

**The Role of Feedback in Malaysian *ESL* Secondary School  
Classrooms**

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## **STATEMENT OF ETHICAL CONDUCT**

The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the role of oral corrective feedback in the context of ESL (English as a second language) in one Malaysian state. Recent studies have provided empirical evidence to support a positive role for feedback in students' second language development. However there has also been evidence that suggests that oral corrective feedback is used in only a limited way in the Malaysian context.

In seeking to understand this limited use of oral corrective feedback, Malaysian teachers' views were gained and their classroom teaching behaviours were investigated. The students' views on oral corrective feedback were also gained, particularly in relation to their attitudes and feelings towards the oral corrective feedback used by their teachers. While most studies have only examined the teachers' perspective, it was a feature of the design of this study to also include the students' perspectives in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to understanding the limited use of oral corrective feedback in this context.

The study data were gained from a mixed methods approach of surveys, semi-structured interviews and classroom observation sessions, collected over five months in 42 secondary schools in the state of Penang, Malaysia. Of the 172 lower secondary school English teachers who responded to the questionnaire, 6 also participated in the interviews and classroom observations. The students' survey was completed by 1843 lower secondary school students. The analysis of the qualitative data was based on a constructivist approach which utilised grounded theory and coded strategies by thematic analysis; the quantitative data were analysed using standard statistical analysis procedures (SPSS) to provide descriptive statistics of frequency distributions, median scores and Chi-square tests.

The main finding from data on the teachers' perspective was that they shared similar views on issues related to the use of oral corrective feedback in classroom lessons. Interestingly, the choice of oral corrective feedback by the teachers in the observation sessions did not seem to depend on the student oral language error types, as previous studies had shown. However, there were some variations evident in the types of oral corrective feedback used for certain error types. A second main finding of the study was that students actually perceived oral corrective feedback positively. They felt positive attitudes and feelings towards the error correction received from their teachers and they were keen to receive more teacher correction.

This study contributes to both the theory and practice of English teaching and learning within a lower secondary ESL classroom context. It has provided insights into how English teachers might attend more usefully to their students' English learning needs, particularly by extending their use of oral corrective feedback.

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## GLOSSARY

Term	Explanation
ESL	The abbreviation for English as a Second Language
EFL	The abbreviation for English as a Foreign Language
TESL	The abbreviation for Teaching of English as a Second Language
L2	The abbreviation for Second Language
MoE	The abbreviation for Ministry of Education
DoE	The abbreviation for Department of Education
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris - Sultan Idris University of Education (UPSI)	A teacher training university which provides teachers to all levels of education in Malaysia
Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR) – Primary School Assessment Tests	A national examination given in Malaysia at the end of students' first year in primary school before they leave for secondary school
Penilaian Menengah Rendah (PMR) – Lower Secondary Assessment	A Malaysian public examination taken by all Form Three students in both government and private schools throughout the country
Sijil Penilaian Menengah (SPM) – Malaysian Certificate of Education	An examination taken by all fifth-year secondary school students in Malaysia
Sijil Tinggi Persekolah Malaysia (STPM) – Malaysian Higher School Certificate	A pre-university examination taken by students in Malaysia
ICT	The abbreviation for Information Communication Technology
Educational Planning and Research Department (EPRD)	The abbreviation for which gives permission for any research conducted on Malaysian ground
Communication Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT)	An observation checklist use to collect data for classroom observation

<b>Terms</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Non-NEST	The abbreviation for non-native English speaking teachers
NEST	Native English speaking teachers
Penang Island	One of the states in Malaysia
KBSM	The abbreviation for Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah – Secondary School Curriculum
Majlis Amanah Rakyat – Indigenous People's Trust Council (MARA)	A government agency that guides Bumiputra in the areas of business and industries by providing fund; study loan is also provided in these areas
Bumiputera	A term used referring to indigenous people of Malaysia
Curriculum Development Centre (CDC)	A department responsible to design curriculum for all levels of education
Malaysian University English Test (MUET)	A test of English language proficiency cater largely for university admissions
NS	The abbreviation of native speaker
NNS	The abbreviation of non-native speaker

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## CHAPTER 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

“A writer writes not because he is educated but because he is driven by the need to communicate. Behind the need to communicate is the need to share. Behind the need to share is the need to be understood”, Leo Rosten.

Conducting research is about sharing a researcher’s thoughts, ideas and discovery of the research by the end of the research journey. Through the discovery, a researcher would learn to understand himself and all his capabilities which are undiscovered before. It is not about changing the world that concerns a researcher in his research world, but it is about the experience gained throughout the whole journey of being a researcher that matters. Stepping into the journey of this study, concerns, worries, excitement and uncertainty were the mixed feelings experienced by the researcher. However, with her experience as a teacher trainer and guidance and help from colleagues and supervisors alike, little confidence emerged within herself.

The initial inspiration of the topic chosen for this study was gained from the researcher’s own learning experiences as a teacher trainer at Sultan Idris University of Education (UPSI), a teacher training university in Malaysia. Working in this system which produces teachers for all levels of education in Malaysia for more than a decade, considerable curiosity and concern emerged about the deterioration of English proficiency among students particularly in spoken language. This situation is still reported even though English is learned from as early as preschool level. Many efforts have also been taken by the government to improve students’ spoken proficiency levels at all ages. This curiosity and concern about the problem triggered

the researcher's interest to investigate what is actually happening in Malaysian classrooms which has resulted in the apparent decline of spoken English proficiency among students.

The problem has also gradually become a national issue with prospective employers in both the government and private sectors starting to complain about having less proficient candidates in the job markets. It is surprising that these complaints are targeted at graduates who are portrayed as being unable to interact even in the simplest English-speaking situations. Graduates are reported to have less self-confidence in communication and their inability to express themselves in a situation is worrying. It might be suggested that this is the result of either the school or tertiary system or the teaching practices of teachers in the classroom, or a combination of both. An investigation into the nature of the English classrooms in Malaysia is needed as it can be argued that the system and teachers are inseparable when teaching and learning is concerned.

After reviewing relevant literature on problems faced by students in their spoken language, the researcher found that there were significant gaps that could be explored. That is, many local researchers tend to focus on the level of exposure and opportunities received by students for classrooms interaction; however, no study seems to have yet been conducted in Malaysia that examines teachers' error correction which is claimed to be a technique in helping students to develop and improve their spoken language. A further investigation of the literature found that studies on error correction in the local context were mostly focused on written error correction; no literature has yet to be found investigating error correction of oral

language. This gave the researcher an inspiration and a motivation to design this study to examine the role of error correction and to explore the views of teachers and students on spoken error correction. The students' responses to teachers' error correction of their oral language is further explored as the literature review suggests that limited if any studies have been conducted to explore this particular aspect of English language teaching and learning in the Malaysian context.

As an introduction of the thesis, this chapter provides an overview of the study. Since this study focused on the speaking aspects of language learning, it is important to introduce the place of English in Malaysia to provide the context for teaching and learning. An introduction to the research background of this investigation follows next by discussing the theoretical background underpins the development of spoken error correction. Additionally, this chapter also introduces the rationale and the significance of the study, as well as the aims, objectives and the research questions. A general picture of the research methodology will be discussed including data collection methods and tools for data analysis. Finally, this chapter ends with discussion of the ethical considerations, limitations of the research and the structure of this thesis.

## **1.2 English in Malaysia**

English has been the most important foreign language which is spoken widely throughout the whole of Malaysia since the British colonial rule. Over the years, English has been extensively used in almost all aspects of daily life among Malaysians: from business transactions to products labels and television jingles. As a global lingua franca, English has been established as a language which all

Malaysians need to be able to understand and to use to communicate especially in the world of science and technology. For this reason, the government feels the need for Malaysians to be literate and able to communicate verbally in English in order to cope with the globalization of the Internet and the Information Age.

As mentioned earlier, though most Malaysians are well-versed in the English language, the proficiency levels among Malaysians vary considerably. Since the early 1990s, the proficiency levels of Malaysians had been shown and have since declined sharply. The main reason for the decline appears mainly to be due to a backwash effect from changes in the education system which were implemented in the early 1960s and 1970s when Bahasa Malaysia, the national language, replaced English as the medium of instruction in schools and as the language of official matters. Realizing the proficiency levels of English among Malaysians is declining, certain actions were taken to curb this problem and to prevent its recurrence. The government has issued a nationwide exhortation to the people to achieve a high standard of proficiency in English, providing incentives and encouragement in various forms.

As a second language in Malaysia, English is evident everywhere. Most Malaysians are proficient enough to speak and understand English although the English language used by most Malaysians to communicate with each other is not a standard English, as in British English, Australian English or American English. ‘Manglish’, a uniquely Malaysian colloquial form of English, is used widely by almost all Malaysians in their daily life.

English is also evident in Malaysia through the media such as local television channels and cinemas. These media screen a wide variety of English cartoons, serials, dramas and films in the original language, with Bahasa Malaysian sub-titles. There are also films and sitcoms which are written and produced in English by local producers featuring local actors. These productions have been successful with good feedback and response from Malaysians. In addition, all forms of imported entertainment in English language are never dubbed and a good proportion of local radio stations broadcast entirely in English; they are widely accepted and enjoyed by the multiracial and multicultural nation of Malaysia.

The role of English is important not only for Malaysians, but also important in the education system which was based on the British education system. English has played a very important role in the education system in Malaysia since the independence. All students in Malaysia, despite their race, culture or religion, usually receive English instruction from the age of 7 years. Most students attend public government schools where an English education system is practised. In the evenings or the weekends, some of them also receive English instruction from private language centres, known as tuition centres, or from qualified freelance tutors. This extra English instructions is based on students' needs, background and preferences; it is to help the students in the preparation for examinations and in the monthly tests at school. Some students who can afford the high school fees attend private schools or international schools in which English is the medium of instruction.

In the Malaysian education system, the English language is taught as a compulsory subject in both public primary and secondary schools. Students learn English in their eleven years of compulsory education from the first year of school (at seven years old) until the last year of school (seventeen years old). Normally, five periods are allocated for English in a week which total about three and a half hours per-week. These are the standard hours allocated to compulsory subjects taught at public schools. Throughout the eleven years of compulsory schooling, students need to sit for three major examinations: UPSR (Primary School Assessment Tests), PMR (Lower Secondary Assessment) and SPM (Malaysian Certificate of Education). In these examinations, English subject is one of the core papers which students need to pass. Only three language skills are assessed: reading, writing and speaking, and they are assessed separately. The details of each examination will be presented in the next chapter.

As mentioned in the previous section, the standard of English among students has started to decline since the 1990s (Murugesan, 2003). In order to raise the standard of English among students in Malaysia, the government has implemented some changes particularly to the English examination papers. The basic requirement for a passing grade in both the PMR and SPM were upgraded as were the papers themselves. The English papers for the SPM examination, particularly the reading and writing components, were upgraded in order to make the papers more challenging than the old model English papers by joining the SPM 322 examination with the Cambridge 119 '0' Level paper. Apart from this, a literature component was added to both examinations by carefully selecting a range of poetry and prose in order to further boost interest among the students towards the English language.



This literature component was added to the SPM English examination first in 2000 then continued with the PMR English paper in 2002.

Apart from upgrading reading and writing components in the English examinations, changes were also made to the oral examination component in the national examination especially in the SPM. The format in which the students were evaluated in the SPM oral examination since its implementation had received drawbacks; it was considered to be inadequate as the students' proficiency in spoken English continued to decrease. As a result of this claim, a new SPM oral examination was designed and implemented in 2003. In this new evaluation format, students' communication skills are continuously assessed over a period of two years rather than only on a single test and this continuous assessment is aimed at truly improving students' verbal skills. While students who sat for the old oral examination were assessed by examiners from outside the school, in this new format students are assessed by their own English teachers at their own schools. Instead of a summative assessment as in the old format, this new format uses a formative assessment in which students are allowed to take the tests as frequently as they wish in order to improve themselves and to gain a better score. Not only are students allowed to keep improving their performances and scores, but they are also allowed to choose the form of their oral tests. Among the choices for the test are individual presentation, group discussion, dialogue, etc. With its more practical format than the previous oral examination, it is hoped that this new improved oral examination format will result in producing students who are competent enough in English speaking skills to fill the vast growing Malaysian workforce.

### **1.3 Theoretical Background**

In this section, a brief summary of some key aspects of the theoretical background related to error correction, both generally and specifically related to oral language, will be given as it relates to the present study.

Researchers in both first and second language (L2) acquisition have examined the link between error correction (known as corrective feedback or CF) and language development. This has led to studies conducted in both naturalistic and instructed settings. An example of a common natural setting is at home where babies learn to speak their first language (L1) (Brown & Hanlon, 1970; Nelson, 1977). In the L2, the street, the school compound, or workplace, are also natural settings in which children and adults learn to communicate in L2 (Clyne, 1977). The more common example of an instructed setting is the classroom, where it is the teacher's job to teach language to learners (Chaudron, 1988).

It is worth noting that research on error correction in the field of second and foreign language teaching and learning is not new. Interest among the researchers started in the 1950's. Only in the late 1950's and 1960's, there were significant changes in views of error correction when the Audiolingual Method dominated second and foreign language classrooms. The theories of behavioural psychologists and structural linguists were used as the basis for developing this method where oral was the primary focus of language learners. According to structural linguists, priority in language teaching should be given to listening and speaking skills. This priority was based on their belief that many languages do not have a written form and that children acquire their spoken language before their written language.

Behavioural psychologists on the other hand, believe that language is acquired through habit formation by reinforced responses to stimuli. This means that if learners gave correct responses to questions (and were reinforced), good habits could be formed. The practice of each grammatical pattern through stimuli-response drills until habits were formed is intended to minimize learners making mistakes (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). By using this method, learners are expected to produce flawless utterances in the target language. As mentioned by Brooks (1960), who coined the term *audioligualism*, immediate and explicit correction by teachers of learners' errors are important as these would avoid learners errors being reinforced in those errors. Many language educators supported the view of error correction in Audiolingualism. Brooks (1960) stated that:

The principal method of avoiding error in language learning is to observe and practice the right model a sufficient number of times, the principal way of overcoming it is to shorten the time lapse between the incorrect response and the presentation once more of the correct model (p. 28).

Hendrickson (1978) also pointed out that one of the guidelines in the teacher's Manual for German in 1961 was that "teachers should correct all errors immediately and that students should be neither required nor permitted to discover and correct their own mistakes" (p. 388).

By contrast, CF theories also relates to a different view of language learning, as indicated in the Noticing Hypothesis and Interaction Hypothesis. The Noticing Hypothesis was proposed by Schmidt (1990), who stated that the Noticing Hypothesis can apply to every aspect of language learning such as lexicon, phonology, grammatical form and pragmatics and "can be incorporated into many different theories of second language acquisition" (p. 149). The Noticing Hypothesis

suggests that “noticing is the necessary and sufficient condition for converting input to intake” (p. 129), and intake refers that “what learner consciously notice” (p. 149). Schmidt (1990) further explained that noticing is the second degree or level of conscious awareness and noticing means the things we are aware of. The example he gave is that we might notice some particular forms which native speakers used in some particular situations, and he also stated that “noticing is related to the question of what linguistic material is stored in memory” (Schmidt, 1990, p. 26).

## **1.4 Rationale of the Study**

Research literature to date (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Braidi, 2002; Mackey, Oliver, & Leeman, 2003; Rhonda Oliver & Mackey, 2003; Sheen, 2004) has supported the view that CF is an essential tool in assisting L2 learners’ development. This literature is extensive and has been applied to various L2 learning contexts, including ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts. More specifically, considerable research has focussed on the various forms of CF (e.g., repetition) and how they may affect the teaching and learning process (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

The literature in L2, ESL and EFL generally indicates that CF can be an effective technique that can be applied by teachers to assist their students’ development toward greater proficiency in the target language, which in this case is English (Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006). Theoretically, CF functions by providing explicit and implicit feedback to the learners on their L2 ‘errors’ (e.g., grammatical and lexical choices, pronunciation). However, there is often reluctance on the part of ESL and EFL teachers to provide CF to students for their communicative

competence. This tendency to ignore errors in the learners' speech might well lead teachers to miss opportunities to assist learners to develop their communicative competence in English as efficiently as possible.

Though extensive research literature indicates the effectiveness of oral CF as an effective technique to assist students in their language development, there does not seem to have been a systematic study in Malaysia to investigate the use of CF on oral language. Most research on CF which was carried out in the Malaysian ESL context focused largely on the area of writing rather than in the area of speaking (Botley & Dorren, 2007; Haja Mohideen, 1996; Ravichandran, 2002; Rosli & Edwin, 1989; Teh, 1993; Wong, 1994), however, at the same time, several previous Malaysian studies have identified a 'deteriorating standard of English' among ESL learners in Malaysia (Lim, 1994; Pillay & North, 1997; Ratnawati, 1996; Rosli & Edwin, 1989, 1990). Based on these factors, there is a clear need to assess whether oral CF is generally being applied by teachers in the Malaysian ESL context has yet to be examined. Therefore undertaking this study is important to address two important issues which will be discussed below.

1. *What are Malaysian ESL teachers' attitudes towards oral CF in their classroom practice?* There are three factors which relate to this issue: the teachers' perspective, the students' perspective and the perspective of the education system.

- Teachers' perspective

Anecdotal evidence has suggested that teachers of English in Malaysia pay little attention to (and possibly even deliberately ignore) their students' speech errors.

Teachers appear to have a tendency to focus on fluency rather than accuracy as a way of building up students' self-confidence in speaking English which is a priority. Teachers therefore may not want to dampen their students' interest and confidence by constantly correcting errors (which can be high frequency). In some English classrooms in Malaysia, teachers consider it adequate if students are able just to give a response in English, even if the English used is incorrect.

- Students' perspective

Apart from teachers' paying less attention to their students' spoken errors, it would also seem that some students pay limited attention to developing their English speaking ability because they do not see its importance. This is assumed to be particularly the case in rural Malaysia where English is not used in daily life, whereas urban and suburban students will encounter a greater degree of English use in everyday life. These rural students therefore may lack motivation and find it more difficult to learn English than other students (Fauziah & Nita, 2002).

- The perspective of the education system

Another issue is the Malaysian education system, as exemplified by syllabus and national examinations. In particular, English as a subject focuses primarily on two language skills: reading and writing – with the major focus in both skills on grammatical correctness (Fauziah & Nita, 2002). Much less emphasis is given to speaking skills in the syllabus and examination and this bias is reflected in classroom teaching. As the Malaysian education system is heavily examination-oriented (Lewey, 1977), listening and speaking in the teaching and learning of English are therefore given limited attention in classroom teaching because they are not a key

focus of the national examinations (Fauziah & Nita, 2002). In the Malaysian education system, students' English speaking abilities are only tested twice in the national examinations throughout the eleven years of schooling: PMR and SPM. For these reasons, classroom teaching is basically examination-oriented and it is common for teachers to focus entirely on the examination especially when learners are in the examination years (Fauziah & Nita, 2002). This could be assumed to mean that students will receive limited input and practice in oral communication in the classroom which in turn is likely to hinder the development of their English oral language skills (Zhang & Kortner, 1995).

## *2. To what extent does the Malaysian context influence teachers' use of CF?*

Most previous studies in ESL and EFL learning, have been carried out in English-speaking countries, such as Canada (Panova & Lyster, 2002), New Zealand (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2001), the United States (Carpenter, Jeon, MacGregor, & Mackey, 2006) and Australia (Oliver, 2000), where English is a national language and teachers are native English-speaking teachers or NEST (Medgyes, 2001). The students involved were the only non-native English-speakers.

Some more recent studies have been conducted in non-speaking English countries such as Korea (Park, 2005; Park, 2010), China (Yang, 2009; Zhao, 2009) and Japan (Katayama, 2007b). However, in these countries English is a foreign language (EFL), teachers are non native English-speaking teachers or non-native English-speaking teachers (non-NEST) (Medgyes, 2001) and the students also non-native English-speakers. Although there have been many research studies investigating CF in classroom (or laboratory) settings, both in English speaking

countries and non-English speaking countries, these studies may not be directly relevant to the Malaysian context for several reasons: the role of English in Malaysia is different, teachers are non-NEST, students as non native English-speakers and the Malaysian school context has unique characteristics. These reasons will be outlined in the next section.

- The role of English in Malaysia

Though several research studies were carried out in non-English speaking Asian countries and the context may be similar but they are not identical. Korea, China and Japan are also Asian countries where English is taught (as EFL), but where English is not widely used in daily life. Most local television channels, radio programmes and movies in the cinemas broadcast in their national languages: Korean, Japanese and Standard Mandarin. Secondly, in these countries, English is not officially and formally used as means of communication either in business or in the government sectors. So this context is different from Malaysia, as Malaysia is an ESL rather than EFL context. Even though English is not a national language, it is officially and formally used in business and widely even in the government sectors. Moreover Malaysians are widely exposed to English in their daily lives with local television channels screening a wide variety of English cartoons, serials, dramas, films and local radio stations broadcast exclusively in English (Murugesan, 2003).

- Teachers as non-NEST

As mentioned before, there were many research studies on EFL and ESL learning and teaching conducted in English-speaking countries with native English-



speaking teachers (NESTs). In most of these studies, the teacher participants have been native, native-like or bilingual speakers of the target language (English, French, Japanese or Korean). The context is different in Malaysia. Being a non-native English speaking country, obviously the teachers are also non-NESTs. Though they are non-NEST, their qualifications and proficiency in English are high. Malaysian ESL teachers are fully qualified as ESL teachers and some of them have even obtained their first degree in TESL internationally from an English speaking country such as the United Kingdom and New Zealand. They have relatively high English proficiency levels although they might not necessarily be native-like or (fully) bilingual.

- Students as non-native English-speakers

The literature has indicated that extensive studies have been conducted on teachers' responses to students' errors. However, there is still limited literature on students' perceptions concerning CF they receive particularly in the foreign language and L2 research (Bang, 1999; Cathcart & Olsen, 1976; Katayama, 1996; Oladejo, 1993). So far the literature on students' perceptions and preferences for oral CF has only been conducted in a Japanese context (Fujioka & Kennedy, 1997; Katayama, 2007a). No study to date seems to have been undertaken to investigate students' perceptions or preferences for oral CF in the Malaysian context.

Other than a limited literature on students' perceptions on oral CF, most research on oral CF in the EFL and EFL contexts, either in English-speaking countries or non English-speaking countries, has focused on students at the university level (Ellis et al., 2001; Katayama, 2007a; Park, 2005; Park, 2010).

Limited studies have been carried out which focus on primary school students (Zhao, 2009) or secondary school students (Yang, 2009) in either the ESL or EFL contexts. Although one study was carried out with the focus on the secondary school participants (Yang, 2009), the context in which the participants were involved in was quite different from that of Malaysian secondary students. The former was an EFL context while the Malaysian context is closer to an ESL one. Also the exposure to English received by students in an EFL context is much lower than the exposure to English received by the secondary students Malaysia. In the former EFL national context, students seldom have the opportunity to listen to and speak English outside the classroom (Yang, 2009). However, in the Malaysian context, secondary students have considerable exposure outside the classroom and English as it is more an ESL context with English much more evident and widely used.

- Malaysian school context

This study also specifically takes into account the Malaysian school context. Firstly, regular secondary school classrooms/schools in Malaysia may be either single-sex or co-educational. Muslim schools, in particular, are single-sex schools, as are convent schools which are single-sex schools (female only). Other single-sex schools include Methodist schools with single-sex male or female students. Penang Free School and St. Georges' Girls School are also single-sex schools with the former considered the 'best' boys' school and the latter the 'best' girls' school in Penang.

Other than the single-sex secondary schools, some secondary schools are based on particular ethnic groups, such as Chinese schools. Though there are some other

ethnic groups in the schools, the majority are Chinese students who have completed their primary school education in Chinese primary schools. This particular Malaysian school context of single-sex school and ethnicity-based schools as well as public schools has not been explored in the literature in relation to ESL or EFL language learning either in English-speaking countries or non-English speaking countries. However, to reflect the Malaysian school system, the present study has included all types of school – single-sex and co-educational.

Based on these factors, this study therefore has addressed various gaps in the literature. This has become an important issue now that the ‘push’ for English language learning where the teachers are non-NESTs in a non-English speaking country has become so great (commensurate with the current status of English as ‘the global language’) and so many ESL and EFL teachers, particularly in Asia, are non-NESTs.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Each study is conducted with the intention to address the problems in certain areas and therefore the completion of the study is hoped to give some insights to the field studied. The present study was conducted with the intention of adding to the knowledge in two broad areas: the L2 learning, and the teaching and learning of English in ESL or EFL contexts. More specifically it addresses oral CF and teaching English in the Malaysian context.

The findings from this study will hopefully contribute important insights for Malaysian teachers to improve their classroom practice especially in relation to using

CF with students' oral language. The outcome of this study would also potentially result in improved culture and climate of interaction between Malaysian teachers and students. Further, some insights will be able to be provided to students to understand why teachers correct their oral language errors. It is assumed that, without correction by teachers, students will not know if what they say is correct and so that this correction would gradually lead them to use better English in the future.

Apart from these insights provided to teachers and students, this study also hopes to address some major issues in second/foreign language education, particularly ESL which have not previously been investigated in detail in the Malaysian context. The findings from this study therefore should add knowledge to the literature among educators and become a useful guide to the further development of new approaches and techniques for the effective use of oral CF in classroom practice, particularly the secondary school classroom.

Finally, the outcome of this study could demonstrate useful implications for the TESL (Teaching of English as a Second Language) programme at the Sultan Idris University of Education Malaysia (the researcher's institution). It could lead to improved units being offered and units related to listening and speaking skills in the programme to be revised. New strategies and techniques could be incorporated into these units to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to apply on oral CF in their classroom teaching.

## **1.6 Research Aims and Objectives**

This study was designed with two main aims: firstly to investigate the use of CF of oral language in Malaysian secondary schools classrooms; and secondly, to explore how both Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers and students perceive CF on oral language. To undertake these aims, the study examined the views of secondary school students and teachers towards the role of oral CF, and identified how oral CF was practiced by the teachers. Following the discussion of the views and investigation of the practices of oral CF in the classrooms, it was hoped to make recommendations for a more flexible and supportive learning and teaching environment. To achieve a comprehensive examination, the research aims were studied as four research objectives, which were as follows:

**Research Objective 1:** To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers on CF of oral language. The following three research questions were posed in relation to this objective:

- What are the general views of the teachers on oral CF?
- What are the teachers' views on their own classroom practices towards oral CF used in their teaching?
- What are the teachers' views on types of learner uptake received following oral CF used on the students' spoken errors?

**Research Objective 2:** To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school students on CF of oral language used by teachers. The following five research questions were posed in relation to this objective:

- What are the general views of the students on oral CF used by teachers?

- What are the students' views on the types of learner uptake following oral CF used by their teachers?
- How do the students feel towards the use of CF by teachers on their oral language?
- What are the students' views on types of errors teachers should focus in oral CF?
- Do the views of the students differ according to their class forms?

**Research Objective 3:** To compare the views of Malaysian secondary school students and teachers on CF of oral language. The following three research questions were posed in relation to this objective:

- What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the use of oral CF in the classrooms?
- What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the types of errors should be corrected in oral CF?
- What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the types of learner uptake following oral CF?

**Research Objective 4:** To investigate the use of oral CF by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers in the classrooms. The following two research questions were posed in relation to this objective:

- What are the types of oral CF used?
- What are the types of errors corrected?

## **1.7 Research Methodology**

A mixed-methods research design underpinned the methodological principles of this study with both qualitative and quantitative methods being incorporated (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). The participants involved in this study were 152 English teachers and 1843 students from 42 Malaysian secondary schools.

Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were used as the data collection tools to assess the participants' teaching and learning experiences with CF of oral language. The data were collected at two phases: Phase I – a quantitative data collection phase and Phase II – a qualitative data collection phase. The questionnaire was designed to elicit the views of students and teachers on oral CF. Semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, on the other hand, were used to investigate the teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices in relation to CF of oral language.

In Phase I, the data were collected through surveys by distributing two sets of questionnaires: a 55-item teacher questionnaire and a 47-item student questionnaire. Statistical data analysis software package, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 18.0) was used to analyse the data gathered in Phase I. As for Phase II, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were conducted with six teachers from three selected secondary schools. The data collected at this phase were analysed using a combination of thematic analysis, a constructivist grounded theory approach and a three-step coding approach (Sarantakos, 2005). The qualitative data collected at Phase II was analysed using NVivo software version 7.0.

### **1.7.1 Phase I – Quantitative phase**

A quantitative approach was used at this phase which was based on numerical data. At this stage two goals were established in collecting the data: to collect scores measuring the distinct attributes of students and teachers on CF of oral language and to compare groups of variables in relation to views and attitudes of these two groups of participants. Through a deductive approach, it allowed hypotheses to be formed in accordance to some theories which were discussed in literature related to CF of oral language. Theories from patterns found in the data were then generated and compared with the hypotheses which were achieved at the end of the Phase I.

### **1.7.2 Phase II – Qualitative phase**

A qualitative approach was used in collecting data at Phase II as it developed and constructed meanings from the data collected in the natural classroom settings (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Compared to the quantitative research method, the qualitative research is more naturalistic, pragmatic, interpretive, emergent and evolving (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Due to its characteristics, meanings in the participants' interpretations of their experiences of oral CF were easily constructed. At this qualitative phase, more insights of the rationale underlying the teachers' classroom practices on oral CF were revealed. With an inductive approach applied by the qualitative approach which started with specific observations and then moved to a tentative generalisation, patterns that are grounded in the participants' responses were sought to form new theories and to generate new hypotheses.



## **1.8 Ethical Considerations**

In every research, an ethical awareness is important before researchers embark into conducting research. Johnson and Christensen (2004) states that ethics was the fundamental principles and guidelines which helped the researcher to uphold things that she valued. Diener and Crandall (1987) have further considered three areas of ethical concern for social research which are: a) the relationship between society and science; b) professional issues; and c) the treatment of research participants. These three issues were kept in mind throughout the whole process of the study which included the data collection, data analysis and also the interpretation of the findings.

Before this study was conducted, it required approval from a number of parties. Firstly, the approval of the ethical issues was obtained from the Tasmania Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee, University of Tasmania before the whole research was carried out. The full ethical approval (H0010404) was obtained from the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2009. The second approval was obtained from the Educational Planning and Research Department (EPRD) of the Ministry of Education (MoE), Malaysia. EPRD is responsible for the approval of all researches which are conducted in Malaysia, either by local or international researchers. The next approval was obtained from the state Department of Education (DoE), in this study, it is Penang Island, the focus of the study. The state DoE is responsible for granting the permission to undertake this study at schools, both primary and secondary. With the approval obtained from all the parties concerned, the study was ready to be conducted as planned.

This study did not bring any harm to the participants though it involved students of aged 13 to 15 year old, who were vulnerable for their immaturity and understanding of the topic researched. Thus careful consideration was given in constructing the questionnaire to avoid sensitive and personal issues being included. As for the teacher participants, they were considered as mentally and physically healthy and therefore were able to independently make decisions about their participation and giving responses in accordance to their own beliefs and views on the topic of the study. All the information about the study was provided in detail to all the participants including withdrawing their participation at anytime without affecting their teaching and learning. As a result, withdrawal from the participation in this study could be done without fear of repercussion.

Apart from the participants being given full ethical consideration, the data report and storage were also given careful attention. The participants involved in the survey were anonymous and the responses were non-identifiable data which could not be identified by anyone including the researcher. The situation was different for the participants involved in the interviews and the classroom observations. Though their responses and the data were re-identifiable, their confidentiality was well protected. No particular reference of participants' names, schools or forms was written on all the interview transcripts and was replaced by pseudonyms. The participants were referred to as  $R_{f1}$ ,  $R_{f2}$  and etc. The participants' names were not used in any publication from the study while completing this thesis and also for the future.

The ethical consideration was not only given to the participants and the data collected, but was also given to the storage of all the paper data including returned questionnaire, transcripts, classroom observation checklists and field notes. The paper data was stored in a locked filing cabinet in the chief investigator's office and all the writing concerning the thesis was stored in the university server with password protection. After a period of five years, all the data will be destroyed which will be the responsibility of the university.

## **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

Time constraints and other issues were some of the constraints on this study. The location of the data collection was one of the limitations of this study. The data were gathered in only one Malaysian state, hence the findings may not be generalised to other secondary schools in Malaysia. Although it would have been useful to include schools from other states, this study was however based on a comprehensive approach in that all the secondary schools in Penang were invited to participate in the study.

Another limitation of the study was the participants involved in both phases. In Phase I, the S-participants involved were only the lower secondary school students; upper secondary students were not invited to participate in the survey as their learning context was considerably different. Also, the number of S-participants was limited which not all the lower secondary students were involved in the survey. The same situation applied to the T-participants. Again, not all the lower secondary school English teachers were involved in the distribution of the questionnaire. Only six English teachers from each secondary school were invited to participate in the

survey. Thus the responses from both T- and S-participants in the survey conducted could not be generalised as a comprehensive list of secondary school teachers and students across Penang, though including all secondary school English teachers and students in survey would have been best.

Considering the participants as a limitation, careful attention was given in inviting both teacher and student participants to be included in the distribution of the questionnaire. The limitation pertaining to the T-participants was resolved by inviting six English teachers from each school to participate in the survey, which some schools had less than six English teachers who were teaching in the lower secondary school classes. Therefore in some secondary schools all the lower secondary English teachers were involved in the completion of the questionnaire. As for the S-participants, ten students from each class were involved in the completion of the survey which resulted in each class with at least between 30% to 40% representatives of the whole class population of between 35-40 students.

The next limitation is the participants involved at Phase II. Only six lower secondary school English teachers were invited to participate in the interviews which meant only six classes were involved in the classroom observations; not all forms were involved. The classroom observations and interviews were only carried out with Form 1 and Form 2 classes. Since Form 3 students were taking the national examination by the end of the school year, no interruption was allowed by principals. The Form 3 lessons, at the time the interviews and classroom observation were carried out, were prepared in order to equip the students with the skills and knowledge in preparing them for the national examination. Due to this limitation,

the results from the data collected from the interviews and classroom observations could not be generalised as feedback from all English teachers of lower secondary schools in Penang. This foreseen limitation was overcome by inviting English teachers from each class form to participate in the interview and classroom observations.

Finally, the topic focused on in the study is another limitation. The study focused only on CF of oral language, a very limited area in the speaking skills. There are other areas in the speaking skills could be investigated which were related to the speaking skills such as accuracy and fluency. Though there are some other issues related to oral CF which could be investigated and explored, due to time constraints, only certain issues are examined. Nevertheless the issues explored and investigated are given thorough attention to their importance in the Malaysian ESL context. On top of this the issues investigated and explored will also provide new insights to the literature concerning the use of oral CF particularly in the ESL and EFL contexts.

## **1.10 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis reports the completed research report of the study. It consists of a total of eight chapters. Other than this introduction chapter, the other seven chapters include Contextual Background of the Study, Literature Review, Research Methodology, Quantitative Data Analysis and Results, Qualitative Data Analysis and Results and Conclusion. An overview of these chapters is outlined below.

### **Chapter 2: Contextual Background of the Study**

This chapter introduces a contextual background of the study by summarizing key aspects of education in Malaysia. The details provided in this chapter gave general understanding on the education which describes some of the development and the policies. It looks at the background of the education system and examination system which discusses the importance of assessment and evaluation with the emphasis given to the secondary school levels. A discussion on the development of the teaching and learning of English in Malaysia is also presented. The nature of teacher education in Malaysia is briefly explained by stating the functions of the institutions responsible for providing teachers to all schools in Malaysia.

### Chapter 3: Literature Review

Chapter 3 reviews a range of literature which provides the theoretical foundation within the area of the study. It looks at the background knowledge of CF on oral language including definition of different relevant terms, theory and model of CF which are the basis of the study. An understanding of what is known now in the field of oral CF, about what constitutes best classroom practice among teachers, and what supports teachers' and students' beliefs on issues related to oral CF are also reviewed in this chapter. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the role of oral CF in the learning and teaching of English in ESL and EFL contexts.

### Chapter 4: Methodology

The principles of the methodology used in this study are introduced in this chapter. This study used a mixed method research methodology; therefore as a methodology chapter, it discusses the qualitative and quantitative research methods in the data collection and data analysis as a mixed method research methodology of

this study. This chapter further details the quantitative research principle and the qualitative research principle which underpinned the methodological principles of this study. A discussion on the theories used to analyse the data collected, including the thematic analysis and constructivist grounded theory is also discussed. This is then followed with an explanation on the process involved in the data collection; a discussion on the validity, reliability and credibility of the instruments is presented next. This chapter then moves on to a discussion on the importance of a pilot study which is to ensure the validity of the study and the research instruments, including the process of the pilot study conducted in this study. Finally this chapter concludes by looking at triangulations which were important in the research methodology employed throughout this study.

#### Chapter 5: Quantitative Data Analysis and Results

This chapter provides an overview of the Phase I data analysis and results: the quantitative data analysis. This chapter begins by introducing the process of the validity and reliability of both sets of questionnaires as the research instruments to collect the data. The procedure involved in processing the data collected is explained next giving an introduction on the grouping of the numerical data into sub-themes. The analysis of the data and results are detailed in the next section, including an overview of the participants' sample for both groups of participants. The techniques involved in analysing the data including investigating of the Median values and analysis of Chi-square tests of significance are also detailed. The chapter then provided the data analysis in accordance to the sub-themes mentioned above.

#### Chapter 6: Qualitative Data Analysis and Results

The qualitative analysis, in particular the constructivist grounded theory approach is introduced in Chapter 6. It views how the constructivist grounded theory approach used in the qualitative analysis provides insights into the perspectives behind the quantitative findings, or emerging insights that have not yet been enclosed. The findings from the interviews and the classroom observations are discussed. By analysing the transcriptions line by line, codes which are related to the participants' views on oral CF are generated. The use of the three step coding approach in coding the data of the interview has resulted in a number of dominant categories in relation to CF of oral language. COLT data analysis procedures used to analyse the classroom observations data was also presented.

#### Chapter 7: Conclusion

This chapter provides the discussions which follow the quantitative results and the qualitative results presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. An examination of whether the research objectives of the study are achieved and the extent to which research questions are answered are presented in this chapter. An overview to the importance of conducting this study and also its journey to its completion are presented. The aims of the study, particularly the investigation of the teachers' and the students' views on oral corrective are revisited in this chapter. Apart from revisiting the research aims, the findings presented in the discussion chapter are also revisited and summarised. This chapter is then followed by some thoughts on the results discussed, including how the research objectives were addressed and a discussion of the overall findings. Any emerging issues found, any weakness of the study and how the study could be undertaken in the future lead to some suggestions



for further research related to the topic of the thesis finally end this conclusion chapter.

## **1.11 Conclusion**

As an introduction chapter, this chapter presents the research and the structure of the thesis generally. It begins with an explanation on how the topic was selected and moves on to the role of English in Malaysia. This is then followed by discussing the research background of the study, discussing on the rationale, explaining the significance of this study and stating the research aim and objectives. Based on the theories discussed, the research methodology used in collecting and analysing the data was introduced. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion on the ethical considerations, the limitations of the research, and the structure of the thesis.

Chapter two, which follows next, will examine the contextual background of the study. Malaysia, in general, and Penang Island, in particular, will be introduced as the context of this study. General information about education in Malaysia will be presented detailing the development of education and policies in Malaysia, the education system and the examination system practiced in Malaysia, the importance of assessment and evaluation and the development of English language teaching and learning in Malaysia. This chapter is further developed by discussing the role of English in Malaysia, focusing on its role in education. Finally, the background of the teacher education in Malaysia including some of the teacher education institutions which provide training to teachers in Malaysia generally, and English teachers, particularly, ends this chapter which introduces the contextual background of the study.

## CHAPTER 2. Contextual Background

### **2.1 Introduction**

“The foundation of every state is the education of its youth,” Diogenes.

In every country, the education system plays a vital role in building up the innovative, creative and successful nation. It is the education system that ensures the proper and necessary knowledge and skills are imparted to the nation. The education system practiced in certain countries has an impact on the way teaching and learning is conducted in classrooms. In relation to Malaysia, the national education and examination systems are designed at all levels of education. This chapter on the contextual background of the study will discuss some aspects related to the national education and examination systems which have an impact on the teaching and learning in Malaysian classrooms.

A discussion on the national education system begins this chapter by presenting the two levels of formal education in Malaysia: primary and secondary schools. The emphasis given to the curriculum and syllabus of the secondary school education, the focused level in this study, is further discussed. Since this study is conducted to investigate issues related to the practice of English language teaching in Malaysia, this chapter has further extended the examination system in Malaysia generally and in particular the English examination system in secondary and primary school levels.

## **2.2 Education System in Malaysia**

In Malaysia, a uniform system of education in both primary and secondary schools has been established whereby a national curriculum is used in all schools. A common centralised assessment and examination system applied at the end of the respective periods of schooling is also conducted. The primary and secondary schools in Malaysia are mostly public schools which are funded by the government. In basic terms, residents in Malaysia are provided with eleven compulsory years of free schooling: 6 years of primary school level (Year 1-6) at the age of 7 to 12 years and 5 years of secondary school level (Form 1 to 5) at the age of 13 to 17 years old. After they have completed their eleven years of compulsory schooling, students are given the freedom to either further their study at the tertiary level or go on to the job market. This current system of education is described as a P – 13 systems (which means 13 points or year levels of education preceding university education) and is divided into 6-3-2-2 levels: 6 years of primary schooling, 3 years of lower secondary schooling, 2 years of upper secondary schooling and 2 years of pre-university schooling (see Appendix 5). The following sections will further detail the two levels of education.

### **2.2.1 Primary school education**

Primary schools are of 2 types operate differently. Firstly, there are national primary schools which are government-operated and use Bahasa Malaysian as the medium of instruction. Secondly, there are national type primary schools – Chinese and Tamil, which are mostly government-assisted (although some are government-operated) and use Chinese (for Chinese schools) and Tamil (for Tamils schools) as

the medium of instruction; Bahasa Malaysia however remains a compulsory subject in national-type schools.

Different types of primary schools in Malaysia are designed to meet the needs meet the needs of Malaysia which is comprised of multi-ethnic groups. Apart from the two types of primary schools, special schools are also available to meet the needs of children who are hearing or visually impaired. The government commitment and initiative in preparing appropriate and sufficient primary schools are seen in the increase of 937 schools over a 30-year period from 1970 to 2000.

### **2.2.2 Secondary school education**

This level of education is the focal level in this study; therefore a more thorough discussion is presented in this section. Secondary school education in Malaysia is conducted for a duration of five years beginning at the age of 13 years. As mentioned previously, the secondary education structure is 3+2+2 (7 years). At the moment a plan has been developed which aims at restructuring the present secondary school education to 4+2 (6 years) and revising the integrated Secondary School Curriculum (KBSM) to fit the new structure. This future structure is also aimed to produce students who are knowledgeable and skilful in various fields especially in science, technology and Information Communication Technology (ICT). Other aims include producing students who are proficient in Malay and English, have positive attitudes, practice good moral values, are critical and creative and possess employability skills and most importantly, are prepared for higher learning.

There are several types of secondary schools in Malaysia: National Secondary School, Religious Secondary School, National-Type Secondary School (also referred to as Mission Schools), Residential Schools and the MARA Junior Science Colleges. Residential schools and MARA Junior Science Colleges are elite schools and catered for *Bumiputra* students. Streaming into specific fields is not applied to lower secondary school education; however upper secondary education is divided into three streams – the academic (science and arts), technical and vocational. The entry of students into these streams depends largely on the academic achievements obtained in their national examination (PMR) which is conducted at the end of Form 3 of lower secondary education. There are 5 types of upper secondary schools in the academic stream: regular day schools, fully residential schools, Technical schools, Science Secondary Schools, and MARA Junior Science Colleges. Although secondary school education consists of various types of schools, Bahasa Malaysia serves as the medium of instruction in national secondary schools and Chinese in national-type schools; English remains a compulsory subject for all students regardless of the school-type.

As mentioned earlier, most students finish their lower secondary education after three years, but this is not the case for students of national-type primary schools, unless they have achieved excellent results in Bahasa Malaysia in the UPSR - the national examination in Year 6 (to be explained later in this chapter). Students with less excellent results in Bahasa Malaysia are retained in 'Remove Class' for the duration of a year before entering secondary education to ensure they acquire sufficient proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia, which is the medium of instruction in secondary schools.

From this discussion, it is clear that different types of schools exist in all levels of education in Malaysia to cater the multi-cultural and multi-racial nation. Though there are various types of primary and secondary schools, the national curriculum is carefully designed to provide consistency and to meet the needs of the various ethnic groups in Malaysia at all levels of education. The national curriculum designed by the MoE is further discussed below.

### **2.2.3 Curriculum design**

Through the use of a single medium of instruction (the national language; Malay) and the provision of the same core subjects for all pupils in all schools within the National Education System, unity is promoted which is the focus of the design of the national curriculum. Nevertheless, the existence of national-type schools allows the use of other ethnic languages as the medium of instruction as well as preserving the cultural diversity of the different ethnic groups in Malaysia.

In planning the curriculum, an integrated approach is used as the underlying theoretical principle to formulate the national curriculum which consists of content and skills (with the focus on the development of basic skills), the acquisition of knowledge and thinking skills. In addition, the inculcation of moral values and attitudes and the correct use of Malay and other languages, such as English, Chinese and Tamil must also be incorporated in each subject. The curriculum has further maintained the uniformity of the curriculum by designing national curriculum at all levels of education: preschool, primary and secondary.

All the elements mentioned in the national curriculum for both primary and secondary school education should be incorporated in all the core subjects taught in all schools including English, as one of the core subjects taught in schools at both primary and secondary levels. Since all schools in Malaysia use the national curriculum, English also has its own curriculum and syllabus which apply at the respective levels of education. The next section will further discuss the English language curriculum and syllabus at primary and secondary schools.

### ***2.2.3.1 English language curriculum and syllabus***

As it served as a L2 in Malaysia, English is introduced at the pre-school level and is formally taught in all primary and secondary schools with the purpose of preparing learners to be able to use English in their daily life, at higher education levels and in the work place. The awareness that English is important leads to the subject being incorporated in the curriculum and is a compulsory subject at all levels.

The design and the development of the curriculum for all levels of education is the responsibility of the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), MoE. CDC has the mission to produce high quality curriculum which is at a par with world standards by 2020 and at the same time is consistent with the National Education Philosophy (1988). Other than this main responsibility of CDC for designing and developing the curriculum at all levels, it also has control of other matters pertaining to curriculum: it disseminates and implements the curriculum, identifies and monitors the implementation of the curriculum, produces support materials relevant to the curriculum, and evaluates the curriculum for further improvements. The CDC also

conducts in-service courses for teachers and other education officers who are directly involved in the implementation of the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2004).

Realizing the rapid global development of ICT, the use of English for ICT was incorporated into the curriculum (both primary and secondary levels); this came into effect in 2003. The aims are to assist students in accessing knowledge of the Internet and other electronic media, and in accessing local and international student network. This implementation is hoping to produce students who are proficient in English which will enable them to read and listen to academic, professional and recreational materials and to speak in seminars and conferences in English (Ministry of Education, 2003a, 2003c). Since this study focuses on the secondary school level, only English language curriculum at secondary school education will be presented in the next section.

### *English language curriculum for secondary schools.*

The design of the national English curriculum for secondary schools focuses on the use of knowledge from subject disciplines (e.g. science and geography) as well as current issues in providing the content for learning to learners. The curriculum exposes learners at the initial stages to issues and concerns in their local environment surroundings (schools, towns and country) which are then expanded to broader issues and concerns outside the country. Learners, wherever possible, are assigned project work which provides them with opportunities to apply inquiry skills to solving identified problems and issues. Apart from assisting them to discuss and analyse issues arising from this activities, the habit of acquiring knowledge throughout their lives is also developed in them.



As stated previously, the use of English for ICT is included in the secondary school curriculum to encourage learners to share their views and opinions in joint activities with other schools through networking. Through this, learners' interpersonal skills are developed which will prepare them to face the outside world when they leave schools. At the secondary school levels, learners are expected to understand English grammar and be able to use it accurately. In addition to this, learners are required to speak internationally intelligible English with appropriate pronunciation and intonation (Ministry of Education, 2003d).

