ENGLISH STUDIES DEGREE

FINAL UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION

Examining Teacher's Corrective Feedback and Learner's Uptake at Different Proficiency Levels: A Study in ESO and Bachillerato English Classes

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ABSTRACT

The development of Schmidt's (1990) Noticing Hypothesis and Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis helped to spread the importance of giving learners Corrective Feedback (CF) in an effort to make them progress in their foreign language learning. Since importance was given to CF, research has been conducted on the way teachers give CF and the way students' respond in their uptake, being one of the most relevant studies the one carried out by Lyster and Ranta (1997). After establishing a taxonomy of CF types and a classification of uptake types, Lyster and Ranta (1997) also studied that the selected CF type could be somehow related with the type of uptake students produced. Furthermore, students' level of proficiency has been another object of study in the field of CF since it was believed teachers had to select the type of CF taking into consideration learners' level of proficiency. Therefore, as teachers' selection of the CF could be determined by students' level of proficiency and by learners' production of a particular type of uptake, the present study aims to examine the type of CF that a single teacher employs with ESO and Bachillerato learners as well as the type of uptake that these students produce after receiving teacher's feedback.

Keywords: corrective feedback, uptake, ESO, Bachillerato.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last century, the question on whether Corrective Feedback (henceforth CF) was crucial in the process of learning a foreign language has been very much discussed in the literature on language acquisition. This discussion was finally concluded with the development of Schmidt's (1990) Noticing Hypothesis and Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis, which illustrated arguments in favour of using CF in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, nowadays, CF is considered an important part of the foreign language instruction. In fact, it was after the publication of Lyter and Ranta's (1997) study that CF received much more attention. This is because their model of treatment of errors and their classification of the types of CF and uptake paved the way for conducting research on this area. For example, authors such as Lyster (2004) investigated the effectiveness of each type CF in the foreign language classroom and others as Kennedy (2010) examined the efficiency of using CF types in different levels of proficiency. In the present paper Lyster and Ranta's (1997) taxonomy of the types of CF and uptake along with some research on the efficiency of CF types in different levels of proficiency are going to be discussed. Within this theoretical framework, this study aims at observing what types of CF teachers provide to students in ESO and Bachillerato as well as what types of uptake these learners give in response to this CF. In order to achieve this purpose, several lessons of two 1st of ESO classes and one 1st of Bachillerato class would be observed in view of obtaining and analysing the types of CF and types of uptake produced in these different classes. These results will be examined and contrasted with previous studies in order to hypothesise the reason why the teacher used the CF and why the student produced the uptake.

In the theoretical framework, we will provide a theoretical overview of CF in view of showing the importance of providing CF in the classroom. Then, Lyster and Ranta's (1997) taxonomy of types of CF and types of uptake will be presented as well as some research conducted on the effectiveness of CF. In the study, we will focus on describing the participants and the data collection procedure. Then, the results and discussion section will be devoted to not only showing the results of the study but also discussing them. This paper will conclude reviewing major findings of the study as well as providing some suggestions for further research.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the process of learning a foreign language, like in any other kind of learning, it is common that students make errors either in pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary. Because students produce deviations of the correct target form, they have to receive some correction on the part of teachers. This correction, which is known as Corrective Feedback (CF), has been defined as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect," (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 171). Therefore, one of the instructors' tasks in the foreign language classroom consists in paying attention to students' errors and trying to find a solution for correcting these mistakes. However, the question of whether it is good or not to focus on students' incorrect target language utterances has been widely debated. This debate on whether addressing students' errors or not would be discussed in the following section.

2.1 Should students' errors be corrected?

The issue of correcting learners' errors in the foreign language classroom has been very much discussed among schools of thoughts throughout decades. In the 1950s and 1960s, behaviourists believed learning a foreign language was a process of stimulus-response in which students acquired habits my imitating and repeating the teachers' language and by receiving a positive or negative response of their imitations. In this learning process, errors were seen as "sins" because they could result in forming erroneous habits and therefore, these errors had to be immediately addressed by instructors through a negative response (Brooks, 1960). Conversely, nativists as Krashen (1981) stated that error correction was not necessary for foreign language acquisition. In his Monitor Model (1981), Krashen distinguished between acquisition and learning. The former knowledge is seen as a "subconscious process" by which students acquire a foreign language without being aware of the rules of the language as the way children acquire their first language, whereas learning consists of a "conscious process" by which students receive explicit instruction of the language and as result, they "know about the rules of the language" (Krashen, 1982, p. 10). He believed that the implicit processes allow learners to acquire the language; whereas, the knowledge obtained from learning could not contribute to acquire the language (Krashen, 1981). For this reason, he argued that error correction was not necessary in language acquisition because it only affected learning. Apart from mentioning the acquisition-learning distinction, this nativist added the Input Hypothesis to his Monitor Model. In

his Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1985) claims that comprehensible input is the only sufficient way to acquire a foreign language and thus, CF plays no major role in the process of acquiring this foreign language.

