

**Corrective feedback and learner uptake
during a small group activity in an ELI context**

Yun Deok Choi

Abstract

The theoretical claim that learners can benefit from participating in negotiation for meaning with their peers has been supported by a lot of empirical research. However, there have been few descriptive studies on this topic. The present study investigated corrective feedback and learner uptake during a small group discussion session, in which 3 to 4 learners participated meaning negotiation in a natural classroom setting. It also investigated what learners thought about their peers' feedback to their erroneous utterances. Seven learners with advanced English proficiency levels in an ELI listening and speaking class was observed. They also completed student surveys at the end of the observation. The recorded data were analyzed based on Lyster and Ranta's (1997) 'error treatment sequence' and Lyster's (1998) coding scheme. The results indicated that learners hardly provided feedback in response to their peer's erroneous utterance in a natural instructional setting. As a result, they also rarely had a chance to uptake in response to the feedback. However, they showed quite positive attitudes toward the peer feedback and their uptake following it. The study has pedagogical implication that adequate selection of task types has significant importance for facilitating meaning negotiation. And it is necessary for learners to recognize that

Introduction

For several decades, there has been a lot of research on corrective feedback and learner uptake in terms of L2 learning under the interaction framework. According to the “Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996),” language learners receive a lot of useful input during conversational interaction, in which they are trying to reach mutual understanding what they are talking about through meaning negotiation. While they are negotiating the incomprehensible meaning, they provide each other with negative feedback which leads to learner uptake, and language learning in eventual. Based on this theoretical background, a lot of researchers have conducted various empirical studies. The studies have proven that L2 learners are able to develop their L2 through participating in conversational interaction, namely, meaning negotiation by carrying out controlled experiments in laboratory settings. On the one hand, some research has examined that negotiation for meaning would be able to provide adequate amount of L2 input (de Asiss, 1997; Kasanga, 1996; Pica et al., 1996). On the other hand, other research has investigated that the effects of communicative task type on the amount of feedback and interactional modifications (de Asiss, 1997; Kasanga, 1996; McDonough, 2004; Pica et al., 1996). While there have been a lot of experimental studies on conversational interaction and L2 learning, there has been limited number of purely descriptive studies on the same issue in terms of natural instructional settings (Panova and Lyster, 2002). Therefore, there is some limitation to understand what kind of meaning negotiation is taking place in actual learning situations. That is, there is urgent need to explore the roles of negotiation for meaning during conversational interactions in actual L2 learning settings. In the following section, the literature review on the “Interaction Hypothesis,” empirical

studies and descriptive study on corrective feedback and learner uptake during meaning negotiation will be discussed in depth.

Literature review on corrective feedback and learner uptake during learner – learner interactions in terms of second language learning

Theoretical background: the Interaction Hypothesis

As an extension of Krashen's (1982, 1985 cited in Mitchell & Myles, 1998) 'Input Hypothesis,' which argued that learners' exposure to 'comprehensible input' was necessary and sufficient condition for second language learning, Long (1981, 1983a, 1983b cited in Mitchell & Myles, 1998) proposed that 'Interaction Hypothesis.' In his hypothesis, Long argued that interactions where learners participated should get far more attention for understanding the true attributes of input. Long and other interactionist researchers claimed that the interactions were not only the main headspring providing the target language input but also the right spots for meaning negotiation. In other words, when two speakers like more proficient and less proficient learners are talking to each other, they are struggling to get mutual understanding of their conversation. It is referred to as 'meaning negotiation' or 'negotiation for meaning.' The more they negotiate the meaning of the incomprehensible part, the more the difficulty level of input is adjusted into the speakers', especially the less proficient learner's, L2 developmental level.

After more about a decade, Long (1996) reformulated his previous 'Interaction Hypothesis' as the following:

It is proposed that environmental conditions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that these resources are brought together most usefully, although not exclusively, during *negotiation for meaning*. Negative feedback obtained during negotiation work or elsewhere may be facilitative of L2 development, at least for vocabulary, morphology and language –specific syntax, and essential for learning certain specific L1-L2 contrasts.

In the reformulated hypothesis, Long emphasized the contributive roles of environmental factors like ‘negative evidence’ to L2 learning. He also underscored consecutive steps through which input changes into intake by introducing a new concept ‘selective attention.’ That is, oral interaction between two speakers provides one of the most suitable places in which L2 development takes place through feedback like ‘negative evidence’ if the interlocutor who receive the ‘negative evidence’ is able to pay attention to it. If the interlocutor can recognize the difference between his/her interlanguage and the target language though negative feedback, he/she will try to correct his/her interlanguage and this will be conducive to L2 development.

As Long’s ‘Interaction Hypothesis’ was suggested and revised as a theoretical background for the roles of conversational interactions, a lot of studies have explored the effects of international moves like feedback on L2 learning during meaning negotiation. In the following sections, empirical studies (Pica et al., 1996; Kasanga, 1996; de Assis, 1997; McDonough, 2004) and a descriptive study (Panova & Lyster, 2002) on corrective feedback and subsequent learner uptake will be reviewed.

Previous empirical studies on corrective feedback and learner uptake during peer interactions in EFL contexts

Several previous empirical research has investigated language learners’ interactions during pair and small group activities and subsequent language learning. These studies have proven that learners are able to get enough information that is necessary to L2 learning (Pica et al., 1996; Kasanga, 1996; de Assis, 1997; McDonough, 2004). Even

though they all investigated the relationship between corrective feedback and learner uptake in terms of L2 learning during pair and small group activities, each study had its own research foci with different methodology, data analysis to explore its own research questions. More specifically, Pica et al. (1996) examined whether learners were able to get enough opportunities for having modified L2 input, receiving corrective feedback on language forms, and producing modified output. With respect to grouping, they used 10 dyads consisted of learners and the other 10 dyads that were composed of NSs and learners. The learners were Japanese native speakers with low-intermediate proficiency, who attended in pre-academic English language classes run by a university. Each dyad took part in jigsaw tasks twice. The researchers coded data into two categories: lexical and syntactic modification. On the basis of data analysis, they discovered the followings: even though learners were able to get modified L2 input, not only the amount was not commensurable to the amount provided by NSs but also morphosyntax produced by the learners had less conformity to the standard English, compared with morphosyntax provided by the NSs; learners produced similar amount of modified output regardless of their interlocutor type; finally, learners provided various types feedback, which was usually segmented forms, in a larger amount than NSs did. As a result, they suggested that learners should be convinced that their conversational interactions with other learners would not be harmful for their L2 development.

