

**INCIDENTAL FOCUS ON FORM IN
TEACHER-LEARNER INTERACTION AND
LEARNER-LEARNER INTERACTION**

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of high learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

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ABSTRACT

Current attention in L2 acquisition research has been given to the integration of message-focused and form-focused instruction. One way to accomplish this is through the incidental focus on form during meaning-focused activities. Some studies have investigated incidental focus on form in different contexts and provided evidence that this incidental focus on form exists in L2 classes and that it facilitates L2 acquisition.

The present study conducted further research into the effects of interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) and learners' proficiency levels (Advanced and Elementary) on the features of incidental focus on form (types of focus on form; types of feedback; linguistic forms focused on and types of immediate uptake). Over 10 hours of interactions with meaning-focused communication tasks were audio recorded in two interactional patterns and in two classes. The 336 focus on form episodes (FFE) were transcribed and analyzed for four features of FFEs.

The results revealed a significant difference in frequencies of FFE types between the two interactional patterns. Teachers were more active in responding to learners' errors, but they were less active in initiating preemptive FFEs. No significant difference was found between the two proficiency levels.

In terms of feedback, no significant difference was found between the two interactional patterns. Both teachers and learners were using similar types of feedback in the FFEs. Learners were as able as their teachers in 'providing solutions'. Thus, Learner-learner interactions appear to be equally beneficial for L2 learning. Equally, there was no

difference between the two proficiency levels. In terms of linguistic focus, there was no significant difference between the two interactional patterns or between the two proficiency levels.

In terms of overall uptake responses, there was a significant difference between the two interactional patterns, mainly in terms of ‘no uptake’, ‘no opportunity for uptake’ and ‘no need for uptake’. However, there was no significant difference in terms of frequencies of ‘occurrence of uptake’. Thus, Learner-learner interactions appear to be equally beneficial for L2 learning from the perspective of producing successful uptake. No significant difference in terms of immediate uptake was found between the two proficiency levels.

The results of this study suggest that in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions at both Advanced and Elementary levels of proficiency, incidental FFEs occur frequently, and the high frequency of immediate uptake in these FFEs can be considered effective for L2 learning. Because learners were able to work as a knowledge source for each other, spoken interactions should be encouraged between learners.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

L1	First language
L2	Second language
TL	Target language
IL	Interlanguage
FL	Foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
EFL	English as foreign language
SLA	Second language acquisition
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
IRE	Initiation-Response-Evaluation
FFE	Focus on form episode
LRE	Language-related episode
NS	Native speaker
NNS	Non-native speaker
T-L	Teacher-learner
L-L	Learner-learner
Adv	Advanced
Ele	Elementary

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. 1 Overview

Based on a survey of relevant literature concerning language learning and teaching theories and practice, such as Language Learning and Teaching Abstracts (which include all abstracts of articles in important journals in language learning and teaching), this section, Chapter Two and Chapter Three review relevant theories and research in the area of form-focused instruction.

Attention to grammar in second language teaching and learning has had a rather controversial history. Early methods of instruction such as grammar/translation focused almost exclusively on grammar while the communicative approach focused on communicative activities almost at the expense of any systematic grammar instruction.

For the past two decades or so, the communicative approach has been dominant in second language teaching, with meaning-focused instruction as its main strategy. In this approach, learners are thought to learn the language automatically as a result of “the opportunities they are given to interpret, to express, and to negotiate meaning in real-life situation” (Savignon, 1983: 6). This perspective on L2 learning has been particularly strengthened by Krashen’s (1985) distinction between acquisition and learning and by the belief that language is acquired rather than learned.

In recent years, however, theoretical perspectives on language teaching and learning have changed. Many second language acquisition researchers now argue that exposure to language is not enough, they (DeKeyser, 1998; Lightbown, 1998; Robinson, 1996; Spada and Lightbown, 1993; Swain, 1985) have indicated that activities, which focus solely on the message, are inadequate for developing an accurate knowledge of language. In particular, studies of French immersion classes in Canada have shown that while learners are exposed to meaningful language use over a long period, or while they may achieve high levels of linguistic fluency in meaning-focused classes, they do not always achieve corresponding levels of linguistic accuracy (Harley, 1989; Harley and Swain, 1984; Swain, 1985). Schmidt (1990; 1994) has argued that acquisition cannot take place unless learners actually ‘notice’ linguistic forms in the input, a process that he suggests is necessary for second language acquisition. Meaning-focused instruction does not encourage such noticing and may actually inhibit it (Schmidt, 1990; 1994). This led to SLA researchers such as Swain (1995) proposing that learners need to do more than simply engage in communicative language use; they also need to attend to form. SLA theory and practice have thus been concerned more recently with achieving a balance between meaning-focused and form-focused instruction.

One way for form-focused instruction to be accomplished is through focus-on-formS, an attempt to draw learners’ attention to distinct entities of language forms (Long, 1991). There is evidence that focus on formS instruction results in learning as measured by discrete-point language tests, such as the TOEFL tests, but there is much less evidence to suggest that it leads to the kind of learning that enables learners to perform the target form in free oral production (Ellis et al, 2002). Norris and Ortega (2000) reviewed 49 studies,

mainly of focus on forms, and found that the effectiveness of instruction was greatly reduced when it was measured in terms of learners' ability to use the targeted structure spontaneously. This led some researchers (Long, 1991; Doughty, 2001) to suggest that an approach which focuses on form would work better.

'Focus on form' is the other way in which form-focused instruction may be accomplished. According to Long (1991:45-46), a focus on form "overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication". It directs learners' attention to linguistic items during interaction that is not specifically concerned with teaching those forms.

A number of studies since the early 1990s support the belief that some kind of focus on form is useful to some extent, for some forms, for some learners, at some point in the learning process (DeKeyser, 1995; Ellis, N.1993; Ellis, R. 1994; Robinson, 1996; Spada, 1997; Spada and Lightbown, 1993; VanPattern & Cadierno, 1993). On the basis of these studies, a claim has been made that focus on form may be necessary to push learners beyond communicatively effective language toward native-like second language competence (Fotos, 1998; Sheen, 2003).

One recent study (Ellis et al, 1999) illustrates how a focus on form can be incorporated into the language classroom. It also identified a range of areas that need to be investigated in future research, including an examination of incidental focus on form in various interactional groupings. The present study aims to investigate the extent to which two variables (interactional patterns: Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions;

proficiency levels of learners) might affect the quantity (frequency) and quality (features) of focus on form.

1.2 Background

Since the early 1990s, SLA research has been concentrating on the development of L2 acquisition theory with a particular focus on form-focused instruction, since meaning-focused instruction has been shown not to enable L2 learners to attain high levels of linguistic and sociolinguistic accuracy (Day and Shapson, 1991; Harley, 1989). To compensate for this shortcoming, it has been proposed that form-focused instruction will draw learners' attention to linguistic items during meaning-focused communication (Day and Shapson, 1991). A number of theoretical claims have been made about the importance of providing L2 learners with opportunities for focusing on form.

First of all, focus on form is compatible with an information-processing theoretical view of L2 acquisition. From a psycholinguistic, information-processing perspective, limited processing capabilities prevent learners from attending simultaneously to both form and meaning, learners generally are more likely to attend to meaning especially in meaning-focused activities (VanPatten, 1990). A focus on form may provide learners with the opportunity to take 'time-out' from focusing on message construction to pay attention to specific forms and the meanings they realize (Ellis, Loewen & Basturkman, 1999). Thus, it may help learners eliminate difficulties in their communication. Focus on form may facilitate the *noticing* of linguistic items, a process that Schmidt (1990, 1994) argues is necessary for second language acquisition. When learners focus on form, their attention is

drawn to linguistic items by either learners querying a linguistic item or the teacher choosing to clarify the learners' understanding of a linguistic item. In this way, focus on form episodes help learners to notice actual gaps in their target language knowledge.

A second benefit of focus on form is that it provides learners with the opportunity to incorporate the targeted linguistic forms into their own verbal output. During meaning-focused interaction, learners are pushed to produce output to convey their message fluently, accurately and appropriately. When teachers respond to learner errors through corrective feedback, they potentially create conditions for them to attempt to produce the correct forms themselves. This helps learners acquire these forms so that they can use them correctly in the future. This 'pushed output', as Swain (1985, 1995) argues, stretches the ability of learners to produce accurate language as they are pushed to process language syntactically as well as semantically.

A third benefit of focus on form is found in skill-building theory (Johnson, 1988). According to skill-building theory, skill-development occurs when learners obtain feedback. That feedback is most effectively used by learners when it is provided under 'real operating conditions', that is, when learners are engaged in meaning-based communication where they need to perform the skill. Such feedback enables learners to carry out a cognitive comparison between their own output and models of target language forms provided through the feedback. In this way, learners have the opportunity to 'notice the gap' (Schmidt and Frota, 1986). In a focus on form, linguistic difficulties will lead both teacher and learners' attention to a negotiation of forms, which may be in the form of explicit and implicit feedback.

In recent years, studies of focus on form have tested the validity of these theoretical claims. Studies on the effects of form-focused instruction on accuracy and on the effects of corrective feedback (Lightbown, 1998; Lyster, 1994, 1998) have shown that form-focused instruction can improve accuracy and that form-focused instruction within a communicative context contributes to higher levels of linguistic knowledge and performance. Studies by Allen, Swain, Harley and Cummins (1990), Day and Shapson (1991), Doughty (1999, 2001); Ellis (2000, 2001); Ellis, Loewen and Basturkman (1999); Ellis, Basturkman and Loewen (2001, 2002); Doughty and Williams (1998); Harley (1998); Long and Robinson (1998); Lyster (1994, 1998); Lyster and Ranta (1997); Oliver (2000); Pica (1996, 1997); Spada (1997); Swain (2000); White (1991), Williams (1999, 2001), for example, also show that teaching learners linguistic forms is, to some extent at least, successful, especially if the approach adopted involves activities that teach forms in relation to a communicative activity.

However, most studies on the nature and effectiveness of focus on form have concentrated on one type of focus on form: planned focus on form, in which the teacher or researcher preplans the linguistic structures to focus on in a lesson. Researchers such as Doughty and Varela (1998), Mackey and Philp (1998), Long, Inagaki and Ortega, (1998) have investigated how focus on form occurs for some planned grammar structures and have found some positive effects.

Besides planned focus on form, there is another type of focus on form, namely, incidental focus on form, which occurs during meaning-focused communication without any prior intention to focus on any targeted linguistic items. Incidental focus on form is different to

planned focus on form in that it is more wide-ranging. Thus, learners pay attention to a variety of linguistic structures only once or twice and these linguistic structures arise incidentally without any prior planning.

A few descriptive studies have investigated incidental focus on form. For example, Ellis et al (1999) conducted an empirical study of the various ways in which a focus on form occurred in two ESL classrooms during lessons that were primarily communicative in nature and found that both reactive and pre-emptive focus on form occurred frequently in adult ESL classes in New Zealand and that uptake levels were also relatively high. The majority of the preemptive FFEs were initiated by students rather than by the teacher and dealt with vocabulary. Students were more likely to uptake a form if the FFE was student-initiated. Williams (1999) investigated whether unplanned focus on form exists in the classroom and during what types of activities it is most likely to occur. She found that learners did generate focus on form, though not very often. Furthermore, the advanced learners were more likely and more willing than lower level learners to initiate episodes involving attention to form and the most prevalent type of focus on form was learner-generated requests to the teacher about language. In another study, Williams (2001) investigated the episodes of unplanned attention to form and uptake. She found that the higher proficiency learners were more likely to benefit from the feedback during the focus on form episodes than lower proficiency level learners. Another finding was that whether the focus on form was initiated by the teacher or learners, learners were about equally likely to remember the form in focus. Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis (2002) examined the relationship between the use of metalanguage in focus on form and the occurrence of student uptake moves. They found that metalanguage was more likely used by the teacher.

Metalinguage occurred more frequently in preemptive focus on form than in reactive focus on form. Furthermore, in student-initiated preemptive focus on form, there was a significant relationship between the presence of metalinguage and the presence of uptake. A recent study by Loewen (2003) also showed that incidental focus on form does exist in ESL classes and benefits L2 learning by testing learners' immediate uptake of those incidental focused forms with tailor-made tests.

The above studies have investigated some aspects of incidental focus on form in different contexts and provided evidence that incidental focus on form exists in L2 classes and it does facilitate immediate uptake. Further research on focus on form, as Ellis et al (1999) and Loewen (2003) point out, is needed in the areas of: impact of teachers' beliefs about language; language learning and language teaching on the quantity and quality of the focus on form that occurs in the classroom; learner differences in preparedness to initiate and to respond to a focus on form and reasons for these differences; the effects of the composition of a class on focus on form; the effects of task types on opportunities to engage in focus on form; the effects of the stage of a lesson on opportunities for a focus on form; factors affecting students' successful uptake of a focus on form; effects of teacher training/education on teachers' preparedness and ability to provide focus on form.

Little attention has been given, however, to the effect of learner proficiency levels and interactional patterns on incidental focus on form. The present study has attempted to remedy this gap by investigating the effect of these variables on the quantity (frequency of occurrence) and quality (types of focus on form; types of feedback; linguistic forms focused on and types of immediate uptake) of incidental focus on form episodes.

1.3 Research questions

(1) To what extent is there a difference in FFE types that occur in:

- a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
- b. Advanced and Elementary classes.

(2) To what extent is there is a difference in feedback types of FFEs that occur in:

- a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
- b. Advanced and Elementary classes.

(3) To what extent is there a difference in the linguistic focus of FFEs that occur in:

- a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
- b. Advanced and Elementary classes.

(4) To what extent is there a difference in uptake types of FFEs that occur in:

- a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
- b. Advanced and Elementary classes.

1. 4 Thesis outline

The structure of this thesis is as follows: Chapter 1 gives an overall introduction to the research background and the research questions. Chapters 2 and 3 are concerned with the theoretical rationale for focus on form, first from the perspective of a cognitive approach and secondly from the perspective of the interactionist approach. Chapter 4 discusses the key question of the present research: incidental focus on form and the framework used in the present study for identifying focus on form episodes. Chapter 5 presents the variables to be considered in the study: interactional patterns and learner proficiency levels. Chapter 6 describes the methodology. Chapter 7 details the results and follows with a discussion of the results in Chapter 8. Chapter 9 summaries the findings, draws theoretical and pedagogical implications, points out the limitations of the study and suggests some future research questions, and ends with a concluding remark.

CHAPTER TWO

THE COGNITIVE APPROACH TO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the cognitive approach to SLA and its relationship to focus on form.

The cognitive approach on SLA takes language acquisition as a mental process, involving the use of strategies that explain how the L2 knowledge system is developed and used in communication and how classroom instruction and interaction can facilitate them (Ellis, 1994). Gass (1997) proposes a model of five stages to characterize this mental process in SLA. It starts with the provision of input and ends with output, as shown in Figure 1.

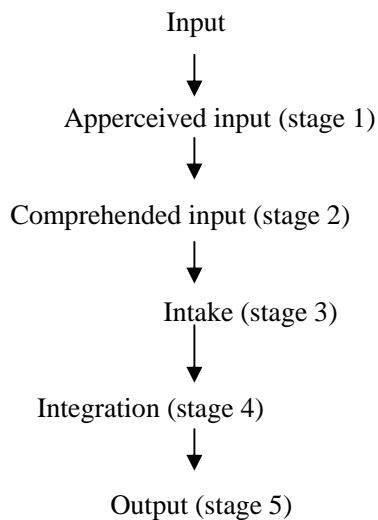


Figure 1 A model of five stages of the mental process in SLA by Gass (1997)

Each of these stages is discussed in turn. The next section focuses on the nature of input, particularly the types of input typically provided in an L2 classroom.

2.2 Input

Input in the L2 acquisition process is defined by Schmidt (1995) as language data that learners are exposed to. The target language data that are provided to L2 learners are either in terms of positive evidence or negative evidence. Figure 2 shows the various forms that input can take (Long and Robinson, 1998).

