and Waxman, 1991), students are active interpreters of teacher actions. This study too has shown students to be aware of the differential treatment of highs and lows by the teacher. The view that students are constantly engaged in making sense of their teachers' behaviour points to the need to recognise students as a great source of information that can be used in improving teaching. For example, as Good (1981) noted, "asking students about teacher treatment may lead to understanding that classroom observation cannot provide" (p.421). Thus, teachers can benefit from a greater understanding of what effect their instruction have on their students. Knight and Waxman (1991) wrote,

Effective teaching requires more than mere execution of individual skills such as wait time or modeling and extends beyond direct presentation of content. Effective teaching requires teachers to understand students' thought processes and then to facilitate their student's mediation of both content and instruction (p. 252)

The present study has also shown that there were some discrepancies between students' and teacher's account of teacher treatment of highs and lows with respect to certain areas of teacher behaviour (e.g. praise). Students' perceptions were also shown to be compatible with the observational data. Although this was not always the case and the observational data was some times seen to corroborate the teacher's side of the story, the fact that the relations between students' perceptions and observational data appeared to be stronger in certain areas may be suggestive of the potential for students as accurate observers of classroom processes. In contrast, the finding that relations between teacher account and observed behaviour appeared to be modest in some areas is in line with the widely held assumption that teachers are frequently unaware of the subtle differences in the ways they treat highs and lows. Again one implication is that teachers can benefit from student perspective as it can alert them to unintended consequences of their behaviour.

#### **10.4 Implications for Further Research**

In this section, I will look at some of the directions that other related studies can follow in order to further our understanding of the phenomenon of interest and make the picture more complete. The discussion will mainly concentrate on procedures that retrospectively could have been used in my study and new research questions that need to be addressed in order to gain more information in the area.

One important area that deserves research attention in the study of teacher expectation effects in the context of foreign language classrooms concerns the notion of wait time. Given the finding from studies in content classrooms that teachers do not wait long enough for highs to respond, it would be interesting to examine this aspect of teacher reaction in the language classroom where there is a higher likelihood of students experiencing some kind of difficulty due to the additional demands associated with getting both the form and content right. Since many students are less likely to enjoy being interrupted in the middle of their utterances or being cut off before they even try, information on this would be useful in terms of assessing the environment that exists for highs and lows during the language learning process.

This study pointed to the need to pay attention to specific instructional contexts in examining patterns of teacher interaction in the language classroom. For example, students' perception of differential treatment of highs and lows appeared to vary depending on whether the interaction involved difficulties in answering a question or problems in reading during reading aloud activities. Thus, further research would benefit greatly from procedures that capture more specific differences in context including differences in the level of difficulty of questions. Another important instructional context that needs research attention relates to the distinction between form –focused and content-focused activity. The comparison of the behaviour of the teacher toward highs and lows should take in to

account differences in activities on the form-content dimension. Equally useful would be the distinction between errors of form and errors of content. Considering all these contextual differences would enhance our understanding of the way differential teacher feedback operates in the language classroom.

Although the focus of the present study was on examining the effect of the teacher's expectation on the feedback behaviour of the teacher, it may well be the fact that student gender plays an important role in the process. In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that gender is more closely related to certain teacher initiated interactions such as criticism than to expectations (Brophy and Good, 1970). Thus, a study of EFL classroom in which the gender and expectation factors are investigated together would be a worthwhile undertaking.

As regards the perceptions of differential treatment in the classroom, the findings in this study are based on an intensive study of a small group of students drawn from a single classroom and hence it would be wrong to generalise from them to all sixth graders in Ethiopia. Thus, further research should show the extent to which the findings in this study apply to other pupils. (Of course, this comment applies to findings that pertain to the observed teacher behaviour as well).

The study of perceptions in this study was approached in an indirect way in the sense that students were asked to describe the kind of treatment received by imaginary students rather than real students. Although there were sufficient reasons for using this procedure (See Section 4.3.2.2.1), given the necessary research tools it would be interesting to find out how what they say about the hypothetical students compares with their own self-reported treatment. Equally interesting would be to investigate the relationship between students' perceptions of differential treatment and student characteristics such as level of proficiency, age, sex, and self-concept.

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# Appendix 1

## Guidelines For Coding Teacher Feedback Behaviour

Appendix 1 contains coding guidelines as well as categories of responses and feedback together with examples of them.

### i) Coding Principles

1. An utterance is coded only once. In cases of uncertainty code as 'other'. Exceptions are indicated.
2. Concentrate on teacher utterances addressed to individual students. Exclude utterance if the student addressed is not known or if it contains indistinguishable bits which render classification difficult.
3. Concentrate on teacher-student academic interactions regardless of whether the teacher calls on a student with or without a raised hand.
4. Ignore both teacher and student initiated private interactions even when the focus of the exchange may be on something academic.
5. Concentrate on academic exchanges. Do not code nonacademic interactions which focus on procedural matters such as asking students to take out their books, checking whether or not they have done something etc.
6. Code utterances addressed to and elicited from high and low achievers only. Do not code interactions involving the intermediate group. In case of redirection, however, you will need to indicate which of the three groups a solicitation was transferred to.
7. Use all available contextual features to code aspects of interaction pragmatically. For example, use teacher reaction and other relevant pieces of evidence in identifying errors and judging the correctness of an utterance. In addition, use both linguistic and nonlinguistic clues to determine the discursive function of an utterance coming as a response to a student verbal output (e.g. answer).

### ii) Operationalising Key Concepts

For the purpose of the present study, the following definition of terms has been used.

- a) '*feedback*' refers to the teacher's overt verbal reaction to students' verbal response or absence of it to his academic solicitations. In addition, lack of such overt reaction has been treated as one kind of feedback behaviour of the teacher and thus is not excluded from the analysis.
- b) a *solicitation* is a teacher's utterance which requires a verbal response from the student. The student does not necessarily have to produce a response for an utterance to count as a solicitation. But it should be fairly clear that it is intended to elicit one. In question-answer exchanges it may want an answer from a student. It may also get a student to read something out.

### iii) Operationalising the response categories

a) *correct*: the student's response to a solicitation is judged to be right by the teacher. It should be fairly clear that the teacher was satisfied with the answers given in terms of the content, the form and manner of presentation (e.g. whether answers should be given in complete sentences or not). It includes

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- an 'acceptable' answer to a grammar exercise, e.g.

796 T: I dash speak three languages I dash speak three languages..yes Sofonias?

797 S: I can't speak three languages

T: I can't speak three languages *any one of you who can speak three languages...*

- *reading a sentence (in a non-reading exercise) without mispronunciation, substitution or omission e.g.*

T: (asks the student to read the question as it is)

S: we dash look out of the window when the teacher teaches teaches

T: Good we dash look out of the window when the teacher teaches teaches

- *error free reading performances in reading lessons.* It does not necessarily mean that the entire reading turn should be free from inaccuracies. In reading aloud activities responses are likely to be extended with a lot of teacher feedback in the form of prompt, correction and encouragement intervening in the process. In this case *correct* refers to 'a speaking turn' within the reading turn which is judged to be free from mistakes. For example, the following reading turn consists of one correct and one wrong responses.

T: yes (nominates)

S: my new life is POSSIBLE (mispronunciation)

T: possible (T corrects thus coded as incorrect)

S: possible because I am working together with other women women we are working together to help ourselves (no error therefore coded as correct).

- a response to a comprehension question which is treated as being correct both content wise and formally. (A factually correct response expressed in a faulty language (e.g. mispronunciation) does not qualify as *correct* (See also partially correct answer).

T: ...ok the second question is how often did she go to the forest?..

795 S: she walked fifteen kilometres from her house to the forest

b) *partially correct or incomplete:* It is usually the case that the answer to a solicit does not come at a go and immediately after the turn containing the solicit. Thus, it is likely to be spread over a series of turns allowing for the teacher to react (usually by providing a series of prompts) to individual utterances in the extended answer. Utterances which are considered to be relevant but not complete are therefore treated as partially correct/incomplete answers. Such series of utterances may eventually lead to correct sentences but they may also end up in wrong answers. In both cases the final product is coded as either correct or incorrect.

Example:

T: Yes. Look at exercise one on page 48 ok (A solicit requiring students to change direct command into indirect command)

S: he told them (partially correct/incomplete)

T: Uh (prompt realised through a simple approving word)

S: to look at exercise one (partially correct/incomplete)

T: to look at exercise one (prompt realised through exact repetition of utterance)

S: on page 48 (partially correct/incomplete)

T: on page 48 he told them to look at exercise one on page 48 (correct).

Also treated as partially correct or incomplete answers are those which are judged to contain some minor error. This is particularly true of answers to grammar and comprehension questions.

#### Example 1 (grammar)

S: we have stand when the teacher enters the class (The original question required them to complete the sentence using *have to* or *don't have to*)

T: It is not yet complete you have missed out something.

#### Example 2 (comprehension)

T: Yohanes ..it dash thirty kilograms

S: WEIGHED (correct answer but wrong pronunciation)

T: it weighed it weighed

There is no partially correct/incomplete response to solicits requiring the student to read out a piece of material (e. g a sentence, a paragraph, or a word). The response to such a solicit may be correct, incorrect, undesired or no response but not partially correct or incomplete.

c) *Incorrect*: the student's answer to a question or his or her performance during reading aloud activities are judged by the teacher as being seriously inaccurate. In solicits requiring the student to read something out, incorrect response refers to whatever word the student fails to pronounce correctly. It has to be borne in mind that every single word is treated independently. Also to be coded independently are mispronunciations or difficulties involving the same word. That is to say the same word mispronounced three times in the same turn will be coded three times.

#### Example 1 (reading)

T: ok (nominates a student to read a part in a passage)

S: they don't BITE like (the first mistake coded as incorrect)

T: they don't bite

S: bite like mosquitoes SAID a student yes you are right said Mrs Senait but flies are STILL very dangerous (two more mistakes codes as incorrect)

T: still (the teacher ignores the first but reacts to the second).

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S: still very dangerous...

#### Example 2 (grammar)

S: you must look out of the window when the teacher teaches (The exercise required them to put in either must or mustn't)

T: must or mustn't

S: we mustn't look out of the window...

#### Example 3 (comprehension)

T: ..the first question is ssh ok what was Fantu's job before..

S: Fantu has a new job

T: uh?

d) *no response*: occurs when a response does not seem to be forthcoming following a solicit. It is normally preceded by a noticeable pause or hesitation at a point where a response is expected as defined by the teacher's behaviour. Also considered as *no response* are utterances which signal non-comprehension (e.g. uh? read what? )

#### Example 1 (reading)

S: ... I col col  
T: I collected

Example 2 (reading)

S: ...when the trees are big ..(pause)  
T: big enough

Example 3 (grammar)

S: we have to LEAVE the classROOM at break time  
T: *not love get that right*  
S: ..  
T: come on Meiraf

*e) undesired:* the student's response may be judged inappropriate and therefore rejected because it is different from what the teacher wanted the student to do.

Example 1

S: she carried the wood to the market  
T: she dash the wood to the market

Example 2

S: they had to (provide the core answer to a grammar exercise)  
T: first read it as it is ...read it as it is ...

In the examples above the teacher rejects the answers (which happen to be correct completions) for the simple reason that this was not what he expected the student to do. Thus, the initial reading (minus suggested answer) demanded constitutes a separate solicit while answering it may require a different one. The two solicits may be directed to one student consecutively or may involve different students.

**iv) Operationalising the feedback categories**

The following lists the instrumental definitions of the feedback categories observed.

**A Teacher feedback to broadly correct student responses.**

- I *(virtually) exact repetition or part repetition* (once or more) + /- yes, right, ok, uh, etc. (F/N/B). Includes expanded repetition. e.g.  
S: she carried it it to the market  
T: she carried the wood to the market.
- II *simple affirmation* e.g. yes, right, ok, uh etc. (F/N/B/). Code as (I) if accompanied by some form of repetition of utterance. e. g.  
S: I dash walk quickly (reading)  
T: uh
- III *(verbal) praise*-(e.g. good)+/-explanation; repetition; simple approving word such as yes) (F/N/B). e.g.  
S: those cows belong to us  
T: those cows belong not belongs because the noun is plural those cows belong to us good those cows belong to not belongs to us the third sentence yes
- IV *repetition and explanation* -(teacher not only repeats answer but also explains

why answer is correct or comments on the meaning of utterance, provides extra information about language e. g. 'it is plural'. Code as III if it contains praise) (F/N/B). e. g.

S: someone  
 T: uh  
 S: who carr carries wood is uh called a wood carrier  
 T: someone who carries wood is called a wood carrier uh here we say carries and then here we say carrier this is the fer verb and this one is the noun we changed the verb into its in to uh uh noun..

V *request repetition of answer* -(teacher demands a replay of student's correct answer for a reason different from lack of clarity; it has to be fairly clear that the teacher was demanding repetition for reasons outside non-hearing). If uncertain code as other (F/N/B). e. g. (read it again, uh?, say it again)

S: they had to open their textbooks  
 T: they

VI *no (audible verbal) feedback* - (teacher just moves on ignoring the answer, or just asks the student to sit down) (NA). e. g.

S: the wood really belo belonged to the government (finishes reading the assigned part)  
 T: sit down

VII *other/(meaning of feedback) unclear* (F/N/B/NA). e. g. louder

S: Take turns to ask questions  
 T: louder please

#### **B Teacher feedback to partially correct student response**

I *prompt* -(exact or part repetition of a student's utterance in a 'keep going, you're on the right track' tone) + / - uh (F/N/B) e.g.

S: some one (grammar)  
 T: someone uh  
 S: who teaches English  
 T: who teaches English  
 S: is called  
 T: is called

II *simple approving word only* -(e.g. right, yes, uh, indicating approval of preceding utterance with possible request to continue)(F/N/B) e. g.

S: ...when the trees they plant grow they would sell them (comprehension)  
 T: right

III *provide correction* -(including repeat with change and supply correct answer or a missing part. Teacher may let the student continue after the correction) +/-ok, uh (F/N/B) e. g.

S: you MUSTN'T shout in the class (grammar)  
 T: you mustn't shout in the class...

IV *offer opportunity to try again* -(including repeat question, provide clue, repeat

without change, prompt, request repetition of utterance e. g. read it again, say the whole thing again, uh?) (F/N/B)

Example 1 S: It usually weighed about thirty kilometre and kilograms (compr.)  
T: *can you improve it by combining the two ideas together? Improve it. how heavy was it*

Example 2 S: she WALKED to the forest everyday (comprehension)  
T: she

Example 3 S: Chaltu has to FETCH water (grammar)  
T: *you have to use the personal pronoun*

VI *no (audible) feedback* -(e. g the teacher simply moves on to something else without reacting in any way to the students' response. Includes redirect to another student) (NA)

Example 1 S: we have to listen ..in the teacher  
T: uh Samuel

Example 2 S: they had to stop TALKING  
T: what does the word they refers to? What does it refer to...

VII *other/(meaning of feedback) unclear* (F/N/B/NA) .

### C. Teacher Feedback to incorrect student response

I *provide correction* -(including repeat with change; supply correct answer) +/-negation, redirection to whole class (F/N/B)

Example 1 T: first read the direct command... (reading)  
S: open your TEXTBOOKS  
T: open your textbooks open your textbooks

Example 2 S: we must shout when ..the are in the classroom (grammar)  
T: we mustn't shout when we are in the classroom

Example 3 S: someone who plays football is..someone who plays football is called a football plays  
T: player ...

Example 4 S: you must look out of the window when the teacher teaches  
T: must or mustn't  
Ss: must mustn't  
T: we must look out of the window when the teacher teaches...

Example 5 S: LEAVE  
T: it is not love  
Ss: leave  
T: leave uh

II *offer opportunity to try again* - (including repeat question, provide clue, repeat without change, request to repeat utterance, prompt . The student has to try. Code as III, IV, or V if teacher calls on another student after such behaviour.) (F/N/B)

Example 1 T: ..what do we call someone who teaches English  
S: teacher..English..someone  
T: no you have to begin your sentence always uh with the word someone

Example 2 S: someone who cli climbs mountain is called an mountains climbs  
T: why do you say an why do you use that an in that sentence why..

Example 3 S: they have they have don't have to be late for school  
T: *there is no rush just take your time and say it again* they

Example 4 S: we must..write..in..the..book  
T: uh?

III *redirect to high* Teacher calls on a high achiever (NA)

IV *redirect to middle*-Teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA)

V *redirect to low* -Teacher calls on a low achiever (NA)

\*Redirections may be preceded by other forms of feedback such as negation (that's not correct) or "is he correct" type of reaction yet they still are classified as redirections.