The curriculum is further divided into the Form 1 to Form 5 syllabi . Each syllabus is provided with curriculum specifications which provide the content to be taught in assisting teachers to implement the curriculum. This serves as a form of reference for the teachers in terms of skills to be achieved, topics and themes to be covered, and the vocabulary, grammar items and sound system to be learned. Each syllabus outlines the aims, objectives and learning outcomes to be achieved by teachers and learners.

The English language syllabus for secondary schools is aimed to extending the proficiency levels of English language learners as well as meeting their needs to use the language in (certain situations) their daily lives, for knowledge acquisition, and for future workplace. The syllabus outlines a number of objectives to be achieved by learners by the end of their secondary schooling (Ministry of Education, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003e):

- i. form and maintain relationships through conversation and correspondence; take part in social interactions; and obtain goods and services;

- ii. obtain, process and use information from various audio-visual and print sources and present the information in spoken and written form;
- iii. listen to, view, read and respond to different texts, and express ideas, opinions, thoughts and feelings imaginatively and creatively in spoken and written form; and
- iv. show an awareness and appreciation of moral values and love towards the nation.

The syllabus consists of three major content areas: the Learning Outcomes, Language Content and Educational Emphases. Firstly, the Learning Outcomes detail the skills to be achieved by the learners. These skills are separated into three areas of language use – Interpersonal, Informational and Aesthetic – which require learners to perform tasks and achieve outcomes both in oral and written forms. Secondly, the Language Content includes the grammar, the sound system, the word list and the literature component to be taught according to each form. Lastly, the Educational Emphases outline some current developments in education which will help learners for the world of work and social life. This includes aspects which incorporate thinking and study skills, ICT skills, values and citizenship, knowledge acquisition and Multiple Intelligences.

The syllabus designed in the teaching and learning of English is based on a communicative model of teaching English and according to a skill-based approach. The four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are specifically targeted by sequenced activities, though sometimes lessons are designed to focus on one or two language skills only. Recently, ‘multiple intelligences’ was introduced by the government to add to the four language skills. Teachers are encouraged to integrate the ‘multiple intelligences’ into the teaching and learning of English

language to increase language competency among students. There are three domains of ‘multiple intelligences’: informational use of the language, aesthetic appreciation of the language, and language for interpersonal communication. By integrating the ‘multiple intelligences’ into the teaching and learning of English, it is expected that students will gain a holistic knowledge of the language as well as the ability to employ it towards any purpose in their future.

The curriculum is a blueprint for teachers with the intention of producing learners who have the confidence and strength to face the real world with its challenges and obstacles. In order to identify the effectiveness of the designed curriculum, examinations are used as the tools for this purpose. The examination system which consists of four national examinations will be further detailed in the following section.

## **2.3 Examination system in Malaysia**

The examination system in Malaysia assesses students at a number of levels throughout their P – 13 system of education. Overall, there are four public examinations which are conducted within the education system throughout the 6-3-2-2 levels in Malaysian: UPSR, PMR, SPM and STPM..

### **2.3.1 UPSR – Primary School Assessment Tests**

UPSR is the first national examination in Malaysian education system which is conducted at the end of Year 6 of primary school level. The number of subjects taken by students differs according to the type of primary school in which they are enrolled. Students of national schools are required to take five papers (Bahasa

Malaysia, Comprehension and writing, English, Mathematics and Science) in addition to an aptitude test. Students of national-type schools are also required to take two extra additional papers, totalling seven papers. The two extra papers are Chinese comprehension and writing (compulsory for Chinese school students only) and Tamil comprehension and writing (compulsory for Tamil school students only)

In UPSR, multiple choice questions are tested using a standardized optical sheet which uses optical mark recognition for detecting answers. Scores are calculated based on a bell curve, thus the yearly performance is a reflection of the passing grade. The examination results determine which type of secondary school students can be enrolled in. Those with poor to average results will be enrolled directly into regular day schools (national and national-type schools) whereas those with excellent results are qualified to be enrolled in the elite schools: the MARA Junior Science Colleges or fully residential schools.

### **2.3.2 PMR – Lower Secondary Assessment**

Previously known as the SRP – Lower Certificate of Education, the PMR is conducted at the end of the lower secondary level (Form 3) and taken by both public and private school students. Among the mandatory subjects in PMR are Bahasa Malaysia, English language, Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Living Skills and Islamic Studies (compulsory for Muslim students). In relation to the grading system, the passing grades are the average scores obtained by the students ranging from A (excellent) to E (failure) or T (non-attendance). The results obtained by the students together with their individual interests determine how they will be streamed into classes (Science, Arts, IT or vocational) at the upper secondary school

levels of two years. Excellent results also enable students to be enrolled in the elite schools (e.g. MARA Junior Science Colleges, fully residential school and Science Secondary Schools).

### **2.3.3 SPM – Malaysian Certificate of Education**

The SPM, equivalent to British GSCE O level, is conducted at the end of upper secondary school level which is at the end of Form 5. This examination is the second last national examination at the secondary education level before STPM – the final examination at this level. SPM consists of two subject areas: compulsory subjects including Bahasa Malaysia, English, Mathematics, Science, History, Islamic Education (for Muslim students), and Moral Education (for non-Muslims students); and six groups of elective subjects, including Arts and Health, Information Technology, languages and literature, technical and vocational, Science and Mathematics, Social Sciences and Religion. Students are given a choice of subjects from these six groups. In 2010, however, a 10-subject limit was imposed and the minimum number of subjects was lowered from 8 to 6 subjects.

The results are determined by grades ranging from A+ (the highest grade) to G (failure). Excellent results enable students to further their study at tertiary level (diploma levels only) or pre-university, Form 6 or matriculation, within their chosen field. However, students with poor and average results have a choice of going into the job market, or applying for vocational institutions according to their choice and field or interest.

### **2.3.4 STPM – Malaysian Higher School Certificate**

The STPM, previously known as the Higher School Certificate (HSC), is a pre-university examination conducted at the end of Form 6. This examination is one of the two major pre-university systems to enable students to enroll in Malaysian public universities (another one is the matriculation programme which is chosen by many *Bumiputra* students). STPM is recognised internationally by many universities which include universities within the Commonwealth of Nations, the United States and the Republic of Ireland.

This examination is an open-list examination which means a combination of subjects may be taken but no more than 5 subjects are allowed. Science– and Mathematics– related subjects are offered bilingually (English and Bahasa Malaysia) which is then conducted only in English starting from 2007. The Cumulative Grade Point (CGPA) system is used with 11 grades (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D and F for fail) and the grade points are between 4.0 (A) and 1.0 (D-). The results which were obtained from the STPM examination determine students' admission into tertiary education and choose their fields of interest.

All the national examinations are prepared and examined by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate, except STPM which is fully controlled by the Malaysian Examinations Council. The list of mandatory subjects for each national examination indicates that certain subjects are given an emphasis which requires students to master targeted levels of performance by the end of their schooling. Among the subjects emphasised are Bahasa Malaysia, English language, Mathematics and

Science. The next section will focus on the English language national examination system.

### **2.3.5 English national examination system**

English, as a compulsory subject, is assessed at all levels of national examinations. Nonetheless the percentages vary according to each language skill with the emphasis given to reading and writing skills rather than listening and speaking skills. Other elements which are included in the national examinations are grammar and literature components.

As mentioned in the previous section, there are four national examinations in the Malaysian examination system: UPSR, PMR, SPM and STPM. Each examination has its own English paper, however, in STPM instead of including English as one of the subjects assessed, students need to sit for a special English examination, MUET (Malaysian University English Test), to enable them to enter pre-university programme. All the language skills and other elements related to English such as grammar, vocabulary and form and function, are assessed at all levels of the national examinations. However, the allocation of percentages and marks awarded for each language skill are not equally weighted. The stronger emphasis in assessment is on two language skills: reading and writing. Listening is only assessed at the highest level, the MUET examination. Speaking skills are also not prioritised as the distribution of marks and percentages awarded in the national examinations shows.

As for UPSR (see Appendix 6.1), speaking and listening skills are not assessed at all; only writing and reading skills are assessed. Assessing students' speaking skills are only included in the PMR examination, however, only 10% of the 100% is allocated (see Appendix 6.1). Though speaking and listening skills are assessed in the MUET examination, the percentages allocated for both skills (15% for each skill) are lower compared to the percentages allocated to reading (40%) and writing skills (30%) (see Appendix 6.2). Only 40% is allocated for speaking in SPM examination which is evidence that speaking skill is still given less emphasis in the Malaysian examination system (see Appendix 6.2). From the uneven allocation of percentages assessments at all levels of national examinations, it could be anticipated that the prominence of the speaking skills are not emphasised in the teaching and learning of English language at all levels of education.

Having a number of national examinations upon completion of certain levels of education seems to indicate that the education system in Malaysia is very examination-oriented (Lewey, 1977; Normah, 2009). There is also great importance placed on examination results as they determine students' admission into the elite secondary schools and into higher education. The uneven levels of emphasis on skills assessed in all the national examinations might well affect the focus of the English language teaching and learning at all levels of education. Teachers might tend to focus their teaching on reading and writing skills, rather than speaking and listening skills. Focusing lessons on reading and writing would reflect the fact that these skills are clearly emphasised in all the national examinations and these results will determine a student's future – either progress into the chosen secondary school or admission into the Malaysian public universities.



The discussion presented on the contextual background touches on the education aspects practiced in Malaysia which has an impact on the teaching and learning at all levels of education. Having an education system which is very much examination-oriented, it reflects the tradition that affects the teaching and learning in classroom, particularly English. Classroom teaching tends to be teacher-centred with teachers having the authority in their teaching; students are left with less opportunity for classroom interaction. Teacher-centred lessons also affect the nature underlying the discourse in teaching of English generally and the way students' errors are corrected particularly.

The education system in Malaysia is practiced nationally and it focuses more on examination; to some extent, it has a big impact on the ways lessons are taught in the classrooms particularly English lessons. Teachers generally have the tendency to teach what are assessed than what are stated in the curriculum; students' needs are often overlooked. Therefore, lessons have become more exam-oriented and teacher-centred instead of communicative (as stated in the curriculum) and student-centred.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Several aspects of education system practiced in Malaysia are presented in this chapter beginning with a discussion on some important aspects of the education system practiced in Malaysia by detailing the two education levels: primary and secondary school. Since this study examines the teaching and learning of English at secondary school level, the curriculum and syllabus designed for this particular subject and level are emphasised in this chapter. The examination system, which has

an impact on the teaching and learning in Malaysia, is also discussed emphasising on the English paper in all the examinations.

Apart from providing information on the education system practiced in Malaysia, an understanding of some literature related to error correction is also important. The next chapter will discuss some aspects of error correction. The theory which acts as a basis of this study is presented by introducing the model used in the analysis of the data collected. Additionally, the findings of related studies are discussed including different contexts which might influence the use of CF among teachers.

## CHAPTER 3. Literature Review

### 3.1 Introduction

A literature review is simply an abstract of ideas and thoughts based on another reference material. It is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge on a particular topic. However, literature review for a thesis is more than just reviewing an abstract of ideas and thoughts; it is a complex task involving critical comments, analysis, synthesis and evaluation of principles which are of direct relevance to the areas researched. Pertaining to this study, the researcher has conducted a comprehensive study of what have been done and written by other researchers in the teaching and learning of ESL, EFL and L2, in particular, in the area of error correction. From the literature identified in relation to error correction, some themes emerged; some were interrelated while others were dominant. Considerable thoughts were given to these emerging themes, as a result, a number of themes were identified as these themes provided important information for subsequent parts of this research investigation. Some of the dominant themes are errors, learner uptake, corrective feedback, corrective feedback and contexts and the role of corrective feedback and will be discussed further in this chapter.

This chapter consists of two aspects of literature on error correction. Firstly, brief explanations including several definitions and categories of error are presented. Discussion on the significance of error from some studies which is then continues with more information on correction as well as some early studies which relate to error correction are presented in the next sections. This discussion then followed by an explanation on learner uptake including the definition and types of learner uptake.

Secondly, a more critical review of the literature on CF is presented including the theory and model of CF which were used as the basis for this study. This is further expanded by including aspects of CF pertaining to teachers' preferences, influential factors and learner errors. A more thorough discussion on errors generally, and how they are affected by different contexts is detailed in the next section on *Errors and Context*. In this section the choice of oral CF used by teachers which are influenced by certain contexts are also examined by reviewing a number of studies. Finally, this chapter on literature review ends with an overview of the role of oral CF in the second and foreign language learning and teaching by discussing the empirical studies in relation to error correction.

### **3.2 Errors**

In a learning process, especially in learning second and foreign languages, occurrences of errors are seen as an inevitable phenomenon. "Like sin, error is to be avoided and its influence overcome, but its presence is to be expected" (Brooks, 1960 as cited in Hendrickson, 1978, p. 387). The comparison of the relationship between error and learning to sin and virtue indicates that in any circumstance, avoiding making errors is almost impossible. However, in learning a language, making errors among students is perceived differently by many educators in which students should be allowed to make errors and the errors made should be accepted.

The argument which is put forward by the educators is that making errors among students should be seen as part of learning a language; people make mistakes and that they learn from the mistakes they made. In the context of learning a language, actual learning takes place when students make mistakes and the mistakes

are corrected; making errors signifies actual learning is taking place. The learning process through error making is more significant especially after receiving some periodic and useful feedback from teachers. As supported by Hendrickson, “Errors are signals that actual learning is taking place, they can indicate students’ progress and success in language learning” (Hendrickson, 1978, p. 388).

Because of the inevitable phenomenon of committing errors in the learning process and the influence it has on the learning outcome, some related issues about errors are examined by many language educators and researchers in their studies. Some of the issues which were investigated and discussed in their studies including whether errors need to be corrected, when would errors be corrected, which errors should be corrected, how would errors be corrected and who should correct learners’ errors. Before any further discussion on the issues is put forward, some important aspects of errors will be presented in the next sub-sections.

### **3.2.1 Definition of errors**

Errors in speaking are very common among language learners, it is worth stating that in fact, even native speakers of their own language made errors in their utterances. However, the errors made by the native speakers are different from the errors made by L2 learners in which the former is known as performance errors. These performance errors as explained by Corder (1981, p. 18) includes “slips of the tongue, false starts, changes of mind and so on”. Brown and Yule (1983) have addressed this claim by identifying a number of aspects in the native speakers’ utterances including repetition and redundancy, vague time and place references, hesitation markers, fillers and incomplete sentences.

In the 1970s when communicative language teaching was introduced, errors were defined broadly rather than just referring to errors of native speakers of the target language. Hendrickson (1978) regarded errors in L2 acquisition as “an utterance, form, or structure that a particular language teacher deems unacceptable because of its inappropriate use or its absence in real life discourse” (p. 387). Apparently, in mid of 1980s, errors were redefined by Richards, Platt, Weber, & Inman (1986) in a dictionary as they described errors as “the use of a linguistic item in a way, which, according to fluent users of the language indicates faulty or incomplete learning of the target language”.

Mistake, is another word which is always associated with error. However there is a distinct difference between both words. From what have been discussed earlier on the definitions of error from various researchers, it can be summarised that an 'error' is a deviation from accuracy or correctness. A 'mistake', on the other hand, is an error caused by a fault: the fault being misjudgement, carelessness, or forgetfulness.

Based on the meaning of errors presented earlier, it is evident that there are several definitions of errors proposed by researchers and educators alike. However, in this study, it has adopted the recent definition of errors which was put forward by Lyster and Ranta (1997) based on their study on French immersion classrooms. They defined errors as “non-native-like users of French” (as the target language), either the errors made received any response from the teacher or not. Therefore, it is worth noting that in this study, counting errors made by the students in the data analysis procedure does not concern with counting “absolute numbers of errors produced by students but rather the number of student turns containing at least one error or use of the L1” (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 51). Instead of using “non-native-

like uses of French”, this study used “non-native-like uses of English” as the target language in which each student turn containing at least one error was counted.

### **3.2.2 Categories of errors**

Different definitions of errors explained earlier have resulted in errors being categorised broadly by researchers in the learning and teaching of a second or foreign language. Chaudron (1977, p. 32) proposed three categories of errors: firstly, *linguistic error* which consists of phonological, morphological, and syntactic errors, secondly, *content error* which refers to errors on fact or knowledge, and finally, *classroom interaction and discourse errors* including speaking in incomplete sentences. The third category also complements one of the aspects produced by native speakers of their own language in which the occurrence of incomplete sentences is normal (Brown & Yule, 1983).

On the contrary, Lyster and Ranta (1997) only focused errors performed by learners in the linguistic category. Though they categorised errors only into one category, several aspects of linguistics are included such as the use of L1, gender, grammatical (to include morphology and syntax together), lexical, phonological and multiple errors. Similarly, this categorization was used in the present study to identify error types in analysing the data collected.

### **3.2.3 The significance of error**

The significance of error is in contrast with the two positions in the last few decades. The first position is more orthodox in which behaviourist psychology is taken as the basis; the desired behaviour is developed through drilling and practice.

In the 1950s and 1960s, this position is represented by audiolingualism in relation to language teaching and learning and the position lies in the notion that *practice* (of correct forms) *makes perfect*; any wrong forms of reinforcement should be avoided, thus it leads to fossilization. The second position which emerged by late 1960s carried a more positive evaluation of error. This position was based on new understandings from transformational-generative grammar, first language acquisition, and “especially cognitive psychology” (Hendrickson, 1978, p. 388). Learning in this position, is perceived to be more humanistic in nature.

Pertaining to the L2 learner, learning a language is not only a question of acquiring a set of automatic habits, but also going through a process of discovering the underlying rules, categories and systems of choice in the language; the learner processes the language data which is presented to him by the teacher (Corder, 1973). To allow the discovery process, there are several factors involved; one of the most important factors is error making in which it is unavoidable yet needed and crucial for language learning (Dulay & Burt, 1974). Making error among learners further shows the sign that the development and internalization of the rules of the language are taking place (Zhu, 2010). The significant contribution of errors in the process of language acquisition is supported by Corder (1967) as he regarded errors as:

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

Making errors among learners might not be a direct measure of their knowledge of the language, but it could be the most important source of information



for teachers to evaluate the nature of the learners' knowledge. By analysing the learners' errors, teachers could identify how much they have learned and at the same time discover what need to be learned. Based on this notion, it is evident that learner error is significant to teachers thus informed teachers of several aspects: whether a systematic analysis was undertaken, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed, and what remains for the learner to learn (Corder, 1981). As highlighted by Corder (1967), errors are also significant for learners themselves as they could use this as a mean to test their hypotheses about the nature of the target language they are learning.

Apart from this, errors also provide feedback to teachers on the effectiveness of their teaching materials and their teaching techniques. Through the feedback provided, it enables teachers to decide whether they can proceed to the next item they are currently teaching, thus provides the information for teachers to design an improved syllabus or a plan of improved teaching. Furthermore the information provided by errors helps teachers in several aspects in their teaching: they can modify their teaching procedures or materials, the pace of the teaching progress, and the amount of practice that they need (Zhu, 2010). Based on this notion, a claim was made by Corder (1981) in which teachers should be able not only to detect and describe errors linguistically but also to understand the psychological reasons for their occurrence. The awareness of the diagnosis and correction skills for errors among teachers is essential as it might help them understand why and how they can interfere to help their students in their learning process (Corder, 1981).

### **3.2.4 Error analysis**

Apart from the significance of error, error analysis is another aspect which teachers need to be aware of in helping teachers to infer what the nature of learners' knowledge is at that point of time in their learning stages and what more needs to be learnt. At the same time, the knowledge of error analysis could also avoid teachers from interfering too much in learner learning process. Error analysis involves three successive stages: recognition of errors, description of errors and explanation of errors.

At the recognition of error stage, as Corder (1973) mentions, it depends importantly upon correct interpretation of learners' intentions. In order for a teacher to know a learner intention in an utterance, an explanation by the learner in his mother tongue on what he wanted to say could be helpful. Once the teacher understands the intention of the utterance, the teacher could study the surface structure of the text-sentence in conjunction with the information derived from its context. Then the utterances are reconstructed to convey what the learner could possibly have intended to mean. Once the recognition has taken place, the next stage, description of errors begins.

Description of errors, as the second stage, involves explaining errors linguistically and psychologically in order to help the learner to learn (Corder, 1973).

At this stage, teachers identify errors which are repeatedly occurred as this helps teachers to observe the rule that the learner may be using and try to describe it. At this stage also, systematic errors are taken into consideration. However, as

claimed by Corder (1973), identifying systematic errors is a difficult task because individual learners may be highly inconsistent in their errors. He further agrees that inconsistency is more characteristic of errors than systematicity. Once teachers are able to describe properly, explanation of errors, the third stage, can begin.

At the final stage, explanation of error, knowledge of psychological and neurological process involved in language learning is important as this knowledge helps teachers to provide accurate explanation to the identified errors. This is because the same error could be explained from various points of view. For example, a learner's mother tongue has only one way of referring to future time while the target language has three ways of referring to the same. Here, the learner has problems and commits errors. In this case it is difficult to decide whether the error was caused by mother tongue interference or because of the confusion of the rules of the target language. Therefore, having knowledge other than knowledge of language learning is an advantage for teachers at the explanation stage of error analysis.

### **3.2.5 Definition of correction**

Instead of defining what error is, Chaudron (1977) divided errors into four conceptions in which the location of error is treated as the first step. Correction, in the first conception, refers to “only those treatments which, after correction of a given item, succeeded in establishing the learner consistent correct performance, and hid autonomous ability to correct himself on the item” (Chaudron, 1977, p. 31). This conception is found to be an extreme view of what Schegloff et al. (1977) call “other-initiated and self-repair”. Chaudron, however highlights that it is “obviously nearly impossible” to find in a given period instruction.

In the second conception, correction exists when “the teacher is able to elicit a corrected response from the committer of the error or from one or more of his classmates”. This conception therefore matches with two of the types, which was defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as learner uptake. In this situation, uptake refers to immediate repair of a learner error in which the error is pointed out to him by the teacher or by another learner.

Additionally, correction in the third conception “simply includes any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance”. In this conception, teacher behaviour is the central focus rather than the learner response towards this behaviour. Chaudron (1977) has further pointed out that both *explicit* and *implicit* corrections are those of teacher reactions.

In the final conception, correction is seen as positive or negative reinforcement and this is dismissed by Chaudron (1977) in which he has described correction as “very narrow and excluding”. This conception has matched with the teacher behaviour in audiolingual/behaviourist language classroom. Apparently in the current study, the definition of CF used matches the second and third conceptions of correction by Chaudron (1977). The model of error treatment sequence, which is developed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and used in this study further explained this match (see Section 3.4.2).

### **3.3 Learner Uptake**

Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977), who are conversation analysts, had first used the term repair in describing activity which involves correction in an informal discourse of native speakers. The structure of conversation activity was analysed and was based on their concept of adjacency pairs of utterances. In the analysis, the structure of conversation pattern was identified: first utterance, or turn by learners, is then followed by a response, or second turn. This pattern was further elaborated by Levinson (1983):

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

Conversation analysis has referred to repair as a device for “the correction of misunderstandings, mishearing or indeed non-hearings” (Levinson, 1983, p. 340). From this, generally, the relationship of speakers is assumed to be an equal one in terms of status. While an equal status relationship of speakers is evident in the statement, three approaches detailed by Schachter (1991) are in contrast in which they assume “a novice-expert relationship between the student, child or subject, and the teachers, parent of experimenter”. Therefore, it is obvious that repair is referred to as a dispreferred and marked category of response and is triggered by trouble or communication difficulty caused by the utterance of one speaker.

Schegloff et al. (1977) also categorized repair into four types which are then adopted by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and incorporated in their proposal of the error

treatment sequence model as a result of their study on CF. The four types of repair including (i) self-initiated and self-repair, (ii) other-initiated and self-repair, (iii) self-initiated and other-repair, and (iv) other-initiated and other-repair.

Other than Schegloff et al. (1977), van Lier (1988) has further expanded the meaning of repair which was defined earlier by Levinson (1983). He further explained that:

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

van Lier (1988) has distinguished the general term *repair* from the specific instance *correction* following Schegloff et al. (1977); repair is defined briefly as “treatment of trouble occurring in interactive language use” (van Lier, 1988, p. 183). He highlights that in NS-NNS conversation, the speaker is given the opportunity by the listeners to do something on errors they made either error on fact, or of reasoning, or of language. In this way, direct correction is avoided and self-repair by the speakers are anticipated. Pertaining to studies on NS-NNS conversation, Faerch and Kasper (1983) conducted another study which examined NS-NNS conversation; the term repair was applied and the results highlighted that the relationship between NS and NNS is unequal. The investigation was conducted on the repair behaviour of the learners themselves and their NS interlocutor and the result suggested that this was influenced by the learners’ proficiency level. Instead of aiming to show repair as one of the conversation structure, Faerch and Kasper (1983) provided an explanation on the existence of repair; the motivation for repair was to save face.

The relationship between learners and teachers is assumed as unequal even in the second and foreign language classroom. This is because the learners are by definition not yet fully proficient in the L2 and have a novice relationship to the expert, the teacher. To further explain this relationship, two distinctive points of classroom talk are highlighted by van Lier (1988): its orientation is pedagogical, and it happens among members of the classroom community in which this community “has its own rules as to what is appropriate and what constitutes face threat” (van Lier, 1988, p. 184). Additionally, roles in classrooms “are clearly defined, and it is the learner who has the trouble, and the teacher who resolves it” (van Lier, 1988, p. 186). However, all talk in the classroom is not defined as being quite different in nature from informal discourse as he stated “we cannot exclude from consideration the things that native speakers do in conversation, since they too may occur in the L2 classroom” (van Lier, 1988, p. 187).

In recent years, instead of using *repair* as to refer to activity which involves correction in an informal discourse of native speakers, the term *learner uptake* was introduced (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) and has been examined extensively by researchers in second and foreign language learning (Carroll & Swain, 1993; Lyster, 1998). As a result, learner uptake is defined in two different ways. According to Slimani (1992, p. 197), uptake is defined as “what learners claim to have learned from a particular lesson”, whereas Lyster and Ranta (1997) hold a different view of learner uptake; learner uptake is referred to learners’ response to teacher’s CF on the error they made. They further explained that learner uptake as “a student’s utterance that immediately follows the teacher’s feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some

way to teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 49).

Uptake covers wide range of learner responses to feedback, ranging from learners' simple acknowledgements of the feedback (e.g. "Ok", "I see") to corrective reformulations of their errors (Egi, 2010). Lyster and Ranta (1997) have suggested two ways of identifying uptake. The first way is that when students demonstrate their understanding of the linguistic forms by correcting the errors made, uptake is considered successful. In contrast, when students fail to demonstrate their understanding by not correcting the linguistic forms corrected, uptake is considered unsuccessful. From this evidence, it is apparent that the use of CF is not always followed by successful students' repair or learner uptake on the correction made by teachers. Some students may follow up the CF used with uptake whereas some students will just acknowledge the correction made.

The term *successful uptake* and *unsuccessful uptake* are introduced by Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen, (2001) who have further developed his study based on Lyster and Ranta (1997) research. While the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) focused only on learner uptake in response to feedback, Ellis et al. included others aspects of uptake. The two aspects of uptake included in his study were learner response to reactive feedback and also the move of focus on form, in which the focus of an interaction divert to form through students' questions about language in the absence of errors. Learner uptake is also divided into two types: (i) uptake that results in "repair" and (ii) uptake that results in "needs repair". These two types are further explained in the next sub-section.



In the present study, the term learner uptake as employed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) was used as the basis. Moreover the definition of learner uptake by Lyster and Ranta (1997) was also used in defining the learner uptake term used in the present study.

### **3.3.1 Types of learner uptake**

As mentioned before, uptake is divided into two categories: repair or need-repair, according to whether learners correctly reformulated their original errors in response to feedback. The first type is repair which is the result of successful uptake and referred to “the correct reformulation of an error as uttered in a single turn and not to the sequence of turns resulting in the correct reformulation; not does it refer to self-initiated repair” (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 49). Whereas needs repair is referred to unsuccessful uptake, i.e. referring to uptake that results in an utterance that is still in need of repair (Ellis et al., 2001; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Based on studies conducted to investigate the occurrence of learner uptake, it is detectable that learners’ uptake or students’ immediate responses follow almost all CF used by teachers in classrooms. In a study conducted by Lyster & Ranta (1997), repair is further divided into four types:

- repetition of correct form: students repeat the correct form provided by teachers,
- incorporation of repetition: students repeat the correct form provided by teachers in which this repetition is then incorporated into longer utterances,
- self-repair error: students self-correct their own error after the indication of the errors by teachers, and
- peer-repair error: the correction of errors by students’ peers.

In a study by Mackey (2006), the term *modified output* is used as to refer to successful repair (Ellis et al., 2001) and repair (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Based on the study, modified output generally requires the learner to modify a problematic form which invited feedback and that uptake and modified output may occur overtly (i.e. could be heard by others) or covertly (e.g., whispering to oneself).

Apart from dividing repair into four categories, Lyster and Ranta (1997) have also categorized needs repair into five categories:

- repetition of the same error: the repetition of the same errors although they are corrected before,
- different errors: students neither repeat the correct form provided by teachers nor repeat the initial error; instead perform a different error,
- partial correction: partial repetition of the correction made on the initial error,
- hesitation: a condition which students hesitate to respond to teachers' correction of the error made, and
- acknowledgement: students just say 'Yes' to acknowledge the correction made by teachers on their error.

In the teaching and learning of the target language, noticing learner successful uptake or unsuccessful uptake is very important. This is important for teachers to enable them to identify learner understanding on the linguistic forms corrected and to further improve their pedagogical aspects in making the teaching and learning of the target language more effective.

Apart from noticing learners successful uptake and unsuccessful uptake as a mean to identify learners understanding on the linguistic forms learned, it is also important for teachers to be aware of learner affective filter. This awareness is crucial as there are a

number of affective variables which play a facilitative but non-casual role in learner language acquisition. These variables include: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety (Krashen, 1985). All the variables mentioned are related to each other closely, as Krashen (1985) mentions, learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are more likely to be successful in second language acquisition. On the other hand learners with low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety are more likely to be less successful in language acquisition as this condition, if combined can 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that impedes language acquisition.

### **3.4 Corrective Feedback**

The effectiveness of CF which is the central focus of many studies has influenced many ESL instructors. Giving feedback, according to Kim and Mathes (2001), has the goal of helping the learners recognize a problem with their production, resulting in the correct form being used following feedback provided. Furthermore through CF within communicative L2 programmes, it can also help students to improve their particular grammatical problem (Spada & Lightbown, 1999). This apparent evidence was discovered in some of the studies which were conducted focusing on the learning of a second or a foreign language (Day & Shapson, 1991; Harley, 1989; White, 1991). In these studies, CF was shown to be effective when groups of learners who received feedback outperformed groups of learners who received no feedback. Apparently, these findings indicated that feedback by teachers is important in helping learners to identify their erroneous utterances thus producing better error-free utterances during interaction.

Although giving feedback on students' erroneous utterances has proven to be effective, the issue on which form of feedback should be used has been a point of argument in ESL teaching in recent years. For instance, feedback provided to students in an ESL classroom setting is usually expected to be explicit feedback in the form of meta-linguistic correction. Conversely, they can also receive implicit feedback which is normally given in the form of recasts (Kim & Mathes, 2001). Between these two types of feedback, explicit feedback seems to be more beneficial than implicit feedback; nonetheless drawbacks are impossible (Carroll & Swain, 1993). The drawbacks lie on students' part whereby students must understand the language used in explicit correction to enable them to correct the errors made. This understanding is crucial because explicit correction relies on meta-linguistic information; students who do not have the specialized vocabulary and knowledge of grammar may not be able to benefit from this feedback (Carroll & Swain, 1993). Unlike explicit feedback, implicit feedback does not require high understanding of a language; unless it is used to target the source, it will not help eliminate the errors (Pinker, 1989).

Since the use of CF by teachers involves in these two categories: implicit and explicit feedback, the present study had also included this aspect to investigate their existence. A two-week classroom observation session was conducted to collect the data focusing on the types of CF preferred by the teachers. Nonetheless the issue on which specific types of CF should be used by teachers were not explored as this study focused only on investigating the nature of how CF is used in the context in which this study was conducted.

### **3.4.1 Theory of corrective feedback**

Pertaining to theories that relate to CF, there are two bodies of research found to have the interest in correction and repair as components of instructional practice in language classrooms: the interaction hypothesis and the discourse analytic studies. The interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996), as its name suggested, emphasizes the interaction between teachers and learners in which negotiated interaction between learners and teachers facilitates learner' target language acquisition. In this negotiated interaction, teachers help learners to draw their attention to gaps in their knowledge of linguistic forms. Teachers as native speakers or more proficient users of the target language create the interactional work among learners to draw the learners' attention to mismatch between linguistic forms they know and those they do not know. At this stage, in the interaction, according to this hypothesis, the focus of the negotiation involves does not concern the meaning of what is being talked about or the meaning of the activity itself because such meaning "is already evident to the learner" (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 4). The concern of the negotiation in the interaction is more on "the linguistic apparatus needed to get the meaning across" (Doughty & Williams, 1998, p. 4).

The theoretical roots in which the interaction hypothesis was applied has created great interests of studies focusing on the instructional nature of negotiated interaction itself. The particular interest among researchers is on CF – the means or devices used by teachers as native speakers or more proficient users of a target language to direct learners' attention to errors in their production of the target language. The assumption of these studies rely greatly on the notion that providing

CF to learners on their non-target-like use of the target language facilitates their language acquisition because it helps learners to “connect[s] input, internal learner capacities, particular selective attention, and output in productive ways” (Long, 1996, p. 452).

Unlike interaction hypothesis that emphasizes on students’ learning which is facilitated by the negotiated interaction between teachers and learners, the analytic discourse studies emphasize on the natural occurrences of interaction in first-language classroom (Edwards & Westgate, 1994; Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Tharp & Gallimore, 1991; Wells, 1999). The basic principle underpins the analytic discourse studies is that classroom interaction is a primary means by which learning is accomplished in classrooms (Kim & Mathes, 2001). Based on this principle, findings of the studies on classroom interaction discovered a pattern of interaction between teachers and learners. Teacher-student interaction, as discovered by the analytic discourse studies, involves mainly of a specialized teacher-led sequence of three actions: a teacher-initiated known-answer question, a student response to that question, and teacher feedback on the sufficiency or correctness of the response; this pattern is also known as initiate-response-feedback, or IRF. The central task of the IRF is instructional. When teachers elicit student’s responses by posing known-answer questions, students’ understanding of the material and how well the understanding is are determined. In IRF pattern, students feedback or response is crucial because by evaluating this feedback, it helps teachers to determine whether learning has taken place, and if it is necessary, teachers provide knowledge which is seen to be inaccurate or insufficient (Hall, 2007). In order for teachers to get feedback or response from learners, there are several ways that

teachers could apply in the classrooms. Among them are to ask for more information or to clarify meanings, to request for an expansion or a justification of a response, and to give the sequence “specifically instructional tenor” (Heritage, 2004, p. 125).

A number of studies on classroom interaction particularly on L2 and FL (e.g. Haneda, 2004; Mondada & Pekarek, 2004; Poole, 1992; Richards, 2006) have confirmed the power of this specialized sequence of instruction in language classroom interaction as an “instrument of pedagogic purpose and teacher control” (Richards, 2006, p. 54). Based on the studies, a more thorough description of teacher-student interaction is provided involving particular sequences. The sequence starts with a teacher posing a question or giving directive to a student. Then the student is expected to provide brief but correct response in the target language in which some kind of evaluative feedback is provided following the response. If the response from the student is determined to be insufficient or inaccurate in any way, the teacher gives feedback in one or more form as mentioned earlier. The teacher has the choice to give the feedback whether in a form of repetition to the response given, it can prompt, it can ask for clarification or expansion and so on.

From the studies discussed earlier, they demonstrate that CF not only helps teachers to determine students’ understanding of what is taught, it also facilitates students to improve the learning of the target language. Despite the positive benefits offered by CF, limited use of CF among ESL teachers in the context of the present study is still evident. This study is therefore conducted to explore the reasons behind the limited use of oral CF which could add to literature of ESL context particularly in Asia.

### 3.4.2 Model of corrective feedback

Based on experimental and observational studies on second and foreign language teaching and learning conducted in previous years, the need for a standard model of CF in language classrooms has begun. This need has resulted in a number of models proposed by researchers with the goal to describe the process of CF in language classrooms. While a number of CF models were suggested by researchers, the section that follows next will only discuss *Error treatment sequence*. This model which was based on Chaudron's model (1977), was simplified by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and form the basis of the study.

The model (see Appendix 4) is a simplified version of Chaudron's *Flow Chart Model of Corrective Discourse* (1977) and was proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in their study on French immersion language classroom. From this study, a simpler model of the process of CF happening in language classroom is developed and is named *Error treatment sequence*. In this simplified version of CF process, certain categories are integrated as mentioned by Lyster and Ranta that "certain categories from the COLT Part B coding scheme (Spada & Frohlich, 1995) with certain categories from Doughty's (Doughty, 1994) analysis of fine-tuning feedback" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 44).

The process of CF in language classrooms begins at Stage 1 which is identified as *learner error* and is non-target like. In this model of *Error Treatment Sequence*, *form* (linguistic error) is the main focus instead of *meaning* (content or interaction errors). The next stage, Stage 2, follows the process and is identified as *teacher feedback*. Based on this model, six categories of feedback are identified: explicit



correction, recast, clarification request, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. The explanation of each category is seen in Table 3.1 (see section 3.4.4). Stage 3 follows the feedback given and known as learner uptake, an immediate response of students on teachers' feedback. However, learner uptake does not have to be necessarily immediate (Gass & Mackey, 1998). Either uptake or no uptake received from the feedback, the topic of the lesson continues (Stage 4a). Then Stage 4b follows if teachers feel reinforcement is needed before the topic of the lesson continues. Lyster and Ranta (1997) in their study have used speech act theory and defined uptake in their model as:

students' utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance (this overall intention is clear to the student although the teacher's specific linguistic focus may not be). A description of uptake, then, reveals what the student attempts to do with the teacher's feedback (p. 49).

Based on this model, learner uptake is divided into two: repaired and need repair as explained in the previous sub-section on types of learner uptake. The details presented on the *Error treatment sequence* served as the framework in analysing the qualitative data collected on CF in the current study conducted.

### **3.4.3 Definition of corrective feedback**

Before this chapter discusses more thoroughly on a number of aspects related to the field of oral CF, some definitions of CF are presented to generate more understanding of CF. There are a number of definitions of CF or known as CF (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) in the literature of error correction. CF refers to responses by teachers on their students' errors, both oral and written. Schachter (1991) has defined CF as teachers' utterances that identify learners' errors and which feedback

is provided in response to the error. While Schachter (1991) has defined oral CF as ‘teachers’ utterances’, Lyster & Ranta (1997) have defined oral CF as the ‘strategies’ teachers use to correct students’ errors in their spoken language and divided CF into two major categories: implicit feedback and explicit feedback. A more inclusive definition of CF is offered by Ellis et al. (2006):

CF takes the form of teachers’ responses to learner utterances that contain an error. The responses can consist of (a) an indication that an error has been committed, (b) provision of the correct target language form, or (c) meta-linguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these (p. 340).

Instead of using the term CF, Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen, (2001) used the term ‘Treatment’ as to refer to CF and divided treatment into two categories:

- ‘direct treatment’: an explicit attempt by teachers to deal with spoken errors including provide (explicit information in the form of definition, example, explanation) and prompt (clues designed to help students to correct the erroneous utterances), and
- ‘indirect treatment’: various implicit responses by teachers to the spoken errors including recast, requests clarification, repeat and elicit solution.

Teachers’ correction of students’ errors as defined by researchers does not vary much, though different terms are used such as ‘Treatment’ (Ellis et al., 2001) and ‘corrective feedback’. The definitions still stress the aspect in which teachers play the main role to initiate the improvement on students’ utterances. In relation to this study, the definition by Lyster and Ranta (1997) is adopted.

### 3.4.4 Types of corrective feedback

Lyster and Ranta (1997) in their study to explore focus-on-form instruction in content-based context of French immersion classrooms, have identified different types of oral CF. Based on the findings of the study, eight types of oral CF were identified: explicit correction, recast, clarification requests, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. Among these types, they are categorized according to whether they are explicit or implicit in nature. Explicit feedback involves an overt indicator that an error has been committed; whereas in implicit feedback types, there is no overt indicator that an error has been committed (Ellis et al., 2006). Normally, implicit feedback takes a form of recast. Explicit feedback, on the other hand, can be divided in two forms: explicit feedback and meta-linguistic feedback. According to Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006), explicit feedback refers to a teacher's response clearly indicating that what a learner said is wrong and hence takes both positive and negative evidence. The interaction below illustrates an example of explicit feedback:

S: "I *doed* my homework yesterday afternoon."

T: "No, not *doed* – did."

In this study, the types of oral CF as listed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) are used as the base to design the questionnaire (Section B: for teacher participants) and the classroom observation checklist. To further demonstrate the understanding of the types of oral CF, the definitions of each type of CF as well as examples are provided in Table 3.1.

From the seven types of CF listed in Figure 3.1, recasts have received the most attention among researchers compared to other types of feedback (Ammar & Spada,

2006; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001). Sheen (2004) has conducted a study to further understand recast and the findings suggested two types of recasts: (i) multi-move recasts (entailing more than one teacher feedback move containing at least a single recast in a single teacher turn) and (ii) single-move recasts (entailing only one recast move in a single teacher turn). In 2006, Carpenter, Jeon, MacGregor and Mackey (2006) have followed up Sheen's study on recasts. While Sheen (2004) divides recast into two types, they have divided recasts into six categories. The categories are divided according to the types of errors which are corrected by teachers:

- phonological recasts: feedback by teachers on pronunciation error,
- lexical recasts: feedback on learners' vocabulary errors,
- morphosyntactic recasts: feedback on grammatical errors,
- corrective recasts: preceded by repetition from students on the correction made,
- repeated recasts: teacher repeats the errors either fully or partially, and
- combination recasts: occur with other types of CF: meta-linguistic information, except explicit correction.

Lyster (1998) has also conducted a study to examine the occurrence of recasts in French immersion classroom. The findings suggested four types of recast in which they differ in forms and function:

- isolated declarative recast (reformulation of the learner erroneous utterances with falling intonation),

- isolated interrogative recasts (reformulation of the erroneous utterances with rising intonation),
- incorporated declarative recasts (reformulation that included additional information with falling intonation), and
- incorporated interrogative recasts (reformulation that included additional information with rising intonation).

Table 3.1. *Oral corrective feedback (adapted from Hall, 2007, p. 516)*

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Explicit correction: teacher provides the correct form

S: Put in my box.

→T: You're missing

Clarification request: teacher asks for more or more clearly stated information

T: How long have you been here?

S: Ten

→T: Ten what?

S: Ten weeks.

Repetition: teacher repeats student's utterance with the error and usually with rising intonation

S: He have the book.

→T: He have the book?

Prompt: teacher repeats part of an utterances, leaving student to fill in the rest with the correct form

S: They has the book.

→T: They .....?

Recast: teacher restates all or part of a student's utterance but using the correct form

S: My brother go home last night.

→T: Your brother went home last night?

Meta-linguistic feedback: teacher provides information on the form needed but without providing the correct form to the student

S: My sister go home last week.

→T: What is the past tense of go?

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In the teaching and learning of the target language, not all types of CF are used by teachers in correcting errors made by students. Some types of CF such as recast or explicit correction are chosen over other types of CF by teachers to correct students' errors. The sub-section which follows next will entail the types of CF preferred by teachers based on several studies conducted.

### **3.4.5 Corrective feedback and teachers' preferences**

As mentioned above, some types of CF are preferred by teachers in the teaching and learning of the target language. This preference is due to the fact that the types of CF chosen to correct students' errors might lead to students' repair on the errors corrected. The frequent types of CF used by teachers to correct students' errors will be discussed below with reference to literature related to this aspect.

Among all the seven CF types listed earlier, recast is the most frequent feedback used by teachers in their classrooms (Iwashita, 2003; Lyster, 1998; Lyster & Mori, 2006; Sheen, 2004). From the studies conducted on recasts, they revealed that teachers tend to use recasts as their dominant corrective strategy over other types of CF because teachers believe that recasts do not break the communicative flow or stop the flow of classroom interaction during lessons. Although recasts are the most popular form of feedback, student uptake of any kind is the least likely to follow recast (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Apart from being the most frequently used feedback by teachers, recasts have also received the most attention among researchers compared to other types of feedback (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Carpenter et al., 2006; Loewen & Philp, 2006;

Nicholas et al., 2001). For instance, Lyster and Ranta (1997) who conducted a study in French immersion classrooms found that recast (55%) was the most frequently used by teachers out of the six different types of feedback. This is then followed by elicitation, clarification request, meta-linguistic feedback, explicit correction and repetition of errors (5%). Apart from being the most frequently used, recast was found to be the least likely to lead to uptake – student responses to feedback. On the other hand, the study found that elicitation was the most successful type of CF which led to student uptake.

Another study by Panova and Lyster (2002) confirmed the findings of the study conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1997). They carried out a study in an adult ESL classroom and the findings revealed that recast was the most frequently used of CF. On top of that, the study also disclosed that recast led to lower rates of student uptake and repair. A more recent study conducted by Tsang (2004) has investigated three aspects of CF: (i) occurrence of CF, (ii) the relationship between CF and learner repair, and (iii) the relationship between CF and kinds of learners errors such as grammatical and phonological errors. The study was conducted in Hong Kong and involved 13 teachers and 481 secondary school students of English learners. The findings support what was found by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in which recast was frequently chosen by teachers to correct their students' errors. Apart from this, the findings from this study are also comparable with the study conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1997) in which recast led to the least repair among students. While recast was the only frequently used of CF in Lyster and Ranta's study, this study revealed that explicit correction was another type of CF frequently used by teachers, thus led to the least repair by students. The most frequent student-generated repair however,



occurred in repetition and elicitation. Other findings discovered from this study on types of repair which resulted from the CF used by the teachers were: (i) negotiation types of CF such as repetition and elicitation resulted in grammatical repairs, and (ii) recast and explicit correction used resulted in phonological repairs.

Unless recasts are used in smaller classes, uptake opportunities are more plentiful following recasts (Sheen, 2004). On top of that recasts are suitable for more advanced learners for the reason that it may pass unnoticed by less advanced learners and students might mistake them for non-corrective repetitions (Panova & Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004). Further, recasts are not necessarily the most effective type of feedback in communicatively oriented classrooms even though they are the most dominant error treatment strategy used among teachers (Lyster, 2004). It is worth noting that different feedback used by teachers to correct learners' erroneous utterances influences learners' noticing and interpretations of the feedback (Yoshida, 2010).

### **3.4.6 Corrective feedback and influential factors**

The effect of CF used in language classrooms is determined by a number of variables. Studies investigating the effects of CF in L2 learning and teaching have identified a number of variables that would help the use of CF to be effective in L2 learning among students. Two variables which need to be considered are individual differences in proficiency level and teachers and students perceptions towards CF used in language classrooms. These variables are important because the effect of feedback will be determined as a result of complex interactions between these individual variables thus influence the choice of CF used by teachers (Carroll,

Roberge, & Swain, 1992; DeKeyser, 1993; Lin & Hedgcock, 1996; Schulz, 1996; R Yoshida, 2008).

The choice of CF by teachers depends basically on several factors and one of the factors most considered by teachers is students' level of proficiency (Ammar & Spada, 2006). A study by Ammar & Spada (2006) indicates that prompts tend to be more effective for the low-proficiency students compared to other types of feedback, such as recasts. As for the high-proficiency students, prompts and recasts tend to be equally effective compared to other types of CF used by teachers. They further reveal that prompts lead to uptake or repair following the feedback used by teachers most of the time. If compared to recasts, they often do not generate or even permit for uptake or repair to take place (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

A study investigating the effect of CF in relation to learners individual differences in proficiency level was conducted by Carroll et al. (1992). The effect of CF on the learning of morphological generalizations involving native English learners of French was examined and conducted in Canada. Though the results indicated positive effect of feedback on morphological learning, the positive effect did not lead to morphological generalization because it was not powerful enough for the generalizations to happen. Concerning the proficiency level of the learners involved in this study, the findings suggested that the effect of CF was more prominent to advanced learners than to intermediate learners.