However, Krashen's hypothesis that a foreign language is acquired naturally without being conscious of the rules of the language and his claim that comprehensible input is only necessary to obtain a foreign language have been criticised. Krashen's view on that the acquisition of a foreign language is a subconscious process has not been accepted by Schmidt (1990). He observed that the linguistic features of the target language are not acquired unconsciously but rather consciously. Therefore, he proposed in his Noticing Hypothesis (1990) that noticing is "the necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake" (p. 132). Intake, which according to Schmidt (1994) is "that part of the input that the learner notices," (p. 139), is relevant for the target language acquisition because if a linguistic form is noticed, this becomes intake and as a result, it is processed and acquired. Moreover, Gass (1991) supported Schmidt's view of acquiring a language by claiming that "nothing in the target language is available for intake into a language learner's existing system unless it is consciously noticed" (p. 136). In order to make learners acquire their target language, they need to focus their attention upon form. Gass (1991) suggested that CF could be used not only as a stimulus for making learners draw their attention to the form of the target language, but also as a way of noticing there is a mismatch between their erroneous utterance and the target form. Consequently, it seems that students need to produce target utterances in order to make them notice this mismatch between the correct form of the target language and the students' errors. This leads to argue Krashen's view on that comprehensible input is only sufficient to acquire the target language.

Although Krashen (1985) upheld his belief that comprehensible input was "the essential ingredient in language acquisition" (p. 101), Swain (1985) considered that only receiving this comprehensible input may not guarantee improving in a foreign language. This claim originated from a revision she made on some Canadian French immersion programmes. Swain observed that despite continuous exposure to comprehensible input of the foreign language, learners still made a considerable number of grammatical errors. This made her think that the problem may arise from students' lack of opportunities to produce output. Therefore, Swain introduced the notion of comprehensible output in the Output Hypothesis (1985). According to this author,

comprehensible output may be defined as demanding learners "the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately" (p. 249). This researcher introduced the notion of comprehensible output arguing that output provides learners with a "hypothesis-testing" function (Swain, 1995, p. 128). This means that as students are pushed to produce utterances in the target language, they may hypothesise about the linguistic forms and they can put into practise their hypotheses in interaction. In these attempts to produce the language, learners can make errors, and they need to receive CF. Therefore, making errors in their attempts to produce comprehensible output can allow learners to obtain feedback not only from teachers but also from peers (Swain, 1988). By providing "learners with the opportunity to produce language and gain feedback, which, by focusing learners' attention on certain aspects of their speech, may lead them to notice either a mismatch between their speech and that of an interlocutor […] or a deficiency in their output," (Gass, 1997, p. 148). Moreover, Gass and Varonis (1994) claimed that as learners notice this mismatch, CF prompts them to change their target language knowledge. If this CF did not allow students to modify some aspects in their interlanguage, these may get fossilised (Rezaei, Mozaffari, & Hatef, 2011); and as a result, learners will not "progress to fully mature linguistic competence" (Tomasello & Herron, 1988, p. 237).

As has been observed in the above review of the most important theoretical perspectives of the treatment of errors, CF seems to be necessary in the foreign language classroom since it can contribute to students' process of learning. However, many researchers wondered about which factors needed to be considered for making CF effective. Some of these that were investigated were the type of strategy or students' level of proficiency. But, before mentioning some reviews, it seems necessary to consider the study conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1997). This is because their model of error treatment, their diverse corrective feedback strategies and their types of uptake paved the way for conducting empirical research on the effectiveness of CF in the classroom.

2.2 A taxonomy of CF types

In Lyster and Ranta's (1997) research, several transcripts of four teachers and learners' interactions in French immersion classrooms were examined in order to account for the different types of corrective feedback moves employed in the classroom as well as to establish a relationship between corrective feedback and uptake. In order to

accomplish these objectives, Lyster and Ranta, taking as reference the categories from Spada and Fröhlich (1995) as well as the categories from Doughty (1994a, 1994b), developed their model of error treatment sequence in 1997. They claimed that, in this sequence, students first make an error and then, the teacher can either not focus on the mistake or provide them with CF. If the instructor gives feedback, it can lead to learners' provision of uptake (and thus, the initial error is repaired or not) or topic continuation.

Based on this error treatment model, Lyster and Ranta (1997) examined the oral feedback moves used to treat the students' errors in the classroom. As a result, they observed in their study six different types of oral corrective feedback.

- Explicit correction consists in signalling students' error in their utterances and then, giving a correction of their ill-formed utterances.
- Recasts do not involve a teachers' indication of students' mistakes, but a teachers' reformulation of a part or all students' initial error.
- Clarification requests consist of a series of phrases that serve to indicate that students' sentences have not been understood or they have not been properly formulated and as a result, they have to reformulate them.
- Metalinguistic feedback comprises the teachers' usage of remarks, questions or information in order to discuss about students' ill-formed sentences with learners as well as prompt them to produce the correct form. Metalinguistic comments announce that an error has been produced. Metalinguistic information shares some knowledge of the language itself with learners in order to make them reflect about the mistake. Metalinguistic questions consist in asking learners yes/no questions in order to draw students' attention to the nature of their error.
- Elicitation involves the elicitation of the correct form by using three techniques. These three ways are making students complete a "fill in the blank" utterance created by the teacher, asking learners questions to focus on the error or even making them reformulate their incorrect utterance.
- Repetition consists of the teachers' reproduction of students' incorrect utterance. Teachers can sometimes reproduce students' errors by pronouncing them with a raising intonation in order to point them.