VI *no (audible) feedback* -Teacher moves on to something else ignoring the erroneous response. Code as III, IV, or V if the solicit that led to the wrong answer is addressed to another student (NA)

Example 1 S students have to look the teacher ..after look the teacher  
T: anyone who wants to try?  
Ss: look after  
T: ok number three.. right read this for me Samuel

VII *other/unclear* - (including criticise, accept, simple negation etc.) (F/N/B/NA)

#### D. Teacher reaction to *no response*

I *supply answer* -teacher provides the desired response (F/N/B).

Example S: when the tree are big ..(reading)  
T: enough

II *stay with the student* -teacher persists in getting the student to try by offering a second chance. Specific behaviours include prompting, repeating question or instructions, providing clue, and other acts aimed at persuading the student to have a go (e.g. come on). The student has to try) (F/N/B).

Example1 T: Yohanes  
S: ..(can't locate the paragraph the teacher is after)  
T: paragraph..

Example 2     S:     read what?  
              T:     *which one of these two should be used to complete that sentence*

Example 3     S:     ..  
              T:     dash stand when the teacher enters the class.. *what goes in there?*

III     *redirect to high* -teacher calls on a high achiever (NA).

IV     *redirect to middle* -teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA).

V     *redirect to low* -teacher calls on a low achiever (NA).

VI     *other/unclear*-(F/N/B/NA). Example “louder”

### **E Teacher reaction to *undesired response***

I     *stay with the student* -teacher repeats question, provides clue, repeats instruction, asks student to repeat utterance with intent to have him/her self-correct. Code as II, III, or IV if teacher calls on another student after repeating a question, or providing a clue or repeating instruction) (F/N/B).

Example 1     T:     yes  
              S:     carried  
              Ss    TTT  
              T:     just read the whole sentence read it

Example 2     S:     we dash it  
              T:     use one of the alternatives

Example 3     S:     they had to  
              T:     look at the actual word or command in the quotation mark

II     *redirect to high* -teacher calls on a high achiever (NA).

III    *redirect to middle*-teacher calls on a middle achiever (NA).

IV    *redirect to low* -teacher calls on a low achiever (NA).

Example of redirection (II, III, and IV above):

T:     difficult .. what does it mean? ..yes Lidya

S:     collected (asks the meaning of another word instead)

T:     no let's first find out what it means difficult what does this word mean difficult uh Meiraf?

V     *supply answer* -teacher provides the desired answer (F/N/B/NA).

Example:     S:     I walk (gives answer when the teacher wanted him to just read it)  
              T:     no I dash

VI    *other/unclear* -teacher reacts by doing something else. Includes ‘no feedback’, accept, and ‘unclassifiable’) (F/N/B).

## Appendix-2 (Lesson Transcripts)

Below are the transcripts of the seven lessons as well as the the transcription symbols used.

### Transcription Symbols

Upper case, e.g. PLANT = wrong pronunciation

Double dots, i. e. .. = noticeable pause

( ) = comments by the observer

xx=unclear speech (more than momentary)

xxx = unclear speech (extended utterance)

*italic script* =translated from Amharic

***italic bold*** =Amharic

T= teacher

S= unidentified student

Ss = several students in unison (unidentified)

H = high achiever

M = middle achiever

L = low achiever

TTT = Teacher Teacher (students bids for attention)

## LESSON 1

- T: (Revises previous lesson) verbs Anna works thirty five hours a week ..she earns five hundred birr a month she types letters answers the telephone..and we also did some comparisons ..we said Abeba is uh uh xx nur nurses and earns more money than typists Nuru earns more money than Anna ..uh and abe Abeba earns less money than Worknesh Workmesh earns more money than Abeba Today ware going to do uh read the passage on page 78. (writes page number on the blackboard) Take out your books take out.. The topic sentence is Fantu the topic sentence is Fantu xx (writes the title) *ok make sure there is a book on each desk xxx ssh silence please wait a minute xx louder louder you were raising your hand weren't you* the topic sentence is Fantu Fantu has a new job (reads the passage aloud to the class) ..it says this is the uh today's passage now you are going to read turn by turn raise your hands and xx
- Ss: TTT
- T: Meskerem
- H: Fantu has a new job she works with 24 other women they work together and plant trees when the when the trees are big ..
- T: big enough
- H: enough they sell them One day
- T: Sit down sit down sit down sit down
- Ss: TTT
- T: yes
- H: One day I talked to Chaltu I I don't earn bi much she SAID se she SAID
- T: she said
- H: se shaid she said but my my new JOB is better than may than my LAST job
- T: last job
- H: what was your LAST JOB asked Chaltu
- T: ok what was you last job asked Chaltu next
- Ss: TTT
- T: ok you boy not you the other boy from the two
- M: I was a wo a wood clec
- T: *louder louder*
- M: I was a wood CARRIER
- T: carrier
- M: xx said Fantu it WAS..
- T: I was the wood carrier said Chaltu uh Fantu
- M: TT WAS a HARD LIFE everyday
- T: sit down sit down
- SS: TTT
- T: read it again
- H: I was a wood CARRIER said Fantu it was a very hard life very EVERYDAY
- T: everyday
- H: I WALKED WALKED 15 kilometres from my house to the FOREST I col col
- T: I collected
- H: wood there I worked very QUIETLY because there were guards in the forest the woods the wood
- T: wood

H: BELONGED  
 T: belonged  
 H: belonged to the gu GOVERNMENT  
 T: the government –sit down good Samuel  
 M: what did you xx  
 T: *louder louder*  
 M: what did you do WITH  
 T: *louder please*  
 M: WITH  
 T: *louder*  
 M: what did you do with your wood asked Chaltu I carried it you to the market xx was very  
 T: I carried it to the market uh  
 M: xx  
 T: *can you all hear alright?*  
 SS: *no*  
 T: *they can't hear you See?*  
 M: ten kilometres  
 Ss: ha ha  
 T: that was very difficult  
 M: from the  
 T: ok sit down Samuel Samuel sit down  
 SS: TTT  
 T: ok  
 H: ...I carried it to the market that was very DIFFICULT  
 T: difficult  
 H: difficult it was 10 1 kilometres from the forest to the market and and the wood was very  
 heavy it  
 T: heavy  
 H: it it usually  
 T: weighed  
 H: wieghed about thirty kilometres  
 T: kilograms  
 SS: TTT  
 T: yes  
 H: it was not a good way to earn money it is better to PLANT trees than to steal wood and I  
 earn more now last month I bought some blankets from..my family  
 SS: TTT  
 T: yes  
 H: my new life is is POSSIBLE  
 T: possible  
 H: possible because I am working together with other women women we are working together to  
 help ourselves  
 T: ok uh  
 SS: TTT  
 T: xx  
 M: ff Fantu has a a new job she works with two four  
 T: with twenty four other women  
 M: other women  
 T: uh

M: they work together and PLANT  
T: plant  
M: plant  
T: trees  
M: when they when the trees are big ..  
T: enough  
M: enough they sell them  
T: sit down... ok yes Mesfin..  
M: one day Fantu talked to Chaltu I don't EARN EARN much she SAID but my  
NEW job is better the THAN my last job.  
T: ok next  
Ss:  
T: yes  
M: what was your last job asked Chaltu  
T: ok  
M: I was a wood carrier said Fantu it was A VERY hard life everyday I walked fifteen  
kilometres from my house to the forest FOREST ..I col col  
T: .....sit down sit down *let's distribute the chance* ..yes  
H: ..  
T: collected  
H: I  
T: collected  
H: I I collect collected woods wood there I worked very QUIETLY because there were  
GUARDS  
T: there were.. guards.. in the  
H: guards in the forest  
T: uh  
H: the wood really belo belonged to the government  
T: sit down  
L: WHAT..did you do  
T: what you do what did you do with the wood asked Chaltu.. uh  
L: I carried it to the market  
T: carried it to the market  
L: xx was ..  
T: that was very difficult uh  
L: that was very  
T: it was ten kilometres  
L: to the market and the wood  
T: *why don't you listen to what I say first? don't miss out words*  
L: FROM the xx forest  
T: from the forest to the market ok  
L: and and the wood WAS very HEAVY  
T: and the wood was very heavy  
L: it xx usually xx WEIGHED  
T: weighed  
L: about..thirty thirty..  
T: thirty kilograms  
SS: TTT  
H: it was not a good away to

T: *louder louder please*

H: it was not not a good away to EARN money it is better to plant trees than to steal wood and I EARN more

T: I earn

H: I earn more now

T: now

H: last month I bought some blankets FOR my family

T: for my family..the last paragraph..ok Meiraf

H: my new LIFE is pass possible pass possible BECAUSE I am WORKING together WITH OTHER WOMAN we are WORKING together to help OURSELVES

T: to help ourselves...ok...*I expect you have all read it individually at home now tell me what you have understood from the passage...yes*

H: *there was a woman called Fantu*

T: uh

T: *I'm afraid the whole class can't hear what you are saying*

H: *there was a woman called Fantu and she manages to get herself a new job together with 24 other women the job involved planting trees*

T: *right*

H: *when the trees they plant grow they would sell them*

T: *right*

H: *then she says my new job is better than my previous job*

T: *that's correct..she used to do two different jobs and her..previous job was not good she did exactly what some people in our town do I mean she just went to the forest and destroyed the state owned woods in so doing they used to face lots of problems they were beaten by guards their wood was confiscated and so on but they got together and organised themselves and started to plant trees and sell them in the market when they grow and finally she says that her life has changed for the better ok uh xx is there any word word you don't understand in the passage?*

H: difficult

T: difficult what does it mean?..Yes Lidya.

H: collected collected

T: *no let's first find out what it means difficult what does this word mean difficult uh..Meiraf*

H: possible

T: uh

H: possible

T: what did you understand when you the word difficult when you met it in the passage uh

T: *I need someone to tell me the meaning of the word difficult come on..no one...difficult in this passage is used to refer to the problems the women faced in their previous job and what was the other word you don't understand?*

Ss: collected

T: collected

Ss: TTT

T: uh

H: *bring things together*

T: *bring things together what happens is that they go to the forest and gather some wood and then carry it back to the town to sell it any other word?*

H: possible

Ss: *be able to do something*

## LESSON TWO

- T: silence please we did two exercises yesterday after we read the passage  
Ss: yeah  
T: comprehension questions and exercise three complete these sentences with the following verbs it says all verbs are given in their past form the first sentence is Fantu talked to Chaltu about her job uh xx can you read for me the rest find the remaining ones find them and read for me  
H: what?  
T: read sentence two under exercise three she dash to the forest everyday what did we fill in that blank space? Uh..xx  
H: *let me try teacher*  
T: ok  
H: she walked to the forest every day  
T: she walked to the forest everyday sentence number three uh  
H: she collected wood in the foester in the forest  
T: she collected in the forest number four uh  
M: she worked QUIETLY because THERE were guards there  
T: She worked quickly because there were guards there that's what we uh did yesterday today we are going to do exercise four and exercise five read this sentence  
Ss: TTT  
T: Bezawork  
H: som someone who CARRIES wood is called wood carrier  
Ss: carries  
T: Read it again  
Ss: carries TTT  
T: ...someone  
H: someone  
T: uh  
H: who carr carries wood is uh called a wood carrier  
T: Someone uh who carries wood is called a wood carrier uh here we say carries and then here we say carrier this is the fe verb form and this one is the noun we changed the verb in to its in to uh uh in to uh noun someone who carries wood is called a wood carrier a wood carreir the man or the women herself carrier she carries wood and we call her a wood carrier this is given as uh uh example for the following uh phrase we have some other phrases what do we call someone who teaches English  
Ss: TTT  
H: teacher ..English ..someone  
T: no..you have to begin your sentence always uh with the word someone someone  
H: Someone who teachers  
T: number one someone  
H: someone who  
T: uh  
H: teachers  
T: teaches  
H: teaches English  
T: English  
H: is called  
T: is called

H: an English teacher  
T: is called  
H: an English teacher  
T: an English English teacher..teacher teaches ok. someone who teaches English is called an English teacher..why what is the reason why we use an here why? why? Why don't we use a the article a what is the reason  
SS: *let me try teacher*  
T: Hana?  
H: *because e is a vowel we begin with an*  
T: because the initial letter or the word uh English is begins with vowel sound English an English teacher because of that we said someone teaches someone who teaches English is called an English teacher xx plays football plays football ok  
H: Someone who play who plays football\_is called plays football  
T: Is she right?..no. uh you have to answer all the quen all the statements according to the xx  
H: Someone who plays football someone who plays is called a football plays  
T: player /someone someone who plays football is called uh uh  
H: called is xx  
T: a football  
H: football play play players  
T: player  
H: players  
T: player player plays player someone who plays football is called a football player number three *we can also use words not given in the book* xx leads group leads group *who can try using this leads group* (not available in the textbook) yes uh Meiraf  
H: someone who ..  
T: leads group this xx look this first  
SS: TTT  
T: who can use this word very easy  
Ss: TTT  
T: *ok*  
H: Someone who leads  
T: uh  
H: leads groups is called  
T: uh  
H: a a leads group groups  
T: Someone who leads group is called uh  
SS: called a group  
T: a group leader a group leader someone..is called a group leader uh someone who leads group is called a group leader number three drives a taxi drives a bus drives a lorry and so on *use* drives a car  
SS: TTT  
T: ok  
H: Someone who drives taxi called a taxi is called a taxi drives  
T: someone who drives a taxi is called a taxi driver someone who drives a car is called driver a car driver a car driver driver drives leads leader plays player we said the next word is number five climbs mountain xx climbs mountains climbs xx *that's not the one skip that item*  
H: *so we're not doing this one here*  
T: *can you answer that ok go ahead if you can*

H: Someone who sweeps ROADS in called  
T: roads  
H: roads in called a ar ROAD sweeper  
T: someone who sweeps roads is called uh road sweepers or cleaner cleaner sort of means sweeper someone who sweeps roads is called roads sweeper ok climbs mountain *you people over there come on try at least this time* climbs mountain climbs mountain  
Ss: TTT  
T: ok  
H: Someone who cli climbs mountain is called an mountains climbs xx  
T: why do you say an why do you use that an in that sentence why what xx  
H: a  
T: say it again  
H: someone who  
T: climbs  
H: climbs mountain is called  
T: called  
H: mountains climbs  
T: mountain climber good mountain is called uh..Asefu  
H: a moutain a mountains climber  
T: a mountain climber mountain climber ok sells vegetables sells vegetables  
H: Someone who sells vegetables is is called veg vegetables seller  
T: Read it again ..someone  
L: who sells vegetables is a called  
T: is a called is called  
L: a vegetable seller  
T: vegetables  
L: seller  
T: no need for a because it is plural xx  
SS: TTT  
T: uh Meseret Meseret  
H: ..  
Ss: TTT  
T: ok  
H: someone who sells vegetables ..is called  
T: someone  
H: vegetables  
T: uh someone who  
H: sells vegetables  
T: sells vegetables  
H: is called  
T: is called  
H: a vegetables  
T: vegetables  
H: BUYER  
T: vegetables seller seller vegetable seller sells seller sells seller ok  
Ss: TTT  
T: produce coffee produce ..coffee let's do this and that would bring us to the end of it  
SS: TTT  
T: *Bezawork why are you so quiet today won't you try?*

H: ..  
SS: TTT  
T: uh Meiraf,  
H: ..  
T: Lidya ..  
H: ..  
T: Samuel  
M: ..  
T: xx Hana ..  
H: Someone who grows coffee is  
T: *I'm going to have to wipe off this bit here xx*  
T: *ok go ahead*  
H: Some one who grows.. is called  
T: Some one who  
H: who produce  
T: produce  
H: produce coffee is  
T: coffee  
H: is called  
T: coffee who produces coffee is  
H: is called  
T: called uh  
H: a coffee  
T: coffee  
H: grows  
T: producer produces producer this xx *we're though with this exercise now let's move on to the next exercise* my book this book  
SS: belongs  
M: belongs  
T: belongs  
M: to me  
T: to me  
M: it is  
T: it is  
M: mine  
Ss: mine  
T: mine my book me mine to express one thing uh possessive pronoun in three different ways the first one is this is my book this is my book this book is mine it's mine so we're going to use different personal pronouns like this this book uh this is my book this book is mi uh this book is mine no this book belongs to me it is mine ok according to this example let's do the following uh phrases or sentences number one this is his hat the other way of saying is  
L: this is his hat  
T: This is his hat  
L: this hat belongs to me ..it is mine  
T: this hat ..this hat  
Ss: this hat belongs to him  
T: belongs..to him the third person singular his him the third way of saying yes  
H: it is him