DeKeyser (1993) also conducted a study to examine the effect of CF in relation to learners' individual differences in proficiency level which focused on investigating the effect of error correction of L2 grammar and oral test on French; the

participants involved were Dutch-speaking high school students learning French as a L2. In the findings, two individual characteristics, achievement levels and anxiety, were determined to be the effect of error correction; after receiving error correction, high achievement students outperformed low achievements students on grammar tests. It is important for teachers to know students' proficiency levels because this influences the frequency of correcting students' spoken errors. As the students' level of proficiency increases, the frequency of teachers' correction decreases (Chun, Day, Chenoweth, & Luppescu, 1982).

Lin and Hedgcock (1996) conducted a similar study to investigate the effect of error correction in relation to students' proficiency level. This study concentrated on student repair as a function of learners' proficiency levels and involved participants from two groups: four high proficient university students who have extensive formal training in Spanish, and four low proficient Chinese immigrants to Spain. Interview sessions were conducted with these participants and the findings from this interview indicated remarkable differences in error recognition and error repairs between the two groups: error correction was noticed and errors were successfully repaired among the high proficient group of students while little sensitivity to error correction was indicated among the low proficient immigrants.

Apart from learners individual differences of proficiency level, the effect of error correction is also determined by teachers' and students' different perceptions of CF (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2005; Schulz, 1996; Yoshida, 2008). A number of studies investigated students' and teachers' views on error correction and one of the studies was conducted by Schulz (1996). This study focused on investigating

students' and teachers' views on error correction and the role of grammar. College students who were enrolled in German language courses in the USA participated in this study in which the findings indicated significant inconsistency between student and teacher attitudes toward error correction. An example of the inconsistency was in a statement of "error correction in speaking the TL (target language)". The finding showed that 90 percent of the students endorsed the statement, nonetheless only about 40 percent of the teachers indicated endorsement. The students' and teachers' views also showed a significant difference in a statement about "whether students disliked being corrected in class". The findings from this statement indicated that 86 percent of the students disagreed with the statement. On the contrary, only 33 percent of the teachers believed that their students want to be corrected in class. Schulz (2001) conducted another study on teachers and students at the university level and found similarity in the findings in which the view of teachers and students showed significant difference in the roles of grammar and error correction. This significant difference was clearly seen particularly in learning to speak a foreign language (Schulz, 2001).

Another study on teachers' and students' perceptions was conducted by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) which focused on the comparison of EFL teachers' and college students' perceptions about error correction. A video watching session on teaching listening comprehension was used as a medium in comparing their perceptions about error correction. Three tasks were assigned to both groups of participants after watching the video: to detect error correction moves, to classify errors, and to judge efficiency of error correction. The results from the comparison indicated that while the same classification of errors was found in both the teachers

and the students, different perceptions of effectiveness of error correction strategies existed in both groups. The findings of this study also indicated that if enough time and explanation were given while correcting students errors, the effect of error correction will be improved.

In a more recent study by Yoshida (2008), different views between students and teachers were also identified. The differences were identified between the choice of CF by teachers generally and the preference of feedback by students in the context of learning Japanese in Australia. An example of different views between teachers and students indicated that while recast was most often chosen by teachers based on several reasons such as limited class hours, more opportunity to self-correct their own errors was preferred by students before receiving correction by teachers in forms of recasts or explicit correction. Self-correction, as recommended by Kasper (1985), benefits teachers and students alike: teachers are provided with information on the learner proficiency, and students are provided a chance to maintain face. Similarly, the finding from Allwright & Bailey (1991) also suggested that self-correction could be developed among students if sufficient opportunity and time are given. This study further indicated that learner characteristics such as students' proficiency level and learning styles were taken into consideration by teachers in choosing CF in language classrooms.

How teachers' and learners' perceive CF which occurs in classroom context may be influenced by their perceptions of classroom interaction. This notion is taken up by Breen (2001) by pointing out that language classes are social situations as well as places of learning; it is noted that teachers usually correct errors based on the

learner language ability, flexibility, and emotional state. Furthermore teachers' responses to learners' participation in a class is very important because this influences learners' self-esteem in a public situation (Breen, 2001). Additionally, teachers response in a form of error corrections is understood as a mean to facilitate and develop students' proficiency (Chenoweth, Day, Chun, & Luppescu, 1983).

Karp and Yoels (1976) have addressed the influence of social pressure on learners' classroom participation by conducting a study which analysed learners' participation in American university classrooms using data collected by classroom observation and questionnaires. The results indicated that the learners and teachers avoided "any situation that might be potentially embarrassing to one or the other" (Karp & Yoels, 1976, p. 426). The results further indicated that the learners were attentive, or at any rate displayed an attentive attitude as to maintain the social relationship with the teacher. However, they avoided as much as possible too much involvement that might be potentially risky. The teacher interpreted "these 'shows' of attention as indicative of a real involvement" (Karp & Yoels, 1976, p. 436). Apparently, the findings from the study indicated that as far as possible, learners will avoid situations that may cause them social embarrassment; teachers should provide learning environment which is less threatening especially in a situation where error correction is evident.

Based on the findings presented above, investigating teachers' and students' perceptions about CF, in depth, is essential to determine the effectiveness of CF used in L2 learning and teaching. The differences in individual and groups need to be acknowledged in the effect of feedback on uptake and L2 acquisition. The

possibilities in mismatching the different perceptions between teachers and students about CF can lead to this effect (Horwitz, 2007; Kern, 1995). Besides, understanding the CF perceived by teachers and students is crucial because students' perceptions about the value and effect of each feedback actually matched with their improvement in speaking skills (Lynch & Maclean, 2003).

Other than students' proficiency levels and teachers' and students' perceptions on CF, the effect of CF is also determined by teachers' intention and students' perception. Failure to match these two aspects may lead to students not noticing the CF used by teachers. A study by Kim and Han (2007) explored the extent to which teachers' intentions and learners' interpretations overlap in the use of recast among EFL learners. Additionally, the study also investigated the extent whether the learners recognize gaps between their own errors and the information in the recasts. The findings indicated more than 50% of corrective recasts were recognized; differences between their own errors and the correct form were also noticed in more than 40% of corrective recasts. However, more than 30% of corrective recasts were not recognized. Another study conducted by Roberts (1995) examined how learners understand their teacher's CF; university Japanese-as-a-foreign-language (JFL) learners were invited. In this study a video-recording of the class was shown to three students; they were asked to point out the teacher's correction to someone in the class and to state the nature of the errors corrected. The findings indicated an average of approximately 35% of the CF was noticed and approximately 21% was understood. Based on these studies, they suggested that learners sometimes do not notice teachers CF; teachers' use of CF does not necessarily trigger learning, nor that a learner response is an indicator that learning has occurred (Yoshida, 2010). Unless

learners feel that their perceived needs are being catered to, for instance their perceptions on and interpretations of CF, positive attitude toward learning is not developed, therefore some impediments to learning will occur (Oladejo, 1993).

As discussed earlier on several influential factors that affect the use of CF in language classrooms, it is important for teachers to consider these factors in order to ensure the effectiveness of CF. Though the factors are important to determine the effectiveness of CF, this study did not investigate all the factors mentioned; only teachers' and students' perception on CF which is important in achieving maximum effect of CF on students' erroneous forms are explored. Besides, students' feelings and attitude towards error correction received from their teachers on their erroneous utterances as well as teachers' use of CF are also investigated.

### **3.4.7 Corrective feedback and learners' errors**

Lyster (1998) in a study identifies a number of errors made by students which lead to the use of CF by teachers in classrooms. Grammatical, lexical, phonological and unsolicited uses of L1 are some of the errors listed in his study. Among these errors, grammatical errors are the most frequent error performed by students. This is then followed by lexical errors, phonological errors and unsolicited uses of L1. He further identifies three types of CF used by teachers following each error listed. Firstly, grammatical and phonological errors invite teachers to use recasts over other types of CF. Secondly, lexical errors invite teachers to use negotiation of form more often than recasts. Finally, unsolicited uses of L1 invite teachers to use translation as the feedback. Based on Lyster (1998), although grammatical errors are the most frequent errors made by students, as mentioned before, they receive the least repair.



He further states that students tend to repair phonological errors the least compared to other errors. The majority of repairs for this error are students' repetitions following recasts. On the other hand, the majority of repairs for grammatical and lexical errors are peer-repair and self-repair following negotiation of form.

There are two patterns that follow the relationship of CF used by teachers to error types and students' immediate repair. First, teachers tend to recast grammatical and phonological errors and to negotiate lexical errors. Second, phonological repairs tend to follow recasts whereas grammatical and lexical repairs tend to follow the negotiation of form (Lyster, 1998). Other types of errors performed by learners as non-native speakers in social settings conversations as identified by Chun et. al (1982) are discourse, factual, word choice which refers to vocabulary, syntactic and omissions. He further discovers that factual errors receive the most frequent corrections followed by discourse errors, errors in word choice or vocabulary, syntactic errors and errors of omission. Different errors corrected by teachers could be related to different demands on learners at different levels of exposure to the language (Oladejo, 1993).

In this current study, the types of errors identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997), will be the basis for identification of errors in the classroom observations. These types of errors also will be the basis in the data collection and discussion in the present study which was undertaken in the contexts of ESL.

### **3.5 Corrective Feedback and Contexts**

Regarding the error treatment in different context, Chaudron (1988) reports that the extent to which errors are corrected or ignored is contingent on the setting (e.g., ESL vs. EFL) and teachers' pedagogical focus (e.g., grammar-focus vs. Communication-based). Sheen (2004) further explains that variations arising in second/foreign language settings are related to differences in pedagogical focus. She explains that the more grammar is highlighted, the more frequent the error correction will be. She has investigated the CF and learner uptake which happen in error treatment across different instructional settings. Ellis et al. (2001) also emphasize the importance of taking the instructional context into account in this study area.

#### **3.5.1 Types of corrective feedback and context**

There are a number of studies investigating CF used in different contexts such as EFL and ESL. A study by Sheen (2004) reviewed descriptive classroom feedback studies in four different contexts (ESL in New Zealand, ESL in Canada, French Immersion, EFL in Korea) and found that in more meaning- or content-oriented contexts, such as ESL in Canada (Panova & Lyster, 2002) and French immersion (Lyster & Ranta, 1997), compared with prompts, recasts were less likely to elicit repair and uptake; whereas in more form-oriented contexts, such as ESL in New Zealand (Ellis et al., 2001), or EFL in Korea (Sheen, 2004), recasts were equally effective at inviting uptake and repair.

Seedhouse (1997) examined the relationship between pedagogy and interaction by analysing numerous extracts from L2 classrooms. In what he termed as “form-

and-accuracy” context, he found that despite teachers’ intentions of avoiding direct and overt negative evaluation of learners’ linguistic errors, this action actually marked linguistic errors as embarrassing and problematic. He suggested that pedagogy and the organization of repair should work in tandem to achieve the purpose of L2 education. In another article (Seedhouse, 2004), he proposed a “variable” approach to repair in the L2 classroom, arguing that there is “no reflexive relationship between the pedagogical focus and the organization of repair” (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 142).

Lyster and Mori (2006) compared teacher-student interaction in two different instructional settings at the elementary school level (18.3 hours in French immersion and 14.8 hours in Japanese immersion). In their study, the immediate effects of explicit correction, recasts and prompts (namely, rate of uptake following feedback) were investigated. The results showed a higher rate of students’ uptake and repair following recasts in Japanese immersion settings, whereas a larger proportion of repair resulting from prompt was revealed in French immersion settings. Using the Communicative Orientation to Language Teaching coding scheme (COLT), (N. Spada & Frohlich, 1995), Lyster and Mori (2006) detected that Japanese immersion was characterized by an analytic orientation, which may have primed learners’ attention to form. Based on their findings and results from other previous studies, Lyster and Mori (2006) put forward the Counterbalance Hypothesis:

Instructional activities and interactional feedback that act as a counterbalance to the predominant communicative orientation of a given classroom setting will be more facilitative of interlanguage restructuring than instructional activities and interactional feedback that are congruent with the predominant communicative orientation. (p. 264)

These results lend to support the argument that the saliency and efficacy of feedback may vary across different instructional settings, highlighting the importance of distinguishing implicit and explicit feedback based on the discourse context (Ellis & Sheen, 2006).

### **3.6 The Role of Oral Corrective Feedback**

A crucial role of CF in the development of L2 acquisition theories and in the teaching of L2 has become the major focus in the research by L2 acquisition researchers. In their research, they agreed that the role of CF determined the relative importance of positive input or negative input in L2 acquisition. Hence this offers three inputs to L2 teaching and learning: a framework for choosing teaching methods and materials, the role of teachers and students, and providing the types of appropriate input in class (Krashen, 1985; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

After descriptive studies by Allwright (1975) and Hendrickson (1978) on the role of CF, other experimental research has expanded focusing on the same issue. These experimental study explored three important aspects of oral CF: the types of errors focused in the correction, the relation of error types to learner uptake and, in turn, L2 acquisition, and the role of individual differences in this relation (Carroll et al., 1992; DeKeyser, 1993; Lin & Hedgcock, 1996; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Schulz, 1996; Tsang, 2004; Yoshida, 2008).

Many researchers have focused their recent research on investigating error correction which occurs during interaction in the language classroom (Ellis et al., 2001; R. Lyster, 1998; Mackey, Gass, & McDonough, 2000; Morris, 2005; Sheen,

2004; Williams, 1999). This research has resulted in the coding of the error correction sequence into three parts: learner initial error (error made by learners), feedback (correction by teachers), and learner uptake (learner response towards the correction made) (Lyster, 1998; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Oliver, 1995, 1998, 2000).

While the researchers mentioned above are interested in investigating error correction in language classroom interaction, others are focusing their research on ‘the role’ of CF itself (Havranek, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Sheen, 2004). More recent research which investigated the role of negative feedback and the relative effects of different types of CF in the context of language teaching (e.g. Doughty, 1994; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Han, 2002; Seedhouse, 1997; Williams, 2001) has sometimes been more explanatory and experimental focusing on classroom-based studies which are carried out to address specific issues on CF. Among the issues including at what point in classroom interaction teachers provide correction; types of errors teacher provides feedback on; types of CF teachers use; who provides CF; relationship between different types of learner errors and teachers’ error correction; and the relationship between CF and learner response (Park, 2005).

The use of CF in language classrooms especially among learners “has been of interest to researchers in the area of” error treatment and CF. The argument brought forward by Morris (2005) in which he mentions that CF can only bring benefits on the pedagogical and theoretical implications for SLA classroom only if CF is made available to learners through classroom interaction. The CF has to be in a form that is usable for learners in their classroom interactions. In addition, the principle for CF in the process of error treatment is the ‘availability’ of the CF itself. Though the

benefits and the role of CF are indisputable in the area of SLA, there are several criteria which have to be met in advance. The criteria include: it has to exist, be useful, and be used by learner and necessary for acquisition to occur (Grimshaw & Pinker, 1989; Pinker, 1989). Another argument brought forward by Beck and Eubank (1991) relates to the ‘universality’ of CF. In their argument, the impact of interaction and feedback in SLA must be examined in different social and instructional contexts.

### **3.6.1 Empirical studies of corrective feedback**

Different theoretical views and perspectives about the role of CF, as mentioned earlier, have led many L2 researchers to conduct empirical research in examining in order to better understand the potential benefits of such feedback for SLA. These empirical researches include both observational and experimental which are conducted in both classroom contexts and laboratory settings (e.g. Braidi, 2002; Doughty & Varela, 1998; Leeman, 2003; McDonough, 2005; Muranoi, 2000). The findings from these studies provide significant insights into the role of feedback. While the findings provide important insights in teaching and learning of L2, mixed results have been found in relation to both the production of modified output following feedback and the effects of feedback on L2. In the following sub-sections, reviews of the most relevant studies are presented.

#### **3.6.1.1 *Observational studies***

The number of studies which focus on investigating the role of CF in observational settings has increased in the field of L2 teaching and learning. Lyster

and Ranta's (1997) study of French immersion classrooms is one of the most widely cited studies. Their study involved the investigation of the frequency of CF and the learners' immediate uptake and repair following six types of feedback (recast, explicit correction, clarification request, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition) in four elementary classrooms. The findings from their study suggested that recasts were the most frequent type of feedback used, accounting for more than half of the feedback types (55%), but they only led to a limited amount of repair of the learners' erroneous utterances (18%). The findings, however, suggested that the types of CF which were used less frequently, led to larger amounts of uptake and repair. These less frequent CF used including direct elicitation of the target form, clarification requests, repetitions and meta-linguistic feedback.

This earlier study was followed by Lyster (1998). In the later study, the same database was analysed to examine the way that teachers recast the learners' error. The findings suggested that the teachers not only recast erroneous forms and repeated or rephrased non-erroneous forms but the rephrasing of the non-erroneous forms was very similar in type and distribution to recasting erroneous forms (Nassaji, 2007). Due to these similarities, Lyster (1998) concluded that using recasts in meaning-oriented classrooms was confusing and ineffective. This is because students were not clear about the correction being made and this led them to be unclear about what was wrong with their language. He further noted that this confusion could occur because "the formal properties entailed in the corrective reformulations may easily be overridden by their functional properties" (Lyster, 1998, p. 65).

Another study investigating the use of CF was conducted by Panove and Lyster (2002) which involved an adult English as a second language (ESL) classroom. The same categories of feedback identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997) were employed in this study analysing 10 hour of classroom interaction. The findings were similar to the findings from Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study in two ways: recasts were frequently used in this classroom, although recasts remained quite low with the learner repair rate of only 13%; and, direct elicitation and repetitions led to higher rate of repair than recasts.

Another study involving adult ESL learners was conducted by Ellis et al. (2001) in New Zealand. This study investigated the use of CF and was focused on the learner successful uptake in student- and teacher-initiated focus on form. The findings were similar to those of Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Panova and Lyster (2002) where they found that recasts were identified to be the most frequently used categories of CF in correcting erroneous utterances. While the findings of frequent occurrences of recasts were similar, the rate of uptake following recasts was different. In those studies, recasts were identified to lead to a high degree of successful uptake in which there was 71.6% uptake, and of this 76.3% was successful.

In contrast, a study by Nabei and Swain (2002) which examined the role of recasts in an English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom in Japan had resulted different findings. In this study, recasts were found to occur very infrequently in this L2 classroom in which only 25 episodes of error were treated within the 420 minutes of classroom recording. However, 23 out of the 25 error treatment episodes were



identified using recasts which resulted in 92% uptake. The findings on the relationship between recasts and immediate uptake suggested that only 7 episodes (30%) led to uptake, including both successful and unsuccessful uptake.

While the studies mentioned above investigated the role of CF in the classroom with the interaction between students and teachers, a study by Pica (2002) examined opportunities for CF by analysing discussion activities in two L2 content-based classes. The analyses resulted in few instances of negotiation and recasts or feedback in the form of modification strategies. These were identified to provide learners with opportunities for pushed output. Pica's conclusion was that, although discussion activities are widely used in L2 classrooms, they fall "short of meeting conditions that satisfy learners' needs for positive and particularly, negative evidence, relevant to second language learning" (Pica, 2002, p. 16).

### ***3.6.1.2 Experimental studies***

There have also been a number of studies which examined the role of CF in experimental contexts, although no conclusive results were discovered from these studies. One study which used an experimental design was conducted by Doughty and Varela (1998). This study concerned an investigation on the usefulness of recasts in two content-based science classes and the participants were intermediate level of ESL students. There were two classes involved: one class was the experimental group which received CF in the form of recasts; and one class of was the control group which received no corrective recasts. The grammatical structure which was used as the target was the English past tense. In this experimental study, pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test assignments were used to identify the

usefulness of recasts. The results of these tests suggested that students in the experimental group who received corrective recasts performed better in both accuracy and the use of the targeted form. On the contrary, the control group students who did not receive any corrective recasts did not perform well in both accuracy and the targeted form.

Apart from the observational study, Lyster (2004) has also conducted an experimental study investigating the effects of recasts and elicitation strategies (what he called prompts) in subject-matter French immersion classrooms. While Doughty and Varela (1998) used two groups in their study, Lyster used four groups of students. The four groups were: three treatment groups which received form-focused instruction of French grammatical gender with each group receiving three different feedback treatments: recasts; prompts; no feedback; and, one comparison group. Written and oral pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test were used in this study. The results from this study suggested that there was no improvement between the group who received instruction which was followed by recasts and the group who received instruction only. In contrast, the results on the written tests suggested that there was an improvement between the group who received feedback in the form of prompts and the ones who receive recasts or no feedback. The former performed better than the latter. The results of the written test have concluded that form-focused instruction is more effective when it is implemented in combination with prompts than with recasts.

Another experimental study was conducted by Mackey and Philp (1998) which examined the effects of recasts on L2 learners' development question formation. The

comparison between the performance of L2 learners who received interactionally modified input and those who received intensive recasts was carried out in this study. The results of the comparison suggested that interaction which contained intensive recasts (by producing developmentally higher level questions) gave more benefits to the advanced learners than interaction which did not contain intensive recasts. These results lead to the conclusion that inducing modification of the learner output is ineffective through recasts. On the contrary, recasts can only benefit students in their short-term learning.

The final experimental study which involved two experiments was conducted by Long et al. (1998). This study was conducted to examine the role of recasts compared to modelling, which involved Japanese and Spanish learners. There were 24 young adult learners of Japanese in the first experiment and the target forms used were ordering adjectives and locative construction. The second experiment involved 30 young adult Spanish learners and the target forms used were object topicalization and adverb placement. In this study, recasts were referred to as utterances that reformulated the target structure after the learners produced the structure. On the other hand, models referred to those that provided the learners with the target structure (pre-emptively) or before they produced it. The study suggested mixed results. By conducting a pre-test, post-test and control group design, the findings suggested that the performance of the Spanish learners who received recasts on their adverb placement was better than the performance of learners receiving models, but not the performance of learners who received recasts on object topicalization. In the first experiment, a pre-test, post-test and control group design were also conducted

and the results suggested that there was no improvement among the Japanese learners who received recasts on either target form.

The discussion on the findings of both experimental and observational studies indicates that CF helps learners to further improve their acquisition of L2 despite the contexts. In relation to the present study, observational study based on classroom context was chosen as the basis to investigate the use of CF in English language classroom in an ESL context of Malaysia. By conducting the present study the potential benefits offered by CF can be further understood and the findings from this study can help fill in the gap which exists in L2 learning and teaching in particular context of ESL in Malaysia.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed some elements which are important in the study of CF. It commenced by reviewing the literature relating to CF starting with errors in general, and focusing on CF in particular. A more detailed discussion of the issues related to errors in different context was also presented. The essential role of CF which helps students in their development of target language learned was also explained by referring to the empirical studies of CF. From the literature reviewed which relates to the elements mentioned, it is undeniable that CF by teachers is crucial in providing students with some opportunities to critically evaluate their acquisition of the target language learned.

In the next chapter, the design of the present study has some things in common with several recent ones. Nevertheless the context in which this current study

examined was different from the previous studies of CF conducted. Detailed discussion on the theoretical basis underpinning the methodology used in the present study will be presented in the next chapter of Research Methodology.

## CHAPTER 4. Research Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

“Every discourse, even a poetic or oracular sentence, carries with it a system of rules for producing analogous things and thus an outline of methodology”, Jacques Derrida.

In writing a thesis, research methodology is one of the most significant factors. Not only does it reveal the nature of inquiry conducted in the study theoretically but also reflects the theoretical orientation and ideology of the researcher. It is applied as a tool to achieve the researcher’s objectives and determines the success of a research.

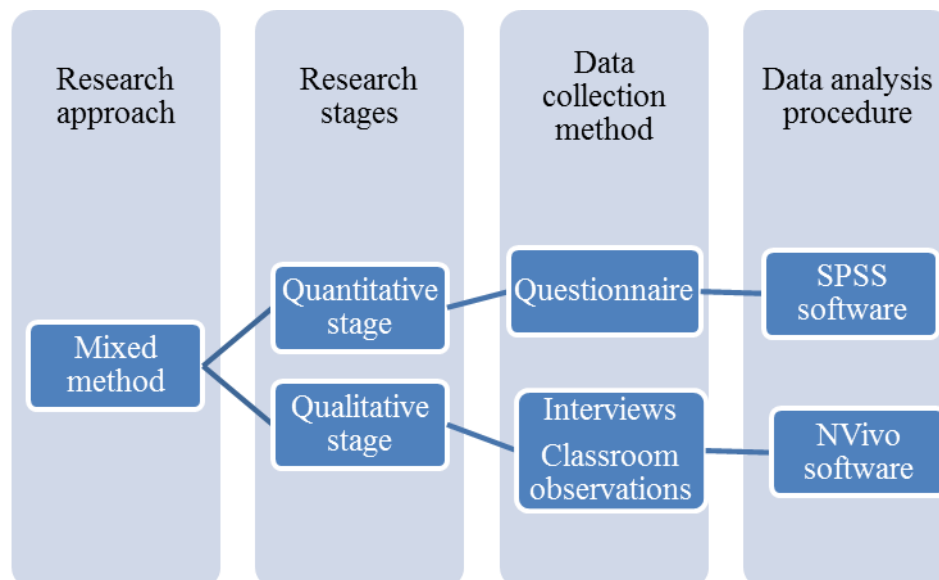
To achieve the success of this study, careful thought was given to its methodology taking into consideration several aspects; detailed descriptions will be presented in this chapter. Firstly, an overview of research approach is outlined emphasising the research methodology principles which were strengthened by the mixed method research approach leading to research tools being used which were to collect both quantitative and qualitative data are also introduced. The research aims and objectives which guided this study are then presented followed by a discussion of the data collection procedure which explained the process of recruiting the participants’ recruitment and sampling. Apart from this, procedures for analysing the data collected are then detailed. Additionally, issues related to the legitimacy of the research such as validity, reliability, credibility and triangulation of the study are addressed. Finally this chapter ends with the ethical issues pertaining to the process of conducting this study which refers to the approval process from a number of parties.

## **4.2 Research Approach**

This study employed a descriptive research method in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches were utilised to collect and analyse the data (R.B. Burns, 1994). The combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches were used for separate purpose to provide an overall examination of the issues raised in this study and were used separately at different phases (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This approach conforms to Greene, Caracelli and Graham's (1989) definition that as such a method "include(s) at least one qualitative method and one quantitative method"(p. 256). The mixed-method approach was chosen for this research as it was the most appropriate way to address all the five research objectives; leading to results that are more likely to have complementary strengths and non-overlapping weakness (Johnson & Turner, 2002). Additionally, this approach further provides complementary and comprehensive the research findings data which would allow an appropriate examination of the issue (Frechtling, Sharp, & Westat, 1997). Qualitative and quantitative approaches are not concerned here as polar opposites of dichotomies; rather, they represent different ends of a continuum (Newman & Benz, 1998). The combination of these two approaches in this study exists in the middle of this continuum as it incorporates elements of both types (Creswell, 2009). The mixed method approach therefore was chosen for this study in order to adopt the strengths of each approach, and hopefully offset their respective weaknesses.

The two methods used to collect the data for this study were separated into two phases: quantitative and qualitative phases. During the quantitative phase two sets of

questionnaires were designed and developed to examine selected variables across a large sample of participants, whereas the semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were conducted during the qualitative phase to examine more finely-tuned of detailed ‘variables’ with a smaller number of participants (Huxley, 1995). Likewise, the combination of both methods further allowed the collection of both broadly based data that allowed source generalisation and ideas that allowed deeper insights into the participants’ views to be gained. It was believed that with this combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, the findings of this study would be useful and robust. Generally, the strength of this study is considered to be of the combination of the quantitative and qualitative methods which potentially gives more useful findings than studies based on only one method (Creswell, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). A concept map of this study including the research approach, research phases, data collection methods and data analysis procedures is illustrated in Figure 4.1 below.



*Figure 4.1.* Concept map of the study



### **4.3 Research Aims and Objectives**

As indicated in Chapter 1, the main aims of this study were to investigate the use of CF on oral language in secondary schools classrooms and to explore how secondary school teachers and students perceive CF on oral language in the Malaysian ESL context. In order to address these aims, this study examined the views of teachers on the role of oral CF in the teaching and learning, particularly in the English subject, as well as identified differences in views and understanding between the two groups of participants on issues pertaining to oral CF. In addition to this, it was conducted to identify how oral CF was used by the teachers to facilitate learning in their classroom teaching. The main aims were expressed as four research objectives in order to examine the issues in a systematic way (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). These four research objectives guided the goals and directions of the study and are summarised below.

**Research Objective 1:** *To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers on CF of oral language.* Teachers are different individuals with different academic and cultural backgrounds, as well as exposure to teaching experience, therefore their views definitely varied accordingly. This objective intended to explore the general views of the teachers on oral CF and how the teachers perceived oral CF based on their knowledge and teaching experience.

**Research Objective 2:** *To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school students on CF of oral language used by teachers.* Students are also different individuals and have their own views which varied according to their upbringing, differences in their cultural background, different exposure in their learning

experience as well as their age group. Therefore, this objective is aimed to identify students' different views on oral CF and further investigate their feelings and attitudes towards the use of CF by their teachers on their oral language.

**Research Objective 3:** *To compare the views of Malaysian secondary school students and teachers on CF of oral language.* In relation to the use of CF on oral language, teachers and students have different point of views from their own perspectives. A comparison between teachers' and students' views were designed to investigate any differences between these two groups of participants in their understanding and perceptions. This might lead to the possibility of developing further improvements in the teaching and learning of English in the Malaysian context. Also it was anticipated that students' views and teachers' views on oral CF may differ.

**Research objective 4:** *To investigate the use of oral CF by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers in the classrooms.* The final research objective of this study was to investigate the use of oral CF by the teachers in their classroom teaching. It was crucial to observe how teachers actually used CF in relation to their students' oral language to further understand their reality of teaching practice and how it might relate to their beliefs of what they should do during lessons. This information would help the researcher to confirm or otherwise the connection between the teachers' views and their classroom practice which was addressed in the previous research question.

The selected research methods were related explicitly to the four research objectives: questionnaire, interviews and classroom observations, which were

applied as the main research procedures for data collection and analysis. Figure 4.2 summarises the relationship between research objectives, research instruments, the data collection and data analysis.

Based on Figure 4.2, firstly, both sets of the questionnaire were distributed to teachers and students of lower secondary school levels to explore the participants' views on the use of oral CF in classrooms in relation to their teaching and learning experience of English in accordance to Research Questions 1, 2 and 3. Secondly, the interview sessions were then carried out with six participating teachers particularly to investigate rationales and confirm the T-participants' views on the use of CF on students' oral language. In addition, the interviews were also conducted to obtain some overviews on how the T-participants used CF to correct their students' error on oral language in their classroom teaching. Finally, the classroom observation sessions were conducted to collect evidence how the T-participants used oral CF during their lessons and how the students responded to the oral CF used. These two data collection methods were conducted to address Research Objectives 4 and 5. The following sections present the mechanism of the data collection and analysis.

#### **4.4 Data Collection**

A total of 2015 participants (172 of teacher participants and 1843 of student participants) from 42 secondary schools in Penang, one of a Malaysian states was involved in this study. Three different forms of data collection were used: questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. These were conducted to investigate the use of spoken error correction in classrooms particularly in the teaching and learning of English at secondary school levels, in relation to four

research objectives. As mentioned earlier, there were two phases involved in the data collection: quantitative and qualitative data collection phases. Two sets of questionnaires were designed at the quantitative stage and distributed to teachers and students in the lower secondary school levels (Forms 1 to 3). Conversely, at the qualitative data collection stage, semi-structured interview sessions were conducted with six teachers from 3 selected schools; classroom observations were also conducted with these teachers to further investigate the occurrences of spoken error correction in their teaching practices.

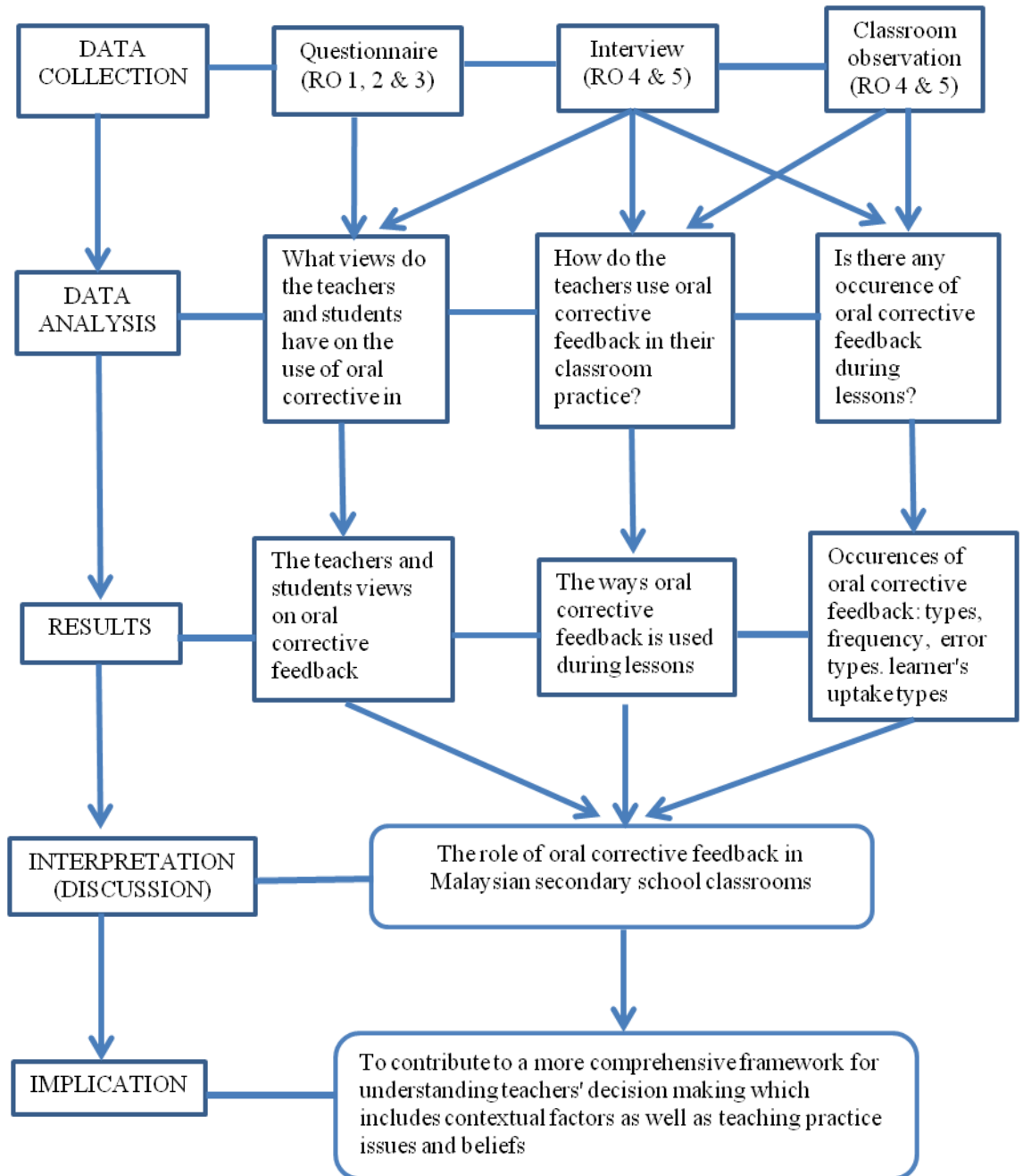


Figure 4.2. Summary relationship between research objectives, research instruments, data collection and data analysis

#### **4.4.1 Participants and sampling**

As mentioned earlier, the participants in this study were teachers (T-participants) and students (S-participants) from 42 Penang (Malaysia) secondary schools (9 boys` only schools, 12 girls` only schools and 21 co-educational schools). This total of 42 schools was the total population of secondary schools in Penang. The school in this study also involved three geographical areas in Penang: urban, sub-urban and rural. In the Malaysian secondary school system, there are five forms and two levels at the secondary schools – lower secondary and upper secondary. Lower secondary school levels refer to Form 1 to Form 3 (aged 13-15 years) and the upper secondary school levels include Form 4 and Form 5 (aged 16-17 years). In this study, only students and English teachers in the lower secondary school levels were selected, however, the total number of students and English teachers involved was not the whole population of students and teachers of lower secondary school levels in Penang. Having only samples from certain population identified is a common practice in a survey methodology to collect information from a sample of individuals, groups, or organizations rather than all of them (Berends, 2006; Chromy, 2006). As a guideline, it is suggested that the appropriate sample size for studies which have a population size of 5000 or more should be approximately 400 (Gay & Airasia, 2003). Thus the sample size of 1843 students and 172 teachers for this study was seen appropriate to Penang schools population.

Three types of secondary schools participated in this study: national schools (n=18), Chinese schools (n=8), and religious schools (n=2). As mentioned in Chapter 2, Bahasa Malaysia is used as the medium of instruction in both national and

religious schools while Mandarin is used as a medium of instruction in Chinese schools. But all students have been learning English since preschool.

The sampling strategies at both phases varied according to the various methods of data collection. Two groups of participants were invited at the quantitative phase of data collection: 1843 students and 172 teachers of the lower secondary school levels so non-probability samples were chosen at this stage. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) there are a few types of non-probability samples. In this study, opportunity or convenience samples, and purposive samples were selected (Cohen et al., 2007) as more appropriate because of the easy accessibility to the samples by the researcher and the willingness and the availability of the participating schools during the study period (Creswell, 2009). The students and teachers were invited to participate in this study because they were directly involved with the experience of spoken error correction in which they could best demonstrate the significance of the use of oral CF in classroom learning and teaching of English particularly at lower secondary school levels in Malaysia. Additionally, they were invited because they were believed to be the most significant population which could be seen as most centrally involved in the learning and teaching process (Corbit, Holt, & Segrave, 2008). The selection of Penang as the focus location of the study was opportunistic because the researcher is originally from Penang, so the familiarity of the location and convenient access to information and participants served as clear advantages.

While the sampling at the quantitative phase (questionnaire) was purposive and opportunistic, the sampling at the qualitative phase (interviews and observations) was

purposive and stratified. A stratified sampling method “involves dividing the population into homogeneous groups, each group containing subjects with similar characteristics” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 111). The participants at this stage were invited from teachers who participated at quantitative phase and who had then signed and returned the consent forms to participate further. As a result, 6 teachers volunteered to be interviewed and their lessons to be observed. A useful blend of randomisation and categorisation were provided through stratified sampling and further enabled the researcher to target approachable group of participants (Cohen et al., 2007). Apart from this, stratified sampling also ensured the combination of views, opinions and evaluation from different angle of perspectives of the participants on oral CF. The general descriptions of the participants at both stages are described in Table 4.1

Table 4.1 *Summary description of the participants in quantitative and qualitative phases*

	Students		Teachers	
	Questionnaire % (n/N)	Classroom observation (n/N)	Questionnaire % (n/N)	Interview/ classroom observations (n/N)
Gender				
• Male	40.2(740/1843)	41/163	16.8 (28/172)	2/6
• Female	59.8(1101/1843)	122/163	83.2 (144/172)	4/6
Form				
• Form 1	31.1(567/1843)	107/163	11.9(21/172)	4/6
• Form 2	33.5(609/1843)	56/163	20.2(35/172)	2/6
• Form 3	35.4(644/1843)		13.7(24/172)	
• More than 1 form			54.2(92/172)	
School area				
• Urban	74.2(1367/1843)	135/163	74.3(126/172)	5/6
• Rural	18.0(331/1843)	28/163	17.3(31/172)	
• Suburban	6.8(125/1843)		8.4(15/172)	1/6



#### **4.4.2 Quantitative phase**

As mentioned in the previous section, the data were collected at two phases: the quantitative and qualitative phases. At the quantitative phase, questionnaire was used to investigate the participants' views, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions and personalities towards the role of oral CF in their parallel learning and teaching experience in particular English subject. A separate version of the same questionnaire was developed for teachers and students. The questionnaire was chosen at this stage because this method allows "collection of large amounts of data in a relatively short space of time" (Mills, 2000, p. 58). In addition, the questionnaire was chosen because it could be administered without the researcher being present (Cohen et al., 2007) and it provided a high response rate from the participants, thus allowing the researcher to have confidence to generalize the results of the research population (Creswell, 2005).

Two sets of questionnaires were designed: SET A (for T-participants) and SET B (for S-participants). Both sets of the questionnaires were structured questionnaires to cater to the large sample involved in this research (Cohen et al., 2007). In a structured questionnaire, information was elicited through a selected-response mode as it increases consistency of response and is less time consuming for the respondents to complete. The constructed items for both sets of the questionnaire were typical multiple choice questions/statements and content was based on a range of previous questionnaire studies. Participants were guided to consider and respond to questions/statements in relation to their learning or teaching experiences in spoken error correction. The responses provided could be organised and analysed as

variables using statistical methods and tools. At this stage, the questionnaire offered an opportunity to gain concrete evidence within the research area and allowed a further exploration of the research matter at the further stage.

Both teachers' and students' questionnaires consisted of two main parts: Part I elicited the participants' demographic information and Part II was divided into four sections - Section A, Section B, Section C and Section D. The items which investigated the types of oral CF and the types of learner uptake (Part II: Sections B and C) were designed based on the findings of the study by Lyster and Ranta (1997). There were six types of CF: explicit correction, recast, clarification requests, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition. Accordingly, there were two categories of learner uptake included: "repair" and "need-repair". While the repair category consisted of repetition, incorporation, self-repair and peer-repair, the need-repair category comprised of acknowledgement, repetition of same error, repetition of different error, hesitation and partial repair (see Appendix 2.1 and Appendix 2.2 for the samples of the teachers' and students' questionnaires).

Two types of items scales were used in constructing all items in both sets of questionnaires. Firstly, the Likert Scale was used with the primary concern of making sure that all these items would be measuring the same thing (Oppenheim, 1992). The system of scoring employed was 1 to 5; the high scale 5 (Strongly Agree) for the favourable attitude and the low scale 1 (Strongly Disagree) for the unfavourable attitude. Secondly, a verbal frequency scale (Alreck & Settle, 1995) was used in which participants were required to state how often they used the types of CF identified and what types of learner uptake occurred on the CF used. The

system of scoring here was 1 to 4 with 4 (Almost Always) being the highest score for the most frequent statement and 1 (Almost Never) being the lowest for the least frequent statement. A summary of the questionnaire designed is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 *Descriptions of SET A and SET B questionnaires*

	SET A	SET B
Part I	Demographic details: Gender, Age, Teaching form, School area, Academic qualification, Years of teaching experience, Years of teaching English, Professional development background	Demographic details: Gender, Age, Form, School area, English examination result, Spoken English proficiency, Self-confidence in spoken English
Part II	<u>Section A</u> Elicit belief, value and opinion on the use of CF on students' oral language. 16 items of Likert scale	<u>Section A</u> Elicit belief, value and opinion on the use of CF on students' oral language. 16 items of Likert scale
	<u>Section B</u> Investigate teachers' classroom practice and types of CF used in their teaching 18 items of verbal frequency	<u>Section B</u> Investigate types of students' uptake on the CF used by their teachers 10 items of verbal frequency
	<u>Section C</u> Investigate the types of uptake received which followed the CF used 10 items of verbal frequency	<u>Section C</u> Investigate students' feelings and attitudes towards the oral CF received 12 items of Likert Scale
	<u>Section D</u> Investigate error types according to their importance in spoken error correction 1 ranking item	<u>Section D</u> Investigate error types according to their importance in spoken error correction 1 ranking item

Distribution of the questionnaires to the participating secondary schools was made personally by the researcher; these were then distributed by the principals to

students and teachers who had volunteered to participate in the surveys. As for the S-participants, the questionnaire had been translated into Bahasa Malaysia, the language which is most known by all levels of secondary school students, in order to avoid any potential confusion, misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the items. As for the T-participants, English was used as these teachers were highly competent in the language. With the distribution of the questionnaire, two other important documents were attached (to each questionnaire): a cover letter informing the participants of the research study and an information outlining how to answer the questionnaire. A stamped self-addressed return envelopes was also provided for the participants to return the questionnaire on completion (they were asked to complete the questionnaire by a given deadline) in confidence. Unreturned questionnaires (both teachers and students) were followed up 5 days after the deadline as specified in the cover letter by sending letters of reminder to all the participants via mail to the identified secondary schools. A copy of the questionnaire along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope was again included with the follow-up reminder to help the participants who might have lost the first questionnaire from the original distribution.

#### **4.4.3 Qualitative phase**

In this phase, two data collection instruments were designed and delivered: semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. These two research instruments are described in the following sub-sections.

#### ***4.4.3.1 Semi-structured interview***

Semi-structured interviews were chosen specifically to collect data in the qualitative phase because they allowed the T-participants to share their experiences and they allowed the researcher to explore the T-participants' feelings towards the research issues to be explicitly explored. Additionally, through the interviews the participants' experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge could be directly quoted (Patton, 2002). In addition, the interviews were important in complementing the information obtained through the questionnaire, the details of which could not be traced from all respondents. As Gall, Borg and Gall (1996, p. 307) advised, "a confirmation survey interview was intended to produce evidence to confirm earlier findings". Apparently, interviews were chosen in this study because they allowed the researcher to get access to the particular context of the participants' behaviour and allowed for understanding of the meaning of such behaviour to be achieved (Seidman, 1998).

In addition, the interview sessions were also significant in addressing the issues of validity and reliability. According to Hopkins (1993) and Burns (1997), the interview is considered an appropriate technique to discuss, confirm and verify information that has been obtained and tentatively concluded. As McDonough and McDonough (1997) also suggested, interviews can be used as a checking mechanism to triangulate data that have already been gathered.

In terms of rapport building, the interview sessions were useful in establishing a positive relationship with the teachers. As Silverman (1993) states, (a good) interview could be used as a means to build relationship with the participants. In the

present circumstance, the T-participants were encouraged to feel free to discuss with the researcher and to be observed, and familiarised themselves with the presence of the researcher during lessons. To further assist in rapport building, the T-participants were also permitted to use Bahasa Malaysia during the interview if they felt this would put them more at ease at expressing themselves than using English.

In a semi-structured interview, questions are prepared and given to all respondents by interviewers to treat all interview situations in a like manner (Fontana & Frey, 2000). A semi-structured interview was adopted in this study within which the interview questions were constructed in relation to the contents of the study prior to the interviews being conducted. Though the questions were relatively few in number, the semi-structured interview was designed to allow in-depth exploration of the views, attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations and feelings associated with the topic being researched (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The questions which were designed acted as prompts to encourage participants to speak freely and comprehensively and they also provided flexibility and permitted more valid responses from the participants (Burns, 1994; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). Additionally, a semi-structured interview acts as guideline to the areas that will elicit responses related to the research objectives and gives the researcher an opportunity to gain much deeper and richer understanding of the rationale behind the participants' views and behaviour – in this case – the use of oral CF in their teaching practice.

In this research, the interviews were conducted with participants in face-to-face mode with the intention of eliciting the T-participants' views and opinions through

open-ended questions (Creswell, 2009). This type of interview was designed to enable the researcher to observe the T-participants and use non-verbal communication and visual aids to achieve a better result (Neuman, 2004). When a face-to-face interview was conducted, it is acknowledged that a number of factors such as social setting and personal characteristic (e.g. gender and personality) may affect the responses of the interviewees. Due to this fact, some measures were taken to avoid factors that might negatively affect the interview. So there was no third person in the interview room in order to provide a feeling of security and confidence to the interviewees (Neuman, 2004).

The T-participants were interviewed in two sessions and both sessions lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes. The interviews were conducted on a weekly basis over a period of two weeks and all the interview sessions were tape-recorded on two audio cassettes – one main and one backup, for later analysis and detail checking (Oppenheim, 1992). Among the types of questions designed were background/demographic information, experience/behaviour and opinion/value in relation to the topic studied (Paton as cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

In the first interview session, the researcher began the interview session with open-ended questions (the background information) with the intention to invite the T-participants to be engaged in a conversation (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Some questions were then followed up by including their opinion/value and experience/behaviour on issues related to the use of CF on oral language and the impact on students' oral participation.

