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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND  
LITERATURE  
(GRADUATE PROGRAMME)**

**EXPLORING PROVISION OF ORAL FEEDBACK DURING  
CLASSROOM INTERACTION IN EFL CLASS: FOCUS ON GRADE  
TWELVE IN EAST SHEWA ZONE**

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**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to review how foreign language teachers provide oral feedback to learners' errors. The main aim of this study was to find out the types of errors are usually corrected and the kinds of oral feedback teachers provide for learners during classroom interaction. Over the last three decades, the role that the provision of oral feedback played in the foreign language learning has been highly a controversial issue. In the field of foreign language learning, however, there growing consensus among the majority of the researchers concerning the significance of error correction. Although the facilitative role of the provision of oral feedback for learners' error has an empirical support, the claims regarding its impact on foreign language learning has yet to be fully or decisively substantiated. In order to move this line of the research forward, it is important to examine the issue from the foreign language teaching literature.

Hawas Preparatory Government School grade twelve English language teachers were the target of the study. As the number of the subjects is small all grade twelve English language teachers were included in the study. To achieve the objectives set, necessary data were collected through classroom observation, questionnaire and interview

The study showed that majority of the teachers found oral feedback as an important tool to help learners to achieve a higher proficiency in foreign language. The investigation indicated that teachers choose to give different kinds of oral feedback in different occasion explicitly or implicitly. The intention of this study has also been to determine what kinds of oral feedback enhance or undermines the chance for learners uptake. The subjects have, among several factors stressed the importance of self correction, implicit and delayed feedback as a means of building learners confidence and to feel comfortable in learning the foreign language at large.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

In Ethiopian high schools, English language is studied as a foreign language in addition to being a medium of instruction. Before the introduction of communicative language teaching methodology, great emphasis was given to grammar teaching. "The emphasis is on explanation and knowledge of grammar, learning grammar rules and patterns and on accuracy of sentences. Teachers often target accuracy in their teaching of the target language." Atkins, Hailom and Nuru(1995:149) As a result learners give more attention to learning grammatical rules of the target language. Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996) have further described the effect of what most of our high school learners tend to think that it is bad to make errors or mistakes since they will be ridiculed by other learners or their teacher. If they do not speak correctly, the teacher's job is to correct any deviation from the total accuracy. So, they are very careful not to take any risks, not to say any thing unless it is correct. The focus on teaching grammar in isolation has limited the feedback activities. Given the teachers practice learners are very much reserved to give feedback in classrooms. This is in fact, a harmful practice and hinders the learning process.

Feedback has been recognized as a vital provision in foreign language classroom. Oral feedback is used in foreign language classroom regularly. However, there is no formal rule on how and when it should be given. One way of language teaching is providing learners with greater opportunity to use the target language. Feedback is directly related to the language teaching methodology as language learning activities demand feedback either from the teacher or the peers. Foreign language teachers often attempt to facilitate language learning activities through various types of feedback. Teachers have different experiences when it comes to giving oral feedback and therefore it can be very different depending on who is providing it. Teachers often give feedback when learners make errors. It is also a common practice for teachers to give feedback on different occasions directly or indirectly. The feedback learners get from their teacher as well as from their peers can influence their learning.

Most of the feedback that takes place during foreign language lesson is guided by the teacher and thus have a significant role in how learners learn and what happens in the classroom. Various researches and theories to language teaching are in favor of employing appropriate

methodology in the provision of feedback. Perrot (1982), Chaudron (1988) and Edge (1989) point out that feedback is the essential element of classroom interaction. Exley and Denick (2004) suggest that "If teaching and learning process are to work effectively, there must be a connection bridge between the teacher and the learner. Feedback is effective only if learners can 'hear it' 'understand it' and then most importantly act up on it in order to improve what they do.'".

On the whole, the ways in which learners are given feedback from their teachers play a great role not only in their learning the language rules but it also contributes to the learners' motivation which is one of the factors that contribute to effective learning of foreign language. It is important for teachers to use oral feedback in a more efficient manner and actually get the learners to learn something from it. Teachers' feedback clearly relates to both oral and written discourse, however, the focus of this study will center on oral production.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Feedback is an essential element of learning. It makes great impact on day-to-day classroom practice on the language taught and used in the classroom. Few years ago, in 1996, communicative language teaching methodology was introduced in high schools in Ethiopia. Since then the nature of most of the tasks done in language classroom demands the activities to be done in pairs or small groups. To achieve this goal, in most cases, learners are supposed to interact among themselves and with their teachers more frequently. One will realize that the learners in Ethiopia, as opposed to the ones who speak English as their first language have considerably few opportunities to use the language communicatively outside and within the classroom among peers. This implies that the teacher is the main source learners expect to communicate with, and as a result she/he is bound to satisfy learners' expectations in terms of feedback.

However, as the number of learners increases in government high schools from time to time, obviously, making individual contact with every learner during class time is unrealistic. So, teachers are obliged to give feedback at a lesser frequency than what is expected of them on regular basis. Large classroom can affect the interaction between the teacher and learners in the classroom. Teachers may not spend significantly more time on doing a task than on discipline or

organizational matters .It can affect not only the quality of teaching delivered but it can also affect learners' concentration .Teachers often finish tasks at a later time than what actually it should be. It is demanding from the teacher to adapt group discussion, pair work and to group learners according to the task by diverse teaching methods

Teachers are expected to interact with their learners regularly to facilitate learners learning. Giving timely feedback for the learners is very important so that learners can engage in their activities effectively. Learners will improve their language proficiency rapidly if they are actively engaged in feedback provision .Unless learners are engaged fully in the interaction in communicative activities, foreign language classes will continue to be dominated by teachers.

This study attempts to address the following research questions:

What kinds of errors and language elements are corrected by teachers and learners more frequently?

What kinds of feedback are provided during classroom interaction?

To what extent students are offered the opportunity to self correct?

### **1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

Provision of feedback by teachers is very important to assist learners to learn the language effectively .Thus, learners should be given variety of feedback that can assist them to use the language adequately. Assessing the actual provision of feedback in foreign language classes is important to facilitate language learning process .The main objective of this study is an attempt to explore teachers' provision of oral feedback during classroom interaction. This study also tries to investigate the kinds of corrective feedback foreign language teachers implement in their classes. The types of oral feedback that lead learners to correct their own errors will be searched

### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Recent local studies have shown that both teachers and learners face problems while they are attempting to give oral feedback and interact effectively in foreign language classes. This study ,therefore, aims at providing relevant information concerning teachers' provision of oral feedback during classroom interaction in promoting target language learning, It will benefit foreign language teachers by creating awareness of their teaching in facilitating classroom

interaction sufficiently in conjunction with giving constructive oral feedback .In addition to this; the study will examine foreign language teachers focuses in giving oral feedback during classroom interaction.

### **1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study will be conducted only in Adama town. Although the study requires observing eighteen sections of grade twelve at Hawas Preparatory School, four sections will be selected from the eighteen sections at random. Grade twelve foreign language teachers will be contacted to explain the purpose of the study and its relevance and to seek their agreement to participate in the study. Questionnaire, interview and classroom observation will be implemented during the study.

### **1.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in one government preparatory school .It was also limited to deal with grade twelve English language teachers .Therefore , the finding could not be generalized to other similar level of grade .Absence of adequate materials and scarcity of local studies on the topic in the Ethiopian context restricted the research information. The researcher believes that had provision of oral feedback been studied for longer period of time by increasing the number of subjects and schools, the findings would have been comprehensive.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

One of the many ways teachers attempt to guide their learners is by providing explicit or implicit feedback about their use of the foreign language. Language teachers want their learners to be able to understand and use the feedback they provide; it is essential to consider which kind of feedback is suitable for the level of learners and the purpose of the lesson.

According to Stern (1993:123)“feedback relates to the degree to which the teacher corrects errors; error corrected versus errors ignored .This option has not appeared as a distinguishing feature of different methods of language teaching. In all forms of formal instruction, the student is made aware of, at least some of the time, when he or she has made an error.” Similarly, Brown (1994:205) underscores that “learners will inevitably make mistakes in the process of acquisition, and indeed will impede that process if they do not commit errors and benefit in the form of feedback on those errors." As learners test their foreign language use in various ways, teachers need means to indicate to learners that some thing can not be said in the foreign language; the way they use the foreign language is different in some ways from their native language.

During classroom interaction learners make errors for various reasons .So, it may be necessary for learners to get feedback from the classroom members or from the teacher. “Feedback relates to the degree to which the teachers correct errors. It is only in communicative approach to language teaching that withholding of explanation and feedback as a phase in the process of instruction was deliberately cultivated in order to give the learners a chance for developing their own communication strategy.”(Stern 1983:490-91).

In general, feedback refers to the response given by the teacher to efforts by the learner to communicate. Littlewood (1981:90)says “Feedback provides learners with knowledge how successful their performance has been.” Harmer (19991:237-38) has made a distinction between content and form feedback “.Content feedback concerns an assessment of how well the students perform an activity rather than as a language exercise, whereas form feedback, on the other hand,

does tell the student how well they have performed linguistically, how accurate they have been.”

## **2.2 ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) CLASSROOM IN THE ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT**

Foreign language learning can be influenced by so many factors. Among other things the class size, the methodologies implemented in the classrooms, learners motivation in learning the language, the textbook, the extent learners' mother tongue is used in classrooms, previous language learning experiences of the learners and the qualification of foreign language teachers and their devotion in teaching . Not only the qualification of English language teachers matter but also the level of proficiency of the subject teachers is also important and performance of learners .As English is a medium of instruction in high schools, the more the learners learn subjects in English, the more they have the means to use the language at least in classroom setting for communication.. Despite the fact that currently, high school learners do not have sufficient foreign language proficiency for their level.

Awol (1999:8-10) has given his account on English language teaching in high school.

As English is a compulsory subject, in addition to its being a language of instruction... it is given a lot of emphasis by the Ministry of Education. As a body that decides on period allotment for school subjects, the Ministry has been given English six hours a week which is a maximum number of periods per subject per week. Each period lasts between 40-45 minutes.

The way textbooks are organized in units and the monotonous patterns each units begins with a reading passage followed by comprehension question and vocabulary exercises. Teachers orientation of foreign language teaching is geared towards enabling students to pass examination rather than to use it in their learning of other school subjects...

As a result of this , learners with out adequate English language proficiency for the expected level come to high school with ,most of them are not any where near prepared to do any thing with English at all. This is irony for the facts that learners have studied English for twelve years as a subject and which are devoted to studying all other subjects in English.

Stoddart, (1986:6) as cited in Seime (1999:15) commented on current learners' English language ability and its consequence in learning other subjects through English.

... the English they possessed by vast majority of students at all levels is totally inadequate for the purpose of learning other subject through it .Students do not possess sufficient English even to understand what they hear from their teachers or read in their textbooks , let alone to participate actively through their own

speaking and writing ... As a result of this inability of students to functioning through English, the quality of teaching and learning in schools has been very adversely affected... mere rote learning often prevents, with no critical and creative participation of students, and little enough of even simple comprehension by them of what they are being told.