While Pica et al.'s study focused on investigating all three elements: modified L2 input; feedback on forms; modified output, Kasanga (1996) focused on examining interactional modification, effects of instruction, and different types of learner grouping. The randomly sampled participants from each grade were 54 EFL students who majored

in English and they were multilinguals. Their level of proficiency was determined based on the length of schooling. With respect to grouping participants, each participant was paired one from the same grade and then one from the different grade. In order to test the effects of task type on interaction, the researcher developed a map task and a topic discussion, and each task is corresponding to a “convergent” and “divergent” type of task, respectively. In general, convergent tasks refer to the ones that every participant has the identical aims concerning outcomes. Contrary to the convergent tasks, divergent tasks refer to the ones whose goals are different concerning outcomes (Pica et al. 1993 cited in Skehan, 1998). Using two dichotomous tasks for the study is different from Pica et al. (1996)’s utilizing a convergent jigsaw task only. The recorded data derived from tasks completion activities were coded according to 7 types of interactional modifications: clarification request; confirmation check; comprehension check; self-repair; other-repair, elaboration and topicalization. Based on data analysis, Kasanga found out several insightful findings. With regard to the task type, convergent information gap tasks, a map task, resulted in a lot more interactional modification, compared with divergent tasks, a topic discussion. About the relationship between learners’ proficiency level and the ratio of interaction, when a more proficient learner took in the speaker’s position, the rate of interactional modification increased. Finally, the researcher proven that learners seemed to be a good source from which learners could have learning chances, if they were grouped with learners with different proficiency levels.

In addition to Pica et al.(1996) and Kasanga (1996)’s empirical studies on peer interaction and subsequent language learning, de Assis (1997) also explored how learners participated in meaning negotiation with peers while they were carrying out

communicative tasks and what type of tasks are more facilitative in meaning negotiation in the EFL contexts, compared with the ESL contexts. Thirty pairs of adult English learners from Brazil, whose proficiency levels were intermediate, participated in the study. Like Kasanga (1996), she also made use of both contingent and divergent types of five communicative tasks: jigsaw, information gap, and opinion exchange, role-play and cued-dialogue for getting data. De Assis coded her data according to the coding category made by Pica et al. (1991), which is opposed to not only Pica et al. (1996)'s classification but also Kasanga (1996)'s data coding scheme. She discovered several findings. Above all, as expected, the amount of interaction between NNS –NNS on EFL contexts was less than that of ESL contexts. In other words, fewer confirmation checks and clarification requests occurred during NNS-NNS interaction in the EFL contexts, compared with the ESL contexts. Second, with respect to the effects of task type on occurrence of meaning negotiation, when the participants carried out jigsaw and information gap tasks, the amount of production made by NNSs were greater than the other three types of tasks. The results of the research presented that NNSs were able to do meaning negotiation when there were problems in understanding like the previous mentioned studies. Based on the findings, she drew a conclusion that task-type is significantly important for creating meaning negotiation, which is the same conclusion drawn by Kasanga (1996).

In addition to the previous three reviewed articles, most recently McDonough (2004) investigated whether learners participating in interactional moves actively while they were participating in pair and small group discussions would produce target language forms with improvement. Her participants were 16 Thai EFL university students

with intermediate levels of proficiency. The target language features of the study were real and unreal conditional clauses. The participants were taking part in pair and small group activities whose theme was environment, and it led to use the target language forms. As for the procedure, the participants conducted four pair and small group activities and took three oral tests during eight weeks. The data were analyzed according to interactional moves which provide negative feedback such as recast, clarification request, and explicit correction, and modified output. Analyzing the data, she found that actively participating learners in interactional moves demonstrated huge improvement in target forms in general. McDonough pinpointed the interesting fact that the participants hardly responded to other-initiated repair while produced self-initiated repair quite frequently. She explained it by referring the questionnaire. It revealed that the participants did not consider the pair and small group activities were useful for English language learning, or they might not think their classmates were helpful for L2 learning and would like to get the information about L2 directly from teachers (Davis, 1997; Fotos, 1994; Jones, 1992; Mackey, McDonough, Fujii, and Tatsumi, 2001; Williams, 1999 cited in McDonough, 2004).

In sum, it has been proven that learners are able to get L2 learning sources by participating in meaning negotiation (Pica et al., 1996; Kasanga, 1996); however, particularly the amount of modified input provided by learner- learner interaction is not comparable to that provided by a NS versus a learner interaction (Pica et al., 1996; de Assis, 1997). In addition, it was also found that communicative task type had effects on the amount of interactional modifications (Kasanga, 1996; de Asiss, 1997), and that learners also provided considerable feedback in response to their interlocutors' utterances

(Pica et al., 1996; McDonough, 2004). In addition to the four empirical studies, the descriptive study on interactional feedback and subsequent L2 learning will be reviewed in the next section.

Previous descriptive studies on corrective feedback and learner uptake during meaning negotiation in an ESL context

Even though a lot of SLA researchers have extensively studied on the relationship between corrective feedback and subsequent L2 learning during learner – learner interaction in EFL contexts, there have been few descriptive studies on the same topic in real classroom situations either EFL or ESL contexts. Panova and Lyster (2002)’s study is one of the few studies. Unlike the studies in above section, which focused on only learner-learner interaction, this article paid attention to a general classroom interaction in which a teacher – a student interacted each other. The researcher explored what kinds of feedback gave rise to the most considerable amount of learner uptake in an adult ESL communication oriented classroom. The total number of participants was 25 who were from various L1 backgrounds, and they had beginning levels of English proficiency. The observation for the study lasted for 4 weeks in Canada. 10 out of 18 hours of recording were used as database. The researchers adopted “the error treatment sequence” devised by Lyster and Ranta’s (1997). After analyzing the data, the researchers discovered an interesting finding that recasts and translation (80%) were the most popular feedback types of a teacher feedback; however, they were not able to lead to corresponding amount of learner uptake. Instead, clarification requests, elicitation, and repetition resulted in the greatest amount of learner uptake, and metalinguistic feedback took the second

place to lead to the learner uptake. That is to say, the results revealed that the teacher had a strong tendency to provide well-formed utterance through recasts and translation for their students, instead of pushing the students to produce self-repaired utterance. The researchers explained the results by referring to the students' limited and low English proficiency.