Questions on the T-participants experience/behaviour and opiniosn/values were asked to elicit the rationale behind their oral CF practices during lessons observed. To create and to maintain a positive interviewing climate as much as possible, the researcher listened attentively and used elaboration probes to elicit as much information as possible from the informant (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). The details of the questions used in both interview sessions are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 *Summary information of the interview questions (Session 1 and Session 2)*

	Interview Session 1	Interview Session 2
Part A	General questions on background information (10 open-ended questions)	Questions on experience/behaviour on oral CF based on the lessons observed (5 structured questions)
Part B	Questions on experience/behaviour on oral CF (13 open-ended questions)	Questions on opinion/value on issues in relation to examination system practiced in Malaysia (12 open-ended questions)
Part C	Questions on opinion/value on oral CF and teaching issues (14 open-ended questions)	

#### **4.4.3.2 Classroom observation**

Classroom observation was used as a further data collection instrument at the qualitative phase. It was intended to identify details of classroom interaction in order to examine how the T-participants actually used CF with their students' oral language, particularly in relation to Research Objective 4. While the interviews gave a sense of flexibility and permitted a more valid response from the T-participants, classroom observation allowed the researcher to understand teachers' behaviour in the reality of the classroom context in which individuals think and react and to



experience their thoughts, feelings and action (Wiersma, 2000). Observation as a method also enabled a better understanding of classroom behaviour in its authentic context; focus behaviours could also be identified and studied in order to describe them objectively. As Nunan (1989). has argued, “researchers need to spend time looking at classrooms to enrich understanding of language learning and teaching” (p. 78).

Classroom observation can be considered as a type of naturalistic observation in this study, as the detailed incidence of spoken error correction in the natural settings in the classrooms was investigated. In this situation, the role of the researcher was as a non-participant observer who was not involved in the classroom activities as this role requires (Burns, 1997; Gay, 1996; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). During the classroom observation ongoing sessions, therefore, teaching activities proceeded naturally without intervention from the researcher or attention given to her presence. Gay (1996) has described the benefit of this approach:

Certain kinds of behaviours can only/best be observed as they occur naturally. In such a situation, the observer purposely controls or manipulates nothing, and in fact works very hard at not affecting the observed situation in anyway. The intent is to record and study behaviour as it normally occurs... (p. 265).

In addition, the researcher’s understanding and the familiarity with the context is very important in later analysing and interpreting the observation data. Being a non-participant observer enabled the researcher to understand the classroom contexts and teaching routines and events (Wiersma, 2000). “Non-participant observers watch what people do, listen to what people say, and interact with participants” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 196). In the present study, the researcher watched what the teachers and students did, listened to what they said and interacted with the

teachers through the interview sessions. The classroom observations were conducted over a period of three months (one week in a month for each classroom). By observing the lessons, the researcher was provided with opportunity to record the behaviour, pedagogy, and teacher-student interactions in order to examine the T-participants' theories and beliefs of using CF on students' oral language in their classroom practice.

While the data in the interview sessions were tape-recorded, the data collected in the classroom observations were recorded using an observation checklist (see Appendix 3) and field-notes. Several elements were recorded in the observation checklist: the types of CF used by the teachers on the students' oral language, the types of learner uptake or responses on the CF used, the types of error corrected by the teachers and the types of errors made by the students. On the contrary, field notes were made at the same time as the classroom observations and were designed to attend to issues that arose which needed immediate recording and would be attended to during interviews. The field notes also recorded what had been seen and heard by the researcher (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and as much as possible, the researcher ensured the classroom observations were recorded in as detailed and as exact way as possible (Seale, 1999). Particular attention was given to this matter in order to avoid confusion between the definitions of CF practised by the T-participants in their classroom meant the same as to the researcher (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Data from the field notes were then "synthesized and summarized immediately after each classroom observation which included interpretations that came to mind and recording of any questions that were implied" (Wiersma, 2000, p. 248). Interpretation of events recorded in the field notes were

clearly separated from the observation data by using brackets or parentheses to indicate that this was the researcher commentary rather than observation.

For further clarification, the classroom observation data were also recorded by using a lapel microphone on the T-participants which recorded the conversations between teachers and students alike. This recording method also assisted the researcher to review the observed lessons repeatedly in order to obtain as much detailed and accurate information on the classroom situations as possible. Moreover the lesson recording also helped the researcher capture the entire situation which was difficult through any one recording method due to the rate at which the behaviours occurred (Wiersma, 2000).

The data collection from the classroom observations took approximately three months. A total of 18 observation sessions were conducted. On average, each T-participant was observed three times and each session lasted approximately 50-80 minutes which is the standard length of a single (50 minutes) or double (80 minutes) lessons period in Malaysian secondary schools. Before the classroom observations took place, meetings between the researcher and the T-participants were conducted to discuss the lessons to be observed and to agree on suitable time for the following interviews sessions. Only lessons which involved active interaction between teachers and students were observed. Single period lessons were preferred as double period lessons were less suitable for observations because teachers normally focused their lessons on writing rather than other skills (i.e. oral), a normal pattern for English lessons in Malaysian schools. However, observing lessons which focused on writing skills would not provide the researcher with sufficient data for analysis as

much less teacher-students interaction was evident in writing lessons. Other than this, the variation was due to the teachers' availability, the nature of the topic taught and also the school timetable. Table 4.4 illustrates the phases of data collection including the survey, interviews, classroom observations and the pilot study of all the research instruments.

Table 4.4 *The Phases of Data Collection*

Phases	2008			2009	
	Sept	Oct	Dec	Jan	Feb – Apr
<b>Quantitative Phase</b>					
Questionnaire					
• Pilot run	√				
• Amendment		√			
• Sent out			√		
• Followed-up unreturned				√	
<b>Qualitative Phase</b>					
Interview					
• Pilot run	√				
• Amendment		√			
• Conducted					√
Classroom Observation					
• Pilot run	√				
• Amendment		√			
• Carried out					√

#### 4.4.4 Pilot (Sample/Test)

A pilot study was conducted for all the research instruments before the final implementation in order to ensure the clarity and effectiveness of the questions and statements. Besides, pilot study further enhanced the validity of this study by pre-testing the particular research instrument (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

Through pilot study, it helped the researcher to find weaknesses of the research design, in which it may lead to failure of the study, and whether the proposed instruments or data collection methods were inappropriate or too complicated (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Moreover, by conducting and reporting the pilot study, it helped to increase the possibility of the study being successful as they allowed the researcher to consider and rework in the last minute before the main research started (Berends, 2006; Burns, 2000; Mason, 1996; Seidman, 1998; van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

As indicated, all the research instruments were piloted which included teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaire, interview questions and classroom observation checklist. Both sets of questionnaires were piloted with the intention to get feedback on the clarity of the items and also to identify ambiguous and difficult words in the items. Moreover, piloting the questionnaires designed is essential to further avoid redundant and irrelevant items (Cohen et al., 2007) and further acted as a pretesting of the questionnaires; deficiencies may be uncovered that were not apparent by simply reviewing the items (Wiersma, 2000). In piloting SET A of the questionnaire, two groups of samples were selected: English teachers from Malaysia and English instructors of the University of Tasmania. Six teachers of the lower secondary school levels in Malaysia were from various parts of Malaysia: two teachers from a sub-urban secondary school in Kedah (a northern state of Malaysia), two teachers from an urban secondary school in Johor (a southern state of Malaysia) and two teachers from a rural secondary school in Selangor (a state in the west coast of Malaysia). Another six English instructors of the University of Tasmania were NEST from the English Language Centre. These two groups were not random

samples, instead, they were selected because they were in a position that enabled them to make valid judgements about the items as they were familiar with the variables under study (the oral CF) (Wiersma, 2000) and to give responses and comments.

Similarly, SET B of the questionnaire; only one sample group was selected (lower secondary school levels students – Form 1 and Form 2) by the six teachers involved in the pilot study of SET A questionnaire. 18 mixed-proficiency levels of English students were selected: 6 students of the low level, 6 students of the intermediate level and 6 of the high level of English proficiency. Both sets of questionnaires were piloted concurrently which took approximately a month to be completed.

Apart from the two sets of the questionnaire, the interview questions were also piloted. Two English instructors of English Language Centre of University of Tasmania were invited in this pilot study; interviews were conducted after observing their lessons for a week. Finally, the pilot study was also conducted with the observation checklist designed for the purpose of recording the data collected during the classroom observations. This research instrument was also tested with the same samples who were involved in the pilot study of the interview questions.

During the pilot study of all the research instruments, few changes were made in accordance to the responses and comments from the samples. In addition, the results of the pilot study led to necessary revisions made in consultation with five academics to seek recommendations and suggestions. After the consultations, necessary amendments were made accordingly to all the research instruments before

they were finally used in the study. The process of piloting the research instruments further enhanced the clarity of the questions and statements and the structures of these tools. The summary of the pilot study of all the research instruments is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

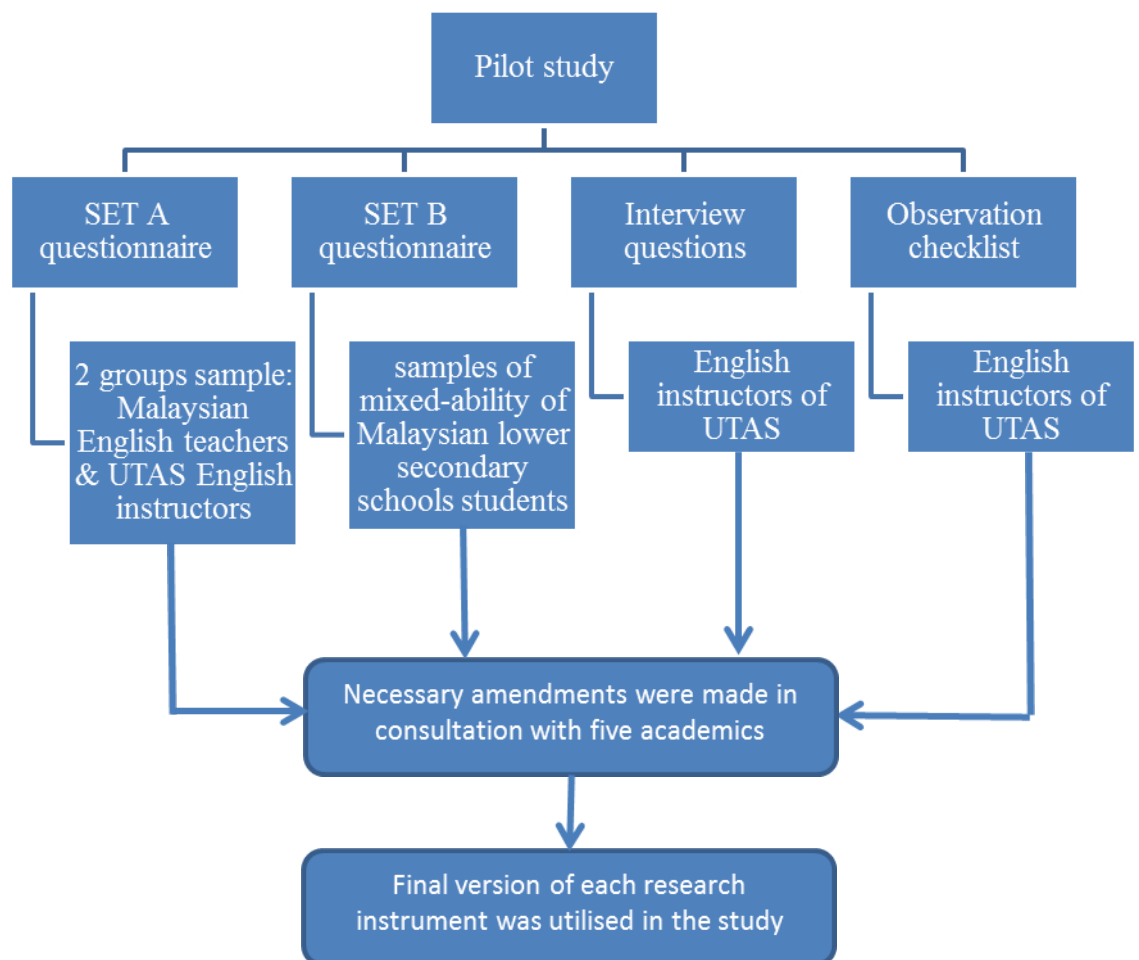


Figure 4.3. Summary of the pilot study of research instruments

## 4.5 Data Analysis

There were two types of data collected in this study which reflected each stage of data collection: numerical data gathered at quantitative stage and the textual data

collected at the qualitative stage of data collection. Numerical data from the two surveys was analysed using the SPSS software version 18.0, whereas the qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations was analysed using NVivo software version 7, adopting a constructive grounded theory as the underlying theory. The next sub-sections explain the process of data analysis involved at both stages: quantitative and qualitative stages.

#### **4.5.1 Quantitative data analysis**

To analyse the data collected quantitatively, descriptive statistics were chosen because the goal of analysing the data at this phase was to describe, summarize and make sense of this particular set of data (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). In addition, descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to summarize large quantities of data using measures that are easily understood (Burns, 1994). Statistical data collected at this phase resulted in numerical data in which it indicated the strength of the participants' responses to the questionnaire items of both sets. Two broad categories were analysed: those that described individual variables and distributions, and those that measure the relationships between variables (Alreck & Settle, 1995). In conveying the essential characteristics of the data, the SPSS software was used to arrange the data into a more interpretable form. This software was adopted to further develop a range of data analysis methods, such as frequency tables, crosstabs, charts and t-tests, to show the relationships between the variables (Bryman, 2008; Huizingh, 2007; Yockey, 2007). As the intention of collecting data at this phase was to analyse numerical data and to find relationships between different variables, SPSS was considered the most appropriate tool.



As mentioned earlier, SPSS software was adopted to analyse the responses from the participants to questions/statements in the questionnaire in relation to the use of oral CF in their teaching and learning of English in the Malaysian context. The results of the data analysis were presented in the forms of frequencies and proportions; median values were employed for continuous data and inferential statistical techniques were adopted to determine the significance of the results. While median values were employed for continuous data, non-parametric tests such as Chi-square tests were applied for variables with categorical data.

There were several steps involved in analysing and describing the data using SPSS. Firstly, the raw data collected was coded into a grid format that was readable for the computer. The second step was to clean up the data in order to avoid errors, then followed by the third step which was to enter the data into SPSS and the final step was to assign certain numbers to variable attributes collected (Neuman, 2004). For example, number “1” was assigned to “SD: Strongly Disagree”, number “2” was assigned to “D: Disagree”, number “3” was assigned to “A: Agree” and number “4” was assigned to “SA: Strongly Agree”. Therefore, number 1 was types referring to SD and so on. The data which was keyed in was also carefully examined to avoid any mistakes which might lead to misleading results or threaten the validity of measurements (Neuman, 2004). The detailed process of analysing the quantitative data collected will be further described in Chapter 5 (Quantitative Data Analysis and Results).

### **4.5.2 Qualitative data analysis**

At qualitative stage, the data were collected from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations and was analysed based on constructivist approach which utilised grounded theory and coded strategies by thematic analysis; the NVivo software was used to assist in the organisation of the qualitative data in various formats and further provides an organised and efficient approach to data analysis. At this research stage, the NVivo software was adopted in the transcription, organisation and interpretation of the textual data and audio records of interviews.

As introduced earlier, the theory which underpinned the data analysis at this stage was the constructivist grounded theory approach as this theory was considered to be an important approach for theory generation (Cohen et al., 2007) which is the focus of data analysis at this stage. This theory was particularly chosen because it “consists of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2). Through the qualitative approach of collecting data at this stage, further understanding of an insider’s view of the field was achieved through close association with both participants and activities within the natural setting (R.B. Burns, 1994). Referring to this stage, patterns were found and theories were developed from the data in relation to the use of oral CF in the learning and teaching of English at secondary school levels of Malaysian context. In addition, the use of the constructivist grounded theory approach in analysing the qualitative data further allowed the interpretation and interrogation of the textual data to find the dominant discourses presented in the T- and S-participants’ experiences on the use of oral CF.

A three-step coding approach was used to organise the data in order to identify categories and concepts and link these concepts into substantive and formal theories on the use of spoken error correction in the learning and teaching of English in the Malaysian secondary school classrooms (Charmaz, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The three-step coding approach were open coding, axial coding and selective coding, in which the initial data was examined, the themes and concepts were compared and contrasted, and then they were synthesized into categories (Charmaz, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The coding approach was important as it was the central pathway to theoretical construction (Sarantakos, 1998, 2005) and further provided opportunities to examine and re-examine the various meanings the data represented.

As mentioned previously, three coding processes were conducted in analysing the qualitative data collected at this stage. Firstly, the open coding process which was the initial stage of the data analysis whereby first-order concepts and substantive code were identified and developed (Sarantakos, 2005). At this open coding process, exploration of any theoretical possibilities was left open in relation to the data (Charmaz, 2003, 2006). Additionally, the researcher remained close to the data, named each line or segment of the raw data, and moved quickly through it to construct meanings from the responses provided by the T- and S-participants on their experience with the use of spoken error correction in the classroom (Charmaz, 2006). The generation of codes were closely related to the participants' learning and teaching experience as discussed in the interview transcripts; the codes identified were from the textual data and were labelled into 35 open codes. The response to the identified codes were recorded and constructed according to the frequency of their occurrences.

The second coding process at this stage was axial coding in which the process involved was to put an “axis” through the data to make connections between the concepts (Sarantakos, 2005). While the open coding process fractured data into separate pieces and distinct codes, this axial coding process “brings the data back together in a coherent whole” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). Through this process, visible links between open codes and grouping them into themes in accordance to the interconnections which occurred were possible. Moreover, the full understanding of the meaning represented in the data was achieved through identifying the links between axial codes. By the end of the axial coding process, 20 axial codes were developed.

The final process of coding the data was the selective coding process which dealt with the interpretation of the data into higher levels of abstraction. This coding process allowed the researcher to work through the axial codes and search for the central phenomenon and the central category in relation to the participants’ experiences in the use of spoken error correction. This was conducted by “selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116). Additionally, it further allowed determining the key elements of the codes and making connections among theories were also possible. In this process, the aim of analysing the data was to outline the three key categories in relation to the participants’ views on the use of spoken error correction in the learning and teaching of English at lower secondary school levels in Malaysian classrooms. The analysis of the qualitative data collected is further detailed in Chapter 6 (Qualitative Data Analysis and Results).

#### **4.6 Validity, Reliability and Credibility**

A very important element in a study is the validity and reliability which are seen as the central issues in the measurement (Neuman, 2004; Silverman, 2005); both are two different things yet related closely to each other. Validity referred to the match between the construct and the measurement which addressed “the question of how well the social reality being measured through research matches with the constructs researchers use to understand it” (Neuman, 2003, p. 179). Unlike validity, reliability was easier to achieve as it refers to the ability to produce the consistent results every time the research procedure is repeated as well as it indicated the dependability or consistency of the findings of the study. Moreover, reliability suggested that the result should remain the same when a research project is repeated or recurs under identical situations or very similar conditions (Neuman, 2003). In quantitative and qualitative study both serve different roles and in practice, both are achieved differently. The present study utilised quantitative and qualitative methods in collecting and analysing the data within which the next sub-sections will detail how validity and reliability were achieved from general perspectives, at the quantitative stage and at the qualitative stage.

Generally, the validity and reliability of this study was gained through thorough data collection procedures and interpretation. Additionally, through the systematic data collection and triangulation of various sources of data, it helped to guarantee that the finding of the research accurately reflect the phenomenon under investigation (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2006). The reliability of this study is indisputable since the findings would not be markedly different if it is conducted

again under the same rule of participants' recruitment. The participation which involved different academic qualifications, and proficiency levels of English as well as cultural backgrounds, with different genders, and different levels of teaching and learning experiences allowed the findings of the study to generalise its sample to the whole population of teachers and students of the lower secondary school levels in Penang.

The credibility of the present study is also unquestionable as all teachers and students involved were only those who were willing and felt comfortable to participate. These were gained by ensuring them that they were not identified in any means including any output related directly or indirectly from the study, thus encouraged them to express their ideas without any fear. Apart from this, the information sheet distributed to them had already indicated that the data provided could be withdrawn at any time within 28 days of the interviews and classroom observations. For the interview sessions, since some of the questions in the interview were related to their teaching and learning experiences, emotional information could be encountered. To lessen this risk, the T-participants were assured the confidentiality and anonymity of the data provided to instil comfort and confidence among them in response to the questions asked in the interview, thus the credibility of this study could be achieved.

#### **4.6.1 Validity and reliability at the quantitative stage**

At the qualitative stage, the data was collected through the survey conducted with teachers and students of lower secondary school levels. The validity and the reliability at this stage was ensured by including clear conceptualising constructions,

a precise level of measurement, multiple indicators and a pilot test (Neuman, 2004). To begin with, the questions/statements in the questionnaire were designed and arranged purposely and consistently according to a pre-designed outline which appeared as the titles of each subsection; the outline contained the central issues intended for investigation. Then, the items of the questionnaire were designed in accordance to the outline to ensure that the items were focused and well structured.

Next, the validity and reliability of this study was ensured by involving multiple sources of responses in which the participants invited were teachers and students of three levels of lower secondary school: Form 1, Form 2 and Form 3. By getting opinions from these two groups of participants, it allowed the researcher to gain a complete picture of the use of oral CF in secondary school in the Malaysian context. Moreover, getting opinions from these two perspectives would avoid any possible occurrence of bias and prejudice throughout this study. Apart from this, the invited teachers and students who participated in this study were from different secondary schools situated in different geographical areas of Penang. The participation of various respondents resulted in different points of view provided, hence ensured the validity and reliability of this study.

Finally, to ensure the validity and reliability in this study, the pilot study, which is an essential tool, was conducted. As mentioned earlier in the previous section (sub-section 4.4.4), the pilot study was conducted on the draft items of both sets of the questionnaires by inviting sample participants. The feedback gained from the pilot study on the items of the two sets of questionnaires was discussed with five academics in a group meeting and some recommendations and suggestions were

provided for necessary amendments and adjustments need to be made on the items. The responses from the participants were then uploaded in the SPSS software in order to test the validity of the items in the questionnaire. The discussion on the details of the pilot test results will be presented in Chapter 5 of Data Analysis and Results.

#### **4.6.2 Validity and reliability at the qualitative stage**

Achieving validity and reliability in qualitative and quantitative research are performed in different ways. As argued by Burns (2000, p. 11), “qualitative research places stress on the validity of multiple meaning structures and holistic analysis, as opposed to the criteria of reliability and statistical compartmentalisation of quantitative research”. The validity in qualitative research revolves its main concern on whether the findings of a research study accurately reflect the phenomenon under investigation (Henn et al., 2006). At this stage, the validity and reliability of the research instruments were conducted through the pilot tests in two parts. Firstly, the pilot test was conducted with two English instructors by asking them the pre-designed open-ended questions to elicit the participants’ views from multiple dimensions on the use of oral CF in their classrooms. The responses from the participants offered valid information; adjustments and amendments were made to the pre-designed open-ended questions accordingly.

There is a variety of ways in assessing reliability in qualitative research. Some of the ways including “increasing the variability of perspectives”, or “setting up a list of possible errors which they aim to avoid” to increase the reliability (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 86) in qualitative research. As for the present study, the reliability was



gained through the questions asked which included different aspects of the issue investigated. This was carefully constructed by designing the interview questions in such a way that allowed the investigation of the T-participants' thoughts from both practical and theoretical perspectives. By incorporating variability of the participants and aspects of designing the interview questions, it enabled the researcher, to some extent, to achieve the reliability of the study. In addition, the interview skills and schedules were adjusted accordingly based on the experiences from the pilot study. The reliability at this stage was further enhanced from the suggestions and recommendations from the interviewees involved in the pilot study.

In terms of mechanical recording, the audio-taped recordings were used to record related information and events, particularly during interviews and classroom observation sessions. The use of this mechanical instrument could help the researcher to review the recorded data and compare one set of data with another. Reviews of such mechanically recorded data were relevant in terms of an *intra-rater reliability* procedure in which, in this case, an *intra-observer reliability* procedure was conducted. The intra-rater or intra-observer reliability was intended to optimise the objectivity and consistency of the data interpreted at different periods of time (Chaudron, 1988). This method is suggested to create consistency of the data description (Nunan, 1992).

In addition to all the measures taken to assess the reliability and the validity of the research mentioned earlier, several techniques – field notes and audio-taping in the interviews as well as classroom observation sessions – were also used at the same time. These techniques were intended to optimise accurate data interpretation when

describing the focused phenomenon regarding teachers' use of oral CF in their lessons. These attempts were intended to achieve reliability. After all the efforts taken, it is believed that if this qualitative stage is re-conducted under similar context, the results will not be distinctly different; this stage is seen reliable.

### **4.6.3 Triangulation**

According to Neuman (2006), triangulation process applied in a project design and the data collection procedure helped to enhance the validity and credibility of a research. This includes the use of various methods and data sources (Bryman, 2008). By using two or more data collection methods in the study of some aspect of human behaviour, triangulation could also be applied (Cohen et al., 2007). Referring to the present study, triangulation was chosen as the research design because "one data collection provides strengths to offset the weaknesses of the other data gathering methods" (Creswell, 2005, p. 514). Through this procedure, it allowed to view a particular point from various perspectives, hence confirmed the reliability and validity of the data collected and the findings of the research. As Campbell and Fiske (1959, cited in Seale, 1999, p. 53) pointed out, "triangulation is a powerful means of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research". Moreover, it could also overcome the limitations and the problems that a single data collection has. Furthermore by triangulating the data, the researcher would get a more complete data set which was not provided by a single data collection approach.

Triangulation is a qualitative cross-validation and can be conducted among different data sources or different data-collection methods (Burns, 1994; Wiersma, 2000). The triangulation of the data was done by incorporating all the three

important elements; the use of multi-method, multi-person and multi-site. Firstly, in the present study, the multi-method referred to the use of questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations as the tools to collect the data. The combination of different methods and research instruments enabled a collection of more accurate and credible picture with the area studied. Secondly, the multi-person referred to the participants involved who were from two different groups; lower secondary school English teachers and students. By comparing the participants' views, understanding and behaviours, the researcher gained the access to a multi-dimension data sources and opinions. Finally, multi-site referred to the locations of all the secondary schools covered in this study which were from different geographical areas of Penang Island; urban, sub-urban and rural. All the elements incorporated in the triangulation process of this study allowed the observation of the participants from different angles and viewpoints, thus the confidence about the observations, interpretations and conclusions could be achieved (Eisner cited in Creswell, 1998).

#### **4.8 Ethical Issues**

The ethical issues in this research were addressed by obtaining approvals from a number of parties. Firstly, the approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), University of Tasmania (UTAS) before the whole research was carried out (see Appendix 1.1). The application was submitted in two forms; HREC the Social Sciences Full Application and Social Science Minimal Application, as there were some uncertainties related to the cross-national characteristics of this study. In both applications, all documents were attached: the Consent Form and the Information sheet (both for T- and S-participants and parents),

and the data collection instruments (two sets of questionnaires, interview questions and observation checklist).

Secondly, approval was obtained from the Educational Planning and Research Department (EPRD) (see Appendix 1.2) of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, with the purpose to register all research conducted on Malaysian ground. The approval was obtained by sending in the research proposal and the letter of approval from the HREC UTAS. Apart from EPRD, the approval from the state Department of Education (DoE) and the principals of the participating schools were also necessary to enable the researcher to collect the data from teachers and students at all participating secondary schools in Penang, the focus location of the study. This approval was obtained automatically and informally once approval was obtained from EPRD.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the methodology which underpinned in the present study which is essential in a research process. Methodology in a research process is important because it indicates the direction in which a research project is conducted and the justification of the approach and tools used to conduct data collection and analysis. In addition, methodology forms a valid basis in a research to evaluate the success of a research, furthermore the knowledge and ability of a researcher in conducting the study undertaken are also judged. A detailed description of the methods and research instruments used as well as the rationale for their use were also presented. The use of the mixed-method approach for data collection in this study was considered the most appropriate as it provided multiple perspectives to

understand the complexity of the use of English oral CF in Malaysian secondary school classrooms. A connection between the theoretical background of the study, the data analysis and the results was also made through the particular mixed-method approach. This chapter has further provided the methodological foundation on which the actual research actions were built.

Following the careful design of the research methodology and research instruments, the process of data collection was conducted, both quantitatively or qualitatively. From the data collection, it was analysed according to standard and appropriate methods of data analysis. In the next chapter on Quantitative Data Analysis and Results, the finding of the quantitative data collected from the two surveys conducted among the English teachers and students of the lower secondary schools will be presented. These findings address three out of four research objectives.

## CHAPTER 5. Quantitative Data Analysis and Results

### 5.1 Introduction

“A statistical analysis, properly conducted, is a delicate dissection of uncertainties, a surgery of suppositions”, M.J. Moroney.

Statistics is all about organizing, summarising, and interpreting information based on a set of method and rules. Its procedures help to ensure the information or observations are presented and interpreted in an accurate and informative way, thus helping researchers to bring order out of chaos. Apart from this, statistics also provide researchers with a set of standardized techniques that are recognised and understood throughout the scientific community. Although facts and figures can be important, this chapter will focus on the methods and procedures of statistics, thus allowing the data to speak for themselves (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007)

This chapter analyses the numerical data collected from the two surveys and will be presented in a number of ways. Firstly, the analysis of the validity and the reliability of the survey will be presented in relation to two phases of the study: the pilot test and the final distribution of both surveys. To ensure the close links between the data analysis and the research purposes, the research aims and objectives will be restated, followed by a brief explanation on the procedures involved in processing the data. Additionally, the data collected in the two surveys will be analysed and presented through descriptive statistics: frequency, median values, cross tabulation and Chi-square tests. Finally, different views between T- and S-participants on aspects of error correction of oral language will be examined.

## **5.2 The Reliability and the Validity of the Questionnaires**

To ensure the reliability and construct validity of the questionnaires (SET A and SET B), scaled question items were entered, coded and tested using SPSS. The reliability and validity tests of both sets of questionnaires were conducted at both stages of data collection to determine how free a scale used in the questionnaire from random error (Pallant, 2010). The aspect of reliability assessed in both sets of questionnaires is internal consistency, which refers to the degree to which the items that make up the scales are measuring the same underlying attribute. To conduct the reliability test, Cronbach Alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency of the scaled items by examining the average inter-item correlation (Chenoweth et al., 1983) which is considered to be a fundamental measure of reliability (Pallant, 2010). Cronbach's Alpha coefficient provides the information on which questionnaire items are related to each other and which items should be removed or changed. In order for the scales of a questionnaire to be reliable, ideally, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values above 0.6 are considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1967).

Likewise, conducting the validity test is also important for the questionnaire to determine the validity of the items constructed. In this validity test, the questionnaire items were tested against their construct of validity by using exploratory factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) was conducted prior to factor extraction and the statistical values equal or greater than 0.6 were considered acceptable (Kaiser, 1970, 1974). These two analyses are further

discussed according to each set of survey at the pilot study and the formal survey distribution.

### **5.2.1 SET A: Teachers' questionnaire**

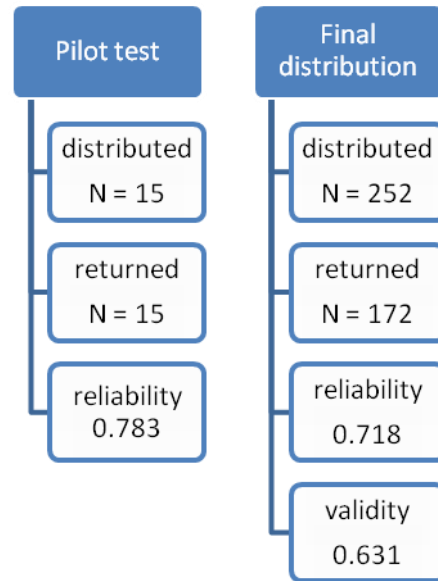
During the pilot test stage, the questionnaire was distributed to 15 English teachers in the lower secondary school levels in four states in Malaysia: Kedah, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Johor. To check the reliability of the scales used in the questionnaire items, 45 scaled items (from a total of 55 items) were selected (PART II: Sections A, B, and C). This selection excludes 9 items on demographic details (PART I) and 1 ranking item (PART II: Section D). The output of the Cronbach alpha coefficient value of 0.783 suggested the scales used in the questionnaire items were reliable (see Figure 5.1.).

In the final study, 252 questionnaires were distributed to English in lower secondary school teachers in Penang of which 172 questionnaires were returned (68%). To test the reliability of the scaled items, the same 45 scaled items as in the pilot test were selected (PART I: Sections A, B and C), excluding 9 items on demographic details (PART I) and 1 ranking item (PART II: Section D). The results of the analysis suggested that the scales used in the items were reliable based on the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.718 (see Figure 5.1.).

Factor Analysis was further performed to construct validity of the questionnaire. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted and resulted in a KMO statistical value of 0.631. The measurement of 0.631 is considered to be satisfactory



as the KMO values were greater than 0.5 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974). The summary distribution of teachers' questionnaire is shown in Figure 5.1.



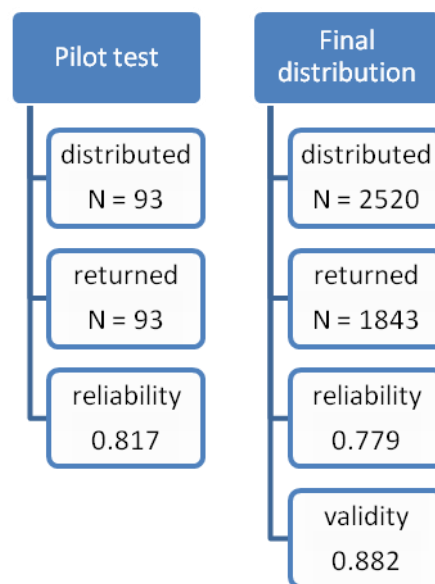
*Figure 5.1.* Summary distributions of teachers' questionnaire

### **5.2.2 SET B: Students' questionnaire**

As for SET B, in the pilot study, the questionnaire was distributed to student sample consisting of 93 students of lower secondary school levels from 4 states in Malaysia: Kedah, Selangor, Johor and Negeri Sembilan. This sample was selected by the English teachers involved in the teacher questionnaire pilot study. In checking the strength of the scales used in the items before the final distribution, 39 scaled items out of the total number of 47 items (PART II: Sections A, B and C) were selected, excluding 7 items on demographic details (PART I) and 1 item of ranking (PART II: Section D). The output of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient suggested very strong internal consistency reliability for the scales with the value of 0.817 (see Figure 5.2).

In the main study, the questionnaire was distributed to 2520 lower secondary school students in Penang, 1843 questionnaires were returned (73%). The same number of items were selected to test the reliability of the items' scales: 39 items out of 47 (PART II: Sections A, B and C), excluding 7 demographic items (PART I) and 1 ranking item (PART II: Section D). The output of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient suggested the scales used were reliable based on the value of 0.779 (see Figure 5.2).

Factor Analysis was further performed to construct the validity of the questionnaire. The result of the validity test indicated that the items had strong validity based on KMO value of 0.882. The summary of students' survey is illustrated in Figure 5.2.



*Figure 5.2.* Summary distributions of students' questionnaire

### **5.3 Quantitative Data Analysis**

As indicated in the last chapter, the mixed method approach to data collection was designed to carefully address the four research objectives. To address three of

the four research objectives, the questionnaire was designed by giving careful attention to the items developed in relation to the literature. The two sets of questionnaires consisted of five sections: one demographic section, three scaled sections and one ranking section. The details of the questionnaires corresponding to the three research questions are presented in Table 5.1 (see Appendices 4.1 and 4.2).

Table 5.1. *Research objectives and corresponding questionnaire sections and items*

Research objectives	Set/Sections	Question items
RO1: Views of secondary school teachers on CF on oral language	<b>SET A: Part II</b> <u>Section A</u> : general views on spoken error correction <u>Section B</u> : views on own classroom practice of spoken error correction <u>Section C</u> : views on learner uptake received <u>Section D</u> : views on error types focused in spoken error correction	Q10-Q26 Q27-Q44 Q47-Q54 Q55
RO2: Views of secondary school students on CF on oral language	<b>SETB: Part II</b> <u>Section A</u> : general views on spoken error correction <u>Section B</u> : views on own responses on teachers' use of spoken error correction <u>Section C</u> : own feelings and attitudes towards spoken error correction received <u>Section D</u> : views on error types focused in spoken error correction	Q8-Q24 Q27-Q34 Q35-Q46 Q47
RO3: Comparison of views between secondary schools students and teachers on oral CF	<b>SET A and SET B Part II</b> <u>Section A</u> : general views on spoken error correction	Q10-Q26 (SET A) Q8-Q24 (SET B)

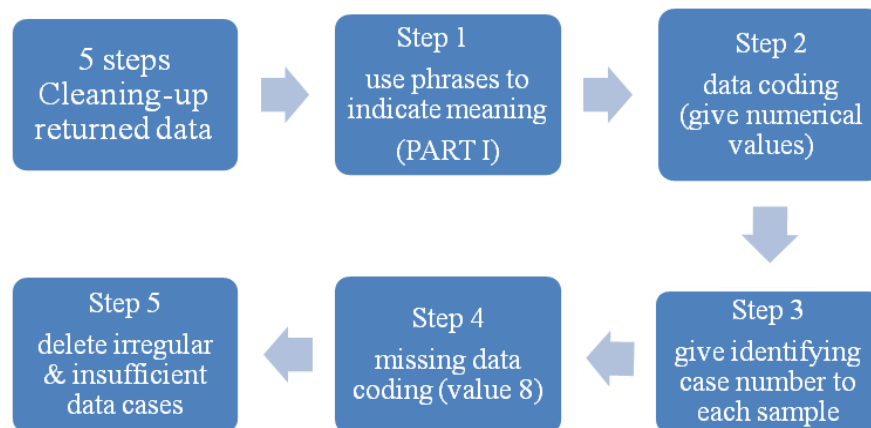
### **5.3.1 Procedure of processing data**

In addressing *Research Objectives 1, 2, and 3* of the study, two questionnaires were distributed to two groups of participants: secondary schools English teachers and secondary school students. The completion of these surveys took approximately 2 months between May and September, 2009. Two sets of questionnaires (SET A and SET B) were distributed to the participants via the participating schools' principals and were returned in self-posted envelopes.

To assist with the data analysis of both sets of questionnaires, SPSS (Statistical Programme for the Social Science) was used as this SPSS is common computer software used by researchers to analyse quantitative data. In using SPSS, there were a number of steps involved in cleaning-up the returned surveys (see Figure 5.3).

Firstly, in Step 1 of the data cleaning up process, phrases were used to indicate the exact meanings of each item in Part I (demographic details) such as '*gender*', '*age*', '*form(s) taught*', '*latest English results*'. However, in Part II (Sections A to D), instead of using phrases, each variable was copied directly into SPSS. Secondly, Step 2 involved the data coding process in which numerical values of 1 to 5 were given to the responses provided based on the options of each item in both sets of questionnaires; the values indicated different meanings for different parts. In Part II the numerical values used to code the data referred to the category options listed for each variable. Different numerical values applied to different sections: Section A, from value 1 for 'strongly disagree' to value 5 for 'strongly agree', Section B and C, from value 1 for 'the least' to value 5 for 'the most' and Section D from value 1 for 'the least important' to value 5 for 'the most important'. In the third step, identifying

case numbers were assigned to each sample; this is important so that one person's responses were not mixed up with another (Oppenheim, 1992). In addition, this step further assisted the researcher to be able to identify the sample in the future if any problems occurred with a particular sample. Next in Step 4, all the missing data were coded a numerical value of 8 where applicable. Finally, in the final Step 5, irregular cases and cases which did not provide sufficient data were deleted as they were deemed irrelevant data. These five steps of cleaning-up the returned data were performed for both sets of questionnaires (see Figure 5.3.).



*Figure 5.3. Steps in cleaning-up returned data*

### **5.3.2 Types of statistical analysis and data**

There were two types of data involved in analysing the quantitative data collected: nominal and ordinal data. The independent variables (demographic details of Part I of both sets of questionnaires) provided the researcher with nominal data because it had nonmathematical properties and had independent response categories; the scores indicated nothing about the quantity of the data being measured (Diekhoff,

1992). Alternatively, the data collected from the dependent variables (all sections of Part II in both sets of survey) were categorised as ordinal data because they had some mathematical properties but was subjective. Furthermore, this data also concerned with response categories that formed a scale (Huizingh, 2007). Apart from this, the total number of independent and dependent variables varied between both sets of questionnaires. SET A questionnaire consisted of 9 independent variables and 46 dependent variables whereas SET B, 7 independent variables and 40 dependent variables were constructed. The chosen independent variables acted as factors which may be used to comply with some interesting results in relation to the views and behaviours of the participants' on oral CF. By operating the statistical analysis on SPSS with the two types of variables, it was anticipated that this may help to determine the inter-connections and relationships between different views and/or behaviours of the different participant groups.

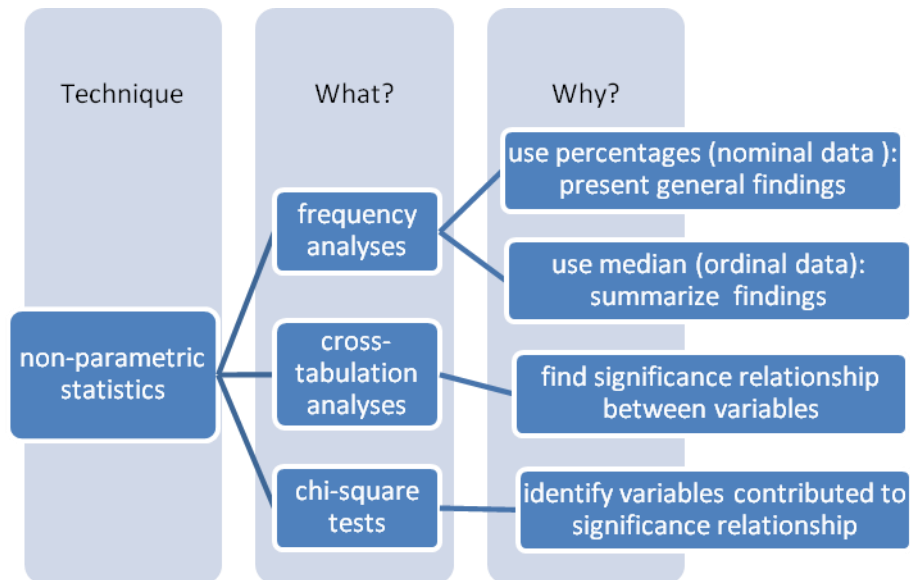
To decide between which statistical techniques (parametric and non-parametric tests) to be used in analysing the data, the distribution of the dependent variables were examined by assessing the skewness, kurtosis and Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic (Coakes, Steed, & Ong, 2010). While skewness provided an indication of the symmetry of the distribution, kurtosis determined the “peakedness” of the distribution (Pallant, 2007, 2010). However, the suitability of statistical techniques to be used also depends on a Sig. value. The value of less than 0.05 obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic would suggest violation of the assumption of normality (Coakes et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010). The Sig. value obtained from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests conducted on the dependent variables of both sets of questionnaires were all 0.000, in which this values were common in large samples.

Based on these values, the dependent variables were considered to be non-normally distributed and therefore non-parametric tests were chosen as these tests are suitable to analyse non-normally distributed data.

Non-parametric techniques were chosen to analyse the data because these techniques are suitable for data that are measured on nominal and ordinal scales (Pallant, 2010). From several types of non-parametric statistics, three types were chosen to analyse the data: frequency analysis, cross-tabulation analysis and Chi-square test were used to analyse the data collected in both surveys. In frequency analysis, percentages were used to present the findings of the nominal data as this measure of central tendency was appropriate for the nominal data. Median values were chosen as the more appropriate measures of central tendency to analyse the ordinal data because median was an appropriate measurement for this type of data (Huizingh, 2007). Moreover this measure was also valid since it required only ordered observations to compute (Agresti & Finlay, 1997). Next, cross-tabulation analysis (or known as cross-tab) was used to further indicate the relationship between two categorical variables; identifying whether the distribution of one variable differed for each category of the other. Cross-tab analysis was also used because it was effective, easily understood and interpreted (Alreck & Settle, 1995). Finally, the certainty of the dependency of the observed variables was measured by using Chi-square test as this test could further determine which independent variables contributed to the significance relationship, statistically (Alreck & Settle, 1995).

Thorough analyses were conducted for both sets of the questionnaire according to each section. The findings were presented generally except for specific aspects of

the data. For example, in SET A (teachers' questionnaire), a number of variables was selected and paired up to compare and check the consistency of responses among the T-participants' beliefs and their classroom practices concerning aspects of spoken error correction. In order to determine the existence of different views pertaining to the teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices, the median values of the variables were compared. Only interesting and significant results were presented. The summary of the non-parametric statistics used to analyse the questionnaire is presented in Figure 5.4.



*Figure 5.4. Non-parametric statistics of data analysis*

### **5.3.3 The samples**

The data were gathered from two samples of participants, secondary school English teachers (N=172) and secondary school students (N=1843) via two sets of questionnaires. As mentioned earlier, the responses from the questionnaires distributed were entered and analysed using the SPSS software. To give a brief analysis of the independent variables making up the sample population, tables were



developed, separately, to present the findings of the two groups of sample. Tables were considered the most suitable method to summarize the number of population in each category, commencing with the T-participants followed by the S-participants.

### ***5.3.3.1 Secondary school English teachers***

From Table 5.2, it can be seen that the majority (144: 83.7%) were female. This result directly reflected the situation in Malaysia where the field of teaching is largely dominated by females and in particular, the English subject. The teachers varied in age with the majority of 80 (46.5%) teachers aged between 41-50 years followed by 46 (26.7%) teachers aged between 31-40 years, 27 (15.7%) teachers aged between 20-30 years and the minority of 18 (10.5) teachers aged more than 51 years.

In relation to the form(s) taught, there were similar differences in percentages across the three forms. The majority of the T-participants 91 (52.9%) were teaching more than one form. This result also closely reflected the nature of teaching English in most of the secondary schools in Malaysia generally and in Penang particularly. Secondary school English teachers are usually assigned more than one form with the intention of giving them more experience in dealing with a variety of student's proficiency levels. However, this also reflected the shortage of English teachers in some of the secondary schools in Penang, especially in the rural area.

Most T-participants were considered as seniors in their teaching field with very considerable experience in teaching, generally and in teaching English, in particular. The results indicated that the majority of teachers, 89 (51.7%) and 76 (44.2%), had

more than 15 years' experience in general teaching and teaching of English respectively. This state of seniority in teaching contrasted with the highest education level of the T-participants whereby the majority of them, 112 (65.1%) had obtained a bachelors degree in teacher training, followed by 18 (10.5%) teachers with a graduate diploma, 11 (6.4%) teachers with a masters degree and the minority of 5 (2.9%) teachers having certificates in teacher training (see Table 5.2). In Malaysia, it is normally the case that those teachers who are seniors in their teaching field are those who had obtained a diploma qualification as their highest level of education. Conversely, the results indicated that teachers in Penang, particularly, were more aware of upgrading their academic qualifications in order to equip themselves with more professional knowledge and training in their teaching field. Similarly, this awareness was demonstrated in the data whereby there were higher numbers of T-participants who had taken the initiative to pursue their professional development by completing their master degree, 8 (4.7%), or a doctoral degree (PhD), 6 (3.5%). Almost an equal number of T-participants, 83 (48.3%) and 85 (49.4%) reported 'yes' and 'no' respectively in relation to attend in-service courses. This also confirmed the awareness of the T-participants as to the importance of professional development.

The data in Table 5.2 revealed that the T-participants came from all geographical areas of Penang: urban, suburban and rural, although the numbers in each area were not balanced. With the majority of T-participants, 124 (72.1%), coming from an urban area, this finding reflected the current situation in Penang where more secondary schools were situated in urban areas. The number for rural or suburban areas were 29 (16.9%) for rural and 14 (8.1%) of the T-participants from suburban.

### **5.3.3.2 Secondary school students**

The total number of S-participants in the study was 1843. Of these, 59.7% (1101) were female and the 40.2% (740) were male students. In relation to their age, the results indicated a balance among the three students age groups: 30.5% (562) aged 13 years, 33.6% (620) aged 14 years and 34.8% (641) aged 15 years. This result directly reflected the forms that were included in the study: 30.8% (567) of Form 1, 33.6% (620) of Form 2, and 34.9% of Form 3. As the findings in Table 5.3 presented, the results also indicated that the S-participants represented all geographical areas in Penang, although the majority came from the urban area, 74.2% (1367). This was followed by S-participants from the rural area, 18% (331), and suburban area of 6.8% (125).