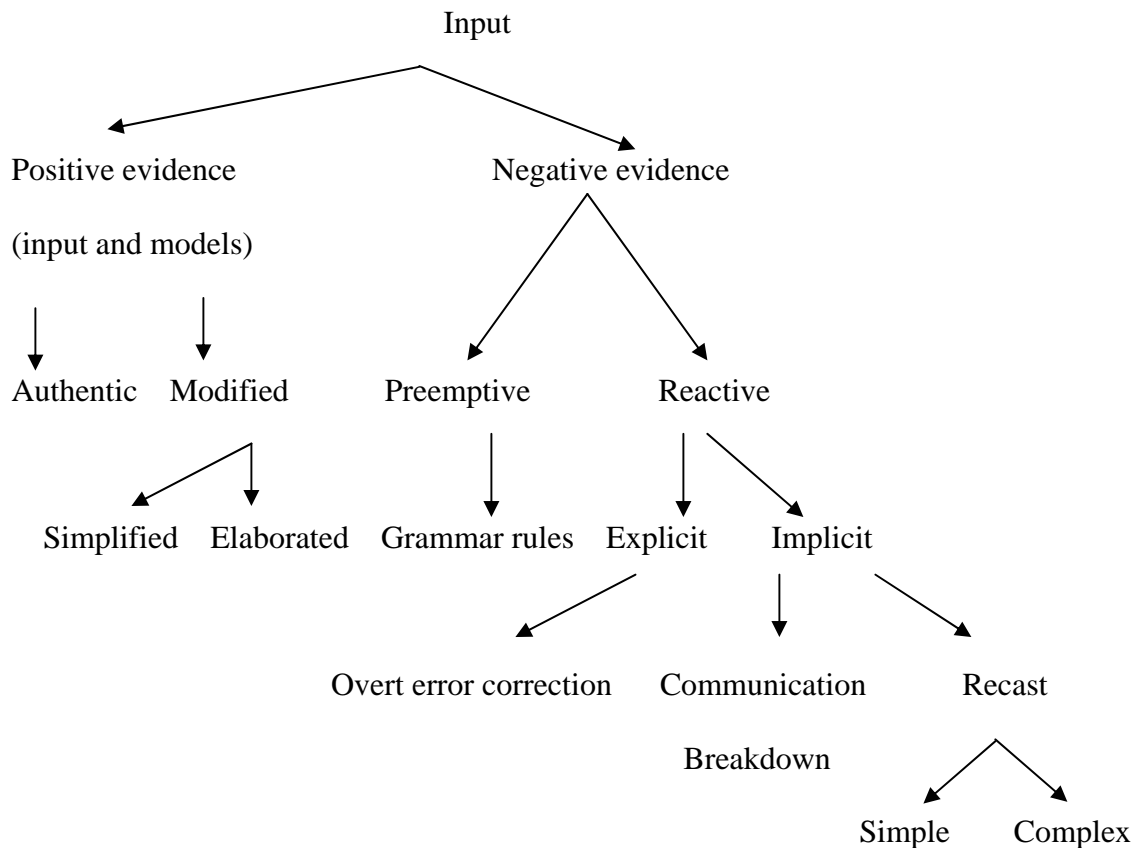


Figure 2 Input in L2 classroom (Long and Robinson, 1998)

2. 2. 1 Positive evidence

Positive evidence refers to models of what is grammatical and acceptable in the target language (Long, 1996). It can be authentic or modified input. Modified input can be either simplified or elaborated. Simplified input refers to the use of shorter, syntactically less complex utterances or sentences, the use of a narrower range of verb tenses and fewer modifiers. For example: “Paco had to make money for his family. Paco worked at night. He often went to sleep in class” (Long, 1996:422). Elaborated input refers to the adding of redundancy by using repetition, paraphrasing and apposition to make the semantic structure more explicit. For example: “Paco had to work at night to earn money to support his family, so he often fell asleep in class next day during his teacher’s lesson” (Long, 1996:422).

Krashen (1981) argues that positive evidence alone is necessary, sufficient and efficient for L2 acquisition. His rationale for the sufficiency of positive evidence comes from L1 acquisition research, which claims that children acquire their native language only by receiving positive evidence. In his Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1982, 1985) argues that for second language acquisition to occur, learners must receive comprehensible input that contains linguistic structures just beyond their ability. This is described as $i + 1$, where ‘i’ refers to learners’ current level of competence and ‘1’ refers to the messages that are slightly beyond their current level of competence. He argues that simplifications, such as teacher talk (the speech modified by the teacher to adapt to the students) and foreigner talk (the speech modified by NS to NNS), as well as context, help make input comprehensible.

Others, such as Long (1996) and White (1991), argue that positive evidence alone is not sufficient. Long (1996) argues that L2 acquisition, especially for adult learners, is qualitatively different from L1 acquisition. Firstly, second language learners have less access than first language learners to comprehensible input over a long period of time. Secondly, while adults may learn much of a new language incidentally, some L2 rules cannot be learned incidentally by exposure to positive evidence alone, because there simply is no positive evidence for such L2 rules. This has been demonstrated in a study by White (1991). In French, adverbs may occur between the verb and the object, but this placement is not possible for English adverbs. Thus, native speakers of French who are studying English must deduce from zero input that what is permissible in their L1 is not permissible in English. This task is difficult since the incorrect placement of adverbs in English doesn't generally cause miscommunication. Based on the results of the study, White concludes that positive evidence alone is not effective to help learners deduce the rules of English adverb placement, some negative evidence is more effective in helping L2 learners to arrive at the appropriate properties of English than positive evidence alone.

Further support for the argument that positive evidence alone is insufficient for SLA comes from the studies of Canadian French immersion classes (Swain, 1985, 1991). Swain (1985) reported that her immersion students, even after years of exposure to target language input (receiving comprehensible input for almost 7 years), still could not achieve native-like levels of accuracy. Swain (1985) argued that this was because learners processed language for meaning only in meaning-based communication without processing it syntactically. In the context of immersion classes, especially in the later grade levels, teachers perceive their primary role as teaching subject-matter knowledge with teachers doing the talking and

students doing the listening. Students have relatively little opportunity to engage in two-way exchanges of meaning in the classroom and are therefore, somewhat limited in their grammatical development. Swain (1985) argued that comprehensible input is only the first step towards grammatical acquisition. It paves the way for future exchanges, which lead to the acquisition of grammatical features when learners have understood the message and feel free to pay attention to form. To remedy the insufficiency of positive evidence, another form of input has thus been proposed: negative evidence.

2. 2. 2 Negative evidence

Negative evidence refers to direct and indirect information about what is ungrammatical and therefore unacceptable in the target language. Forms of negative evidence are illustrated in Figure 2 (page 12).

Long and Robinson (1998) distinguished between two broad types of negative feedback, namely: pre-emptive (e.g., explanations of grammar rules) and reactive (i.e., feedback on unacceptable utterances). The former constitutes an attempt to forewarn learners of a potential problem, while the latter represents an attempt to deal with an actual problem. Long and Robinson (1998) did not differentiate types of pre-emptive negative feedback, but in the case of reactive feedback, they distinguished a number of types, based on a general distinction between explicit and implicit feedback. Explicit feedback, as in the case of overt error correction, is provided in order to direct learners' attention to forms and structures. Whereas implicit feedback, as in the context of a communication breakdown, is designed to

overcome communication problems by using negotiation strategies such as repetition (repeating the error with a rising tone to attract attention), confirmation checks and clarification requests (the asking of questions to clarify meaning), or the recast, which involves the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error.

There have been a number of studies on the effects of different forms of negative feedback on SLA. Some consensus exists in that view that for negative evidence to be effective, it must exist, exist in usable form, be used and be necessary (Beck and Eubank 1991; Pinker, 1989).

First of all, negative feedback has been shown to exist in L2 classrooms. Salica (1981) found that adult ESL students responded correctly to 64% of corrective feedback moves given by teachers. Chaudron (1977), in a study of French immersion classrooms, found that teacher feedback could help learners to locate the error and increased learners' correct responses by about 15%. He also found that adding emphasis to errors could help to increase correct responses by about 20%. Wren (1982) found that an advanced adult ESL student was able to self-correct 14% of her errors, but 83% of them after teacher treatment during individual tutorial sessions with the researcher. Oliver (1995), found in her study of NS-NNS child dyads, that 55% of interactions contained errors and that 37% of the total interactions involved negative feedback, with NSs responding differentially to the grammaticality or ambiguity of their NNSs peer's turns. Based on this evidence, Oliver argued that negative feedback was neither rare nor inconsistent in this L2 interaction.

Other studies provide evidence to indicate that negative feedback in L2 acquisition is usable and used. For example, Richardson (1995) examined 15-minute free conversations by three adult NS-NNS dyads and found that NNSs were more likely to imitate correct grammatical morphemes after corrective recasts than after any of the other three responding moves (non-corrective recasts, topic continuations, and topic changes). Research on francophone adolescents in Quebec (Lightbown and Spada, 1990; Spada and Lightbown, 1993; White, 1991; White et al., 1991) has shown that learners who participated in form-focused activities or who received error correction had an advantage over those learners who participated in only natural classroom activities. The results indicate that not only does negative evidence exist in these types of conversation, but that it is also usable and used by L2 learners in the language acquisition process.

Whilst it is widely recognized that such input data is necessary for SLA, it is still a recognized fact that not everything that learners receive as input data is utilized as they develop their second language. Some language input data filters through to the learner, but some does not (Gass, 1997). Therefore, Gass (1997) distinguished three kinds of input. The first type consists of the totality of potential language available to a learner, which is in the form of positive and negative evidence. This type of input, as Gass argues, may not be fully utilized by learners. Consequently, she argues that the first type of input can be further defined as ‘apperceived input’ and ‘comprehended input’, and that they can be utilized by learners and be integrated into their interlanguage system.

In the section that follows, the discussion is focused on the five stages of the mental processes working on the input data and on how each of them converts into the next stage.

2.3 Apperceived input (noticed-input)

When learners are provided with language data, the first thing for them to do is to apperceive the input, that is, to ‘notice the gap’ between what they already know and what there is to know (Gass, 1997). The apperceived input or noticed input refers to the part of language data that is consciously noticed by learners.

The notion of ‘noticing the gap’ (Schmidt, 1990) emphasizes the role of consciousness in language processing. Schmidt claims that acquisition cannot take place unless learners consciously ‘notice’ linguistic forms in the input. ‘Noticing’ is seen as a “necessary and sufficient condition for the conversion of input to intake for learning” (Schmidt, 1994:17).

According to Gass (1997), learners may notice the bit of language in some way due to the saliency of certain language features and to their existing L2 knowledge. When learners apperceive the input, it means that linguistic form has become part of the learner’s cognitive system. This process of apperceiving is an internal cognitive act in which a linguistic form is related to some bit of existing knowledge or a gap in knowledge. Therefore, this first stage prepares the input for further comprehension. In other words, the apperceived input prepares the input to be comprehended.

2.4 Comprehended input

In her five-stage model, Gass (1997) uses the term ‘comprehended input’ instead of ‘comprehensible input’ to indicate the second stage of the mental process, a stage in which

learners begin to have a comprehension of the input data after they have noticed it. The differences between the two terms, as Gass (1997) explains, are that comprehensible input emphasizes the speaker, rather than the hearer who controls the comprehensibility. On the other hand, 'comprehended input' focuses on the hearer (the learner) and the extent to which he or she understands. The second difference is concerned with the nature of comprehension. In Krashen's (1985) sense, comprehension is treated as a dual variable: something is either understood or it is not. However, Gass (1997) argues that there are different levels of comprehension, which represent a continuum of possibilities ranging from general semantic to detailed structural analysis. The comprehended input leads to the next stage: intake.

2.5 Intake

After learners have a full comprehension of the input data, the next stage is for them to assimilate linguistic material and correlate the input data with their existing grammatical knowledge (Gass, 1997). This is referred to as the process of intake. Gass (1997) refers to this process as selective processing in which learners begin to match the comprehended information against their prior knowledge and against their existing internalized grammatical rules. In addition, learners begin to generalize the comprehended information and store it into their working memory, and finally store it into their long-term memory (Gass, 1997).

2. 5. 1 Factors affecting the conversion of input to intake

In the process of L2 acquisition, the most important factor is for the input language data to be used and learned by learners. That is, the input data should be converted into the intaken data. For input to convert into intake, a number of factors may affect the way the input is processed by learners. In the following section, two factors, attention and linguistic knowledge are discussed.

2. 5. 1. 1 Attention

According to Schmidt (2001), SLA is largely driven by what learners pay attention to and notice in target language input and what they understand the significance of noticed input to be. Attention to input is seen as the first step in getting linguistic information into the cognitive system. Schmidt argues that factors such as salience and frequency of the linguistic items can affect whether learners will notice these items. Furthermore, attention allows learners to notice a mismatch or gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce, as well as what they produce and the target forms. As Logan, Taylor and Etherton (1996) claim, people learn about things they attend to and do not learn much about the things they do not attend to.

The second step concerns how attention is allocated by learners between meaning and form during their language learning activities (Loewen, 2003). Learners need comprehensible and meaningful input to improve their L2. However, their linguistic accuracy may not

improve a lot if they are only involved in limited meaning-focused communication. VanPatten (1990) argues that learners can not attend to both meaning and form at the same time. Hence, learners in meaning-focused communication usually focus on the processing of meaning and understand the target language utterances without attending to the form of those messages. As a result, they seldom notice the L2 forms in the input and their interlanguage cannot improve to any great degree. Thus, as Skehan (1998) argues, it is necessary to capture learners' attention so as to induce them to notice linguistic forms which they may incorporate into their interlanguage system.

2. 5. 1. 2 Linguistic knowledge

Another factor that affects the conversion of input to intake is the conversion of explicit knowledge to implicit knowledge.

According to Bialystok (1981), explicit knowledge is the knowledge that is analyzed (in the sense that it exists independently of the actual instances of its use), abstract (in the sense that it takes the form of some underlying generalization of actual linguistic behavior) and explanatory (in that the logical basis of the knowledge is understood independently of its application). According to Long (1988) and Ellis (1990), explicit knowledge refers to the knowledge of grammatical forms and rules developed through formal instruction.

Implicit knowledge, according to Swain (1983), refers to the ability of learners to use forms accurately in meaning-focused communication and this ability is developed through opportunities to receive meaning-focused L2 input and to produce meaning-focused

comprehensible L2 output. As Ellis (1994) argues, implicit knowledge is intuitive, in the sense that learners are unlikely to be aware of having ever learnt it and are probably unaware of its existence.

Ellis (1994), to indicate the relationship between the two types of knowledge, claims that explicit knowledge plays an important role in developing implicit knowledge. First, explicit knowledge can help learners to notice features in the input. Second, explicit knowledge may facilitate the process of ‘noticing the gap’ (refer to section). ‘Noticing’ is important because it accounts for which features in the input are attended to and so become intake. Finally, explicit knowledge can convert into implicit knowledge directly (with instruction) or indirectly (with practice in use).

In the above section (2.5.1), I have discussed what factors might affect the conversion of input data to intake. Different results follow the process of intake, that is, how the intake data is processed. This is followed by the next stage, integration.

2. 6 Integration

Integration refers to what happens as a result of the process of intake. After the input data have been processed during the intake stage, they can be integrated into the learners’ present knowledge system in two possible ways. One is the development of the L2 system and the other is storage. Intake may be incorporated into the learner’s second language system, or it may be stored in the working memory as a hypothesis about a linguistic item,

which may then be tested and either confirmed or disconfirmed at some future point in the process of output (Gass, 1997). This stage is followed by the final stage: output.

2.7 Output

Output is the stage where learners make use of target language knowledge to produce an utterance. According to Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985), one of the functions of learner output is testing the hypothesis about a linguistic item. In Gass' five-stage model, output helps learners to test those linguistic items that they met in the previous stage of integration. In producing output, learners try out new language forms (hypotheses) by receiving feedback from others. When learners produce an utterance that is not comprehended, the listener may respond with a clarification request, which can lead to three possible outcomes. First, the learner may simply repeat the uncomprehended utterance without making any grammatical modification and in this case, the output is not enhanced. For example:

1. A: How many times?
2. B: times?
3. A: How many times you take a shower everyday?
4. B: everyday.

(from the data of the study)

In Line 3, Learner A repeated *times* without making any modification, so the output is not enhanced.