### LESSON THREE

- T: What we have to do under exercise one. It says Chalu and Ahmed have to help their pe uh their parents and we have an example here. Chaltu has to help her mother. We did this using the picture under number one under number one on page 81. What else has Chaltu help her uh her parents? What else? Number two. This is number one her parents number two number two yes
- H: Chaltu has to FETCH water
- T: You have to use the personal pronoun
- H: she
- T: ok say it again
- H: she has to FETCH water
- T: seee has she has to fetch water She
- H: has
- T: has to
- SS: fetch water
- 
- T: fetch
- SS: water
- T: water. This is what Chaltu do. What else? yes yes
- L: she has she has to clean to clean the table
- T: she has to clean the table she has to clean ..the table The last one what Chaltu has to to do Hana
- H: Chaltu she has to look after baby
- T: she has to look after the baby..after the baby/ this is what Chaltu has to do uh according to this Ahmed has to do something to help his parents so what what has he do number five number five..Lidya
- H: he has to sweep the house
- T: he has to sweep the compound or the flo the floor he has to sweep looking uh the picture the picture under number five /Ahmed has to he has to sweep the compound the compound/ what else has Ahmed do? What else has Ahmed has to do? Yes Alem
- H: He has to FETCH the kerosine
- T: He has to feed the chickens /he has to feed hens..number seven uh
- SS: TTT
- T: uh Meiraf
- H: he has to FETCH kerosine
- T: He has to fetch cros kerosine *perhaps you may think that the object in that picture is a container of petrol or milk and you may interpret it as showing someone carrying a container full of petrol or milk* so he has to fetch kerosine or milk last sentence yes
- H: He has to go to the sho shopkeeper
- T: he has to go to the shop to buy something he has to also go to uh shop to buy something? he has to..go..to shop..to buy something ok? Ok this is what we did have to do under exercise one yes xxx *so if we look at these* have to has to I have to do something you have to do something she has to do something and he has to do something. We use has because the subject of this sentence is third person singular Ahmed and Chaltu. Chaltu has to do Ahmed has to do. So when we change the personal pronoun she or he in to I or they or we have to also change this uh uh verb I have to we have to they have to you have to she has to he has to based on this fact. let's do another exercise xxx /xxx/ *Who can read this for me?* xxx Lidya
- H: don't have to
- T: uh?

SS: no TTT  
H: have to  
T: yes  
M: Complete  
T: uh  
M: the sentence..  
T: using  
M: using have to or  
T: using have to or don't have to  
M: don't have to  
T: Yes complete these sentences using have to or don't have to. Say for example here I dash.. ok how do you complete these sentences? Read this as it is read this sentence as it is yes Samuel

M: I walk  
T: no I dash  
M: I dash walk quickly  
T: uh

---

M: ACROSS ..the.. road  
T: I dash quick I dash walk quickly across the road from these (points to the words on the blackboard) which one are you going to fill the blank space this or this one..Alem

H: I have to  
T: Read the whole sentence  
H: uh?  
T: Read the whole sentence  
H: *Read what?*  
T: *Which one of these two should be used to complete that sentence?*  
H: to have to  
T: *Read the whole thing*  
H: I have to walk quickly across the road.  
T: Yes I have to walk quickly across the road. *People don't stand in the middle of traffic roads do they? Nor do you walk slowly once you're in the road. Instead you would check both sides of the road first and cross it as quickly as possible to avoid being hit by a vehicle would't you? Uh?*

SS: Yeah.  
T: We don't say I don't have to walk quickly across the road *because if you do so you risk being hit by a car* so the answer should be I have to walk..quickly.. across the road/ ok number two *Mehari can you read this for me? Mehari?*

M: I dash play ..in the..road.  
T: I dash play ...I dash play in the road ..yes ..Tewodros  
H: I don't I don't play in the road.  
SS: I don't have  
T: I don't play in the road we don't play in the road you don't play in the road ..you no I don't have to play sorry I don't have to play in the road you don't have to play in the road they don't have to play in the road because the subject is the first person singular we have to use have to in in positive form ok. I I don't have to ..play.. in the road you have to underline this part of the sentence(referring to I don't have to) *you underline it here* ok you dash listen to your teacher you dash listen to your teacher number three

H: You dash listen you have to  
T: teacher or your teachers

H: You have to or listen ten to your teachers  
T: you have  
H: You have listen ten or to your teachers  
T: Why do you say that or?  
SS: TTT  
T: Yes Mesfin.  
M: you dash listen to your teachers  
T: yes ..which word are you going to fill the blank space have to or don't have to ? Hana ( uses wrong name )  
L: You have to..listen to your teacher  
T: You have to listen you have..to listen..teachers number four students dash be early for school students..for school uh Sofonias  
M: don't have to students  
T: Students  
M: students..have to  
T: uh?  
M: early  
T: students have to be  
M: to be early for school  
T: yes students have to be early for school ..school number five and the last one they dash be late for school..Hana  
H: they have they have don't have to be late for school  
T: *there is no rush just take your time and say it again they...*  
H: they don't have to be late for school.  
T: they don't have they don't have they don't have to be late for school yes ..for school Early or late? Students have to be early for school they have they don't have to be late for school.  
*Right. That's all there is to do under this exercise I will nowmove on to the opposite of the two expressions we've just looked at they are must and mustn't. I'll show you how to do it in a minute and you will do it here in class if we've time or else you'll do it for your homework I think I will have to wipe off this part (of the blackboard) here. Can I use this part? Have you finished copying this bit here?*  
SS: Yeah.  
T: *are you sure*  
Ss: *yeah*  
T: *There we go xxx who can read this for me Asefu.*  
H: Complete this sentence using using most most using  
T: Is she right?  
SS: *We can't see alright from here TTT let me try*  
T: I mean the way she read it *Oh dear you can't see what is on the board uh uh yes Yohanes*  
M: complete these sentences using MUST or MUSTN'T  
T: must or must not mustn't. *They just refer to things that we need to do and things we need to avoid. The ones we saw before this also refer to the same thing as these ones here. They are very close to each other in terms of meaning. ok ...xxx make sure you leave enough space below each question to put your answers in. You could also write the question and the answer for each before you proceed to the next if you wish.* ( the following interaction is based on a teacher made material so not available in the textbook)  
Ss: yeah

## LESSON FOUR

- T: Exercise one on page 81. We also we had we did some other exercises using have to and don't have to. Today we're going to do exercise -c. It says what do you have to do in the classroom? What mustn't you do? We have dash we have mustn't and so on ssh ssh xx read the instruction.
- M: Make as many sentence as you ... as you ... can using have to or mustn't
- T: Ok .Make as many sentence as you can using have to or mustn't uh uh we have some verb xx we dash fight in the class
- L: mustn't fight in the class
- T: we dash fight in the class we dash fight in the class
- SS: TTT
- T: yes.
- L: xx we must ..we must ..must
- SS: TTT
- T: *you try that.*
- L: we ..must ..we must ..in the class
- T: Bezawork
- H: We must fight in the class.
- T: must or mustn't
- SS: mustn't must
- T: yes /xxx fight in the class/ *Now let's see if you can make your own sentences using the word fight. I remember I told you to try and make some at home before you come to class have you tried?*
- SS: *What? Yes yes.*
- T: *Making sentences of your own using the word fight yes.*
- H: We mustn't fight in the class.
- T: uh
- H: We have to stand in the class.
- T: uh ok the second sentence is we .. dash ..stand read the sentence
- SS: TTT.
- T: *x I 'd like you to read it as it is.*
- L: We stand
- T: We dash
- L: We dash stand
- T: Uh
- L: dash xx WHEN
- T: *Stop speaking over her leave it to her uh when*
- L: when the teacher
- T: uh
- L: enter
- T: enters
- L: enters
- T: uh
- L: class
- T: *the class uh can anyone read it better for us?*
- SS: TTT
- T: Yohanes.
- M: you dash stand when the teacher uh in the enter

SS: enters  
M: enters the class  
T: *Once someone is given the floor everybody keep silent while they're standing. You'll give corrections only when they get it wrong. Right carry on please. Tell me which word fits best?*

SS: TTT  
T: *Yeah. Yes.*  
H: you have stand ... when the teacher enter the class  
T: *You have not finished you have missed out something.*  
H: uh?  
T: *Say it again*  
H: We have to student when the teacher enter enters the class  
T: *We have to stand when the teacher enters the class. It was the word to that was left out.. xx... I think I will have to slot in the words in the questions themselves instead of writing the whole sentence beneath the question to save time.*

H: *ok*

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T: *Have to you have to stand when the teacher enters the class. Now let's see what sentence you can make using the word look.*

SS: xx  
T: *I'm waiting for you to try.*  
H: *Let me just try.*  
T: *Go ahead.*  
H: Students are look after the teacher.  
T: *Students uhm but you need to use the word have to in your sentence.*  
H: Students are have to look the teacher ... after look the teacher.  
T: *Anyone who wants to try?*

SS: look after.  
T: *Ok number three.. Right. Read this for me Samuel.*  
M: We dash .. out of the window when the teacher  
SS: enter  
T: *Leave that to him let him finish please. We dash look out of the window when the teacher uh?*

SS: teachers  
T: *Finish it off.*  
M: teachers  
SS: TTT  
T: *how do you read the last bit?*  
Ss: TTT  
T: Meiraf  
H: teachers  
T: *uh xx read the whole thing*  
SS: TTT *let me try.*  
H: We dash out of the windows when the teachers teachers.  
Ss: TTT  
T: *That's not teachers.*  
H: We dash look out of the window when the teacher teaches teaches.  
T: *Good. We dash look out of the window when the teacher teaches which one are you going to fill in the blank space?*  
Ss: TTT *Let me try teacher.*

T: xx  
 L: we have  
 T: uh  
 L: to WRITE .. in .. the ..book  
 Ss: TTT Let me try.  
 T: we dash write in the book uh  
 Ss: TTT  
 M: we must ..write..in..the..book  
 T: uh?  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: We mustn't write in the book. *but I know there are a lot of students who always like to write in the book*  
 Ss: *Yeah.*  
 T: *That is not something desirable we ought to avoid doing this be it in pencil or pen that's why we have to use a negative form you mustn't you mustn't write in the book.*  
 H: We dash sit in the xx class.  
 T: uh?  
 H: We dash  
 T: uh  
 H: we dash sit  
 T: *use one of the alternatives*  
 H: We have sit in the classroom.  
 T: xx ok .. *Anybodyelse?* Hana  
 H: We have to sit in the classroom.  
 T: we have to sit in the classroom good. Tewodros?  
 H: We have we have we have to sit  
 T: uh  
 H: in the teacher chair  
 T: in the?  
 H: teacher chair  
 T: uh  
 H: chair  
 T: ok ok not bad. *Now let's see what the rest you will say*  
 Ss: *Let me try Teacher*  
 T: Nebiyou.  
 H: We dash sit properly in the class  
 T: we dash sit properly in the class.. *I know some students don't sit the way they should they tend to sit with their legs up or with their back turned and stuff..but this absolutely unacceptable to the teacher...so properly here means in a way that is appropriate to the situation they are in and acceptable to people ..so the emphasis here is on the need to sit in an acceptable manner ..we have to sit properly in the classroom ..number eight number eight. Listen listen Who can make a sentence using the word listen?*  
 H: we have to  
 T: uh  
 H: listenten to the radio  
 T: we have to listen to the radio.. anything else? Tewodros?.  
 H: we have to listen to the teacher  
 T: we have to listen to the teacher ok  
 L: We have to listen ..in the teacher

T: uh Samuel

M: We have to drink or eat in the class

T: xxx Elias

L: We dash eat or drink when?

T: we are

L: we are in the class

T: yes we dash eat or drink when we are in the class ...*can we make similar sentences using words other than eat and drink which are already given in the book?*

Ss: TTT

T: ok.

H: we mustn't eat or drink when we are in the classroom.

T: we mustn't eat or drink when we are in the classroom ..*can we make similar sentences?*

Ss: *Sure*

T: we have to eat *what* banana

Ss: orange

T: orange and so on .. xxx *when we do it in the negative ..so this is all there is under exercise three now let's move on to four. We'll do it here in class if we have time..but if we run out of time today you'll do it for your homework because you already know how to do it uh that's it*

Ss: write your school's rules with we don't have to or have to.

T: yes ..write your school's rules with we uh we don't have to or we have to..*you all know that there are certain rules to observe in schools ..there are ceratin things we are expected to do and things we are expected to avoid. What are these?. The first question is*

Ss: TTT

T: uh Marshet (uses wrong name)

Ss: Mekdes

T: uh

Ss: Mekdes

L: dash wear wear school uniform

Ss: TTT

T: dash wear school uniform ..*look. this is what you have to do you'll have to put in the blank spaces either this one here or that one ..now who can do that for me?*

M: We have to

T: uh?

M: we have to ...xxx

T: *take your hand off your mouth and speak up*

Ss: ha ha *Let me try please teacher*

L: we have to..wear school ..uniform

T: we have to..wear school uniform *that's absolutely important you know you are always being turned away for failing to wear the uniform for this school don't you?..we have to wear school uniform we have to wear school uniform you could write the answers on the next line beneath the question. .you could also put it in the blank space in the question itself. ok sentence number two. .read from your books and answer the questions*

Ss: TTT.

T: Henock?

L: yes sir.

T: *have you got a book with you? I would like you to do the second one*

L: ..

T: *you just borrow one*

## LESSON 5

- T: must, mustn't we've done lots of exercises on this haven't we?
- Ss: Yeah.
- T: uh have to don't have to must mustn't *..if you just look at their relationships you will find that have to and must have similar meanings and one can replace the other.. for example uh uh the sentence we have to stand when our teachers the class can also be expressed as we must stand when our teacher enters the class. .similarly, the sentence we don't have to play in the road we don't have to play in the road can be expressed as we mustn't play in the road. .so mustn't can take the place of don't have to and have to can be replaced by must. .the meaning expressed by each pair is the same..this was what we looked at in our previous lessons..today we're going to some more under exercise five exercise five..what did the teacher tell the students to do it says.. remember that this question applies to all those under this exercise from one to eight..what did the teacher tell the students to do? what you need to do is change the direct command to indirect command command/ direct command in to indirect command or reported uh command For example stop talking it says. this is direct command stop talking is direct command. .what I would like you to do in this exercise is to read the direct command as it is first and then give the reported form of it next*  
Ok. Uh ..Meseret
- H: he TOLD..them xx to STOP TALKING
- T: Uh?
- H: he ..TOLD them
- T: this what the teacher said to the student. He told he told the teacher told the student to uh?
- Ss: stop
- T: stop
- Ss: talking
- T: talking *if we say this is a direct command we can change it in to indirect command. the first one is given the second one is indirect command .ok according to this example we are going to do the following eight or seven commands. .ok read the command the direct command first and then change it in to reported speech. .yes read it first as it is*
- H: listen carefully.
- T: listen carefully.. ok.how do we change that word in to indirect command?
- H: he TOLD them to listen carefully.
- T: he
- H: TOLD them to listen carefully
- T: he ...he told them them
- H: to
- T: to
- H: listen carefully
- T: *louder please ssh I can still hear some noise. .what does them refer to in he told them?*
- H: it is them the students
- T: students students the teacher told the students to listen carefully. .as we see there the teacher told the students to stop talking now he told them to listen carefully. .this is the direct indirect command ok number three
- Ss: TTT.
- T: first read the direct command then change it.
- L: open your TXTBOOKS.
- T: open your textbooks open your textbooks
- L: He told
- T: uh