It should be mentioned that these six types of oral corrective feedback were later classified into two categories: reformulations and prompts. Whereas explicit correction and recasts were included in the reformulation category; clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition were allocated in the prompts category (Ranta & Lyster, 2007). Apart from observing these aforementioned CF types in their study, Lyster and Ranta introduced the notion of "uptake" in their 1997 study. According to them, uptake could be defined as a "student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (1997, p. 49). Moreover, these authors observed two different forms of uptake in their study, being repaired and un-repaired. Repaired uptake refers to the resolution of learner's initial error; whereas un-repaired uptake is the unresolved students' initial error. Furthermore, they found out four types of repaired uptake and six types of un-repaired uptake. Although they examined and obtained different types of repaired uptake and un-repaired uptake, only the types of repaired uptake would be commented. Therefore, repaired uptake may consist of repetition, incorporation, self-repair and peer-repair.

- Repetition involves students' reproduction of teachers' correct form after it has been provided by the teacher.
- Incorporation consists in students making a sentence in which they include teachers' correct form.
- Self-repair is learners' response to teachers' corrective feedback in the form of a self-correction of their initial error.
- Peer-repair involves a correction given by a student in response to an initial error made by another different learner.

These different types of oral corrective feedback and these types of uptake that Lyster and Ranta described in their study (1997) made many researchers question whether uptake could be seen as an indicator of foreign language acquisition. Lyster and Ranta (1997) claimed that students' production of repaired uptake may allow "learners to automatize the retrieval of the language knowledge" (p. 57), and as a result it could facilitate acquisition. However, Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2001) mentioned that repaired uptake could not be related with the acquisition of that form since "this would mean that the student should be able to use the feature later on without prompting" (p.

287). Moreover, Mackey, Oliver, and Leeman (2003) claimed that "[…] Even though there may be a direct correlation between modified output and L2 development, this has not been demonstrated empirically" (p. 48). Despite this fact, research has focused on the effectiveness of applying each type of oral corrective feedback in the foreign language classroom, as will be commented in the following section.

2.3 The effectiveness of different CF types

The effectiveness of using either recasts or prompts in the foreign language classroom has been a subject of much debate. This is because some researchers such as Lyster and Ranta (1997) or Sheen (2004) found that recasts tended to be the most frequent CF strategy employed in language classroom. Despite being widely employed, there has been controversy among researchers regarding their effectiveness in the classroom.

For instance, Long (1996, 2007) observed that recasts could be effective in foreign language classrooms. This was because the teacher's provision of the correct target form does not seem to interrupt the flow of the conversation as it seems to occur with other CF types. Even though recasts do not seem to break the communication flow, the provision of the correct target form might not be seen by learners as a correction (Lyster, 1998b) but rather as "an alternative form" of what students mentioned before (Chaudron, 1988, p. 145). Conversely, Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam (2006) claimed that prompts could be seen as a correction for learners since these were more salient in pointing out the location of the error.

Although, as it has been indicated above, uptake might not be closely related with the acquisition of the target language, other authors have questioned the effectiveness of recasts and prompts in terms of uptake. For example, Lyster and Ranta (1997), who observed the types of oral CF that led to uptake, showed that recasts had the least amount of uptake. Moreover, they observed that recasts "did not account for any repairs" (1997, p. 55). Since recasts mainly consisted of teacher's reformulation of students' erroneous utterance, students' opportunities to generate a repair are limited. Therefore, these latter authors mentioned that recasts could not be effective since students only repeated teachers' correct form instead of repairing themselves their errors.

However, Lyster and Ranta (1997) mentioned that elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition could be effective since they call for providing correction opportunities in students' uptake. This means that learners respond to their initial erroneous utterances by providing a correction. As elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition make students self-correct, learners "drawn on their own resources and thus actively confront errors in ways that may lead to revisions of their hypotheses about the target language" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 57). Therefore, they believed that pushing students to provide a repair for their erroneous utterance could be more effective than just receiving the correct target form from teachers.

As it has been commented, in their study, Lyster and Ranta (1997) found that some corrective feedback strategies were seen more effective than others. They believed that this effectiveness may be related with students' level of proficiency. That is, Lyster and Ranta (1997) suggested that the corrective feedback strategy should be selected considering learners' level of proficiency of the target language. They made this statement because they observed that one teacher who had high proficient students did not tend to use recasts as frequent as the other teachers with low proficient learners. From this observation, they believed that the higher the levels of proficiency students have, the more able they are to notice their errors and to produce modified output. As a result, they considered that instructors teaching to high proficient students used CF strategies which made learners produce repair in their uptake. Other research which focused on the efficiency of using different CF strategies depending on learners' level of proficiency are those by Havranek and Cesnik (2001), Ammar and Spada (2006) and Kennedy (2010).