The bottom line is that there have been a lot of second language acquisition (SLA) researches, and among them the four previous empirical studies and one descriptive study were reviewed in the previous two sections. The four studies commonly focused on peer interactions and L2 learning during meaning negotiation, especially in terms of pair activities. It means that these research paid attention to only the interaction between two learners in a pair or dyad. Contrary to the studies, the other descriptive research focused on what kinds of feedback led to the most copious amount of learner uptake during interactions between the teacher and the students in an adult ESL classroom.

Even though a lot of SLA researchers have conducted empirical studies on the relationship between corrective feedback and learner uptake in terms of L2 learning during learner – learner interaction in EFL contexts (de Assis, 1997; Kasanga, 1996; McDonough, 2004; Pica et al., 1996), there have been few descriptive studies on the same topic in natural classroom situations either EFL or ESL contexts. That is, most SLA studies under interaction framework have dealt with pair activities rather than larger group activities, and it has happened due to the mishap in terms of research design and convenience of data gathering. It was pointed out that there have not been many studies on conversational interaction with more than two participants (Gass, 2003). Furthermore,

the previous research has focused mainly on the learners with beginning or intermediate levels of English proficiency and did not concentrate on learners with advanced English proficiency levels. Therefore, in order to fill the gap in the SLA literature, the present researcher investigated corrective feedback and learner uptake in terms of L2 learning during meaning negotiation. Three to four learners with advanced levels of English proficiency participated in the meaning negotiation during a small group discussion session in a natural classroom setting. Thus, in terms of research design, the present study made use of purely measuring design. It means 'one selects certain features, operationally defines them, and quantifies their occurrence, in order to establish a relationship between features or between features and other things, such as educational outcomes' (van Lier, 1990, p34 cited in Nunan, 1992). In addition, as the researcher has thought that learners' attitudes towards peer feedback would have effects on learner uptake, she also added one more research question. Based on these research foci, the following three research questions were formulated:

- 1) What is the distribution of different kinds of feedback in learner-learner interaction?
- 2) How much do learners accept the peer feedback and make it into uptake?
- 3) What do learners think about their classmates' feedback to their erroneous utterance?

In the following section, methodology for the present study will be discussed in detail.

Method

Participants

The total number of students who took part in the study was seven because 8 out of 18 students agreed to participate in the research project and one student was absent from the class on the observation day. Five students had the same L1 background, Japanese while the other two

students were from East Timor in which its official languages are Tetum and Portuguese. Three students were females while the remaining four students were males. As for the students' academic status, only one student was a graduate and the remaining of the students were undergraduates. The students came from various majors (2 from political science, 1 from economics, 1 from nursing, 1 from music, and 1 from travel industry management and 1 from women studies). Their length of English study was from at least 2 years to more than 6 years. Two out of seven students had studied in English speaking countries before taking the ELI class for about 1 to 2 years while the other students had never studied in those countries before. They were assigned to an advanced listening and speaking class by the results of the placement tests administered by the institute of the university at the beginning of the semester.

The teacher was a female English/Korean bilingual graduate assistant (GA) and this is her first semester to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) to university level students in an ELI (English Language Institute) program; however, she has a lot of experience to teach English from primary students to adults both in Korea and in USA. She voluntarily agreed to participate in the research due to her academic and professional interest. She was informed that the study would investigate the learner- learner interaction during a small group discussion session; however, she did not know the specific research questions.

Instructional Context

The purpose of English Language Institute (ELI) program is to help primarily international and immigrant students who are admitted to the university to learn necessary academic English skills for their effective studying. There are three courses: listening & speaking, reading, and writing. According to the guidelines provided by the ELI, the students taking the class are

basically those of who had not received a score of 100 or better on the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a score of 250 or better on the computer-based TOEFL, or a score of 600 or better on the paper-based TOEFL. Although the ELI program are composed of intermediate and advanced courses, students from both levels are highly advanced English learners. It is because students must have considerably high level of English capacity in order to be admitted to the university.

According to the course description, the advanced level listening and speaking class is a communication-oriented course that offers learners the opportunities to far more enhance their academic listening and speaking skills that are necessary for them to fully understand lectures and thoroughly take part in oral discussions in a university setting in America. This is to say, the instruction is focusing on improving not only speaking skills like quality presentations and oral discussion but also listening skills like following teachers' lectures and understanding or evaluating classmates' presentations. As a result, the instruction is rarely focusing on linguistic forms and the primary focus is to enrich students' effective communication skills in English.

Procedure

The study was carried out for two days, February 14th and 21st, in an advanced level listening and speaking class from an English Language Institute (ELI) program in a large university, in USA. On February 14th, the researcher attended the class with permission from both the director of the ELI and the teacher and pre-observed the class activities. On that day, she distributed consent forms to the 18 students before formal observation and explained the general purpose of the study at the beginning of the class. The formal observation took place on the February 21st and the recording was implemented. On the observation day when a small group

discussion session was observed, the students were randomly assigned into two small groups by the researcher. Even though there were five groups in the classroom, only two groups that consisted of students who agreed to participate in the research were recorded. One group consisted of three students while the other group was made up of four students. Each group member took a seat in a circle during the session. Two digital audio recorders were placed in the middle of each group in order to capture students' utterance clearly. The researcher mainly observed the latter group; however, she was able to look at the other group at regular intervals because the two groups were placed quite closely. Meanwhile, the teacher circled the whole classroom throughout the session as she usually does. The topic for the small group discussion session was how to do an expert interview and to brainstorm and learn effective expressions that can facilitate the interview. The two target groups discussed the same topic, or proper language usage for a middle part of the interview.

The total amount of recorded discussion was about 14 minutes for each group; however, there were two intervention of the teacher in order to lead the discussion in the right direction and give some tips for students. It took about 2 minutes 45 seconds in total, and those time intervals of teacher intervention time were excluded from the data analysis. In addition to the teacher intervention period, the first 52 seconds of the group discussion were excluded from the analysis because there was no significant interactional conversation during those time intervals. Therefore, the database analyzed for the current study was about 25 minutes. The total database for the present study was transcribed by the researcher.

At the end of the class, the researcher distributed student survey forms on learners' attitudes about peer feedback to the seven participants and was able to collect six survey forms since one student did not submit it on March 14th, two days later of the observation. There were

two reasons for the researcher to use the survey form. Above all, the researcher tried to triangulate the small scale descriptive data with qualitative information. In addition, she believes that the students' attitudes on peer feedback will have some effects on their uptake patterns. In order to test the utility of the survey, the researcher pilot tested it one of the participants on the day of observation.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the data and the transcription was analyzed on the basis of a student' turn. Ideally, the researcher planned to transcribe all students' utterances thoroughly, she could not do that due to two reasons: firstly, the distance between two observed groups was so close that voices of the students' were mixed and became undistinguishable. Secondly, the researcher was not accustomed to listening and transcribing strong English accent of the students who are from South East. As a result, some parts of the data could not be transcribed and thus were not analyzed.