In spite of aforementioned facts, the aim of learning a foreign language is to enable learners to complete their high school studies and possibly to pursue their studies in higher institutions and universities. The English foreign language program for high school learners consists of two cycles and successful completion of the second cycle represents the requirements to join university. The activities that focus on linguistic form are moderate, and the evaluation of students, which includes speaking, listening, reading and writing are evenly distributed throughout the course units.

However, Ellis (1994:522-23) emphasized that there are many other factors such as "beliefs, aptitude, learning styles, personality and motivation which influence the ability to learn a new and a foreign language." Harmer (1991:51) adds "classroom that are badly lit and over crowded can be excessively demotivating but unfortunately many of them exist in schools." In Chaudron view (1988:121) "the typical foreign language classroom, the classroom belief is that the fullest competence in the foreign language is achieved by means of teacher providing a rich target language environment, in which not only interaction and drill are executed into target language, but also disciplinary and management options."

It is an undeniable fact foreign language teachers in Ethiopia often use learners mother tongue during foreign language class time for various reasons. There can be also individual differences how frequently foreign language teachers use learners mother tongue in conducting their lesson. As a result learners overtly ask their teacher for help, by using their mother tongue in order to solve the problems they are facing or to fill the draw back.

Littlewood (1981:45), strongly argues against the use of student mother tongue in a foreign language class time.

Many teachers use learners' mother tongue in this aspect of their work. This may often be a necessary decision, in the interest of organizing the lesson clearly and efficiently. However, it also means sacrificing valuable opportunities for well motivated foreign language use. In addition, it ends for devalue the foreign

language as a vehicle for communication, learners see it as allocated to communicatively non essential domain such as drills or dialogue practice, while the mother tongue remains apparent medium for discourse matters of immediate importance. Many learners are likely to remain unconvinced by teachers attempt to make them accept the foreign language as effective means satisfying their communicative needs, if teachers abandon it as soon as such need arise in the immediate classroom situation

On the contrary Eldridge (1996: 303) in his study concluded by saying:

English language teachers have for very long time been convinced about reducing even abolishing students' mother tongue in the target language classroom. The reason for this is presumably to maximize the amount of speaking in the target language, and this improves learning efficiency... he further argues that there is no empirical evidence to support the notion that restricting the mother tongue use would necessarily improve learning efficiency.

To abolish totally the use of mother tongue during foreign language classroom may not be effective; learners have to be told in the language they understand when they are in difficult position to grasp the concept or the forwarded ideas. On the other hand, totally neglecting or minimizing the use of foreign language during foreign language class time is equally inhibiting learners from practicing the foreign language at least in classroom context.

### **2.2.1 TEACHERS'ROLE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS**

In many traditional language classes learners have been made to feel that errors being discredited on the teacher and learner alike and have been criticized or punished for making so many errors. One of the most inhibiting factors in formal learning situation is the fear of making mistakes and being ridiculous either by their classmates or by their teacher.

Teachers hold tremendous responsibility to shape the learners language learning strategies by modeling appropriate communication, modifying the quantity and quality of students' opportunity to participate, and by setting standards in which the learners performance will be measured. Teachers need to consider the context in which the learners are learning, the language and the necessity of error correction for particular lesson practice. Teachers have to be resourceful in providing a variety of feedback as one type of feedback is not suitable for all learners in the classroom.

Furthermore, Chaudron(1988:133) stresses

Teachers may be unaware of the impact of their feedback on students, and at times even feel that their input has little effect. Aside from giving oral instruction, the primary role of language teachers is often considered to be the provision of both error correction a form of negative feedback, and a positive reaction as approval of learners' production. Teachers are expected to execute their vested power in instructional authority to evaluating and all students behavior, nonverbal and verbal

The importance of encouraging fluency, encouraging accuracy, and building good self image of the learner is the responsibility of the foreign language teachers. As pointed out by Richard and Lockart (1995:103) "In communicative language teaching, teachers role are these: The teacher has two main roles; the first is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the class room, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant with in the learning and teaching group." Individual learners may well differ in terms of particular error correction techniques most appropriate for their unique language development need. Teachers' decision should involve a lot of different conditions specific to the learner.

### **2.2.2 LEARNERS' ROLE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

In common view, there are different roles for learners learning a foreign language in supportive environment in which it is spoken, use in everyday situation and learning in a formal classroom. Learners would assume certain roles where only the teachers have got the command of the language and hardly any available exposure other than the formal classroom. In classroom teachers are likely to guide learners' activities in light of the objective of the lesson. As the lesson in the formal classroom is carefully controlled, sequenced and selected, in most cases learners are forced to follow the pattern.

First of all, when someone learns a language in supportive environment, unlike the formal classroom, the learner has got the means to use the language focusing on the message (meaning), but in the formal classroom situation in the Ethiopian context it is on drills (activities). Therefore, learning English as a foreign language is a continuous challenging endeavor for learners learning in the absence of supporting environment notably with the lack of sufficient input. In such cases, learners shouldered great responsibility. Harmer (1991:37) confirms this by saying "If students make the most of their own resources, and if they can take their own

decisions about what to do next and how best to study, their learning is better and they achieve more.” Littlewood (1981:59) has indicated the role of the learner engaging in activities at various levels. “Success is thought to be based on such factors as checking one’s performance in language, being willing to guess and take risks with both comprehension and production, seeking out the opportunity to practice.” If foreign language teachers take a substantial share of classroom time to talk, the learners have very limited chance to rehearse the language at least in classroom situation. Still the provision of oral feedback in facilitating the activities of the lesson can enhance or hinder the role of the learners.

Relying on the approaches and methods in which the learning is delivered, learners do have different roles in different situations. For example, “very limited roles available in audio lingual methodology for learners. Learners were seen as stimulus response mechanism while learning was a direct result of repetition practice.” Richards and Rodger (2001:28). In contrast Littlewood (1981:19) suggests, “in many of communicative activities, the teacher creates a situation and sets an activity in motion but it is the learners themselves who are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion.” In some cases learners may prefer team problem solving situation in group/pair or more individual work other time.

### **2.3 CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

There are various terms used in identifying mistake, error, corrective feedback and feedback as synonyms. Because of possible confusion arising from the use of these terminologies alternatively, a brief definition of these terms mistake, error, feedback, uptake and types of error is presented below

#### **2.3.1 MISTAKE AND ERROR**

Although the term error and mistake appear to be synonymous, there is a significant difference between them. (Corder 1967 as cited in Richard and Lockart (1991:91) has drawn a distinction between ‘mistake’ and ‘error’.

Long uses the term error to refer to regular pattern in the language speech which is consistently different from the target language model. The regularity of speech patterns reveals the learners underlying competence the system of the rules that govern his speech. In contrast, Long uses the term mistake to refer to ‘memory

lapse', slip of the tongue and other instances of performance errors as the teacher is used in analyses of the first language data. Secondly language learners can often correct their own mistakes, but the error they make from this perspective are part of their current system of inter language rule and hence are not recognizable (to learner themselves) as 'wrong'. Thus their errors are not amenable to self repair but their mistake may will be.

Errors frequently occur in foreign language classrooms. They are in fact natural part of foreign language learning and teaching process, both teachers and learners should accept them as an essential ingredient of this process. "Error is an utterance form or structure that is particular language teacher deems unacceptable because it inappropriate use or its absence in real life discourse." Henderickson (1978:387)

Allwright and Bailey (1991:84-85) describe what an error is: Typical definition includes some reference to the production of a linguistic form which deviates from the correct form. The correct version, in turn, is often identified in the way native speakers typically produce the form. Chaudron (1988) defines error as a linguistic form for a content that differ from native speakers norm or facts and as any other behavior signaled by the teacher as needs improvement.

These definitions embrace both correct forms an utterance by native speaker standards as well as the teachers' 'judgment'. Furthermore, "An error is a form unwanted by the teacher" Allwright and Bailey (1991:85). Thus a teacher can judge inappropriate utterance based on certain criteria like context or subject related error and grammatical incorrect form

### **2.3.2 FEEDBACK**

In a foreign language classroom, provision of oral feedback is a highly repeated practice as the teaching learning process demands. Ellis (1985:296) states "Feedback is the response to the efforts by the learner to communicate. Feedback can involve such functions as correction, acknowledgement, request for clarification, and backchannel cues such 'Mmm' It has been suggested that feedback plays a major role in helping learner to test hypotheses they have formed about the rule system of the target language." Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1996; 123) underline "Feedback refers to supplying students with clues about spoken or written errors in ways which are designed to promote correction by students. It is also used to refer to giving supportive reactions to students 'ideas, ways of organizing what they say or write, in such a way as to

promote improvement by students .It should be a way of reminding students of the correct form of the English ,not a kind of criticism.”

### **2.3.3 UPTAKE OR LEARNER RESPOSE TO FEEEDBACK**

Lyster and Ranta (1997:49) defined uptake in their works as a learner’s utterance that immediately follows the teacher’s feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teachers intention to draw attention to some aspect of the learner’s initial utterance.”(the over all intention is clear although the teacher’s specific focus may not be)A description of uptake ,then reveals what the student attempts to do with the teacher’s feedback.If the re is no up take ,then there is no topic continuation which is initiated by either the same or an other learner (in both cases the teacher’s intention goes unheeded )or by the teacher(in which case teacher has not provided an oppportunity for uptake the leaner .In other words , uptake shows what the learner tries to do with the teacher’s feedback .They described two types of learner uptake :uptake that produces an utterance still needing repair and up take that produces a repair of the error in which the teacher’s feedback focused. This latter type uptake with repair does not include self initiated repair but rather those types of repairs that learners produces in direct response to the feedback provided by teacher.

### **2.3.4 TYPES OF ERROR**

For foreign language teachers to correct every error is time consuming, demotivating and above all it is impractical. It may also result in lower quality of error correction. It is imperative to differentiate the type of errors learners are making in the language learning process. These errors can be observed ,analyzed and classified to reveal something for the teacher ,as well as the learner. Researchers suggest various types of errors to be handled in hierarchy accordingly by language teachers .

Herron (1981 ) also identifies four types of error

- 1.Over generalization Over generalization refers to an error caused by extension of language once to the error where they do not apply.
- 2.Performance errors Performance errors are systematic errors that occur as the result of

memory lapse or fatigue ,careless

3.Marker transitional competence errors Marker Transitional competence errors are errors that result from a natural perhaps inevitable developmental sequence in the second language learning process.

4. Strategies of communication and assimilation errors are errors resulting from an attempt to communicate in the target language with out having completely acquired the grammatical form necessary to do so.