L: them to open your textbooks  
T: uh it says open your textbooks when you change this direct command in to indirect command you have to change the word you in to their ok say it again  
L: open your  
T: uh  
L: he told  
T: the teacher told  
L: he told  
T: uh  
L: them to  
T: he told them  
L: to  
T: to  
L: open your  
T: to open  
L: your  
T: not your  
L: textbooks  
T: *who can correct that? Bezawork?*  
H: He told them to open textbook  
T: no something must be there uh xx  
Ss: no  
H: he told them open their book textbook.  
T: he opened them to open their textbooks their textbooks *you've got to change your in to their your is a word used by the original speaker*  
Ss: *Yeah.*  
T: *The word you won't be appropriate when some other person is reporting the command. For example if I shout at a certain student stop talking and if you want to talk about what I said you wouldn't say it in exactly the same way as I did you will have to change you in to something. So he told them to open their textbooks he told them to open their. .we did something similar to this in other lessons do you remember? right ok Tewodros?. you just read this one here as it is.*  
H: he told them to open their exercise  
Ss: No Teacher  
H: text.. books.  
T: *he told them them refers to..you should bear in mind that this question here applies to all questions its common to all what did the teacher tell the students to do? he told them different things. one is stop talking the other is listen carefully then open your textbooks. .when all these are spoken by another person your will be changed in to their ok*  
Ss: *TTT. Let me try this time*  
T: Assefu  
H: He told them ..to ..look at  
T: read the uh  
H: look at exercise one on page 47  
Ss: 48 48  
T: yes. .look at exercise one on page 48 ok  
H: he told them  
T: uh  
H: to

T: uh  
 H: ..  
 T: uh  
 H: he told them to  
 T: uh  
 H: look  
 T: he  
 H: told  
 T: told  
 H: them  
 T: the students them  
 H: to  
 T: to  
 H: look look at  
 T: to look uh  
 H: at  


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 T: uh  
 H: Exercise one  
 T: exercise one  
 H: at on  
 T: on  
 H: page 48  
 T: 48 it is this indirect command ..he told them the teacher told the students to look at exercise one on page 48. *I am keeping an eye on you guys over there ..you are not listening .Elias, Henock ..stop talking . . ok I'm now going to ask you a question .. Henock I would like you to do number five. .you have to read it for me first and then change it . .It is you I'm talking to Hencok*  
 S: yes  
 T: try to answer that question... first read the direct demand  
 L: work with your PARTENERS( says this as he sits)  
 T: work with your partners work with *Come on stand up and read it for me*  
 L: work with your PARTNERS..  
 Ss: partners par teners  
 T: this is the actual word of the teacher change the same command in to reported speech or uh command  
 Ss: TTT.  
 T: yes loudly please  
 H: work with your partners  
 T: uh  
 H: he told them to work with your partners  
 T: why did you say your  
 H: their their  
 Ss: their  
 T: say it again  
 H: ok. He told them to work with their partners.  
 T: he told them the teacher told the students to work with their partners/ he told them to work with instead of your you have to change that in to their partners partners not parents but partners. *the command will have a different meaning if you use one in the place of another. Right Nebiyou*

H: Take turns to ask questions.  
T: *louder please*  
H: take turns to ask questions  
T: take turns to ask questions ok  
H: he told them to ..to take turns to ask questions.  
T: very good ..told ..he told them ..to take turns uh  
Ss: to ask questions  
T: to ask  
Ss: questions  
T: questions. *Remember to write both the direct and indirect command. I'm not writing the direct ones here because they are already in your books. Ok Meiraf*  
H: speak quietly.  
T: speak quietly  
H: He told them to speak..quietly quietly  
T: He told them  
H: to speak

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T: to speak the teacher told the students to speak quietly he told them to speak ssh ssh quietly to speak quietly. Yes indirect command Mehari the last  
M: ...you see ONLY English  
T: *louder louder please*  
M: use ..use ..only English  
T: Use only English use only English don't use any other language when you are in the class in class *come on let's finish it off*  
M: ..  
Ss: TTT.  
T: yes  
M: He told them . . to . . use ONLY English.  
T: only  
M: only English  
T: He told them to use only English he told them to use only English .. *what this means is that you have to use only English no Amharic or any other language..but we usually mix it with other languages in class. So that was about direct and indirect command..the next exercise requires us to change the same command. had to had to say what the students had to do say what the student has to do.. we are going to follow the same procedures and note the quotation marks here stop talking you have to write this uh uh command using had to ...Lidya*  
H: They had to stop tek TALKING  
Ss: TALKING  
T: what does the word they refers to? what does it refer to? ..what does the word they refer to?  
H: ??  
T: what does the word they refer to?  
Ss: he no have  
T: uh?  
H: no ..verb ..verb  
Ss: not have  
T: uh?  
H: verb .. verb

## LESSON 6

(after the teacher has read aloud the reading passage for the class)

Ss: TTT.

T: *You just raise your hands no shouting please Uh Bezawork.*

H: (reads) one day one day Mrs Senait uh talked to her students about flies .. are you afraid of flies she ss asked .. the students laughed of course not they they said

T: sit down sit down.

Ss: xx

T: ok.

H: they don't BITE like

T: they don't bite

H: bite like mosquitoes SAID a student yes you are right said Mrs. Senait but flies are STILL very dangerous

T: still

H: still very dangerous they probably kill MORE children than any other in..

T: insect

H: insect

Ss: TTT

T: Nebiyou

H: how asked the student

T: how? how? asked the student

H: How asked the student .. they kill people because they they are very very dirty .. they walk on dirty things ..like dung and vo vomit and dead animals they collect dirt dirt on their hairy legs then they walk then walk on people food and food the dirty drops off their legs out

T: sit down that's enough

Ss: TTT

T: Yohanes

M: ..(can't locate the right paragraph)

T: paragraph

M: it is ever .. wash .. worse when they eat some OF YOUR food LISTEN to what happened FLIES

T: flies

M: can

T: flies

M: can

T: flies

M: can

T: say flies

M: flies can eat hard things .. so they vomit .. IN the food

T: on the food

M: on the food first to make it soft they eat something then they EXER EXCRETE

T: they they excrete

M: then they excrete on the food and you eat it oh said the children

T: good sit down

Ss: TTT

T: yes ..uh Alem

H: so we must all work together to *great* get get RID of FLIES from our house and VILLAGES

T: villages  
 H: said Mrs. Senait .. let's things let's think of things we must do  
 T: ok good  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: ok Meseret Kalayou  
 H: one day Mrs. Senait TOLD to her students about flies . . are you afraid of flies she asked . .  
 the students REPLIED of of course ..  
 T: of course not  
 H: of course not they said  
 T: they said sit down .. Mekdes ( uses wrong name)  
 M: ..(some confusion)  
 T: *show her the exact location*  
 Ss: *that's Hana sir*  
 T: *ssh wait a minute I have given the chance to her*  
 S: *me?*  
 T: Mekdes  


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 Ss: Hana  
 T: *Hana I didn't know the name is Hana*  
 M: they don't BITE like mosquitoes .. said a ..  
 T: student  
 M: student  
 T: uh  
 M: you are..  
 T: you are right  
 M: you are right said Mrs. Mrs. Senait but ..  
 T: flies  
 M: flies are .. still very DANGEROUS  
 T: dangerous  
 M: dangerous they  
 T: *watch out for the full stops don't treat them as if they don't exist*  
 M: PROBABLY  
 T: they probably  
 M: PROBABLY  
 T: probably  
 M: probably  
 T: uh  
 S: KILL KILL  
 T: kill  
 M: more children ..THAN  
 T: than  
 M: than ..an than  
 T: any  
 M: any other in..  
 T: insect ok  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: .. *wait wait let's see who should read ok you try*  
 L: .. who ..asked ..the students  
 T: how  
 L: how..asked..the students

T: *ssh silence please leave it to him .. uh*  
 L: they they .. kill people  
 T: they kill  
 L: kill people because they are very very DANGEROUS  
 T: very very uh?  
 L: dirty  
 T: dirty  
 L: they ..  
 T: louder .. uh  
 L: ..  
 T: uh  
 L: .. they WALK  
 T: they walk  
 L: they walk ON dirty  
 T: they walk on..uh  
 L: dirty  


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 T: dirty things  
 L: dirty things..LIKE xx  
 T: like  
 L: ..  
 T: like  
 L: ..  
 T: uh  
 L: .. DUNG and ex c..  
 T: uh?  
 L: ..  
 T: dung  
 L: vomit and  
 T: vomit and dead animals  
 L: vomit and dead animals  
 T: sit down  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: Abeba Bayou  
 M: ..they collect dirt  
 T: *you just continue from where he stopped*  
 M: they collect dirt on their hair legs  
 T: hairy  
 M: legs  
 T: legs  
 M: they ..they WALK on people and food  
 T: uh  
 M: the dirt the dirt DROPS  
 T: drops  
 M: drops off .. their legs on ..to the people and food  
 T: on to the people and food good  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *ok Marshet*  
 L: ..  
 T: *you don't know where you are? would you please show it to her*

L: it is EVEN  
T: it is?  
L: it is EVEN xx where as when they xx some of your food xx x what..  
T: *where the hell do you find these words in the passage ? you're producing something that doesn't exist in the book .. it is even*  
L: it is even..  
T: worse  
L: worse when they..eat some of your food  
T: uh  
L: listen to what ..  
T: happens  
L: happens  
T: uh  
L: ..  
T: flies  
L: flies can ..can  


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T: can  
L: can ..eat hard ..  
T: things  
L: things so  
T: sit down sit down sit down  
Ss: TTT  
T: ok  
S: so we must xx  
T: so they  
L: so we  
T: so they  
L: so they  
T: vomit  
L: ..  
T: so they vomit..will someone please show him where he should read from?  
L: so they vomit on the food FIRST to make it soft they eat it something then they then they ex..  
T: excrete  
L: on the food and then you eat it xx .. said the children  
T: sit down Lidya  
H: yes .. said the children ..so we MOST ALL work TOGETHER to get rid of FLIES from our houses .. and villages said Mrs. Senait let's take take of things we must do  
T: ok *that's it*  
SS: TTT  
T: *now we'll have a look at some of the difficult words in the passage before we do the next exercise . .yes we're through with the reading I'm afraid*  
H: *no I just wanted to ask the meaning of the word vomit*  
T: vomit  
Ss: TTT  
T: uh?  
H: ( gives Amaharic equivalent of the word)  
T: (repeats the Amharic word) ..vomit it says .. uh..*stop shouting please so they vomit on the food first to make it soft what flies do is that they land on your food and vomit on it in order to make it soft so they eat it after it has been soft*

Ss: TTT  
T: *ok*  
H: bite  
T: bite who can tell her who can tell her the word bite bite bite bite what does it mean?  
H: xx  
T: *menkes* ..uh dung . .dung . . uh?  
S: *ibet*  
T: *ibet* . excrete  
H: *segera*  
T: uh? *sorry?*  
H: *segera*  
T: *aynemidir*  
T: *yeah Right so we 've seen the problems that flies cause ok having said that let's come down to exercise one. It says we must kill flies we must keep our house clean what else uh uh must we do to to uh get rid of uh to get rid of flies? It says we must keep our dash clean*

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Ss: TTT  
T: ways of getting rid of flies  
Ss: TTT  
T: uh  
H: we must keep our house clean  
T: we must keep our house clean .. what else must er do xx to get rid of flies . . uh .. try the second one Meseret  
H: we must COVER our food  
T: we must cover our food . . we must cover our food to get rid of flies ..whatelse..uh..what else *to be free from the problems caused by flies what is it that we have to do?* .. yes  
H: we must we must get flies ..uh we must..  
Ss: TTT  
H: we must get RID of flies  
T: uh? .. we must?  
H: we must get RID of flies  
T: uh .. we must keep flies away from our house our houses and villages . *.that's all there is to do in this exercise..the next exercise is exercise two write these sentences in the correct order write these sentences in the correct order..number one ssh..ssh we must keep our houses clean number three*  
H: *answers or what?*  
T: *uh?..let's finish this*  
H: we must keep flies AWAY from  
T: we  
H: from  
T: must uh  
H: aw our house  
T: keep flies..away .. from  
H: kill flies  
T: our . houses . .and villages it says *this is what you ought to have done under exercise one moving on to exercise two we have to write these sentences in the correct order what you need to do is to put the pictures in the correct order based on the information in the passage. Meiraf*  
H: the fly lands on the food  
T: the fly lands on the food..*so which picture goes with this sentence?*

## LESSON 7

- T: we can say you could uh she could walk when she was one and a half old.. Meiraf?
- H: she couldn't feed feedn't..
- T: she couldn't feed herself
- H: herself when she was two two years
- T: when she was two years..now dress herself
- Ss: TTT
- H: she couldn't dress herself when she was three years old
- T: yes she couldn't dress herself when she was three years old..*this was part of the exercise we did the other day ..I will now move on to exercise five leaving exercise four for you to do it on your own It is an important exercise exercise five..it says xx..write the correct word to make true sentences you have to form true sentences using these the first sentence is I dash speak three languages*
- Ss: TTT
- T: I dash speak three languages I dash speak three languages yes Sofonias
- M: I can't speak three languages
- T: I can't speak three languages *any one of you who can speak three languages? I know those of you who come from places outside Addis Ababa know Amharic English and some other language*
- Ss: yeah
- T: *let's see how many languages Asefu speaks Amharic English and Tigrigna three languages but this sentence doesn't apply to many of you so you could have answers like can and can't depending on the number of languages you speak but for the moment let's have this as an answer I can't speak three languages but why do we have to use can't and not couldn't? why we couldn't say could why is that?*
- Ss: TTT
- T: ok
- H: *we didn't use could because we are talking about the pres presenten present*
- T: *yes that's right we're talking about what a certain student is able to speak at the moment so can not could could so we say I can I can't speak three languages uh sentence two of number one*
- Ss: TTT
- T: ok I dash speak when I was born
- L: I can't speak when I was born
- T; is she right?
- Ss: no no
- T: Elias
- L: yes
- T: *not you*
- Ss: *ha ha that's Nebiyou Elias*
- H: I couldn't speak when I was born
- T: I couldn't
- H: speak when I was born
- T: *yes can people lean to speak the moment they're born*
- Ss: no
- T: no they can't I couldn't speak when I was born xxx number two I dash understand English when I start started school
- Ss: TTT

T: uh..Alem  
H: I couldn't understand English when I started school.  
T: I couldn't understand English when I started school *were you able to speak as much English as you can now when you started school six years ago*  
Ss: *no*  
T: *let alone speaking*  
Ss: *we couldn't even read*  
T: *you didn't know any English then so I couldn't understand English . . when?/*  
H: when I start English when I started English  
T: *Elias come on read what I have just written*  
L: *this one here?*  
T: *yeah*  
L: I couldn't..understand English..when I stated school.  
T: I couldn't understand English when I started school..ok sentence two of number two..Meiraf  
H: I can't  
T: I dash understand it when I was in grade six..five  
H: I..I can't understand it when I was I was in grade five  
T: are you right? Is she right?  
Ss: TTT  
T: is this sentence right or wrong?  
Ss: wrong  
T: wrong *ok what should have been the answer Elias uhm Samuel rather*  
M: ..  
T: I dash understand it when I was in grade five uh  
M: ..  
Ss; TTT  
T: Lydia  
H: I could understand it when I was in grade five.  
T: yes. I could understand it it refers to what?..*what does it refer to* I dash understand it when I was in grade five *what does it represent?..what word is being replaced by it? uh?*  
Ss: TTT  
S: English  
T: English *it refers to the word English* it says I couldn't understand English when I started school *doesn't it?*  
SS: yes  
T: I could understand it when I was in grade five *that is last year when it applies to you* number three  
Ss: TTT  
T: number three..Tewodros?  
H: I can't read three languages  
T: I dash read three languages *this is similar to what we have in number one* I speak three languages *it says yeah* I dash three languages this number three is I dash uh read three languages uh I can't or I can or uh  
Ss; I can't I can  
T: uh  
Ss: I can't I can  
T: *can't you read something written in three different languages*  
S: *we can*  
T: *what are these languages*

S: *Amharic Tigrigna and English*  
 Ss: *we can't read Tigrigna Teacher*  
 T: *yeah ok how about others I know those who were born here in Addis don't speak many languages but I'm sure you understand at least two languages Amharic and English ho matter where you were born so I dash read three languages I can't read three languages may be this last sentence may not be relevant to some of you so feel free to write can if you as long as the it is true of you I can't..read..three languages it is difficult to have a negative sentence that applies to all I know some of you will say I can and that's fine they can say I can..uh*  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *stop shouting Elias . .no rather Samuel*  
 M: *I can't..I can't read English six years ago*  
 T: *I dash read English three six years ago*  
 Ss: *wrong wrong*  
 T: *ssh ssh what did you say say it again*  
 M: *I can read English six years ago*  
 T: *why did you say I can*  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *ssh ssh correction*  
 M: *I couldn't couldn't read exes exercises xx..in English*  
 Ss: *no TTT*  
 H: *I can't xx*  
 T: *sentence two of number three sentence two*  
 Ss: TTT  
 H: *I could I couldn't read English six years ago*  
 T: *I couldn't read English six years back six years ago I couldn't read English six years ago were you able to read English when you were in grade one six years ago*  
 Ss: *no*  
 T: *so it should be could not can because we are talking about the past*  
 (blank cassette missed out parts of the lesson here)  
 T: *ok I can spell my name in English can you spell your name in English?*  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *ok you try and write your name*  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *now stop shouting me me I have decided who write your name and your fathe name on the blackboard*  
 S: (writes name)  
 T: *Yohanes..Taye xx*  
 Ss: TTT  
 T: *Samuel come and write your name your full name you have to capitalise your first the first letter of your name and your father name*  
 S: (writes name)  
 T: *is he right? you read it read your name*  
 SS: TTT  
 T: *I said stop shouting..so he can spell his name in English . . he can't uh Samuel ( writes the name on the black board) this is a vowel ok ok that's all ssh ssh uh uh sentence two of number four I dash spell it last year I dash spell it last year ok you read that the last one the fourth xxx*  
 Ss: TTTT:

## Appendix 3

### Student Questionnaire (Pilot)

Appendix 3 refers to the questionnaire used during the pilot phase of the study.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information concerning the ways teachers react to students' responses to their questions in the classroom.