Table 5.2 *Summary analysis of T-participants*

Variables		Percentage (n)
Gender:	Male	16.3 (28)
	Female	83.7 (144)
Age:	20-30 years	15.7 (27)
	31-40 years	26.7 (46)
	41-50 years	46.5 (80)
	More than 51 years	10.5 (18)
Highest education:	Certificate in teacher training	2.9 (5)
	Diploma in teacher training	10.5 (18)
	Bachelor degree in teacher training	65.1 (112)
	Master degree in teacher training	6.4 (11)
	Others	13.4 (23)
Professional development:	Post graduate	
	Master degree	4.7 (8)
	PhD	3.5 (6)
	No	90.1 (155)
	In-service courses	
	Yes	48.3 (83)
	No	49.4 (85)
Forms taught:	Form 1	11.6 (20)
	Form 2	19.8 (34)
	Form 3	13.4 (23)
	More than one forms	52.9 (91)
Years of teaching:	Less than 1 year	5.2 (9)
	1-5 years	13.4 (23)
	6-10 years	15.7 (27)
	11-15 years	13.4 (23)
	More than 15 years	51.7 (89)
Years of teaching English:	Less than 1 year	8.1 (14)
	1-5 years	13.4 (23)
	6-10 years	16.3 (28)
	11-15 years	16.3 (28)
	More than 15 years	44.2 (76)
Area of school:	Urban	72.1 (124)
	Suburban	8.1 (14)
	Rural	16.9 (29)

In relation to the S-participants' latest English test results, proficiency level of spoken English and self-confidence in speaking English, the results were significantly contradicted. The majority of the S-participants, 60.2% (1110), obtained between grades A and B in their latest English tests, but their proficiency levels and self-confidence in their spoken English did not reflect these grades. The majority of the S-participants did not rate themselves as having high proficiency levels, 21.2% (390) or being very confident in their spoken English, 39.2% (722). In fact they rated themselves as having average proficiency level, 70.6% (1302) and being less confident, 56.1% (1034) when it comes to communication in English. The S-participants also rated themselves as having better writing skills than speaking skills (see Table 5.3). In addition, these findings might suggest the influence of the Malaysian examination system (as mentioned in Chapter 2) which tends to focus more on writing and reading skills than speaking skills.

Table 5.3 *Summary analysis of S-participants*

Variables	Percentage (n)
Gender	
Male	40.2 (740)
Female	59.7 (1101)
Age	
13 years	30.5 (562)
14 years	33.6 (620)
15 years	34.8 (641)
Current form	
Form 1	30.8 (567)
Form 2	33.0 (620)
Form 3	34.9 (644)
School area	
Urban	74.2 (1367)
Suburban	6.8 (125)
Rural	18.0 (331)
Latest English grade	
Between A and B	60.2 (1110)
Between C and D	34.8 (642)
E and below	3.3 (60)
Proficiency level in spoken English	
Good	21.2 (390)
Average	70.6 (1302)
Poor	7.7 (142)
Self-confidence in spoken English	
Very confident	39.2 (722)
Less confident	56.1 (1034)
No confident	4.1 (76)

## 5.4 Results

In this section, two correlations were examined: between the independent variables and dependent variables, and between the dependent variables themselves. The items constructed in Part I of both sets of questionnaires were independent variables which asked for the participants' demographic information. On the other hand, the items in Part II Sections A to C (both sets) were designed based on Likert'

Measurement of Attitudes (Likert, 1932); the use of Likert's Measurement of Attitudes varied in accordance to different sets of questionnaires designed.

In SET A, within Section A and C, the Likert scale was designed with value 1 corresponding to the lowest agreement and 5 to the highest agreement. Whereas in Section B, the Likert scale was designed with value 1 corresponding to the least frequency and 5 to the most frequency. In SET B, within Section A, the Likert scale designed with value 1 corresponding to the lowest agreement to 5 corresponding to the highest agreement. However, in Section B and C, the Likert scale designed with value 1 corresponding to the least frequency to 5 the most frequency. Each item required the respondents to choose a single value from the scale. As mentioned in the previous section, median values were used to describe the participants' responses to the items.

#### **5.4.1 Analysis of the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers on oral corrective feedback**

Research Objective 1 investigated the teachers' general views on oral CF. In addressing this research objective, three research questions were formed and a survey among secondary school English teachers was conducted to collect relevant data. The results corresponding to this research objective are presented in relation to each research question; figures and tables are used to illustrate the findings where relevant.

#### ***5.4.1.1 What are the general views of the teachers on oral corrective feedback?***

To explore the T-participants' general views on spoken error correction, 16 items were constructed (Part I Section A of SET A questionnaire). After analysing the data collected from the survey, two categories were identified as addressing this research question: general aspects; and technical aspects of spoken error correction. The results are presented according to each category and supplemented with figures for clarity.

##### *Participants' views on general aspects of spoken error correction.*

The results from the survey consisted of three general aspects of spoken error correction: the importance of correcting students' spoken errors by teachers; teachers' assumption on students knowing the reasons for the errors corrected; and the explanation by teachers which followed the corrections made on oral language. There were four items constructed to investigate the T-participants' views on general aspects of spoken error correction mentioned earlier:

*Q10: Correcting students' errors in speaking is important.*

*Q20: Too much correction by teachers decreases students' motivation to participate orally.*

*Q25: Teachers should not assume that students know the reasons of their errors by just indicating the errors.*

*Q26: Teachers should not give a long explanation when giving feedback on errors on students' oral language.*



Findings from the survey suggested a consistency in the responses from the median values of 4 and 5 (see Figure 5.5). In general, the findings revealed that the T-participants had strong agreement on the importance of correcting students' errors in speaking (Q10). However, they also agreed that too much correction of the students' spoken errors led to less student motivation in their oral participation (Q20). In relation to the explanation by teachers that followed the corrections made, the T-participants agreed that students should not be given long explanations orally on the errors corrected (Q26). This suggests that teachers should not assume that students will know the reasons for their errors by merely stating the errors during their correction (Q25).

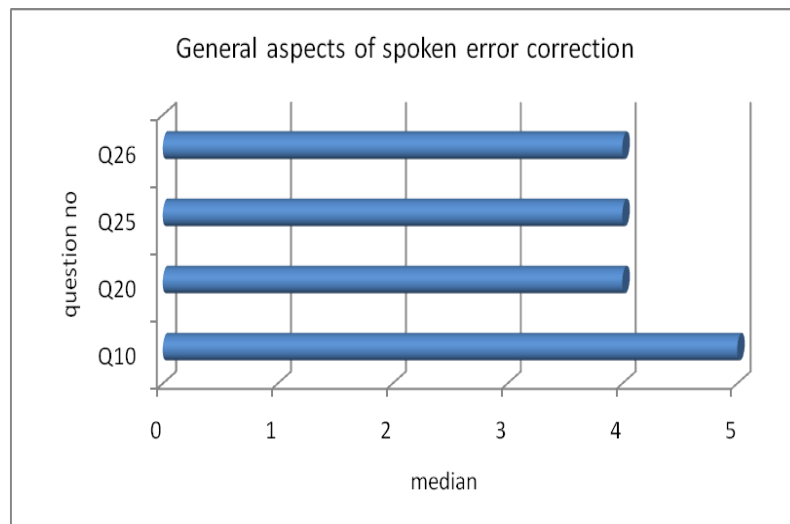


Figure 5.5. Results of median values of general aspects of spoken error correction

#### *Participants' views on technical aspects of spoken error correction.*

The findings for this category were further divided into three major areas: *how*, *when* and *which* spoken errors should be corrected and were presented accordingly. The 12 items constructed to investigate the T-participants' views on technical aspects of spoken error correction were divided accordingly to these three major areas:

How should spoken errors be corrected?

*Q16: Teachers should encourage students to identify their own errors when speaking.*

*Q17: Teachers should highlight students' errors in their oral language.*

When would correcting spoken errors be appropriate?

*Q12: Teachers should correct the students' errors the moment they make the errors.*

*Q13: Teachers should correct the students' errors only after they have finished their sentences.*

Which spoken errors should be corrected?

*Q11: Teachers should correct every error students make when they speak.*

*Q14: Teachers should correct the students' spoken errors only if the errors are obvious.*

*Q15: Teachers should emphasize correcting errors on accuracy in students' oral language.*

*Q18: Teachers should only give feedback on errors which are easy to explain on students' oral language.*

*Q19: Teachers should not avoid giving feedback on errors which require complicated explanation on students' oral language.*

*Q22: Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak.*

*Q23: Teachers should not focus only on fluency on students' oral language.*

*Q24: Teachers should avoid feedback on students' spoken errors which are too complicated to explain.*

*How should spoken errors be corrected?* In general, the T-participants had equal agreement on two ways of *how* spoken errors should be corrected: assigning the responsibility for correcting students' spoken errors to the students themselves by encouraging them to identify their own spoken errors (Q16) and

taking the responsibility for correcting students' spoken errors by teacher's highlighting the students' spoken errors (Q17). This equal agreement is shown by the same median value of 4 for both questions (see Figure 5.6)

*When would correcting spoken errors be appropriate?* The findings for this aspect indicated that the T-participants agreed to both options: correcting spoken errors the moment the errors occurred (Q12); and correcting spoken errors only after the students finished their utterances (Q13). These agreements could be identified from the median value of 4 for both questions (see Figure 5.6). The findings may have indicated that the T-participants were unsure as to *when* correcting students' spoken errors would be appropriate and thus agreed to both situations, rather than interpreting them as exclusive options.

*Which spoken errors should be corrected?* From the results, it can be seen that the T-participants agreed on four aspects of *what* errors should be corrected in students' oral language: correct every error which occurred in students' spoken language (Q11); correct if the spoken errors were obvious (Q14); correction should emphasis on errors on accuracy (Q15) and not only on fluency (Q23); and teachers should not avoid correcting errors which required complicated explanation (Q19). This agreement was demonstrated by the median value of 4 for each item (see Figure 5.6).

Apart from agreeing in four aspects, the T-participants also disagreed with two aspects of *what* teachers should focus in their correction: feedback should only be given on easy explanation errors (Q18); and avoiding errors which are too

complicated to explain (Q24). This disagreement was seen from the median values of 2 (see Figure 5.6).

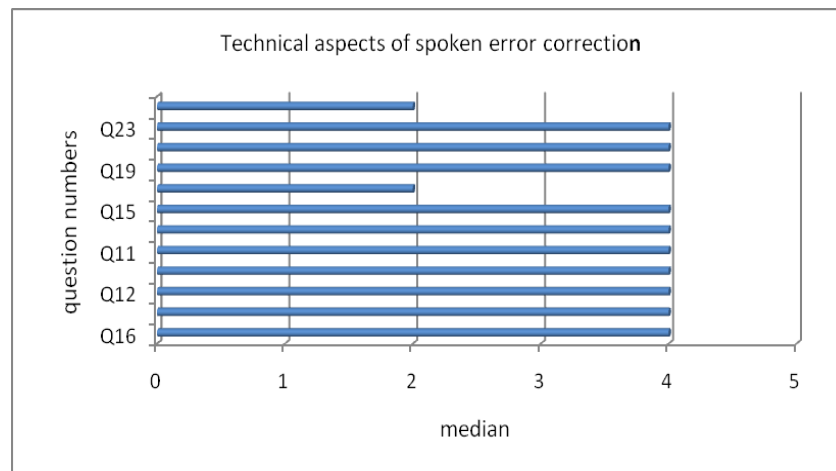


Figure 5.6. Results of median values of technical aspects of spoken error correction

The T-participants' views on *which* error types teachers should focus on in their correction was examined through item 55 in Section D. In this section, the single item used to assess this involved ranking on a scale from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). The T-participants were asked to rank the five types of errors listed according to their assessment of their importance. The error types were grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, meaning and function. The findings were examined according to three levels of importance: most important (median values of 4 and 5), average important (median value of 3) and least important (median values of 1 and 2). Of the five error types, grammar was ranked as similarly important (median value of 4). The other four error types which were ranked as average important an average median value of 3: pronunciation, meaning, vocabulary and function (see Figure 5.7).

Considering all the median values from these findings, it can be seen that there was little difference reported in the level of importance across all the errors types. A

very slight difference in median value of 1 among all the errors listed, showed that the T-participants felt all the error types shared a similar level of importance, although grammar was identified as clearly of importance.

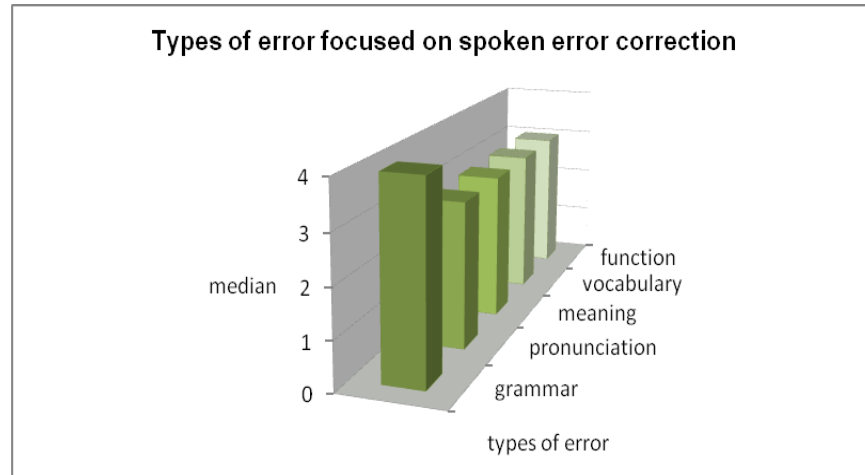


Figure 5.7. Results of median values on error types focused in spoken error correction

#### ***5.4.1.2 What are the teachers' views on their own classroom practices with regards to the use of corrective feedback in their teaching?***

While the previous results presented the T-participants' general views on oral CF, the results in this section presented their views on their own teaching practices in relation to the use of oral CF in their classroom. The results from the survey in relation to their own classroom practice were divided into two categories: own practice of oral CF and types of oral CF used. Each item in Part I Section B on SET A questionnaire was constructed to investigate these two aspects – Likert's Measurement of Attitudes giving the scales from 1 (low frequency of behaviour) to 5 (high frequency of behaviour) was used and 18 items were constructed. The results

are presented according to each category and the summarised results presented in figures.

*Practices of oral CF.* Based on the results of the T-participants' rating on the five-point Likert's scale, the classroom practices were divided into three levels of emphasis: strong emphasis (median values of 4 and 5), average emphasis (median value of 3) and weak emphasis (median values of 2 and 1). These three levels of response were determined by examining the median values of all 12 items constructed to investigate the T-participants' teaching practice in relation to their use of CF in their classrooms:

Strong emphasis (positive practices)

*Q27: I emphasize correcting students' spoken errors in my English lessons.*

*Q34: My feedback on students' errors depends on their abilities.*

*Q36: I point out the errors made by my students, when I give feedback on their spoken errors.*

*Q41: I correct errors promptly when my students make errors on their oral language.*

*Q37: I explain on the errors when I give feedback on my students' spoken errors.*

Average emphasis

*Q28: I avoid correcting every error made by my students in their oral language.*

*Q35: I concentrate on weak students when correcting errors on oral language.*

*Q29: I avoid giving feedback on errors which are too complicated to explain.*

Weak emphasis (negative practices)

*Q30: I avoid getting my students to correct their own spoken errors.*

*Q31: I do not explain the errors when I give feedback to my students' spoken errors.*

*Q32: I give feedback on my students' spoken error without giving any explanation.*

*Q33: I discourage peer-correction when my students make errors on their oral language.*

The findings indicated that the T-participants gave more emphasis to the positive practices of spoken error correction from the median value of 4 for Q27, Q34, Q36, Q37 and Q41. Average (median value of 3) and lower emphasis (median values of 1 and 2) was given to Q28, Q29, Q35, and Q30, Q31, Q32, Q33 respectively (see Figure 5.8).

By analysing all the median values of the items, it clearly indicated that T-participants were confident with what they practised in their teaching in relation to the positive practices of spoken error correction. Nonetheless, when negative practices which dealt with more technical aspects of *what* errors to correct (Q28 and Q29), *which* group of students to focus the correction on (Q35) and *how* spoken errors were corrected (Q30, Q31, Q32 and Q33), the median values indicated that average and less emphasis was given to these technical aspects (see Figure 5.8).

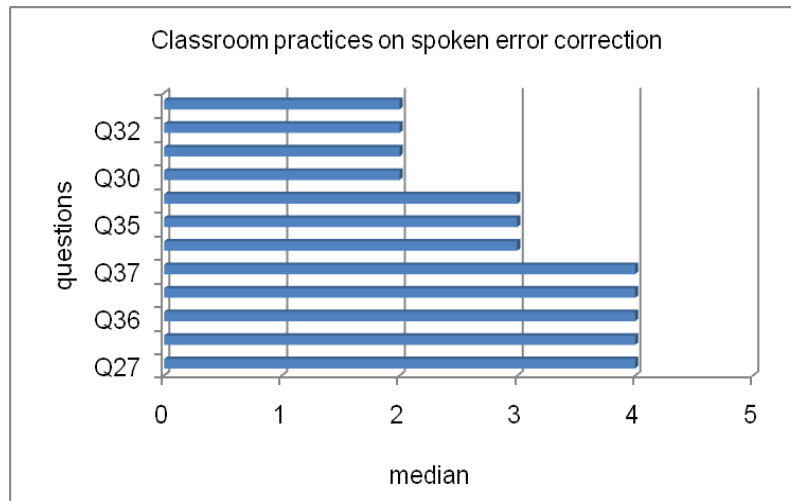


Figure 5.8. Results of median values of classroom practices on spoken error correction

*Types of oral CF used.* There were six items (Part II, Section B)

constructed to elicit the T-participants' views on the types of oral CF they used when they corrected students' spoken errors in their teaching which represented the six types of oral CF (Lyster & Ranta, 1997): explicit correction (Q38), recast (Q39), clarification request (Q40), elicitation (Q42), meta-linguistic feedback (Q43) and repetition (Q44).

The items were constructed using the Likert's scaling giving the T-participants the response option of 1 (low frequency of behaviour) to 5 (high frequency of behaviour). The findings were categorized into three levels of reported frequency: most frequently used (median values of 4 and 5), average frequently used (median value of 3) and less frequently used (median values of 1 and 2).

The types of oral CF most frequently used by the T-participants in their correction of students' spoken errors were explicit correction (EC), repetition (R),



meta-linguistic feedback (MF), elicitation (E), and clarification request (CR). The results showed that all types of CF were regarded as high frequency (median value of 4), with only one type of CF, recast, showing a slightly lower frequency level (median value of 3). The comparison of the median values of all the types of CF listed indicated that all of them were similarly used, if not equal, by the T-participants to correct their students' spoken errors in their teaching (see Figure 5.9).

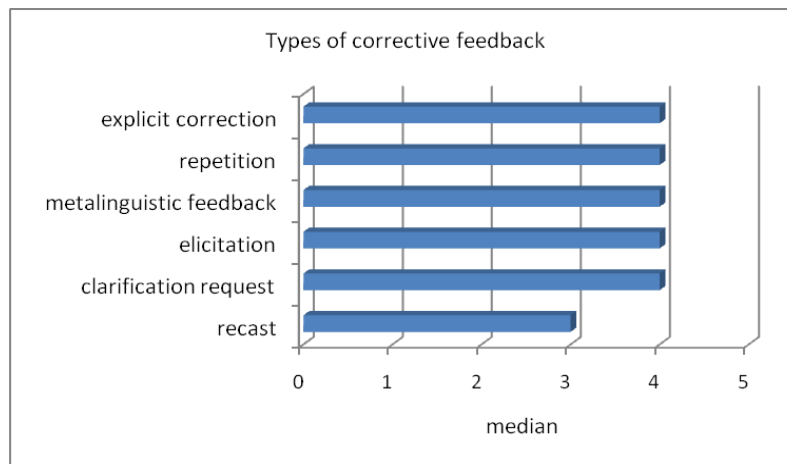


Figure 5.9. Results of median values on types of oral CF used in teaching

#### ***5.4.1.3 What are the teachers' views on types of learner uptake received following oral corrective feedback used on students' spoken errors?***

The items constructed to address the T- participants' views on the types of learner uptake following CF used the same scales of Likert's Measurement of Attitudes as in Section B, giving the participants scales from 1 (low frequency of behaviour) to 5 (high frequency of behaviour). There were 8 questions constructed representing 2 types of learner uptake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) which were further sub-categorized into two: repair (repetition of correct form (Q47); self-repair error

(Q51); and peer-repair error (Q53)), and need repair (repetition of the same error (Q48); repetition of different errors (Q49); partial correction (Q50); hesitation (Q52); and acknowledgement (Q54)).

From the analysis of the responses, among all types of learner uptake, acknowledgement, self-repair error and partial correction had the highest median value of 4. This indicated that these three types of learner uptake were the most frequently received by the T-participants after their correction of their students' errors of oral language. The next types of learner uptake were repetition of correct form, repetition of the same error, repetition of different error and peer-repair error with the median value of 3. With the median value of 2, hesitation was the least frequent learner uptake received by the T-participants after their corrections on students' spoken errors (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. *Median values of learner uptake following CF*

Types of learner uptake	Median
<i>Repair:</i>	
self-repair error (Q51)	4
peer-repair error (Q53)	3
repetition of correct form (Q47)	3
<i>Need repair:</i>	
partial correction (Q50)	4
Acknowledgement (Q54)	4
repetition of different error (Q49)	3
repetition of the same error (Q48)	3
hesitation (Q52)	2

### 5.4.2 Summary findings of Research Objective 1

The findings related to Research Objective 1 appear to indicate that theoretically, the T-participants had good knowledge of oral CF. However, practically, the tendency was for a less frequent use of spoken error correction of

their students' oral language. This might suggest that, in their teaching, speaking skills were not the most important focus; great focus may be given to writing skills, which would reflect the focus of the Malaysian school curriculum and examinations system (as discussed in Chapter 2).

### **5.4.3 Analysis of the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school students on oral corrective feedback used by their teachers**

This research objective investigated the students' views on oral CF used by their teachers. In addressing this research objective, five research questions were developed and questionnaires were distributed to secondary school students to gather the data. The findings corresponding to this research objective are presented in relation to each research question. Figures and tables are also presented to summarize the findings.

#### ***5.4.3.1 What are the general views of the students on oral corrective feedback used by teachers?***

This research question investigated the S-participants' views on aspects of spoken error correction. To address this research question, 16 items of SET B questionnaire were constructed. The findings from these items are presented in two categories: general aspects (Q8, Q18, Q23 and Q24) and technical aspects of spoken error correction. The technical aspects of spoken error correction were further divided into the three aspects of *when*, *which* and *how* spoken error should be corrected. The results are presented according to each of the two main categories identified.

*Participants views on general aspects of spoken error correction.*

In this category, there were four items constructed to investigate the S-participants' views on general aspects of spoken error correction. The results of the median values indicated different levels of agreement among S-participants on the general aspects of spoken error correction. The median values of 4 and 5 were taken to indicate strong agreement, whereas a median value of 3 indicated uncertainty and median values of 1 and 2 indicated weak agreement. The four questionnaire items were:

*Q8: Correcting students' errors in speaking is important.*

*Q18: Too much correction by teachers decreases students' motivation to participate orally.*

*Q23: Teachers should not assume that students know the reasons of their errors by just indicating the errors.*

*Q24: Teachers should not give a long explanation when giving feedback on errors on students' oral language.*

From the analysis, the S-participants had strong agreement that correcting students' errors in speaking is important (Q8) (median value of 5). Though they agreed strongly with Q8, the S-participants were unsure on the three other general aspects of spoken error correction (Q18). Teachers were uncertain whether they should or should not assume that students know the reasons for the correction made by just indicating the errors. They were also uncertain whether teachers should or should not give long explanations on corrected errors. This uncertainty was demonstrated in the median value of 3 on all these three items (see Figure 5.10).

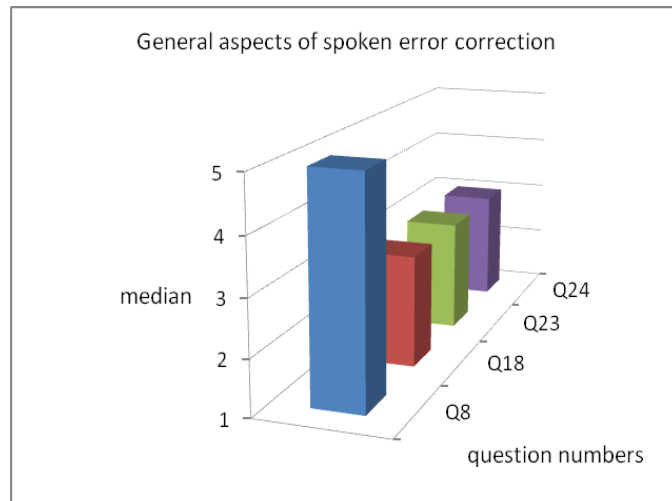


Figure 5.10. Results of median values of general aspects of spoken error correction

*Technical aspects of spoken error correction.* The findings on the views of S-participants on the technical aspects of spoken error correction were divided into three major areas: *how*, *when* and *what* spoken errors should be corrected. 12 items were constructed to explore the S-participants on these aspects were listed below:

How should spoken errors be corrected?

*Q14: Teachers should encourage students to identify their own errors when speaking.*

*Q15: Teachers should highlight students' errors in their oral language.*

When would correcting spoken errors be appropriate?

*Q10: Teachers should correct the students' errors the moment they make the errors.*

*Q11: Teachers should correct the students' errors only after they have finished their sentences.*

Which spoken errors should be corrected?

*Q9: Teachers should correct every error students make when they speak.*

*Q12: Teachers should correct the students' spoken errors only if the errors are obvious.*

*Q13: Teachers should emphasize correcting errors on accuracy in students' oral language.*

*Q16: Teachers should only give feedback on errors which are easy to explain on students' oral language.*

*Q17: Teachers should not avoid giving feedback on errors which require complicated explanation on students' oral language.*

*Q20: Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak.*

*Q21: Teachers should not focus only on fluency on students' oral language.*

*Q22: Teachers should avoid feedback on students' spoken errors which are too complicated to explain.*

The findings (see Figure 5.11) indicated that the S-participants were certain with what they need in relation to spoken error correction used by teachers. This was particularly the case when the technical aspects of *when, how would spoken errors be corrected* and *what errors teachers should focus on their correction* were concerned. These agreements were demonstrated from the median value of 4 for most of the technical aspects of spoken error correction (*how*: Q14 & Q15, *when*: Q10, and *what*: Q9, Q12, Q13, Q17). Additionally, the result suggested that the S-participants were very positive and keen for their teachers to correct their oral language errors. The certainty of their opinions and their positive attitudes towards spoken error correction was also apparent when the S-participants were unsure (median value of 3: Q11, Q16 & Q21) and disagreed (median value of 2: Q20 & Q22) with items of the technical aspects which expressed very definite negative positions. These results suggest that

the S-participants may want teachers to be precise when correcting their students' spoken errors.

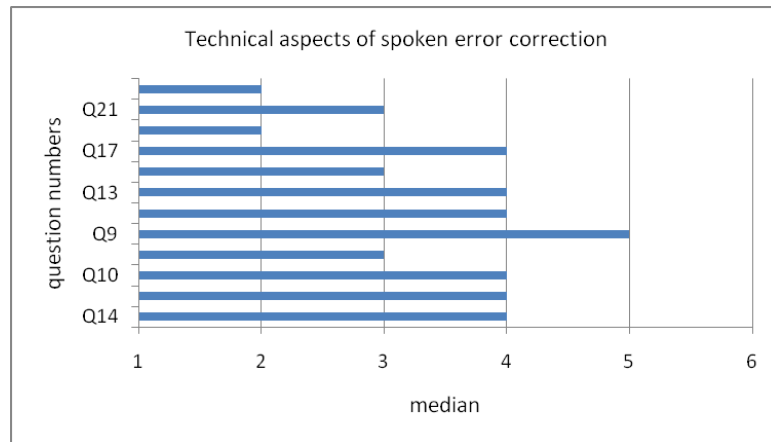


Figure 5.11. Results of median vales of technical aspects of spoken error correction

#### 5.4.3.2 What are the students' views on the types of learner uptake following oral corrective feedback used by their teachers?

The items constructed to address this research question focused on investigating the types of students' immediate responses following their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language. These immediate responses are known as *learner uptake* (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). The construction of all the items were based on Likert's scales providing the S-participants a scale from 1 (low frequency of behaviour) to 5 (high frequency of behaviour). Seven items were constructed representing 2 types of learner uptake which were further sub-categorized: repair (repetition of correct form (Q27); self-repair error (Q31); and peer-repair error (Q33)) and need repair (repetition of the same error (Q28); repetition of different errors (Q29); partial correction (Q30); and acknowledgement (Q34)).

The analysis (see Table 5.5) showed that the repair category, with a median value of 4 for each item, was the most frequent response made by the S-participants after their teachers corrected their spoken errors. Acknowledgment, in the need repair category, was another frequent response by the S-participants following their teachers' correction of their oral language with the median value of 4. This was then followed by partial correction, repetition of the same error and repetition of different error with the median values of 3, 2, and 2 respectively.

These findings demonstrated that the S-participants were very positive in their responses towards their teachers' correction of their spoken errors. Acknowledgement had the highest median value in the need repair category. As seen in Table 5.10, acknowledgement was the most frequent response by the S-participants towards their teachers' correction. This would probably indicate that by acknowledging, the students had demonstrated their understanding towards the corrections made. They would only respond to their teacher's correction if they felt the need arose.

Table 5.5. *Median values of the analysis of Learner Uptake*

Types of learner uptake	Median scores
<i>Repair:</i>	
Q27: repetition of correct form (RCF)	4
Q33: peer-repair (PR)	4
Q31: self-repair error (SR)	4
<i>Need repair:</i>	
Q30: partial correction (PC)	3
Q28: repetition of the same error (RSE)	2
Q29: repetition of different error (RDE)	2
Q34: Acknowledgement (A)	4



***5.4.3.3 How do the students feel towards the use of corrective feedback by teachers on their oral language?***

In addressing this research question, nine items were developed to elicit the S-participants' feelings (negative and positive feelings) towards their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language and were based on the Likert's Scales giving each item scales from 1 (low agreement) to 5 (high agreement). Some of the positive feelings included the feelings of being motivated, encouraged, confident and conscious towards teachers' correction of their spoken errors. Alternatively, the negative feelings included the feelings of being discouraged, embarrassed, stupid and losing confidence. The items of both negative and positive feelings were paired up and compared in order to find out whether the students had positive or negative feeling towards their teachers' correction of their spoken errors. This comparison indicated that the S-participants were very positive towards their teachers' correction rather than feelings negative which was seen from the median values of each pair (see Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 *Median values of positive and negative feelings towards spoken error correction*

Positive feelings	Median values	Negative feelings	Median values
Q42: feel conscious of making errors	4	Q46: feel stupid	2
Q44: become conscious of my own errors	4		
Q37: become motivated to participate orally	4	Q45: feel embarrassed	3
Q40: feel confident to produce more error-free sentences	4	Q43: lose confidence to produce error-free sentences	3
Q39: feel encouraged to produce less-error sentences each	4	Q41: feel discouraged to speak more	2

#### ***5.4.3.4 What are the students' views on types of errors teachers should focus on in oral corrective feedback?***

To investigate the S-participants' views of the types of errors teachers should focus on when they corrected students' errors, one item was constructed. Instead of using the Likert scales, a ranking scale was used where the S-participants were required to rank the types of errors provided according to their level of importance. The ranking scale used was from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). There were five error types listed including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, meaning and function.

From the analysis, the S-participants ranked grammar as the most important error teachers should focus on in their correction of students' spoken errors (median value of 40). This was then followed by all four other errors: vocabulary, pronunciation, meaning and function. They shared equal importance with the

median value of 3 (see Figure 5.12). This finding probably reflected the skills in classroom lessons which is more on writing skills than the other language skills. The students felt that grammar, in both writing and speaking, had equal importance as far as teachers' correction of their spoken errors was concerned.

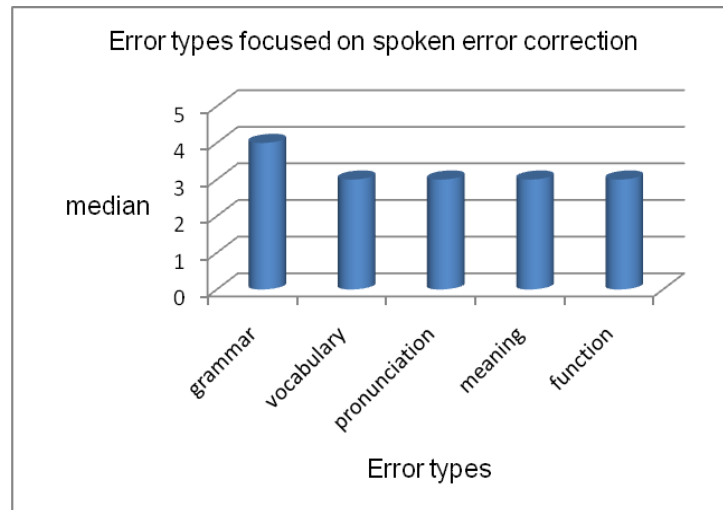


Figure 5.12. Results of median values of error types focused on spoken error correction

#### ***5.4.3.5 Do the views of the students differ according to their class forms?***

This research question investigated whether the S-participants' views on oral CF used by teachers differed according to their class forms (Forms 1, 2 and 3). To determine the existence of the differences in views according the S-participants' class forms, crosstabs analyses using Chi-square tests were conducted. Thorough analyses via cross-tabs were conducted between the class forms, as the independent variable, and all the dependent variables in accordance to all the results of the other four research questions formed as part of Research Objective 2.

The results showed that the views of S-participants differed in a number of aspects: general and technical aspects of spoken error correction, types of learner uptake, feelings towards the spoken error correction used and types of errors focused.

Only significant relationships were presented here. Each significant relationship was further analysed through Chi-square test of significance to determine which class forms contributed to the significant relationship, statistically. The findings were presented according to each category with figures and tables as appropriate.

*General aspects of spoken error correction.* The results of the cross-tabs analyses showed that there were different views among the S-participants in relation to their class forms. Two questions on general aspects of spoken error correction showed these differences in particular Q18 (*Too much correction by teachers decreases students' motivation to participate orally*), and Q24 (*Teachers should not give a long explanation when giving feedback on errors on students' oral language*).

To further identify which class forms contributed to the significant difference in views among the S-participants, Chi-square tests of significance were carried out for both items. The output of the tests for Q18 and Q24 in Table 5.7 indicated the class forms which contributed to the significant different views among the S-participants.

Table 5.7 Results of Chi-square test of class forms with Q18 and Q24

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square (Q18)	28.757 <sup>a</sup>	8	.000
• Form 1 & Form 2	13.431 <sup>a</sup>	4	.015
• Form 1 and Form 3	27.502 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Pearson Chi-Square (Q24)	16.055 <sup>a</sup>	8	.042
• Form 1 and Form 2	15.904 <sup>a</sup>	4	.003

\*\*The chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level

*Technical aspects of spoken error correction.* The cross-tabs analyses resulted in statistical significance in views among the S-participants in relation to their class forms with the technical aspects of spoken error correction, particularly in relation to *which* errors to correct and *when* correcting oral language errors would be appropriate.

The strategic aspects of *which* errors of oral language teachers should correct resulted in the significant difference in views on three items: Q9 (*Teachers should correct every error students make when they speak*), Q16 (*Teachers should only give feedback on errors which are easy to explain on students' oral language*), and Q17 (*Teachers should not avoid giving feedback on errors which require complicated explanation on students' oral language*).

To identify which class forms accounting for the statistical significance difference in views among the S-participants, Chi-square tests of significance were conducted for each item. The output of the tests for Q9, Q16 and Q17 in Table 5.8 indicated the class forms which contributed to the significant different views among the S-participants.

Table 5.8. Results of Chi-square of class form with Q9, Q16, and Q17

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square (Q9)	22.761 <sup>a</sup>	8	.004
• Form 1 & Form 2	11.017 <sup>a</sup>	4	.026
• Form 1 & Form 3	11.806a	4	.019
Pearson Chi-Square (Q16)	41.717a	8	.000
• Form 1 & Form 2	33.711 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
• Form 1 & Form 3	24.385a	4	.000
Pearson Chi-Square (Q17)	26.624a	8	.001
• Form 1 & Form 2	16.279 <sup>a</sup>	4	.003
• Form 1 & Form 3	10.628a	4	.031
• Form 2 & Form 3	11.430a	4	.022

\*\*The chi-square test is significant at 0.05 level

*Types of learner uptake.* This aspect as mentioned earlier, investigated the types of students' responses or known as learner uptake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) towards their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language. Cross-tabs analyses were conducted for this aspect of learner uptake to investigate the existence of significantly different views among the S-participants in relation to their class forms.

The cross-tabs analyses indicated that three types of learner uptake contributed to the differences in views among the S-participants: repetition of correct form (Q27), repetition of the same error (Q28) and peer repair (Q33). Figure 5.13, Figure 5.14 and Figure 5.15 illustrate the results respectively.

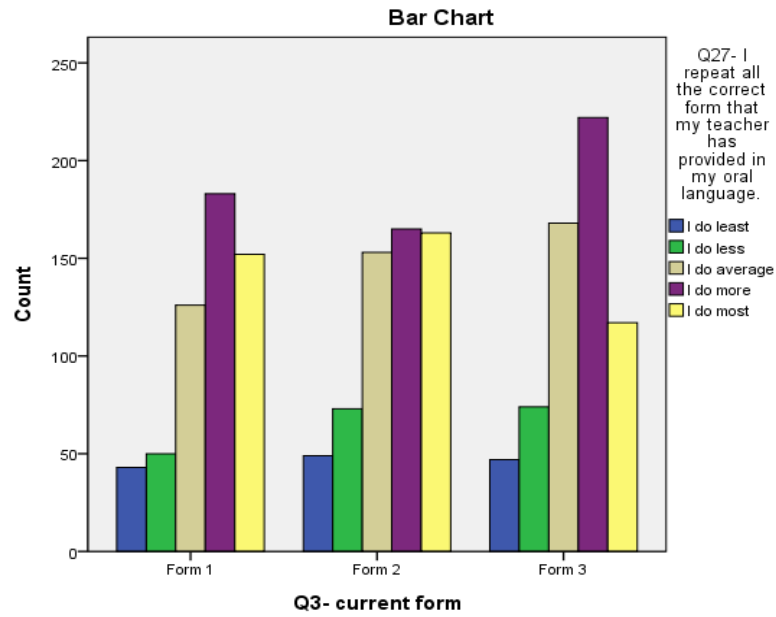


Figure 5.13. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q27

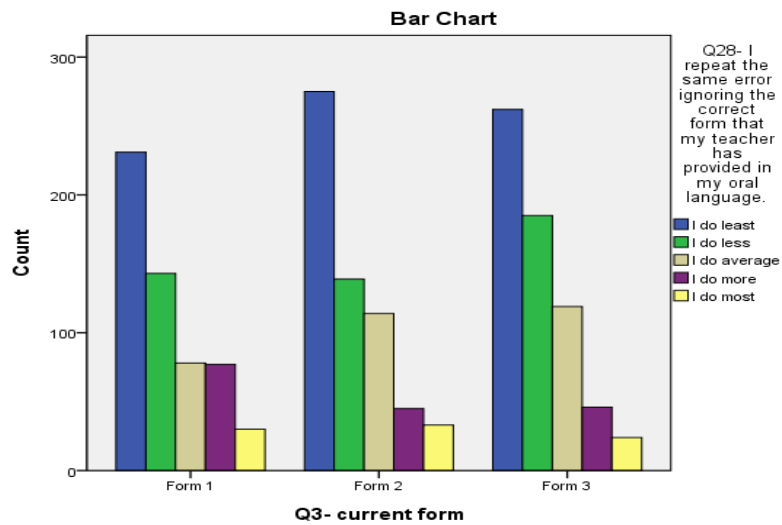


Figure 5.14. Results of cross-tab analyses of class forms with Q28

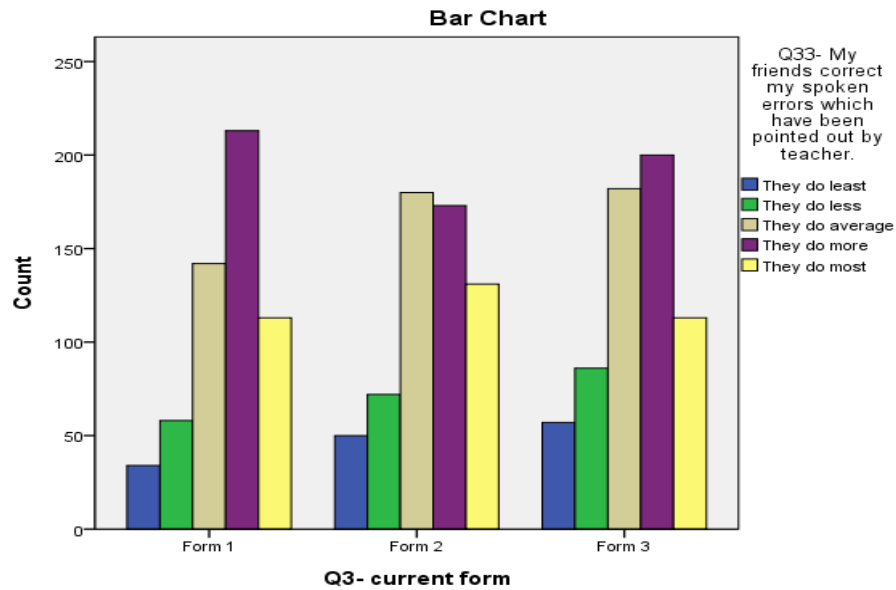


Figure 5.15. Results of cross-tab analyses of class forms with Q33

To further identify which class forms contributed to the existence of significant differences, Chi-square tests of significance were further conducted. Table 5.9 showed the class forms that contributed to the significant different views for Q27 (*repetition of correct*), Q28 (*repetition of the same error*) and Q33 (*peer repair*):

Table 5.9 Results of Chi-square test of class forms with Q27, Q28 and Q33

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<b>Q27:</b>			
Form 1 & Form 3	14.557 <sup>a</sup>	4	.006
Form 2 & Form 3	16.201a	4	.003
<b>Q28:</b>			
Form 1 & Form 2	17.301a	4	.002
Form 1 & Form 3	19.459a	4	.001
<b>Q33:</b>			
Form 1 & Form 2	12.718a	4	.013
Form 1 & Form 3	11.576a	4	.021

<sup>a</sup>\*\*The chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level



*Feelings towards spoken error correction.* The cross-tabs analyses for the S-participants' feelings, both positive and negative, towards their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language resulted in significant differences in views among all the three forms. The results were presented in two separate sections: firstly, significant differences between class forms and positive feelings and secondly, significant differences between class forms and negative feelings.

Firstly, the cross-tabs analyses were conducted between the class forms and the independent variables of the participants' positive feelings towards their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language to determine the existence of significant difference, statistically. The results indicated significant differences in views among all the three forms and two positive feelings: feeling conscious of making errors (Q42) (see Figure 5.16) and becoming conscious of their own errors (Q44) (see Figure 5.17).

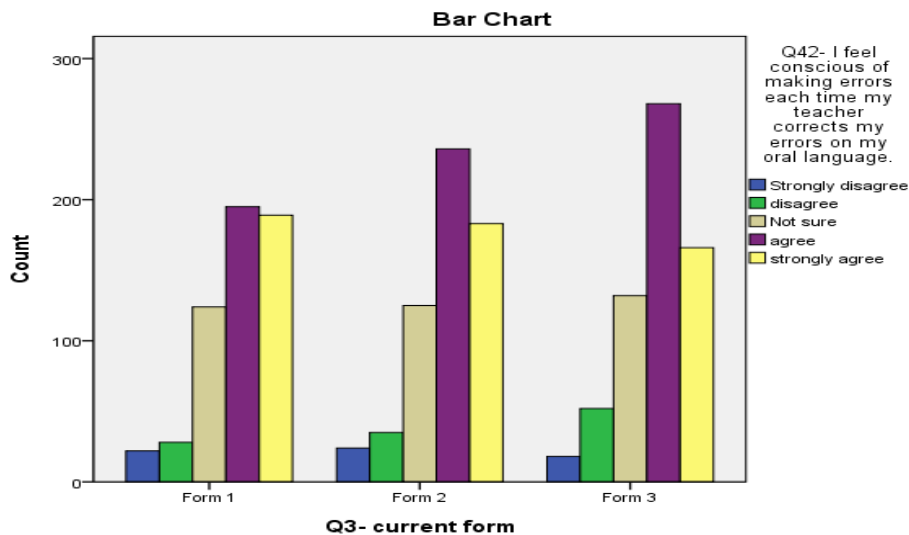


Figure 5.16. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q42

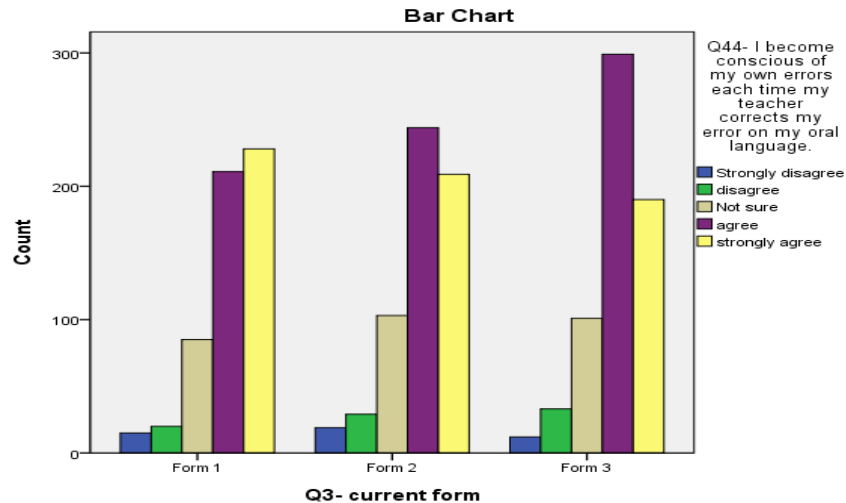


Figure 5.17. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q44

Chi-square tests of significance were further performed to identify which class forms contributed to the significance different views for both Q42 and Q44. Table 5.10 presents the results which indicated the class forms which contributed to the significant difference with Q42 and Q44.

Table 5.10 Results of Chi-square test of class forms with Q42 and Q44

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Q42:			
Form 1 and Form 3	15.822 <sup>a</sup>	4	.003
Q44:			
Form 1 and Form 3	18.776a	4	.001

<sup>a</sup>\*\*The chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level

Secondly, the cross-tabs analyses were conducted between the class forms and the independent variables of negative feelings of the S-participants towards their teachers' correction of their spoken errors to determine whether a significance difference in views existed. The results indicated there were significant differences in views among the S-participants according to their class forms in relation to the

negative feelings towards their teachers' correction of their spoken errors particularly Q41 (*feeling of discouraged to speak more each time their spoken errors were corrected*), Q43 (*lose confidence to produce error-free sentences each time their spoken errors were corrected*) and Q46 (*feeling stupid each time their spoken errors were corrected*). The results are presented in Figure 5.18, Figure 5.19 and Figure 5.20 respectively.

