Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn – Bonner Zentrum für Lehrerbildung – Forschungsprojekt Englisch im Praxissemester 2019/20
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Oral Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake in the *Unterstufe* and *Oberstufe* of a German *Gymnasium*: A Quantitative Study

Background:

Observation: Huge quantity of spoken learner errors in the EFL classroom.

→ Ability to handle inaccurately spoken learner output in a beneficial way is an important teaching skill.
→ How to best respond to ill-formed learner utterances?
→ EFL teachers tend to correct ill-formed learner utterances more frequently and resolutely during elementary instruction of EFL learning (cf. Timm, 2013, p. 226)

Hypothesis and Research Question:

Hypothesis: Frequency and effectiveness of oral corrective feedback (CF) differ significantly depending on the grade level of the EFL learning group.

Research questions: 1) What is the distribution of oral CF types in EFL classes of the *Unter-* and *Oberstufe* of a German *Gymnasium*?
2) In how far do learners of both grade levels benefit from CF?

Theoretical Background:

message before accuray principle (Timm 2013), *affective filter hypothesis (*Krashen 1982), *comprehensible output hypothesis* (Merrill Swain 1995)

Classification of corrective feedback:
input-providing CF,
output-prompting CF

Feedback types:
1) explicit correction,
2) recast,
3) elicitation,
4) metalinguistic feedback,
5) multiple feedback,
6) non-verbal,
7) peer correction,
8) delayed correction,
9) clarification request,
10) no feedback

Learner uptake:
1) uptake resulting in repair,
2) uptake resulting in utterance still needing repair,
3) no uptake (teacher continuation, learner continuation)

Repair types:
self-repair,
peer-repair,
repetition,
incorporation.

Model Studies: Lyster & Ranta (1997); Panova & Lyster (2002)

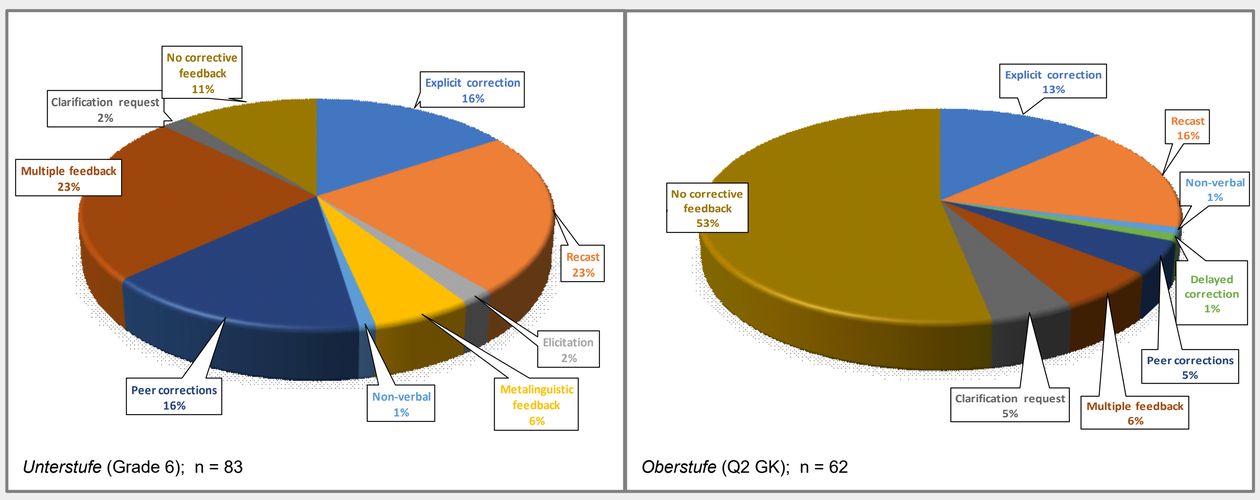
Methodologial Approach

- Unterstufe: grade 6, 31 learners, 2nd year of EFL learning, focus on form
- Oberstufe: Q2 GK,17 learners, 6th year of EFL learning, focus on message
- Teacher: same in both groups, female, teaching experience 3 years
- 16 EFL lessons (8 lessons per class), 720 minutes total (360 minutes each)
- quantitative, naturalistic, reactive, structured, third-party observation
- observation sheets (cf. Lyster and Ranta 1997, p.44)