The researcher coded her research data based on her own modified version of Lyster and Ranta's (1997)'s error treatment sequence (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p.44, see the appendix A). The reasons that the researcher adapted and modified Lyster and Ranta's (1997) coding scheme for her data analysis are the following reasons: first of all, even though the coding scheme was initially designed for identifying each teacher's feedback choice in response to student's ill-formed utterances, it is also able to be a tool for classifying individual student's selection of feedback type in response to his/her classmate's erroneous utterance during small group discussion sessions; second of all, it can expedite an investigation of the relationship between a student's feedback type and the other student's response to it.

In Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model, the error treatment sequence constituted the primary part of coding data and it consisted of five main parts: learner error, teacher feedback, learner uptake, topic continuation and reinforcement. The flow starts with a student's utterance with one or more errors. It could be followed by a teacher's negative feedback or topic continuation. The latter refers to the situation where the conversational interaction is still going on. Topic continuation might be initiated either the teacher or one of the students. If the corrective feedback is provided, there could be either learner uptake or topic continuation in response to the feedback. As learner uptake occurs, it means that either learner repair, which refers to the learner's correction of his/her previous erroneous utterance, or needs-repair, which refers to that learner's utterance is still problematic and it needs to be fixed, happen. If there is no learner uptake, it means that topic continuation follows the feedback, which is not accepted by the learner. If there is learner repair in response to the feedback move, it is followed by either teacher's reinforcement, which refers to a short and approving statement, or topic continuation. And if there is needs- repair, it is followed by either additional teacher feedback or topic continuation.

However, the current study focuses on student-student interaction, the researcher adopted and modified the original error treatment sequence as the following:

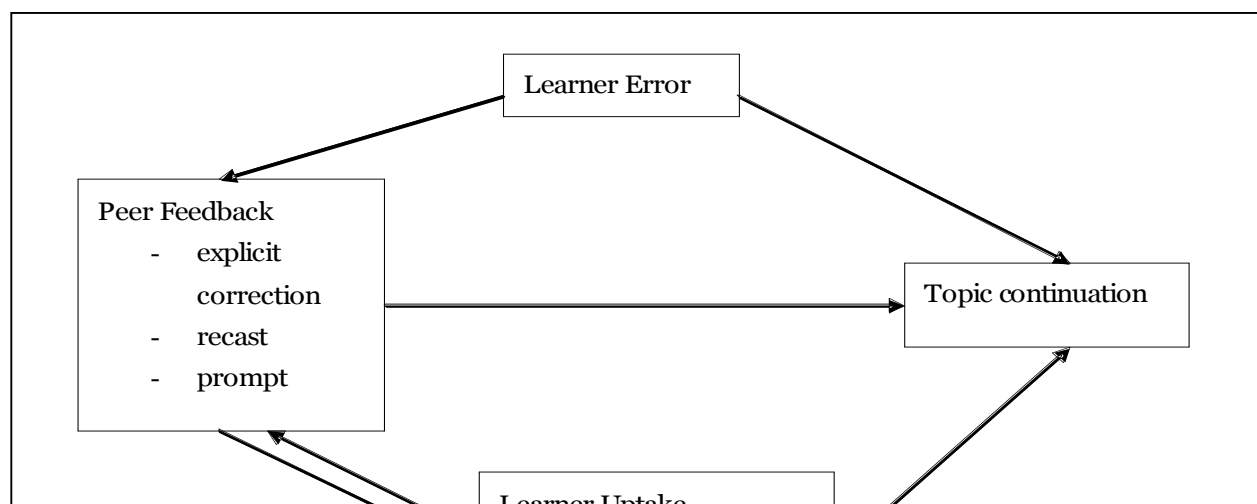


Figure 1. Coding scheme for data analysis adopted from Lyster and Ranta (1997)'s 'Error Treatment Sequence' and modified by the researcher.

Like Lyster and Ranta's (1997) scheme, this modified version's sequence also starts with a student's utterance with one or more errors. The student's erroneous utterance is followed either by peer feedback or by a topic continuation, which is initiated by the other student. If the peer feedback is provided by one of the small groups members, there could be learner uptake or topic continuation. If the topic continuation follows the peer feedback, it means the student who produced erroneous utterance does not respond to the feedback or ignore it. In contrast, if the learner uptake follows the peer feedback, it means that there is either repair or needs-repair. In the case if repair, it refers to the situation where the student's previous erroneous utterance is corrected by himself/herself. Meanwhile, if needs-repair occurs, it means that the student tries to correct his/her initial erroneous utterance in response to the feedback, but his/her utterance still has some problems to be fixed. In this case, one of other group members might provide additional feedback to the problematic utterance of the student. Unlike Lyster and Ranta's (1997) sequence, there is no reinforcement because the current study only focuses on learner- learner interaction, in which reinforcement could not be found.

Data Analysis

Error

Except the first 52 seconds as warming-up and the periods of the teacher's intervention, all students' utterances were transcribed and analyzed whether there were one or more errors. In counting errors, incomplete sentences were excluded because it was hard to predict whether a complete expression would be correct or incorrect. Then the errors were further classified into phonological, grammatical, lexical and multiple error types. Multiple error type refers to the case in which more than one type of error occurs together. Unlike Lyster and Ranta's (1997) coding, the L1 use was not included in the error type because it never happened even in a group whose members are all from the homogeneous L1 background.

Feedback types

As for the students' feedback types, the researcher adopted Lyster's (1998) taxonomy. There are three reasons for adopting Lyster's (1998)'s categorization of feedback types. Most of all, according to previous studies (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Lyster & Mori, 2006), the teachers less frequently used explicit correction than other type of feedback like recasts and prompts and it led to low rate of student uptake. Based on these findings, the researcher would like to investigate whether a student also use explicit correction less frequently than other types of feedback when he/she interacts with his/her classmate. In addition, the researcher found that previous studies (Lin & Hedgcock, 1996; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Netten, 1991 cited in Panova & Lyster, 2002) have implied that learners with more advanced level might be able to notice the role of recasts as negative evidence, while learners with less advanced level might not. Based on these findings, the researcher also would like to examine whether it is also

applicable to my participants who are advanced level learners. Lastly, there have been findings that when a teacher provided prompts with a student as feedback, they led to high rate of student uptake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Lyster & Mori, 2006). Based on these findings, the researcher also would like to know whether the same or similar uptake pattern will occur between learner – learner interaction.