In a study with learners who were studying English as a Foreign Language in Germany, Havranek and Cesnik (2001) observed the efficacy of using either prompts or recasts in the classroom. In order to examine their effectiveness, students first received these types of feedback in their instruction classes and then, they were asked to complete some tests based on the language items they had received CF. In their analysis, they claimed that students had better grades in their tests in those linguistic items they had previously received prompts. Moreover, they argued that these results could be related with learners' level of proficiency. They observed that both high level

students and low level learners who received prompts obtained better results than those high level students and low level learners who only received recasts.

In turn, Ammar and Spada (2006) published a research paper in which the effectiveness of using prompts and recasts in three different classes was analysed. In each classroom, students were divided into groups depending on their level of proficiency and each teacher used a specific CF strategy. During three weeks, students received instruction in a particular linguistic item and then, they were asked to do some tests based on what they had studied. Considering the marks obtained in the tests, Ammar and Spada (2006) observed that high-proficient learners benefited equally from prompts and recasts; whereas low-proficient learners benefited more from prompts than recasts. These high-proficient learners benefited equally from these spoken CF because "their knowledge of the target language might not be particularly affected by the nature of the techniques used to draw their attention to the formal properties of the language," (Ammar & Spada, 2006, p. 563). The difference between these two low-proficiency groups may be due to the fact that recasts are not as salient and explicit as prompts (Ammar & Spada, 2006). Recasts may be seen implicit to students as these latter might not realise of the error by just receiving teachers' correct form. On the contrary, prompts could be seen both salient and explicit to learners because, according to these authors, they clearly indicate the commitment of an error as well as metalinguistic cues make students' notice the error and as a consequence, think about the correct target form. Low-proficient learners, who need assistance from teachers to build their interlanguage system, need to receive signals and information which make them notice the error and try to think about the appropriate target language form. Therefore, Ammar and Spada (2006) believed that this error treatment in low proficient students should be addressed by using prompts.

Instead of focusing on different teachers, Kennedy (2010) analysed the types of CF strategies that a single teacher used in different proficient students of the same foreign language classroom. She observed that there were some differences in the type of feedback that the teacher provided for each proficiency student. She noticed that low-level learners received recasts rather than prompts; whereas high-level students received prompts instead of recasts. According to Kennedy (2010), this difference in the treatment of errors could be because high-level students, who have acquired a great amount of knowledge of the target language, are able to repair their errors. Conversely,

low-level students, who do know much about the target language, still need to receive the correct form of the language in their feedback.

These studies suggest that learners' level of proficiency could be seen as a factor to consider in the selection of a CF strategy or another. This is because this CF would determine the students' production of repair or the repetition of teachers' correction in their uptake. In order to observe if learners of different proficiency levels produce repairs or repetitions, this study aims to examine both students' types of uptake and the types of CF employed in ESO and Bachillerato. Specifically, it focuses on whether an individual teacher selects different CF strategies depending on the level of proficiency in these classes. In the next section we turn to discuss the study itself by explaining the rationale, the setting, the participants, the data collection procedure and the findings.

3. THE STUDY

3.1 Rationale

As attested by some previous research (Kennedy, 2010; Lyster & Ranta, 1997), learners' level of proficiency may be a factor that could affect the selection of the type of CF provided to learners. This CF may lead to eliciting students to generate a repair of their erroneous utterance or this CF may lead to a simple repetition of teachers' correction (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Therefore, teachers have to select carefully the CF because it does not only depend on students' level of proficiency, but it also determines the type of uptake. Taking these issues into account, the present study aims at examining the following research questions:

RQ1: What type of CF is provided in ESO and Bachillerato students?

RQ2: What type of uptake ESO and Bachillerato learners produce after teacher's feedback?

3.2 Setting and Participants

The study was conducted over a period of 6 weeks in a private school in Spain. This school offers both ESO and Bachillerato courses to students ranging from twelve to seventeen years old. In this private school, students either in ESO or in Bachillerato study English as a foreign language compulsory subject three hours a week. In these

English classes, learners receive grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening and speaking instruction from non-native teachers.

Prior to selecting the participants of the study, the researcher observed all the school courses in order to reflect upon which ones would be chosen for the oral corrective feedback classroom observation. Two classes of 1st year of ESO and one class of 1st year of Bachillerato were selected for two reasons: on the one hand, the level of English proficiency in 1st year of ESO tended to be lower than the level of proficiency in 1st year of Bachillerato. On the other hand, all the students in these classes had the same English teacher. Because this study tried to observe what oral CF was employed in different levels of English proficiency, having the same teacher for all these courses was necessary and it would allow for comparability issues.

A total of eighty EFL students and one non-native English teacher participated in the study. Out of these learners, 35 students belonged to the class in 1st year of Bachillerato and 45 learners belonged to the two classes in 1st year of ESO. Although most EFL bachillerato students had a B1 (CEFR) level in English, it should be pointed out that some learners had a higher proficiency level than that of the rest of the class. Conversely, most 1st of ESO students in both classes had an A1 (CEFR) level in English even though some students had a higher proficiency level.