Below are 57 teacher classroom behaviours and a description of an imaginary student. Imagine the student in the description is in your class. Before you complete the questionnaire, read the description carefully to have some idea about what the student is like and what your teacher thinks about this particular student and then show how the teacher would behave towards this student.

Abebe/Kebede is someone who does really well/does not do well in English. In fact she always gets the best/the lowest grades in the class and is considered to be a very smart/weak boy. Our English teacher also knows this.

Example item

The teacher asks the class to give Abebe/Kebede a clap when he answers a question correctly.

Yes

No

If you think the teacher shows such behaviour when working with Abebe/Kebede in the situation described in the item, put a tick in the box coming before the word 'yes' and if you think this is not true of the teacher's behaviour toward the student, put a tick in the box before 'No'.

1. The teacher ignores errors made by Abebe/ Kebede.

Yes

No

2. The teacher ignores pronunciation errors made by Abebe/Kebede while giving an answer to a question

Yes

No

3. The teacher does not correct Abebe/Kebede when he uses a wrong word while answering a question.

Yes

No

4. The teacher ignores pronunciation errors made by Abebe/Kebede while reading aloud.

Yes

No

5. The teacher interrupts Abebe/Kebede if he makes mistakes.

Yes

No

6. The teacher does not interrupt Abebe/Kebede to correct errors.

Yes

No

7. The teacher waits patiently when Abebe/Kebede does not give the correct answer at his first attempt.

Yes

No

8. The teacher gives Abebe/Kebede time to think and improve his answer when he gives a wrong one at his first attempt.  
 Yes  No
9. The teacher waits patiently when Abebe/Kebede fails to respond.  
 Yes  No
10. The teacher gives Abebe/Kebede a chance to improve his answer when he gives an incomplete answer.  
 Yes  No
11. When Abebe/Kebede produces a wrong answer the teacher asks him to repeat his answer with the intent to get him to self-correct.  
 Yes  No
12. The teacher asks Abebe/Kebede to repeat his answer when the answer is not clear.  
 Yes  No
13. The teacher gives Abebe/Kebede a second chance when he fails to produce a correct answer because he thinks he is able to correct himself.  
 Yes  No
14. The teacher provides Abebe/Kebede with an answer when he is unable to produce one.  
 Yes  No
15. The teacher calls on another student when Abebe/Kebede fails to give the correct answer.  
 Yes  No
16. The teacher asks a group of students to answer a question when Abebe/Kebede fails to do so.  
 Yes  No
17. When Abebe/Kebede fails to give a correct answer, the teacher asks the whole class to give one.  
 Yes  No
18. When Abebe/Kebede fails to give a correct answer, the teacher asks someone sitting next to him to try the question.  
 Yes  No
19. The teacher praises Abebe/Kebede even when he gives a wrong answer.  
 Yes  No
20. The teacher gives explanations or revises the lesson when Abebe/Kebede fails to give a correct answer.  
 Yes  No
21. When Abebe/Kebede fails to give a correct answer, the teacher supplies one himself and the returns to Abebe/Kebede to get him to try it again.  
 Yes  No
22. The teacher returns to Abebe/Kebede to ask him to try a question again after getting the answer from another student.  
 Yes  No
23. The teacher returns to Abebe/Kebede to ask him to try a question again after getting the whole class to answer it in unison.  
 Yes  No
24. The teacher returns to Abebe/Kebede to ask him to try a question again after getting a group of students to answer it.  
 Yes  No
25. The teacher returns to Abebe/Kebede to ask him to try a question again after getting the answer from someone sitting next to him.  
 Yes  No
26. The teacher just provides the answer when Abebe/Kebede fails to give a correct answer.

- Yes  No
27. The teacher moves on after getting someone else to give the answer to a question which Abebe/Kebede was unable to answer.
- Yes  No
28. When Abebe/Kebede make mistakes while reading something aloud the teacher corrects it and asks Abebe/Kebede to continue with the reading.
- Yes  No
29. The teacher stops Abebe/Kebede and calls on another student to read when Abebe/Kebede fails to read a text out correctly.
- Yes  No
30. The teacher asks Abebe/Kebede to do a similar question after giving correction to a wrong answer to a previous question.
- Yes  No
31. The teacher returns to Abebe/Kebede to ask him to find out where he went wrong after announcing the correct answer.
- Yes  No
32. The teacher gives correction to Abebe's/Kebede's answer and asks the class to say why it was wrong.
- Yes  No
33. When Abebe/Kebede gives a wrong answer, the teacher's reaction is simple rejection.
- Yes  No
34. When Abebe/Kebede gives a wrong answer, the teacher simply gives the correct answer without drawing attention to the fact that the response was wrong.
- Yes  No
35. When Abebe/Kebede makes a mistake, the teacher indicates the occurrence of an error by repeating the utterance.
- Yes  No
36. When Abebe/Kebede makes a mistake, the teacher indicates the location of the error in the response.
- Yes  No
37. The teacher asks Abebe/Kebede to repeat utterance with intent to alert him to the occurrence of error.
- Yes  No
38. The teacher provides information as to cause or type of error in Abebe's/Kebede's utterance.
- Yes  No
39. The teacher provides Abebe/Kebede with clues to help him correct himself.
- Yes  No
40. The teacher repeats the question to make Abebe/Kebede aware of the existence of an error in his response.
- Yes  No
41. The teacher rephrases the question when Abebe/Kebede fails to give the correct answer.
- Yes  No
42. The teacher uses a non-verbal signal (e.g. wave finger, frown) to show Abebe's/Kebede's answer is wrong.
- Yes  No
43. The teacher accepts even a wrong answer from Abebe/Kebede.
- Yes  No
44. The teacher praises Abebe/Kebede for giving correct answer.

- Yes  No  
45. The teacher praises Abebe/Kebede even when he gives a wrong answer.
- Yes  No  
46. The teacher follows up a correct answer from Abebe/Kebede with a bit of explanation to the class.
- Yes  No  
47. The teacher shows acceptance of correct answer from Abebe/Kebede by repeating the response.
- Yes  No  
48. The teacher decides to drop the correction of Abebe's/Kebede's error and moves on to other activities or topics.
- Yes  No  
49. The teacher criticises Abebe/Kebede for failing to give a correct answer.
- Yes  No  
50. The teacher admires Abebe's/Kebede's correct performances.
- 
- Yes  No  
51. The teacher praises Abebe/Kebede when he gives wrong answers.
- Yes  No  
52. The teacher says a few words of encouragement when Abebe/Kebede fails to respond.
- Yes  No  
53. The teacher says a few nice words before he asks Abebe/Kebede to answer a question.
- Yes  No  
54. The teacher says 'come on this is an easy question' etc. when Abebe/Kebede is unable to answer a question.
- Yes  No  
55. The teacher asks Abebe/Kebede to remain standing until another student gives the correct answer to a question he missed.
- Yes  No  
56. The teacher neither praises Abebe/Kebede for correct answers nor criticise him for wrong ones.
- Yes  No  
57. The teacher praises Abebe/Kebede only when he gives a correct answer to a question.
- Yes  No

## Appendix 4

### Student Questionnaire (Main)

Appendix 4 refers to the questionnaire used for the main study.

#### High achiever form

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information concerning the way teachers react to students' responses to their questions in the classroom.

Below are 30 teacher classroom behaviours and a description of an imaginary student. Imagine the student in the description is in your class. Before you complete the questionnaire, read the description carefully to have some idea about what the student is like and what your teacher thinks about this particular student and then show how the teacher would behave towards this particular student.

Kebede (Almaz) is someone who does really well in English. In fact, he (she) always gets the best grades in the class and is considered to be a very smart boy (girl). Our English teacher also knows this.

#### Example item

The teacher asks the class to give Kebede (Almaz) a clap when he (she) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

If you think the teacher shows this kind of behaviour almost always when working with (Kebede) Almaz in a situation like this, put a tick in the box coming before the word "always" and if you think this happens only sometimes or doesn't happen at all for that matter put a tick in the appropriate box. Remember not to put a tick in more than one of the boxes for each item.

1. The teacher just moves on without saying anything when Kebede (Almaz) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

2. The teacher praises Kebede (Almaz) when he (she) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

3. The teacher provides a correct and complete answer when Kebede (Almaz) gives a partially correct answer.

always       sometimes       never

4. The teacher encourages Kebede (Almaz) to correct himself (herself) or improve his (her) answer when he (she) gives a partially correct answer.

always       sometimes       never

5. The teacher criticises Kebede (Almaz) when he (she) gives an answer which is correct only partially.

always       sometimes       never

6. The teacher praises Kebede (Almaz) when he (she) gives a partially correct answer.

always       sometimes       never

7. The teacher just moves on without saying anything when Kebede (Almaz) gives a partially correct answer

- always       sometimes       never
8. The teacher interrupts Kebede (Almaz) when he (she) adds something wrong to a partly correct answer in an attempt to make it more acceptable.
- always       sometimes       never
9. The teacher redirects the question to another student when Kebede (Almaz) provides a partially correct answer.
- always       sometimes       never
10. The teacher returns to Kebede (Almaz) after getting another student to give a correct answer to a question which Kebede (Almaz) initially answered only partly (correctly).
- always       sometimes       never
11. The teacher just moves on without any comment when Kebede (Almaz) fails to give the correct answer.
- always       sometimes       never
12. The teacher praises Kebede (Almaz) even when he (she) doesn't know the right answer.
- always       sometimes       never
13. The teacher scolds Kebede (Almaz) for not knowing the correct answer to a question.
- always       sometimes       never
14. The teacher provides the correct answer when (Kebede) Almaz fails to give one.
- always       sometimes       never
15. The teacher gives Kebede (Almaz) a chance to self-correct when he (she) gets something wrong
- always       sometimes       never
16. The teacher calls on someone else when Kebede (Almaz) fails to provide a correct answer
- always       sometimes       never
17. The teacher returns to Kebede (Almaz) to ask him (her) to repeat the answer to a question which was provided by someone else following his (her) failure to answer correctly.
- always       sometimes       never
18. The teacher provides a brief explanation of relevant points following Kebede's (Almaz's) failure to answer correctly
- always       sometimes       never
19. The teacher gives Kebede (Almaz) a long enough time to respond when he (she) is unable to try
- always       sometimes       never
20. The teacher tells Kebede (Almaz) off when he (she) fails to give a response to a question he asks.
- always       sometimes       never
21. The teacher calls on someone else when Kebede (Almaz) fails to respond to a question he asks
- always       sometimes       never
22. The teacher provides the correct answer when Kebede (Almaz) fails to respond
- always       sometimes       never
23. The teacher returns to Kebede (Almaz) to ask him (her) to repeat a correct answer which was provided by someone else following his (her) lack of response
- always       sometimes       never
24. The teacher provides a brief explanation of points relevant to a question following Kebede's (Almaz's) failure to respond
- always       sometimes       never
25. The teacher uses English when responding to Kebede's (Almaz's) correct answer
- always       sometimes       never
26. The teacher uses English when responding to Kebede's (Almaz's) wrong answer
- always       sometimes       never
27. The teacher uses English when responding to Kebede's (Almaz's) partially correct answer

always       sometimes       never

28. During reading aloud activities, the teacher stops Kebede (Almaz) and calls on someone else to do the reading when he (she) fails to read correctly

always       sometimes       never

29. The teacher allows Kebede (Almaz) to continue reading after giving corrections when he (she) fails to read correctly

always       sometimes       never

30. The teacher expects Kebede (Almaz) to correct himself (herself) when he (she) reads some thing wrongly

always       sometimes       never

### Low achiever form

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information concerning the way teachers react to students' responses to their questions in the classroom.

Below are 30 teacher classroom behaviours and a description of an imaginary student. Imagine the student in the description is in your class. Before you complete the questionnaire, read the description carefully to have some idea about what the student is like and what your teacher thinks about this particular student and then show how the teacher would behave towards this particular student.

Daniel (Genet) is someone who does not do very well in English. In fact, he (she) always gets the best grades in the class and is considered to be a very smart boy (girl). Our English teacher also knows this.

### Example item

The teacher asks the class to give Daniel (Genet) a clap when he (she) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

If you think the teacher shows this kind of behaviour almost always when working with (Daniel) Genet in a situation like this, put a tick in the box coming before the word "always" and if you think this happens only sometimes or doesn't happen at all for that matter put a tick in the appropriate box. Remember not to put a tick in more than one of the boxes for each item.

1. The teacher just moves on without saying anything when Daniel (Genet) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

2. The teacher praises Daniel (Genet) when he (she) answers a question correctly.

always       sometimes       never

3. The teacher provides a correct and complete answer when Daniel (Genet) gives a partially correct answer.

always       sometimes       never

4. The teacher encourages Daniel (Genet) to correct himself (herself) or improve his (her) answer when he (she) gives a partially correct answer.

always       sometimes       never

5. The teacher criticises Daniel (Genet) when he (she) gives an answer which is correct only partially.  
 always       sometimes       never
6. The teacher praises Daniel (Genet) when he (she) gives a partially correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
7. The teacher just moves on without saying anything when Daniel (Genet) gives a partially correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
8. The teacher interrupts Daniel (Genet) when he (she) adds something wrong to a partly correct answer in an attempt to make it more acceptable.  
 always       sometimes       never
9. The teacher redirects the question to another student when Daniel (Genet) provides a partially correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
10. The teacher returns to Daniel (Genet) after getting another student to give a correct answer to a question which Daniel (Genet) initially answered only partly (correctly).  
 always       sometimes       never
- 
11. The teacher just moves on without any comment when Daniel (Genet) fails to give the correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
12. The teacher praises Daniel (Genet) even when he (she) doesn't know the right answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
13. The teacher scolds Daniel (Genet) for not knowing the correct answer to a question.  
 always       sometimes       never
14. The teacher provides the correct answer when Daniel (Genet) fails to give one.  
 always       sometimes       never
15. The teacher gives Daniel (Genet) a chance to self-correct when he (she) gets something wrong  
 always       sometimes       never
16. The teacher calls on someone else when Daniel (Genet) fails to provide a correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
17. The teacher returns to Daniel (Genet) to ask him (her) to repeat the answer to a question which was provided by someone else following his (her) failure to answer correctly.  
 always       sometimes       never
18. The teacher provides a brief explanation of relevant points following Daniel's (Genet's) failure to answer correctly  
 always       sometimes       never
19. The teacher gives Daniel (Genet) a long enough time to respond when he (she) is unable to try  
 always       sometimes       never
20. The teacher tells Daniel (Genet) off when he (she) fails to give a response to a question he asks.  
 always       sometimes       never
21. The teacher calls on someone else when Daniel (Genet) fails to respond to a question he asks  
 always       sometimes       never
22. The teacher provides the correct answer when Daniel (Genet) fails to respond  
 always       sometimes       never
23. The teacher returns to Daniel (Genet) to ask him (her) to repeat a correct answer which was provided by someone else following his (her) lack of response  
 always       sometimes       never
24. The teacher provides a brief explanation of points relevant to a question following Daniel's (Genet's) failure to respond

always       sometimes       never

25. The teacher uses English when responding to Daniel's (Genet's) correct answer

always       sometimes       never

26. The teacher uses English when responding to Daniel's (Genet's) wrong answer

always       sometimes       never

27. The teacher uses English when responding to Daniel's (Genet's) partially correct answer

always       sometimes       never

28. During reading aloud activities, the teacher stops Daniel (Genet) and calls on someone else to do the reading when he (she) fails to read correctly