According to Corder (1975; 208-217) there are three types errors:

1 .Interlanguage errors caused by first language interference

2.Intralingua errors caused by learners 'and over generalization rules

3.Errors caused by teaching techniques that are errors caused teachers insufficient data or lack of required proficiency

## **2.4 ERROR CORRECTION**

Error correction has been recognized as vital in foreign language learning and teaching in the last three decades .Interest in the study of error correction has been increasing since then. As Brown (1994:20-21) described ,children learning their first language making countless mistakes from the point view of adult grammar language ,but carefully by processing feedback from other ,children slowly but surely learn to produce what is acceptable speech in their native language. Based on children first language learning Brown mentioned the process of second or foreign language learning was like that of the first language acquisition .People also learn a foreign language through appropriate feedback on the errors they work. Concerning the importance of error correction , Krashen has made a distinction between language learning (conscious) and language acquisition (subconscious).In his studies ( 1994) Krashen argues error correction has little or no effect on subconscious acquisition ,but it thought to be useful for conscious learning. Error correction is supposedly helping the teacher to induce the target form of the rule .In his view error correction has immediate effect of putting learners on the defensive .It discourages a

strategy in which the learners will try to avoid mistakes, avoid difficult constructions not focus on meaning and more on form. A safe procedure is to eliminate error correction entirely in communicative type of activity.

Another researcher vehemently opposed the merit of error correction in formal language learning context. A recent study on significance of both oral and written correction was reported. Truscott (1996, 1999) suggests that learners are sometimes hurt by being corrected They may not take correction seriously .He claims that teachers' error correction is inconsistent and sometimes wrong. He further argues correction may interfere with fluency. Truscott concluded learners do not learn from correction, so the whole processes of giving corrective feedback should be abandoned.

Unfortunately, foreign language learners will not benefit from these ideal situations; furthermore, it is not the reality of formal learning. Unless learners' errors are corrected at all, uncorrected grammar (or other language elements) can and will result in fossilization of a language.

Henderickson in his (1978) study mentioned error correction techniques. First of all, correcting English Foreign Language learners oral work and written error improves their familiarity with target languages. Second, instead of correcting every single mistake, the teachers should try to create a supportive classroom environment in which learners feel free to produce sentences and take risk to express their ideas. Third, considering which errors to correct, teachers would like to use the correction techniques to correct learners errors .Finally, the error correction from a teacher might not be always helpful for every student in all languages classroom. In other words, peer correction and self correction with the teacher guidance are also important ways to help learners learn from their mistakes

#### **2.4.1 SHOULD ERRORS BE CORRECTED?**

Many language teachers think that correcting students' error is their prime responsibility. However ,researchers like Krashen 1994;Terrel1982;Truscott 1999; do not acknowledge the importance of correcting errors in foreign language learning .They believe that corrected errors will not be avoided the next time either .Krashen argues to the extreme corrective feedback

does not only have little/no significance but also potentially harmful ,since it interrupts the flow of discourse that could provide comprehensible input. On the other end other researchers Henderickson 1978; Allwright 1988; Chaudron 1988; have shown in their studies error correction is important and necessary part in classroom context .However, one must take into account that not all correction are good corrections. When learning a foreign language, learners pass through different stages in the acquisition process. Some times learners do have difficulties in learning the foreign language and will only be insecure by error correction.

These questions were framed by Henderickson in his 1978 review of feedback on errors in foreign /second language classroom as follows.

- 1 .Should learners' errors be corrected?
2. If so, when should learners' errors be corrected?
3. Which learners' errors should be corrected?
- 4 How should learners' errors be corrected?
5. Who should do the correcting ?

Researchers still strive to find a compromise solution to these questions .From practical point of view teachers should correct those errors that are especially important or which learner may have especial difficulty to over come on their own .The how and when error correction that should be implemented in foreign language classes is very delicate and controversial issue

#### **2.4.2 SELF CORRECTION**

If learners may learn from their own errors, then correcting those errors is a crucial part of learning. The way in which the student is correcting also plays a large part not only in the effectiveness of learning language rules ,but also contributes to the learners' motivation which is a key factor in foreign language success Poter. S and Hecht (1993:152-161) support this idea by saying

Self correction in the mother tongue appears then to be a natural control process and in foreign language acquisition it may contribute to the learning

process....From pedagogical point of view, self correction may be seen as part of an education for autonomous learning. If our teaching aims at to lead to what 'learning how to learn' then self correction is a step in that direction ,because it encourages responsibility and independence of the learner.

In self correction teachers play role by calling students' attention to the fact that error has been made .He/She then describes different ways teacher can make learners become aware of their errors. "Students usually prefer to correct their own mistakes rather than let it be corrected by some one else. Also self correction is easy to remember because some one has put some thing in his/her head .So ,show an error has been made then give the student a little time to recognize the error and try to get him/her correct it ".(Atkins,Hailom and Nuru 1996:140)

It might be very rewarding process to let learners, do their own correction rather than provide it right away learners could manage to self correct quite successfully. Chaudron (1988) suggests " the interaction that emphasizes self repair this way was more likely to improve learners ability to monitor their own target language speech". Krashen (1994:106) set a condition about self correction. "Self correction efficiency will also vary according to the condition under which it is done. In "free speech" self correction is up to the performer, and there is no specific focus on form .Rather, the flows, in most case is on communication."

On the whole, self correction to be efficient , demands great patience from the teacher and from the peer. Teachers and other classroom members should restrain from intervention as a student tries to correct his/her own errors .Teachers should encourage learners to correct their own errors first themselves. So, the most frequent self correction is initiated by teachers withhold correction and let the learner to speak to do the correction.

### **2.4.3 PEER CORRECTION**

Learners working together in the classroom make numerous correction moves. They will use the language in a variety of ways and learn from each other. There are many instances of learners calling attention to each others error as they are engaged in activities . Such kinds of activities are ground to notice ones own errors and the errors of others..Learners not only call attention to each other .errors but also they do correct as observed in a variety of context of

feedback .When ever possible, teachers should ask learners to work in peer or in small group. “The manner in which errors are treated – whether by the teacher, the learner themselves, or by the peer – may do much to influence the learners’ opinion to error treatment.”Allwright and Bailey (1991:108) .

Edge (1989:26) identified advantage and disadvantage of peer correction .Peer correction is particularly used in the case of what is called error. Edge describes four advantages of peer correction. Firstly, when a learner makes a mistake, an other learner corrects it, both learners are involving in listening to and think about the language. Secondly, when a teacher encourage learners to correct each others mistakes. The teacher gets a lot of important information about the students’ ability .Can they hear a particular mistake? Can they correct it? Thirdly, the learners become used to the idea that they can learn from each other .So, peer correction helps learners cooperate and helps to make them less dependent on the teacher Fourthly, if learners are used to the idea of peer correction with out hurting each others’ feelings, they will be able to help each other when they work in peers and groups, when the teacher can not hear what he said. Additionally, she mentions two problems with peer correction.Firstly, when a teacher asks a peer correction from the whole class, it might be that the same two or three people always want to answer. Second, if learners are not used to correct each other, they may find it very difficult to change their habits.

#### **2.4.4 TEARCHRS’ CORRECTION**

Teachers may face problems which error to correct and which one to leave for the learners .The question of which type of errors are worth attention in the foreign language learning and teaching process is still under study. Foreign language teachers are in need of a set of guiding principles for correcting the errors .Decision regarding correction must take into account learners ability ,content and grammatical structure at a particular stage of learning. Atkins,Hailom and Nuru ,(1996:113) have indicated “yet often teachers are over critical of students’performance to point where the students are afraid to participate for the fear of failure and even ridicule .This is demotivating and harmful psychologically and hinders learning process.” Herner(19988:160) supports this by saying “So, too much teacher correction may be at the expense of the learners’ willingness to self correct.” Allwright(1988:214) considers “ if learners can not correct themselves ,they should be corrected ,but teachers need to be aware of the potential they have

for creating confusion in the minds of learners.”

To facilitate a successful language learning activity, teachers must consider the balance between accuracy and fluency. Normally, teachers have many possibilities to choose from when deciding where and how to correct errors. Among various options, either restating the error to indicate to the speakers or to repeat the utterance with error corrected. Edge (1989 :26) concluded that “if we think that a particular mistake needs to be corrected, and if neither the student who will make the mistake, nor any other student can correct it, then the teacher has to give the correct form straight away. So, if self correction and peer correction fail at first, the teacher can sometimes help focusing attention on the place where the mistake occurs.”

#### **2.4.5 HIERARCHY OF ERROR CORRECTION**

Teachers may have strong views about error correction because of their own previous foreign language learning experience. Nevertheless, Brown (1994:263-64) explained two types of errors to correct ‘Error correction is defined in terms of global and local errors. When global errors hinder communication, they prevent learners comprehending some aspects of the message; local errors do not prevent message from being heard; context provides key to meaning. Like wise Cohen (1975) makes a strong claim from the study of error correction. From his observation he is led to the following categorization of errors.

- 1.** Errors affecting intelligibility is global error; error affecting over all organization ;”local” errors affecting single element in a sentence. It is suggested that teacher should work primarily on the correction of global errors.
- 2** High frequency of errors Errors which occur frequently, have been considered important enough to correct.(But if such errors are minor the correction may only serve to annoy the learners and to waste class time.)
- 3.** Error at higher level generality It has been suggested that error involving general or broad grammatical rules are more deserving correction than those dealing say, a grammatical exception as a lexical item.
- 4.** Errors with stigmatization or irritating effect Even if an error does not affect intelligibility or occur very often, it could still be worthy of remediation because of the stigmatizing effects that it

has on the listener or reader.

**5** Errors affecting a large number of students Some source suggest that only errors common to the whole class are deserving the class time

**6** .Errors that are relevant to a pedagogical focus The importance that the teacher attributes to an error may depend on the objective of a particular lesson. A teacher may let an error of verb tense go uncorrected during a lesson in which he/she is explicitly teaching and correcting for appropriate article usage.

Apart from discouraging correcting every learners' error is extremely unpleasant and time consuming. Not only does error correction depend on the type of error and the kind of the task in which the error occurs, but also it is the product of the approach and the method implemented in the classroom. Thus, proper handling of learners' error is a necessary part of foreign language teaching. The implication is that the process should be based on the possibility of success and its suitability to a particular situation in which it is useful. Over all, taking into consideration the level of the learners, and the nature of the lesson, selective error correction has to be a widespread practice of foreign language teachers.

#### **2.4.6EFFECTS OF ORAL ERROR CORRECTION**

Truscott in his (1999) essay strongly argues against oral error correction. He explained his points on problems of oral error correction. Oral error correction remains a regular activity in language teaching practice. Teachers wishing to give helpful correction face a number of serious problems. It is difficult for the teacher to understand students' errors. So, uncertainty about intended meaning is making it difficult for teachers to determine exactly what error(s) occurred. Presenting correction is difficult for language teachers. Correction will often have to be designed to fit the reason for its occurrence.

Teachers are observed being inconsistent in correcting students' errors .If teachers are inconsistent in their correction; the corrections are likely to be harmful as they are to be helpful. Most teachers now share the assumption that effective instruction requires a communicative focus in the class room .But reconciling this assumption with the use of correction creates difficulties for the teacher. Correction, by its very nature, interrupts classroom activities,

disturbing the ongoing communicative process .

For any given instance of correction to be effective ,both teachers and learners must overcome a great many problems one of which is sufficient to make correction a failure .Learners often fail to notice and recognize the correction .Learners may not take correction seriously. Making an effort to understand is not sufficient; success in understanding is also necessary.