The teacher was a 50-year-old female Spanish/Valencian bilingual with 10 years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language in both ESO and Bachillerato courses. This instructor was selected because she was the same teacher in the aforementioned ESO and Bachillerato courses, so comparisons between courses could be made. Having described the participants of the study, the procedure for obtaining the data will be explained.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In order to conduct this study, the teacher was informed that her classes in ESO and Bachillerato would be observed for research purposes, but care was taken not to reveal that the focus would be on her CF. This information was not provided in order to make sure that her way of giving corrective feedback was not modified by the presence of the researcher. Ten sessions of both ESO and Bachillerato classes were examined. During observation, the researcher paid attention to the oral production of students' errors, the teacher's provision of CF and finally, students' production of uptake.

Teacher-learner interactions were transcribed, and in order to examine the types of CF and the types of uptake a table was created for each class (see Appendix 1). In this table, all students' errors, teacher's feedback and learners' uptake were noted down. Erroneous utterances in which either the teacher did not provide CF or the learners did not show any reaction to the instructor's provision of CF were excluded from analysis.

The total of errors in each class were coded as phonology, grammar and vocabulary. Also the types of CF strategies and learners' uptake in each class were also coded using Lyster and Ranta's (1997) taxonomy. In this sense, CF was classified as recasts, explicit correction, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, repetition and elicitation. Similarly students' responses to teachers' CF were also classified according to the above-mentioned taxonomy. However, it should be mentioned that we only focused on students' uptake which was repaired rather than the uptake which was left unrepaired. Therefore, students' uptake was classified as repetition, incorporation, self-repair or peer-repair. After classifying both teachers' oral CF types and learners' uptake in the three classes, they were counted in relation to their frequency of occurrence. All these data are presented in the following section.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the six-week class observation, a total of 244 errors were made by all the students in the two classes of ESO and the only class of Bachillerato. Out of this total number of errors, 159 errors (65.2%) were made by ESO students (79 were phonological errors, 49.7%), whereas 85 errors (34.8%) were committed by Bachillerato learners (66 were grammatical errors 77.6%).

4. 1 Results and Discussion related to Research Question 1

Regarding the first research question which focused on observing the types of spoken CF provided to ESO and Bachillerato students, the CF results of each proficiency level are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The teacher's strategies used to correct ESO students are presented in Figure 1: 28.9% of oral CF used was metalinguistic feedback, 26.4% recasts, 22.6% elicitation, 15.1% clarification requests, 6.3% repetition and 0.6% explicit correction. Consequently, it seems that metalinguistic feedback was

the most frequent CF strategy employed in both classes of first of ESO and explicit correction was the less employed at this level.

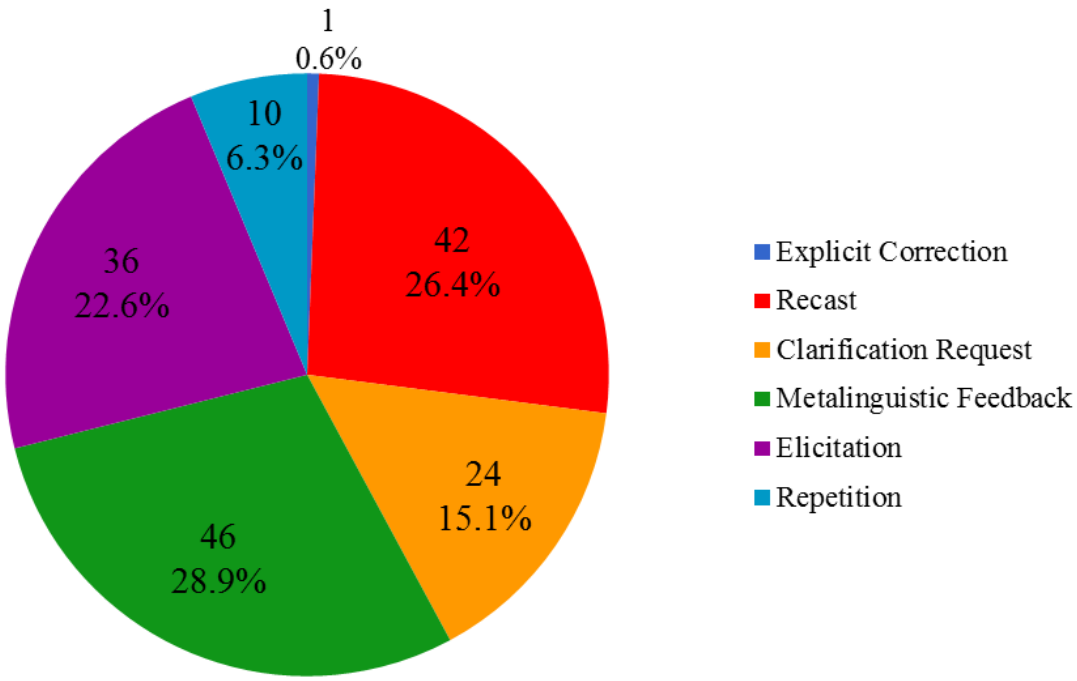

Figure 1. Types of oral CF employed in the two classes of 1st of ESO.