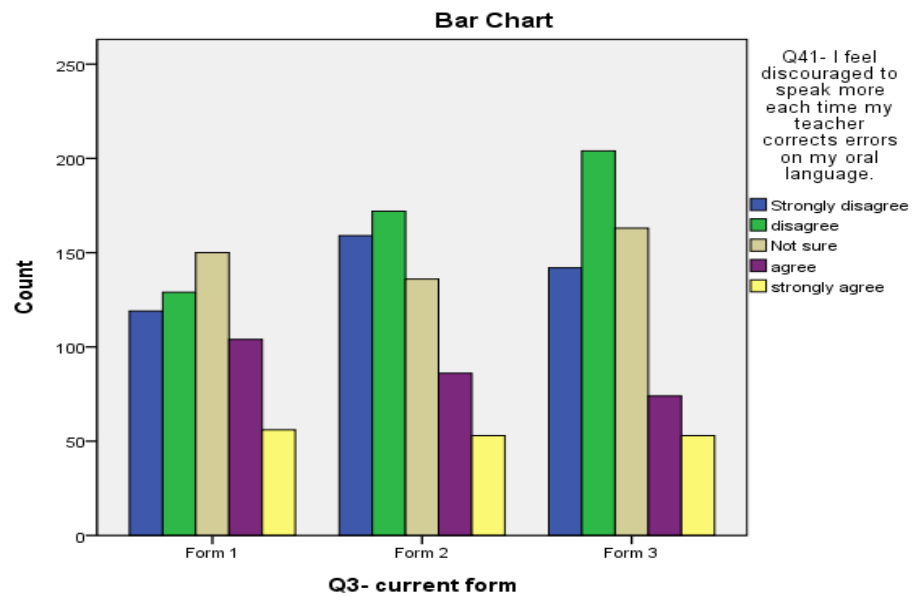


Figure 5.18. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q41

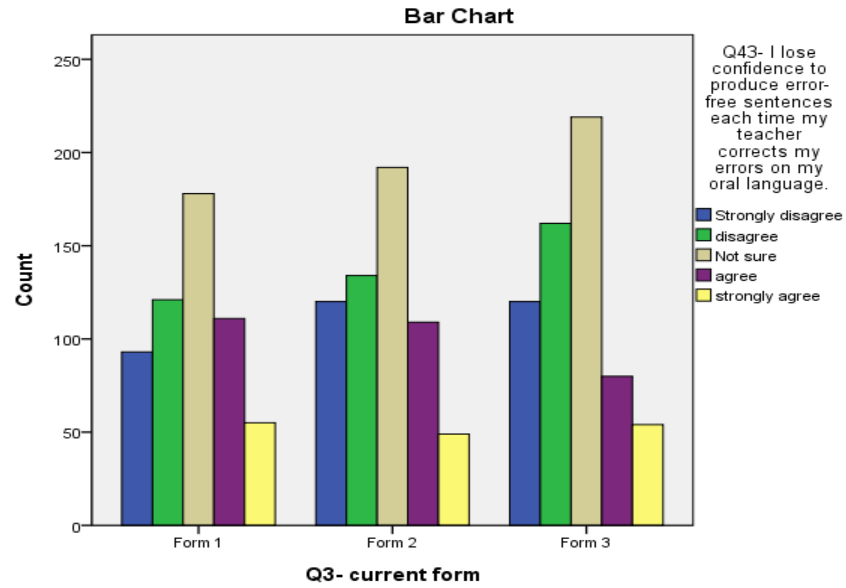


Figure 5.19. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q43

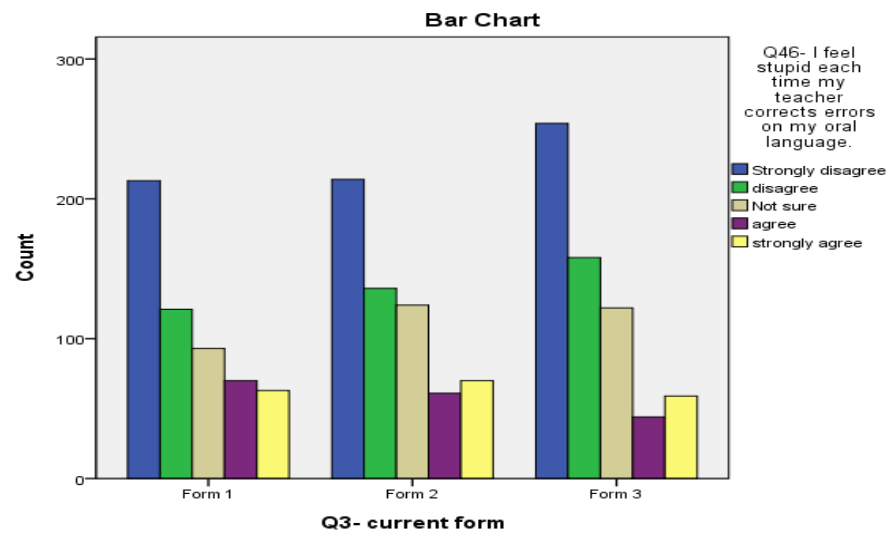


Figure 5.20. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q46

To further determine which class forms contributed to the significant differences, Chi-square tests of significance were performed for all the negative feelings mentioned above (Q41, Q 43 and Q46). Table 5.11 showed the class forms

which contributed to the statistical significance differences in views among the S-participants.

Table 5.11 *Results of Chi-square tests of class forms with Q41, Q43 and Q46*

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Q41:			
• Form 1 & Form 2	12.413 <sup>a</sup>	4	.015
• Form 1 & Form 3	19.586a	4	.001
Q43:			
• Form 1 & Form 3	13.725a	4	.008
Q46:			
• Form 1 & Form 3	13.582a	4	.009

\*\*The chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level

*Types of errors focused in spoken error correction.* As mentioned before, one ranking item was constructed to investigate this aspect of oral CF. To find out whether the S-participants' views differed according to the class forms, cross-tabs analyses were conducted. The results showed there was significant difference between the S-participants' views on which types of errors teachers should focus more in their correction of students' spoken errors and their class forms. The type of error which contributed to this significant difference in its level of importance was pronunciation (see Figure 5.21).

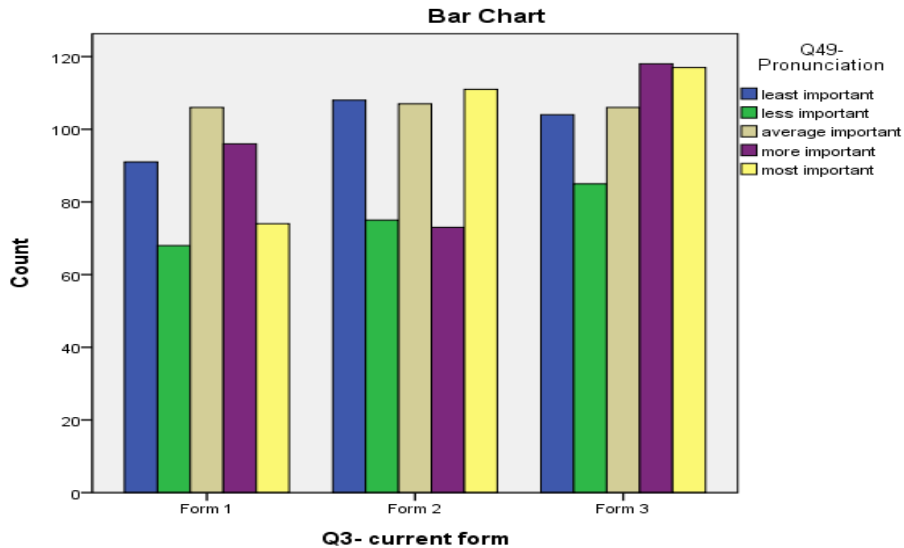


Figure 5.21. Results of cross-tabs analyses of class forms with Q49

Chi-square tests were conducted to further identify which class forms within this significance difference. The Chi-square tests as shown in Table 5.12 resulted in the significant difference within these class forms.

Table 5.12. Results of Chi-square tests of class forms with Q49

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.676 <sup>a</sup>	4	.030

<sup>a</sup>\*\*The chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level

#### 5.4.4 Summary findings of Research Objective 2

The findings of Research Objective 2 seem to indicate that the S-participants had very positive attitude towards spoken error correction. As they felt that correcting students' spoken errors was important, it was also the case that they seemed to want teachers to be technical when correcting their spoken errors. Apart from having positive attitudes, the S-participants also had positive feelings towards their teachers' correction. From the results of cross-tabs analyses and the Chi-square

tests conducted, the S-participants' views varied according to their different forms. The differences in views were mostly between S-participants in Form 1 vs. Form 2, and S-participants of Form 1 and Form 3. There was very little difference in views between S-participants of Form 2 and Form 3. The tendency of the existence of views mostly among S-participants of Form 1 with the other 2 forms suggested that their unfamiliarity with issues pertaining to spoken error correction and also the lack of knowledge and experience in spoken error correction. The findings also suggested that the level of maturity among the S-participants may have varied.

#### **5.4.5 Analysis of teachers' and students' views on oral corrective feedback**

This research objective identified different views between T- and S-participants pertaining to error correction of oral language. In addressing this research objective, three research questions were formed. Some items in both sets of questionnaires were constructed with the intention to investigate whether there were different views between the T- and S-participants. Therefore, a number of sections in both surveys consisted of the same items were selected and were compared in order to identify the different views between the two groups of participants.

The comparison was also made on a number of aspects. The first aspect compared was the types of learner uptake: between learner uptake received by T-participants and learner uptake responded by S-participants' on the correction made. Additionally, comparison was also made between T-participants' classroom practice (what they did during lessons) and S-participants' expectations of what teachers should do during lessons in relation to error correction of their oral language. In

doing so, the median values of the selected items were compared to determine whether different views were evident. Nevertheless, only interesting and significant differences were highlighted and discussed here. The selected questions which contributed to the significance and interesting difference of views between T- and S- participants pertaining to error correction of oral language are presented according to each research question.

***5.4.5.1 What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the use of oral corrective feedback in the classroom?***

To address this research question, the selected items in both sets of questionnaires were compared, particularly Section A which investigated the participants' views on general aspects of spoken error correction. When comparing the median value of 4 between T- and S- participants' general views on spoken error correction (as shown in Table 5.13), it was shown that they held opposing views concerning correcting every error students made in their oral language. The T- participants, having considerable knowledge and experience in teaching, agreed that teachers should not correct every error students made in their oral language (*Q22*) and because of this, only average emphasis was given in their classroom practices (*Q28*). These findings might indicate that for T- participants correcting every occurrence of students' spoken error would interrupt the communication flow of the students. If the tendency of teachers correcting students' spoken errors was too frequent, students' interests, self-confidence and motivation to communicate would be lessened. However, interestingly, the S- participants as the party who were



corrected, disagreed on this aspect. They disagreed that teachers should not correct every error that they made (median value of 2 in Q20). Their expectation during lessons complimented their views on this aspect whereby they wanted their teachers to correct every spoken error that they made. This seemed to indicate that the S-participants would want their teachers to correct every spoken error they made without considering the impact and effect of being corrected too frequently. This might indicate that the S-participants considered teachers' correction of their oral language to be important in improving their speaking ability.

As mentioned in the findings of previous sections, the tendency for there to be less occurrence of spoken error correction in teachers' classroom practices might lead to the S-participants' expectation that teachers should correct every error they made in their oral language. However, if the occurrences of spoken error correction by teachers were more frequent in the lessons, the S-participants' views might have changed.

#### ***5.4.5.2 What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the types of error should be focused on oral corrective feedback?***

In addressing this research question, the results of the ranked item in Section D which investigated the participants' views on types of error teachers should focus in their correction of students' oral language was selected and the median values were compared. The findings showed that, interestingly, the median value of 4 (Q47 and Q55) given by both T- and S-participants indicated that they had both ranked grammar as an important error to be focused on in teachers' correction of students'

spoken errors (see Table 5.13). The tendency for T- and S-participants to agree that grammar should be focused on in error correction indicated the importance of producing grammatically correct utterances in conversations. In addition, this indicated that using correct grammar is important for them in order to speak good English which further demonstrated that speaking and writing were treated equally; using correct grammar is fundamental to produce good writing, therefore using correct grammar is also fundamental to producing good utterances.

***5.4.5.3 What are the differences in views between teachers and students towards the types of learner uptake following oral corrective feedback?***

The views between students and teachers on the types of learner uptake received and responded after the corrections on the spoken errors are also compared. The findings highlighted that on the T-participants' views, learner uptake received was more on the need repair category than the repair category. However, the S-participants had different views on this aspect: more learner uptake on repair than need repair category. Though their views were different, the similarity existed between the types of learner uptake in both categories: self-repair error (repair category) and acknowledgement (need repair category). The results from the comparison suggested that there was not much difference in views between the T- and S-participants pertaining to error correction of oral language (see Table 5.13).

Table 5.13 *T- and S-participants' views on spoken error correction*

Teachers' views	M	Students' views	M
<i>General views:</i> Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak. (Q22)	4	<i>General views:</i> Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak. (Q20)	2
<i>Classroom practice:</i> I avoid correcting every error made by my students in their oral language. (Q28)	3	<i>During lesson:</i> I want my teacher to correct every error that I make in my oral language. (Q35)	4
<i>Error type focused:</i> Grammar (Q55)	5	<i>Error type focused:</i> Grammar (Q47)	5
<i>Learner uptake received:</i> <i>Repair:</i> self-repair	4	<i>Learner' uptake responded:</i> <i>Repair:</i> repetition of correct form peer-repair self-repair error	4 4 4 4
<i>Need repair:</i> partial correction acknowledgement	3	<i>Need repair:</i> acknowledgement	

## 5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the quantitative data collected in addressing four research objectives: *Research Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4*. The findings were detailed from two sets of questionnaires distributed to T- and S-participants of the lower secondary schools. Overall the findings indicated that the T- and S-participants had positive attitudes towards spoken error correction, in particular the S-participants. Unexpectedly, the S-participants' feelings were positive towards their teachers' correction of their errors of oral language. Secondly, in relation to the T-participants' classroom practices on correcting students' spoken errors, the findings suggested less occurrence of this particular aspect which resulted in S-participants wanting their teachers to correct each spoken error they made. Thirdly, the findings

revealed that the differences in views of the S-participants on spoken error correction existed according to the three different class forms. Interestingly, the comparison of views between both groups of respondents revealed that they shared similar views on most aspects of spoken error correction except a number of aspects.

This chapter described the findings of the quantitative data collected from the survey conducted. In the following chapter, the findings of the qualitative data collected from the interview and the classroom observations will be presented. The constructive grounded theory was used to analyse the interview data; the COLT analysis approach was used to analyse the classroom observation data collected. From the analysis of both data, a number of themes emerged from the data analysed and were finally categorised into four main categories.

## **CHAPTER 6. Qualitative Data Analysis and Results**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Qualitative data, unlike quantitative data, consists of language words and observation and is non-numerical in nature. As with all the data, analysis and interpretation are required to bring order and understanding of particular issues. Moreover, the analysis of qualitative data provides a platform for researchers to discover underlying meanings and patterns of relationships, including classifications of types of phenomena and entities, in a manner that does not involve mathematical models. Qualitative analysis of the data is aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior.

In relation to this study, the in-depth understanding of the teachers' behavior and the reasons for such behavior pertaining to oral CF was gathered through interview sessions and classroom observations. Constructive grounded theory and the thematic analysis (Charmaz, 2003, 2006) which involved the three-step coding approach (Sarantakos, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998b) were used as the fundamental theories underlying the analysis of the qualitative data collected. To further assist the analysis process (Bazeley, 2007), the NVivo software was used to facilitate the process of coding the data.

In this qualitative data analysis and results chapter, the themes and categories which emerged from the interviews and classroom observations data are discussed descriptively. As a result, four categories were generated from the interview data, as for the classroom observation data, instead of identifying the emerging themes or

categories, the data was analysed by addressing each of the research questions formed from Research Objective 5 (refer to Chapter 4). While some themes and categories which emerged from the interview data analysis happened to confirm and re-visit the issues that emerged in the quantitative chapter, other new categories were also generated and discussed in this chapter.

## 6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

As mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter 4) the interview questions for both Interview Schedules were designed to examine Research Objective 1 whereas the items included in the Classroom Observation Checklist were designed to address Research Objective 5. The information about the question items designed and the objectives addressed is detailed in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1. *Research objectives, instruments and question items*

Research objectives	Instruments	Question items
RO 1: Views of secondary school teachers on CF on oral language	Both sets of interview questions	Interview schedule 1: Section B
RO 5: The use of oral CF by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers in the classrooms	Both sets of interview questions Classroom observation checklist and field notes	Interview schedule 2: Section A

### 6.2.1 Qualitative analysis

While a deductive approach was used to analyse the quantitative data, an inductive direction was employed in analysing the qualitative data collected (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). Through this inductive data analysis, themes were generated from the T-participants' responses to the interview questions in both interview

schedules (W Creswell, 2009). In addition, maintaining the focus of meaning reconstruction and interpretations in the T-participants' experiences in using oral CF in their classroom teaching is also important at this stage (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). A more thorough and sufficient understanding and exploration of meanings was also expanded through the analysis of the qualitative data in which this could not be possible through the numerical data collected at the quantitative stage.

The data analysed at the qualitative stage included the T-participants' responses to the interview questions and the data collected in classroom observations; both data were textual component. As mentioned previously, the interview sessions and the classroom observations were audio-taped, and before any analysis was conducted, the audio-taped interviews were transcribed in detail. All the transcriptions were uploaded into the NVivo software for efficiency (to avoid much time spent on reading through the T-participant's responses line by line in a paper format). After the process of uploading the transcriptions were completed, the main aspect of analysing the qualitative data began by identifying the emerging themes within the text. The process of analysing the data were known as a theoretically saturated activity in which it depended upon the generation of research matters out of a particular theoretical orientation (Silverman, 2005). Throughout this process, the existence of theories is a part of the entire process instead of proceeding inquiry and discovery (Lichtman, 2010).

The constructive grounded theory and the thematic analysis were employed as the basis of the qualitative data analysis process in which they are "general methodologies for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered

and analysed” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998b, p. 158). In this methodology, there are three steps involved: sampling, coding and writing the theory (Flick, 2002, 2006). This chapter therefore only focuses on the coding and writing theory steps, without discussing the sampling step as this step was covered in the methodology chapter earlier. The coding and the writing theory steps followed Strauss and Corbin’s (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1994, 1998a) three-step coding approach: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. In the theory generation process, the textual data was analysed line-by-line, repeatedly and extensively in order to identify possible themes and categories which are grounded in the data. After the process of identifying the themes and categories were completed, they were linked into substantive and formal theories (Grbich, 2007; Ryan & Bernard, 2000), and formulated into a logical, systematic and explanatory scheme (Strauss & Corbin, 1998b). These thorough steps were carefully conducted in order to ensure a flexible but valid manner of interpretation of the data analysed. The themes and core categories which were developed through the three-step coding process will be presented in the next sections.

### **6.2.2 Participants and responses**

The qualitative data collection in this study involved two components: T-participants’ responses to the semi-structured interviews and the data collected in the classroom observations. Both components recruited the same participants in the data collection in which 6 lower secondary school teachers from 3 secondary schools in the state were involved.



In the first component, two sets of interview schedules were designed to investigate the T-participants' views on oral CF targeting at secondary school levels. Each interview session took 30 to 45 minutes. The interviews (conversation between the researcher and the T-participants) were audio-recorded and the recordings were transcribed into textual format for further analysis.

The second component which involved classroom observation sessions were conducted over 12 weeks; each T-participant was observed in two-week lessons. Each T-participant was observed in two lessons a week; there was a break of 5 weeks between each observation. The classroom observations were audio-recorded and then analysed by examining the preferences of the T-participants pertaining to a number of issues of oral CF in their classroom practices.

Before the first interview session which explored the T-participants' views on particular aspects of CF, some background information was gained from the questions constructed. After analysing the data, from the total number of six T-participants, the majority of them were females (4) and the remaining 2 were male teachers. Based on the findings in Table 6.2, all the T-participants were qualified teachers academically with each of them possessing a bachelor degree from local universities as well as from overseas. The particular degree obtained from the international university was from the United Kingdom. Though only 2 T-participants were graduates in the teaching areas (TESL), another 3 teachers had sound knowledge of English based on the degrees they possessed: 1 teacher had a degree in English literature and 2 teachers had degrees in English studies. On the contrary, the only T-participants who possessed a degree in economics took up

English as her minor area and at the time the interview sessions were conducted, she was completing her Masters degree in TESL at a local university.

In relation to their teaching experiences, all the T-participants had vast experience in which all 4 of them had experienced teaching in the rural schools and 2 of them had experienced teaching at primary school levels. While the T-participants for the survey were teachers from all forms of lower secondary school levels: Form 1, 2 and 3, the T-participants involved in the qualitative data collection were only from Form 1 and Form 2. As mentioned in the previous chapter, since Form 3 classes were examination classes, the researcher was not allowed by the principals to conduct interviews as well as classroom observations in these classes.

Interestingly, the data revealed that the influence that all the T-participants' had in their teaching practice was inspired by their previous learning experiences from their own school teachers and lecturers. This is evident from each of their responses in which 2 T-participants stated that *'the teachers that I had during my school years inspired me to become who I am now'* (R<sub>m1</sub> and R<sub>f1</sub>). Another two T-participants stated that *'I have the tendency to see them and perceive them as my role-model'* (R<sub>f4</sub>) and 1 T-participant said that *'I would like to imitate what they have taught me'* (R<sub>f3</sub>). The findings of the T-participants' background information are presented in Table 6.2.

### **6.2.3 The coding processes**

The analysis of the qualitative data in this chapter followed an inductive process as the analysis is aimed at generating theories from the information provided by the T-

participants in relation to their experiences, views and beliefs on oral CF. In the process of generating theories, particularly the interview data, a constructivist grounded theory and thematic analysis approach, which involved three coding stages, was adopted to identify the dominant discourses presented in the data as described by (Charmaz, 2006):

A constructivist grounded theory approach places priority on the phenomena of study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationship with participants and other sources of data.... Constructive grounded theory lies squarely in the interpretive tradition. Constructivists study how – and sometimes why – participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations (p. 130).

The qualitative data in this study, particularly the interview data, were interpreted in three stages. Firstly, the interpretation of the data was conducted by analysing the raw data thoroughly line-by-line and paragraph-by-paragraph. This was then followed by the second stage which was to generate initial codes and themes, and ended at the third stage of identifying how theories were developed at the end of the coding process. Throughout the whole process of analysing the interview data, not only the codes and themes were generated, but also the relationships among the codes/themes were examined. The process of re-examining and re-grouping into categories of the initial codes obtained in the open coding process were conducted in the last step: the selective coding. Two aspects: meanings within the data and the relationship between different codes and themes, were taken into consideration and discussed throughout the analysis of the interview data.

Table 6.2. *The background details of the interview participants*

Category		N = 6
Gender	Male	2
	Female	4
Academic qualification		
	B. Ed TESL	2
	B. A. English literature	1
	B. A. English	2
	B. of Economics	1
Professional development attended		
	Teaching techniques	3
	ELT Seminar	
Post graduate		
	Masters in TESL	1
Teaching experience		
	Taught schools in rural areas	4
	Taught primary schools	2
Current classes		
	Form 1	4
	Form 2	2
Reasons for teaching		
	It's a passion	1
	Teaching is meaningful	1
	Love being with children	1
	Teaching provides self-satisfaction	1
	Love teaching	1
	Share knowledge with others	1
Influential factor for current teaching practices		
	Influenced by previous English teachers	6

### 6.2.3.1 *Open coding*

As mentioned before, the coding employed in the analysis of the interview data was the three coding process adopted from Strauss & Corbin (1990). The first step involved was open coding which was used to identify and label first-order concepts and substantive codes (Sarantakos, 2005). These first order concepts were identified

and labelled as the initial codes through line-by-line analysis of the raw data to construct meanings of the T-participants' experiences (Charmaz, 2006). In this process, initial codes were firstly developed to classify their responses, and then compared and labelled with 35 open codes. These initial codes however are open to reconstruction as they were only one representation of the data which were built on the basis of the researcher's personal experiences of research, teaching and learning.

#### **6.2.3.2 Axial coding**

The second step of the three coding processes is axial coding which is also known as "second pass" (Neuman, 2004, p. 462). At the axial coding step, the development of themes identifying the axis of key concepts in the data analysis took place (Neuman, 2006). In this process, the open codes were reviewed and re-examined and then the concepts which represented the themes were also elaborated. Understanding the classification of these themes in terms of certain conditions assisted in achieving the purpose of axial coding, which was to sort and organise a large amount of data and reassemble them in new ways (Creswell cited in Charmaz, 2006). In this process, some questions were raised in relation to causes, consequences, conditions and other forms of the interconnections between the codes (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This was then followed by classifying, specifying and naming the themes "in terms of the conditions that give rise to it; the context in which it is embedded; and the action/interaction strategies by which it is handled, managed, carried out; and the consequences of these strategies" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 97). The emerging themes were then incorporated in relation to the T-participants' experiences and views on oral CF. As a result of the whole process of

axial coding, a richer understanding of the particular phenomenon represented in the data was discovered. The open codes were reclassified into 20 themes.

### **6.2.3.3 *Selective coding***

The final step of the three coding process is selective coding within which “themes are further summarised and selected and made into central phenomenon and major categories” (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 350). At the selective coding stage, the themes which emerged in the previous axial coding process were compared and contrasted. Once the overall analysis was completed, it was organised around core generalisations and ideas (Neuman, 2003). Though the overall analysis was completed, the themes were further compared, contrasted and constructed into higher order core categories which were a higher level of abstraction of data analysis. The dominant categories were integrated as abstractly as possible, as “the higher the abstract level of the categories, the wider the applicability of the theory” (Bohm cited in Sarantakos, 2005, p. 350). According to these interrelations, the 20 themes were refined into 4 categories in which each category carried other sub-categories.

## **6.3 Results of the Interview Data**

The final three coding process, as explained above, resulted in four main categories which were constructed from the T-participants’ responses to the interview questions. These categories not only enabled the researcher to recognise dominant discourses surrounding the T-participants’ views and experiences in oral CF, but also enabled the researcher to observe these categories moving closely towards a grounded theory on how the T-participants viewed oral CF in this

particular Malaysian context. The following four categories and the sub-categories are discussed in detail in this section and are intended to address *Research Objective 1*:

Category 1: Participants' understanding of feedback, correction and language error

Category 2: Participants' views on general aspects of spoken error correction

- Positive benefits of spoken error correction
- Negative impact of spoken error correction
- The role of feedback in the learning and teaching of English

Category 3: Participants' views on technical aspects of spoken error correction

- How would spoken errors be best corrected?
- Which spoken errors should be corrected?

Category 4: Participants' views on their own classroom practices of spoken error correction

- How do spoken errors get corrected?
- Who receives more corrections on their oral language?
- Which errors are corrected in students' oral language?
- Which errors are not corrected in students' oral language?
- What factors are considered in correcting errors on oral language?

### **6.3.1 Category 1: Participants' understanding of feedback, correction and language error**

Interestingly, the understanding of 'feedback' among the six T-participants was not common; different teachers had different understanding yet all agreed that feedback benefited teachers more than students. Feedback, as perceived by most of the T-participants, referred to the responses teachers "get (received) from something" (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1) or "from clients" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1) which in this study, it referred

to responses from students pertaining to what was taught in the lessons. Through feedback, “a two-way process (interaction)” which “sounds positive” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1); teachers were informed as to whether students were “actually learning and getting some information or not” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1) throughout the lessons. In this two-way interaction process, students’ emotional aspects were also acknowledged. Students were either “happy to learn [this and learn that] or they (students) were not happy to learn [this]” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1). Moreover it provided an environment which made students feel “more comfortable” especially when feedback was provided “at the end of the lesson as a whole”, and served to “encourage them to speak and use more English language” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1). Feedback also informed teachers whether students “have accepted it (the corrections made) or whether they have taken actions (on the correction made) and have made amendments on it” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). This could be identified in situations when students “can tell you, they can answer easily” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1) and even “talk to you when they don’t understand what you say and what you mean” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1).

While ‘feedback’ was perceived as to benefit teachers, ‘correction’ was perceived as to benefit students. The interpretation of correction by most of the T-participants referred to the teachers’ correction of students errors which included “all four (language) aspects while learning” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1) and was seen to benefit students more than teachers. Correction, on the other hand, was perceived as “more negative and is a one-way process” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1) which was “more towards personal, towards individual” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1). Though correction was a one-way process, it encouraged “some improvements among students” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1) in a situation when “students do it (mistake) wrongly, teachers ask them to do the



correction” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1) and when “teachers try to correct that mistakes by teaching them the correct way” (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1). This correction does not only refer to speaking but also referred to “writing aspects, from grammar sense” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). Interestingly, one of the T-participants indirectly highlighted the difference between ‘error’ and ‘mistake’ in a situation whether correction by teachers was needed. The teacher highlighted that “if there’s error, should we (teachers) have more corrections towards it, if mistakes may be the person (student) itself can do the correction” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). From the different interpretations of feedback (i.e. what teachers received from students) and correction (i.e. what students received from teachers) among the T-participants, it demonstrated that the term ‘feedback’ was not commonly used in the ESL context in Malaysia compared to ‘correction’, as the response of one of the teachers indicted:

“I think if you want to use the word feedback to students, they may not understand well because they have been taught since primary to use the word correction” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

Apart from investigating the T-participants’ understanding of ‘feedback’ and ‘correction’, their understanding of ‘language error’ was also explored. Generally, language errors were referred to as “anything as long as it’s related to the grammar rules of English use” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1) and “from four aspects (of language)” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). The findings revealed that language errors most commonly highlighted by the teachers were “pronunciation” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1) and “more on grammatical errors” (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1). The aspect of grammar which was given priority was “part of speech particularly tenses” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1). Other comments suggested directly that teachers were influenced by the teaching context and “what you (teachers) are focusing on or what you (teachers) are teaching at that time” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1)

should also be an aspect to consider in correcting language error. Considering the teaching context is important because “there are times you (teacher) have to correct certain things [the focus of the lessons]” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Apparently only one T-participant emphasised that in spoken language “since we (teachers and students) are not native speakers, there should not be any error” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). From the data, it was clear that the T-participants were more concerned with students’ mispronunciation of words, as well as the grammatical aspects. It is evident that priority was given more to accuracy than fluency in students’ productive skills because “aural-oral skills influence their (students’) writing and if [normally] they are good in their listening and speaking skills, definitely they will be good in their writing skill” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1).

### **6.3.2 Category 2: Participants’ views on general aspects of spoken error correction**

Category 2 on the T-participants’ views on general aspects of spoken error correction was further organised into three sub-categories: benefits of spoken error correction; negative impact of spoken error correction; and, the role of CF in the learning and teaching of English. These sub-categories were constructed from the three emerging themes at the axial coding process in which the emphasis was on what oral CF had to offer to teachers and students alike. The three sub-categories are discussed below.

### ***6.3.2.1 Benefits of spoken error correction***

In Category 2, a number of benefits of spoken error correction were identified from the T-participants' interview responses related to the topic of the students' improvement of English language. One of the benefits identified from the responses was that the corrections made by teachers on students' spoken errors led to the students' development of English. Most T-participants agreed that the corrections made would help students to become aware of their errors, as they believed that "if students are not corrected, they will never learn, they will not know their mistakes" (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1). The T-participants also understood that when students were continuously corrected on their spoken errors, this led to accuracy in their writing ability. As mentioned by one of the T-participants "Yes, because when you teach them to speak correctly, it will be engraved in them to write correctly as well" (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). This indicated the teachers' beliefs in the idea that corrections on students' spoken errors would not only improve students' accuracy in speaking, but also improve their accuracy in writing.

### ***6.3.2.2 Negative impact of spoken error correction***

Other than the benefits of spoken error correction which were included in Category 2, the negative impact of spoken error correction was also included in this category. From the analysed data, it was evident that generally, correction of students' spoken errors did not have a negative impact on the students; rather it was considered to be a fundamental part of "the learning process. When you (students)

make mistakes, you (students) need to be corrected. It is called learning” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1).

Although error correction was considered part of the learning process, some negative impacts were highlighted by the T-participants. These negative impacts were not related to the spoken error correction itself, but rather to the way that oral CF was used by teachers which affected students. As R<sub>f4</sub> reported during the interview:

For me, no. It depend on how and what are the approaches you use to tackle the problem to correct your students. If you do it in a very gentle [way] and you make them realize that, actually correction is just nothing. It’s for improvement. For them may be they will accept it, willingly (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1)

Apart from how teachers corrected students’ errors of oral language which could lead to negative impacts on students, some aspects reported by the students themselves could also be seen as a reason as to whether oral CF had any negative impact on them. One of the aspects mentioned by the T-participants, included the students’ personality and attitudes in accepting correction from teachers on their spoken errors. For example, as R<sub>m1</sub> reported in the first interview:

Depending on the students. That’s why sometimes I also notice that there may be 1 or 2 students who are very sensitive. Okay, that’s why you have to get to know the students. ... I do have students who are over sensitive. To these students I will not correct them openly. I would, I mean whether it’s spoken or written or whatever, especially spoken English, I will not correct them openly. So I will correct them, may be later or privately (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

The responses provided by the T-participants on the question of negative impacts of spoken error correction, it indicated that they were clearly sensitive towards, and concerned about their students’ feelings whenever they corrected their students’ spoken errors. As teachers, being sensitive towards students’ feelings and

perceptions on spoken error correction is important to avoid misunderstanding among students on the intention of the correction made. This could help prevent students from perceiving error correction as negative actions by teachers as far as spoken errors are concerned.

### ***6.3.2.2 The role of feedback in the learning and teaching of English***

The last sub-category which emerged from the three coding process was the role of feedback in the learning and teaching of English. The data from the interviews indicated that feedback had positive roles in the teaching and learning of English. The positive roles of feedback were more in the areas of “teachers’ self-development” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1) than the students’ language development. Each respondent reported different aspects of how feedback could help teachers in the self-development of their teaching. Recognizing the positive results of their teaching was one of the aspects as described by R<sub>f2</sub> in Interview 1:

It does help. Ya, it does help. I mean, you don’t get that feedback okay. Remember I was saying correction leads to feedback. So if you don’t give the feedback meaning you do not do your job by correcting. So you wouldn’t get positive result. I would say the positive result would be the feedback (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1).

In addition to this, the opportunity for teachers to self-reflect on their own teaching was another reason why feedback was seen as important and had positive roles in the teaching and learning of English. Apart from positive roles to teachers, feedback also offered positive benefits to students. As R<sub>f4</sub> described:

This is very important because feedback, it makes you reflect what you have done and also and it encourage the students to make the correction after you give them the feedback. Without feedback, they wouldn’t know what mistake they have done (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1).

Another aspect highlighted by R<sub>m2</sub> about the role of feedback in the teaching and learning of English was that feedback could be used as a means of self-improvement in an individual's teaching and learning of English. As reported by one of the T-participants:

To me feedback is more towards improving, upgrading something, any situation, any mistake, any problems that's the role of feedback. Because from feedback you can learn something, you can have solution towards it (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1).

From all the aspects highlighted by the T-participants on the positive roles of feedback in the teaching and learning of English, it was evident that the positive roles only referred to the teachers' side. None of the T-participants mentioned the positive roles of feedback which benefited students. This could demonstrate the different understandings of the meaning of 'feedback' and 'correction' to teachers. It seemed that 'feedback' was associated with teachers, but 'correction' was associated with students.

### **6.3.3 Category 3: Participants' views on technical aspects of spoken error correction**

The second category which was refined from the three coding process was the T-participants' views on the technical aspects of spoken error correction. In this category, more descriptive responses were provided by the T-participants in which the responses were further sub-categorised into two aspects of spoken error correction: *How would spoken errors be best corrected?* and *Which spoken errors should be corrected?*. These sub-categories were further explained in the next sections.

### ***6.3.3.1 How would spoken errors be best corrected?***

From the responses by the T-participants, there were mixed opinions on the best way to correct students' spoken errors. Of the 6 T-participants, two indicated that "there is no definite best way" (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1), or "there is no one correct way of correcting students' spoken errors" (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Instead, teachers could be flexible in correcting students' spoken errors in any way that they felt would be useful and effective, and which led to the encouragement and improvement of students to use the language. As R<sub>f4</sub> added to her report:

For me, as long as you can make the students improve and encourage them to use the language, just go ahead and as long as the students, they could master certain skills at certain time with certain approach, why not? There is no definite approach that you should use. I think we should be more flexible (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1)

While two T-participants revealed that there was no definite way to correct spoken errors among students, two other T-participants affirmed that immediate correction would be best in correcting students' spoken errors. Accordingly there were some exceptional situations in which immediate correction would not be used by teachers to correct students' spoken errors. An example of an exceptional situation as reported by R<sub>f2</sub> was "if is it oral assessment, [ok] do it after the student has spoken. But if it's a classroom, may be a classroom discussion, I will definitely correct the person there and then" (Interview 1). Another example of such a situation was reported by R<sub>m1</sub>: "I would consider correcting there and then, not to wait too long. But if let say you can wait like my Form 6 students, if they doing presentations then, you do at the end" (Interview 1).

While some took the responsibility as teachers to correct students' spoken errors, other T-participants delegated the responsibility to students to correct each other's spoken errors which occurred during lessons. They believed that through peer-correction students could learn from each other and this would create a more engaging environment for them and lessen any feelings of self-consciousness. In addition, peer-correction would be best carried out during group discussion whereby students were less conscious of the corrections made by their peers and when teachers would be acting more as facilitators who observed and only interrupted whenever necessary. As R<sub>f3</sub> reported in Interview 1:

The best way is to do it (peer-correction) in groups, [ ... ]. So they can actually correct one another. That is more fun and I will come in later to tell them. So they actually enjoy learning from one another first then I will come in later, like a facilitator. You tell them how to do it (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1).

#### ***6.3.3.2 Which spoken errors should be corrected?***

The question as to which spoken errors should be corrected elicited mixed opinions among the T-participants. Nonetheless, a number of spoken errors were highlighted including pronunciation, grammatical and vocabulary errors. One of the T-participants mentioned that pronunciation errors should be prioritised because he believed that mispronunciation of words could lead to different messages being conveyed and different meanings being interpreted. As R<sub>m1</sub> reported, "I will be more towards pronunciation, because pronunciation is very important. If you pronounce certain words differently, it might have different meaning [okay]. People might interpret differently [okay]" (Interview 1).



Grammatical error was another type of spoken error mentioned by the T-participants where they focused on when they corrected their students' oral language errors. One of the T-participants focused her spoken error correction of grammatical errors because "students make a lot of errors there (especially tenses)" (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1). While teacher R<sub>f2</sub> only gave grammatical errors as her priority in correcting students' spoken errors, another teacher provided reason as to why grammatical errors were the focus of her correction. This teacher believed that wrong use of grammar in speaking would influence students' writing skills : "it (grammar) will influence their writing. If their (the students') grammar is wrong, it will affect their writing" (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1). Therefore focusing her spoken error correction of grammatical errors would help students to be accurate hence improve their writing skills.

Other than pronunciation and grammatical errors, which were given the priority mentioned earlier, vocabulary errors were also highlighted by the T-participants in their spoken error correction. The reason for emphasizing vocabulary errors in their spoken error correction was that "if they (the students) don't have the vocab, they can't actually tell you what is actually happening and when did it happen" (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). From this response it could be concluded that using correct words to communicate is important; lacking vocabulary could affect the flow of communication.

In summary, the findings were that pronunciation, grammatical and vocabulary errors had equal importance, since there was no majority agreement among the teachers on which spoken error should be prioritised in their spoken error correction.

Though these errors were emphasized by some T-participants, other spoken errors, which were not specified, were also important because they were related to each other in communication. However, the question of which error should be emphasised seemed to depend mainly on the focus of the lessons. For example, R<sub>m1</sub> reported that:

I think you should correct on all, [right] because without the vocabulary they can't speak, [right]. With the vocabulary but wrong grammar and wrong pronunciation [right], so it is also pointless. You have to correct all but [aa....] whether, I mean whether you are going to concentrate on pronunciation or on the grammar or on vocabulary, depending on what you are doing at that time (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

From the findings presented above, it can be concluded that spoken error correction was evident in the classrooms. However, teachers focused more on form than meaning in relation to oral language.

#### **6.3.4 Category 4: Participants' views on own classroom practices of spoken error correction**

The final category extracted from the three coding process, during the selective coding stage, was the T-participants views on their own classroom practices. While the previous two categories focused on the T-participants' views on the general and technical aspects of oral CF, this category focused on their views in relation to their own classroom teaching and spoken error correction. In this category the T-participants unconsciously reflected on their own classroom practices in answering the interview questions. This category was then sub-categorised into five aspects related to spoken error correction: *How do spoken errors get corrected?*, *Who receives more corrections on their oral language?* *Which errors are corrected in students' oral language?* *Which spoken errors are ignored?* and *What factors are*

*considered in correcting errors on oral language?* These sub-categories are further explained in the following sections.

#### ***6.3.4.1 How are spoken errors corrected?***

From the responses which were coded earlier, it was evident that some variations existed among teachers in the way they corrected their students' on errors of oral language. The variations extracted from the responses related are: immediate correction, end-of-lesson correction, different error-similar correction, peer-correction, repetition of correct forms, and whole-class correction.

*Immediate correction versus end-of-lesson correction.* Based on the data collected, it could be identified that a number of factors affected teachers' choice between these two ways of correcting students' spoken error. One of the factors normally considered by teachers was students' characteristics, particularly, students' self-consciousness and sensitivity towards the corrections made on their oral language. If the teachers could identify earlier that students were sensitive and self-conscious about teachers correcting their spoken errors openly, personal consultation was chosen as an approach to correct the spoken errors. Alternatively, to those students who were less sensitive and could accept teachers' correction of their spoken errors more openly, teachers tend to use immediate correction of these students. For example, R<sub>f4</sub> described the reasons for choosing between the two types of spoken error correction during lessons:

If let's say the students, they are not that self-conscious and not sensitive to receive criticism, I will do it on the spot. If let say they welcome my criticism, if for those students they are quite sensitive, then I will do it at

the end of the lesson. I call them in group or talk to them personally (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1).

*Different error-similar correction.* This is another way identified from the data, used by one of the T-participants to correct students' spoken errors. This teacher chose to correct different spoken errors using the same way of correction because he felt that it was easier and useful for the students in order to avoid confusion among students. As he mentioned in his response, "it easier for students to understand the corrections made" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2). If [a] different approach was used "may be they [the students] won't get it [the corrections made]" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2).

*Peer correction.* This spoken error correction was normally encouraged in lessons especially during group work or group discussion activities. In this sub-category of spoken error correction, "those [students] who are good helped [me] to correct the errors" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2). As a result, teachers' direct correction of students' spoken errors could be avoided. The intention of the T-participants in avoiding direct correction was because he believed that direct corrections by teachers "might demotivate the students" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). Additionally, peer-correction was encouraged because it "is easier to do [it like that] so the students won't get offended and if do it [correction] in public, they [students] will feel embarrassed" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2).

*Repetition of the correct forms.* This spoken error correction was chosen by two teachers in their lessons particularly to correct students' pronunciation errors. In this correction, students were asked to read a text aloud together and correction

was made on their mispronunciation of words while reading. Students were asked to repeat the correct forms a number of times to ensure correct pronunciation was modelled in them. This was described by R<sub>f1</sub> on how repetition of correct forms was chosen as a way to correct her students' spoken errors during her lessons:

Sometimes I gave them text like text book have a text inside there. I asked them to read together. Then they will stop, like some words are very difficult, they will stop there. Then I will ask them to repeat. [I will, I will like] I will mention once, then ask them to repeat, repeat, repeat (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 2).

Another example of how repetition of correct forms was carried out in order to correct students' pronunciation errors was described by another teacher:

I would, if let's say there is pronunciation error, I will ask them to repeat the word. If they don't do that, I will ask them one more time, until I make sure that they pronounce the word correctly until the very end (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 2).

From the responses of the two teachers, it seemed that they believed in the notion that repetition of correct forms could help students with the memorization of correct pronunciation.

*Whole class feedback.* Basically, from the data collected, this type of spoken error correction was chosen particularly to correct grammatical errors which were commonly made by the students during lessons. In this correction, the main focus was "on major errors first such as subject-verb-agreement [which] is very important" (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 2) and would be highlighted first. The focus of this correction then moved on to "minor errors, for example, singular nouns and plural nouns [with 's' and no 's']" (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 2) which the teacher felt were less important.

From the variations of how spoken errors were corrected among students, it was clearly indicated that the T-participants prioritized the intentions and rationales for their decision to choose the best way to correct their students' spoken errors which would best benefit their students. This further demonstrated that the T-participants would consider their students' needs as the priority in their classroom teaching.

#### ***6.3.4.2 Who receives more corrections on oral language?***

The interview data indicated that the majority of the T-participants (four teachers of six) tended to focus their spoken error correction of students whom they felt had problems with the language. These students were those with lower proficiency levels in which teachers would frequently give feedback on their errors of oral language. However, teachers focused their spoken error correction more on the lower proficiency level students, "less feedback was given to those advanced students" (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1).

There were a number of reasons which contributed to this situation occurring during lessons. One of the reasons was because "students who can speak well, if they [students] make an error, it can be a minor error" (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1). Additionally the teachers concentrated on lower proficiency students when they correct their students' spoken error "because these students [lower proficiency students] they really need help to improve the language, especially the spoken language" (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). The final reason why more oral CF was given to students with speaking problems than advanced students was described by one of the teachers:

Those with problem we give more feedback because they need it. Whereas those (students) who are advanced, we tell them once, they are more conscious because they use it every day. Whereas they (students with speaking problems) don't use it every day. You have to look at the environment that they are in. Like the *asrama* (hostel) girls, they are all using Malay (Bahasa Malaysia). The chances of them using it is less. I have to make them practice more. Normally I focus more on this (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1).

Based on this response, not only R<sub>f3</sub> provided her reason for concentrating on students with language problems in her oral CF, but the response also demonstrated her sensitivity towards students' background. By knowing her students' background, she could provide more exposure for them to use English during lessons.

While the majority of the T-participants focused their spoken error correction of the lower proficiency students, two teachers focused their correction of all levels of proficiency. These T-participants highlighted that their best effort was put in during lessons to correct students of all levels of proficiency if time and opportunities permitted. The reason provided by one of the T-participants as to why she would focus her spoken error correction of all levels of students and in fact on individual student if she had time was because she believed individual correction and attention could help students to improve their English. This was evident in her response:

If I give feedback, if I can, I will try to give feedback to everyone based on one-to-one basis, instead of the whole class feedback. Because this one you can tackle the problem individually and you can help them to improve their English. And if let say, in school, sometimes because we run out of the time, we couldn't give personal attention (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1).

Apart from the reason mentioned earlier by teacher R<sub>f4</sub>, another T-participant also highlighted his intention of focusing his spoken error correction of all levels of students. Obviously, it would "Depend(ing) on their (the students') needs" (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). The students' needs in this context referred to the students'

characteristics, for example, students' level of proficiency, as mentioned by the teacher "sometimes weak students, you have to correct there and then okay" (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Whereas "(normally) for good students I will call them later, alright. I may call them I mean you correct them, then, later you explain to them. There are times where you have to correct in front of everybody" (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Although the T-participant took the students' levels of proficiency into consideration in his spoken error correction, he would still correct "all of them (the students). Not just the weak ones but even the good ones also" (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Based on this response, it is apparent that he had no particular preference as to which group of students spoken error correction should be focused on. Rather, his spoken error correction was distributed equally to all students if the need arose. This also demonstrated that equal opportunity was given to all students during lessons to allow them to benefit from the spoken error correction received, and hence to improve their English.

#### ***6.3.4.3 Which errors are focused in oral language correction?***

The issue of which spoken errors were focused by the T-participants in their correction resulted in three T-participants indicating that they corrected all types of errors "as far as it is related to language" (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1). All errors which related to the language were corrected because they believed that "if it's speaking, it all works together" (R<sub>f2</sub>, interview 1). This reflected their belief that as teachers, they would try their best to correct every spoken error made by their students. Although the T-participants stated that they would correct all spoken errors, some variations on certain occasions existed referring to which spoken errors were emphasized on the



correction made. One of the occasions would be the focus of the lessons as highlighted by a T-participant in his remark:

As I said depends. Like teacher, we somehow try to correct everything. There are times we try to correct everything, right. It depends. I can't really say. I mean, like in this lesson I'm going to concentrate on this. In this lesson I'm going to concentrate on this. Depending on what you teach (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

While the majority of the T-participants corrected all errors related to the language, others focused their spoken error correction of certain errors. One of the spoken errors which was focused on was “[my correction is] more towards pronunciation (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). Pronunciation errors were normally the focus of his correction of the students’ spoken errors particularly “if the pronunciation carries different meaning” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2). Another error highlighted was grammatical errors as she mentioned in her response “[I] pay more attention to grammar” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1).

Interestingly, the data revealed that the T-participants also considered accuracy and fluency in their correction of students’ oral language. Errors of accuracy were given more attention especially among “the good ones (students)” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). Whereas among “the lower ones (students), weaker ones (students), the lower proficiency students, fluency was encouraged rather than focusing on errors of accuracy” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1). “As long as they (lower proficiency students) are able to communicate and deliver their message very well” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1), errors on accuracy should not be the focus; they should be allowed to express themselves (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1). In certain situations, accuracy and fluency were given equal importance in relation to the two productive skills: writing and speaking. One example of the situation was when writing “a letter to the editor, they (students) must

be accurate”; if talking about something, they (students) need to fluent” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). This showed that accuracy is needed for writing, but fluency is needed for speaking; accuracy is not so important in speaking.