Incorporating the correction into practice is very necessary. Even when all of the above problems are overcome, the correction may still have little or no value because of the final most important problem. If a correction is to have a long term impact on the learner's use of language, the information it conveys must be incorporated in the developing interlanguage making possible its accurate, automatic use in the future.

However, Lyster ,et al (.2002) vehemently argued against Truscott's ideas of problems with oral error correction..They put forward their findings in favour of error correction in general. Some classroom studies have shown that corrective feedback can be integrated in ways that do not break flow of interaction .Teachers provide feedback as they interact with learners ,who in turn appeared neither traumatized nor frustrated ; instead they appear to expect such intervention as an intrinsic part of classroom process. They went on claiming yet ,if corrective feedback need to be consistent to be effective ,would it not follow that the input to which the learner are exposed should also be consistent? Again, this is not a problem that is particular to error treatment .It applies equally to all aspects of classroom learning (lesson, tasks, home work, test , and the like .) Emphatically, they expressed many advocates of "correction". are more likely to do the following: a) stress the importance of the integrating the feedback into meaningful interaction ,with out necessarily breaking the communicative flow (b) to consider the effect of feedback to be gradual not immediate .They summed up their view by saying that providing corrective feedback is a feasible discourse move that neither damages learners moral nor prevents communication .

## 2.5 VARIOUS TYPES OF FEEDBACK

The role of feedback in a foreign language classes have been studied over the years .The claims regarding its importance have not been fully concluded .In a classroom context, without feedback a lesson can not be conducted continuously. As long as teaching and learning of a foreign language is taking place, the provision of feedback is always there. Chaudron (1988:13) advocates “the importance of feedback as contrasted with narrow notion of correction is therefore and an inevitable constituents of classroom interaction, for no matter what the teacher does ,learners derive information about their behavior from the teacher reaction. ”Ur (1996:242) strengthens the same idea.“In the context of teaching in general feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of learning task, usually with the object of improving this performance.”

As it is known, in the teaching and learning process, feedback either from the teacher or from the learner is a necessary part of formal language learning phenomenon. It is indispensable for learners to get appropriate feedback in any way for efficient language learning .Ellis (1994:702) has made a distinction between negative and positive feedback in classroom context.

When a teacher gives feedback, it can be positive or negative .positive feedback he/she praise students for doing a good job .Helping students, to develop good self confidence when learning a foreign language is an important part of teachers’ job. An other kind of feedback is ‘negative feedback ‘which is used to help students to understand what has to be changed in utterance. Feedback in a teacher – student learning environment can be defined as information given to the learner which they can use when a teacher gives student some kind of information about how to correct a mistake. An other type of feedback is used in schools in peer response where students give feedback to each other.

Chaudron (1988;132-34)adds the aspect of interaction in classroom between learners and teachers with the widest scope probably that is generally referred to as feedback., which includes the notion of error correction Feedback is ,therefore, information learners can use actively to modify their behavior.

In language acquisition, the term ‘feedback’ refers to information given to learner which they can use to revise their interlanguage. A distinction is often made between positive and negative feedback(some times referred to negative evidence ; positive feedback refers to information that indicates a hypothesis is correct .A distinction also made between ‘on –record ‘and ‘off –record ‘ feedback (Day et

al.1984) depending whether the feedback is direct (that is a correction or indirect (for example ,on the form of a request for confirmation .)On record feedback supplies 'direct' negative evidence' while 'off-record feedback supplies 'indirect negative feedback.(Ellis,1994:702)

Feedback serves as a general term for the information provided by listener on reception and comprehension of message .As Vigil and Oller (1976) explain ,it is useful to distinguish 'cognitive' and 'affective' feedback, the former relates to actual understanding while the latter concerns the motivational support that interlocutors provide each other with during an interaction(Ibid 538).

Depending on the nature of the lesson that focuses on form or function, direct, indirect, immediate, delayed feedback is needed in formal language learning classes. As a first option ,teachers should encourage learners to self correct by waiting after they have spoken or by asking them to try again. It is largely agreed up on if the focus is on communication; the flow of talk should not be interrupted by the teacher correction. Norish(1983:116) points out

when students interact with their teacher, teacher should react to the content of their utterance not just to form only. Teacher response is useful as a comprehension check for students ,and it shows the teachers are listening to what they say .The feedback can be explicit ( for example grammatical explanation or overt correction or implicit ).Implicit correction includes .but it is not limited to confirmation .repetition ,recast, classification request silence and even facial expression.

It is still a controversial issue to state clearly when and how to give immediate and delayed oral feedback. Provision of immediate or delayed oral feedback is a trade off between accuracy and fluency. Allwright and Bailey (1991:102-3) wrapped up the arguments for and against delayed feedback as follows:

If a teacher chooses not to correct an error in one learner's utterance the other learner may assume that the form or function was correct as it stood. This assumption conceivably lead to some clearly incorrect internalizing errors .Whereas the problem with immediate error treatment ,may teacher feel that it often involves interrupting the learner in mid-sentence - a practice which certainly be disruptive and eventually inhibit the learners' willingness to speak in class at all." Fanslow (1976b) has argued that teachers should offer learners the greatest possible variety of treatment ,not only because we know no one way that always work, but also because different people need to be treated differently anyway.

Also, teachers need to keep on trying out different possibilities.

### **2.5.1 SPOKEN FEEDBACK**

Teachers use variety of methods for correcting error in the classroom. "Oral corrections are provided correctly by the teacher, but they may also be elicited from the learner who made the mistake in the first place or by other member of the class. Correction may or may not include a clarification of why the mistake was made and may or may not require reproduction of the acceptance form by the learner." Ur (1996:242)

A study conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1970) identified six types of teachers' feedback with regard to oral error correction.

- 1. Explicit correction** refers to the explicit provision of correct form. As a teacher provides the correct form, he or she indicates what the student had said was incorrect (example "Oh, you mean," "You should say")
- 2. Elicitation** Teachers directly elicit a reformulation from students by asking questions such as "How do you do that...?" or by pausing to allow the student to complete teachers' utterances, by asking student to reformulate their utterance. Teachers use questions to elicit correct forms. Teachers occasionally ask students to reformulate their utterance.
- 3. Recast** Teachers implicitly reformulate all or part of the student utterance minus the error.
- 4. Metalinguistic feedback** Teachers provide comments, information or question related to well formedness of students utterance without explicitly providing the correct form. Meta linguistic comments generally indicate that there is an error somewhere (example "Can you find your error?") "No. not x" or even just "No"
- 5. Clarification request** indicates to students either that their utterance has been misunderstood by the teachers or that the utterance is ill-formed in some way and that a repetition or reformulation is required. Teachers use phrases such as "I do not understand", "Pardon me" "what do you mean by x?"
- 6. Repetition** Teachers repeat the students ill formed utterances adjusting intonation to highlight the error.



Providing feedback to learners on their performance is another important aspect of foreign language teaching. Feedback can be either positive or negative and may serve not only to let learners know how well they have performed but also to increase their motivation. In foreign language classroom, feedback for learners spoken language may be a response either to content of what the learners have produced or to the form of the utterance. In their study Richard and Lockart (1995:188-89) made a distinction between content and form feedback.

### **Feedback on content**

A variety of strategies are available in giving feedback on content.

For example

**Acknowledging the correct answer** The teacher acknowledges that a student's answer is correct by saying for example "Good", "Yes that is right" or "Fine"

**Indicating an incorrect answer** The teacher indicates that a student's answer is incorrect by saying for example "No that is not quite right" or "Mmm"

**Praising** The teacher compliments a student for an answer, for example, by saying "Yes, an excellent answer"

**Expanding or modifying a student answer** The teacher responds to a vague or incomplete answer by providing additional more information or rephrasing the answer in the teacher's own words.

**Repeating** The teacher repeats the student's answer.

**Summarizing** A teacher gives a summary of what a student or a group of students has said.

**Criticizing** The teacher criticizes a student for the kind of response provided.

### **Feedback on form**

In language class room, feedback is often directed towards the accuracy of what a student says.

Feedback on form can be accomplished in different ways such as:

- 1 asking a student what he/she said
- 2 pointing out the error and asking the student to self correct
- 3 comment on an error and explaining why it is wrong, without having the student to repeat the correct form
- 4 asking another student to correct the error
- 5 using gesture to indicate error has been made

(Richard and Lockart, 1995:188-89)

### **2.5.2 EFFECTS OF ORAL FEEDBACK**

Researchers have noted problems regarding inconsistency, ambiguity and ineffectiveness of teacher's correction (Allwright, 1975; Long, 1977) They attributed efficacy of corrective feedback to the ambiguous and unsystematic approaches adapted by majority of teachers.

Chaudron (1988:141-50) in his study analyzes the problems of feedback in classroom context. First, one of the most noted problems with corrective feedback is that "repetition" of a speaker's utterance can serve similar function, of either negation (correcting or positive neutral (agreeing), appreciating, understanding. Thus, second problem is that, for L2 learners, whose grammar may not encompass the target rule, the modification or emphasis may be imperceptible, or perceived merely as an alternative to their own utterance because accepting, approving, confirming, repetition occur frequently in the same context. A third, problem is the inconsistency with which teachers correct learners' utterance at times accepting a faulty target language for the sake of communication, at times correcting minor errors or altering learners' meaningful communication for the sake of example. The usefulness of such a set of feedback is most evident when we consider the problem that researchers have noted regarding inconsistency and ineffectiveness of teachers' correction.

From different studies on provision of feedback, it is possible to infer the complex nature of providing feedback to learners and not possible to come up with a single answer. Based mainly on practical and empirical considerations researchers underpin the issue of how effective error correction is still a bone of contention. In formal classroom context, provision of feedback is a

wide practice that is almost all interwoven in the lesson. Foreign language teachers need to see different factors meticulously from the perspective of learners, the school, and the goal of education. Provision of feedback demands various consideration and competent skill of language teachers to handle problems at different times and situation. It is the prime responsibility of foreign language teachers not to discourage learners due to over correction. While the various approach to language teaching and proposal for the proper methodology in correcting students' language mistakes are all valid, they are, however, not absolute

## **2.6 REVIEW OF LOCAL STUDIES**

Given the importance of oral and written feedback in foreign language learning very few local studies have been devoted to examining the relationship between teachers feedback and the foreign language learning process. Relatively speaking, fewer studies on oral feedback were conducted when compared with written feedback. Some years back, local studies were conducted in high schools in relation to feedback. All these studies were MA theses. The subjects of the three studies were randomly assigned to high school learners and English language teachers. The over all aim of Wondwosen's study was to examine grade eleven English language teachers feedback behavior .The focus of his study was, however, on written feedback. Wondwosen (1992) states that teachers spend a great deal of class time for provision of feedback. Although teachers spend a great proportion of the class time for the provision of feedback, their strategies do not seem successful. He found that English as a foreign language teachers did not encourage students; they distort the contribution of students, and fail to serve as a means of clarifying meanings and increasing understanding. He observed that a limited number of feedback types occur more frequently than others. Learners generally receive little or no help from the teachers in their attempt to provide correct utterances.