The usage of metalinguistic feedback with low proficient students is not in line with the results of previous studies (Kennedy, 2010; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Sheen, 2004), who showed that recasts were the mostly employed CF among low proficient students. Using more metalinguistic feedback than recasts in these ESO classes could be because the instructor might have thought prompts could help students to realise that they had committed errors instead of recasts, as Ammar and Spada (2006) pointed out. Even though metalinguistic feedback was overused in the two ESO classes, it is followed by recasts, with similar percentages. The usage of recasts in these two ESO classes might be because the instructor could feel that those low proficient learners may not have enough linguistic knowledge to notice the error and linguistic resources to give a correction in their uptake, as mentioned by Kennedy (2010). Conversely, this author claimed that prompts tended to be employed with those learners who have a high level of proficiency of the target language because students can resort to their interlanguage system to repair their incorrect output.

As it has been previously observed, both recasts and metalinguistic feedback were the most used CF strategies in these two ESO classes. The reason for tending to

employ these two CF strategies could be because the teacher could have noticed some differences in the English level of proficiency between the students in the same class. Even though most learners had a low level of proficiency, the teacher observed that some of them had more linguistic level than the rest of their classmates. Because of this difference in the mastering of the language, the teacher mentioned that she paid attention to each student's proficiency level in the same class in order to give each learner a type of CF. This claim shows that the teacher used different types of feedback depending on the students' level of proficiency within the class. In the two ESO classes, the teacher might have decided to employ recasts with those ESO students who had a lower level of English than the rest of their classmates; whereas the instructor might have decided to use metalinguistic feedback with those ESO students who had a higher level of English than the rest of their classmates.

With regards to the types of CF used in the class of 1st of Bachillerato, the results of oral CF at this level of proficiency are presented in Figure 2: 40% of CF employed in this level of proficiency was metalinguistic feedback, 23.5% elicitation, 20% recasts, 10.6% repetition and 5.9% clarification requests. As a result, it seems that metalinguistic feedback was the most frequent type of oral CF used in the class of Bachillerato and clarification request was the least employed in this level of proficiency.

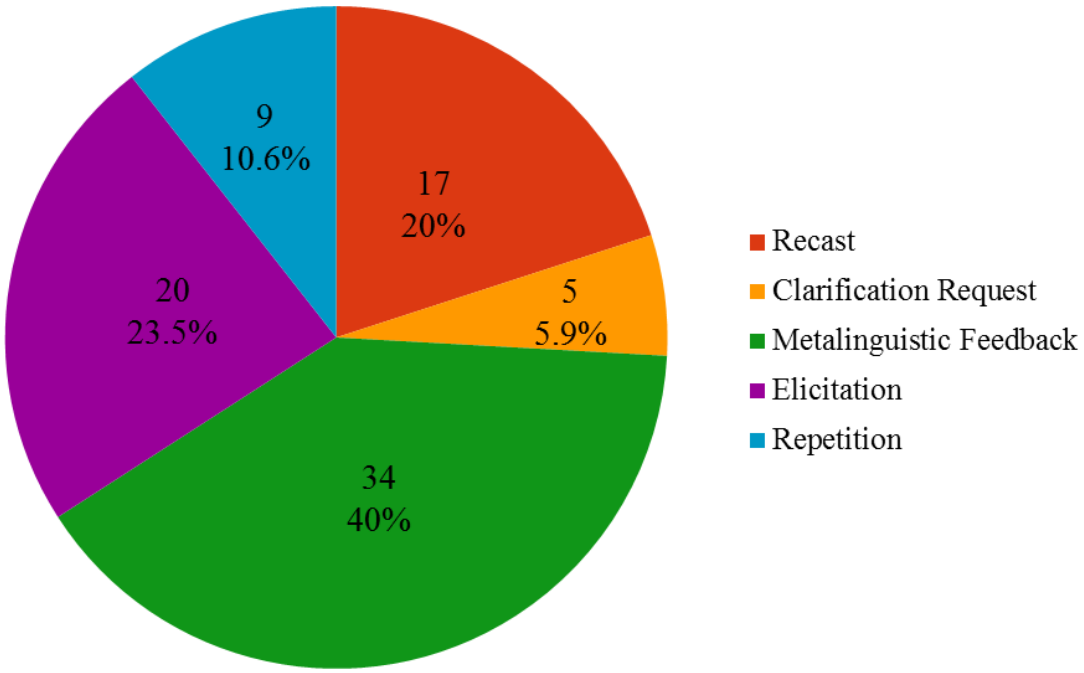

Figure 2. Types of oral CF employed in the class of 1st of Bachillerato.