always       sometimes       never

29. The teacher allows Daniel (Genet) to continue reading after giving corrections when he (she) fails to read correctly

always       sometimes       never

30. The teacher expects Daniel (Genet) to correct himself (herself) when he (she) reads some thing wrongly

always       sometimes       never

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- hard time and he is always angry with them. I know of two who have been expelled from school because they hadn't shown up a good two weeks. So yeah students like the ones I'm talking about don't participate and they don't do nothing. The teacher has to force them if they are to do something.
- I: I'm just wondering what causes them not to be interested in school work? Could it be because they are weak or do you know of any other reason?
- S: I'm afraid I have no idea.
- I: What is the reaction of the teacher like when pupils of the same ability as yours answer a question correctly?
- S: Me?
- I: No someone who is as good as you are.
- S: He would be very pleased. He would say very good and stuff like that. You know what? During reading lessons many students may raise their hands but when they are given the chance to read they just can't read properly. They would read a bit and then there is a long pause before they are able to read the next bit so it is a lot jerky. Our teacher wouldn't tolerate this he would say sit down sit down and then he would sort of advise them to practise harder at home. Another thing he would do is ask them to read the same thing on the next day to find out if they can get it right.
- I: What happens if a student doesn't respond at all?
- S: He would get angry with him at first. On the next day he would ask this same student to try. He might also explain to him certain things point out the vowels and consonants for him and then ask him to have a go. You know what he usually puts pressure on such students to work harder because grade six isn't an easy thing to be in you need to work a lot.
- I: How does the teacher try to encourage weaker students?
- S: There are lots of things that the teacher would do to draw weak students into activities. One of the things he does is to concentrate on them and work with them almost to the exclusion of the other groups as it were. There are times when only the weak are required to read and if they don't read properly during such occasions they will certainly be in the teacher's bad book. He will make a note of their names and tell them that he would be asking them to read the same material in the next lesson. He wants them to put in more effort in to their work so he would also tell them that they could be judged incomplete if they don't perform better when they are asked to read during the next lesson. The students would then begin to practise more because they don't want to be reported to the office as incomplete at the end of the year you know as someone who hasn't completed the course. They will be in deep trouble if the teacher carries out his threat. And if they don't perform to his satisfaction on the next day he may even ask them to leave the room but this is something which may happen only rarely as the students make an effort to read better.
- I: But do you remember someone being sent off because he failed to try or perform adequately?
- S: Oh yes.
- I: When does the teacher praise students? I mean when does he say good very and that sort of stuff?  
...and who takes most of the praise if he does?
- S: Uhm most of the praise goes to the strong ones. The teacher is usually pleased with the answers that come from bright students. He usually responds to the correct responses from such students by saying very good and things like that. This usually happens during reading lessons. Our teacher becomes very happy when you read something correctly.
- I: So are you saying that bright students are the ones who are praised more often?
- S: That's right.
- I: Does he also criticise them for failing to respond or to provide satisfactory answers?

- S: Not really. If you try and get it wrong, he would give the answer himself and ask you to correct it. So long as you're trying it is OK by him.
- I: Does he do this with all students?
- S: Most of the time it is the bright students who receive such treatments. He would be happy to see them trying.
- I: How about the weak?
- S: He would do the same.
- I: Does it mean that students will also be praised even when they don't produce the correct answer?
- S: You mean when they don't even try?
- I: No no. They do try but they don't get it right.
- S: Yeah it happens. For example you know there are some stupid students in our class and if these students raise their hands and try the teacher would give them encouragement. He might say that's good very good or something like that even if the answer is wrong. During reading lessons if a weak student is given a chance to read and has some difficulty reading the part he is expected to read the teacher would write the bits that are causing him some trouble to the student's on the blackboard and ask him to read it for him. If the student can't read it, the teacher would again write it in the student's exercise book and ask him to practise reading it at home. This is what he would do.
- I: How about when the student doesn't try at all?
- S: Well this is one of the things that drive the teacher mad. You've got to try and say something. If it is a reading lesson for example you will have to try and read at least a bit of what you are asked to read. if you remain silent, the teacher would be cross with you. He would be very disappointed really. I think he feels what ever effort he is making to help us is not bearing any fruit. So he may even stop teaching and leave the class in despair.
- I: Does he behave in the same way towards highs?
- S: You mean if they don't try to read something they are asked to?
- S: Yeah. I mean if they are asked a question or chosen to read and they remain silent and stuff without trying at all would he be angry too? I mean is this more frequent with highs or lows?
- S: I think he gets angry with highs more often than he does with lows in similar situations.
- I: Right
- S: Specially if you are one of those students who participate in class regularly and who are always called on to read and if you fail to try or don't do you homework, the teacher will see red. And you certainly are in to a lot of criticisms and reprimands from him. He just doesn't seem to put up with such behaviour especially when it comes from the bright ones.
- I: How about the weak students? I mean what happens to them if they find themselves in similar situations?
- S: I think the teacher won't be as upset. He might just say that's typical of you isn't It I just don't get it why don't you try why don't you work harder. But he won't be as cross.
- I: Supposing a student gives a wrong response and the teacher has to call on another student to answer the same question what type of student would that another student be? I mean is it someone who happens to be sitting next to the first student or someone better than the first one or is it done just randomly?
- S: In reading lessons for example if you are asked to read you will have to stand up and do the reading. After you have read a bit you may get to a word which turns out to be too difficult for you to read. As a result there will be a gap in the reading. When the pause lasts longer the teacher will ask you to sit down and call on one of those who are raising their hands. If the other student also fails to perform to his satisfaction, the teacher will get upset. He would say how many times do I have to tell this class to work harder you're getting on my nerves.

- S: It usually comes when the high gives a correct answer. But you could see him doing the same with the lows from time to time. He would in addition say something like you won't repeat this grade if you keep it up.
- I: Are there times when the teacher would criticise students for something?
- S: Yeah he usually scolds those who fail to do their homework or participate in class and things like that.
- I: What happens when a student fails to give a correct answer?
- S: What he would do is ask another student to try and give the correct answer and then return to the one who missed the question to ask him to repeat the answer.
- I: What sort of students would he do this with the highs the lows or averages?
- S: Usually he would do it with highs and averages.
- I: But which group are more likely to get this kind of treatment quite often?
- S: I think the weak and the average students.
- I: What happens when a student fails to respond? Say if a weak student doesn't make any attempt to respond?
- S: The teacher would write the question on the blackboard and ask him to read it. And if the student fails to read it correctly the teacher would be cross with him. He would say how come you're here in this class I just wonder how you managed to be promoted from grade five to grade six and stuff like that.
- I: Does he usually do this with...
- S: No this happens only occasionally.
- I: Is this kind of reaction usually directed towards the weak?
- S: Yes. That's right.
- I: Does the teacher praise a student even when he knows that the answer was not correct?
- S: Yes it happens.
- I: Tell me more about it.
- S: When a weak student tries and gives the wrong answer, the teacher may sometimes say that's good I'm glad you tried I hope you keep trying and stuff.
- I: You said earlier that if a student fails to give a correct answer another student will be made to give the desired answer. But what kind of student gets nominated to do this after an unsuccessful attempt by another? I mean is it someone who is better than the one who didn't succeed?
- S: Normally it goes to someone who is volunteering to answer and the person may turn out to be better. But it is just one of those who are raising their hands who would be asked to provide the correction.
- I: So it is just a random thing yeah?
- S: Exactly.
- I: How about reading? I mean what happens when weak and strong students read?
- S: The teacher usually praises the highs during reading and if someone happens to read less correctly the teacher would say why don't you read as accurately as he does you should really work harder.
- I: Tell me is there is any difference between boys and girls in terms what they do and what happens to them in the classroom?
- S: I think the teacher treats both equally.
- I: Which group perform better?
- S: Oh it is girls who do better in our class. We have quite a lot of strong girls. Of course the number of girls in the class is also bigger.
- I: So is it girls who participate more?
- S: That's right but they are not the only ones there are also several boys who

- are good participators.
- I: Do you participate in class?
- S: Not much I'm afraid. I mean I don't see myself as a good participator.
- I: Why is that?
- S: It is just that I feel nervous and I'm usually shy.
- I: Have you ever had any bad experience in class?
- S: (no response)
- I: How does the teacher react when you read correctly?
- S: He would give me more encouragement and say that's good keep it up something like that.
- I: Just one last general question what is it that you don't want to see the teacher doing?
- S: I think he shouldn't expel students from class when they don't do their homework without giving a warning first.

**L4 (female low achiever)**

- I: Can teachers differentiate between the good and the bad students in their classes?
- S: Definitely.
- I: How do they know that?
- S: I think they know from you know exam results and stuff. If you for instance take our English teacher he has no problem identifying the good and bad ones in our class.
- I: What apart from the exam results help them to have such knowledge?
- S: It is of course the participation of students that tells him who is who in the class.
- I: Do you also know who are bright and who are weak in your class?
- S: Yeah. It is easy. You only need to see who are participating and who are not. Besides you can identify the best students based on their ranks in the class. Obviously one expects someone who stood first in the first semester to be smart. So that's how we are able to tell who is who.
- I: Do the strong and weak students receive different treatment from your teachers?
- S: Absolutely. Yes. For example our Amharic teacher favours the highs and she really doesn't care about the lows. She simply ignores them.
- I: Do you participate in class?
- S: Yeah but not quite so in English classes though I'm OK as far as Science and Maths are concerned.
- I: Can I ask you why?
- S: Because uh you know I have nobody at home to assist me with it.
- I: Right. Apparently there are also other students like you who don't seem to participate much in the class but why do you think this is so?
- S: May be they have some problems in the family. I don't know may be they don't take their lessons more seriously
- I: What is the usual reaction of your English teacher to correct responses from students?
- S: He praises a student who gives a correct answer and he would give encouragement and that kind of stuff do you see what I mean?
- I: How about when the correct answer comes from lows?
- S: He would do the same. You know our teacher treats us in the same way I must also say though he seems to be more pleased when a low gives a correct answer.
- I: Who in your opinion receives more praise?
- S: I think it is the weaker ones who are praised quite often. Perhaps the reason he does this is because he wants to build their confidence.
- I: Would the teacher do this in spite of the fact that the answer that he receives from the weak student turns out to be wrong?

- S: I find it absolutely upsetting to see a teacher discriminating against some students in a class. I can give you an example. Our Amharic teacher seems to be determined not to let Nebiyou and myself participate in class. I feel very bad about it. One day I had to ask her why she was treating us that way. I just wanted to find out the reason. She said to me you are one of those students who haven't yet learned to behave in class that's why. So I began to hate her class and I usually choose to stay outside the classroom until her class is over. You know why? I know I won't be allowed to participate so why sit idle in the class. I know she doesn't give me a single chance to answer even if I raise my hand every time she asks questions. So I decided to give it up all together.
- I: Do you know of bright students who are treated in the same way by your Amharic teacher?
- S: No. The thing is that we are already in her bad book. May be because we are loud and less obedient sometimes. I remember we were asked to leave the class one day because she said she couldn't stand our behaviour.
- I: Are there certain teacher behaviours that are more or less associated with the best student only?
- S: No I can't think of any.
- 
- I: For example, who gets praised more often?
- S: Our English teacher seems to praise lows more often. May be because he wants to encourage them to work harder and to boost their confidence. This happens even when their work is far from accurate. We have another teacher who does exactly the same. That's our Social Studies' teacher. He is like our English teacher. But I don't see much of this in the rest of our teachers.

**L5 (female low achiever)**

- I: Can a teacher differentiate between good and bad students in a class?
- S: Of course yes.
- I: How does he know that?
- S: If you just look at what happens during lessons you will see that some students participate while others don't. So you could tell from this who is who. There are some students who don't like to raise their hands though. They can read when the teacher call son them but they don't offer to answer.
- I: How about you? I mean do you know who are smart and who are not in your class?
- S: Yeah absolutely.
- I: How do you know?
- S: I mean you only have to look at who are answering and who are not.
- I: What type of students participate more in class?
- S: Girls.
- I: What makes you think it is so?
- S: I just don't know but it is them who give correct answers most of the time. The boys are not as good. They answer questions correctly only occasionally.
- I: So you think there is a difference in ability between the two groups?
- S: Yeah I mean girls tend to read better in English classes. But then what I would like to suggest is that chances to read must be distributed equally among the students. It may perhaps be a good idea to do it in turns one after another according to our seating arrangement. This method pressurises students to work hard and prepare themselves for the task because they know they will be asked to read. But the way the teacher is doing it now gives chance only to those who raise their hands and this doesn't encourage or force students to work harder and they will remain inactive throughout the lessons.

- S: He would ask another student to try it while you are still standing and then ask you to repeat the student's correct answer.
- I: Do you think a student always needs to be told whether his performance is correct or not?
- S: Yeah. If for example I'm reading something aloud and there are long pauses in between he would ask me to improve my performance or do it all over again.
- I: On what basis does the teacher choose students to read in class?
- S: Uhm at first it used to be a kind of round reading. One student reading after the other in rows. This was the way he did it in the first couple of weeks but now he doesn't do this any more. The teacher just chooses from among the students who are raising their hands.
- I: What happens when a student has difficulty reading an assigned paragraph? I mean would the teacher wait for him to finish it off or would he stop him in the middle?
- S: I think he would try to help him by reading the words that are causing him a problem and ask him to repeat and then proceed.
- I: What if the student makes errors with almost every word he is trying to read?
- S: In that case he would ask him to stop and ask another student to take over.
- I: Tell me is there anything you particularly like or dislike in your teachers' classroom behaviour?
- S: I think we would be better off returning to the round reading. This would avoid the divide between highs and lows. It also gives all students in the class the chance to practice reading almost equally.
- I: What happens when a low doesn't volunteer to participate?
- S: He would ask us to practise at home the trouble though is that I don't practise reading much.
- I: Why is that?
- S: I just don't know. It is not that I hate English. It is just that I don't understand what I read. I think I like to work more on Science.
- I: Can you think of any treatment that is usually associated with highs only?
- S: I'm afraid no.

**H6 (female high achiever)**

- I: Do you think your English teacher knows who is good and who is not so good in your class?
- S: Oh yeah. Absolutely.
- I: What enables him to do this?
- S: Primarily it is the participation of students and the answers that they give to questions asked by him that enable him to identify the ability of students.
- I: Tell me more about how he identifies the weaker ones?
- S: Easy. You will always find them sitting in the class doing or saying nothing when some activity is going on. I think you have noticed such students when you were in our class. The teacher tries to encourage them to participate usually with little success though.
- I: What does the teacher do to help them participate more?
- S: One of the things I remember he did at the beginning of the year was to get them to work with us in groups and get some assistance from us. But it didn't work. This was because they were not interested. It seems to me that pupils with urban background are the same all over. They just are not keen on their schoolwork they seem to have less desire to study compared with those with rural background.
- I: What else does he do in class to help this group?
- S: Well, if I may tell you what happened this afternoon, we were having a lesson and the teacher asked two students to try and read. You will never guess what they said. They said they just can't. This made the teacher absolutely upset and disappointed. He started saying things like

- how come you are here in grade six when you can't even read. He made them leave the room though he let them in a while later.
- I: So what kind of students participate in class?
- S: All sorts of students actually highs, lows and averages.
- I: But which group participate more?
- S: Well I think it is the highs and the middles.
- I: Why do you think the other group don't participate? Could it be because they are shy?
- S: No. As far as I'm concerned the main reason they don't participate is that they are weak. It has very little to do with shyness. In fact none of those in our class are shy.
- I: When does the teacher praise students? I mean when does he say things like good very good and that sort of thing you know what I mean?
- S: Yeah. The way things are is this. The teacher asks a question. If it is an easy one chances are that one of the three or four students sitting together will know the answer and this student will tell the answer to those who are sharing a desk with him. Then all of them will raise their hands although they don't really know the answer. The teacher will then nominate someone from among those who rarely try to answer. And if he gets it right he will give him lots of encouragement and praise. So this is the way it happens.
- I: Would the teacher do the same if the student happens to be one of those who participate regularly?
- S: Well it all depends on the level of the difficulty of the question. If for example if it is a difficult one you will see less hands so the teacher will try to persuade them to volunteer.
- I: Are there times when the teacher would praise lows when he knows the answer given was wrong?
- S: Yes I know of some occasions like that. He would just follow it up with some positive remarks in order to make the student feel good. He would say things like that's good I know you can do better than you appear to be. Now can anyone help him? Then he would call on another student who usually happens to be a brighter one. The thing is that we are seeing less of it these days He seems to have abandoned stuff like this at present. I think it was a good thing to do though.
- I: Can you think of other things he does or used to do when dealing with lows?
- S: The other thing he used to do earlier in the first semester was to write on the blackboard answers coming from a student and then go back to the student who failed to give the correct answer and get him to repeat it. But again I don't see much of this in recent days.
- I: Which group are criticised more often?
- S: You will see this when they fail to produce the correct answer of course. He would say I don't understand why you find this so difficult and then he would go on to provide explanations.
- I: But do you think he usually does this with highs or lows?
- S: Look this is what happens. If for example he asks a question which turns out to be difficult for the whole class and I happen to be the only one who manages to answer it while the rest of the class remain silent, that is not the end of it. The teacher wouldn't leave it at that. He might give some explanations related to the question or answer given. He would be less likely to let it pass without such further explanations simply because one student in the class has managed to provide the correct answer.
- I: Would he do the same if the answer came from a less able student?
- S: In fact he would be more pleased to see it coming from such a student. Besides the explanation would be even more.
- I: So it doesn't matter who gives the correct answer.