#### ***6.3.4.4 Which errors are not corrected in students’ oral language?***

Not only was the issue raised of which spoken errors were to be emphasized in the teachers’ correction, but also the issue of which spoken errors should be disregarded by the teachers was also explored in the interviews. Unexpectedly, certain spoken errors, in particular vocabulary errors or “choice of words” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1), were identified as errors which the T-participants tended to ignore in their lessons. Vocabulary errors were only corrected during lessons if the words used affected the meaning or made the message confusing. Although vocabulary errors were normally ignored, correction was still conducted at the end of lessons when an explanation was provided as to why the use of the words was inappropriate. R<sub>m1</sub> gave his rationale for not correcting his students’ vocabulary error:

Sometimes (it’s) the choice of word. The other day when I was talking about the different of audience, spectators and congregation, you know. When they mixed up those words [right], it just want to get the idea, [alright], the idea of [okay], I mean the general idea of what those because they are similar, talking about a group of people. Then I accept it, but I would go back later on, explain to them. I would accept their answers and then later on I would correct and explain to them the appropriateness of the vocabulary (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

Apparently, only one T-participant stated that he ignored vocabulary error in his spoken error correction; other teachers did not specify any particular errors that they ignored in their correction. Instead, a number of reasons were evident in the data as rationales for not correcting students’ spoken errors in their lessons. One T-

participant's reason for not correcting his students' spoken errors was related to the purpose of language classes – language classes provided opportunities for “them (the students) to use the language, to converse in it” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1). Based on the data, it was evident that spoken errors were not corrected very often in the lessons, although one teacher stressed that “I (as a teacher) still try to make them (the students) use it correctly” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 1).

Apart from the purpose of language classes as being to provide opportunities to speak and not to correct the students' spoken errors, the focus of lessons was also highlighted as a second reason. As expressed by one of the T-participants, depending on the errors, “if it's not major mistakes and all, then I may skip, if it's a major mistake and something to do with the lesson then, I will correct them” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 2). In another remark by a T-participant, the objective of the lesson was highlighted as a reason for not correcting certain spoken errors. As the teacher expressed:

I let go certain errors when [aa..] you have to look at what objectives you would like to achieve. If let say today, my focus is on writing skills, then definitely I have to let go the oral skills, listening and speaking skills. But let say for particular lesson that I focus on listening, then I have to focus on listening skills. Normally listening and speaking skills will come in together. You can't separate the aural and the oral (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1).

A third reason for not correcting was related to the situation in which the spoken errors occurred. T-participants took the overall situation into as one T-participant indicated:

Depending on the situation. If they are having a debate or whatever, I let them go on first. Later only I will correct them. At the end when you do, you know, summary, when you summarize the whole thing, then I tell them where their mistakes are (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1).

The T-participants also added that the spoken errors were not corrected in certain situations because “when you (teachers) correct them (students) all the time, they don’t feel like talking at all” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1). When corrections were not done to all spoken errors, the T-participants not only attempted to maintain their students’ interest, but they a non-threatening environment for the students which encouraged them to use English during lessons.

#### ***6.3.4.5 What factors are considered in correcting errors on oral language?***

Another important issue explored in the interview questions was which factors influenced the T-participants in correcting their students’ spoken errors. From the data analysis, two factors were identified: students’ proficiency level and students’ background. It was evident that the majority of the T-participants highlighted students’ proficiency levels, in particular, it seemed that the lower proficiency level students were least likely to be corrected. This factor was important in order for the T-participants to determine the way they would correct spoken errors particularly among the lower proficiency level students. Apparently, two ways of correcting were evident from the data. Firstly, the T-participants used a psychological approach in which the feelings of embarrassment and self-consciousness among students could be avoided as much as possible. Instead they encouraged the students to feel encouraged to accept corrections made more positively. This was described by one T-participant:

You tend to like, correct the students who can’t speak and pronounce words well in a very encouraging way. So you don’t like, like, bring them down. Like make fun of them. But you encourage them by saying something nice, use psychology (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 1).

“Personal consultation or one-to-one basis consultation instead of in front of the class” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 1) was another way the T-participants used to correct spoken errors among the lower proficiency level students. This approach is important to avoid embarrassment and feeling of low self-esteem to the students particularly the lower proficiency students. As teachers, “if they (the lower proficiency students) try to speak, we (teachers) will try to accept what they say. Don't simply correct them. Let them feel very low self-esteem” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview 1).

Students' background was the second factor considered when correcting students' spoken errors in classrooms. This factor was important because it would affect the students' characteristics as individuals. The particular characteristic which teachers paid attention to was the students' level of shyness as the T-participants felt this would affect their perceptions and acceptance of the way that teachers corrected their spoken errors. The teachers' sensitivity toward this characteristic was important to avoid increasing students feeling of low self-esteem and embarrassment when teachers corrected their spoken errors. This view was evident in a response by R<sub>f3</sub>:

I always look at their background because some of them are shy. If you do it too much in front of the class, this will actually make them feel very small, it will actually make them very small, it will crush their self-esteem. Sometimes I go personally because, you know, the Malay girls, those from here, the town and those from Seberang (quite a rural area) and those who stay in the 'asrama' (hostel), they are shy and they feel sometimes they come and tell me, you know, “Teacher, my friends are laughing at me”. So we have to consider this factor and we have to be very subtle in certain ways. Because some of the girls, they laugh out right and that is not nice (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 1).

This comment showed that, by knowing students' background, teachers could be flexible in choosing a way to correct students' spoken errors in the classrooms

which is indirect yet could be effective. When teachers correct their students' spoken errors indirectly, the lower level proficiency students would not be offended by the teachers' correction of their spoken errors not could it encourage situation where their peers might respond negatively to them.

## **6.4 Results of the Classroom Observation Data**

While the interview data were coded using the three coding process, the data collected in the classroom observations were analysed using the COLT data analysis procedure. However, only the COLT Part B coding scheme was included in the analysis (Spada & Frohlich, 1995).

As indicated earlier, the data in the classroom observations were collected to address Research Objective 4: *To investigate the use of oral CF by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers in the classrooms?* Two specific research questions were designed to address this research objective: 1) What are the types of oral CF used? and 2) What are the types of errors corrected?

The research objective focuses on an investigation of the actual practices of the teachers in relation to spoken error corrections, by directly observing their lessons. The observation data demonstrated the frequency of the occurrence of spoken error corrections in the lessons observed and examined to what extend teachers used oral CF in their classroom teaching.

In addressing Research Objective 4, the findings are divided into four parts in relation to the four sub-questions and are presented accordingly.

### 6.4.1 What are the types of oral corrective feedback used?

The analysis of the classroom observation data indicated that all the six types of oral CF – correction, repetition, meta-linguistic feedback, recast, clarification request and elicitation – were used by the teachers in their correction of oral language among their students. Nevertheless, the occurrences of each type of oral CF were not equally balanced in their lessons. Explicit correction was the most frequently used with elicitation the least. The occurrences of the six types of oral CF in all the 18 lessons observed for each teacher are summarised in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 *Distribution of feedback types by T-participants*

	R <sub>m1</sub> (n=16)	R <sub>m2</sub> (n=1)	R <sub>f1</sub> (n=1)	R <sub>f2</sub> (n=6)	R <sub>f3</sub> (n=12)	R <sub>f4</sub> (n=6)	Total (n=42)
Explicit correction	15 (94%)		1 (100%)	4 (66%)	8 (67%)	3 (50%)	31 (74%)
Meta-linguistic feedback		1 (100%)				2 (34%)	3 (7%)
Repetition					3 (25%)		3 (7%)
Clarification request	1 (6%)			1 (17%)			2 (5%)
Recast				1 (17%)		1 (16%)	2 (5%)
Elicitation					1 (8%)		1 (2%)

Table 6.3 indicates the T-participants' preferences for different types of oral CF, as well as the total distribution of feedback types for all six teachers. Across the six teachers, the single largest category used was explicit feedback, which accounted for nearly three quarters (74%) of the total number of teacher turns containing feedback. The other feedback types were distributed in decreasing frequency as follows: meta-linguistic feedback and repetition with equal percentage of 7%,

clarification request and recast with equal percentage of 5%, and elicitation with the lowest percentage of 2%. From these findings, it appeared that correcting students' ill-formed utterances explicitly was the feedback method of choice of the teachers. This was true for all six teachers, although R<sub>m2</sub> did not use explicit correction at all compared to other T-participants. Other differences noted were the limited use of meta-linguistic feedback by R<sub>m2</sub>, clarification request by R<sub>m1</sub> and R<sub>f2</sub>, recast by R<sub>f2</sub> and R<sub>f4</sub> and elicitation by R<sub>f3</sub>.

The analysis of the classroom observation did not only identify the preferences for different types of oral CF for the teachers, it also examined the relationship between types of oral CF and types of learner uptake which is displayed in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4. *Learner uptake following teacher feedback*

	Repair	Needs repair	No uptake
Explicit correction ( <i>n</i> =31)	14 (45%)	0	17 (55%)
Meta-linguistic feedback ( <i>n</i> =3)	3 (100%)	0	
Repetition ( <i>n</i> =3)	3 (100%)	0	
Clarification request ( <i>n</i> =2)	0	0	2 (100%)
Recast ( <i>n</i> =2)	1 (50%)	0	1 (50%)
Elicitation ( <i>n</i> =1)	0	0	1 (100%)

From Table 6.4, it is evident that explicit correction, the most popular feedback technique, is also the least likely to lead to uptake of any kind. Only 45% of the explicit correction led to learner uptake whereas with the majority (55%) not leading



to any observable learner uptake. It can be argued that meta-linguistic feedback and repetition are similar in that they are the most successful techniques for eliciting uptake. All students' utterances following these types of feedback involved uptake with successful repair (100% for both feedback). Recast leads to an even distribution of repair (50%) and no response (50%). This suggests that recasts may lead to uptake or no uptake depending on whether the students noticed the CF used. Conversely, clarification request and elicitation were the two types of feedback which did not lead to any learner uptake; no response was received from the students as a result of these feedback types.

The analysis of data presented in Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 indicates a relationship between feedback type and learner uptake. However, the issue as to whether all repairs are equally effective indicators that students have noticed the feedback is still unanswered. In addition, a repair in which a student simply repeats what the teachers have said does not necessarily indicate that the feedback has been understood. Therefore a further examination was undertaken to separate peer- and self-repair from repetition and incorporation. Peer- and self-repair as were regarded as "student-generated repair" and repair and need repair as "all repairs". Table 6.5 summarises the number and percentage of repairs attributed to each feedback type involved.

Table 6.5. *Number and percentage of repairs attributed to each feedback type*

	Explicit correction	Meta- linguistic feedback	Repetition	Clarification request	Recast	Elicitation
All repairs (n=16 )	14 (87%)	0	2 (13%)	0	0	0
Student- generated repairs (n= 4 )	0	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	0	1 (25%)	0

Table 6.5 displays the breakdown involving the number and percentage of repairs attributed to each feedback type. If all types of repairs are considered, evidently explicit correction accounts for the highest percentage (86%), with repetition in second place (14%). However, if student-generated repair is focused alone, the findings change significantly. In this case, explicit correction does not account for any repairs, while meta-linguistic feedback is responsible for 50% of all student-generated repairs. Repetition and recast have an even distribution of 25% for the remaining self-generated repairs. From Table 6.6, it is clear that the choice of feedback technique may have an effect on the type of repair that follows.

Table 6.6. *Corrective feedback following types of error*

	Pronunciation ( <i>n</i> =19)	Vocabulary ( <i>n</i> =9)	Grammar ( <i>n</i> =7)	Function ( <i>n</i> =7)	Total ( <i>n</i> =42)
Explicit correction ( <i>n</i> =31)	16 (52%)	8 (26%)	2 (6%)	5 (16%)	31 (74%)
Meta-linguistic feedback ( <i>n</i> =3)			3 (100%)		3 (7%)
Repetition ( <i>n</i> =3)	3 (100%)				3 (7%)
Clarification request ( <i>n</i> =2)			1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (5%)
Recast ( <i>n</i> =2)		1 (50%)	1 (50%)		2 (5%)
Elicitation ( <i>n</i> =1)				1 (100%)	1 (100%)

#### 6.4.2 What are the types of errors corrected?

From the findings of the classroom observation data, it is evident that four types of errors were given priority in the teachers' correction of their students' errors of oral language. Table 6.7 details the types of errors corrected by the teachers in the lessons observed over the two weeks of classroom observations.

Table 6.7 *Distribution of error types in classroom observations*

	R <sub>m1</sub> ( <i>n</i> =16)	R <sub>m2</sub> ( <i>n</i> =1)	R <sub>f1</sub> ( <i>n</i> =1)	R <sub>f2</sub> ( <i>n</i> =6)	R <sub>f3</sub> ( <i>n</i> =12)	R <sub>f4</sub> ( <i>n</i> =6)	Total ( <i>n</i> =42)
Pronunciation	11 (74%)		1 (100%)	2 (33%)	5 (42%)		19 (46%)
Vocabulary	2 (13%)			2 (33%)	4 (33%)	1 (17%)	9 (22%)
Grammar		1 (100%)		2 (34%)		4 (66%)	7 (17%)
Function: pragmatic	3 (13%)				3 (25%)	1 (17%)	7 (15%)

The types of errors corrected by each teacher and the total distribution of error types for all teachers are shown in Table 6.7. Across the six teachers, the most corrected error was pronunciation errors, which accounted for nearly half (46%) of the total number of errors corrected. The other error types were distributed in decreasing frequency as follows: vocabulary errors (22%), grammatical error (17%) and function errors (i.e. pragmatic) (15%). From these findings, it would appear that the T-participants focused more on pronunciation errors than the other error types. This was true for all six teachers, although R<sub>f4</sub> and R<sub>m2</sub> did not correct pronunciation errors at all. In addition, a majority (4 teachers) spread their corrections across a number of errors rather than only focusing on one error type. For example, R<sub>m1</sub> focused on pronunciation, vocabulary and function errors, R<sub>f2</sub> focused on pronunciation, vocabulary and grammatical errors; R<sub>f3</sub> focused on pronunciation, vocabulary and function errors; R<sub>f4</sub> focused on vocabulary, grammatical and function errors. The other two teachers focused their correction only on one error type; R<sub>m2</sub> focused on grammatical errors and R<sub>f1</sub> focused on pronunciation errors. Other differences that were noted among teachers were the small number of vocabulary errors (17%) and function errors (17%) corrected by R<sub>f4</sub>.

#### ***6.4.2.1 Why were pronunciation errors the most frequent errors corrected by the teachers?***

From Table 6.7, it was evident that pronunciation errors were the most often corrected by teachers. Teacher R<sub>m1</sub>, for example, corrected 76% pronunciation errors corrected in the three lessons observed. This teacher focused most of his corrections on pronunciation errors because he believed that correction of spoken errors

depended mainly on the focus of a lesson. His views on which errors he corrected on his students' oral language were clearly expressed in his interview response to this teaching practice:

It depends. I can't really say. I mean, like in this lesson I'm going to concentrate on this. In this lesson I'm going to concentrate on this. Depending on what you teach (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 1).

Additionally, pronunciation errors were the most often corrected in the lessons which focused on literature teaching and these were the lessons taught by R<sub>m1</sub>. In all of his three lessons observed, students were required to recite a poem in which there were many unfamiliar words from the poem to be pronounced. Therefore this T-participant focused his correction of pronunciation errors since recitation of the poem was one of the main activities in all his lessons. As a result, the overall finding of the error types most corrected was pronunciation error.

#### ***6.4.2.2 What were corrected on errors of function?***

There are many aspects of function error. In the lessons observed, function errors were largely related to pragmatics. Although function error was the least (14%) corrected by teachers in the classroom observations, it is also important to highlight the particular aspect that was focused by the teachers. The details of pragmatic error correction are summarised in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8. *Evidence of correction of errors on pragmatics*

Teacher	Evidence	Comments
R <sub>m1</sub>	Ss: Teacher, I go to toilet? T: How do you say when you want to ask permission? What are the magic words you need to use? Ss: Teacher, may I go to toilet, please? T: Okay. What do you have to say after that? Ss: Thanks you teacher. T: Good	The improper use of the language to ask for permission was corrected. The stress was given on politeness with the use of the word 'please' and 'thank you'.
R <sub>f3</sub>	<i>Evidence 1:</i> Ss: Teacher, wait! T: Excuse me teacher  <i>Evidence 2:</i> Ss: Now, I call... (during a debate) T: I would like to call upon...	The improper use of the language in an informal situation to invite another speaker in a debate was corrected.

From Table 6.8, it can be seen that although pragmatic errors were corrected, the focus of the teachers' correction was on the politeness forms rather than meaning of the utterances. It was evident that the teachers stressed the correct use of the forms to show politeness rather than the meaning of the utterances themselves. It is evident that the teachers had the tendency to focus on forms over meaning in their correction of oral language.

#### **6.4.2.3 *Why are there few error corrections?***

From the data analysed, it was evident that there were few error corrections made during the lessons. Throughout the 12 lessons observed only 42 occurrences of correction were recorded from 780 minutes of lessons; the average rate was 19 minutes per-correction. This rate indicated that the teachers had the tendency not to correct their students' spoken errors and possibly not as much as they could.

To investigate the reasons for this situation, the data were examined further and showed that the teachers provided a number of reasons for the low frequency of error correction. The obvious reason provided by most of the teachers was, as might be expected, the “school system which is more towards examination-orientated” (R<sub>f4</sub>; R<sub>m2</sub>; R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 2), so lessons were conducted with a focus on preparing students for examination. These exam-focused lessons led the teachers to have “the tendency to correct the written language than the spoken language” (R<sub>m2</sub>, Interview 2), so that the speaking skills were not the main focus of the lessons. The T-participants also had the tendency to focus their corrections on the written language because of the unequal percentages allocated to each of the four language skills in examination assessment: “80% was on the written test, whereas only 20% was on the spoken test” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 2). This left the teachers with “no choice but to stress more on the written language” (R<sub>m2</sub> Interview 2). Not only did the examination system lead teachers to focus more on the written language, but “parents were also more concerned with the achievement of the written work; getting good results is more important rather than the achievement of the aural-oral skills” (R<sub>f4</sub>, Interview 2). Therefore achieving the objectives of the lessons as well as completing the syllabus

for exam purposes was the aim of the lessons – for parents as well as teachers (and students).

The teachers also tended to correct written errors more than spoken errors because in written errors “they (the errors) are recorded and permanent. You can go back and find the mistakes, it’s there” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 2); “there are proofs (of the errors)” (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 2). However, unlike written errors, spoken errors are not permanently recorded so “once it’s (the spoken error) lost, that’s it, you can’t go back and find it” (R<sub>m1</sub>, Interview 2).

Fewer occurrences of spoken language error corrections during the lessons observed were also the result of the impact that the Malaysian education system has on classroom teaching. This meant that teachers had a tendency to “teach students on how to answer examination questions” (R<sub>f2</sub>, Interview 2), so that lessons were “geared towards what the students need to do to get an ‘A’” (R<sub>f3</sub>, Interview 2). Since the lessons and teaching were exam-focused, the spoken errors made by students tended to be ignored because they were less important – “by the end of the day students have to answer the questions (examination)” (R<sub>f1</sub>, Interview).

## **6.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the findings from the data collected in the semi-structured interviews and classroom observation sessions which addressed two research objectives: Research Objective 1 and Research Objective 5. As detailed in this chapter, the T-participants were described as having sound knowledge about oral CF, but made only limited use of oral CF, as was evident in the findings of the



classroom observation sessions. Apparently, this limited use of oral CF in their classroom practices seemed to be a result of the Malaysian education system which emphasises examinations in general and reading and writing skills, in particular. Therefore, the lessons were geared to preparing students for examinations and little emphasis was given to speaking skills. As a result, the teachers used little oral CF in the classrooms although they were aware that error correction could help students' English oral language development.

Discussions which examine whether the findings have answered the research aims and research objectives of this study satisfactorily will be presented in the next chapter. Apart from this, the challenges faced by the researchers throughout the completion of this study are also described. Based on the findings of this study, some educational recommendations are put forward and implications for further research are also identified. Last but not least is the researcher's reflection on her research journey which has developed her maturity as a researcher as well as a teacher trainer will also be revealed in the next chapter on Conclusion.

## CHAPTER 7. Conclusion

### 7.1 Introduction

“A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policing, and coercion are fruitless. We find that after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us”, John Steinbeck.

The journey in our life should have a logical beginning and a logical ending.

As for the research journey of writing, in every great piece of knowledge, comes through four steps: idea, research, discussion and conclusion. A conclusion chapter for a researcher could be described as in a situation when an athlete is running to the finish line he throws in every bit of his energy in the end because it is always a close call of who the winner is. In the light of the two previous chapters, this chapter is intended to examine the extent in which the two research aims and the four objectives are addressed and achieved. The discussion which follows is designed to examine the findings related to the research aims and research questions. Some of the challenges of the research journey which were successfully overcome are presented. The implications for further research that can be identified from this study are then identified before this thesis is concluded with a reflection on the researcher's experience of drawing this study together.

### 7.2 Addressing the Research Aims and Objectives

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the main aims of this study were twofold: firstly, to explore how oral CF was perceived by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers and students; and, secondly, to investigate how oral CF was used by teachers in several Malaysian secondary schools classrooms. With respect to the data collected

quantitatively and qualitatively, the findings permit the four research objectives to be addressed:

**Research objective 1:** To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers on oral CF.

**Research objective 2:** To examine the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school students on oral CF used by teachers in relation to their forms.

**Research objective 3:** To compare the views of Malaysian secondary school students and teachers on CF of oral language.

**Research objective 4:** To investigate the use of oral CF by Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers in the classrooms.

To collect the quantitative data, two surveys were conducted among teachers and students; qualitative data was collected through interview and classroom observation sessions. The findings will be summarised below in relation to the four research objectives.

### **7.2.1 Examining teachers' views on oral corrective feedback**

In addressing Research Objective 1, qualitative and quantitative data were collected from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. From all the data analysed, the T-participants in this study could be described as having positive views and sound knowledge of oral CF. The flexibility and multiple techniques used to correct their students' spoken errors in their teaching indicated their awareness of students' individuality and their different needs such as proficiency levels, personality, attitudes and feelings. This awareness was important to establish because error correction could be a very sensitive issue to some students leading to

embarrassment and feelings of threaten (Yoshida, 2010). Encouraging self- and peer-correction in their teaching demonstrated the teachers' knowledge that these error correction techniques helped students to recognize errors (Cohen, 1975) and led to the repair of erroneous utterances (Zhao, 2009).

The priority in their error correction was on the less proficient students as they thought that this group of students needed more help in oral language. Being non-NEST, the T-participants understood their students' needs hence they were able to anticipate and predict language difficulties encountered by this group of students (Árva & Medgyes, 2000; Kelch & Santana-Williamson, 2002; Medgyes, 1994). Moreover, this understanding aligns with the T-participants' knowledge of the relationship between errors and learning as it demonstrates they understood that errors are indications of actual learning and, of students' progress and success in language learning (Hendrickson, 1978). Additionally, the T-participants were also aware that their responses to students' errors in classrooms had significant influence on students' self-esteem (Breen, 2001). Apart from this, focusing the correction of less proficient students demonstrated that the T-participants understand the problems and weaknesses that their students had pertaining to oral language (Tang, 1997). Furthermore as non-NEST, the T-participants were aware of the difficulties their students are "likely to encounter and the possible errors they are likely to make" (Medgyes, 1983). Less-proficient students as the focus of error correction also indicated the T-participants' sensitivity towards difficulties and problem faced by their students in the process of language learning. This is one of the advantages of the T-participants being non-NEST as they have the ability to empathize with students particularly the less-proficient students who might face more problems that

the more proficient students in the learning process (Barratt & Kontra, 2000; Ling & Braine, 2007; Moussu & Llurda, 2008).

The grammatical and pronunciation errors claimed to be the focus of error correction among the T-participants were to be expected in the findings. From previous research, this claim was based on the view that lessons were aimed at accuracy rather than fluency; this may be a reflection of the education system in Malaysia, particularly, the examination system which focuses on writing ability more than speaking ability (Fauziah & Nita, 2002). The findings showed that that accuracy in speaking and writing was treated as equally important. Correctness over appropriateness however was the aim of the spoken error corrections. This situation has limited the opportunity (among the T-participants)” to develop students’ fluency, as so they focused the lessons on accuracy on the understanding that accuracy in speaking would help the students to become accurate in their writing. Additionally, the T-participants focused on accuracy in their error correction because they were aware that “a lot of examinations are based on how accurate a student is in constructing correct pieces of language” (Edge, 1989). This is a general basis for all national English examinations in Malaysia.

From the findings discussed earlier, the T-participants could be described as having positive views on oral CF and this was evident in all the data analysed. All the claims made by the teachers pertaining to their classroom teaching further affirmed their positive attitudes towards oral CF. Thus the response to Research Objective 1 was that teachers generally had positive views toward oral CF.

### **7.2.2 Examining students' views on oral corrective feedback**

Quantitative data collected from the questionnaire was used to address Research Objective 2. Analysis of the questionnaire which explored the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school students found a number of fascinating and significant findings. Interestingly yet unexpectedly, the S-participants could be described as having positive views (including positive attitudes and feelings) towards the error correction received from their teachers. These positive attitudes and feelings suggested that they understood that the teachers' error corrections could be a good means of facilitating and developing their oral proficiency (Chenoweth et al., 1983; Schulz, 1996). The S-participants were also keen to receive more teachers' corrections on their spoken errors than they were currently receiving. The preference for self-correction of their spoken errors during lessons is in line with their understanding that by self-correcting their errors, they could avoid embarrassment and negative responses towards the teachers' corrections (Ellis, 1994). By self-correcting their errors, the S-participants were practising the skills of independent learning which developed skills that can be applied outside the classroom in the real world (Camps, 2003).

Other evidence of the S-participants' positive views of oral CF was shown in the learner uptake following teacher error correction. Generally, learner uptake following this correction was in the repair category; such as repetition of correct forms, peer-correction and self-correction. This learner uptake seemed to demonstrate that the S-participants noticed the CF provided by their teachers, which

is a signal that the students accurately understood the purpose of this CF (Egi, 2010; Lightbown, 1998; Lyster & Mori, 2006; Mackey et al., 2000).

This study's findings suggest that having emphasis on the importance of grammar in their learning, resulted in the S-participants wanting grammatical errors, in particular to be corrected most often in their spoken errors. This finding was predictable and similar to the finding related to the T-participants' views; it also affirmed the S-participants' awareness that grammar is important in learning another language in their learning context (Katayama, 2007b). Additionally, this finding reflected the particular nature of Malaysian classrooms; lessons are focused primarily on two (of the four) language skills – reading and writing – with a major focus on grammar (Fauziah & Nita, 2002).

The different forms of students in the study questionnaire were reflected in the different views among the S-participants in relation to oral CF. The differences in views between Form 1 students with other forms (Form 2 and Form 3) were clearly shown. However, the difference in views between Form 2 and Form 3 students were limited. Form 1 students tended to perceive oral CF differently from the other two forms students and this could possibly be due to their maturity level (Oliver, 2000). As the youngest of the three student groups, they probably had less knowledge and experience of oral CF and its effects. The observed differences in views among the S-participants might also reflect the demands of English language learning for the different levels of students and/or the teaching activities at different year levels (Oladejo, 1993). Students at the lower year levels were more concerned with the grammatical aspects, whereas students at the higher levels were more concerned with

conveying of meaning in their speech (Oladejo, 1993). Apart from this, the different views of the S-participants in Form 1 compared to the other forms were probably related to variations in proficiency levels (Katayama, 2007b). Most of the Form 1 students only received English instruction from their primary school education, whereas the other two forms had received more substantial English instruction from Form1. It is always the case that as the class levels progress, the variation increases. The S-participants with 2-3 years of studying English might have developed a stronger awareness of teacher CF.

Despite the findings showing that the S-participants had positive views, attitudes and feelings towards the oral CF that they received from the teachers, it should be also noted that the students received little teacher CF. It may be the case that if their teachers had corrected their spoken errors more often, students' views, feelings and attitudes might possibly have been less positive than was the case in this study. It could also be speculated that the S-participants' favourable attitudes and positive perceptions towards the CF used by their teachers was the result of the way English was taught or tested or both (Schulz, 2001).

The findings discussed earlier on the S-participants' perspectives of oral CF affirmed their positive views, attitudes and feelings towards the CF received from their teachers. The outcome of Research Objective 2 then was to find that students generally had positive views, feelings and attitudes toward oral CF.



### **7.2.3 Examining teachers' and students' views on oral corrective feedback**

In addressing Research Objective 3, the T- and S-participants' views on oral CF were compared. This comparison resulted in some similarities, but also some differences in the views of the two groups (of participants). The similarities between the two groups of participants related to their views on oral CF. From the findings, oral CF was perceived positively by both groups of participants indicating their awareness that, through the oral CF used by the teachers, students' oral language could be developed and improved.

By contrast, the intentions of the T-participants in using oral CF with their students' spoken errors were not in accord with the S-participants' expectations. As teachers, the T-participants disagreed with correcting every error made by their students. This view about not correcting every error was adopted largely to avoid student embarrassment. They assumed that students would avoid situations that may cause them social embarrassment as much as they could (Karp & Yoels, 1976). Correcting all errors might also negatively affect their confidence, and this would have an impact on their desire to actively participate in oral communication during lessons. However, the study's findings showed that the S-participants did not consider the teachers' error correction as face-threatening to them (Katayama, 2007b). Knowing their teachers to be knowledge providers, the students expected teachers' correction of every spoken error they made. This discrepancy in CF between the teachers' intentions and the students' expectations could lead to problems in the classroom. In fact, it might be useful to avoid as much as possible as

this could result in lower ineffectiveness of CF than might be expected. Furthermore this could also lead to problem of noticing the CF used by the teachers: students did not notice that CF had occurred (Yoshida, 2010). A match between teachers' practices and students' preferences is important because this is likely to facilitate student language learning (Katayama, 2007b).

Similar understandings between the T- and S-participants were identified in their agreement that grammatical errors were the main focus of CF. Knowing that they made grammatical errors most often, the S-participants wanted teachers to focus their CF on these errors. Similarly, knowing that grammatical errors were the most frequent errors made by students, the T-participants had decided to emphasise grammatical errors in their CF. The similarity in views between the T- and S-participants further indicated that both groups understood the main concern in their lessons was accuracy rather than fluency. This finding affirmed that the Malaysian education system has an impact on how teachers and students perceive CF, particularly in relation to the types of error that should be the focus. Because lessons were mostly focused on grammatical aspects for accuracy and correctness, the T- and S-participants had the tendency to choose grammatical errors as the appropriate focus of the CF. This also reflected the nature of lessons in Malaysian secondary schools which were largely examination-oriented (Lewey, 1977).

Apart from this, the similarity in views between the T- and S-participants was also evident in the types of learner uptake following CF used in lessons. Though their views were not identical, both groups indicated self-correction as the main type of learner uptake following CF. This finding seemed to indicate that the T- and S-

participants noticed the benefit offered by student self-correcting errors. Self-correction has been shown to provide greater benefit to students' inter-language development than being provided with correct forms in other studies (Corder, 1967; Kasper, 1985; van Lier, 1988). By encouraging self-correction among students, teachers were deliberately sharing their power as teachers and their role as knowledge providers with the students. On the other hand, by their preference for self-correcting their own spoken errors, the S-participants may have shown that they wanted to be autonomous with their own learning which is regarded as essential to becoming competent in a target language (van Lier, 1988). Self-correction does not only give teachers information on the learner's proficiency but also provides students with a chance to maintain face, which has been shown to be important (Kasper, 1985).

Discussions of the T- and S-participants' views pertaining to oral CF indicated that they shared similar views despite the fact that they were on two sides of the interaction. The similarities in views had further affirmed that generally, the T- and S-participants understood the education system in Malaysia very well. Both groups of participants had also understood the nature of styles in Malaysian secondary schools. These findings addressed Research Objective 3.

#### **7.2.4 Investigating the use of oral corrective feedback in the classrooms**

Classroom observations were conducted to investigate the use of oral CF among the 6 T-participants which was the focus of Research Objective 4.

From the findings, it was evident that CF was used in a limited way by the T-participants in the lessons observed. As detected by COLT analysis, classroom activities were mostly teacher-oriented or teacher-directed. It was discernible that this situation reflected the nature of English lessons in Malaysia; teachers were in control of classroom activities. Despite the fact that the communicative approach in English teaching is clearly stated in the curriculum, lessons are still usually teacher-centred. For this reason few occurrences of CF were probably detectable in the classroom observations data. As a result, the dominance of teacher talk might have deprived students and teachers opportunities for student-teacher interaction, so the chances for CF and learner uptake were limited (Yang, 2009). Moreover, there was little discussion following the topics taught in two classes observed with students of an average level of proficiency. This allowed only limited opportunities for these students to interact, which may have contributed to the low occurrence of feedback and uptake. Although opportunities for interaction existed on some occasions, the T-participants were not provided opportunity to embed correction with meaningful interactions as the students response were very short (Yang, 2009).

The obvious finding from the classroom observation data which was in contrast to those of other studies was the type of CF frequently used by the T-participants. In this study, explicit correction was most often used; however, in previous studies, recasts were most often used to correct students' spoken errors (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Tsang, 2004; Yoshida, 2008). Another significant finding of this study was that recasts were not used as frequently as they were used in other studies (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Tsang, 2004). In fact recasts were the least used type of CF. Explicit correction was used most often in the lessons observed;

however the finding was not similar to the findings of quantitative data where peer- and self-correction were mostly encouraged. It appeared that from the questionnaire and the interviews conducted, the respondents had theoretical content knowledge of oral CF; however, different situations were observed in practice. Several possible reasons could have explained the findings; among these were time constraints. Not much time is required if explicit correction was used compared to other types of CF; teachers identified students' errors and provided the correct answers (Fanselow, 1977; Oladejo, 1993). From the nature of explicit correction, teachers not only identified the error, but also gave the correct form; this minimized any disturbance in the flow of the activity (Katayama, 2007a).

Another reason for the frequent use of explicit correction in the lessons observed was the type of errors corrected. Almost half of the corrections made were on pronunciation errors. In other types of CF, such as self- or peer-correction, it would be impossible to correct pronunciation errors as students would not have the knowledge and capacity to correct their own mispronunciation of words. The T-participants, however, as the competent users of the language, would be able to correct pronunciation errors directly in the classrooms. Unless the students were advanced students, correcting pronunciation errors could be possibly done implicitly by the teachers or among the students themselves.

Although it may be undesirable for the T-participants to provide CF more frequently than what was observed, it is detectable that, when they did indeed provide feedback, the T-participants provided a wide range of the techniques they have at their disposal instead of relying too extensively on explicit feedback, which

comprised half of all feedbacks moves. In doing so the T-participants could ensure greater opportunities for uptake following feedback. Apparently, the findings also showed that, in terms of absolute numbers, explicit correction accounted for the largest number of repairs. However, this is likely due to the very high frequency of explicit correction. Although nearly half of explicit corrections led to repair, all of these repairs involved repetition of the T-participants' explicit correction. This revealed that the students noticed the modification made by the T-participants on their errors, by repeating the correct form provided by their teachers (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

In relation to the limited use of other types of CF which encouraged self-repair, it is most likely the case that the T-participants were reluctant to use them more frequently lest the flow of communication be broken (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Nonetheless, the data analysis of the classroom observations revealed that none of the CF types used stopped the classroom interaction or broke the communicative flow. On the contrary, uptakes actually meant that the students were in control of their own learning which could lead them to become autonomous learners. This affirmed that CF and learner uptake comprise an adjacency pair that is clearly expected in classroom discourse and that occurs as an insertion sequence without stopping the flow of communication (Mey, 1993).

### **7.3 Challenges of the Research**

“Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch-what make you go beyond the norm”, Cicely Tyson.

No research is a perfect research without challenges and obstacles. To the extent that this study is concerned, there are a number of challenges and obstacles which were finally overcome along its completion process, thus made this thesis as practical and applicable.

Focusing on the research aims and the objectives of this study has been the main challenge as this acts like a platform which guides the journey of the study. Many possible aspects related to oral CF could be explored, however, with a close consultation with the literature, the gap was identified. Though considerable literature on oral CF was identified in ESL and EFL contexts alike in many countries (Coskun, 2010; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Park, 2010; Zhao, 2009), there was no evidence of literature examining oral CF in a Malaysian ESL context. This gap in the literature needed to be filled; focusing the research aims and objectives on exploring teachers' and students' views on oral CF was a good starting point as this would help the researcher to understand how oral CF is perceived in the context. Apart from this, the use of oral CF in the classroom also needed to be investigated because whatever happens in the classroom affects the teachers' and students' perceptions of oral CF. The focus of the research aims and objectives would allow a better understanding of several aspects of oral CF.

Another challenge encountered in this research journey was the choice of relevant literature on the topic researched which has also been of significance for the researcher. Initially, the researcher felt that all literature was relevant to the topic researched, however bearing the research aims and objectives in mind, relevant literature could be chosen to reflect the topic researched. In reviewing the relevant

literature, there were some instances in which indirect issues appeared to be important. These issues were identified and weaved into the relevant literature. Apart from choosing the relevant literature, maintaining flexibility and being critical in writing and reviewing the literature were real challenges as sometimes personal opinions and beliefs could easily interfere; each person reviews the literature differently.

Collecting the data at both quantitative and qualitative stages had also been a challenge. Tracking the unreturned questionnaires were quite challenging for both surveys conducted at the quantitative stage of data collection. To track these questionnaires, reminder letters were sent to all the principals of the participating schools to ensure the questionnaires were returned. These reminder letters resulted in more questionnaires returned and resulted in more than a 60% return rate, considered as a successful rate for a survey. Having had the participants who were engaged with their teaching and learning routines at the qualitative stage, had sometimes made the process of data collection longer than anticipated. To avoid delays in the process of data collection, necessary preparations were made including identifying the participating schools and preparing all the documentation needed before arriving in Malaysia. In relation to the teacher-participants who were involved in the semi-structure and classroom observations, once they were identified, frequent meetings and discussions were conducted; the consensus of suitable lessons to be observed and appropriate times for interview sessions were made. Apparently all the necessary actions taken in the data collection process had helped the researcher to overcome the challenges successfully.



Judgement of the relevant research findings was another obstacle faced by the researcher in the completion of this thesis. Interpretations of the data analysed and the emerging themes from the findings was challenging. However, only relevant findings which addressed the research aims and objectives as well as relevant to the literature were presented. Apart from this, emerging themes from the data considered to be significant to oral CF were presented as these findings could be new findings filling the gap in the literature. One of the significant findings which did not address the research aims and questions directly but were worth discussing was the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices. Findings which were presented in this study were not only those relevant to the research aims and objectives but also those which were considered significant to the literature.

Making the chapters in this thesis coherent, interrelated and informative was as challenging as others. The challenge was on the decision made in choosing which chapters to include reflecting the journey of the whole research. Not only the chapters were organised for coherence, the sections within the chapters were also organised so that they were interrelated. For example, introduction sections in all the chapters were written to introduce the content of the chapters whereas the conclusion sections in all the chapters were included to re-capture the content of the chapters. Moreover, the Introduction chapter was written to briefly introduce the journey of the thesis and the Conclusion chapter restated all the important aspects achieved throughout the journey. With careful organization of the chapters as well as the sections within the chapters, the thesis is coherent, interrelated and informative.

## **7.4 Educational Recommendation**

The findings of this study have led to some educational recommendations which could lead to a number of improvements in such areas as the education systems practiced in Malaysia, pedagogical aspects of ESL/EFL teaching and learning and professional improvements among ESL/EFL teachers in Malaysia.

### **7.4.1 Education system**

From the findings, less oral CF was identified in the lessons observed than in other studies which may reflect the education system in Malaysia. Initiatives could be introduced to restructuring the “too exam-oriented” education system which often leads to memorisation among students to obtain good grades (Darshan & Ong, 2003) towards a more flexible system which encourages student creativity and the ability to understand and analyse problems. Indirectly, through problem-based lessons, more interaction could be encouraged, thus providing teachers with more opportunities for error corrections of oral language among students.

Another aspect of the education system which could be improved is the examination systems which put greater emphasis on assessing reading and writing skills than listening and speaking skills. The improvement could focus on a balance in assessing the four language skills so that there is a shift from examination-oriented lessons, focusing mainly on reading and writing skills, to lessons which encourage a greater balance of all four skills. This would also encourage lessons with more opportunities for classroom interaction among students, which would create more opportunities for teachers to use CF.

### **7.4.2 Pedagogical improvement of ESL/EFL teachers**

In classroom teaching, teachers play a vital role in ensuring that knowledge is developed in students and having an impact on their learning in a positive manner. In this study the teachers indirectly had an impact on students' acquisition of L2 through error correction. From the findings, it was evident that the students wanted their spoken errors to be corrected more than they were actually corrected; therefore there should be a change in teachers' practice from largely ignoring students' errors to providing appropriate CF on the errors. Besides, teachers might also try to discover the potential benefits that CF has to offer for students' L2 learning. Understanding the benefits of CF would allow teachers to maximise the potential of their classroom instruction to improve students' learning.

Another finding from this study revealed a clear preference by the teachers for explicit CF such as explicit correction, meta-linguistic feedback and repetition, not much time was devoted to implicit feedback such as recasts, clarification request or elicitation. On this basis, it was suggested that the teachers give greater balance to both types of CF (Ellis, 2003). Teachers need to provide a wider range of feedback strategies to ensure an encouraging feedback environment, thus enabling teachers to selectively use different types of CF to those who make the errors based on their judgement of their students' ability and characteristics. Using a variety of feedback techniques could be practised by teachers since different techniques are likely to appeal to different students in term of their needs, proficiency level, age and classroom objectives (Coskun, 2010).

In order for teachers to use appropriate CF with their students, an investigation into students' preference for feedback which is based on these characteristics could be conducted. Not only investigating individual differences, teachers could also investigate group differences in the preference of CF. By doing this, teachers could avoid conflict and show flexibility in using CF to manage the differences between teachers' expectations and students' preferences which are mostly affected by students' characteristics such as learning styles, proficiency level, motivation, and others. Apart from this, teachers should also update their knowledge generally with current theories of L2 acquisition and teaching generally, and CF particularly, to maximise the benefits of CF on students' L2 development.

#### **7.4.3 Professional development of ESL/EFL teachers**

Another recommendation from this study relates to teacher pre- and in-service training course, particularly the TESL programme of the current teacher training university in which the researcher is attached to; techniques and approaches in dealing with students' spoken errors may need to be clearly included in such programmes. van Lier (1988) claims that correction is one of the most important variables in language learning. Truscott (1996) on the other hand argued that language correction is often ineffective as a result of teachers' lack the skills to analyse and explain students' problems. For students, language correction is ineffective because of lack of the skills to understand and use the feedback. For these reasons, language teachers should effectively provide CF in their classroom practices. Although the results of this study indicated that the teachers had sound knowledge of CF, a lack of systematic training was also evident. Therefore as a

teacher training university which trains teachers for all levels of education (pre-school, primary and secondary school education) in Malaysia, there is a need to give the pre- and in-service teachers formal training in relation to oral CF so as to raise their awareness of it: what CF is, the important role that students can play, the importance of CF, and importantly, how CF can be effectively incorporated into teaching.

Similarly, as for teachers in schools, training could also be provided on how to help them find a useful balance between theory and practice in their teaching. Although the present findings revealed that teachers varied their use of CF, there is also a need for them to apply them in a more systematically planned way. To be effective teachers, they need to know their students and to be aware of who are the most sensitive to correction; some students are keen to be corrected all the time, while others are more easily inhibited (Walz, 1982). Consequently, training should provide the opportunity for teachers to acquire the ability to vary their choice of feedback option using their knowledge and experience of the students' ability to attend to the errors being corrected.

## **7.5 Implications for Further Research**

“No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it”, Albert Einstein.

Though the findings from this study are compatible with the findings from other studies in relation to oral CF, there are several aspects which could not be addressed in this study. The intention of conducting this study was not just to address theoretical and research issues, but to also further understand the practical

issues pertaining to oral CF in the context researched so that teachers and students might be able to benefit from the findings. With limited time for the researcher to complete this study, it was almost impossible to investigate every aspect of oral CF in ESL context of Malaysia. Therefore, further research is needed in order to address further aspects to provide more insights into issues pertaining to oral CF, particularly in the Malaysian ESL context.

One of the interesting findings suggested that the students had positive attitudes towards the oral CF used by their teachers. To date, several studies have investigated students' attitudes towards oral CF. In spite of this, however, very limited studies have been conducted to address the students' affective domain towards oral CF provided by their teachers. Further research is required to specifically investigate the students affective domain pertaining to teacher oral CF received across a variety of instructional and naturalistic contexts to verify if the finding of this study applies in other contexts.

While this study has provided some insights into the teachers' and students' views of oral CF as well as the use of oral CF by the ESL teachers in Malaysia, the cultural aspects embedded in the way oral CF is perceived and used have not been addressed. Additional studies are needed to investigate these aspects with students of different cultural backgrounds at all levels of secondary schools. Such studies on cross-cultural background are recommended to examine whether the way oral CF is perceived and used is influenced by cultural aspects.

Even though the sample in this study provided varied population mix with differences in religion, proficiency level, race and age group, the findings cannot be

generalized because the sample was not a random sample of all lower secondary school students and teachers in Malaysia, just of one state. Despite this, the findings in this study provide a useful understanding of teachers' and students' views of oral CF as well as of how oral CF was used in classrooms particularly in the lower secondary school levels of ESL context in Malaysia. Thus, more studies should be conducted with teachers and students in the lower secondary school levels across more states in Malaysia with the focus on exploring their views and feelings as well as how oral CF is used in different states. Apart from this, more studies are recommended to be conducted involving teachers and students of Malaysian upper secondary school levels (e.g. in Penang) to explore their views as well as examine how oral CF is used. Comparative findings from both studies could then be possible to identify similarities and differences in relation to aspects of oral CF. All the classroom research recommended would help teachers gain awareness that each class is a small world requiring special attention with its unique dynamics (Coskun, 2010).

## **7.6 Reflecting on the Research Journey**

“A journey is a person in itself; no two are alike. And all plans, safeguards, policing, and coercion are fruitless. We find that after years of struggle that we do not take a trip; a trip takes us”, John Steinbeck.

A research journey cannot be divorced from a researcher. Conducting research is not about the research itself, but it is about the journey that a researcher undertakes throughout the completion of the whole research. A researcher embarking into a research journey not only as a passenger in a trip, but as a person who also goes through a meaningful journey process which involves experiences, making sense of the research discourse and seeing things contextually. In this research journey, the

researcher has gained many invaluable experiences which have moulded the researcher in the development of personal growth and changes as a researcher as well as a teacher trainer.

The nature of the research experience has added to the researcher's knowledge as the thesis walked her through the literature which was not anticipated. Tough yet worthwhile journey of writing up this thesis has opened the mind to a more complex understanding of oral CF which was once thought to be straightforward. It has been rather significant to the researcher to discover that there is interwoven and connection between teachers' intention and students' expectations on the use of oral CF. It should not have been surprising: understanding issues in relation to oral CF is complex, language learning is complex, and understanding the complexity of teachers' and students' behaviours is challenging.

The journey of this study has further developed personal growth and changes as a researcher as well as a teacher trainer including changes in the development of skills and reflection on personal attitudes. Through the use of technology in the completion of this thesis, the researcher has extended her skills, developed her confidence and stretched her own capabilities in herself who was once technology illiterate, thus enabling the researcher to apply the newly acquired skills in the research culture of her institution. Engaging in this research has sharpened skills of the researcher, particularly in the area of technology. Such skills will be beneficial in conducting future research.

Apart from the development of skills as mentioned earlier, changes to attitudes have also taken place for the researcher. As a teacher trainer, respect towards



teachers has increased knowing that the decisions made in their teaching are always a conflict between the demand of the curriculum and their desire of improving and helping students in their learning within which the earlier is normally prioritised. It makes the researcher thoroughly aware that while the knowledge of teaching gained at tertiary levels is crucial, the training received is not necessarily applicable in the real classroom context. The ability of the teachers to weave the trainings received with their own teaching experiences to attend to the demand of the curriculum and at the same time help students to develop in the language learning has made the researcher realizes how challenging it is to be a teachers.