The use of metalinguistic feedback in high-level students is in line with the results obtained in previous studies (Kennedy, 2010; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). These aforementioned researchers observed that teachers tended to employ prompts instead of recasts with high proficient students. In this study, the reason why the teacher might have used metalinguistic feedback could be considered the same as that given by Kennedy (2010), who suggested that high proficient learners, who seem to have a considerable amount of linguistic knowledge, can be pushed to notice the mismatch between their utterance and the target utterance and as a result, to provide corrections for their errors. As students can resort to using their linguistic knowledge for self-correction, the teacher might have used metalinguistic feedback in an effort to make students produce repairs in their uptake.

In this study, metalinguistic feedback was the mostly employed CF strategy in both ESO classes and the Bachillerato class in relation to other types of oral CF. Therefore, the teacher tended to employ the same CF strategy at the three different classes. However, due to some proficiency differences between the ESO students of the same class, the instructor mentioned that she gave CF taking into consideration each student's proficiency level in the same class. Consequently, the teacher also opted to provide to low proficient ESO learners with the correct target form (recasts) since they did not have enough linguistic knowledge to produce a correction. Conversely, the teacher used metalinguistic feedback with more proficient ESO learners, in an attempt to prompt these learners to identify their errors and to provide a correct target form.

Similarly, the teacher mostly employed metalinguistic feedback with Bachillerato learners, probably because this type of spoken CF prompts students to produce a correction in their uptake.

4.2 Results and Discussion related to Research Question 2

Regarding the second question, which focused on examining the type of uptake produced after receiving CF, the results of uptake for each CF in ESO and Bachillerato are presented below. Table 1 displays the different types of uptake that were produced by ESO students after receiving each CF.

Table 1. *Types of uptake produced by ESO students after each type of CF.*

Types of Feedback	Types of uptake
Recast (n= 42)	Repetition (n=42)100%
Explicit correction (n=1)	Repetition (n=1) 100%
Clarification request (n= 24)	Peer-repair (n=12) 50%
	Self-repair (n=12) 50%
Metalinguistic Feedback (n=46)	Peer-repair (n=11) 23%
	Self-repair (n=35) 77%
Elicitation (n=36)	Peer-repair (n= 14) 39%
	Self-repair (n= 22) 61%
Repetition (n=10)	Peer-repair (n=3) 30%
	Self-repair (n=7) 70%

As it can be observed, students repeated teachers' correct form only when this was a recast or an explicit correction. This finding is in line with the results obtained in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study. In their analysis, these researchers claimed that repeating teacher's correct target form cannot result in generating correction in learners' uptake. Although recasts and explicit correction do not seem to allow students to produce a correct form, in the study, it can be observed that there were opportunities for learners to self-repair or peer-repair. This can be seen in the usage of clarification requests, metalinguistic feedbacks, elicitation and repetitions (see Table 1). This finding corroborates Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study, in which it was observed that "elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition lead to student-generated repair," (p. 56).

The types of uptake that Bachillerato students produced after each CF type are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Types of uptake produced by Bachillerato learners after each type of CF*.

Types of Feedback	Types of uptake
Recast (n= 17)	Repetition (n= 17) 100%
Clarification request (n=5)	Peer-repair (n=2) 40%
	Self-repair (n=3) 60%
Metalinguistic feedback (n=34)	Peer-repair (n= 6) 18%
	Self-repair (n=28) 82%
Elicitation (n= 20)	Peer-repair (n=6) 30%
	Self-repair (n=14) 70%
Repetition (n=9)	Self-repair (n=9) 100%

As can be observed in the above table, the repetition of the correct target form only occurred in those instances in which the correction was given by the teacher (recasts). Conversely, students' production of uptake in the form of repair occurred after receiving CF in the form of clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. These results are similar with those found by Lyster and Ranta (1997). In their study, they showed that recasts accounted for fewer learners' repairs than other CF types because students' uptake is only a repetition of teachers' reformulations of learners' errors.

A comparison of the type of uptake that was produced by ESO and Bachillerato students is shown in Figure 3, which displays the frequency of the different types of uptake produced by not only ESO students (left pie chart) but also Bachillerato learners (right pie chart).