Second, the learner may reformulate the utterance with some modifications. For example:

1. B: do you know when we can, another people, wash with super, without super.
2. A: super, how to ...?
3. B: sorry, soap. Without soap. Every time, with soap.
(from the data of the study)

In Line 3, Learner B made a modification to his pronunciation of *super* to be *soap*.

In the second example, the output is enhanced. Enhanced output is claimed to induce learners to engage in restructuring (McLaughlin, 1990) and clarification requests alert learners to potential gaps in their interlanguage which they seek to fill by paying closer attention to input (Takashima and Ellis, 1999).

In addition, output induces learners to ‘notice the gap’. In attempting to produce what they want to say, they may ‘notice the gap’ (Schmidt & Frota, 1986) between what they want to say and what they are able to say. It raises learners’ consciousness of problematic structures. The ‘gap’ noticed while producing the target language may be an unknown lexical item or a particular grammatical feature that is needed to convey precisely the learner’s intended meaning. As a result, learners will turn to others, or to their own linguistic resources to work out a solution; or they will be primed to notice it in future input (Swain and Lapkin, 1995). Therefore, output may activate ‘noticing’, triggering mental processes that lead to modified output.

Finally, output forces learners to process language syntactically as well as semantically (Gass, 1997; Skehan, 1998; Swain, 1995). When learners attempt to understand others, their attention is only given to the meaning of the L2; hence they do not have to process it deeply. However, when they produce L2 output, they are forced to process language more

deeply. Swain (1995:128) claims that output forces learners to deeper, grammatical processing and that this potentially has a “significant role in the development of syntax and morphology”.

The above sections have discussed the five stages of Gass’ SLA model and how they work in the mental processes of learning. The next section (2.8) will focus on how these cognitive processes are fulfilled in the context of a focus on form instruction classroom.

2. 8 The relationship between cognitive processes and focus on form

The five stages of cognitive processes in SLA can be realized in contexts where a focus on form approach is employed. By examining the following two definitions and models of focus on form, the cognitive correlates can be identified:

1. *“...focus on form overtly draws students’ attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication” (Long, 1991: 45-46).*
2. *“focus on form involves an occasional shift in attention to linguistic code features---by the teacher and /or one or more students---triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production” (Long and Robinson, 1998:23).*

It can be seen from these definitions that the key cognitive construct in focus on form is focus or selective attention. In Long and Robinson’s (1998) definition, it is suggested that

any shift from meaning processing to form processing should be a brief response to problems in spontaneous communication.

From the above definitions, it can be seen that focus on form involves learners' briefly and perhaps simultaneously attending to form, meaning, and use during one cognitive event. This kind of joint processing is claimed to facilitate the cognitive mapping among forms, meaning and use that is fundamental to language learning (Doughty, 1999). Doughty (1999) claims that progress in adult SLA generally depends on cognitive processes such as paying attention to features of target input, noticing interlocutor reactions to interlanguage output, and making insightful comparisons involving differences between input and output utterance details.

2.9 Summary

This chapter has discussed the cognitive model of SLA, particularly Gass' (1997) five-stage model of SLA process, which explains how language data is processed through several stages into the learner's interlanguage system. The last section has explained the relationships between the cognitive processes and focus on form. In the next chapter, the discussion focuses on the interactionist approach to focusing on form.

CHAPTER THREE

THE INTERACTIONIST APPROACH TO SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

3. 1 Introduction

Chapter Two proposed that the five stages of cognitive processes in SLA can be realized in the contexts where a focus on form approach is employed. In addition, focus on form occurs in the process of interactional activities. This chapter discusses the interactionist approach to second language acquisition and the relationship between the interactionist approach and focus on form. First, it discusses the interaction hypothesis, upon which the interactionist approach is developed; it then discusses the relationship between the interactionist approach and focus on form.

3. 2 The interaction hypothesis

The interaction hypothesis is based on early work in ethnomethodology that examined how native speakers repair breakdowns in communication (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977). It is also based on Hatch's (1978) insight that learners not only manifest what they have already learned in interaction but that they also learn a second language through the process of interaction.

The early version of the interaction hypothesis is closely associated with Krashen's input hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), which claims that learners will acquire an L2 when they have access to comprehensible input and when their 'affective filter' is low so that the comprehended input is available to the internal acquisitional mechanisms for processing. Krashen views interaction as just one of the three ways in which input can be made comprehensible; the other two are simplified input and learners' use of context to help decode messages in the L2.

Long (1983) extended Krashen's work in his interaction hypothesis, agreeing with Krashen that acquisition is facilitated when learners obtain comprehensible input. However, Long (1996) claimed that interaction is a 'crucial site for language development. Long argues that interaction facilitates acquisition because of the conversational and linguistic modifications that occur in such discourse and that provide learners with the input they need. Through one type of interaction, termed 'negotiation', learners and their interlocutors signal that they do not understand something. Through the resulting interaction, learners have opportunities to understand and use the language that was incomprehensible. Additionally, they could also get more input and have more opportunities for output.

Long (1996) emphasized that negotiation can facilitate the kinds of conscious 'noticing' (Schmidt, 1990, 1994) regarded as necessary for learners to convert input into intake. According to Long (1996), it is not the interaction that is beneficial for SLA, but particularly negotiation for meaning. Long (1996: 414) writes:

...it is proposed that environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that these resources are brought together more usefully, although not exclusively, during 'negotiation for meaning'.

Long (1996: 418) describes negotiation for meaning as a process in which “learners and competent speakers provide and interpret signals of their own and their interlocutor's perceived comprehension, thus provoking adjustments to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all three, until an acceptable level of understanding is achieved”. Similarly, Gass (1997) refers to negotiation as involving interlocutors in an attempt to resolve communication breakdowns rather than participating in a free flowing exchange of information. Thus, negotiation covers not only the negotiation of meaning but also the negotiation of form. Long (1996) claims that such a negotiation may be beneficial because it provides learners with exposure to negative feedback in response to their nontargetlike utterances. It serves to highlight linguistic forms that are problematic to learners. It helps learners to ‘notice the gap’ between the input and their own interlanguage and forces learners to modify their output which in turn may promote fluency, automatised retrieval processes and syntactic, rather than purely semantic, L2 processing (DeKeyser, 1998).

3.3 Negotiation in SLA

Long's (1996) revised version of the interaction hypothesis provides a context in which the cognitive processes occur. The early version sees negotiation as enabling learners to obtain comprehensible input, thereby supplying them with positive evidence. The revised version

proposes two other ways in which negotiation can contribute to acquisition: through the provision of negative evidence and through opportunities for modified output. As Pica (1994) argues, negotiation arising from conversational interaction contributes to language acquisition by providing learners with comprehensible L2 input, pushing them to produce modified output, and drawing their attention to L2 forms.

3. 3. 1 Contribution of negotiation to comprehensible input

The contribution of negotiation to comprehensible input arises through the feedback data that learners receive on their communication utterances from signals of non-understanding. In order to reach mutual understanding or repair communication breakdowns, interlocutors use strategies like repetition, recast, comprehension check, and confirmation check and clarification request. These negotiation moves make input comprehensible and result in further opportunities for communicating a message in a meaningful context (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993).

The argument that negotiation contributes to comprehensible input has been examined in a number of studies and supportive evidence has been found. Initial research into the significance of negotiation for providing comprehensible input during one-to-one native speaker and nonnative speaker interaction was undertaken by Pica, Doughty and Young (1986); Pica, Young and Doughty (1987); and Pica (1991).

In a pilot study, Pica et al (1986) compared the listening comprehension of NNSs' English on directions to an assembly task given by a NS (a teacher) under two input conditions: (1)

syntactically and semantically pre-modified input without interaction and (2) unmodified input with interaction. Results indicated that interaction generated a larger quantity of input and greater redundancy of input, both of which helped make the linguistically complex directions more comprehensible. However, this study did not investigate deeply the mechanism by which these input modifications were brought about during the course of interaction, and this led to further research by the same researchers.

In 1987, Pica et al employed the same two conditions of input exposure as those of their pilot study in 1986. In condition one, the input consisted of 15 pre-modified directions to a comprehension task. Subjects were not allowed to negotiate with the teacher as she presented the directions. In condition two, the directions were given in their original, unmodified linguistic form and subjects were encouraged to request clarification of unclear direction content. Then the researchers compared the comprehension of the 16 nonnative speakers. Results of the study revealed that comprehension was significantly better when negotiation of meaning was encouraged. The researchers also found that the negotiation between the nonnative speakers and the native speaker served as a mechanism for native speaker's modification of input, either by encoding or by triggering repetition and rephrasing of input content, and thus played a critical role in comprehension.

In 1991, Pica included three different input exposure conditions in an L2 classroom context. In condition one, learners were encouraged to negotiate with the teacher. In condition two, learners could only watch and listen as the learners in condition one negotiated. In condition three, learners carried out the task away from the other two groups by listening to a text of the directions, which has been generated through negotiation. The follow-up

analysis suggested that individual subjects whose level of comprehension development was at or above the level of their classmates could comprehend well the direction input in the three conditions. However, for some subjects at lower developmental levels of comprehension, direct participation in negotiation was very effective to help them to better understand the direction input.

The three studies (Pica et al, 1986; Pica et al 1987; and Pica, 1991) reviewed above all suggested that more comprehensible input can result from negotiation. Other studies (Ellis et al, 1994; Mackey, 1999) also show that comprehensible input obtained from interaction facilitates L2 acquisition.

Ellis, Tanaka & Yamazaki (1994) investigated whether negotiated interaction could set up the conditions for acquisition. They compared how baseline input, pre-modified input and interactionally modified input affected adult learners' comprehension. In the baseline group, learners followed directions with no modifications. In the pre-modified group, three learners interacted with a native speaker who was given baseline directions. Learners were allowed to request clarification if they did not understand. In the interactional group, learners were allowed to interact with their teacher. The results showed that interactionally modified input resulted in better comprehension than pre-modified input, and led to more new words being acquired than pre-modified input. Consequently, the researchers suggested that interactionally modified input facilitated L2 acquisition.

Another study (Mackey, 1999) compared the effects of interactionally modified input and pre-modified input on learners' acquisition of English question patterns. Mackey found that

interactional groups advanced through more developmental stages and also produced significantly more high-level question structures. Thus, she came to the same conclusion as Ellis et al (1994) that interactionally modified input helped L2 acquisition.

The above reviewed studies provide evidence about how negotiation makes contribution to comprehensible input. The following section discusses how negotiation contributes to modified output.

3. 3. 2 Contribution of negotiation to modified output

The above studies indicate that negotiation can facilitate comprehensible input and lead to L2 acquisition. In addition, negotiation of meaning provides more opportunities for learners to produce and modify their output. In order to reach a mutual understanding between the listener and speaker, learners have to try their best to make themselves understood by modifying their produced utterances. In the process of modifying their output, learners 'notice a gap' between their production and the target language norms. As discussed in Chapter two, this modified output facilitates L2 acquisition.

Two studies (Pica, Holliday, Lewis & Morgenthaler, 1989; Ellis and He, 1999) provide evidence that while negotiating with native speakers (teachers), learners are also able to modify their output so as to make it more understandable.

Pica et al (1989) examined how L2 learners responded linguistically when native speakers signaled difficulty in understanding them. Results indicated that NNSs tended to modify their output most often when NSs signaled an explicit need for clarification rather than provided a model utterance for confirmation. Therefore, Pica and her colleagues argued that learners, in modifying their output, test hypotheses about the second language, experiment with new structures and forms, and expand as well as exploit their interlanguage resources in creative ways.

Ellis and He (1999) investigated the relationship between interactionally modified input and L2 learners' acquisition of new vocabulary. They examined the different effects of pre-modified input, interactionally modified input and modified output on the comprehension of directions in a listen-and-do task as well as the acquisition of new words embedded in the directions. They found that the negotiated modified output group (subjects negotiated with other subjects to modify their own output) outperformed the other two groups in aspects of comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. The researchers explained that by being involved in producing new words and negotiating their output, the subjects could process new words more deeply than by simply hearing them. However, as the researchers argued, this result did not understate the function of modified input. Since modified output did not occur in a vacuum, it occurred as a response to comprehensible input and the opportunity to interact. The interaction provided opportunities for learners to use and negotiate new vocabulary items in dialogically symmetrical discourse, which created a better condition for acquisition to occur than interaction in teacher-controlled exchanges.

Besides contributing to comprehensible input and modified output, negotiation also makes contributions to drawing learners' attention to some linguistic features. Studies on how negotiation focuses learners' attention on linguistic form are discussed in the following section.

3. 3. 3 Contribution of negotiation to awareness of linguistic features

Researchers (Pica, 1994, 1996; Nobuyoshi and Ellis, 1993; Mackey, 1999) have pointed out that negotiation and the modification of input in foreigner talk discourse may serve a broad purpose of making features of the target language more salient, and therefore more 'noticeable' by language learners. As Pica (1994) claims, negotiation provides a great number of opportunities for learners' attention to be drawn to both message meaning and target language form.

The following studies focused on how negotiation could lead learners to focus their attention on particular linguistic forms. Negotiation of form is seen as an important process in acquiring the investigated linguistic features in L2.

Pica (1996) examined whether negotiation could focus learners' attention on L2 forms. She analyzed the utterances of negotiation which were produced as 20 English NS/NNS dyads engaged in communication tasks. The analysis revealed that the NS utterances offered data on L2 lexical and structural features. Analysis of NS-NNS negotiation revealed that NS

signals and responses of negotiation provided NNSs with a great deal of L2 lexical and structural data.

In Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993), one question was to test whether ‘pushing’ learners by means of requests for clarification would result in more accurate use of past tense verb forms in communication. In the experimental group, the teacher was pre-emptively drawing learners’ attention to forms in their output, and learners did modify those incorrect forms while producing their output. The results indicated that learners in the experimental group who could negotiate with their teacher about verb forms improved the accuracy of their production. This study also provided evidence that there were delayed effects of ‘pushing’ output through negotiation.

Mackey (1999) also offered evidence of the delayed effects of negotiation on learners’ L2 development. In this study, Mackey investigated whether conversational interaction facilitates second language development and whether the developmental outcomes are related to the nature of the conversational interaction and the level of involvement. Adult ESL learners were divided into four experimental groups (interactors; interactor unreadyes; observers and scripts) and one control group while taking part in task-based interaction. Results showed that only the interactor groups who could negotiate with a native speaker increased significantly in terms of developmental stage and were able to produce significantly higher level structures. The results confirmed that the extent of the increase would be related to the nature of the interaction and the role of learners.

The studies reviewed above indicate in what aspects that interactional negotiation makes contributions to L2 learning. The following section summarizes the relationship between the interactionist approach and focus on form.

3. 4 The relationship between the interactionist approach and focus on form

According to the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1983, 1996), acquisition is facilitated if learners negotiate for meaning when a communication breakdown occurs. In the course of negotiation, learners modify and restructure their output in order to reach a mutual understanding. As a result of such negotiation, firstly, learners receive feedback on their own production when they attempt to communicate. These negotiation moves make input comprehensible and result in further opportunities for communicating a message in a meaningful context (Pica et al, 1993). Secondly, learners modify their output when they are pushed to reformulate their productions to make them more comprehensible. Both comprehension and modified production are tied closely to learners' attention to L2 forms. Comprehension can be seen as the 'entrance requirement' (Krashen, 1985) and modified production as the context for learners to draw on their current system of interlanguage forms. Attention to form is needed when learners attempt to process meaningful input (Long, 1990; Schmidt, 1990) and attempt to master structural features that are difficult to learn inductively because they are relatively imperceptible in L2 input or overlap with structures in the learner's L1 (Pica, 1994). In addition, attention to form is needed when learners produce and modify their output. During output production, learners' attention is focused on the form of their own interlanguage system and heightens their awareness of their own interlanguage system. When learners use their interlanguage resources to

communicate, they set up a basis from which they can be given feedback on their production, leading to modifications of their original message toward a greater comprehensibility by adjusting the use of forms (Pica, 1994).