- S: Yeah. I mean there would be sort of similar responses from the teacher in situations like this regardless of who gave the correct answer.
- I: Do you think that a student's response should always be followed by an indication from the teacher as to whether the answer was correct or wrong?
- S: I should think so.
- I: Now tell me what happens when a student fails to respond?
- S: As a matter of fact the question will go to someone who has the answer to it which usually turns out to be a brighter student.
- I: So it is not done randomly yeah?
- S: No not at all.
- I: Do you see any difference between boys and girls?
- S: Well as you might have noticed boys don't participate much. As far as I'm concerned only three of them participate actively in the class. The rest of them are most of the time inactive.
- I: Is there anything you would like to see the teacher doing?
- S: One thing I would most like to see the teacher doing is to give more emphasis to helping verbs. He used to pay more attention to this sort of stuff early in the year. So I feel that we will gain more from lessons whose focus is on such aspects as the school year is drawing to a close and the exam approaching.

**M7 (male middle achiever)**

- I: Do you think your English teacher knows who's smart and who's not so smart?
- S: Oh yes he does.
- I: How does he manage to do this?
- S: I think one only needs to see who is giving correct answers and who isn't to do this. The trouble though is that there are some students who are always seen blowing hot and cold about offering to answer questions because they feel nervous to answer publicly.
- I: Right.
- S: You know there are students who raise their hands while the teacher is writing the question on the blackboard and put them back the moment the teacher turns round to face the class. To me this is the result of nervousness or lack of confidence. I think such students could do better with a more caring and friendly teacher who can help them come out of their shells. Someone who doesn't flare up at the slightest possible error and someone who is more understanding and willing to get closer to them and appreciate their problems. So I feel that a teacher should avoid criticising or ridiculing students when they get it wrong if such students are to feel more confident. The uncaring and insensitive teacher is unlikely to succeed with such type of students.
- I: Does it mean that the teacher is not in a position to know more about those who don't participate much?
- S: Not exactly. There are other ways too I mean apart from participation in the form of answering oral questions. The teacher has a regular access to the work of the students be it seat work or homework. In fact some marks go to such work done over the semester. So all I'm driving at is that the teacher has lots of things to draw on in learning about the ability of his students. If I may add this our teacher is a very nice and helpful person and this is evident in the students' performance. Those who had low performance at the beginning are making a lot of progress. Their relationship with him is also improving a lot. At the beginning of the year they were a bit reluctant get closer and talk to him. They were a bit afraid I think. May be they didn't get to know him well that's why. And the fact that the teacher forced students to participate more and answer questions threatened most of them.
- I: Do you yourself know who are the good ones and who are the bad ones?

- S: Sure. Why not? We're in the same class it shouldn't be difficult.
- I: How do you know that?
- S: From their participation in class. I know it's not something that you can do in week's time. You need a month or two to be able to know who is who.
- I: What type of students participate in class?
- S: Usually the highs and averages but it also looks to me that the entire class are beginning to take active parts in classroom activities.
- I: What do you think brought about such a change?
- S: I think it is because we've been together in the same class for more than a semester now and everybody have got to know each other better.
- I: What does the teacher do to draw weaker students into an activity?
- S: This is what he does. If we're working on an exercise for example and some bright student gives the correct answer to a question, he would write it on the blackboard and then ask the student who gave the correct answer to read the answer again from the blackboard. I think the idea is to give weaker students a chance to hear it again. Once this is done it is the turn of the less able ones to try and read the answer in the same way as the brighter student did. If any error occurs when the lows are trying the teacher would give correction.
- I: What sort of things lead to a student being praised?
- S: I think this happens when we're able to give answers to really good questions in an important exercise and we all feel very pleased and encouraged when this happens.
- I: Was it the highs only who were praised before?
- S: Yeah. That's correct. I think the reason he did this was to stimulate lows to work harder and attain the level the highs have achieved.
- I: So these days you see the teacher praising the lows too yeah?
- S: Yeah.
- I: Is it done just to boost the confidence of lows or what?
- S: Yeah. I think it is both to encourage them to work harder and perform better.
- I: What happens when the lows don't answer correctly?
- S: One thing I can say is that it doesn't make him be cross with them. He will simply ask another student to try and give the correct answer and the student who is given this chance could be high or low.
- I: How likely is the teacher to praise a student following an inadequate answer or even a wrong one for that matter?
- S: I don't think the teacher ever does this. What I think he would probably do in situations like this is to try and protect the feeling of the student and prevent embarrassment on the part of the student. The other thing I think he might do is to ask the student if he can fix whatever has gone wrong.
- I: What exactly do you mean by it?
- S: I mean he would simply say that's good or something like that and ask him to sit down.
- I: Tell me how is the nomination of a student to try to answer a question done following a wrong response from another student?
- S: Well it just goes to one of those who are raising their hands.
- I: Supposing we have students from both groups raising their hands, who do you think the teacher would choose to do the correction?
- S: I think the first chance would go to the lows.
- I: Why is that any idea?
- S: I think the reason he does this is to encourage the lows to try and catch up with those who are regarded as high. Of course this is a recent thing. The teacher seemed to often give such

chances to the highs in the first semester because they are the ones who give correct answers most of the time.

I: What happens during reading lessons?

S: I think the lows are just as likely to be called on as highs during reading lessons.

I: Why is it? Could it be because there is not much difference between the two in terms of their reading ability?

S: Yeah.

I: Supposing a student who is chosen to do some reading aloud is seen having some difficulty carrying out the task would he stop him?

S: I don't think he would do this. What he would do if he detects any confusion or mistakes in what you're doing is to ask you repeat or try again.

I: So if you are chosen to read a paragraph the teacher would wait for you until you get to the end of it.

S: That's right. He would give you the chance to finish it off.

I: Do you see any difference between boys and girls in terms of ability?

S: Yes I do I haven't got any clue as to what led to such difference though. Especially in the first semester it looked to me that girls dominated the class but the good news is that both boys and girls participate more or less equally now.

I: Tell me is there any teacher behaviour that you don't approve of?

S: One thing I don't want to see the teacher doing is yell at someone who is not able to answer correctly and perhaps struggling to answer. I think it would be a good idea for a teacher to give you some time to deal with difficult questions. And if you can't he should provide the answer and he should provide more encouragement.

#### **M8 (female middle achiever)**

I: Do you think your English teacher knows who is smart and who is not?

S: Of course yes. He will only need to look at how students answer questions. For example the bright students would give firm answers right away. They are as fast as lightning. But if you look at the way the weak students respond to questions you will see that their answers aren't as fast coming. You have lots of hesitations and things in their responses.

I: Do you as a member of your class know the bright and the weak students in your class?

S: Yes of course.

I: How do you know that?

S: I can identify the bright ones by looking at the way they answer questions and perform during reading aloud activities. They are the ones who usually give correct answers and do lots of reading in the class. But if you look at the weaker students you will notice that they don't give correct answers as often and you don't see them reading most of the time.

I: What sort of occasions are associated with teacher praise?

S: One of the occasions which lead to such praises is when the teacher gives our exam papers back. When he does this he might say you are a very clever boy or girl to someone who performed well. Similarly, he might also say you did badly on this exam I know you are a disaster and stuff like that to someone who performed poorly.

I: How about during question - answer activities?

S: You would hear similar stuff in question - answer activities too. For example if someone who previously performed poorly begins to answer questions he would encourage him. He would say I'm glad you're making good progress.

I: But who receives the most praise?

S: I think it is the highs who are praised more often. I think this is because they are the ones who answer correctly most of the time.

- S: I'd be pleased.  
 I: Would you most like the corrections to come from the teacher or fellow students?  
 S: I don't care who gives the correction as long as it is a valid correction. I don't mind whether it is the teacher or one of my classmates who is doing the correction.

**H9 (female high achiever)**

- I: Do you think your English teacher knows which students in your class are weak and which ones are strong?  
 S: Sure!  
 I: How is it possible for him to do that?  
 S: I think one way he is able to know this is through questions and answers. He is able to see who asks questions and answers questions correctly. Besides this he can learn about their behaviour from exam results and their behaviour in the classroom. For example it is the weak students who score low marks and they are also the ones who usually have private talks in the classroom during lesson times.  
 I: You said the teacher can identify the weak and the strong students from the questions they raise in class...  
 S: Yeah. It may sometimes be difficult to judge them on the basis of this criterion though. This is because there are a few students who are really brilliant but who also rarely raise their hands to answer or ask questions.  
 I: Do you as a member of the class know who are good and who are bad students in your class?  
 S: Yeah. Sort of. But I know the ones who give correct answers most of the time.  
 I: What is the usual response of the teacher to a correct response from a student?  
 S: He would say that's good keep the good job up don't feel shy I know you can do it and that sort of stuff.  
 I: What in your opinion makes some students participate less in class?  
 I: I think one reason is that they seem to always be busy talking to each other during lesson time. So they don't listen when the teacher asks questions. Nor do they do their homework properly.  
 I: What does the teacher do to encourage more participation?  
 S: Once the question is answered by a certain bright student, the teacher would turn to those who don't participate and ask them to repeat the answer given previously.  
 I: Does the teacher praise students even when their answer is wrong?  
 S: No not at all. Probably what he would do in a situation where the student has touched upon the answer is to give him more encouragement. He might say that's good and things like that.  
 I: Do you think the teacher is sometimes harsh with those who don't answer correctly? I mean does he get angry when this happens?  
 S: No he would just move on. However, he may praise or give encouragement to the highs when they answer correctly.  
 I: What sort of a student is called on following an unsuccessful attempt by another student?  
 S: Usually it is just a random thing. But he may give priority to those who rarely raise their hands if he happens to see one at the time.  
 I: Tell me about what happens during reading lessons?  
 S: Uhm the teacher sometimes decides to give the chance to read to those who are raising their hands. But at other times he insists on those who don't volunteer to read.  
 I: What would the teacher do if he sees someone having difficulty reading?  
 S: He would provide some assistance. He would say for them the words that are causing them problems.  
 I: What if the mistakes keep coming?

- S: He would urge them to do their homework and encourage them to ask questions and so on.
- I: If the teacher has to be harsh with a student who has given a wrong answer what type of student would that be?
- S: Weak students I should say. I think the teacher gets angry and criticises them
- I: You mean you don't see this happening to highs?
- S: That is very rare with them.
- I: What type of student takes the chance to try a question following an unacceptable response from another student?
- S: It is usually the highs. Then the teacher would ask the student who made the unsuccessful attempt to repeat the answer given by the bright students.
- I: Tell me what happens during reading lessons?
- S: Well, as far as the nomination of students is concerned the opportunity to read goes to one of those who are offering to read.
- I: What happens if you make mistakes while reading?
- S: The teacher would point out to us the correct way of saying it.
- I: He wouldn't stop you and get another student to take over?
- S: No, he would let you finish it with him assisting you.
- I: Does this apply to both the lows and the highs?
- S: That's correct.
- I: What is it that the teacher does with lows that he doesn't do with highs?
- S: He tends to give priority to lows during reading lessons. This seems to be the case no matter whether they are raising their hands or not
- I: And anything else that's associated with highs?
- S: Nothing.

#### **H11 (male high achiever)**

- I: Do you think your English teacher knows who's good and who's not so good in your class?
- S: I think so. I remember one day the teacher doing this. You know the students sitting in the far side of the class don't you? They're extremely weak. So what happened was that the teacher selected the good students in the class and asked us to help them with their lessons. So I'm sure he knows us very well.
- I: How do you think he came to know who is who in the class?
- S: I think it is because the highs participate more. This is because they seem to know the answers to most questions asked in the class.
- I: How about you do you know which students are good and which ones are not so good in your class?
- S: Yes I do. For example I know that the teacher considers me as one of the highs in the class. But then I also understand that there are certain things that I don't really know. So I have to seek help from those who know better. I know the smart ones and they are also the group who participate more in the class. So you know it's not difficult to identify.
- I: Do you see any difference between the way the teacher responds to correct answers coming from highs and lows?
- S: I think he gives more encouragement and praise to the lows in this situation. He would say good very good keep it up and that sort of stuff when they give correct answers. I think the reason he does this is because he wants them to catch up with the highs. He seems to think that they need such encouragement to do this. But he wouldn't do this with highs because they are doing well already you see what I mean? It is the group of weak students who need this sort of things I think.
- I: Who gets more chance to answer questions?

It seems to me that lows are more likely to be nominated if they raise their hands. The problem though is that they don't usually offer to answer. So this leaves the highs more chance to try and answer. However, if lows showed more willingness to try, they would be given more opportunity to answer. I'm sure the teacher puts lows first.

I: What happens when a student fails to provide the correct answer? I mean does the teacher's reaction differ according to whether the student is high or low?

S: What happens is that if a low achiever gives a wrong answer the teacher would call on a brighter student to provide a correct one. But if it is a high achiever who gave the wrong answer, he would direct the question to some one with similar ability. I don't mean the lows are given no chance to try and give a correction to a response from another low achiever. They could also get such an opportunity if they know the answer. Finally the teacher would give some explanation concerning the point in focus

I: Tell me about what happens during reading lessons?

S: I think I like the way the teacher goes about it. What normally happens is that the teacher would first read the passage aloud for us and then he would distribute the chances to read among those who are showing some interest to read. It doesn't matter whether you are a weak or strong student. Further chances to read are also created for those who haven't had the chance to read when the teacher writes sentences on the blackboard and asks them to read them for him.

I: When does he do this? Does he also do it mainly for the benefit of the weak whenever he does it?

S: Yeah but the thing is that the less able ones don't participate much even in activities like this. So in the end it is still the highs who get more opportunities even in the activities which require reading from the black board too.

I: Are there times when the weak are praised even when their answer turns out to be wrong or defective in some way?

S: Yeah. I mean you can see such things when the teacher notices some signs of enthusiasm and eagerness to contribute or participate. So if the student is seen making an effort and showing a strong desire to know more he would be praised for it and given more encouragement if the answer he provides is nothing like the desired one. And it seems to me that this is working with some students. I can see some students who are getting more and more motivated to learn and making some progress. The teacher would appreciate and encourage such behaviour. On the other hand nothing like this would take place if the student is perceived as someone who is careless and unmotivated.

I: Can you think of any teacher behaviour which is usually associated with highs and not with lows?

S: I personally believe that the teacher always tries to treat all students equally. I don't think he ever decides to give more attention to the bright because they have good performance. Similarly he doesn't ignore lows simply because they happen to perform less. xxxx But I must also admit that he seems to provide more praise to highs. This I think is because they show more interest in the lessons while several other students in the class seem to switch off most of the time.

I: Do you see any difference between boys and girls in terms of their classroom behaviour?

S: Yes absolutely. Girls seem to be more active participators in all subjects including English. For example, our Amharic teacher gives more chances to girls to participate. And she tells the class why she is doing that. She would say they have no time for schoolwork at home because most of the household chore rests on their shoulders. I'm afraid I don't approve of such behaviour on the part of the teacher. It seems to me that there are also several boys whose labour is demanded in the family.