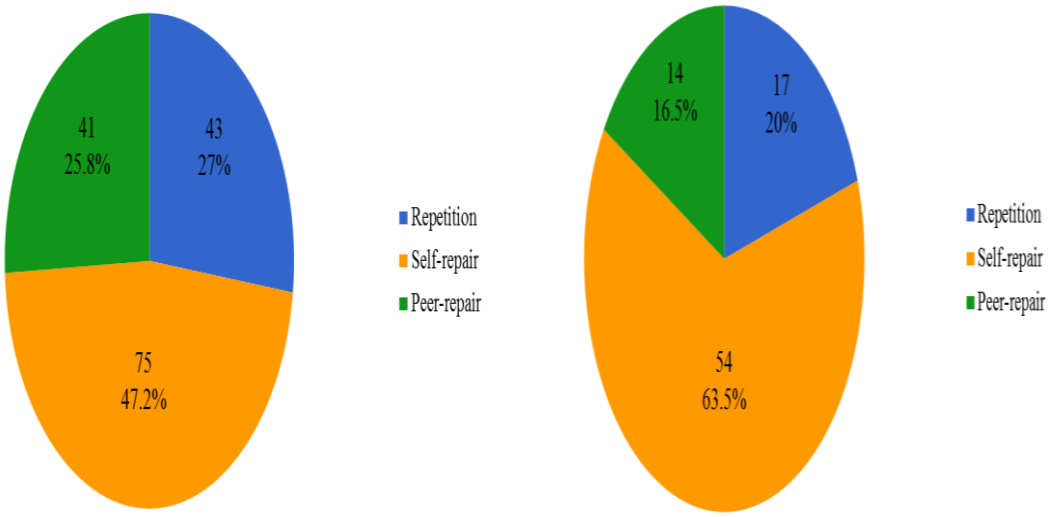

Figure 3. Comparison of types of uptake produced by both ESO and Bachillerato learners.

Bachillerato students tended to most frequently produce self-repair in their uptake (63.5%) than ESO learners (47.2%) and this result could be related with Kennedy's (2010) research. This high percentage of students' provision of the correct target form in their uptake might have resulted from using the teacher prompts. As Kennedy (2010) claimed, teachers might employ prompts that could request students use their linguistic knowledge in order to correct their errors. In order to correct these errors, according to Kennedy (2010), learners are expected to have a considerable amount of linguistic knowledge and as a result, the only students capable of providing a correction are those with a high linguistic level. Conversely, ESO learners reported a lesser amount of self-repair in their uptake (47.2%) because they could have received a percentage slightly higher of recasts (27%) than that of Bachillerato students (20%). Since ESO students do not seem to have much linguistic knowledge, they were given the correct target form in recasts (Kennedy, 2010). As they receive teachers' correction, they do not seem to be pushed to produce it and therefore, as Lyster and Ranta (1997) reported, their opportunities to repair in the uptake may decrease. Besides, the provision of recasts in ESO students could be related with the percentage of repetition of teachers' correct form (27%). As Lyster and Ranta (1997) suggested, recasts might not allow students to produce repair in their uptake since their uptake might only consist of a repetition of teachers' reformulations of learners' errors.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was twofold: firstly, to examine the types of CF that a teacher could use with ESO and Bachillerato learners and secondly, to observe the types of ESO and Bachillerato learners' responses to the CF provided by the teacher. In order to analyse these two research questions, a study was conducted in two 1st of ESO classes and one 1st of Bachillerato class in which teacher-student CF interactions were observed, transcribed and afterwards, the CF samples were coded according to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) CF taxonomy and uptake classification. The analysis of the data points to the fact that metalinguistic feedback was the most employed CF technique in the two classes of ESO, followed by recasts. The use of these two CF strategies in the two ESO classes could be because the teacher might have noticed differences in the level of proficiency between the students in the same class. Due to these differences, the instructor commented that she gave CF paying attention to each learner's proficiency level within the same class. Therefore, the teacher employed recasts with those students who seemed to have a low proficiency level; whereas she used metalinguistic feedback with those learners who might have a high proficiency level. Conversely, the most frequent type of CF in Bachillerato was metalinguistic feedback. This may be due to the fact that the teacher considered that these learners could have enough linguistic knowledge to provide a correction for their errors.

As far as the findings for the second research question are concerned, the type of uptake that both ESO and Bachillerato students tended to produce the most was self-repair. Despite giving the same type of response, it was observed that the percentage of self-repair in Bachillerato students was higher than that found in ESO learners. The reason may lie in the fact that Bachillerato learners were given CF types that pushed them to produce a correction. In contrast, ESO students produced a higher percentage of repetition of teacher's correct form than Bachillerato learners, which could be because ESO students received more recasts than Bachillerato learners. Since ESO learners were given the correct answer to their initial errors, they only repeated it in their uptake.

Even though this study has observed the types of CF employed in these two ESO classes and the Bachillerato class as well as students' uptake to teacher's provision of CF, the findings obtained from these class observations are limited. Therefore, as limitations to the present study we can mention both the small number of class observations (only 10 in each group) and the small number of data obtained. Also, a

long-term observation may have yielded a wider number of CF types and uptake types for each of the three classes. Another limitation refers to the fact that only one teacher was observed, and probably, other teachers may perform the provision of CF differently.

In summary, this study has focused on the types of CF provided to ESO and Bachillerato students as well as ESO and Bachillerato students' types of uptake produced after receiving teachers' CF, but their production of uptake cannot be considered as an indicator of students' acquisition of the target language as Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2001) cautioned. In order to observe if the types of CF could have helped these different proficient students to acquire the target form, some follow-up post-tests in which students were asked to give the right target form of their initial errors could be a way of observing the acquisition of the correction of their initial erroneous form. As a result, further research examining the effectiveness of using different CF in helping different proficient learners to acquire the target language should be carried out.

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APPENDIX 1 Classroom Observation

Classroom: Number of Students: Teacher: Date: Time:

Student's Error	Type	Teacher's Feedback	Type	Student's Uptake	Type