3.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the interaction hypothesis upon which the interactionist approach is based. Essentially, the interaction hypothesis emphasizes the role of negotiation in the development of SLA. The theoretical basis of focus on form from the perspective of the interactionist approach is that more opportunities for conversational interactions, such as negotiation, are provided when learners focus on form. The next chapter discusses the features of form-focused instruction and features of focus on form in particular.

CHAPTER FOUR

FOCUS ON FORM

4. 1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed introduction to the intended research topic, incidental focus on form. The starting point is a brief description of form-focused instruction, followed by a description of incidental focus on form and its principal options, the items included in a focus on form episode, such as types of feedback provided or received, immediate uptake received by learners and linguistic forms. Then a framework of focus on form episodes is developed which can to be used for analyzing the occurrence of incidental focus on form in the present study.

4. 2 Focus on form

Focus on form is one type of form-focused instruction, which refers to a teaching approach where the treatment of linguistic form occurs in the context of performing a communicative task (Ellis et al, 2002). Long (1988, 1989) defined two pedagogical options of form-focused instruction: focus on formS and focus on form. Focus on formS involves drawing learners' attention to distinct entities of language form. The process of doing so is evident in the traditional approach to grammar teaching, a good example of which is the 'PPP' (presentation, practice and production) approach. Focus on form, on the other hand, 'overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication' (Long, 1991: 45-46). Based on

Long's (1991) definition of focus on form, Ellis et al (1999) extended Long's definition. They distinguished four features of focus on form: (1) it is observable (i.e. occurs interactionally); (2) it arises incidentally; (3) it occurs in discourse that is primarily meaning-centered; (4) it is transitory; and (5) it is extensive (i.e. several different forms are attended to in the context of a single lesson).

A further distinction of focus on form was made by Ellis et al (2002) between planned focus on form and incidental focus on form.

4. 2. 1 Planned focus on form and incidental focus on form

In a planned focus on form, pre-selected forms are taught through communicative activities which are intensive rather than extensive. A planned focus on form involves repetitive exposure to a single pre-selected linguistic feature rather than non-repetitive exposure to numerous linguistic features within a single lesson (Ellis et al, 2002). Learners are instructed with a planned focus on form in enriched input and then get involved in focused communication tasks which are designed to elicit production of the specific target features in the context of meaningful communication. For example, Doughty and Varela (1998) reported a classroom experiment in which a science report task served to create a context for the use of the past tense. Teachers would provide focus on form by means of confirmation checks and recasts when learners failed to use the target language. A planned focus on form is different from focus on formS. In focus on formS, the primary focus is form, and the learning process is evident in the traditional approach to grammar teaching

which is based on a synthetic syllabus. A planned focus on form implies that the teacher and learners are aware that the primary purpose of the activity is to learn a pre-selected form and that learners are required to focus their attention on some specific forms intensively in order to learn them. The principle is that language learning is a process of accumulation of distinct entities. In such an approach, learners are required to treat language primarily as an 'object' to be studied and practised bit by bit and to function as learners rather than as users of the language. Planned focus on forms can involve the incorporation of targeted items in the input through input flood (repeated input materials) or input enhancement (highlighted items in the input materials), or they can involve learners in the production of the targeted forms, often including corrective feedback on any errors in the use of the targeted forms.

In the case of incidental focus on form, attention is given to linguistic problems as they arise incidentally in the course of instruction. Thus, they have not been explicitly chosen for teaching. Particularly, an incidental focus on form involves the use of unfocused tasks, i.e. communication tasks designed to elicit general samples of the target language rather than specific forms. Such tasks can be performed without any attention to form. However, in performing the task, both the teacher and learners will incidentally attend to various forms. In these cases, attention to form will be extensive rather than intensive, that is, many different forms rather than a single item are likely to be treated. Therefore, a broad coverage is afforded in the incidental focus on form. Furthermore, the linguistic items addressed in incidental focus on form arise spontaneously in the course of communicative activities when learners have difficulty in the use of these forms, so they meet communicative needs at the moment they arise (Williams and Evans, 1998). Two kinds of

incidental focus on form are further distinguished: reactive focus on form and preemptive focus on form.

4. 2. 2 Reactive versus preemptive focus on form

According to Ellis et al (2001a: 413), “a reactive focus on form arises when learners produce an utterance containing an actual or perceived error, which is then addressed usually by the teacher but sometimes by another learner. Thus it supplies learners with negative evidence.” It occurs in episodes that involve negotiation and is triggered by something problematic that a participant has said or written (Ellis et al, 2001a). For example:

1. S: I clean them for you.
2. T: I'll.
3. S: I'll clean them for you.
4. T: Good.

(Ellis et al, 1999: 28)

In Line 2, the teacher is responding reactively to the error in Line 1.

A preemptive focus on form is problem-oriented too. It occurs when either the teacher or a learner initiates attention to form “even though no actual problem in production has arisen” (Ellis et al, 2001a: 414). It typically consists of exchanges involving a query and response.

A preemptive focus on form can be initiated by a learner to the teacher or to another learner, or by the teacher to the learners. A student-initiated preemptive focus on form is typically initiated by means of a query that the learner addresses to the teacher or to another learner (Ellis et al, 2001a). For example:

1. S: is this an American word?
2. T: no no no, it's very common.
3. S: yeah?
4. T: very common, it's not just American.

(Ellis et al, 1999: 28)

In Line 1, the learner is pre-emptively asking a question about a word that he does not understand.

In an early study by Day, Chenoweth, Chun and Luppescu (1984: 29), the term 'non-corrective feedback repair' was used to refer to the preemptive focus on form conceptually, which is defined as occurring not in response to errors, but as an attempt to repair "other instances of difficulties in the discourse". Day et al divided non-corrective feedback repairs according to who initiates it and who completes it, with both options being possible for either the NS or NNS. The two options are NNS-initiated/NS completed and NS initiated/NNS completed (similar to student-initiated/teacher-completed and teacher-initiated/student-completed). NNS-initiated repairs consist of word searches and requests for help. Word searches involve learners pausing, unable to come with the next

word, and NSs providing the word. Requests for help involve direct appeals when a learner requests help with a linguistic item.

A preemptive focus on form can also be initiated by the teacher. When a teacher initiates a preemptive focus on form, he/she assumes that the form in question might be problematic for the students in some way. The teacher usually initiates such a focus on form either by a query or an advisory statement. One problem with a teacher-initiated preemptive focus on form is that teachers cannot know for sure whether the gaps they assume to exist in their students' knowledge are actual gaps. Moreover, a gap for one student may not be a gap for others. Thus, the teacher's addressing of the problem may be a waste of time for others. This is also the reason teachers may choose to ignore some of the students' queries in class. Therefore, Ellis et al (2001a) argue that teachers would do better to limit themselves to providing corrective feedback in response to errors in reactive focus on form, where the need for assistance is clear.

A number of studies (Ellis et al, 2001a; 2002) have suggested that such learner-initiated preemptive focus on forms usually address gaps in learners' linguistic knowledge which can be presumed to be significant and enhance opportunities for acquisition. Slimani (1989, 1992) found that learners were more likely to report learning new items from a lesson if the items occurred in sequences involving student topicalisation. Ellis et al (2001b) found higher levels of uptake in student-initiated FFEs than in teacher-initiated ones. Therefore, learner topicalisation can promote language acquisition. The disadvantage of student-initiated preemptive focus on form is that it can detract students' attention from the communicative activity.

A recent study by Ellis et al (1999) made further investigations of focus on form and illustrated some characteristics of focus on form, in particular, the characteristics of focus on form episodes. The following section gives a full description of the general characteristics of focus on form episodes proposed by Ellis et al (1999).

4. 3 General characteristics of focus on form episodes

‘Focus on form episodes’ are defined by Richards, Platt & Platt (1992: 333) as episodes when “one of the speakers may break the main course of the conversation to check up on a particular point. Usually the other speaker(s) will supply the answer. After this exchange, the side sequence, the main conversation is usually taken up again”. Ellis et al (1999) proposed a framework of general characteristics of focus on form episodes (FFE) (See Appendix B). They provided a detailed description of different types of FFE according to whether it is the teacher or the student who responds to or initiates the FFE. General characteristics of FFEs were identified to conclude: approach, instigator, linguistic focus, timing and source.

4. 3. 1 Approach

In terms of the approach to focusing on form, FFEs can be a responding FFE or an initiating FFE. The responding FFEs are reactive in that they “occur when a participant responds to an utterance produced by another participant that is perceived as problematic, either because its meaning is not clear or because it is seen as containing a linguistic error”

(Ellis et al, 1999:28). By contrast, initiating FFEs are proactive in nature in that they “occur when a participant decides to break from the main focus of the conversation by drawing attention to some aspect of language” (Ellis et al, 1999: 28).

4. 3. 2 Instigator

“Instigator refers to the person responsible for bringing about a focus on form. In reactive FFEs, the person who responds to the utterance containing a perceived problem is the instigator. In preemptive FFEs, the person who raises a linguistic topic is the instigator. In both reactive and preemptive FFEs, the instigator can be the teacher or a learner” (Ellis et al, 1999: 29).

In reactive FFEs, it can be the teacher or another learner who responds to an error in another learner’s speech. Ellis et al (1999) argued that the discourse in reactive FFEs did not differ depending on the Instigator, so they collapsed teacher-initiated and student-initiated RFFEes into a single type. However, it did differ in the case of preemptive FFEs. In preemptive FFEs, it can be the teacher or a learner who raises a question about a form. In the present study, three types of focus on form were identified: Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs and Reactive FFEs (Teacher-initiated Reactive and Learner-initiated Reactive).

4. 3. 3 Linguistic focus

An important part of focus on form concerns the identification of linguistic features that are focused on. In Ellis et al (1999), the following aspects of language were listed as forms that teachers and students pay attention to in the process of focusing on form: (1) grammar, that is determiners, prepositions and pronouns, word order, tense, verb morphology, auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement, plurals, negation, question formation, etc; (2) vocabulary, that is the meaning of open class lexical items including single words and idioms; (3) spelling, that is the orthographic form of words; (4) discourse, that is textual relations, such as text cohesion and coherence, and pragmatics such as the appropriate use of specific forms according to social context; and (5) pronunciation, that is supra-segmental and segmental aspects of the phonological system.

The present study examined the occurrence of FFEs in the oral communication process while students were performing some communication tasks in L2 classes. Therefore, only some linguistic problems that were likely to occur were considered: grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

4. 3. 4 Timing

Timing refers to when participants start attending discursively to a linguistic form (Ellis et al, 1999). When participants start attending to an error immediately, this is coded as immediate. When they start attending after some intervening discourse, it is coded as delayed. Usually, delayed attention occurs in writing when an error is addressed subsequently.

In the present study, because only oral communication activities were considered, timing was considered only in the sense of immediate timing.

4. 3. 5 Source

Source refers to the problem that triggers an FFE. It can be a problem where the participant fails to comprehend something that another participant has said. In such cases, the source is analysed as Message. According to Long (1983), such cases lead participants to attempt to achieve understanding after a breakdown in understanding and they are referred to as ‘negotiation of meaning’. In other cases, a focus on form arises when there is no problem in understanding what has been said. However, the participants pay attention to a linguistic error in another participant’s utterance even if he /she has understood the utterance. In such cases, the problem source is Code. Such episodes are described as ‘negotiation of form’ (Ellis et al, 1999).

It is argued in Ellis et al (1999), that in many instances, the source of an FFE is apparent, as the discorsal context makes it clear whether the participants are negotiating meaning or form. However, in some cases, the lexical problems are ambiguous. It is not clear whether the teacher or another learner has focused on a form because he/she failed to understand the message or because he/she wished to clarify something about the word. Sometimes, negotiation of meaning arises because of some linguistic problems. In the present study, FFEs containing ‘negotiation of form’ were identified. Those FFEs, which were ambiguous in lexical problems, were included too.

The next section provides a detail illustration of features of each type of FFE (Reactive, Student-initiated and Teacher-initiated FFEs). More examples were provided in Chapter Six, Methodology, section 6.5.2.1.

4. 4 Categories in Reactive FFEs

In Reactive FFEs, or ‘Responding FFEs’ (Ellis et al, 1999), although the Instigator might be a teacher or a learner, the discourse in Responding FFEs does not differ depending on the Instigator. Thus, Ellis et al (1999) collapsed teacher-initiated and student-initiated RFFEs into a single type. The categories in Reactive FFEs were generalized by Ellis et al (1999) as: Trigger; Response and Uptake.

4. 4. 1 Trigger

In a Reactive FFE, “the Trigger is the utterance perceived as problematic, either because it was not understood or because it was considered to contain a linguistic error. In a Reactive FFE, the Trigger constitutes the starting point of an episode” (Ellis et al, 1999: 35).

4. 4. 2 Response

“A Response is an attempt to address the problem that arose in the Trigger” (Ellis et al, 1999: 35). Two general categories of response were identified in Ellis et al (1999): *Provide Solution* and *Seek Solution*.

In the case of *Provide Solution* the participants seek to address the problem by means of an Inform or a Recast. An Inform involves the provision of explicit information about the linguistic form that is perceived as the problem. It can be by means of definition, an example, an explanation or by signalling the problem. A Recast reformulates all or part of the Trigger by correcting the linguistic error. It can be realised by means of a statement modelling the correct form or by means of a confirmation request.

Seek Solution can be realised by means of a Clarification request or a Repetition. A Clarification request is where a participant asks another to make a previous statement clearer. Sometimes, a request for clarification may serve to negotiate meaning, however, it can also function to negotiate form. Clarification requests provide speakers with an opportunity to reformulate their erroneous utterances and thus, serve as a means of promoting ‘push out’, which is believed to facilitate acquisition (Swain, 1985; 1995).

Repetition is when a participant repeats the Trigger or part of the Trigger, including the part containing the linguistic error. A Repetition does not supply learners with information relating to what constitutes correct linguistic form and it does not require a participant to reformulate his/her erroneous utterance (Ellis et al, 1999).

Another type of response is Prompt, which is an attempt to get the participant who produced the Trigger to correct the error. Typically, it involves the use of a clue to indicate the location and/or nature of the error. Like a Clarification request, a prompt requires the participant to reformulate and therefore, potentially contributes to acquisition through 'pushed output'.

4. 4. 3 Uptake

In a focus on form, following the response, it is possible for learners to produce immediate reactions, namely 'immediate uptake'. This uptake is optional. In Ellis et al (1999), four categories of uptake were identified: (1) Acknowledgement, (2) Successful Repair, (3) Unsuccessful Repair and (4) None.

The category of Acknowledgement involves learners simply acknowledging the Response with a *yes*, *mm*, *oh* or a similar acknowledgement token, without incorporating the correct form into his own production. It was argued in Ellis et al (1999) that an Acknowledgement is sometimes ambiguous as to whether it constitutes attention to form or to meaning. It can

be an acknowledgement of the correct form provided in the feedback or an acknowledgement of the message content, or both.

In the case of a Successful repair, the learner who produced the Trigger corrects the ‘error’ by reformulating all or the erroneous part of the Trigger’ (Ellis et al, 1999: 40). Unsuccessful Repair (Partially successful uptake) involves the student who made the Trigger attempting to correct his or her error, but failing to do so (Ellis et al, 1999: 40).

The last category is None. Because uptake is optional, it is possible for FFEs not to contain uptake. The term None refers to the situation where the learner makes no attempt to react to the Response.

4. 5 Categories in Student-initiated FFEs

Categories comprising Student-initiated FFEs are Trigger, Response and Uptake.