Number	Student's error & teacher's feedback	Type of corrective feedback 1= Explicit Correction 2= Recast/ Implicit Reformulation 3= Echoing/ Repetition 4= Elicitation 5 = Metalinguistic Feedback 6= Non-verbal ways 7= Delayed Correction 8= Peer Correction 9= Multiple Feedback 10= No corrective Feedback 11 = Clarification request	Uptake 1= uptake that resulting in repair 2= uptake resulting in utterance which still needing repair 3= No Uptake	No Uptake 1= Teacher Continuation 2= Student Continuation	Repair 1= Self-Repair 2= Peer-Repair 3= Repetition 4= Incorporation	Needs-Repair 1= Acknowledgment 2= Same Error 3= Different Error 4= Off Target 5= Hesitation 6= Partial Repair

Selected Results

Distribution of Feedback Types



Unterstufe (Grade 6); n = 83

Oberstufe (Q2 GK); n = 62

Table 2. Number and percentage of feedback turns leading to uptake and repair

		Number (and %) of Uptake	Number (and %) of Repair	Number (and %) of Learner-Generated Repair	Number (and %) of Needs-Repair
Explicit correction	Grade 6 (n=13)	8 (62%)	3 (24%)	0	5 (38%)
	Q2 GK (n=8)	6 (75%)	2 (25%)	0	4 (50%)
Recast	Grade 6 (n=18)	13 (72%)	1 (6%)	0	12 (66%)
	Q2 GK (n=9)	4 (44%)	3 (33%)	0	1 (11%)
Elicitation	Grade 6 (n=2)	2 (100%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
	Q2 GK (n=0)	0	0	0	0
Metalinguistic feedback	Grade 6 (n=5)	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	5 (100%)	0
	Q2 GK (n=0)	0	0	0	0
Non-verbal	Grade 6 (n=1)	0	0	0	0
	Q2 GK (n=1)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	0
Delayed feedback	Grade 6 (n=0)	0	0	0	0
	Q2 GK (n=1)	0	0	0	0
Peer correction	Grade 6 (n=13)	13 (100%)	13 (100%)	13 (100%)	0
	Q2 GK (n=3)	3 (100%)	3 (100%)	3 (100%)	0
Multiple feedback	Grade 6 (n=20)	19 (95%)	19 (95%)	19 (95%)	0
	Q2 GK (n=4)	4 (100%)	3 (75%)	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
Clarification request	Grade 6 (n=2)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)	2 (100%)	0
	Q2 GK (n=3)	3 (100%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)	2 (67%)

Table 3. Number and percentage of repairs attributed to each feedback type

	Explicit correction	Recast	Elicitation	Non-verbal	Metalinguistic feedback	Peer correction	Multiple feedback	Clarification request
All repairs Grade 6 (n=45)	3 (7%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	0	5 (11%)	13 (29%)	19 (42%)	2 (4%)
All repairs Q2 GK (n=15)	2 (13%)	3(20%)	0	1 (6%)	0	3 (20%)	3 (20%)	1 (6%)
learner-generated repairs Grade 6 (n=40)	0	0	1 (10%)	0	5 (13%)	13 (32%)	19 (48%)	2 (5%)
learner-generated repairs Q2 GK (n=8)	0	0	0	1(12%)	0	3 (38%)	3 (38%)	1 (12%)

Discussion and Conclusions

Hypothesis: Confirmed. More frequent and effective CF in elementary instruction of EFL learning than in the advanced course.

Research Questions: 1) *Unterstufe*: High frequency of oral CF, eight different CF techniques; peer-feedback most frequently used. → High affective filter: Affective domain of second language acquisition (SLA) might potentially be hindered; could result in learner demotivation, low self-confidence, high anxiety leves.
Oberstufe: Low frequency of CF, seven different, mostly input-providing CF techniques → Low affective filter: The provision of CF must fit the curruicular goals and foster communicative competence.

2) General: Uptake rates largely depend on the CF move provided. Output-prompting CF promoting negotiation of form generates highest rates of uptake. Instances of uptake are not instances of learning.
Unterstufe: Correction sequences fundamentally successful and contributing to SLA and L2 learning. Corrective techniques encouraging learner-generated repair most effective (especially peer correction);
But: Learner-generated repair is not L2 learning.
Oberstufe: Learners not frequently required to actively produce modified output. Majority of CF not successful: High frequencey of input-providing CF without subsequent self-repair interpreted as ineffective in terms of SLA (cf. Havranek, 2002, p. 268); CF more beneficial in terms of fluency and communication; might contribute to the affective domain of SLA: Keeping up the communicative flow, avoiding *Psedogespräche* (cf. *message before accuracy* principle).

Chances:
Clarification of chances and challenges of CF types with respect to grade level.
Benefits of peer correction exposed.

Challenges:
Barely representative or generalisable conclusions possible (sample size, contextual variables not considered [like learner aptitude, motivation, anxiety level or age]).
Unclear in how far negotation of form or uptake foster SLA.

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Further research necessary to provide a sufficient basis for reliable claims about effective oral error correction

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