After examining teachers attitude towards English language learners' errors , Heyleysus (1995)concluded in his study that Ethiopian English as a foreign language teachers' attitudes towards learners' error were negative. Their actual treatment of error seems to be influenced by factors which can be described as nonpedagogical.. Teachers were correcting learners incorrect oral response using a variety of treatment techniques, the most frequent acts used were negation and interruption. Hayleysus' classroom observation revealed that teachers preferred to put stringent demands on grammatical accuracy and pronunciation. He depicted the whole picture

as one of the most inhibiting factors in learning and using the target language since they attached too much importance to the avoidance of errors than tolerance. He suggested that perhaps, it will be better if teachers develop tolerance towards learners' error by reacting leniently to learners incorrect responses.

More recently, Kassaye (2006) has studied the provision of oral feedback in high school in different circumstance during satellite plasma lesson. The study highlights the fact that provision of feedback is poor during plasma lesson .The classroom teacher provides the majority of the feedbacks. The type of feedback provided by plasma teacher was mostly the correct answer .It does not contain clues. Learners were not given ample time to practice the language items. The classroom teachers do not have sufficient time to comment on learners response .His study did not clearly indicate the role of self and peer correction in light of provision of oral feedback during the plasma lesson or afterwards.

Samson (2007) studied second cycle (grade eight) English or English as foreign language classrooms to investigate the effect different types of feedback have on learners learning . He noticed English language teachers reacted to learners errors in different ways, and the correction they have made include: rephrasing/reformulating the ill-formed utterances ,explicitly providing the correct form ,providing meta linguistic comment that refers to the formation of the utterance ,requesting learners to repeat or reformulate the utterance ,and by using head in cues prompting learners to produce correct form .From study he implies in his conclusion that detailed study is needed over a period of time in order to arrive at a conclusion regarding the effectiveness of a certain type of feedback .He concludes it is evident that language learning is a complex and time consuming process that can not be reduced to students' immediate correct response following the teachers feedback. He found that among other types of oral feedback which leads learners response to feedback repetition, request and prompt served 100%.during classroom interaction .This finding seems a bit awkward as classroom interaction and feedback are subject to many factors that are likely to influence their effectiveness.

The studies reviewed so far have shown that there is a great drawback in providing appropriate feedback particularly on oral feedback to improve students' accuracy as well as fluency level of the target language. The studies also show that deficient teachers methodology was

commonly observed in teaching the target language effectively .To enhance the use of target language by learners the reviewed literatures implied that both the provision and type of feedback have an over all effect on learners language acquisition process.

Therefore ,this study focuses on the kinds of error that are usually corrected by learners as well as their teachers .This study also tries to explore provision of teachers oral feedback and identify the kinds of oral feedback that lead learners to correct their own errors.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

As previously mentioned, the objective of this study is investigating the kinds of oral feedback foreign language teachers implement in their classes to assist learners language acquisition process. This section focuses on describing the methods and instruments used to explore provision of oral feedback from grade twelve English language teachers who had been aware of the main purpose of the research. The study tries to investigate the types of oral feedback and the common error correction focus by teachers and learners while teaching and learning English as a foreign language scenario.

The timing and the types of oral feedback provided during classroom interaction can very easily influence the learning and teaching process. The interaction between the teacher and their learners was observed and interpreted by the researcher. The content of the lessons of observed classes include grammar, comprehension and vocabulary. This study will not make claims about the effectiveness of different types of oral feedback. Since the present study is meant to be observational and descriptive, there was no experimental group. To analyze the provision of oral feedback that occurs during classroom interaction, frequent tabulation count was used to code the data.

In this chapter the instruments used to collect data are discussed. That is, data source, data collection techniques and procedures followed and how they were implemented

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The present study is meant to be observational and descriptive; data were gathered from subjects through classroom observation while the lesson was conducted and through questionnaire and interview. As a number of the subjects are small; given their consent, all grade twelve English language teachers were included in the study from Hawas Preparatory Government School. Different types of data collection methods were used: classroom observation, questionnaire and interview to triangulate the data collected.

### **3.3 INSTRUMENTS USED**

To gather the necessary data from the subjects of the study, the researcher employed three instruments classroom observation, questionnaire and interview respectively

#### **3.3.1 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

Classroom observation took place at Hawas Preparatory Government School. Classroom observation was conducted in order to watch and listen to an interaction among learners themselves and with their teachers while classes are conducted. Thus, to obtain the required information, direct observation was conducted in four sections out of a total of eighteen sections. All English language teachers are on duty at the same time in conducting their classes because of plasma transmission; it was convenient to observe four sections four times consecutively over duration. Among the sections the teachers attended, only four sections were randomly selected using fish bowl draw. Each class was observed four times in different lessons. This was done through non participant observation strategy in all sections by watching and listening to the activities and to draw a conclusion from the gathered data. The classroom observed had an average of eighty learners each, who were attending English language instruction for forty minutes over four days in a week. The observation session was conducted on the basis of observation checklist which was adapted from Lyster and Ranta (1997) Sequence of Error Treatment as it contains different kinds of oral feedback and learners uptake including repair and needs repair. The items in the checklist comprise of additional points such as target language use focus during classroom interaction among learners and with their teacher, the way teachers correct mistakes and response to mistakes. During classroom interaction it should be clarified that neither the number of errors nor the total number of turns taken to respond to questions by the learners was counted for its over all purpose was, as stated in the research questions, to observe the kinds of oral feedback. Oral feedback types are labeled as recast, explicit correction, elicitation, clarification request, repetition, metalinguistic feedback and praise or encouragement.

#### **3.3.2 TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

A questionnaire was administered in order to collect data on provision of oral feedback. The questionnaire constitutes two parts, professional background with common focus of teachers

error correction. The questionnaire contains ten questions. The items in the questionnaire were open ended and closed ended .The purpose of including these open-ended questions was to allow teachers to express their views about oral feedback; views that may not have been captured by one of the items in closed ended questions to be available .It was also to allow teachers to expand on and to clarify their response to any of the items in the questionnaire. This is done mainly because it is essential to gather detail information from the subjects. The questionnaire was distributed to grade twelve English language teachers in the school .The distribution of the questionnaire was done by the researcher. All the subjects filled in the questionnaire and returned them after two days.

### **3.3.3TEACHERS' INTERVIEW**

From grade twelve English language teachers, who teach in Hawas Preparatory Government School, four were interviewed as they were available for the interview. Interview was administered to gather detail information if need arises to explain points to the subjects face to face. For that reason, to gather uniform information from the subjects which assures the comparability of data , eight structured (open-ended) interview items were prepared and the interview was conducted with the teachers in their respective school.

### **3.4 SAMPLING**

Hawas Preparatory Government School in Adama Town was selected for the study. The school was selected as there was no sufficient research conducted in the school. Owing to certain practical consideration such as accessibility in obtaining help from English language teachers and cooperative school administration the study was conducted at Hawas Preparatory Government School.

The main sources of data were grade twelve English language teachers and their learners. Subjects were small enough to be selected totally in terms of availability of time. The study included five grade twelve English language teachers which corresponds 100%of the total population. Two of them are female and the rest are male. All the subjects were willing to let their classes be observed, to offer information needed by responding to the written questions and interview

### **3.5 PROCEDURES .**

The learners seated on a single desk for three in teacher fronted classroom. The observer seated in the back to have a wide look around the classroom. The objective of the observation was only clarified to the teachers an hour earlier; however, the kinds of the activities, teachers planned to have before the beginning of observation were unknown to the observer.

During classroom observation of four periods in four sections over four days ,the main unit of learners errors , teachers feedback and learners up take which is either repair of the error or needs repair were tabulated alternatively .This order reflects what usually happen when a teacher responds to an utterance containing an error and where the learner attempts to respond to teachers feedback move. In the other case ,teachers initiated or learner initiated topic continuation focus on learner error , teacher feedback, up take with repair or which needs repair.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Regarding methods of data analysis and interpretation, the researcher employed descriptive tabulation method of data analysis.The data are presented both in frequency count and percentage to add more clarity to the presentation of findings of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter of the study deals with presentation and discussion of the data collected from subjects through observation, questionnaire and interview. Accordingly, the teachers responses are presented and discussed. Data obtained from the questionnaire, interview and observation are presented separately. Discussion of the findings from the items are dealt with a separate section for the sake of convenience. In the first section, the findings related to the teachers' response to the questionnaire are treated followed by classroom observation and interview.

#### 4.2 DATA FROM TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

To obtain data on their professional backgrounds, subjects were asked to provide information pertaining to their educational status, duration of services. One MA in TEFL and four of them have taken their first degree (BA) major in English with an average of 15 years experience teaching in high school.

Questionnaire was distributed to five grade twelve English language teachers and the return rate was 100%. The questionnaire contains ten questions. The questions focus on provision of oral feedback and the common focus of error correction.

##### 4.2.1 TEACHERS' COMMON FOCUS ON ERROR CORRECTION

During provision of oral feedback, the common teachers focus in correcting learners errors can vary from one to another depending on the particular context of teaching and learning. To gather information from teachers and to assess their common focus on correcting learners errors prominent language elements were included in the question.

**Table 1. teachers' response to errors that are usually corrected by teachers**

Grammar	Pronunciation	Word choice	Meaning
37.5%	25%	25%	12.5%

The above table shows what teachers usually correct in learners' errors when giving oral feedback. Most commonly, oral feedback is used when learners make error in grammar .It seems that teachers are less concerned with errors in meaning when compared to other language elements.

#### 4.2.2 LEARNERS SELF OR PEER CORRECTION PRACTICE

As learning a language is exhibited by interaction, in learning a foreign language learners are often asked to do activities in peers. To examine what types of oral feedback teachers use in their classes to help learners to correct their errors individually ,in pair or in small group the question was included .

**Table 2 .teachers' response to self or peer correction**

Grammar	Pronunciation	Word choice	Meaning
55.5%	22.22%	-none or 0%	22.22%

#### 4.2.3 TEACHERS' ENCOURAGEMENT

Concerning the importance of giving encouragement during classroom interaction, teachers were asked to react to the question.

All the subjects agreed in their response by saying that giving encouragement is necessary to keep the learners active in the interaction .Teachers' response on giving encouragement clearly shows that its importance in teaching a foreign language by pushing learners to take part actively and gradually to build their confidence in expressing their ideas regardless the fear of making mistakes . Teachers indicate that when learners try to correct their errors by them selves ,they can learn a lot of things from their errors .Encouragement helps learners to develop their confidence to do more .Teachers believe that if learners correct their errors ,they will not repeat it again .Giving encouragement for learners to correct their errors is important to build their confidence and feel proud of themselves; they can also learn through discussion

though some can be unhappy.

#### **4.2.4 GIVING ENOUGH ORAL FEEDBACK**

Unless learners are given enough oral feedback they may not remain active in the interaction. To investigate teachers' view how effective they are in providing oral feedback they were asked the question.

Teacher should give learners chance to correct their errors either by repeating what they have said and pause at places where they have made the mistake or repeating that part two or three times so that they think over their mistake. They usually give them oral feedback so that learners trace their own errors and correct them by themselves. If a learner makes a mistake, teachers ought to advise to refer to the note and correct their error by asking the other learner, if they can correct the error. Generally, teachers give chance or encourage learners to take responsibility of error correction in order that they can develop their confidence.