According to Lyster's (1998) taxonomy, feedback types consist of three distinctive components such as explicit correction, recast, and prompts based on their different properties. Each of their characteristics is explained in its definition and an example. All the examples are from Panova and Lyster (2002), except the example of recast, because adequate examples were not found in the present study.

1. *Explicit correction* refers to a move where one of the other small group members provides a correct expression with an apparent indication that the student's utterance was problematic.

S: The day...tomorrow. (lexical error)

T: Yes. No, the day before yesterday. (explicit correction)

2. *Recasts* refer to a move where one of the other small group members provides a completely or partially correctly reformulated expression with relation to the student's erroneous utterance implicitly, without any explicit indication of the student's utterance was inaccurate. The example is from the database of the current study.

G: yeah, or taking smile, (lexical error)

F: Yeah, smile. (recast)

3. *Prompts* refer to various feedback moves where one of the small group members forcefully lead the student to do self-repair for himself/herself instead of providing correctly reformulated expression beforehand, unlike both explicit correction and recasts. Prompts consist of elicitation, metalinguistic clues, clarification requests, and repetition.

1) *Elicitation* refers to a move where one of the small group discussion members instantly elicits a correctly reformulated expression from the student by putting questions, giving some time to accomplishing his/her utterance, or requesting the student to reproduce the utterance correctly.

S: New Ecosse. (L1)

T: New Ecosse. I like that. I'm sure they'd love that. Nova...? (elicitation)

2) *Metalinguistic clues* refer to a move where one of the small group members offers statements or interrogations regarding the accurateness of the student's utterance.

S: Nouvelle Ecosse...(L1)

T: Oh, but that's in French. (metalinguistic feedback)

3) *Clarification requests* refer to a move where one of the small group members indicates that there are some problems in the student's utterance and there is a need to reformulate the utterance correctly.

S: I want practice today, today. (grammatical error)

T: I'm sorry? (clarification request)

4) *Repetition* refers to a move where one of the small group members repeats the student's erroneous utterance with rising intonation for highlighting the problematic part.

T: ...Here, when you do a paragraph, you start here, well, let's see, anyway, you write....write, write, write (pretends to be writing on the board), remember this is...what is this called?

S: Comma. (lexical error)

T: Comma? (repetition)

Learner uptake

Similar to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) categorization, learner uptake in the current study refers to a student's immediate utterance in response to one of the small group members' feedback and it means that the student, to some extent, notices the feedback giver's intention to

draw him/her pay attention to certain part of the previous utterance. Learner uptake consists of “repair” and “needs-repair” based on Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomy. All the examples are from Panova and Lyster (2002) because adequate examples were not found in the present study.

1. *Repair* refers to a student’s accurate reformulation of his/her previously erroneous utterance immediately in response to the feedback. Repair can be realized as the following types: repetition, incorporation, self-repair and peer-repair.

1) *Repetition* refers to a case where a student repeats one of the small group member’s feedback which contains accurate expression.

S: Yes, I have to...to find the answer on...on the book also? (grammatical error)

T: In the book, yes. Both...in the book. (recast)

S: In the book. (repair/ repetition)

2) *Incorporation* refers to a case where a student repeats accurate expression included in one of the small group member’s feedback, and subsequently he/she incorporates the accurate expression into an expanded utterance.

T: Okay, it’s good. You wanna tell us one?

S: Eh...:Kaii convention (phonological error –stress)

T: What kind of convention? (recast)

S: Kaii convention...eh...some people...(repair/ incorporation)

3) *Self-repair* refers to a case where a student correctly reformulates his/her initial erroneous utterance in response to the feedback that does not offer an accurately reformulated form.

S: C’est ça. Très chaud. (L1)

T: It’s very...? (elicitation)

Same student: Hot. (self-repair)

4) *Peer-repair* refers to a case where other group member correctly reformulates the erroneous utterance other than the student who had produced it, in response to the

feedback provided one of the small group members.

S: I don't understand wine [win]. (phonological error)

T: I'm sorry...? (clarification request)

Same student: Wine [win] (needs-repair/ same error)

Different student: Wine [wain] (peer repair)

Lyster and Ranta (1997) categorize “needs-repair,” which refers to a case where a student tries to correctly reformulate his/her previous erroneous utterance, but the utterance is still inaccurate and thus it needs to be precisely fixed. Needs-repair can take the following forms: acknowledgement, same error, different error, off-target, hesitation and partial repair. All the examples are from Choi (2005)'s data, except for acknowledgement, because adequate examples were not found in the present study.

1. *Acknowledgement* refers to a student's statement “yes” in response to the feedback, without any other reaction.

G: yeah, or taking smile. (lexical error)

F: Yeah, smile. (recast)

G: Yeah, like, that's important. (acknowledgement)

2. *Same error* refers to a case where a student repeats his/her previous erroneous utterance in response to the feedback provided one of the other small group members.

NNS L2: Aha, forty-eight hours in ah. (grammatical error)

NS: They have to return it in 8 hours, time? After 8 hours? (recast)

NNS L2: Uhm, they have to return the money, uh, for, forty-eight hours, the two, two days in, ah, ah. (same error)

3. *Different error* refers to a case where a student neither correctly reformulates his/her initial erroneous utterance nor repeats the previous erroneous utterance. The student produces another erroneous utterance.

NNS L3: They asked first the why, why a cashier uh...don't afraid about his uh...the

man. (grammatical error)

NNS interlocutor: Ah, why the cashier was not afraid of the man with the mask?
(recast)

NNS L3: or, or, why didn't a cashier think he is a thief. (different error)

4. *Off-target* refers to a case where a student response to the feedback provided by another small group member, but avoids focusing on the linguistic point, without producing other erroneous utterance.

NNS L3: Maybe she, he had a small, small mind to uh...yeah. (lexical error)

NNS interlocutor: He lost his patience? (recast)

NNS L3: He stole some money. (off-target)

5. *Hesitation* refers to a case where a student hesitates to response to the feedback provided by another small group member. An example of this type was not able to be found.
6. *Partial repair* refers to a case where a student produces partially corrected utterance after his/her previous erroneous utterance in response to the feedback provided by another small group member.