4. 5. 1 Trigger

In a Student-initiated FFE, the trigger is a question about a linguistic form. This question can be of three kinds: Solicited Question, Free Question and Request Confirmation. In a Solicited Question the teacher invites the learners to ask about linguistic forms that may be problematic. Although it is the teacher who extends the invitation, it is still the student’s responsibility to raise a question; therefore, this type of move is still listed as

Student-initiated (Ellis et al, 1999:42). Free question is a question in which one learner poses an unsolicited question to the teacher or another learner. Usually this type of question begins with a WH question word. Or the learner may just make a statement about something that he/she does not understand. A free question is raised to address a gap in the student's L2 competence. Request Confirmation is a query where students ask for agreement regarding an assumption. It serves as the discoursal means by which learners can test hypotheses about the L2.

4. 5. 2 Response

In a Student-initiated preemptive FFE, besides the two types of responses, Provide Solution and Seek Solution, there might be another two types. One is Refuse and the other is Refer. It can be performed by the teacher or another learner. In the case of Provide Solution, the teacher or the other learner responding to the Trigger offers a solution by supplying information (Ellis et al, 1999: 44). This information is argued to be significant in that it fills the gap in the student's L2 competence (Ellis et al, 1999). In a Seek Solution, the teacher or another learner elicits information that can be used to address the Trigger. The elicitation may be directed at the instigator of the FFE or at another participant. In the classroom setting, when a student poses a question to the teacher, the teacher has the right to decline to respond to the Trigger. Or when it is posed to another learner, the other learner may also refuse to provide an answer. This response is referred to as Refuse (Ellis et al, 1999: 45). The last category of response is Refer, which is where a participant guides the student who made the query to a reference source, such as a dictionary.

4. 5. 3 Uptake

Uptakes in Student-initiated FFEs are identified as Recognize, Apply and None (Ellis et al, 1999). Recognize is defined as that where the learner who produces the Trigger now acknowledges the Response provided by another learner. Apply is defined as that where the learner who produces the Trigger incorporates the information supplied in the Response into his/her production, sometimes by repeating or rephrasing part of the Response. None refers to the situation when the learner who produces the Trigger fails to follow up the Response.

4. 6 Categories in Teacher-initiated FFEs

Similar to Reactive FFEs and Student-initiated FFEs, Teacher-initiated FFEs comprise three parts too: Trigger, Response and Uptake. The difference between this Teacher-initiated FFE and the other two types is that the last two parts (i.e. Response and Uptake) are optional moves (Ellis et al, 1999: 47).

4. 6. 1 Trigger

In a Teacher-initiated FFE, the Trigger is the teacher's move, which begins the episode. Two categories of Trigger are identified in Ellis et al (1999), Query and Advise. A Query by the teacher is a question about a linguistic form, which includes both WH questions

calling for learners to supply information and confirmation-type questions. Advise is when the teacher draws the learners' attention to a particular linguistic form.

4. 6. 2 Response

In Teacher-initiated FFEs, responses might be the expected answers of learners to the teacher's query or the learners' repetition of what the teacher has advised. In response to the teacher's query about a form, two possible types of response might follow. One is that there is no answer from the learner, which indicates that the teacher's query is really a linguistic gap for the learner. In this case, the teacher might produce his/her own response, followed by the learner's uptake of various kinds. The other type of response is Provide, a correct answer from the learner. In this case, the teacher's query on an assumed problem turns out to be not a problem for the learner. A Provide, argued in Ellis et al (1999: 50), serves as one way in which learners' explicit knowledge of linguistic items can be developed.

4. 6. 3 Uptake

Uptake in a Teacher-initiated FFE can only occur after a teacher responds to his/her own Query and is always a student-made move. Categories of Uptake are identified as the same as those in Student-initiated FFEs: Recognize, Apply and None.

Based on the illustration of the features of different types of FFE, a framework of identifying FFEs for the present study was drawn, presented in the following section.

4. 7 The framework of identifying FFEs for the present study

In the present study, the focus was to compare the types of incidental focus on form, the types of feedback, linguistic focus and the types of immediate uptake in FFEs while students of different proficiency levels were engaged in different interactional patterns. Therefore, only the relevant features of FFEs were considered. A framework of features to be identified in an FFE was designed and this was based on the descriptive systems of General Characteristics of Form-Focused Episodes, Categories Comprising Responding Form-Focused Episodes, Categories comprising Student-initiated Focus on Form Episodes and Categories comprising Teacher-initiated Focus on Form Episodes described in the previous sections (Ellis, et al, 1999, see Appendix B). Table 1 below indicates the items to be considered in an FFE in the present study.

Table 1. The framework for identifying FFEs in the present study

FFE types	Feedback types	Linguistic focus	Uptake types
Reactive	inform	grammar	successful
	recast	vocabulary	acknowledgement
	repetition	pronunciation	no uptake
	clarification request		no opportunity
	prompt		incorrect uptake
	incorrect		
Learner-initiated	inform	grammar	acknowledgement
preemptive	no feedback	vocabulary	successful
	incorrect feedback	pronunciation	no uptake
	prompt		no feedback and no uptake
Teacher-initiated	inform	grammar	acknowledgement
preemptive	correct feedback	vocabulary	successful
	prompt	pronunciation	no uptake
			no need for uptake
			no opportunity

4. 7. 1 Types of FFE

Regarding the types of focus on form, three types were included in the present study: Reactive; Teacher-initiated preemptive and Learner-initiated preemptive. In Teacher-learner interactions, Reactive FFEs were teacher-initiated. In Learner-learner interactions, Reactive FFEs were learner-initiated.

4. 7. 2 Types of feedback

Types of feedback of FFEs included in this study were: (1) inform, (2) recast, (3) repetition, (4) clarification request, (5) prompt, (6) no feedback, (7) correct feedback and (8) incorrect feedback.

Some types of feedback would occur only in Reactive FFEs, such as inform, recast, repetition, clarification request, prompt and incorrect. Some types of feedback only in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, such as inform, correct feedback and prompt. Some types of feedback only in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, such as inform, no feedback, incorrect, feedback and prompt.

4. 7. 3 Linguistic focus

Across the three types of FFEs, three linguistic categories were identified in the present study. They were grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Since this study was based on observations of performance of communication tasks in ESL classes, linguistic problems concerning discourse usage were rare; thus, they were excluded from the study.

4. 7. 4 Types of uptake

Seven types of uptake were included in this study: (1) successful, (2) acknowledgement, (3) no uptake, (4) no opportunity for uptake, (5) no feedback and no uptake, (6) no need for uptake, and (7) correct feedback.

Some types of uptake would occur only in Reactive FFEs, such as successful, acknowledgement, no uptake, no opportunity and incorrect uptake. Some types of uptake only in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, such as acknowledgement, successful, no uptake, no need for uptake, and no opportunity. Some only in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, such as acknowledgement, successful, no uptake, and no feedback and no uptake.

The reasons for these items to be selected for this study were based on the data collected from the pilot study. More detailed explanations are provided in Chapter Six: Methodology.

4.8 Summary

In this chapter, I firstly defined form-focused instruction, the distinctions between focus on form and focus on formS, and further distinctions of planned and incidental focus on form. Then I discussed the principal options of incidental focus on form, the follow up feedback of learners in an incidental focus on form, linguistic features to be focused on, as well as immediate uptake following feedback. In particular, I described the characteristics of a Form-focused Episode were outlined, including categories comprising responding to focus on form episodes, and categories comprising learner-initiated and teacher-initiated focus on form episodes described by Ellis et al (1999). Finally, based on the above discussion, I drew a framework for identifying incidental focus on form episodes in the present study.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH VARIABLES IN THE STUDY

5. 1 Introduction

The present study investigated the occurrence of incidental focus on form while learners of different proficiency levels were engaged in different interactional patterns in ESL classes. Hence, interactional pattern (interaction between teacher and learners, interaction between learners) and learner proficiency level and their relationship with language acquisition are examined in this chapter.

5. 2 Interactional patterns

In language classroom settings, two general categories of interaction may be identified. The first one is the interaction between the teacher and other learners as a whole. The second one is the interaction among or between learners themselves, which may include the interaction in small groups or in dyads (also referred to as pair work or peer work).

5. 2. 1 Teacher-learner interaction

The teacher-learner interactional pattern in language classrooms is the most traditional pattern and is often described as IRE, that is Initiation-Response-Evaluation (Barnes, 1992; Cazden, 1988; Mehan, 1979). In this pattern of interaction, the teacher poses a question to a

learner who is expected to provide a brief and correct response, then the teacher evaluates with such phrases as “Good,” “That’s right,” or “No, that’s not right”. The teacher plays the role of an expert, providing learners with instruction and doing most of the talking and commenting. Each round of interaction typically involves one student at a time, with the teacher moving on to ask a question of another learner after the teacher has evaluated the prior learner’s response (Lemke, 1990).

Wells (1993) proposed a reconceptualization of this IRE pattern. The newly modified interaction includes the typical IRE moves, but with extension on the third part. Instead of evaluating learners’ response, the teacher continues to ask them to expand on their thinking, justify or clarify their opinions, or make connections to their own experiences. Wells argued that the third part of the IRE which now involves some negotiation moves between the teacher and learners opens the door to further discussion and produces more opportunities for learning.

As the most traditional pattern of interaction in language classrooms, the teacher-learner interactional pattern has enjoyed and is still enjoying prevalence in most language classrooms throughout the world. This is due to the advantages of this type of interaction.

As Harmer (2001) generalized, whole class teaching gives learners a sense of belonging to a group. When everyone is involved in the same activity, learners have the sense that they are all in it together and this experience enables everyone to find common reference to talk about and can be used as reasons to bond with each other. Moreover, whole class teaching is suitable for activities in which the teacher acts as a controller, giving explanations and instructions. In addition, it allows teachers to ‘gauge the mood’ of the class in general and

provides a good way to get a general understanding of student progress. Even now, it is the preferred class style in many educational settings where students and teacher feel secure when the whole class is working in lockstep, and under the direct authority of the teacher.

With a long history and a profound tradition in many countries, the teacher-learner interactional pattern has shaped the teaching and learning styles in its own unique ways. Teachers are regarded as the resource of knowledge and learners are supposed to receive knowledge from the teachers. Wong-Fillmore (1985) found in an NNS immersion setting that far higher proficiency was gained in teacher-centered class than in those based on individual and group work. She suggested the reasons for this were due to the teacher's superior FL command, and also due to discourse features of the teacher's talk, such as clarity of lesson structure, clarity and fairness of turn allocation, and the ability to gear to pupil proficiency.

Jones (1992) compared the contribution of teacher and peer knowledge to declarative learning in an FL classroom, contrasting the effects on student uptake of teacher-supplied input with those of purely student-supplied input. It was found that teacher/materials input gave higher uptake rate (four times higher) than peer input. The first reason, given by Jones, is that the teacher has a superior FL knowledge. The teacher supplied more items because she has more in stock. Another reason is that the students' learning style is conditioned by past learning experiences. As Ellis (1989) argued, students expect the teacher to supply foreign language knowledge just as they expect a greengrocer to supply vegetables. Conversely any items supplied by peers are undervalued.

There are a number of other empirical studies that have provided evidence for the advantages of the teacher-learner interactions from other perspectives. For example, Pica and Doughty (1985) examined input and interactional features in small groups vs. teacher-fronted formats, and related their findings to the acquisition of communicative competence in English as a second language. The results showed that, first, more grammatical input was available during teacher-fronted than during group activities. And most of this grammatical input was produced by the teachers, whereas students' productions were equally ungrammatical in both situations. Secondly, negotiation moves were more available during teacher-fronted interaction. Although the number of negotiation moves were few in both teacher-fronted and group situations. The researchers argued that, in light of input, it was the teacher's production that made the input in the teacher-fronted lesson more grammatical overall.

Their conclusion regarding the amount and quality of input got further support from Porter's study in 1986. In this study, one question was to investigate the differences in the input provided by native speakers and non-native speakers (learners). Comparison was made in terms of rating, quality and total words. Ratings by ESL teachers showed that native speaker input was twice as good as learner input. In quality, native speaker input was about one-thirds as 'faulty' as learner input. In total words, native speakers produced significantly more words than learners did. In addition, native speakers were able to monitor their own and their interlocutor's speech more closely than did the learners. Based on these findings, Porter argued that learners could not provide each other with the accurate grammatical and sociolinguistic input that native speakers could provide them.

In terms of the occurrence of focus on form in a teacher-fronted class, it was found that the most effective explicit feedback was provided by the teacher to the learners (Herron and Tomasello, 1988, Tomasello and Herron, 1988, 1989). Negotiation can occur either between the teacher and learners (Pica et al, 1987; Lyster, 1998; Nobuyoshi and Ellis, 1993). It was also found that recasts (another implicit type of focus on form) were used more frequently and effectively by teacher to learners (Doughty, 1994; Doughty and Varela, 1998; Ellis et al, 1999; Long et al, 1998; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Mackey et al, 2000; Ortega and Long, 1997; Seedhouse, 1997). There was only one study (Yamaguchi, 1994) that included the examination of the amount of corrective feedback provided by five NSs and five advanced L2 learners of Japanese to ten beginning Japanese learners while performing a closed and an open task in pairs. Yamaguchi found that NSs provided significantly more corrective feedback to the beginning NNSs than did the advanced learners. Thus, learners seldom used recasts successfully. There have been no studies showing that learners can respond to each other with effective recasts. It can be inferred from the reviewed studies that, recasts, due to their properties of being a corrected version of the problematic form, are most frequently provided by teachers or NSs to learners.

Recent research on focus on form has explored various ways in which the teacher or materials developer can attract and manipulate learners' attention to form (e.g. Day and Shapson, 1991; Doughty and Varela, 1998; Harley, 1998; Leeman, Arteagoitia, Fridaman & Doughty, 1995; Long et al, 1998). It is assumed (Williams, 1999) that the degree of attention given to form in form-focused instruction or in the focus on form is controlled by the teacher or instructional materials in response to learner needs. It is more often the teacher who realizes that students are making systematic errors on a given form and who

responds accordingly, either in the form of explicit or implicit feedback. Or the teacher might surmise that the learners are grasping for a form or word that they do not know and provide it at the appropriate juncture.

In spite of the advantages of teacher-learner interactions in terms of more comprehensible input provided, there are also arguments and empirical studies to indicate some disadvantages of this pattern of interaction, especially in the context of CLT (communicative language teaching) approach (Harmer, 2001; Jones, 1992; Pica and Doughty, 1985; Porter, 1986; and Wong-Fillmore, 1985).

Pica (1987) claimed that teacher-centered classroom discourse is not favoured for interactions between the teacher and students toward a mutual comprehension. Firstly, the teacher cannot take time with each student for individual negotiations aimed at mutual comprehension of message meaning. Secondly, opportunities to modify and restructure interaction towards mutual comprehension seldom arise in the language classroom, because a necessary precondition for interactional modification is often lacking in the design and organization of classroom activities.

Harmer (2001) argued that teacher-learner interactions do not favor individual students. Students have to do the same thing at the same time and at the same pace. Individual students do not have the chance to say anything on their own. Some students may not like to participate in front of the whole class since it can be a risk of public failure. Therefore, this type of interaction may not encourage students to take responsibility for their own

learning and should not be taken as the best way to organize communicative language teaching or specifically task-based sequence.

In an empirical study, Nystrand (1997), after conducting a comprehensive study of the classroom interaction patterns, found that learners in teacher-learner interactions were less able to recall and understand the topical content than learners who were involved in more topically-related, participatory discussions. Therefore, he argued that such teacher-learner interactions were not favored for providing learners with more opportunities to develop intellectually complex language knowledge and skills. Similarly, Barnes (1992) found that this type of interaction did not allow for more complex ways of communicating between the teacher and learners.

More empirical evidence of the disadvantages of teacher-fronted interaction is presented in the section on advantages of learner-learner interaction discussed below.

5. 2. 2 Learner-learner interaction

The learner-learner interactional pattern refers to the interaction occurring between or among learners themselves. It can be further divided into sub-categories of group work and pair work (or termed as dyadic or peer work in some studies). In this PhD research, it is pair work that was chosen as the learner-learner interactional pattern. Hence only pair work is discussed.