#### **4.2.5 IMPORTANT KINDS OF FEEDBACK**

As learners come to class with different backgrounds and ability, one type of oral feedback can not fit for all learners. This being the mere fact, teachers have to find ways that accommodate majority of their learners. A question related to this idea was given.

When teachers provide oral feedback, implicit oral feedback is more important than others. Next to implicit oral feedback, delayed feedback is very important since learners do have ample time to think about the errors and to make various attempts to manage their learning. According to teachers, explicit and immediate feedback is the least important for majority of learners as learners can get the answers without additional effort to solve the problem on their own.

**Table 3. Perceived importance of oral feedback for majority of learners**

	Very important	Fairly important	Rather important	Not important	
Explicit	2				Teachers remarked Frequency
Implicit	4	1			Teachers remarked Frequency
Immediate	1		1		Teachers remarked Frequency
delayed	2	2			Teachers remarked Frequency

#### **4.2.6. TEACHERS' JUSTIFICATION**

Teachers may have the tendency to use one type of oral feedback over the other taking in to account its importance for majority of their students. They put their justification about the important kinds of oral feedback for majority of their learners .Teachers' put foreword their ideas by comparing and contrasting implicit and explicit, immediate and delayed provision of oral feedback

If the feedback is implicit ,the learners will not feel embarrassed .When teachers give feedback later ,then the learner who has made the mistake can recognize it , but others may not recall whom has made the mistake .Implicit feedback is important because it helps to influence the learner and to encourage him/her to correct the error by himself/herself.

Implicit and delayed feedback give chance for learners to do more .Explicit, implicit, immediate and delayed oral feedback are generally important because these types of feedback are needed

for different types of errors. So variety of error corrections are needed to give oral feedback to learners. On the whole, explicit, implicit, immediate and delayed feedback are important to correct learners' errors in different ways.

#### 4.2.7 RATE OF PROVISION OF ORAL FEEDBACK

Teachers were asked to rate the six kinds of oral feedback. Teachers preferred different approaches when giving oral feedback. The distribution reveals very diverse preference in giving oral feedback. Recast has been chosen by three teachers as top preference which is equivalent to 60%. Repetition has been chosen by two teachers as second preference which corresponds to 40% in giving oral feedback. Elicitation has been chosen by two teachers as their third and fifth choice (40%) and meta linguistic feedback as the fourth preference by the same number. There was no similar response among subjects concerning the sixth preferred type

**Table 4. Marked rate**

	Teacher1	Teacher2	Teacher3	Teacher4	Teacher5
Explicit correction	4	1	3	6	5
elicitation	3	5	5	3	6
recast	1	6	2	1	1
Clarification request	6	2	1	4	3
repetition	2	4	6	5	2
Metalinguistic feedback	5	3	4	2	4

#### 4.2.8. ADAPTTING FEEDBACK

Even though there are so many factors that can influence the provision of oral feedback, one of them is large class size. If there are so many learners in one class as observed in this study with an average figure of eighty students, teachers often find themselves in difficult position to give oral feedback effectively by addressing the needs of the majority of learners. To know whether teachers adapt oral feedback to the needs of particular learner or not, at least as situation

demands they are asked this question.

Adapting feedback to the needs of individual learners is important occasionally because the needs and interest of learners are different from one to other. The oral feedback can be direct or indirect because it can reduce the fear of the learner while they participate. If the situation allows, to adapt feedback to the needs of individual learners is important. In case, the feedback can be given according to the attitudes of the learner. Some learners are usually willing to learn from their errors while others will be offended when they are told about their mistakes.

#### **4.2.9 FOCUS ON FLUENCY VERSUS ACCURACY**

As teachers make their target either on accuracy or fluency, it can affect the way they provide oral feedback for learners to large extent. The type of oral feedback teachers provide can also determine the interaction they have with their learners or among learners themselves .With regard to their focus of tendency in providing oral feedback teachers reacted to this idea. Teachers stated their practices for providing oral feedback during classroom interaction whether their focus is on fluency/accuracy or fluency and accuracy

Their response implied that 40% of the teachers focus on fluency. Similar number of teachers, 40% focus on both fluency and accuracy. Only 20% of the teachers' focus is on accuracy. Others set a condition for to focus on fluency or accuracy. Actually this depends up on the learners proficiency .If learners are already fluent ,the teacher may focus on accuracy .Delayed oral feedback can be given to learner so that he/she can get a clue that encourages him/her to correct the error.

#### **4.2.10. TEACHERS' COMMENTS REGARDING ORAL FEEDBACK**

Teachers expressed their general outlook on the provision of oral feedback .As far as spoken language is used to convey message, teachers should not give too much emphasis on oral feedback, if learners communicate their ideas .This point is raised because oral feedback some times can discourage learners from participating in class. What should be borne in mind is that gradually learners can correct their own errors by themselves and come up with acceptable sentences. This indeed takes a lot of time and requires patience both from learners and teachers. Learners should be given oral feedback on their English lessons so that they can be fluent user

of the language .Learners must develop different ways of correcting errors that is self correction ,peer correction apart from teachers correction. Learners have to know that oral feedback has a beneficial effect on language learning .Teachers should be careful when they give oral feedback during classroom interaction ,they have to be tactiful while correcting learners' errors ;other wise, learners will be offended and develop hatred of language learning especially when explicit correction is implemented.

### **4.3 CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

As previously noted ,the purpose of this study was to explore the provision of oral feedback and how English language teachers implement different kinds of oral feedback in correcting learner errors while teaching .To this effect, this section attempts to discuss the data gathered during classroom observation. As a result classroom observation was taking place for forty minutes in four sections four times over four days..

During the observation of the classroom the first day, activities appeared to be calm on that the learners felt nervous and embarrassed to initiate in front of an unfamiliar observer. However, marked pattern of interaction was observed when teachers walked among learners and asked and answered questions.

The provision of oral feedback was found in almost every turn responding to the content of the lesson as well as the learners errors .In other words ,the teachers were more inclined to correct local errors specifically grammar .It was generally noticed that teachers' use learners idea and praise and give encouragement too.

Teachers were too much reserved not to use negative feedback .It seems teachers educational qualification and their experience helped them not to discourage learners by giving negative feedback frequently.This helps learners to generate the target language to some extent .However; the production was remarkably slow with long pauses generated largely with the aid of repetition of the teachers question and his /her frequent and extended pauses. It appeared that learners were generally hesitant to speak with low and unclear voices indicating a lack of confidence, responding predominately only when they are nominated .In the strict sense, it is obvious that the production from an average learner were much smaller in comparison with the teacher efforts.

Learners face difficulties in learning a foreign language through plasma. Plasma presentation of the lesson encourages a one way communication. Plasma teacher does not provide sufficient time; as a result learners could not cope up to finish activities in the given time. Most of the time the classroom teacher remains passive leaving learners to follow the plasma teacher instruction and to carry out the activities on their own. Majority of the learners were frequently observed not being able to comprehend introduction and understand pronunciation at large. Learners are accustomed to copying from the screen. In short time, different activities were given to be done. In the remaining time which was about ten minutes classroom teachers were unable to sum up the lesson and discuss the highlight.

Even though learners learn other subjects in the target language as well as the language itself, in most cases majority of the learners could not follow the instruction of the plasma teacher properly to carry out the activities as it was intended. Consequently, learners asked and answered questions using mother tongue dominantly. The plasma teacher focused on accuracy rather than fluency; as a result, learners did not exercise the language sufficiently at their disposal; instead, they were very eager to copy the answer from the plasma screen. It was observed that most of the learners were willing to be corrected by classroom teachers and asked questions for further clarification.

Unlike the plasma teacher, the classroom teachers focused on individual activities. Language used during interaction by learners among themselves was mother tongue. But teachers used exclusively target language on providing explanation or oral feedback. Teachers' correction of learners errors was frequently on grammar. Generally, they use elicitation, explicit correction and recast more than the remaining three types (repetition, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback). Most of learners errors were on grammar, word choice, meaning and pronunciation. From errors that need correction by teachers, learners same errors, partial repair and off target errors were frequently treated. Self repair (self correction) was the very common type of error correction regardless of peer or teachers correction. Teachers use repetition and incorporation in order to explain points if learners fail to correct the error. In some instances to reinforce the oral feedback, teachers used topic continuation. On the whole, teachers' response to mistakes were frequent. Though teachers advocate implicit and delayed feedback on the questionnaire practically during actual classroom sessions teachers gave explicit and immediate feedback.

#### **4.4 DATA FROM TEACHERS' INTERVIEW**

In order to increase the reliability of the information obtained from classroom observation and questionnaire a third instrument was used additionally. That is, interview was conducted at Hawas Preparatory Government School to cross check results obtained from other instruments. The recorded data was transcribed below.

##### **4.4.1 ORAL FEEDBACK FOR SELF CORRECTION**

As mentioned earlier teachers use various types of oral feedback. The first question was asked to investigate which kind of oral feedback helps learners to correct their own errors. Teachers replied though explicit oral feedback has its own limitations, implicit oral feedback leads learners to correct their own errors. Implicit oral feedback will assist learners without too much guidance to correct their errors. Delayed oral feedback is also important because it gives learners chance to think over the errors. Learners can take the oral feedback given to the errors positively if they directly participate in the process of correcting them. Therefore, it is advisable to encourage learners to detect the error for themselves and to correct them.

##### **4.4.2 PREFERENCE TO SELF, PEER, TEACHERS' ERROR CORRECTION**

Normally, in foreign language classrooms there are various activities that learners are doing while learning the language. As the activities are different in nature, teachers also use different kinds of oral feedback for learners errors. Teachers were requested to shed light on their preference to self, peer, teachers error correction.

If given the choice teachers opt for self correction for learners to be able to develop confidence in themselves and this may convince them that they are capable of getting the correct way of saying something even though they make errors. Secondly, self correction also motivates the learners to participate in the class. If somebody corrects learners errors, they may feel embarrassed and as a result learners prefer to keep quiet and this greatly affects their active participation in the classroom. If learners practice correcting their own errors, it will make them learn from their mistakes and will give them more chance to concentrate on error correcting eventually.

#### **4.4.3 TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO CORRECT ANSWERS**

Teachers are obliged to give oral feedback not only where learners are making mistakes. Learners do demand approval from their teachers as to how their language is intelligible to their listeners. To see how teachers react to learners correct answer information was sought.

When learners come up with correct and acceptable sentences teachers often appreciate and encourage learners by saying words such as very good, that is it, well done, fantastic and the like. Encouragement boosts learners moral, enhances their motivation towards learning the language. So verbal reward for learners' correct answers do serve the best interest of the teachers to give approval on learners attempt.

#### **4.4.4 ERRORS TEACHERS OFTEN CORRECT**

It is obvious learners make different kinds of mistakes while learning the foreign language; yet practically it is impossible to correct every error learners make and it is a factor to discourage learners not to participate during classroom activities. To investigate how teachers discriminate the kinds of error learners are making the question was raised.