NNS H1: Actually his father's job was cow-fighters? (grammatical + lexical error)

NNS interlocutor: Her father was a bull-fighter? (recast)

NNS H1: Bull-fighters (partial repair)

As Lyster and Ranta (1997) pointed out, the "needs-repair" types can result in another feedback from the other small group member and, concomitantly, they lead error treatment sequence to continue over the third turn.

Results

The data consists of 161 student turns. The first group members accounted for 90 students' turns (56% of all turns) while the second group accounted for 71 students' turns (44%). Of the student turns, erroneous utterance occurred 106 times. It means that one turn may contain

more than one error and there are also student turns which are error-free.

As shown in Table 1, of the six types of feedback, only “recast” was provided once by the one of the first group members. Therefore, the recast accounted for 100% of the corrective feedback. The other five types of feedback were not used at all by the students.

Table 1. Distribution of corrective feedback and its proportion (N=1)

Feedback type		Frequency of feedback (n)	Proportion of feedback (%)
Recast		1	100
Explicit correction		0	0
Prompts	Clarification request	0	0
	Metalinguistic feedback	0	0
	Elicitation	0	0
	Repetition	0	0

In response to the recast, the student who produced the erroneous utterance did uptake it, but it was needs-repair, which means it still has problem and needs to be corrected. In addition, the student’s needs-repair was identified as acknowledgement, which refers to a student’s statement “yes” in response to the feedback, without any other reaction. Table 2 demonstrates the result.

Table 2. Frequency and proportion of uptake and repair in response to feedback types

Feedback type	Uptake moves	Repair moves
---------------	--------------	--------------

		n	% of uptake moves	n	% of repair moves
Recast (n=1)		1	100	0	0
Explicit correction (n=0)		0	0	0	0
Prompts (n=0)	Clarification request	0	0	0	0
	Metalinguistic Feedback	0	0	0	0
	Elicitation	0	0	0	0
	Repetition	0	0	0	0

With respect to students' attitudes toward the peer feedback, the researcher found out mainly two things based on the results of the student survey: students' thoughts about the frequency of peer feedback and the frequency of their uptake in response to the peer feedback.

Table 3. Students' thoughts about frequency of peer feedback and frequency of their uptake

Frequency of peer feedback	Students' response (n)	% of response	Frequency of uptake	Students' response (n)	% of response
Enough	2	33	Every time	3	50
Not enough	3	50	Depends on the case	2	33
No response	1	17	Don't care	1	17

As table 3 presents, two out of six students (33%) thought that the frequency of peer feedback

was enough while the other three students (50%) thought that there was not enough peer feedback and mentioned that there should be more peer feedback. The remaining one student (17%) did not respond to the question. As for the frequency of uptake, three (50%) out of six students answered that they uptake peer feedback every time, whereas the other two students (33%) responded that they uptake peer feedback if they think the feedback is correct. The other one student (17%) answered that he did not care about his uptake in response to the peer feedback.

Discussion

The purposes of the current study were to explore what kind of feedback pattern would take place, how much learners would uptake peer feedback in learner-learner interaction and what learners think about their peer feedback to their erroneous utterance in a natural classroom setting.

Analyzing data, the researcher found significant difference between the current study and the previous studies in terms of distribution of feedback types and uptake. That is, in the current study, recast was the only feedback type used by the student out of six feedback types. Furthermore, it was used only once, and resulted in needs-repair. The finding is quite peculiar, compared with the findings of the previous studies (de Assis, 1997; Kasanga, 1996; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; McDonough, 2004; Panova and Lyster, 2002) in that the participants of the studies made use of various feedback type in response to his/her interlocutor's erroneous utterance, and the interlocutor did uptake following the feedback as either repair or needs-repair; however, if task types of each study are considered, it is not a quite surprising result.

With respect to task types, the current study used divergent type of task, namely,

discussion, which did not push learners to actively participate in meaning negotiation. On the other hand, the four studies (Pica et al., 1996; Kasanga, 1996; de Assis, 1997; McDonough, 2004) used convergent tasks(only one goal exists) or convergent tasks plus divergent tasks (different goals exist). According to Pica et al. (1993)'s framework on task types, four factors can contribute to more efficient tasks in terms of possibility to produce comprehensible input, feedback on erroneous utterance, and modify an interlanguage. The four factors are the followings: each interlocutor should have a different part of information and the information must be exchanged or manipulated for obtaining an outcome of the task. Second, the interlocutors must demand and supply the information each other. Third, the interlocutors have the identical goals. Lastly, only one outcome should be accepted (cited in Skehan, 1998). In contrast to the conditions for effective tasks recommended by the researchers, the task carried out by the students in the natural classroom setting was a discussion type, which every student had their own opinions, and they were not required to demand and/or supply each other's opinions. In addition, the task of the present study had divergent goal, which refers to that different goals exist, and there were more than one optional outcome. Therefore, it is assumed that the discussion task of the present study did not provide sufficient condition for creating considerable amount of negotiation for meaning. In other words, the task did not require the students to actively interact each other, concomitantly, there were not proper amount of feedback and modified utterance.

In the same vein, it was pointed to the fact that even though the tasks were communicative if they did not require students (a) to confirm or clarify meanings of each other's utterances or (b) to check out whether they understand each other or (c) to participate in the task, they did not necessarily result in proper amount of meaning negotiation among students during

interactions. Therefore, in order to induce active interactions among students, tasks which demands each students to participate in meaning negotiation instead of tasks that merely invite them to take part in conversational interaction must be used (Pica and Doughty, 1985a).