Pair work is another frequently used pattern of learner-learner interaction in language classrooms, especially in western countries, where language classes are small in size (15 – 20 students). It is an attractive alternative to the ‘teacher-led lockstep’ mode, since it can produce greater quantity and quality of negotiated interaction (Long and Porter, 1985: 207). Harmer (2001) proposed that pair work increases the amount of speaking time any one student gets in class. It allows learners to work and interact independently without the necessary guidance of the teacher, thus promoting learner independence. It allows teachers time to work with one or two pairs while other students continue working. It recognizes the old maxim that ‘two heads are better than one’, and this cooperation helps the classroom become a more relaxed and friendly place. It is relatively quick and easy to organize.

Also, the argument in favor of pair work is supported by some empirical studies which have examined the extent to which pair work can promote successful second language development.

The first group of studies provides evidence in regard to the quantity of negotiation produced in learner-learner interaction. Long et al (1976) found that learner discussions in pairs promoted a greater quantity of speech and a greater variety of speech acts and social uses of language than did the teacher-led discussions. Later, Long and Porter (1985) found that learner dyads could provide more opportunities for engagement in negotiation work than NS-NNS dyads. Finally, Doughty and Pica (1986) found that in the classroom, pair rather than group work on two-way tasks might ultimately be most conducive to negotiated modification of interaction, and hence to second language acquisition.

There are studies which further examined the nature of input provided by learners to others in their interaction. For example, Porter (1986) examined the input that learners provided to each other and to native speakers during task-centered discussions and compared that input with native speaker input. It was found that even though the learners provided ungrammatical input to each other, their input contained at least two interaction features (repairs, prompts) that might be vital to second language acquisition. It was also found that input from learners was just as comprehensible as that from native speakers.

Besides input, other elements were examined as well. Pica, Porter, Paninos & Linnell (1996) investigated whether learner-learner interaction could address their need for L2 input modified toward comprehensibility, for feedback that focused on form, and for modification of output in the same way as in interactions between learners and native speakers. They compared five dyads of English L2 learners with that of five dyads of learners and English NSs on two communication tasks. The results revealed that although learners provided only a limited source of modified input and modified output, and that they could also provide opportunities for feedback in simplified form, they did provide more utterances of feedback of simple segmentation type than did the NSs. These utterances contained considerable amounts of L2 morphosyntax and could serve as a source of useful L2 input. And in the area of feedback, learners could offer some data of considerable quality.

In a more recent study, Mayo and Pica (2000) examined the same questions and concerns. They compared the interaction of seven dyads of EFL learners with that of seven dyads of EFL learners and English NSs on two communication tasks. They found that the

learner-learner dyads were not significantly different from the learner-NS dyads with respect to their contributions of input, feedback and output as they participated in the communication tasks. In addition, the learner-learner dyads used interactional strategies of scaffolding, completion and self-correction, which further related to their input, feedback and output needs.

Some empirical studies (Kowal and Swain, 1994; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Pica, 1994; Pica et al, 1989) have also provided evidence that learners play a variety of roles in drawing attention to form in the process of negotiated interactions. Pica (1994) indicated that learners initiated a number of negotiation moves, which not only facilitated comprehension, but also assisted in the segmentation and analysis of input; made problematic items in the input more salient and triggered the provision of important negative feedback from interlocutors. In addition, learners modified their output more often to make their output more comprehensible. When learners received various forms of feedback, they were forced to modify their output to be more like the target-language. In this process, learners noticed that what they knew already and what they did not still know yet, thus leading to reflecting on their IL knowledge (Kowal and Swain, 1997; Swain and Lapkin, 1995).

In a study investigating the preemptive focus on form, Ellis et al (2001b) distinguished the preemptive FFEs initiated by students and those by teachers. The findings indicated that the majority of the preemptive FFEs were initiated by students rather than by the teacher and dealt with vocabulary. Students were more likely to uptake a form if the FFE was student-initiated.

In sum, for language learners in classroom settings, language activities occur either in the interaction between the teacher and other learners or between learners themselves. There are different arguments and results from empirical studies about the effects of different interactional patterns on SLA. It is important to investigate the nature of the two types of interactions in terms of the opportunities they can provide for comprehensible input, modified output and feedback of various kinds. Therefore, in this PhD study, one key variable in the study is to investigate the two types of interaction in terms of their effects on the occurrence of incidental focus on form.

5.3 Learner proficiency levels

An important area to be considered in studying the learners' performances in the process of learning, especially in their interaction with teachers and other learners, is the effect of learner variables, such as their age, gender, goals, learning style, and background. One of the basic differences among learners is proficiency level (Williams, 1999). As Williams states, proficiency is a factor that needs to be investigated further as it relates to the effectiveness of focus on form. The following section discusses the relevant theories and empirical studies concerning how learners' proficiency levels may affect their performance in their process of learning.

The rationale for considering learners' proficiency levels in their L2 learning is mainly based on Pienemann's (1989) claims concerning the learnability of form and structure. Pienemann claims that the learnability of a structure is dependent on the readiness of learners to acquire it. This means that learners need to be at the correct developmental level

to have the processing constraints required for acquiring the structure. If learners are not at the correct developmental level, they will not acquire the structure.

VanPatten (1994: 32) argued that learners “are driven to process referential meaning before anything else when involved in communicative exchanges”. Gass (1997: 137) made similar claims for the need to process meaning first. Her argument states that:

some input is utilized for comprehension of meaning and other input will be utilized for further grammatical development. The former precedes the latter: semantic comprehension is a prerequisite for syntactic comprehension, and syntactic comprehension is a prerequisite to acquisition. None guarantees the following step.

Williams (1999) argued that developmental readiness might become a factor in the effectiveness of drawing learner’s attention to form. When ‘noticing the gap’ is used to describe the cognitive processes, the ‘gap’ refers to a small space between the target language and learners’ interlanguage system. For beginning learners, it would be difficult to notice this ‘gap’. As L2 proficiency advances, learners will tend to extend their attention to other aspects of language. Thus, learners with a higher proficiency level are in a better position to allot some of their attention to form even during more conversational activities.

A number of empirical studies have investigated to what extent and in what aspects learners of different proficiency levels performed and benefited from their interactions with others.

In terms of input provided by learners, advanced learners could be a better input source, as indicated by the studies by Porter (1986) and Mayo and Pica (2000). In these studies, the advanced learners were found to be able to provide a larger quantity and a better quality of input than low level learners (Porter, 1986). Moreover, advanced learners were able to offer more complex feedback and with grammatical accuracy as well as native speakers (Mayo and Pica, 2000).

In terms of the attention given to form in the meaning-focused communication, it was found that the advanced learners were more able to attend to form and negotiate about form. For example, VanPatten (1990) explored whether or not learners can consciously attend to both form and meaning when processing input. Learners of three university levels were chosen as subjects: Level I= first semester; Level II = fourth semester; Level III = third year conversation. Results of the study showed that early stage learners have greater difficulty in attending to both form and content. VanPatten concluded that simultaneous attention to informational content and 'meaningless' form in the input is difficult for the early stage and intermediate stage learners. Only when input is easily understood can learners attend to form as part of the intake process.

Williams (1999) examined the extent to which learners at four levels of proficiency can and do spontaneously attend to form in their interaction with other learners. By analyzing the learner-initiated language-related episodes, Williams found a clear increase in the number of LREs as proficiency rises. With regard to the amount of talk, the advanced learners were more able and /or more willing to initiate episodes involving attention to form. In terms of learner-generated requests to the teacher about language, the advanced learners produced

fewer. Therefore, Williams argued that, as proficiency increased, learners turned increasingly to one another for help. Also, the advanced learners showed greater willingness or ability to talk about language and give feedback on form to one another. The fewer interactional moves produced by low level learners was due to their lack of language proficiency, which was related to low confidence in second language use, and consequently made learners feel shy to speak more in front of others (Jacob and Ratmanida, 1996).

Some studies of focus on form have considered learners' proficiency levels and found different effects on focus on form.

In terms of explicit feedback, different results were obtained for learners of different proficiency levels. Winne, Graham & Proch (1993) found that learners at a low proficiency level benefit more from explicit feedback in learning inferencing. They argued that explicit instruction could help learners understand the task and their tutor's goals and to work to meet them. But some studies showed that explicit feedback was more helpful to advanced learners, such as in Carroll, Swain & Roberge (1992). In this study, they looked at the effects of explicit feedback on the learning of morphological generalization and found that feedback was more helpful to advanced learners in both the experimental groups and comparison groups. This was explained as a result of their increased ability and flexibility in processing, storing and recalling the information. There are also studies (Herron and Tomasello, 1988; Tomasello and Herron, 1988, 1989) that provide evidence that explicit feedback is effective in teaching how to draw generalization about some grammatical features for learners of both advanced and low proficiency levels. For advanced learners, they benefit from explicit feedback due to their higher cognitive ability; and for low level

learners, they need more explicit instruction for a better understanding of some grammatical features.

In terms of the effect of negotiation and recasts on learners of different levels, empirical results also differ. Some studies show that low level learners benefit more from negotiation. Pica (1991) compared three different input exposure conditions in an L2 classroom context and found that learners at lower developmental levels benefit more from direct participation in negotiation. As Pica argued, negotiation was effective in helping those less competent learners in their comprehension.

On the contrary, Mackey and Philp (1998) found, in their examination of the effects of negotiated interaction on the production and development of question forms, that advanced learners obtained more from interaction with intensive recasts than low proficiency level learners. Their finding, as they stated, supported the claims of Pienemann and Johnson (1987) and Pienemann, Johnston & Brindley (1988) concerning the fixed stage sequence in ESL, which indicated that it was the developmentally 'ready' learners who made the greater gains in terms of sustained increase in higher-level structure.

Studies reviewed above favor the argument that advanced learners could produce more in terms of input to other learners, feedback on forms and more complex and accurate output. However, there were some studies that provide different results. For example, Brock (1985:55) reported a very low number of clarification requests occurring in classes with learners of high proficiency levels. Brock explained that the generally high level learners would get involved in far fewer instances of clarification than lower level learners.

Pica (1996) suggests that for learners of different proficiency levels, negotiation may exert different benefits. Negotiation may work best with intermediate learners. Beginner learners lack the resources to negotiate effectively while advanced learners tend to focus on opinion and interpretation rather than comprehension or linguistic clarity. There seems to be no one study that has compared the effects of proficiency levels on the outcomes of incidental focus on form with other variables being compared. Therefore, one of the concerns in this PhD study is to investigate the extent to which learner proficiency levels might affect learners' performance in focusing on form incidentally.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has discussed the two research variables being investigated in this study (interactional patterns and learner proficiency levels) and their relationship with second language acquisition. It has been pointed out that there are advantages and disadvantages for both teacher-learner and learner-learner interactional patterns for language learning, hence, a new question was proposed to research how these two interactional patterns might affect the occurrence of incidental focus on form in conducting meaning-focused communication tasks. Another factor that might affect the occurrence of incidental focus on form was learner proficiency level, so it was considered that two different levels of proficiency learners would be examined and compared in terms of their production of incidental focus on form.

CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design, context, subjects, data collection procedures, the framework for identifying and coding the incidental focus on form sequences, and how the data were analyzed.

6.2 Design

This study aimed to observe and describe natural classroom interactions between the teacher and learners and between learners themselves while they were performing meaning-focused communication tasks in ESL classes, with a focus on a specific predetermined phenomenon, incidental focus on form. The research variables that were presumed to have an effect on the occurrence of incidental FFEs were the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner interactions and Learner-learner interactions) and the learner proficiency levels. Therefore, observations and audio-recordings were conducted in two classes of different proficiency levels (one Elementary class and one Advanced class) while the students performed the ten selected communication tasks in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions).

The recordings were transcribed and FFEs were identified and coded according to a framework of coding system drawn by the researcher based on the FFE coding systems

described by Ellis et al (1999). Finally, statistical analysis was conducted by using SPSS to answer the following four research questions:

- (1) To what extent is there a difference in FFE types that occur in:
 - a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
 - b. Advanced and Elementary classes.
- (2) To what extent is there is a difference in feedback types of FFEs that occur in:
 - c. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
 - d. Advanced and Elementary classes.
- (3) To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus of FFEs that occur in:
 - a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
 - b. Advanced and Elementary classes.
- (4) To what extent is there a difference in uptake types of FFEs that occur in:
 - a. Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in
 - b. Advanced and Elementary classes.

6. 2. 1 Research context

The research was conducted in the School of Languages at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand. In the School of Languages, different levels of

English programs are provided. Students are assigned to different proficiency level classes based on placement tests: Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper intermediate and Advanced.

6. 2. 2 Participants

The participants came from two intact classes. One class was at Elementary level (Ele class) and the other was at Advanced level (Adv class). Consideration in selecting the two classes was mainly based on their proficiency levels, the availability and willingness of the teachers to have their students involved.

Students in the two classes were adult migrant students who had come to the School of Languages at AUT to improve their level of English. In the Advanced class, there were 16 students, 8 males and 8 females. Their ethnic backgrounds included Chinese (7), Korean (1), Russian (1), Iranian (3), Egyptian (1) and Sri Lankan (2). Their age range was between 20-48, with the average being 32. In the Elementary class, there were 19 students, 5 males and 14 females. Their ethnic backgrounds included Chinese (11), Korean (5), Russian (1) and Cambodian (1). Their age range was 20-40, with the average being 30.

The two teachers who were teaching the two classes were experienced in ESL teaching. One had 25 years teaching experience and the other had over ten years experience. They both had a good understanding of language teaching theories and were familiar with communicative teaching approaches and task-based instruction.

Permission to conduct the research was first sought and obtained from Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. After the teachers agreed to participate, the researcher visited each class and explained to the teacher and the students that the purpose of the research was to examine classroom interaction during their performance of meaning-focused communication tasks, and invited them to participate (See Appendix A for the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Forms). Before the students signed the consent forms, the researcher performed a trial recording of one communication task that was not used in the data collection of the study, so that students had a clear idea of what would be done in class.

6. 2. 3 Tasks used for data collection

In this study, the data was collected when the students were engaged in communication tasks. Therefore, some communication tasks were selected. The following sections discuss the definitions of communication tasks and the reasons that the communication tasks for data collection were selected.

6. 2. 3. 1 Definitions of communication tasks

Based on different theories, functional concerns and methods of implementing tasks in instruction, researchers have tried to classify tasks into different categories, some in very broad terms and some in very specific terms. Different terms and names have been used to refer to different and sometimes the same types of task.

A very broad distinction was made by Nunan (1989, 1993) who classified two types of task on the basis of their communicative functions: real-world or pedagogical tasks. Real-world tasks consisted of essential communicative activities that learners needed to function in their new country, and pedagogic tasks were designed to promote the language acquisition process, although they might have no connection to the language functions required by the learners in their daily lives.

Maintaining Nunan's distinction, pedagogical tasks have been further classified into structure-oriented tasks and communication-driven tasks (Skehan, 1998); focused and unfocused communication tasks (Ellis, 2000). In the case of structure-oriented tasks, or the focused tasks, some linguistic feature is prominent and essential (i.e. its use is required by the task). In the case of the communication-driven tasks, or unfocused communication tasks, no effort is made in the design or the execution of a task to give prominence to any particular linguistic feature. The language used to perform the task is 'natural' and only very broadly determined by the content of the task.

There are some other types of task or terms for tasks which have been investigated in some empirical studies, such as one-way tasks (no exchange of meaning is obligatory) vs. two-way tasks (making the exchange of meaning obligatory) (Long, 1981); closed tasks or convergent tasks (where there is a definite solution or ending) vs. open tasks or divergent tasks (where there is no clear resolution) (Duff, 1986).