Teachers usually correct learners error related to grammar, pronunciation, and word choice. According to teachers this mainly happens if learners could not correct the error on their own, as teachers teach most commonly grammar lessons they were tempted to correct grammar errors at large.

#### **4.4.5 DIFFERENT KINDS OF ORAL FEEDBACK USE**

Foreign language teachers may use a particular type of oral feedback for correcting learners errors. For example, in order to correct a pronunciation a teacher can use repetition or recast in order to draw learners' attention to the error. Thus, it was demanded from teachers if there was a particular type of oral feedback they use to correct learners errors.

When teachers give immediate and explicit oral feedback to learners, learners may feel uncomfortable, embarrassed; so learners do not like immediate and explicit oral feedback. It is better instead to give implicit oral feedback as it does not offend learners and further does not cause negative attitudes towards learning in general. Learners can manage correcting errors with little help from teachers. Explicit error correction will cause learners to be reserved

during classroom participation. Immediate oral feedback, if it is particularly negative, will decrease learners' participation too. Implicit and delayed oral feedbacks make learners eager in the interaction and enforce them to take part in participation.

#### **4.4.6 PARTICULAR TYPE OF ORAL FEEDBACK**

It is clear that foreign language teachers do use different kinds of oral feedback for learners' errors. The oral feedback could be explicit, immediate, delayed or implicit. From practice teachers know that using different kinds of oral feedback will help them to address the needs of their students at large. A question was put for teachers to give their suggestion on particular type oral feedback they use.

Teachers encourage learners to correct their own errors without referring to particular type of implicit error correction. They thought self correction is the best of all error correction in building learners confidence. Occasionally peer correction is good so that learners can discuss on the errors and find out the correct answer for themselves. In contrast immediate and delayed oral feedback do have their own disadvantage. Immediate oral feedback may offend learners and cause low classroom participation learners in activities. Delayed oral feedback may not be effective as learners can forget points at all.

#### **4.4.7 ORAL FEEDBACK THAT GIVES MORE CHANCE FOR UP TAKE**

Even though there are different kinds of oral feedback, they are not equally used by teachers for correction learners errors. There can be certain kinds of oral feedback that push learners to produce language. In other words, such types oral feedback give learners more chance for uptake. Therefore, teachers were invited to suggest among oral feedback that level ground for learners' uptake. For example if a teacher repeats by drawing the learners attention to the error, a learner automatically can react.

Implicit and delayed feedback was identified as giving more chance for learners up take. These kinds of oral feedback were believed to keep learners involved in the interaction and will permit learners to suggest their own ideas since there is no too much teachers interference, if the feedback is implicit and delayed. The best thing is to help learners find out the errors; teachers have to correct learners' errors as a final option that is, when learners can

not correct their errors.

#### **4.4.8 ORAL FEEDBACK THAT GIVES LEAST CHANCE FOR UPTAKE**

From different kinds of oral feedback available, certain types of oral feedback may give learners least chance for uptake. For example, if a teacher uses a clarification request, learners may not go ahead using the teachers' oral feedback. So, teachers were inquired to explain which kinds of oral feedback provide learners with least opportunity for up take. Teachers gave answer although all types oral feedback are important ,immediate and explicit error correction were believed to be poor in providing learners uptake. When teachers correct directly (explicitly) learners' errors, there is least chance for learners uptake. If teachers give chance for learners to correct errors they will get many opportunities for uptake. Implicit error correction paves the way for learners' uptake; consequently, learners are able to produce language for communicative purpose and they will get experience as well.

#### **4.5DISCUSSION**

This study tries to explore provision of oral feedback by observing their occurrences in teacher and student interaction. The main aim of the research has been to find out how teachers use oral feedback when learners make errors. It has been found that majority of the teachers realize that oral feedback is important to achieve higher language proficiency. The findings suggest that all learners errors including grammar, meaning ,word choice and pronunciation invited corrective oral feedback in addressing the issue of the kinds of feedback that are provided during classroom interaction notably grammar dominates.

The study found out that the five teachers in the study used different types of oral feedback (recast, clarification request, repetition, explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback) in addition to praise and encouragement. There was major difference among teachers' preferences in the provision of oral feedback for learners' error.

In relation to what language elements that students/teachers correct more frequently, the result showed that both teachers and learners correct grammar and pronunciation errors more than other language elements. With regard to learners being offered the opportunity to self correct, the findings confirmed from all the instruments used (classroom observation, questionnaire and

interview) learners were given opportunities to correct their errors before others correct the error.

The result shows that oral feedback is used most often when learners make errors in grammar and pronunciation. The study also tried to assess which type of oral feedback teachers mostly use depending on the error made by learners. The findings demonstrated that most of the subjects were aware of the necessity of applying different types of oral feedback to different errors made by the learners'. Teachers use recast more frequently than other types of oral feedback, but repetition, elicitation and metalinguistic feedback were used more or less equally. Implicit and delayed oral feedback gave learners more chance for uptake while immediate and explicit error correction gave least chance for learner uptake.

In summary, it seems that in order for oral feedback to bring about adequate proficiency level of the learners certain conditions have to be met. Above all, as Allwright, 1975; Long 1977; Chaudron 1988 noted teachers need to be very systematic and consistent in providing oral feedback.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION ,SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 5.1 Conclusion

The present study was aimed at investigating errors that are usually corrected by teachers and learners as well as the provision of oral feedback. Although the study identifies certain types of oral feedback for learners' errors are frequently used by teachers, it did not make any generalization about the effectiveness of one type oral feedback over the other as absolute number of errors produced by learners and the number of turns were not counted.

As it is clear from the studies reviewed, the patterns of provision of oral feedback and learners' uptake vary depending on the instructional context. Researchers (Allwright 1975; Long 1977; Chaudron 1988) described there are many challenges in providing effective oral feedback that would end up in learners higher rate of uptake. The present study indicates that similar results emerged from classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. Great majority of teachers' provision of oral feedback was seen ineffective, inconsistent, unsystematic and ambiguous as teachers failed to select feedback types in accordance with error types given that the context in which the teachers work is inconvenient. In contrast, grammar errors were corrected at higher rate than any other language elements. Even though error correction plays an important role in the development of learners' ability to speak accurately, teachers also must pay attention to the content of the utterance and be prepared to respond to it. Lyster and Ranta (1997) provided evidence that some types of oral corrective feedback are more successful than others in getting response from learners. In their study the single largest category is recast, which accounts more than half of the total number of teacher turns containing feedback. Similarly, there were cases where it seems to claim one type of oral feedback (recast) has higher rate of occurrence than other types. In this particular context recasts were also effective in eliciting uptake, and learner responded to any provision of oral feedback as much as class time.

The instructional settings observed in this study implied that classroom teacher played less prominent role than the plasma teacher. It was evident in this study during classroom observation majority of the learners were hesitant to participate in activities. The small amount of learners

uptake, as opposed to the large number of topic continuation moves initiated by plasma teacher and classroom teachers showed that the pace of the lesson by plasma teacher does not allow classroom teachers to keep the floor during the delivery of the lesson. Repeatedly, classroom teachers were seen lack of initiation to act as a facilitator while the plasma teacher is imparting the lesson. As long as the plasma teacher takes main portion of the class time, classroom teachers ought to be a mediator during the lesson. In many occasions neither the plasma teacher nor the classroom teachers oral corrective feedback does lead to the uptake because learners were not engaged in productively as participants. The challenge for classroom teachers was to create an effective learning situation and help learners to involve in the process. For these reasons, foreign language teachers should seriously consider various options of provision of oral feedback as they improve learners ability to achieve successful communication..

Language acquisition process can be liable to be influenced by so many factors; hence, to come up with a simple solution can cover all aspects of all issues involved is impractical. Taking into consideration different factors, teachers failed to give adequate and appropriate oral feedback to address the needs of their learners at large. To alleviate the problem, appropriate methods ought to be implemented by teachers and learners simultaneously oral feedback to be effective.

Based mainly on practical considerations certain types of errors are more correctable than others and therefore selective error correction method is needed. Teachers were observed spending their corrective oral feedback time on local errors. It was also very demanding for teachers to choose appropriate oral feedback in the right situation. Caution is required on the part of the teacher in handling errors as they highly influence learners towards attaching high importance to grammar learning and not to develop negative attitudes to learn the target language. .

In conclusion, oral feedback is still believed to be very important by teachers. Even though the research shows that the teachers' tendency changing from focus on accuracy to focus on fluency teaching approach. Still teachers stick to grammar accuracy. This practice may undermine the learners use of the language for communicative purpose. It can be one of the causes for learners lower participation during classroom interaction. Instead teachers should focus on correcting global errors rather than on local errors in order to make average learners to participate in classroom activities and practice the target language. Above all, errors made by the learners need due attention so that learners should be trained to convey their message across regardless the

errors. Learners need to lessen the use of the mother tongue during foreign language class time; otherwise; they will not have means to practice the target language. To achieve this goal, learners should practice using target language during class time among themselves and with their teachers as a springboard as long as English language is a medium of instruction for most of high school courses. .

The subjects of the study are aware of the important factors necessary for learners' uptake and try to adapt oral feedback to the needs of each individual learner at times. Unless the learners uptake increases from time to time, they will not have the opportunity to recognize the gap between what they know and the rule of the target language .Nevertheless, the investigation of the study showed that teachers prefer one type of oral feedback to the others and this preference will hold on to that type of oral feedback regardless what learners being practiced. Thus to make learners difficulties easier and learning more interesting depending on the nature of the lesson, teachers have to offer a variety of oral feedback. If learners should not overcome the fear of making mistakes, they will remain hesitant to take part in activities and as a result they will not be in a good position to improve their language proficiency. From this discussion it is possible to conclude any benefit ,the result from provision of oral feedback would be worth .On contrary , it could lead to harmful side effects such as inhibiting and negative attitudes towards learning. Still effective provision of oral feedback will depend on teachers own classroom observation.

## **5.2 SUMMARY**

This study was conducted to examine teachers focus in correcting learners' errors and the kinds of oral feedback teachers provide for learners' errors during classroom interaction. To achieve the objectives set, necessary data were collected through classroom observation, questionnaire and interview.

The findings showed that all learners' errors invited corrective oral feedback mainly grammar and pronunciation. As noted during classroom observation majority of the learners are hesitant to participate in classroom activities which may be due to the fear of making errors. This incident implies that both teachers and learners emphasize accuracy more than successfully communicate using the target language .A vast majority of learners will remain silent if they can not produce perfect accuracy of the target language. In other words ,learners uptake is very limited unless

they take risk to use the rule of the target language .It is important not to focus solely on grammar accuracy of the spoken language rather the focus should be on fluency until learners acquire sufficient command of the language.

Provision of oral feedback is one of the ways in which it is used as a bridge to connect the teacher and learners to engage in the activities during classroom interaction. Particularly in language classes, it is very unlikely to pursue a lesson with out oral feedback. Given this importance of oral feedback for language learning and teaching, it demands that teachers to play a constructive role in the teaching and learning processes. Provision of oral will bear fruit if teachers can empower learners to make good use of the oral feedback that they receive mostly from the teachers and peers.