- S: Sure! Why not. If he knows the answer and raises his hand, chances are that he will be chosen to give the correction
- I: How are students chosen to do reading in reading lessons?
- S: I think this is done in two different ways. Some times the nomination follows the seating arrangement. I mean he gets us to read parts of the text one after another in a kind of round reading. But the way it is usually done involves getting one of those who have volunteered to read.
- I: Tell me what happens if a student is making frequent mistakes while reading?
- S: The teacher would try to help him. I mean he would write the bits that the student is unable to read correctly on the blackboard and draw the student's attention to the way they are read.
- I: What if the student makes too many errors? Would he stop him and ask another student to take over?
- S: No. He would try to help him until he gets it right. He would also wait patiently for the student to finish the assigned part.
- I: Would the teacher praise a student for an answer that is correct only partly?
- S: I think he would. If turns out that the response contained half of the answer while the remaining is wrong he would praise the student for what he got correct at least.
- I: What happens when a student fails to respond? I mean if he remains silent or makes no attempt to answer a question directed to him?
- S: He would encourage him to say something by way of trying at least.
- I: Is there any chance of a student being praised after giving a wrong answer?
- S: No. One could be praised for trying though.
- I: XXXX
- S: Yeah. But I think he treats them equally.
- I: Tell me is there anything you would like the teacher doing or avoiding?
- S: Uhm I like it when the teacher asks us questions and gives us some guidance.

#### **M14 (male middle achiever)**

- I: What happens when a low achiever gives a correct answer to a question?
- S: He would be praised. he would say you are a very good lad and stuff.
- I: Who receives more encouragement and praise?
- S: Weaker students.
- I: Does the teacher ever praise weaker students when the answer they give is known to be wrong?
- S: Yeah I think so. There are times when the teacher would first say a few words of encouragement and give the student time to think to encourage him to produce the correct answer.
- I: Right So it means the weak get more praise and encouragement when they fail to produce the correct answer.
- S: Yeah I mean it is a kind of moral boosting thing.
- I: I saw several students who don't participate in your class. Why is that?
- S: But there are also some who don't like to participate even when they have the answers to the questions asked.
- I: Does the teacher criticize students for something wrong?
- S: Yes he does.
- I: Who does he criticize most of the time?
- S: All types of students.
- I: What happens when someone fails to perform correctly after repeated unsuccessful attempts?
- S: He would give him some time to think. If this fails he would call on a brighter student.

- S: No I can't remember of one. But he may just say not bad or something like that in order to avoid the student feeling embarrassed especially if he is one of those who participate rarely. For example if xxxxxx
- I: Right. What happens when a high fails to produce a correct answer?
- S: He would urge him to try again and get it right. May be he would repeat the question for him and see if can fix it in his second attempt. But if the student fails again, he would give the correct answer himself and then go on to give a bit of explanation to the whole class.
- I: Tell me what happens during reading lessons?
- S: If a weak student is given a chance to read and falters repeatedly while reading or shows signs of incompetence, the teacher would just ask him to sit down
- I: Would he do the same if he saw similar behaviour from the high?
- S: I think he would be disappointed. And kind of scold him. However this is not very common among the highs as they usually manage to avoid such things by practising a lot and performing well in the classroom.
- I: Do you see any difference between boys and girls?
- S: Yeah. I mean if you look at the participation of students in our class you will clearly see that it is girls who dominate the class. Of course their number is also greater than boys in the class. To just return to the your question, yes there is a clear difference between the two. The participation and performance of boys is not as high. I have no idea why this is so though.
- I: What is it that the teacher does to help the low achievers?
- S: He urges them to sit next to bright students and get some assistance from them
- I: Can you think of any of your teacher's behaviour which seems to be closely associated with one of the groups I mean highs or lows?
- S: Yeah. I mean it looks to me that the teacher is more tolerant towards the lows. He doesn't scold them much. May be because he wants to encourage them to work harder and improve their position. May be he believes that any harsh treatment would discourage them from doing so. But the way I see it the situation with the highs seems a bit different. I think the slightest mistake or misbehaviour from the highs is enough to set him off.
- I: Are you saying that the teacher is quite prepared to put up with some undesired behaviours from lows and nothing like that happens when the situation involves highs?
- S: Absolutely. My guess is that the teacher thinks lows need to be treated with glove hands in order to protect their feelings and if they are to make some progress. If he scolds them or treats them in some harsh manner they may feel bad about it and this may affect their interest in the subject. But the same behaviour from the teacher is less likely to produce the same effect on highs. They know they perform well and do their work properly. So any such negative behaviour or negative remarks from him will not have the same power on the highs and therefore can't make them feel bad or discourage them in any way. In fact it looks to me that the highs seem to have learned not to let such behaviours or remarks from the teacher carry much weight with them anyway

#### **M17 (female middle achiever)**

- I: Right. Obviously students in one class differ in terms of their ability. I mean some may be bright some weak and other somewhere in between. Do you think your English teacher knows which students fall in which category?
- S: I suppose so. I mean as a teacher he is better placed to do this because a lot of asking and answering of questions goes on in the classroom and students who give correct answers most of the time clearly stand out in the class. So yes I think so.
- I: How about you? Do you know who is who in the class?

- S: It is usually the high who are asked to come out and show something.  
I: What happens if a low fails to produce a correct answer?  
S: The chance will go to another student.  
I: What about when the high fails to produce the desired answer?  
S: He'll be asked to try again.
-

## Appendix 6

*Appendix 6 refers to the transcript of the interview with the teacher.*

- I: ...Right. Tell me. How do Class 6E compare with the other grade six classes you are currently teaching?
- T: Well it is usually the case that at the beginning of the academic year when they meet someone as their newly assigned teacher for the first time, most students strive to impress the teacher. This was the case with the group you asked me about too. Everybody was seen making an effort to win a favourable assessment of their ability from me. However, as time went by the participation of many began to fall considerably as they eventually retreated into silence when the lessons started to take a more serious tone. Going back to your question, I'm teaching four groups of grade six students of which Class 6F and Class 6C better than Class 6E. I think there are more bright students in F and C.
- I: Give me an idea about the status of the fourth group?
- T: Oh yeah. I forgot to mention that group 6D. This group is more similar to 6E than to the other two groups in terms of the proportion of stronger students. With regards to D and E, I think E is only slightly better than D which is the weakest.
- I: Talking about the potential of students, how good are the students you perceive as good learners of English? I mean are you saying that someone who is good does really well in most areas of the subject say reading, grammar pronunciation etc. Or is it possible for a student to be really good at reading and not so good at grammar spelling and so on.?
- T: Um. yeah I should think so. If you look at the pupils in 6E you will see that there are a few students who are quite good at reading but not so good as far as structure is concerned. In particular they seem to have some difficulty in the use of tenses. The good news however is that such students are making a lot of progress because I devote more attention to it in class. On the other hand you have those who are good performers in the area of grammar but less so in reading. So there appears to be two categories of good students. I have to stress that I am talking about them in relative terms. I'm just comparing the two groups of good students in my class.
- I: I'm just wondering if there are also students in this class who are generally good performers in both reading and grammar?
- T: Well, like I said the whole thing is relative and I'm just comparing students in one class independent of other groups. I mean there may be students in other classes who do better than those I consider strong in Class 6E. But so long as they stand out in that class I would be inclined to maintain my perception of them as good students even though I realise that they could be outperformed by students in other groups. On the whole the pupils I consider good in Class 6E are generally good performers in both reading and other areas compared with the rest of the class. But I still find it hard to speak about their abilities in absolute terms.
- I: Can I ask you a related question? Are those who are good at English also good at other school subjects? The reason I'm asking this is because I understand that you have access to their scores in other subjects as a homeroom teacher of the class one of whose job is to compile and keep a record of their results in all subjects.
- I: That's right. It seems to me that there is a strong correlation between performance in English and performance in other subjects. As far as I can tell from their results for the first semester, the relative status of students in English has a parallel in their position in other

show much interest to answer questions. Under the circumstances you have no option but to force them to try if you are really committed to the idea that all students need to participate. As far as I am concerned, I think weak students are the ones who need more attention in class. It is unfortunate that I felt I was paying more attention to those who were raising their hands in some of the lessons you observed. I had no idea what you were interested in that's why. Normally, however, I devote more attention to those who I believe are weak and thus need encouragement and help. I usually spend a whole lot of time talking to them. Some times in class other times outside class in the absence of the other groups.

I: Let's talk about the average students. I mean those who come in between the high and low achievers. Do students in this group resemble highs or lows in terms of potential or performance? Are they more biased towards one group more than the other?

T: I think they resemble the highs more than the lows. If you take people like Fekadu, Sofonias and Yohanes the one I referred to earlier, all these are good students. They certainly don't belong to the category of lows, although they usually have to be coaxed first to answer questions.

I: Do you usually praise your students when they answer questions? If you do praise how do you distribute your praise among the three groups?

T: I usually praise students when they produce extraordinary answers or exceptionally brilliant responses. But I may also praise a student whom I perceive as low when he or she produces a correct answer although the answer may fall short of the standards I set for the highs. So I may be inclined to praise a student about whose ability to answer a particular question I was initially sceptical when he or she provides the desired answer. Just to lift his morale a bit. I think I would say that's very good keep it up and things of that sort. But I may also praise highs when they give a correct answer just to help them maintain their positive self-esteem.

I: Do you ever praise someone regardless of the fact that the answer she or he managed to produce was not to your satisfaction or even wrong?

T: Oh, yeah. I certainly do on some occasions. For example, I might say that's good following a wrong initial response from a low achiever and go on to give the correct answer myself or get one of the students to provide the expected answer. All I am trying to show by doing this is that I am pleased with the attempt he or she made. I may not explicitly comment on the correctness or incorrectness of the initial response. I would simply say good in order to encourage further contributions or participation from the same student in future. So it is a morale boosting thing. I would then nominate one of the more able ones to provide a correct answer to the same question. Or I may just give the answer myself without drawing students' attention to the defective nature of the previous answer.

I: So what exactly is the basis on which you are praising the student if the answer is unacceptable to you?

T: It is just the participation the attempt to answer questions that is being valued here. The student will be praised for showing willingness to answer and for making an effort to come out of his or her shell and take part in public exchanges. I might also do the same when someone I see as a weak student touches upon the desired answer. I won't treat the incomplete or the partial answer as if it is a perfect answer just for the sake protecting the feeling of the producer of the answer. What I might do is just praise him for the attempt and make necessary changes to improve the quality of the original response.

I: Would you do the same with those low achievers who always make an effort to participate in class or those high achievers who generally keep low profile in class?

T: It is not in my style to praise students frequently. I generally tend to praise occasionally. I see no point in praising high achievers every time they produce correct answers. Yes I know they are good they see themselves as good students. So my praise carries little weight with such

catch up with their peers. I might also get them to join a group of more able students and work with and be assisted by them.

I: Supposing a weak student fails to provide the correct answer or fails to respond at all and you have to turn to another student to get the answer, what sort of student would that be? I mean would you call on someone who happens to sit next to the student who was unable to respond or would you look for someone who you think is better than the first one?

T: I would generally redirect the question to one of those who are raising their hands. If a neighbour of the original student bids I would call on him or her.

I: so it doesn't matter whether the second student is better than the first or not

T: Exactly. So long as he volunteers to have a chance, I wouldn't mind whether the student happens to be one of the weak or not.

I: Would you behave in the same way if the student who fails to respond or give a correct response happens to be one of those who you believe are bright?

T: Oh yeah exactly. But it is interesting to see that not two bright students are the same I mean equally bright in all respects. If you take two highs it is often the case that what turns out to be easy to one proves to be difficult to the other So if a bright student loses, I would look for another bright student. If the answer is not forthcoming after being redirected to another student, then obviously I would be the one who would be giving the answer. So that is the way I usually do it. But I will always remember to try and get answers from students themselves before I decide to provide one.

I: Can I ask you in what situation you decide to provide extra information in the form of explanations or clues that might lead to the desired answer?

T: Sorry I didn't catch that.

I: I'm just wondering if and at what stage in the question - answer exchange you would give additional information that might lead to the correct answer? It could be in the form of revision of previously covered material or a reminder of where in the textbook the relevant information is available and that sort of thing.

T: Well what I normally do when a student fails to respond is that I ask another student to try the same question. If again subsequent attempts at the question turn out to be unsuccessful, I might try to point out some relevant details say about when we dealt with the material in focus where to locate the information needed to answer the question or even encourage them to consult their books. I may also join them in the search for the section of the textbook which deals with the area in question. But I must say that I do this only occasionally. But I would do it with all sorts of students in different situations say when the weak fail to respond or when the highs get it wrong etc.

I: Does it mean that you have to first see that the question is proving difficult even to the bright student before you give such assistance?

T: Exactly. I have to put the question to brighter students and see if they can answer it before I do anything. If the correct answer doesn't come or if the answer turns out to be inadequate in some way, I may resort to explanations and stuff.

I: So am I right in thinking that the likelihood of you giving such explanations or other forms of additional information is higher when a bright student fails to respond or gives a wrong answer compared with the occasions in which such behaviours come from the lows?

T: I think it is in a way a question of the frequency with which the two groups try to answer questions. Clearly, it is the group of high achievers that volunteer more and therefore called on more often. It seems to me that there are more instances of wrong answers from highs than from lows. This is because most of the interaction in the class involves this group. So I would imagine that highs are the ones who receive more clues and explanations because the lows rarely volunteer to answer.

## Appendix 7

*Appendix 7 refers to the questionnaire used in assessing the teacher's perception.*

### Teacher Individual Assessment Questionnaire (TIAQ)

Name of student \_\_\_\_\_

Ability-----

- high
- low
- middle
- I can't say

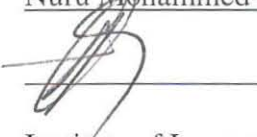
*Instructions:* First fill in the name and ability level of each student. Then complete the questionnaire based on how you think YOU interact with each individual student in the classroom. When you complete the questionnaire for each student you will probably need to read each item replacing X by the name of the individual. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. The teacher just moves on without any comment when X answers a question correctly.  
 always       sometimes       never
2. The teacher praises X when s/he answers a question correctly.  
 always       sometimes       never
3. The teacher provides a correct (complete) answer when X gives a partially correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
4. The teacher encourages X to correct himself/herself or improve his/her answer when s/he gives a partially correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
5. The teacher criticises X when s/he gives an answer which is only partially correct  
 always       sometimes       never
6. The teacher praises X when s/he gives a partially correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
7. The teacher just moves on without saying anything when X gives a partially correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
8. The teacher interrupts X when s/he adds something wrong to a partly correct answer in an attempt to make it more acceptable.  
 always       sometimes       never
9. The teacher redirects a question to another student when X provides a partially correct answer to it.  
 always       sometimes       never
10. The teacher returns to X after getting another student to give a correct answer to a question which X initially answered only partly (correctly).  
 always       sometimes       never
11. The teacher just moves on without any comment when X fails to give a correct answer.  
 always       sometimes       never
12. The teacher praises X even when s/he doesn't know the right answer.  
 always       sometimes       never

13. The teacher scolds X for not knowing the correct answer to a question.  
 always       sometimes       never
14. The teacher provides the correct answer when X fails to give one.  
 always       sometimes       never
15. The teacher gives X a chance to self-correct when s/he gets it wrong  
 always       sometimes       never
16. The teacher calls on someone else when X fails to provide a correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
17. The teacher returns to X to ask him/ her to repeat the answer to a question which was provided by someone else following X's failure to answer correctly.  
 always       sometimes       never
18. The teacher provides a brief explanation of relevant points following X's failure to answer correctly  
 always       sometimes       never
19. The teacher gives X a long enough time to respond when s/he is unable to try  
 always       sometimes       never
20. The teacher tells X off when s/he fails to give a response to a question he asks.  
 always       sometimes       never
21. The teacher calls on someone else when X fails to respond to a question he asks  
 always       sometimes       never
22. The teacher provides the correct answer when X fails to respond  
 always       sometimes       never
23. The teacher returns to X to ask him/ her to repeat a correct answer which was provided by someone else following X's lack of response  
 always       sometimes       never
24. The teacher provides a brief explanation of points relevant to a question following X's failure to respond  
 always       sometimes       never
25. The teacher uses English when responding to X's correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
26. The teacher uses English when responding to X's wrong answer  
 always       sometimes       never
27. The teacher uses English when responding to X's partially correct answer  
 always       sometimes       never
28. During reading aloud activities, the teacher stops X and calls on someone else to do the reading when X fails to read correctly  
 always       sometimes       never
29. The teacher allows X to continue reading after giving corrections when s/he fails to read correctly  
 always       sometimes       never
30. The teacher expects X to correct himself/herself when s/he makes a mistake while reading  
 always       sometimes       never

## Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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