As Long (1989) argues, two-way tasks produce more negotiation of meaning than one-way tasks. Pica et al (1993) claim that two-way tasks are more effective in terms of their

potential to generate comprehension of input, feedback on production, and interlanguage modification. While performing the tasks, each interactant should hold a different portion of the information which must be exchanged or manipulated in order to reach the task outcome. In addition, interactants should be required to request and supply this information to each other, and interactants should have the same or convergent goals. Finally, only one acceptable outcome should be possible from their attempts to meet this goal.

Long made a distinction between 'closed' and 'open' tasks. 'Closed tasks' require speakers to reach within a single correct solution or one of a small, finite set of correct solutions that have been determined beforehand by the designer of the task and known to the participants to have been so determined, such as a decision-making task and a problem-solving task. 'Closed tasks' will induce higher quantity and quality of negotiation for meaning than 'open tasks'. In doing 'open tasks', participants know there is no predetermined correct solution, but instead a wide range of acceptable solutions, such as free conversation, a debate, ranking favorite leisure time activities, explaining how something works. In doing 'closed tasks', participants know that task completion depends on their finding the answer, not settling on any answer they choose when the going gets rough and moving on to something else. It is predicted that 'closed tasks' will elicit more topics, and language recycling, more feedback, more incorporation, more rephrasing, more precision, and so on. These adjustments involve the kinds of reformulation noted earlier and are likely to lead to provision and incorporation of feedback, and hence, to interlanguage destabilization.

An elaborate and specific classification was developed by Pica et al (1993) on the basis of who holds and conveys information; who requests and who gives feedback on the

information; the direction of the information flow; the precision of the information required; and the number of possible task solutions: (1) The information gap task: where one participant holds information that must be given to others; (2) The jigsaw task: which is a multiway information gap task, requiring all participants to give and receive information; (3) The problem-solving task: which is a multiway information gap task requiring the participants to agree on a single task solution; (4) The decision-making task: which is similar to the problem-solving task and requires the participants to agree on a decision; and 5) An opinion (information) exchange task: which often does not require a task solution.

6. 2. 3. 2 Communication tasks selected for the present study

This study intended to examine the occurrence of incidental focus on form, which involves the use of unfocused tasks, that is, communication tasks designed to elicit general samples of the language rather than specific forms. They could be performed without any attention to specific forms, but with various forms being attended to incidentally.

Ten communication tasks were selected for the study (see Appendix E). They were ten *information exchange* tasks based on the following rationale: (1) they are meaning-focused tasks, with no special grammatical features to be engaged in; (2) they can be conducted either between the teacher with the whole class or between learners in pairs; and (3) they are two-way tasks. They also fall into categories of being pedagogical (Nunan, 1993), communication-driven (Skehan, 1998) and unfocused (Ellis, 2000), two-way (Long, 1981) and opinion (information) exchange tasks (Pica et al, 1993).

Before these tasks were selected, more than thirty tasks were considered by the researcher, and shown to the two teachers of the two classes where observations would be conducted. The two teachers gave their comments on the selected tasks, such as which words were new to their students, whether the tasks had been used before, which tasks were more interesting and more relevant to their teaching programme, which were more likely to be used by themselves, and how they would conduct these tasks in their classes.

Based on the two teachers' feedback, the researcher made some modifications to the original tasks. First, a number of the words supposed to be too difficult were substituted with easier ones, so that the students from the Elementary class had no problems in understanding the tasks. Second, all the selected tasks were modified to be consistent in format, so that students were familiar with how these tasks were to be performed. Finally, to ensure that all students were able to have enough discussion, all tasks prescribed the number of items that needed to be discussed. For example, Task One originally requested students to decide the most important things to take when they were going to live in a Kiwi's home as a home-stay student. The modified version requested students to decide the most important TEN items.

It was hoped that the performance of these tasks would not intrude upon the normal teaching programme too much. Therefore, before the observations, the researcher discussed with the two teachers about these tasks, so that they would make changes in their teaching plans to make time for these tasks, substituting some of their planned oral activities.

6.3 Data collection

Before the real recording, a trial recording was conducted in each class to familiarize students with task performing procedures.

All students in the two classes participated in performing the communicative tasks, but only five pairs were recorded in each class. The reason for this was that in the Advanced class, several students did not agree to be taped. In the Elementary class, the five pairs were chosen randomly each time according to where they were sitting in the classroom. Learners were paired or grouped randomly in the way that they came from different L1 backgrounds to reduce the chances of talking to each other in their L1.

After the students formed pairs, they were given the handouts and two minutes to read through the task instructions. They performed each task for about 15-20 minutes, depending on the task. Then the teacher organized a summary discussion with the whole class, which usually lasted 15 minutes.

Each time, forty minutes were given to each observation before the end of the class. Due to differences in learners' proficiency levels and task requirements, time spent on each task varied. The length of time spent on each observation is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 2 Observation record

	Task name	Elementary class		Advanced class	
		Length (Minutes)	Date	Length (Minutes)	Date
1	<i>Home stay student</i>	35	March 26	27	Mar 29
2	<i>BBQ</i>	36	March 31	40	April 27
3	<i>People in the office</i>	40	April 1	35	May 3
4	<i>Useful things for learning English</i>	26	April 2	25	May 3
5	<i>In the library</i>	37	April 7	30	May 10
6	<i>Five thousand dollars</i>	30	April 30	30	May 10
7	<i>What makes a good English teacher?</i>	25	May 5	30	May 17
8	<i>No TV</i>	30	May 13	30	May 17
9	<i>Street Scene</i>	35	May 13	31	May 24
10	<i>Gifts</i>	35	May 20	38	May 24
Total hours in each class		5.5 hours		5.2 hours	
Total hours in the two classes		10.7 hours			

When the audio recordings were being conducted, the researcher was present all the time as a non-participant observer, making notes of the class procedures. This was found to be helpful in doing the transcriptions, particularly in identifying the errors in pronunciation. The recordings were conducted with a walkman recorder (Sony recording walkman WM-GX688) with a clip-on microphone attached to the teacher, five small cassette recorders (Sony TCM-150) in front of the five pairs, and a cassette recorder (5265 AV) with a Boundary Microphone for the whole class as a backup.

6. 4 Transcription

The recorded data was transcribed into written form by the researcher (see Appendix F for a sample transcription of Task One). A transcription key is attached in Appendix E.

Transcription occurred in two stages: broad transcription and narrow transcription. At the stage of broad transcription, all data was transcribed. All FFEs were identified and marked on the written transcription. At the narrow transcription stage, the researcher listened to the tapes again and focused on those identified FFEs, particularly those FFEs containing a pronunciation error. When the researcher did the transcription, particular attention was given to the pronunciation in FFEs, because this determined whether the identification of the FFE was Reactive or Preemptive. For example, Episode 24 and Episode 284 look very similar, but Episode 24 was identified as a Reactive FFE and Episode 284 was identified as a Preemptive FFE. In Episode 24, the first participant had problem with pronunciation, which caused a non-understanding for the second participant, who reactively requested clarification.

Episode 24

1. A: yes. Good idea (good is not clear)
2. B: what?
3. A: good, good.
4. B: oh, good idea.

In Episode 284, there is no problem with the first participant (speaker B), but the second participant, who did not understand the term 'yacht', queried the first participant. Therefore, this episode was identified as a Preemptive FFE.

Episode 284

1. B: I will buy a yacht.
2. A: what is that? Pardon?
3. B: a yacht, maybe not enough, just a small, a boat
4. A: yes, a boat.

6.5 Analysis

After the transcription, the researcher identified all the FFEs in the transcriptions, coded all the FFEs and placed the data into SPSS for statistical analysis.

6. 5. 1 Identification of FFEs

The first step was the identification of the FFEs in the transcriptions. An FFE was defined as consisting of the discourse in which there is a starting point for the attention to linguistic to start and another point for the attention to linguistic focus to end, due to a change in topic back to message or sometimes another focus on form (Ellis et al, 2001).

In order to determine reliability in the identification of FFEs, a sample of 20% of the data was identified by a specialist rater. The resulting agreement rate was 96%. Disagreement usually focused on whether an episode was a negotiation of meaning or a negotiation of form.

6. 5. 2 Coding of FFEs

Once the FFEs were identified, a trial coding was conducted according to the framework of coding system described in Chapter Four. Based on these results and the findings of the pilot study, some modifications were made to the coding system. Some categories were excluded and some were added. The category of ‘unsuccessful repair’ as a type of uptake was excluded as it was found to be rare in the data. Some types of feedback and uptake, such as ‘incorrect feedback’, ‘correct feedback’, ‘no opportunity for uptake’, ‘no need for uptake’ and ‘incorrect uptake’ were added to the system, as illustrated in Table 5. Detailed

discussion of the categories in the system are provided in the following section, with examples from the collected data for the study.

Table 3 The framework for coding FFEs in the present study

Types of FFE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. reactive 2. learner-initiated preemptive FFEs 3. teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs
Types of feedback	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. inform 2. recast 3. repetition 4. clarification request 5. prompt 6. incorrect feedback 7. no feedback 8. correct feedback
Linguistic focus	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. grammar 2. vocabulary 3. pronunciation
Types of uptake	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. successful 2. acknowledgement 3. no uptake 4. no opportunity 5. incorrect uptake 6. no need for uptake 7. no feedback and no uptake

6. 5. 2. 1 Types of FFE

Three categories of FFE were identified and coded in this study: Reactive, Learner-initiated preemptive and Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs.

Reactive FFEs

According to Ellis et al (2001a: 413), “a reactive focus on form arises when learners produce an utterance containing an actual or perceived error, which is then addressed usually by the teacher but sometimes by another learner. Thus, it supplies learners with negative evidence.” It occurs in episodes that involve negotiation and is triggered by something problematic that a participant has said or written (Ellis et al, 2001a). Reactive FFEs occurred in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. In both interactions, when a Reactive FFE occurs, it is always the learner who makes an error in his/her speech, and which is responded to by the teacher or another learner. Therefore, the instigator (whether it is the teacher or a learner) in a Reactive FFE can be identified according to the interactional pattern, that is, when a Reactive FFE is identified in Teacher-learner interactions, the instigator is the teacher, and in Learner-learner interactions, the instigator is the learner. Thus, in Reactive FFEs, no further distinction between who initiates the FFE is made.

Episode 9 below is an example of a Learner-initiated reactive FFE with a surrounding context, occurring in Learner-learner interactions. The underlined utterances constitute the

FFE. In Episode 9, the two learners focused briefly on a linguistic item: the pronunciation of ‘toothbrush’ within a discussion about items to take when one was to stay at a Kiwi’s home as a home-stay student. In Line 2, Learner A made an error in the pronunciation of ‘toothbrush’, which is the trigger of the FFE. In Line 3, Learner B responded to the trigger first by repeating the incorrect pronunciation and then providing a correction. In Line 4, Learner A acknowledged the correct form and proceeded with the discussion. In Line 5, the discussion returned to the topic. This FFE was coded as reactive, the type of feedback was recast, the linguistic focus was pronunciation and the uptake move was an acknowledgement.

Episode 9

1. B: number four?
2. A: tea brush (should be toothbrush), that one.
3. B: tea-brush? Toothbrush!
4. A: yeah. Because you need it every day.
5. B: yes. I think so. I need it too. I think same as you.

Episode 56 is an example of teacher-initiated reactive FFE. In Line 2, the learner described the shirt as ‘one is point’. In Line 3, the teacher responded to this error by the correction of ‘the other has spots, or has prints’.

Episode 56

1. T; David?
2. L: man’s t-shirt, the t-shirt’s color is different. One is white, one is point.

3. T: ok, the man's shirt. One is white, the other has spots, or has prints. Any others?
4. L: the woman's handbag, the handbag near the table, B have...
5. T: stripes,

Preemptive FFEs

A preemptive FFE “involves the teacher or learner initiating attention to form even though no actual problem in production has arisen” (Ellis et al, 2001a: 414). It typically consists of exchanges involving a query and response. Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs occurred in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs occurred only in Teacher-learner interactions. Although a preemptive focus on form can be initiated in different ways, such as a solicited question, a free question and a request confirmation, no further distinction is made concerning the types of trigger in this study.

Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs

In a Learner-initiated preemptive FFE, the trigger is a question about a linguistic form. This question can be of three kinds: Solicited Question, Free Question and Request Confirmation. “In a Solicited Question, the teacher invites students to ask about linguistic forms that may be problematic” (Ellis et al, 1999: 42). Although it is the teacher or another learner who extends the invitation, it is still the student's responsibility to raise a question; therefore, this type of move is still listed as student-initiated (Ellis et al, 1999). Free question is a question “that invites another participant to supply an answer” (Ellis et al,

1999: 42). Usually this type of question begins with a WH question word, such as 'What', 'Why'. Request Confirmation is a query where students ask for agreement regarding an assumption (Ellis et al, 1999). A Learner-initiated preemptive FFE may be done through a question, rising intonation, or simply a statement that is followed by linguistic information (Loewen, 2002).

The first type, a Free-question FFE usually starts with a WH question word where a linguistic form suddenly occurs to the learner. Thus, the learner draws attention to the word. Episode 174 below is an example of a Learner-initiated preemptive FFE directed at the teacher by means of a free question. In this activity, the teacher was leading a discussion about what could and what could not be sent as gifts. A student remembered that in his culture people would usually not send a flower as a gift, but he did not know the English word for the flower, so he asked the teacher about the word in Line 3. In Line 4, the teacher provided the target word, followed by the student's repetition of the word (Line 5), which was coded as a successful uptake.

Episode 174

1. L: also shoes.
2. T: why?
3. L: Go away. What is the name for the flower, that is white, you put it before the tomb.
4. T: it is Christianise.
5. L: Christianise.
6. T: that is not good.

The other type of Learner-initiated preemptive FFE is initiated by a learner's requesting confirmation when the learner has some problems in understanding some forms produced by the teacher or another learner in the previous utterance, even though there is no error in the production at all. Episode 7 below is an example of a Learner-initiated preemptive FFE by means of one learner's repeating the word 'cancer' with raising intonation which he did not understand in another learner's previous utterance. In Line 2, Learner B produced an utterance which contained the word 'cancer'. In Line 3, Learner A posed a query about the word 'cancer' by raising the intonation. In Line 4, Learner B provided information about the word. In Line 5, Learner A indicated his understanding of the word. In Line 6, the conversation returned to the topic of advantages of drinking tea.

Episode 7

1. A: very good for your body.
2. B: they say green tea, if you always drink like that, no cancer.
3. A: cancer?
4. B: cancer, a disease that kills people.
5. A: Ah, cancer. I know, yeah.
6. B: Chinese women, they always drink it.

Some Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were coded by the researcher according to the context in which the communicative task was conducted. The following FFE occurred in the task where students were comparing two different pictures. In Line 3, Learner A wanted to use a word to describe something in the picture, but he did not know the word, so he

posed a question to Learner B by pointing to the object in the picture. Learner B knew what Learner A was referring to, but he did not know the answer either (Line 4).

Episode 36

1. A: one man.
2. B: yes.
3. A: A: Do you have...? I don't know the name of this....
4. B: no.
5. A: How many people do you see sitting?

Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs

A Teacher-initiated preemptive FFE is defined as an episode in which the teacher initiates an FFE by querying students about some form, even though no actual problem in production has arisen (Ellis et al, 2001a). There are two types of Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs: one is that the teacher raises a question about a linguistic item, the other is that the teacher draws attention to a linguistic form by modelling or reminding the students about it (Ellis et al, 2001a). In the following section, the discussion focuses on the first pattern of Teacher-initiated preemptive focus on form. “This category includes both WH questions calling for students to supply information and confirmation-type questions. In this respect, Teacher-initiated FFEs resemble Student-initiated FFEs” (Ellis et al, 1999: 48).

When the teacher initiates a linguistic query, students might fail to answer the question. In this case, the teacher might choose to answer the question himself/herself, or choose not to respond. If the teacher provides a response, then students have the option of reacting to that response with an uptake move. Thus, uptake could occur in teacher-initiated queries only if students fail to answer the query or gives a non-target answer and the teacher provides a response instead. In this type of FFE, the type of feedback was coded according to how the teacher responds and the uptake is coded according to the student's final move relating to the focused form. For example, In Episode 291 below, the teacher was organizing a comparison of two different pictures. A student was describing a watch (Line 2). The teacher presumed that the student might not know the word to describe the face of the watch, so she asked the student about the word (Line 3). It turned out to be problematic to the student by the non-target answer given by the student (Line 4). Then the teacher provided the correct answer, which was coded as an 'inform' feedback (Line 5). In Line 6, the student incorporated the feedback into her own production. Thus, the uptake was coded as a successful one.