Opportunities to share the discoveries from this study with colleagues not only have developed greater confidence in the researcher with what was discovered, but it has assured the researcher that oral CF can be significant in the teaching and learning of English and that how CF is used in the classrooms can help students to develop their oral proficiency. On the contrary, towards the end of this thesis the researcher has become more aware that there are still questions which are unanswered and puzzles unsolved on how effective oral CF is in helping students to develop their oral language.

As a teacher trainer, the experiences gained through the interviews and the classroom observations have triggered the thought that there is a need for teacher trainers to correspond with teachers at schools more often than just visiting the schools during practical teaching assessments. Frequent meetings with the teachers will create the realization of theory and practice in line; help and training can be provided to attend to the lack of training among teachers pertaining to oral CF. The

missing link between theory and practice among teachers has increased the awareness of the researcher that as a teacher trainer, the responsibilities are not only to train the pre- and in-service teachers, but also to provide training and support as much as possible to current teachers at schools; updating them with current practices which could be beneficial for their students' learning as well as their own classroom teaching.

## **7.7 Conclusion**

Matching teachers' intentions and students' expectations in relation to oral CF is very important for CF to be effective in students' development of language in either ESL or EFL contexts. In order to find out how far this has matched in the ESL context of Malaysia, this study investigated the teachers' and students' views as well as the use of oral CF in the lower secondary school levels. The discovery made from the findings addressed the four research objectives, thus two research aims were also successfully achieved. In the ESL context of Malaysia, obviously CF was limited in its use in classroom teaching, despite the positive views and attitudes of the teachers and students towards CF. Time constraints and the impact of the examination-oriented education system were identified as the main reasons for the limited use of CF in classroom teaching. However, in situations where CF was used by the teachers in the classrooms, explicit correction dominated other types of CF; similarly, pronunciation errors were also clearly the focus of CF by the teachers.

Apart from the findings which addressed the research aims and objectives, the journey of this research itself has also had a great impact on the researcher. Other than the knowledge gained, experiences throughout the completion of this thesis has

developed the researcher mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Having had the opportunity to interview the teachers and to share the findings with colleagues, the researcher has increased her self-confidence as a researcher as well as a teacher trainer. Furthermore, starting this invaluable journey with her family by her side but left alone to complete this thesis has strengthened her self-motivation and family relationship. The realization of the importance of support from colleagues and friends has expanded the researcher's horizon of facing life positively.

In conclusion, the journey that the researcher takes in this study has made her realize that the importance of research is not only in discovering what is being researched but also in discovering what is beyond research. With all the effort and the hard work put in by the researcher in completing this thesis despite of all the challenges faced and overcome, she feels that this thesis is a piece of writing which should be appreciated.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **Appendix 1: Ethics Approvals**

Appendix 1.1: HREC Approval

Appendix 1.2: EPRD Approval

# COPY

## Appendix 1.1

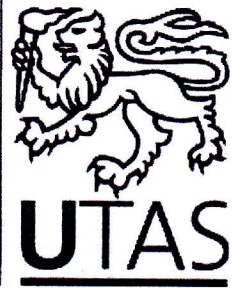
### MEMORANDUM

<http://www.research.utas.edu.au/index.htm>

**HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK**

Private Bag 01 Hobart  
Tasmania 7001 Australia  
Telephone (03) 6226 2764  
Facsimile (03) 6226 7148  
Marilyn.Knott@utas.edu.au

*HREC Approval*



## **FULL COMMITTEE ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL**

20 April 2009

Dr Marion Myhill  
Education  
Private Bag 1307  
Launceston

**Ethics reference: H10404**

**The role of feedback in Malaysian ESL secondary school classrooms.**

**PhD candidate: Ms Wan Mazlini Othman**

Dear Dr Myhill

The Tasmania Social Sciences HREC Ethics Committee approved the above project on 12 April 2009.

All committees operating under the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network are registered and required to comply with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (NHMRC 2007).

Therefore, the Chief Investigator's responsibility is to ensure that:

- 1) All researchers listed on the application comply with HREC approved application.
- 2) Modifications to the application do not proceed until approval is obtained in writing from the HREC.
- 3) The confidentiality and anonymity of all research subjects is maintained at all times, except as required by law.
- 4) Statement 5.5.3 of the National Statement states:

Researchers have a significant responsibility in monitoring approved research as they are in the best position to observe any adverse events or unexpected outcomes. They should report such events or outcomes promptly to the relevant institution/s and ethical review body/ies and take prompt steps to deal with any unexpected risks.

- 5) All participants must be provided with the current Information Sheet and Consent form as approved by the Ethics Committee.
- 6) The Committee is notified if any investigators are added to, or cease involvement with, the project.

- 7) This study has approval for 4 years contingent upon annual review. A *Progress Report* is to be provided on the anniversary date of your approval. You will be sent a courtesy reminder closer to this due date.
- 8) A *Final Report* and a copy of the published material, either in full or abstract, must be provided at the end of project.

Yours sincerely

Ethics Executive Officer





*Appendix 1.2*

**UNIT PERANCANG EKONOMI**  
*Economic Planning Unit*  
**JABATAN PERDANA MENTERI**  
*Prime Minister's Department*  
**BLOK B5 & B6**  
**PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN**  
**62502 PUTRAJAYA**  
**MALAYSIA**

*EPRD Approval*



**EPU**  
ECONOMIC PLANNING UNIT  
PRIME MINISTER'S DEPARTMENT, MALAYSIA

*Telefon : 603-8888 3333*  
*Telefax : 603-888*

Wan Mazlini Othman  
191 Wellington Street  
Launceston, Tasmania  
**7250 Australia**  
Email: [wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au](mailto:wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au)

*Ruj. Tuan:*  
*Your Ref.:* UPE: 40/200/19/2412

*Ruj. Kami:*  
*Our Ref.:* 17 Mac 2009

*Tarikh:*  
*Date:*

**APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA**

With reference to your application dated **17 February 2009**, I am pleased to inform you that your application to conduct research in Malaysia has been *approved* by the **Research Promotion and Co-Ordination Committee, Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department**. The details of the approval are as follows:

Researcher's name : **WAN MAZLINI OTHMAN**

Passport No. / I. C No: **740422-07-5330**

Nationality : **MALAYSIAN**

Title of Research : **"THE ROLE OF FEEDBACK IN MALAYSIAN ESL  
SECONDARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS"**

Period of Research Approved: **FOUR MONTHS**

2. Please collect your Research Pass in person from the **Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Parcel B, Level 4 Block B5, Federal Government Administrative Centre, 62502 Putrajaya** and bring along two (2) passport size photographs. You are also required to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated from time to time by the agencies with which you have dealings in the conduct of your research.

3. I would like to draw your attention to the undertaking signed by you that you will submit without cost to the Economic Planning Unit the following documents:

- a) A brief summary of your research findings on completion of your research and before you leave Malaysia; and
- b) Three (3) copies of your final dissertation/publication.

4. Lastly, please submit a copy of your preliminary and final report directly to the State Government where you carried out your research. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,



**(MUNIRAH ABD. MANAN)**

For Director General,

Macro Economic Section,

Economic Planning Unit.

E-mail: [munirah@epu.ipm.my](mailto:munirah@epu.ipm.my)

Tel: 88882809/2818

Fax: 88883798

ATTENTION

This letter is only to inform you the status of your application and **cannot be used as a research pass.**

C.c:

Ketua Setiausaha

Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia

Bahagian Perancangan Dan Penyelidikan Dasar Pendidikan

Aras 1-4, Blok E-8

Kompleks Kerajaan Parcel E

Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan

**62604 Putrajaya**

(u.p: Dr. Soon Seng Thah)

(Ruj. Tuan: KP(BPPDP)603/01/ Jld. 10(12)

## Appendix 2: Information Sheet

Appendix 2.1: Information sheet for principal

Appendix 2.2: Information sheet for teachers

Appendix 2.3: Information sheet for Students

Appendix 2.4: Information sheet for parents

## Appendix 2.1: Information sheet for principal



### INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRINCIPALS

DATE

**Research project title:**  
***The role of feedback in Malaysian ESL secondary school classroom***  
Dr. Marion Myhill, Dr. Thao Le and Miss Wan Mazlini Othman

#### **Invitation**

Your school is invited to participate in a research study on oral corrective feedback. We would appreciate your assistance by agreeing to your school's participation and also by informing your teachers and students about the project. We hope that your teachers and students would agree to participate by completing a questionnaire and possibly also by being involved in an interview and classroom observation.

This study is being undertaken by Wan Mazlini Othman in completion of a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education at the University of Tasmania, Australia under the supervision of Dr Marion Myhill and Dr Thao Le of the Faculty of Education.

#### **1. 'What is the purpose of this study?'**

This study focuses on oral corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL school context. The aims are to examine the use of oral corrective feedback in secondary schools ESL classrooms in Malaysia and to explore the views of Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers and their students on oral corrective feedback. This study hopes to develop our understanding of oral corrective feedback in classroom settings and how oral corrective feedback is used in classroom practice.

#### **2. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'**

Your school has been invited to participate in this research because you teach English (ESL) in your lower secondary classes and so we are keen to collect the views of your teachers and students. Their participation will allow them with the opportunity to share their opinions and share experiences which be very valuable for our research.

#### **3. 'What does this study involve?'**

Participation in this study involves the following:

**For the questionnaire:** With your permission, our questionnaires will be distributed to all in lower secondary ESL teachers and students in your school; the questionnaires

are to be returned to the researchers in stamped addressed return envelopes which we shall provide.

**For the classroom observation:** Teachers who have indicated an interest in participating in the classroom observation will be asked to contact Miss Wan Mazlini

The classroom observations will be conducted over 2 weeks. The purpose of the classroom observations will be to record the instances of oral corrective feedback by the teacher and how the students respond to it. The observations sessions will also be audiotaped.

**For the interview:** Teachers who have given their consent may be asked to participate in an interview of approximately 30-40 minutes with one of the researchers (Miss Wan Mazlini). The topics to be covered in the interview will be teachers's understanding and use of oral corrective feedback.

It is important that you understand that your teachers' and students' involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have them participate, we also respect their right to decline. There will be no consequences to them if they decide not to participate. Similarly, if they decide to discontinue participation at any time, they may do so without providing any explanation. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and their names will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. All of the research will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

**4. Are there any possible benefits from participation of my teachers and students in this study?**

Their participation in this study could lead them to improve their knowledge and understanding of issues related to the use of oral corrective feedback in the classroom. Students could also develop an understanding of the reasons why teachers correct their spoken errors.

If we are able to take the findings of this study and link them to other research findings, the result may be a useful addition to knowledge and understanding of oral corrective feedback and its use in practical classroom situations.

**5. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, if your teachers and students find that they are becoming distressed or uncomfortable during the interviews, they have the right to decline answering any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences, and if they so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the study.

**6. What if I have questions about this research?**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact the investigators: Dr. Marion Myhill (+613 6324 3908) [Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au](mailto:Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au), Dr. Thao Le (+613 6324 3696) [T.Le@utas.edu.au](mailto:T.Le@utas.edu.au), or Wan Mazlini Othman (+613 6334 7070) [wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au](mailto:wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au). We would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will be mailing/emailing you a summary of our findings. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +613 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person

nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote [[HREC project number](#)].

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this research.**

**If you are happy for your teachers and students to take part in this study, please sign the attached consent form and return it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may fax the form to Wan Mazlini Othman (+613 6324 3048). This information sheet is for you to keep.**

Yours sincerely,

---

**Dr. Marion Myhill**  
Chief Investigator

---

**Dr. Thao Le**  
Co-Investigator

---

**Wan Mazlini Othman**  
Student Investigator



## Appendix 2.2: Information sheet for teachers



### INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS

DATE

#### **Research project title:**

#### ***The role of feedback in Malaysian ESL secondary school classroom***

Dr. Marion Myhill, Dr. Thao Le and Miss Wan Mazlini Othman

#### **Invitation**

We would like to invite you to participate in the study on oral corrective feedback. Your principal has been approached by the researcher to make this research known to teachers. We hope that you would agree to participate by completing a questionnaire and possibly also being involved in an interview and classroom observation.

This study is being undertaken by Wan Mazlini Othman in completion of a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education at the University of Tasmania, Australia under the supervision of Dr Marion Myhill and Dr Thao Le of the Faculty of Education.

#### **7. 'What is the purpose of this study?'**

This study focuses on oral corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL classroom context with the aims to investigate the use of oral corrective feedback in several secondary schools classrooms in Malaysia and to explore how Malaysian ESL secondary school teachers and students perceive oral corrective feedback. This study hopes to advance the knowledge of oral corrective feedback among teachers and how it affects their teaching practice. The findings of this study will be useful to teachers, policy makers and teacher education institutions.

#### **8. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'**

You are being invited to participate in this research because your view as a teacher is essential and your participation will provide you with the opportunity to express opinions and share experiences and have them used to inform the research.

#### **9. 'What does this study involve?'**

Participation in this study involves the following:

**Completion of a Questionnaire:** With the permission of your principal, will be distributed to all in lower secondary ESL teachers and students in your school; the questionnaires are to be returned to the researchers in stamped addressed return envelopes which we shall provide. Completing the questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes. The questionnaire consists of two parts: **Part I** will require you to give your demographic information including some personal and educational background information. **Part II** will require you to state your views, beliefs and values concerning the use of oral corrective feedback in your classroom practice. The questionnaire is attached for your information. If you would like to

participate in this part of the study, could you please complete the questionnaire and return it in the stamped addressed envelope. Your completion and return of the survey indicates your consent to participate in this part of the study.

**Participation in Classroom Observation:** The classroom observations will be conducted for 2 weeks. The purpose of the classroom observations is to record the instances of the occurrence of the oral corrective feedback by the teacher and how the students respond to it. The observations are not meant to criticize in any means of your classroom practice. It will also record your behaviour, pedagogy, and teacher-student interactions in order to provide the researcher with indications of the teacher's theories and beliefs of using oral corrective feedback in the classroom practice. All the classroom observations will be audio-taped to allow analysis of teachers' speech (e.g. by providing teachers with a lapel microphone).

**Participation in Interview:** The interviews will take place at the end of each week of classroom observation.

1. Interviews will be conducted face-to-face by the researcher.
2. Interviews will take approximately 30-40 minutes for the interview.
3. Before the interviews begin, we will seek your permission to audio-record the interview, you may decline permission.
4. Transcripts of the interviews will be made available to you to ensure the correctness of the views expressed. You may edit or withdraw content from the transcripts that you contributed during this process.
5. All interview data used in this study will be kept in a locked and secure filing cabinet and password protected computers in the Department of Education, University of Tasmania and will be destroyed five[5] years after the completion of the study.
6. All information from the interviews will be treated in a confidential manner, and your name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. This will be protected by labeling the tapes using pseudonyms (as chosen by you). Any names (of people, organizations and geographical areas) mentioned will be coded (given pseudonyms) during the transcription process
7. A copy of the paper reporting the results of the work will be made available to those interviewees who indicate an interest in the final outcomes.

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we also respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate, and this will not affect your service. Similarly, if you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing any explanation. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and your name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. All of the research will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

#### **10. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

Your participation in this study could lead you to improve your knowledge and understanding on issues related to the use of oral corrective feedback on students' spoken errors. This study could also result in improved culture and climate of interaction between teachers and students.

If we are able to take the findings of this study and link them to other research findings, the result may be a useful addition to knowledge and understanding of oral corrective feedback and its use in practical classroom situations.



**11. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, if you find that you are becoming distressed or uncomfortable during the interviews, you have the right to decline answering any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences, and if you so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the study.

**12. What if I have questions about this research?**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact the investigators: Dr. Marion Myhill (+613 6324 3908) **Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au**, Dr. Thao Le (+613 6324 3696) **T.Le@utas.edu.au**, or Wan Mazlini Othman (+613 6334 7070) **wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au**. We would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will be mailing/emailing you a summary of our findings. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +613 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote [*HREC project number*].

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this research.**

**If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form and return it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may fax the form to Wan Mazlini Othman (+ 613 6324 3048).**

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

Yours sincerely,

---

**Dr. Marion Myhill**  
Chief Investigator

---

**Dr. Thao Le**  
Co-Investigator

---

**Wan Mazlini Othman**  
Student Investigator

## Appendix 2.3: Information sheet for students



### INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENTS

DATE

**Research project title:**

***The role of feedback in Malaysian ESL secondary school classroom***

Dr. Marion Myhill, Dr. Thao Le and Miss Wan Mazlini Othman

#### **Invitation**

We would like to invite you to participate in the study on oral corrective feedback. Your principal has been approached by the researcher to make this research known to students. We hope that you would agree to participate by completing a questionnaire and participating in classroom observation.

This study is being undertaken by Wan Mazlini Othman in completion of a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education at the University of Tasmania, Australia under the supervision of Dr Marion Myhill and Dr Thao Le of the Faculty of Education.

#### **13. 'What is the purpose of this study?'**

This study focuses on oral corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL context. This study investigates the use of oral corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL secondary school classrooms. This study hopes to advance our understanding of the oral corrective feedback and provides research evidences on teachers' and students' views on oral corrective feedback.

#### **14. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'**

You are being invited to participate in this research because your view as a student is essential and your participation will provide you with the opportunity to express opinions and share experiences and have them used to inform the research.

#### **15. 'What does this study involve?'**

Participation in this study involves the following:

**Completion of a Questionnaire:** With the permission of your principal, the questionnaires will be distributed to all in lower secondary ESL students in the school; the questionnaires are to be returned to the researchers in stamped addressed return envelopes which we shall provide. The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire consists of two parts: **Part I** will require you to give your demographic information including some personal and educational background information. **Part II** will require you to state your views and experience concerning the use of oral corrective feedback on your spoken errors by your teacher in the classroom. The questionnaire is attached for your information. If you

would like to participate in this part of the study, could you please complete the questionnaire and return it in the stamped addressed envelope. Your completion and return of the survey indicates your consent to participate in this part of the study.

**Participation in Classroom Observation:** The classroom observations will be conducted for 2 weeks. The purpose of the classroom observations is to record the instances of the occurrence of the oral corrective feedback by the teacher and how the students respond to it. The observations will record teacher-student interactions in order to provide the researcher with indications of the teacher's theories and beliefs of using oral corrective feedback in the classroom practice. All the classroom observations will be audio-taped to allow analysis of teachers' speech (eg. by providing teachers with a lapel microphone).

It is important that you understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we also respect your right to decline. There will be no consequences to you if you decide not to participate. Similarly, if you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing any explanation. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and your name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. All of the research will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

**16. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

Your participation in this study could develop your understanding the reasons why teachers correct your spoken errors and add to your knowledge on oral corrective feedback.

If we are able to take the findings of this study and link them to other research findings, the result may be a useful addition to knowledge and understanding of oral corrective feedback and its use in practical classroom situations.

**17. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, if you find that you are becoming distressed or uncomfortable during the interviews, you have the right to decline answering any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences, and if you so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the study.

**18. What if I have questions about this research?**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact the investigators: Dr. Marion Myhill (+613 6324 3908) **Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au**, Dr. Thao Le (+613 6324 3696) **T.Le@utas.edu.au**, or Wan Mazlini Othman (+613 6334 7070) **wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au**. We would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will be mailing/emailing you a summary of our findings. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +613 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote [*HREC project number*].

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this research.**

**If you wish to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form and return it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope. Alternatively, you may fax the form to Wan Mazlini Othman (+ 613 6324 3048).**

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

Yours sincerely,

---

**Dr. Marion Myhill**  
Chief Investigator

---

**Dr. Thao Le**  
Co-Investigator

---

**Wan Mazlini Othman**  
Student Investigator

## Appendix 2.4: Information sheet for parents



### INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENT(S)

DATE

**Research project title:**

***The role of feedback in Malaysian ESL secondary school classroom***

Dr. Marion Myhill, Dr. Thao Le and Miss Wan Mazlini Othman

#### **Invitation**

We would like to invite your son/daughter to participate in the study on oral corrective feedback. For this purpose, we would invite you to give permission to your son/daughter to participate in the study on oral corrective feedback. The principal has been approached by the researcher and the principal has informed the students. We hope that you would be happy to allow your son/daughter to participate in this study by completing a questionnaire and participating in classroom observation.

This study is being undertaken by Wan Mazlini Othman in completion of a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education at the University of Tasmania, Australia under the supervision of Dr Marion Myhill and Dr Thao Le of the Faculty of Education.

#### **19. 'What is the purpose of this study?'**

This study focuses on oral corrective feedback in the Malaysian ESL school context. The aims are to investigate the use of oral corrective feedback in the secondary school ESL classrooms. This study hopes to advance the understanding of the oral corrective feedback among teachers and students and provides research evidences on teachers' and students' views on oral corrective feedback.

#### **20. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'**

You are being invited to give permission to your son/daughter to participate in this research because his/her view as a student is essential and his/her participation will provide her/him with the opportunity to express opinions and share experiences and have them used to inform the research. The principal of the school has been approached by the researcher to make this research known to students of this school. We hope that you would be happy to allow your son/daughter to participate in completing a questionnaire and participating in classroom observation.

#### **21. 'What does this study involve?'**

Participation in this study involves the following:

**Completion of a Questionnaire:** With the permission of the principal, questionnaires will be distributed to all students in the school; the questionnaires are to be returned to the researchers in stamped addressed return envelopes which we shall provide.

The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire consists of two parts: **Part I** will require your son/daughter to give his/her demographic information including some personal and educational background information. **Part II** will require your son/daughter to state his/her views and experience concerning the use of oral corrective feedback by the teacher on his/her spoken errors in the classroom. If you would like to consent the participation of your son/daughter in this part of the study, please complete the consent form attached and return it in the stamped addressed return envelope. Your completion and return of the consent form indicates your consent to the participation of your son/daughter in this part of the study.

**Participation in Classroom Observation:** The classroom observations will be conducted for 2 weeks. The purpose of the classroom observations is to record the instances of the occurrence of the oral corrective feedback by the teacher and how the students respond to it. The observations will record the normal class teacher-student interactions in order to provide the researcher with indications of the teacher's theories and beliefs of using oral corrective feedback in the classroom practice. All the classroom observations will be audio taped to allow analysis of the teacher's speech (eg. by providing teachers with a lapel microphone).

It is important that you understand that the involvement of your son/daughter in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we also respect your son's/daughter's right to decline. There will be no consequences to your son/daughter if he/she decides not to participate. Similarly, if your son/daughter decides to discontinue participation at any time, he/she may do so without providing any explanation. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and your son's/daughter's name will not be used in any publication arising out of the research. All of the research will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania.

**22. Are there any possible benefits from participation of my son/daughter in this study?**

Your son's/daughter's participation in this study could develop him/her understanding the reasons why teachers correct his/her spoken errors and add to his/her knowledge on oral corrective feedback.

If we are able to take the findings of this study and link them to other research findings, the result may be a useful addition to knowledge and understanding of oral corrective feedback and its use in practical classroom situation.

**23. Are there any possible risks from my son's/daughter's participation in this study?**

There are no specific risks anticipated with participation in this study. However, if your son/daughter finds that he/she is becoming distressed or uncomfortable during the interviews, he/she has the right to decline answering any questions and to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences, and if he/she so wish, may request that any data supplied to date be withdrawn from the study.

**24. What if I have questions about this research?**

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please feel free to contact the investigators: Dr. Marion Myhill (+613 6324 3908) [Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au](mailto:Marion.Myhill@utas.edu.au), Dr. Thao Le (+613 6324 3696) [T.Le@utas.edu.au](mailto:T.Le@utas.edu.au), or Wan Mazlini Othman (+613 6334 7070) [wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au](mailto:wmothman@postoffice.utas.edu.au). We would be happy to discuss any aspect of the research with you. Once we have analysed the information we will be mailing/emailing you a summary of our findings. You are welcome to contact us at that time to discuss any issue relating to the research study.

This research has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +613 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote [*HREC project number*].

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this research.**

**If you wish to allow your son/daughter to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form and return it in the enclosed post-paid pre-addressed envelope.**

**Alternatively, you may fax the form to Wan Mazlini Othman (+ 613 6324 3048).**

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Dr. Marion Myhill**  
Chief Investigator

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**Dr. Thao Le**  
Co-Investigator

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**Wan Mazlini Othman**  
Student Investigator

## **Appendix 3: Questionnaire**

Appendix 3.1: Questionnaire for teachers

Appendix 3.2: Questionnaire for students



### Appendix 3.1: Questionnaire for teachers



Dear Teachers,

I am Wan Mazlini Othman, a lecturer in the Faculty of Languages, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. Currently, I am completing my Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Tasmania, Australia. My research for my doctoral study is to investigate '*The Role of Feedback in Malaysian Secondary School Classrooms*'. This research is conducted with two aims, first, to describe the use of corrective feedback on oral language in several Malaysian secondary schools classrooms and second, to explore how Malaysian *ESL* (English as a Second Language) secondary school teachers and students perceive corrective feedback on oral language.

This questionnaire consists of two parts:

**Part I** will require you to give your demographic information where it will ask some personal and educational background information. You need to fill in the appropriate boxes provided.

**Part II** will consist of four sections; *Section A*, *Section B*, *Section C* and *Section D* which require you to give answers on your beliefs, values, experiences and views on your classroom practice concerning the use of corrective feedback on students' oral language. You need to circle or tick your responses in the appropriate spaces provided.

Thank you for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

Yours faithfully,

Wan Mazlini Othman

**SET A****Part I****Demographic Information**

Please tick (✓) the appropriate response in the boxes provided. Only one response per topic.

1. What is your gender?

1) ☐ F

2) ☐ M

2. What is your age in years?

1) ☐ 20-30 years

2) ☐ 31-40 years

3) ☐ 41-50 years

4) ☐ more than 51 years

3. What is your highest education Level?

1) ☐ Certificate in teacher training

2) ☐ Diploma in teacher training

3) ☐ Bachelor degree in teacher training

4) ☐ Master degree in teacher training

5) ☐ Others (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you currently completing any of the following?

1) ☐ Master degree

2) ☐ PhD

5. Have you attended any Professional Development course?

1) ☐ yes (please list): \_\_\_\_\_

2) ☐ no

6. How long have you been teaching?

1) ☐ Less than 1 year

2) ☐ 1-5 years

3) ☐ 6-10 years

4) ☐ 11-15 years

5) ☐ More than 15 years

7. Which Form(s) are you teaching in 2009?

1) ☐ Form 1

2) ☐ Form 2

3) ☐ Form 3

4) ☐ More than 2 Forms

8. What area is your school situated in?

1) ☐ Urban

2) ☐ Suburban

3) ☐ Rural

9. How many years have you taught English?

1) ☐ Less than 1 year

2) ☐ 1-5 years

3) ☐ 6-10 years

4) ☐ 11-15 years

5) ☐ more than 15 years

**Part II: Section A**

Please read the statements below. Please circle the response that best fits your view.

Please circle only one.

**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

**4 = Agree (A)**

**3 = Not sure (NS)**

**2 = Disagree (D)**

**1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**

No.	Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
10.	Correcting students' errors in speaking is important.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	Teachers should correct every error students make when they speak.	5	4	3	2	1
12.	Teachers should correct the students' errors the moment they make the errors.	5	4	3	2	1
13.	Teachers should correct the students' errors only after they have finished their sentences.	5	4	3	2	1
14.	Teachers should correct the students' spoken errors only if the errors are obvious.	5	4	3	2	1
15.	Teachers should emphasize correcting errors on accuracy in students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
16.	Teachers should encourage students to identify their own errors when speaking.	5	4	3	2	1
17.	Teachers should highlight students' errors in their oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
18.	Teachers should only give feedback on errors which are easy to explain on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
19.	Teachers should not avoid giving feedback on errors which require complicated explanation on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
20.	Too much correction by teachers decreases students' motivation to participate orally.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	Giving feedback on students' error in speaking is not important.	5	4	3	2	1
22.	Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak.	5	4	3	2	1
23.	Teachers should not focus only on fluency on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1

24.	Teachers should avoid feedback on students' spoken errors which are too complicated to explain.	5	4	3	2	1
25.	Teachers should not assume that students know the reasons of their errors by just indicating the errors.	5	4	3	2	1
26.	Teachers should not give a long explanation when giving feedback on errors on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1

## Section B

Please read the statements below. Tick (✓) the response that best describes your classroom practice from 1 (least) to 5 (most). Please tick only one.

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
27.	I emphasize correcting students' spoken errors in my English lessons.					
28.	I avoid correcting every error made by my students in their oral language.					
29.	I avoid giving feedback on errors which are too complicated to explain.					
30.	I avoid getting my students to correct their own spoken errors.					
31.	I do not explain the errors when I give feedback to my students' spoken errors.					
32.	I give feedback on my students' spoken error without giving any explanation.					
33.	I discourage peer-correction when my students make errors on their oral language.					
34.	My feedback on students' errors depends on their abilities.					
35.	I concentrate on weak students when correcting errors on oral language.					
36.	I point out the errors made by my students, when I give feedback on their spoken errors.					
37.	I explain on the errors when I give feedback on my students' spoken errors.					
38.	I provide the correct form when I give feedback on my students' error on their oral language.					

39.	When I give feedback on my students' spoken errors, I paraphrase what my students have said without including the errors made.					
40.	I confirm errors made by asking my students to repeat what they have said.					
41.	I correct errors promptly when my students make errors on their oral language.					
42.	When I encourage my students to self-correct their errors, I ask questions to elicit correct forms.					
43.	I encourage peer-correction after my elicitation on the errors.					
44.	I highlight errors by changing the intonation on the errors in my repetition.					

### Section C

Please read the statements below. You are required to tick (✓) the response that best suits you from 1 (the least) and 5 (the most). Please tick only one.

No.	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
45.	My students participate in oral discussions during English lessons.					
46.	When my students speak, they are conscious of the errors that they make.					
47.	My students repeat all the correct form that I have provided in their oral language.					
48.	My students repeat the same error ignoring the correct form that I have provided in their oral language.					
49.	My students make a different error instead of repeating the correct form that I have given in their oral language.					
50.	My students repeat part of the correction that I have made in their oral language.					
51.	My students correct their own error after I highlighted the error in their oral language.					
52.	My students respond to the correction that I have made in their oral language.					
53.	My students' peers correct their spoken errors which I have pointed out.					

54.	My students acknowledge their spoken errors when I point out to them.					
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**Section D: The important elements of error focused by teachers when correcting errors on students' oral language.**

55. Which elements of error do you focus the most when you correct your students' errors on their oral language? Please rank in order from 1 (the least important) to 5 (the most important).

Grammar \_\_\_\_\_

Vocabulary \_\_\_\_\_

Pronunciation \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning \_\_\_\_\_

Function \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for your participation. Your responses will help understand this important topic better.***

## Appendix 3.2: Questionnaire for students



Dear Students,

I am Wan Mazlini Othman, a lecturer in the Faculty of Languages, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. Currently, I am completing Doctor of Education at the University of Tasmania, Australia. My research for my doctoral studies is to investigate '*The Role of Feedback in Malaysian ESL Secondary School Classrooms*'. This research is conducted with two aims, first, to describe the use of corrective feedback on oral language in several Malaysian secondary schools classrooms and second, to explore how Malaysian ESL (English as a Second Language) secondary school teachers and students perceive corrective feedback on oral language.

This questionnaire consists of two parts.

**Part I** will require you to give your demographic information where it will ask some personal and educational background information. You need to fill in the appropriate boxes provided.

**Part II** will require you to give answers on your opinion and experiences on the use of corrective feedback by teachers on your oral language and the impact it has on your oral participation during English lessons. You need to state your opinion by circling the appropriate scales provided.

**Part III** will require you to give answers on the types of corrective feedback used by your teachers on your oral language and your responses to the corrective feedback used. You need to state your opinion by circling the appropriate scales provided.

Thank you for your time and co-operation in completing this questionnaire.

Yours faithfully,

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Wan Mazlini Othman





UNIVERSITY  
OF TASMANIA

**Part I (Students)**

**Demographic Information**

*Please tick (✓) the appropriate response in the boxes provided. Only one response per topic.*

10. What is your gender?

1) ☐ F

2) ☐ M

11. What is your age in years:

1) ☐ 13 years

2) ☐ 14 years

3) ☐ 15 years

12. What form are you in?

1) ☐ Form 1

2) ☐ Form 2

3) ☐ Form 3

13. What area is your school situated in?

1) ☐ Urban

2) ☐ Suburban

3) ☐ Rural

14. What grade did you obtain in your last English result?

1) ☐ between A and B

2) ☐ between C and D

3) ☐ E and below

15. How do you evaluate your spoken English?

1) ☐ good

2) ☐ average

3) ☐ poor

16. How do you evaluate your self-confidence in speaking English?

1) ☐ very confident

2) ☐ less confident

3) ☐ no confident

**Part II****Section A**

Please read the statements below. Please circle the response that best fits your opinion. Please circle only one.

**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

**4 = Agree (A)**

**3 = Not sure (NS)**

**2 = Disagree (D)**

**1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**

No.	Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
8.	Correcting students' errors in speaking is important.	5	4	3	2	1
9.	Teachers should correct every error students make when they speak.	5	4	3	2	1
10.	Teachers should correct the students' errors the moment they make the errors.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	Teachers should correct the students' errors only after they have finished their sentences.	5	4	3	2	1
12.	Teachers should correct the students' spoken errors only if the errors are obvious.	5	4	3	2	1
13.	Teachers should emphasize correcting errors on accuracy in students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
14.	Teachers should encourage students to identify their own errors when speaking.	5	4	3	2	1
15.	Teacher should highlight students' errors in their oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
16.	Teachers should only give feedback on errors which are easy to explain on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
17.	Teachers should not avoid giving feedback on errors which require complicated explanation on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
18.	Too much correction by teachers decreases students' motivation to participate orally.	5	4	3	2	1
19.	Giving feedback on students' error in speaking is not important.	5	4	3	2	1
20.	Teachers should not correct every error students make when they speak.	5	4	3	2	1
21.	Teachers should not focus only on fluency on	5	4	3	2	1

	students' oral language.					
22.	Teachers should avoid feedback on students' spoken errors which are too complicated to explain.	5	4	3	2	1
23.	Teachers should not assume that students know the reasons of their spoken errors by just indicating the errors.	5	4	3	2	1
24.	Teachers should not give a long explanation when giving feedback on errors on students' oral language.	5	4	3	2	1

### Section B

Please read the statements below. Circle the number that best suits your response from 1 (least) to 5 (most). Please circle only one.

25.	I participate in oral discussions during English lessons.	5	4	3	2	1
26.	When I speak, I am conscious of the errors that I make.	5	4	3	2	1
27.	I repeat all the correct form that my teacher has provided in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
28.	I repeat the same error ignoring the correct form that my teacher has provided in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
29.	I make a different error instead of repeating the correct form that my teacher has given in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
30.	I repeat part of the correction that my teacher has made in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
31.	I correct my own error after my teacher highlighted the error for me in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
32.	I respond to the correction that my teacher made in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
33.	My friends correct my spoken errors which have been pointed out by teacher.	5	4	3	2	1
34.	I acknowledge my spoken errors when my teacher points out to me.	5	4	3	2	1

### Section C

Please read the statements below. Please circle the response that best fits your opinion. Please circle only one.

**5 = Strongly Agree (SA)**

**4 = Agree (A)**

**3 = Not sure (NS)****2 = Disagree (D)****1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)**

No.	Statements	SA	A	NS	D	SD
35.	I want my teacher to correct every error that I make in my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
36.	I like my teacher to give feedback on the errors that I make on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
37.	I become motivated to participate orally each time my teacher corrects errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
38.	I expect my teacher to give an explanation to each feedback given on errors that I make on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
39.	I feel encouraged to produce less-error sentences each time my teacher corrects errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
40.	I feel confident to produce more error-free sentences each time my teacher corrects errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
41.	I feel discouraged to speak more each time my teacher corrects errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
42.	I feel conscious of making errors each time my teacher corrects my errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
43.	I lose confidence to produce error-free sentences each time my teacher corrects my errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
44.	I become conscious of my own errors each time my teacher corrects my error on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
45.	I feel embarrassed each time my teacher corrects the errors that I make on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1
46.	I feel stupid each time my teacher corrects errors on my oral language.	5	4	3	2	1

**Section D: The important elements of error focused by teachers when correcting errors on students' oral language.**

47. Which elements of error do you think teachers should focus the most when they correct students' errors on oral language? Please rank in order from 1 (the least important) to 5 (the most important).

Grammar	_____
Vocabulary	_____
Pronunciation	_____
Meaning	_____
Function	_____

**Thank you for your participation. Your responses will help understand this important topic better.**

## Appendix 4: Classroom Observation Checklist

## OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Observation : Week 1 / 2 /

**Teacher's name :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class** \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_  
: \_\_\_\_\_  
: \_\_\_\_\_

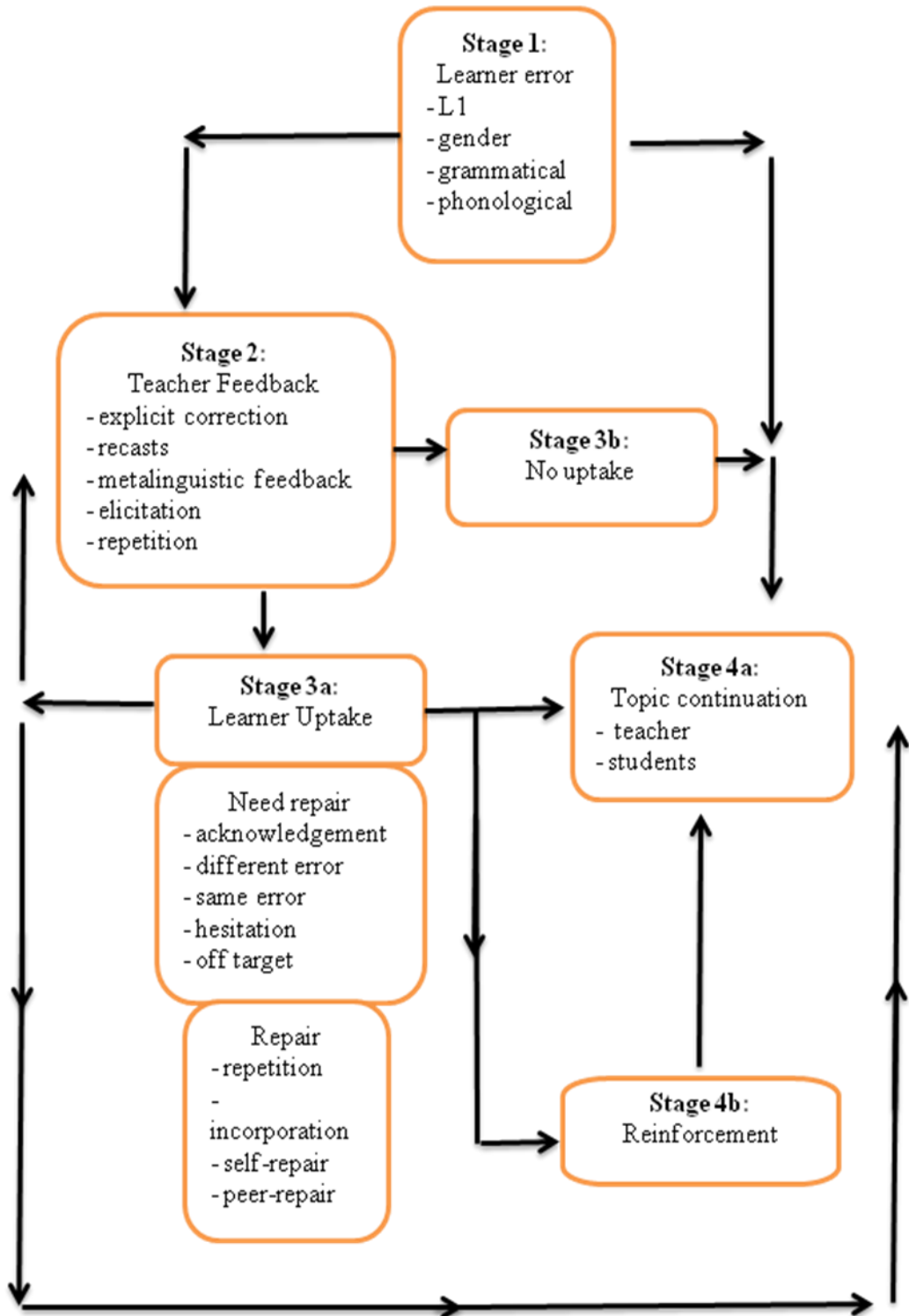
## Session

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time

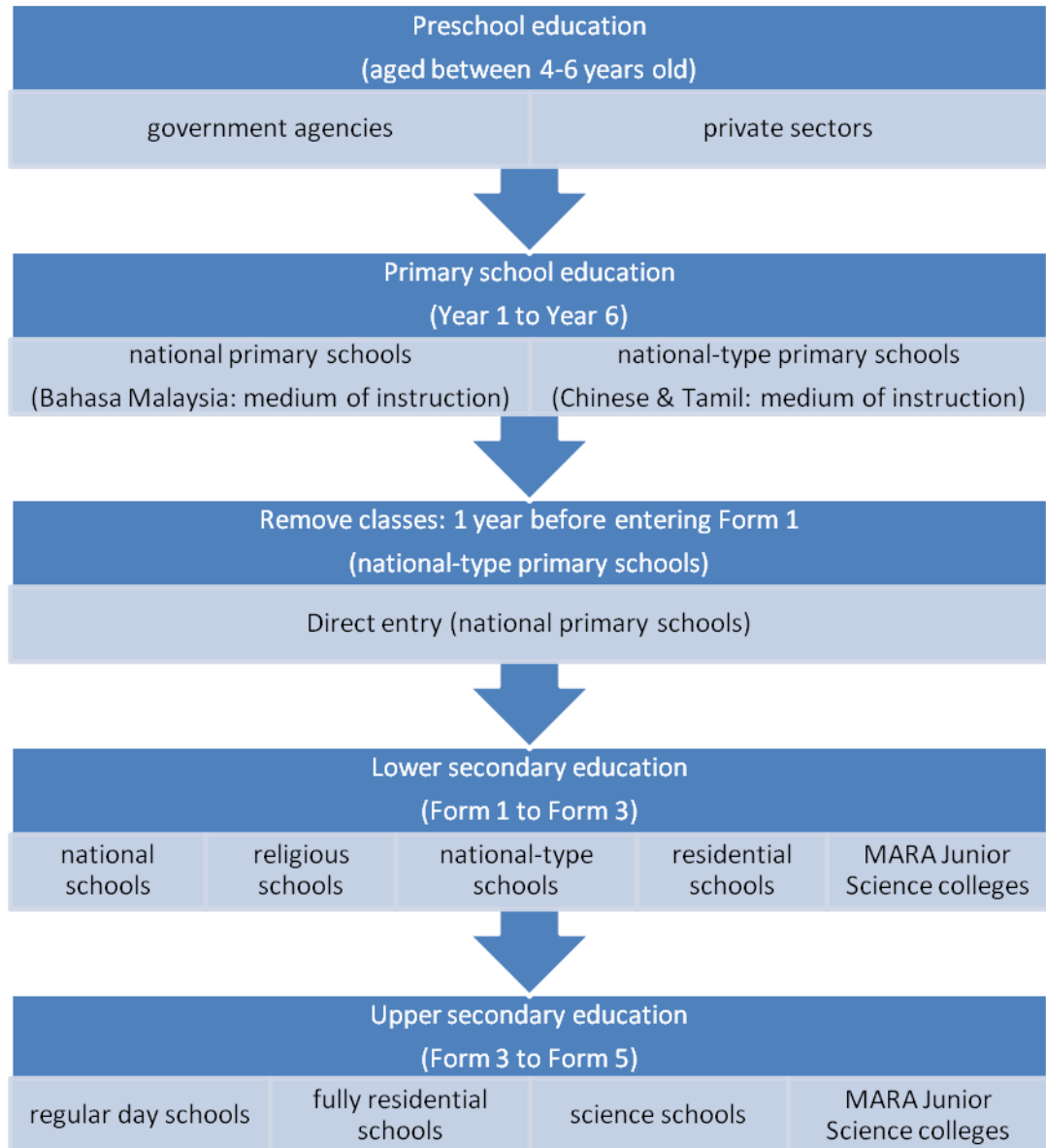
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Appendix 5: Error Treatment Sequence Model





## Appendix 6: Education system in Malaysia

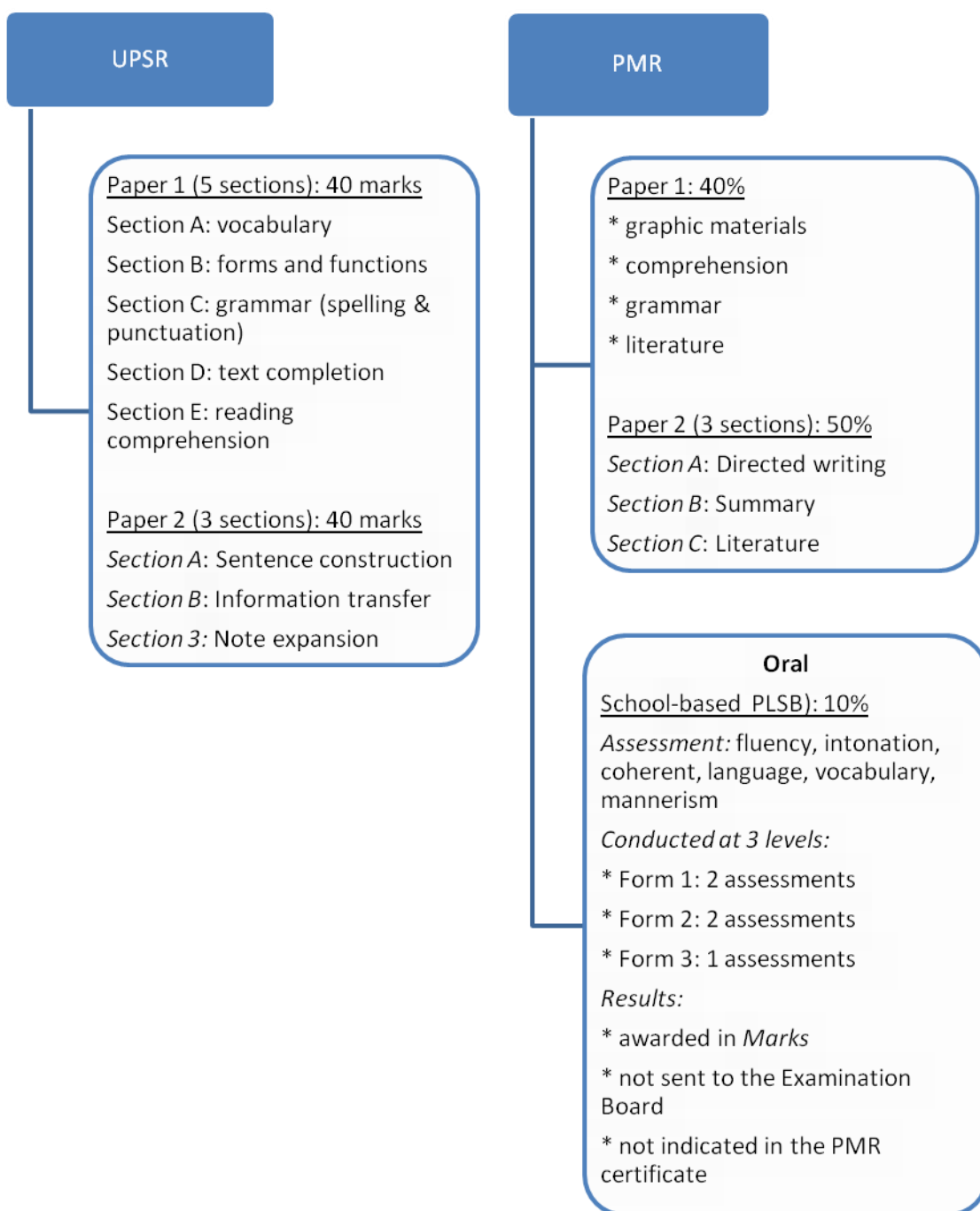


## **Appendix 7: Formats of English Examination Papers**

Appendix 7.1: Format of English examination papers – UPSR and PMR

Appendix 7.2: Format of English examination papers – SPM and MUET

## Appendix 7.1: Format of English paper – UPSR and PMR



## Appendix 7.2: Format of English papers – SPM and MUET