With regard to students' attitudes towards the frequency of peer feedback and their uptake in response to it, the students in the present study showed positive attitudes in general despite the fact that there was no evidence to prove their attitudes to be true. This result contrasts with the findings of the previous studies, which used the same method, student questionnaires (Mackey et al., 2001; McDonough, 2004; Slimani, 1992). Concerning the frequency of peer feedback, half of the students of the present study wanted to get more peer feedback, especially on grammatical aspects. And the other two students responded that they were satisfied with the current amount of the peer feedback while only one student did not respond. About student uptake in response to the peer feedback, almost all six students responded that they accepted or would accept the peer feedback at all times. More specifically, three students responded that they accepted and would accept the peer feedback all the time while the other two students responded that they accepted and would accept the peer feedback if they thought the feedback was correct. Only one student responded that he did not care about his uptake in response to the peer feedback. In contrast to the present study, several previous studies have found different students' attitudes toward the feedback provided by their peers. Among the studies, McDonough's (2004) study revealed that the students did not consider peer feedback as helpful learning sources for improving their English knowledge and they preferred teachers' explicit instruction for learning an English grammar because they thought their peer's English proficiency was not enough to provide accurate input. As a result, the students did not respond to considerable amount of peer feedback. The other study also uncovered the similar results. That is, the students paid their close

attention to the teacher's utterances rather than those of the peers. And even though the learners listened to their peer's utterances, they did not consider them useful sources for English input. It was revealed on the basis of the learners' reports about L2 classroom activities (Mackey et al., 2001). Similar findings were also reported by Slimani's (1982, 1992) study. She discovered that students did not expect their peers' input to play significant roles for their eventual language learning (cited in Mackey et al., 2001). Even though it is intriguing to notice the different students' attitudes to their peer feedback across several studies, more investigations into it are needed because of the fact that the number of students of the current study was quite small and peer feedback did not take place in actual observation. It is also doubtful whether the students of the current study really uptake their peer feedback when it is provided.

In a post hoc analysis, the errors produced by the students were further examined based on the classification of phonological, lexical, grammatical and multiple errors. The post hoc examination indicated that most of the student errors were grammatical errors (85%, 90/106), and lexical, phonological, multiple errors accounted for the remaining errors: 9% (10/106), 2% (2/106), and 4% (4/106) respectively. It is very interesting that none of the grammatical errors received corrective feedback during communicative interactions. Even though it is not certain that these ungrammatical utterances would have negative influences on the development of students' language learning for the present paper, some researchers cautioned against students' ungrammatical input while they were participating in pair or group work in communication-oriented instruction (Schweers, 1995; Pica & Doughty, 1985b). Schweers (1995) expressed concerns about the hazard that students might be exposed to abundant amount of incorrect input produced by their classmates and the flawed input might result in 'fossilization' (Selinker, 1972 cited in Kasanga, 1996). Pica and Doughty (1985b) also warned of utilizing group activities as a

way of developing grammatical competence. Since the purpose of the present study was not to explore whether an amount of flawed input produced by the peers would have harmful effects on the students' L2 development, any claims about it cannot be proposed for sure for now. However, it needs to be investigated in depth in the future research on this topic because it is very important to explore the risk of being exposed to a flood of defective utterances produced by the peers in terms of using small group activities in natural classroom settings.

Conclusion

This small-scale exploration found that students with advanced English proficiency levels in an ELI class hardly provided feedback in response to the other student's erroneous utterances during a small group discussion session. As a result, uptake following the peer feedback was also rarely found. In contrast to it, most of the students presented positive attitudes toward the frequency of peer feedback and their uptake in response to it on the questionnaires.

It seems that considerable amount of feedback and uptake does not occur in natural classroom settings, in contrast to controlled experimental laboratory settings. In other words, it is likely that precise selection of task types is influential in creating considerable amount of meaning negotiation in which adequate amount of feedback and uptake take place. That is, in order to facilitate negotiation for meaning, convergent task types like information gap and jigsaw should be used rather than divergent task types like discussion or decision-making. This is because convergent types of tasks push the students to actively participate in negotiation for meaning. In addition to the selection of right task types, teachers should try to let students know that they will get benefit from meaning negotiation with their peers during conversational interaction, even if they do not perceive input and feedback provided by their peers useful

sources for L2.

The current study has its meaning in that it investigated the pattern of corrective feedback and uptake during a small group discussion session rather than pair and dyad work session in natural classroom settings, where an uncontrived divergent task was used instead of contrived tasks which frequently used in laboratory settings. However, the findings and pedagogical implications may be only applicable to the current instructional context where the purely descriptive study was conducted. In addition, since the study was a pilot test with limited number of participants and small data, it needs to be further investigated in the future research. It is hoped that future investigations will investigate how students' attitudes toward peer feedback affect their uptake in response to the feedback and what kind of effects flawed input provided by students on development of language learning.

References

- Choi, Y. (2005). *The effects of learner proficiency and interlocutor type on the amount of feedback and learner uptake*. Unpublished MA thesis. Sungkyunkwan University, Seoul.
- de Assis, A. (1997). Peer interaction and language learning in the foreign language context. *Communication and Cognition*, 30, 115-136.

Gass, S. M. (2003). Input and interaction. In C.J. Doughty & M. H. Long (Eds.),

Handbook of second language acquisition (pp.224-255). Oxford: Blackwell.

Kasanga, L. (1996). Peer interaction and L2 learning. *Canadian Modern Language Review*,
52, 611-639.

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language
acquisition. In Ritchie, W. C. & Bhatia, T. K. (Eds.), *Handbooks of second language
acquisition* (pp. 413-468). San Diego: Academic Press

Mackey, A., McDonough, K., Fujii, A., & Tatsumi, T. (2001). Investigating learners'
reports about the L2 classroom. *International review of applied linguistics in language
teaching*, *39*, 285-308.

McDonough, K. (2004). Learner-learner interaction during pair and small group activities
in a Thai EFL context. *System*, *32*, 207-224.

Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (1998). Input and interaction in L2 learning. *Second language
learning theories* (pp. 121-143). New York: Oxford University Press.

Nunan, D. (1992). Research Methods in Language Learning. *An introduction to research
methods and tradition* (pp. 5-7). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