Teachers do have great role in imparting the lesson besides building the learners confidence to use the target language for communication in classroom context. It is obvious learners do have the frequent inclination to use their mother tongue by denying to use the foreign language for immediate classroom communication purpose. Thus teachers need to break the barrier of making learners dominantly use the target language in foreign language classes.

To sum up, provision of oral feedback is important practice that has been frequently used in foreign language classes. In classrooms practically depending on the learner level and the objectives of the lesson different types of oral feedback explicit or implicit, immediate or delayed oral feedback can be provided. As the reviewed literature stated, it is difficult to come up with certain ideas to be functional for all cases to correct learners' errors. The present study relies on a small data and restricted to the analysis of provision of oral feedback in one teaching context. Researchers (Allwright1975; Long 1977; Chaudron 1988) reveal that providing oral feedback is a good way to promote the acquisition of language learning process. In general, it is some times good to consider individual differences among learners when teachers provide oral feedback to the learners.

Results on the report also evidence, further classroom research is highly desirable to look at how provision of oral feedback is implemented by foreign language teachers in their classrooms. It was also observed that recast and explicit correction were more frequent than other types of oral feedback during classroom observation .Given the fact that practical

consideration and other constraints that are prevalent in Ethiopian high schools, effects of large class size in adjusting oral feedback to the needs of individual learners ;reasons why teachers emphasis in correcting learners grammar errors additional studies are needed on teachers practice concerning provision of oral feedback.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATION**

The finding of a research on teachers' oral feedback and learners' up take need frequent investigation and the result may not be conclusive claim related to language learning. Further research is needed to describe how provision of oral feedback functions effectively in learning a foreign language in formal classroom context.. Nevertheless, it is possible to recommend some ideas for teachers based on findings .This study offers seven general recommendations for teachers based on classroom observation, questionnaire and interview.

Even though errors can be categorized in different types and levels, teachers should focus on global errors or errors that affect a large number of learners instead of focusing on local errors as it may inhibit learners' attempt to use the language fluently. Teachers should apply different types error correction methods depending on the actual situation that determines the teaching and learning process to take place. It is also necessary for teachers to give rooms for self and peer correction instead of correcting all learners' errors themselves

Teachers should be systematic in handling learners' errors in relation with the context of teaching and learning the foreign language. In addition , teachers have to realize the objective of language learning so that they can assist learners language acquisition processes. As learners do have little opportunities to practice the language outside classroom, to enhance learners language acquisition process, learners need to be encouraged to produce language to communicate at least in classroom context. Further, an error correction technique that requires teachers assistance particularly at earlier stage have to be very appropriate as the oral feedback can be a cause that hinders or accelerate language learning process.

Teachers need to be aware of their error correction practices in providing oral feedback for learners' errors .As the provision of oral feedback practically observed ,it can benefit majority of learners taking in to consideration their level of learning and their current language proficiency in addressing learners errors. Apart from focusing on maintaining high degree of

accuracy, specifically teachers need to focus on oral feedback that facilitate constructive classroom interaction and learners increased uptake during class time.

Practicing a variety of oral feedback provision is necessary for foreign language teachers to capture the attention of the learners and to overcome the difficulties of the vast majority of the learners. Teachers from practice they know that one type of oral feedback does not fit the needs of all learners. Individual differences is a prevalent thing that is frequently observed by foreign language teachers in general. As much as possible, despite the fact that large class size may prevent to apply most appropriate oral feedback for an individual learner, teachers have to strive to achieve the goal over a period of time by paying attention to the needs of their learners.

Most important of all, teachers provision of oral feedback should be perceived clearly by learners. Eventually, provision of oral feedback techniques employed in the classroom should always embrace learners to correct their errors before teachers attempting to respond to the correct form explicitly and immediately.

As time goes on, it is important to make learners less dependent on their teachers. One of the means to develop the learners independency from the teachers very frequent assistance is by giving constant practices for learners to self or peer correct errors. Teachers should be reserved from supplying the correct answers right away. A sufficient time should be given to learners to correct their error first if not peer eventually teachers. Teachers should not give correct response before learners have had enough time to process the information. If foreign language teachers allow time and provide appropriate clues for the learners to self correct, more often the learners will come forward to error correction. As researchers suggest the least effective technique for correcting learners in correcting language use is to supply for learners the correct answer right away.

Foreign language teachers have to be trained by providing great emphasis on how to handle learners' errors and correct them. Sufficient training is very necessary concerning provision of oral feedback for the prospective foreign language teachers as well. The training should allow foreign language teachers to be familiar with the concept like different types of learners' error including local and global, hierarchy of error correction, explicit and different types of implicit oral feedback as well as oral feedback on form and content.

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## Appendix A

### Research instrument for classroom observation

1. During the lesson teachers' focus is on \_\_\_\_\_ individual/ small group/whole  
Class activities

2. During the lesson teachers' focus is on \_\_\_\_\_ form, meaning /message

3. Language used during interaction by students \_\_\_\_\_ target language / L1 (mother tongue)

4. Language used during provision of feedback by teacher \_\_\_\_\_ target language / L1 (mother tongue)

5. Teachers' correction of learners' errors is \_\_\_\_\_ grammatical/meaning/ pronunciation /word choice

6. Teachers' feedback

Repetition	Explicit correction	Clarification request	Metalinguistic feedback	Elicitation	Praise or encourage	Recast

### 7.Learners' error

Grammatical	Meaning	Pronunciation	Word choice	Multiple

**8.Learners' uptake**

**a.Needs repair**

Acknowledge	Different error	Same error	Hesitation	Off target	Partial repair

**b.Repair**

Repetition	Self repair	Peer repair	Incorporation

9.Teachers feedback /reinforcement topic continuation

10. Teachers response to mistakes

Not at all	rarely	sometimes	Frequently	Very frequently

11. Teachers correct mistake

explicitly +delayed	explicitly + immediate	implicitly +immediate	Implicitly + delayed

Sequence of error treatment (adapted from Ranta and Lyster1997)

## **Appendix B**

Brief definition of important terms

The current study adapts the categorization of (Lyster and Ranta ,1997)Error Treatment Sequence for classroom observation purpose. As used in their study brief definition of important terms that were used in classroom observation checklist listed below.

Lyster and Ranta distinguished four kinds of repair in their study ;repetition, self repair, peer repair, incorporation

1. Repetition refers to a student's repetition of teacher's feedback when the latter includes the correct form.

2. Self-repair refers to self correction produced by the student who made the initial errors in response to the teacher's feedback when the later does not already provided the correct form

3. Peer-repair refers to peer correction provided by a student ,other than one who made the initial error ,in response to the teacher's feedback. The nature of this uptake type is the same as self-repair.

4. Incorporation refers to a student's repetition of correct form provided by the teacher ,which is then incorporated into a longer utterance produced by student

The other type of uptake is needs repair ,which refers to a situation when learners respond to the corrective feedback but the learners' utterance does not result in repair in the original erroneous utterance.

In Lyster and Ranta (1997) there were six types of needs repair identified in their data: acknowledgement ,same error different error off target ,hesitation and partial repair .

1 .Acknowledgment generally refers to a simple "yes" on the part of the student in response to teachers feedback as if say "yes, that is indeed what I meant to say(but you have just said it much better) Acknowledgment includes a "yes" or "no" on the part of the student in response to the teachers metalinguistic feedback..

2. Same error refers to uptake that includes a repetition of student's initial error
3. Different error refers to a student's uptake that is in response to the teacher's feedback but that neither corrects nor repeats the initial error ;instead, a different error is made.
- 4 .Off target refers to uptake that is clearly in response to the teacher's feedback turn but the circumvents the teacher's linguistic focus altogether ,with out including any further error.
5. Partial repair refers to uptake that includes a correction of only part of the initial error.
- 6 .Hesitation refers to a student's hesitation in response to the teachers feedback.

## APPENDIX C

Questionnaire for grade 12 English language teachers

Dear teachers :

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on the provision of oral feedback during classroom interaction from grade 12 English language teachers. Your genuine response to the questions will contribute greatly for the success of the research .please complete all parts that you find appropriate to you. The researcher will keep the information obtained confidential.

Thank you in advance for being voluntary and for your valuable information.

### **Please don't write your name**

Put tick mark  in the box

I am

Male

Female

I have been teaching English for \_\_\_\_\_

Less than five years  6-10 years  11-15 years  16 or more years

My qualification is \_\_\_\_\_

College Diploma  B.A  M.A  others

1. Which of learners' errors are usually corrected by yourself?

Pronunciation  word choice  meaning  grammar

2. Which of learners' errors(self/peer) are usually corrected by learners?

Pronunciation  word choice  meaning  grammar

3. Do you give encouragement for learners' to correct their errors?

Explain why you think it is important/not important?

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4. Do you think that you give enough oral feedback for learners' to be able to trace their

own errors and to correct it?

Explain

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5. Which kind of feedback is important for majority of your learners'?

Please indicate the rate of importance

Explicit  very important  fairly important  rather important  not important

Implicit  very important  fairly important  rather important  not important

Immediate  very important  fairly important  rather important  not important

Delayed  very important  fairly important  rather important  not important

6. (Referring Q5.) Why do you think this/these kind(s) of feedback is/are important?

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7. Which one(s) do you use when you give oral feedback for learners' errors?

(Please rate them accordingly from one to six)

As teachers supply the correct form, she/he clearly indicates that what student had said was incorrect (e.g. "Oh you mean""you should say") \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers directly elicits a reformulation from students by asking questions such as "how do you say that in English?" or by pausing to allow the student to complete teachers' utterances, by asking students to reformulate their utterance. E.g. comment on do you say that in English \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers implicitly reformulate all or part of the students' utterance minus the error \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers use phrases such as "I don't understand", "pardon me" without explicitly providing the correct form \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers repeat ill-formed utterances adjusting intonation to highlight the error \_\_\_\_\_

Teachers provide comments, information or question related to wellformedness of students' utterance Indicates to students either that the utterance is ill-formed in some way and that a repetition or a reformulation is required. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you adapt feedback to the needs of individual learner?

Please explain why it is necessary

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9. In provision of feedback during classroom interaction your focus is on

fluency-

accuracy

Fluency and accuracy

Other methods Comment

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10. Other comments regarding oral feedback in English foreign language classroom

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## Appendix D

### Questions for grade twelve language teachers' interview

First of all thank you for being willing to be interviewed for interview .please introduce your self ,your name ,your qualification and how long have you been teaching English in high school.

1. What kinds of oral feedback lead learners to correct their own errors?
2. Which error correction is more important for learners?  
Self /peer /teacher
3. What kinds of feedback do you use for students correct answer?
4. what kinds of learners errors do you often correct?
5. Have you noticed any difference in using implicit /explicit/ immediate /delayed oral feedback for learners to correct their errors.?
6. Please mention if there is particular type of oral feedback that enables you to correct learners' errors.
7. what types of oral feedback will give learners more chance for uptake?
8. What type of oral feedback will give learner least chance for uptake?



## DECLARATION

I, the under signed declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

Name : Legesse Kassa

Signature -----

Place: Addis Ababa University

Date of submission--30/06/2008