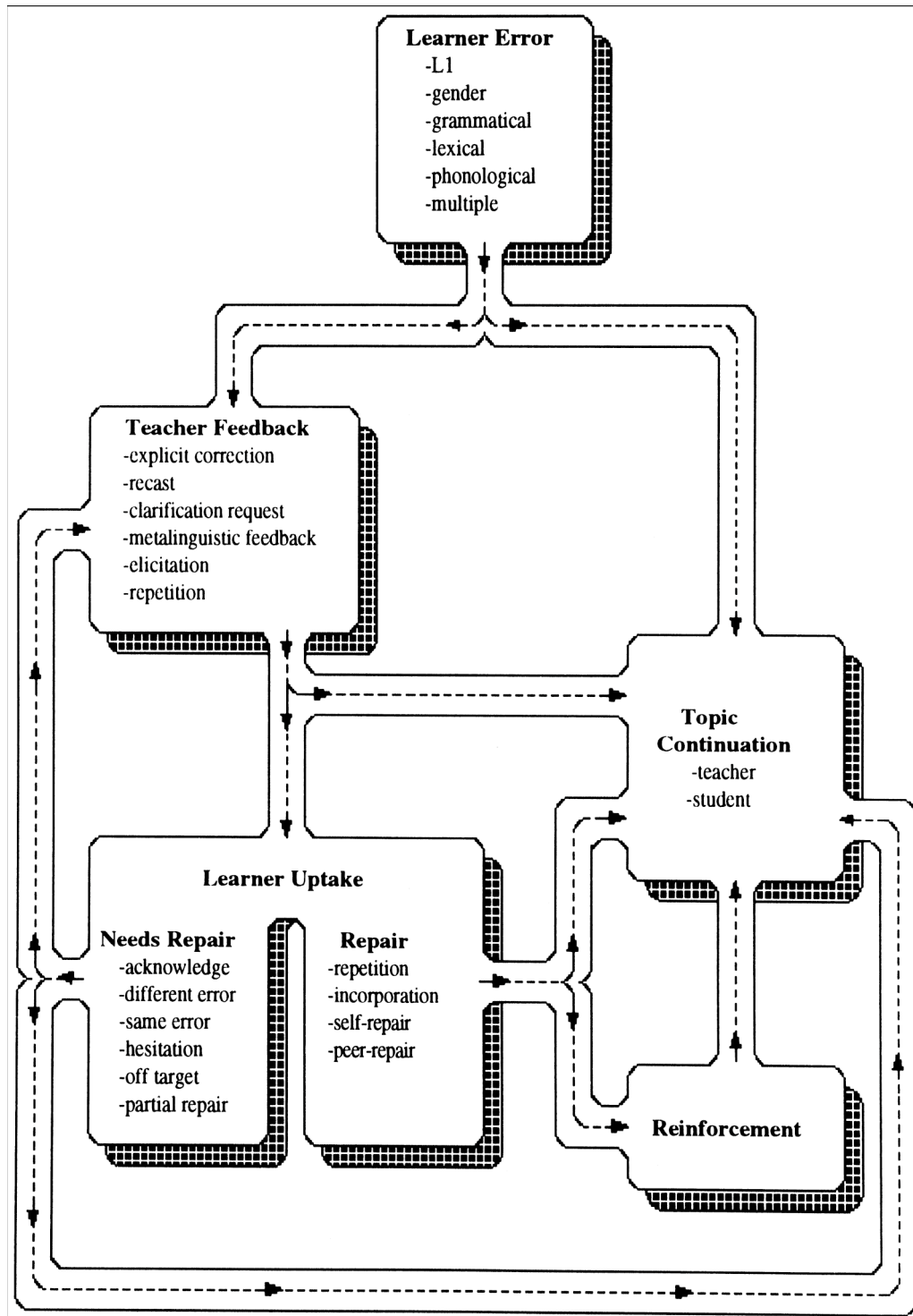
Panova, I., & Lyster, R. (2002). Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult
ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *36*, 573-595.

Pica, T., & Doughty, C. (1985b). The role of group work in classroom second language
acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *7* , 233-248.

Pica, T., Lincoln-Porter, F., Paninos, F., & Linnell, J. (1996). Language learners'
interaction: How does it address the input, output, and feedback needs of L2 learners?
TESOL Quarterly, *30*, 59-84.

Skehan, P. (1998). A rationale for task-based instruction. *A Cognitive approach to Language learning*. (pp. 93-120). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Appendix A: Figure 1. Error treatment sequence (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p.44)



Appendix B: Student Survey Form

Student Survey

Data collected from this anonymous survey will be used for a research project for SLS 672, Second Language Classroom Research, in the department of Second Language Studies at University of Hawaii at Manoa. The information gathered will be used for research on learner-learner interaction in ELI classroom settings. The purpose of this study is to investigate how learners perceive peer feedback and how much the learners accept the feedback as uptake. There are no risks to you from participating in this research. If you do not wish to participate, you may simply deny responding to the survey questions, and you may stop at anytime, with no penalty to yourself. If you do choose to participate, **completion and return of the survey indicates your consent to participate in this study.**

Please do not put your name on this form. The survey is anonymous and under strict confidentiality. Nobody including your instructor will be able to access to this survey form. It should take approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the researcher, Yun Deok Choi, at yundeok@hawaii.edu.

Survey questions

<Demographics>

Please circle obviously in the appropriate letter (#1-4) or write a proper answer (#5-7) on your sheet with a ball point pen. Make sure to only mark one.

1. Gender

A. Male

B. Female

2. Student's level

A. First year

B. Second year

C. Third year

D. Fourth year

E. Graduate

(Freshman)

(Sophomore)

(Junior)

(Senior)

3. How long have you been studying English?

A. 0-2 years

B. 2.1- 4 years

C. 4.1- 6 years

D. more than 6 years

4. Have you studied in any English speaking countries before taking an ELI class at UH?
A. Yes
B. No
5. IF YES for #4, what country did you study in?
6. IF YES for #4, how long did you study there?
7. What is your major?

<Peer interaction>

If you need more space to write, please use the blank sheet at the end of the survey. There are no right answers, so please feel free to write your own opinions or thoughts.

1. How is your English Listening and Speaking class going?
2. What kinds of feedback or reaction do your classmates usually provide you or other classmates? The following two dialogues are examples in order to help you to understand the term “feedback.”

(Examples)

- 1) A: He **like** the sitcom, Friends.

(ungrammatical sentence due to omission present singular ‘s’)

B: **Could you say it again?** ← feedback

- 2) A: He **like** the sitcom, Friends.

B: **Oh, he likes the sitcom, Friends.** ← feedback

You can either explain certain situations or present some examples, or both. Feel free to write anything that comes to your mind related to “feedback.”

3. How often do your classmates provide you with feedback or reaction?
What do you think about the frequency of your classmate's feedback?
For example, do you think that is not enough, enough, or too much?
Feel free to write your own opinion.

4. How often do you accept your classmate's feedback? If you accept it quite often, why? Or if you rarely accept it, why? In this case, "accepting" can mean 1) to repeat the utterance using the corrected form, 2) to acknowledge their feedback and make a mental note of the difference, or 3) to accept it as a form of turn-taking and then continue on with the discussion.

5. What do you think about feedback provided by your classmates during the class? That is, do you feel comfortable and being helped, or do you feel uncomfortable and annoyed? And why do you feel that way?

☺ Thank you for your cooperation. I appreciate it.

Yun Deok Choi
University of Hawaii at Manoa