Episode 291

1. T: is it gold?
2. L: no, diamond, the watch has diamond.
3. T: what is the part you look at? What is it called? (pre-empting)
4. L: the surface. (Incorrect answer)
5. T: no, face. (Teacher providing explicit feedback)
6. L: face. (student's uptake)
7. L: I want a big television

The above section has discussed and illustrated the three types of FFE to be identified in the present study. The next section focuses on the types of feedback that occur in each type of FFE.

6. 5. 2. 2 Types of feedback

Types of feedback refer to the ways in which other participants (teacher or another learner) respond to the trigger of a focus on form episode. Types of feedback are discussed in the following sections respectively as they occur in Reactive FFEs and Preemptive FFEs.

6. 5. 2. 2. 1 Types of feedback in Reactive FFEs

Two general categories of response in Reactive FFEs were identified in Ellis et al (1999): Provide Solution and Seek Solution. In the case of Provide Solution, the participants seek to deal with the problem by means of an Inform or a Recast. Seek Solution refers to the situation where the responding participants ask the participant who produces the Trigger or on some other participants to deal with the problem. Seek Solution can be a Clarification Request, a Repetition or a Prompt.

In the present study, six types of feedback in Reactive FFEs were identified: Inform; Recast; Repetition; Clarification Request, Prompt and Incorrect feedback which was found to exist in Learner-learner interactions and added as one type of feedback. They can occur in both

interactional patterns. The following section provides explanations and examples of each type of feedback in Reactive FFEs.

Inform

An ‘inform’ involves the provision of explicit information about the problematic linguistic form that is perceived as the problem. It can be by means of definition, an example, an explanation or by signalling the problem, given by one participant or the teacher about the linguistic form that is perceived problematic or when the other learner fails to produce the form or produces the non-target form. Episode 81 below is an example of one learner providing information to another learner (Line 3).

Episode 81

1. B: yes.
2. A: clock, the clock has two ring.
3. B: two ring? No, it is circle.
4. A: oh, circle! Yes.
5. B: your clock is circle.
6. A: yes.

Episode 56 below is an example of the teacher’s use of ‘inform’ as a feedback to students. In Line 5, the teacher responded to the error in using ‘point’ by providing more information about the correct form ‘spots’.

Episode 56

1. T: ok, how many difference?
2. Ls: 11
3. T: David?
4. L: man's t-shirt, the t-shirt's color is different. One is white, one is point.
5. T: ok, the man's shirt. One is white, the other has spots, or has prints. Any others?
6. L: the woman's handbag, the handbag near the table, B have/
7. T: stripes.

Recast

A 'recast' reformulates all or part of the Trigger by correcting the linguistic error. It can be a statement modelling the correct form or a confirmation request. It can be the act of the teacher or one learner who correctly reformulates all or part of the error. Episode 51 below is an example of recasting (Line 3) by one learner in response to another learner's error in using the words 'dust box'.

Episode 51

1. A: no, no earring.
2. B: no, she is ... and side dust box.
3. A: Dustbin?
4. B: yes. Second table, the boy, wear a tie.
5. A: yes

Repetition

‘Repetition’ is when a learner repeats the Trigger or part of the Trigger, including the part containing the linguistic error. A ‘repetition’ does not supply learners with information relating to what constitutes correct linguistic form and it does not require a participant to reformulate his/her erroneous utterance (Ellis et al, 1999). It is different to a ‘recast’ because a ‘recast’ corrects the error, while a ‘repetition’ does not. Episode 20 is an example of a learner repeating the error as feedback. In Line 2, Learner A repeated the error in pronunciation by raising the intonation to draw Learner B’s attention to it. In Line 3, Learner B corrected the incorrect pronunciation.

Episode 20

1. B: next one is camera (sounds like Kamerle).
2. A: camera (corrected)?
3. B: camera.

Clarification request

A ‘clarification request’ occurs when a participant asks the person who has produced the error to make a previous statement clearer. This often involves the use of expressions such as “pardon”, “what do you mean?” or “what”. Episode 49 is an example of a ‘clarification

request'. In Line 3, Learner B used the word 'pardon' to request a clarification of the word 'gardigon'.

Episode 49:

1. B: Oh, I know. She wearing the glass.
2. A: she wearing the gardigon.
3. B: pardon?
4. A: gardigon.
5. B: yes.

Prompt

A 'prompt' is an attempt to get the participant who has produced the Trigger to correct the error or answer their own query. Typically it involves the use of a clue to indicate the location and /or nature of the error. In Episode 267 below, in Line 2, the learner used the term 'second level' which was regarded as a trigger of the FFE. In Line 3, the teacher first responded with a question to request the learner about the correct word for the bookshelf. Then, in Line 5, the teacher gave further clues by saying 'on the second...'. In Line 6, the learner provided the correct form 'shelf'. In Line 8, the learner successfully corrected the word.

Episode 267

1. T: tell me, first one. Hands please.
2. L: on the left book sheft. There is a sign on the second level.

3. T: what do you call those things?
4. L: Bookshelf.
5. T: on the second---
6. Ls: shelf.
7. T: shelf?
8. L: second shelf!
9. T: ok, there is a sign?

Incorrect feedback

Another type of feedback which was found to exist in Learner-learner interactions is 'incorrect feedback' which refers to the non-target like information. Episode 61 is an example of such incorrect feedback (Line 3).

Episode 61

1. A: listen the tape,
2. B: listen with ... the tape.
3. A: with tape, with the tape,
4. B: with, with the tape.
5. A: Kiwi friend, watching friend, listen with the tape.

6. 5. 2. 2. 2 Types of feedback in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs

In the present study, four types of feedback in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were coded: Inform, Prompt, Incorrect feedback and No feedback. Inform, Prompt and Incorrect feedback occur as they do in Reactive FFEs, thus, no examples were given here. In the classroom setting, when a student poses a question to another learner, the other learner may also refuse to provide an answer. This response is referred to as ‘no feedback’. An example of ‘no feedback’ is given below in Episode 36.

No feedback

Episode 36

1. A: do you have? I don't know the name of this thing?
2. B: no. I don't know.

6. 5. 2. 2. 3 Types of feedback in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs

In Teacher-initiated FFEs, three types of feedback were identified: Inform, Prompt and Correct feedback.

Inform

In Teacher-learner interactions, when the teacher assumed that students might have problems in some linguistic items, he/she might stop the conversation and draw attention to items by asking students questions. The assumed problem might be a real problem, in this case, students would not be able to provide a target-like answer as in Episode 102, Line 2.

Then, the teacher provided an answer to his/her own query (Line 3), followed by the student's uptake. This can be of various kinds. Feedback was provided by the teacher in this FFE and was coded as 'inform', indicating that this FFE was addressing the real knowledge gap of the student.

Episode 102

1. T: signs, for minute or hour. What do you call these?
2. L: \angle
3. T: They are hands. This is the hour hand. How about this?
4. Ls: minute hand!
5. T: thirteen.

Prompt

Prompt occurs in similar situations to those for 'inform'. When the teacher asks students a preemptive question and gets no or incorrect answer, the teacher prompts students to work out the problem by themselves. It resembles the 'prompt' in Reactive FFEs, so no example is given here.

Correct feedback

One possible consequence of a Teacher-initiated preemptive FFE is that the question proposed about a presumed problem might not be an actual problem for students. Such an episode consists of two moves. The first move is the teacher's query. In the second move, the student provides the target answer. In this case, the type of feedback was coded as

‘correct feedback’, indicating that the teacher was not addressing a real knowledge gap of the student. In Episode 304, the teacher asked the learner to provide a synonym for ‘methodological’ (Line 2), which the teacher assumed that the learner did not know. It turned out that the learner was able to provide the target form (Line 3), and this was acknowledged by the teacher in Line 4.

Episode 304

1. L: methodological.
2. T: it is similar to something else. What is that?
3. L: well organized
4. T: yes, I think it is similar to well organized. Another one?

The above section has described the types of feedback to be identified in each type of FFE.

The next section describes the linguistic focus of FFEs.

6. 5. 2. 3 Linguistic focus

The three categories chosen for linguistic focus in this study were: grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Negotiation about the spelling of words was included as a focus on vocabulary in this study. There is no distinction in terms of linguistic focus between Reactive and Preemptive FFEs.

Grammar

This category includes determiners, prepositions and pronouns, word order, tense, verb morphology, auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement, plurals, negation, question formation, plural-s, sentence construction, etc. Episode 37 is an example of focusing on grammar, the plural form of 'lady' (Line 2).

Episode 37

1. A: same.
2. B: how many lady?
3. A: lady? Ladies, women.
4. B: oh, three ladies, three women.
5. A: Yes. How many rubbish bin in your picture?

Pronunciation

This category includes segmental and supra-segmental aspects of the phonological system that are not related to bound grammatical morphemes. Generally, it involves the pronunciation of individual words. The identification of errors in pronunciation was mainly accomplished when the researcher was doing the narrow transcription.

Episode 20

4. B: next one is camera (sounds like Kamerle).
5. A: camera (corrected)?
6. B: camera.

Vocabulary

This category includes the meaning of single words, idioms, phrases and sentences. Episode 7 below is an example of focusing on the meaning of the word ‘cancer’.

Episode 7

1. A: very good for your body.
2. B: they say green tea, if you always drink like that, no cancer.
3. A: cancer?
4. B: cancer, a disease that kills people.
5. A: Ah, cancer. I know, yeah.

Spelling errors were listed under the category of vocabulary, because it is found that the issue of spelling might help learners to know the meaning of the word for second language learners. In Episode 98 below, Learner B got to know the meaning of ‘flag’ when Learner B spelled the word.

Episode 98

1. A: flag.
2. B: yes?
3. A: f-l-a-g.
4. B: yes, flag. This is different.

The following section focused on the last item in an FFE, the immediate uptake.

6. 5. 2. 4 Types of uptake

The final move in an FFE is immediate uptake, which refers to the optional response to the feedback provided in the previous move. Types of uptake are discussed separately in Reactive and Preemptive FFEs in the following sections.

6. 5. 2. 4. 1 Uptake in Reactive FFEs

In a Reactive FFE, following the feedback, it is possible for learners to produce reactions. In the present study, five types of uptake responses were coded: successful uptake; acknowledgement; no uptake; no opportunity and incorrect uptake. The following section provides examples of each type.

Successful uptake

In the case of a ‘successful uptake’, the learner who has produced the Trigger corrects the ‘error’ by reformulating all or the erroneous part of the Trigger (Ellis et al, 1999). Episode 37 below is an example of repairing the error successfully in a Reactive FFE in Line 3.

Episode 37

1. B: how many lady ?
2. A: lady? Ladies, or women.
3. B: oh, three ladies, three women.

Acknowledgement

The category of ‘acknowledgement’ involves the student simply acknowledging the feedback with a *yes*, *mm*, *oh* or a similar acknowledgement token, without incorporating the correct form into his own production, as in Episode 22, Line 5.

Episode 22

1. B: how about number two?
2. A: I think hat
3. B: yes, this country, the sun is very strong, if you don't have a hat, we go to BBQ, and instead of BBQ, and we get sunburn.
4. A: sun burnt.
5. B: yes, we become BBQ.
6. A: Number three, sun cream.

No uptake

Because uptake is optional, it is possible for FFEs not to contain an uptake. Sometimes it is possible for learners who made the error to ignore the feedback provided but continue the conversation. Thus, no uptake would occur. The ignorance might be due to the learner's failure in understanding the provided information, or due to his concentration on the conversation. In Episode 2, Learner A ignored the feedback provided and continued his speech in Line 3.

Episode 2

1. A: record, usually record.
2. B: small recorder.
3. A: and small mirror, man need small mirror too.

No opportunity

In this category, there is no chance for the learner who has made the error to produce uptake because the teacher or the other learner who has provided the feedback continues his or her turn by asking a question unrelated to the incorrect linguistic form or continues the discussion about the topic after they provide the feedback. Episode 28 below shows how the teacher continued her question, leaving no opportunity for the learner to make the uptake move.

Episode 28

1. L: het (should be 'hat').
2. T: hat. How many of you have hats? Anything else?
3. L: blanket.

Incorrect uptake

Another type of uptake found to have occurred in Learner-learner interactions is 'incorrect uptake'. It occurs when one learner provides incorrect feedback and the other learner who makes the uptake move takes it as a correct form, as in Episode 61 below, Line 5.

Episode 61

1. A: listen the tape.
2. B: listen with ... the tape.
3. A: with tape, with the tape,

4. B: with, with the tape.
5. A: Kiwi friend, watching friend, listen with the tape.

6. 5. 2. 4. 2 Uptake in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs

Four types of uptake in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were included in the study: successful uptake; acknowledgement; no uptake and no feedback and no uptake. The first three types of uptake were coded the same as those in Reactive FFEs, thus no discussion and examples are given here. An example is provided for the last category ‘no feedback and no uptake’ in the following section.

No feedback and no uptake

In Learner-learner interactions, when the required learner fails to provide feedback about a linguistic item, as in Episode 110, Line 4, there would be no uptake. It is different from ‘no uptake’ (where the learner who produced the error does not show any move of uptaking), and ‘no opportunity for uptake’ (where the teacher or the learner who has provided feedback continues the conversation, leaving no chance for uptake to occur).

Episode 110

1. B: no, beauty shop.
2. A: there is a barber shop indicator.
3. B: what is this?

4. A: I don't know.
5. B: in the picture, can you see a bank?

6. 5. 2. 4. 3 Uptake in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs

Five types of uptake were included in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in the study: successful uptake; acknowledgement; no uptake; no opportunity for uptake; and no need for uptake. The first four types of uptake are the same as those in Reactive FFEs and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs. Therefore, the following section focuses on the discussion of 'no need for uptake'.

No need for uptake

When the teacher initiates a preemptive FFE and the student provides a correct answer in the feedback move, this would end the FFE. However, this type of FFE is included as one feature of preemptive FFE in Teacher-learner interactions, and the uptake was coded as 'no need for uptake', since it can tell to what extent the teacher is not addressing the real knowledge gap of the students. Episode 93 below is an example of a Teacher-initiated FFE, with the learner providing the correct answer to the teacher's question, the uptake was coded as 'no need for uptake'.

Episode 93

1. T: signs, for minute or hour. What do you call these? They are hands. This

is the hour hand. How about this....

2. Ls: minute hand.

6. 5. 2. 5 Special cases of FFEs

It was found that there were some longer and complex FFEs which contain more than one linguistic item, or more moves of negotiation, or more than one type of feedback and uptake. In such longer and complex FFEs, the type of FFE was coded according to the trigger, types of feedback and uptake were coded according to the final moves in the episode. The following section provides some examples of some special cases of FFEs and how these special FFEs were coded in the study.

One FFE containing two linguistic errors

Episode 56 below is an example of an FFE that contains two linguistic errors. Lines 1-3 provide the discourse context in which this FFE occurs. In Line 4, the student described the man's shirt in one picture as being white and in the other as having some spots. The student made two errors: one was a grammar error in using 'is' instead of 'has', the other was a vocabulary error using 'point' for 'spots'. In Line 5, the teacher corrected the two errors. Such an episode was identified as two episodes, differing in linguistic focus: in one episode, the linguistic focus was grammar, and the other was vocabulary.

Episode 56

1. T: ok, how many difference?
2. Ls: 11
3. T: David?
4. L: man's t-shirt, the t-shirt's color is different. One is white, one is point.
5. T: ok, the man's shirt. One is white, the other has spots, or has prints. Any others?
6. L: the woman's handbag, the handbag near the table, B have/
7. T: stripes,
8. L: stripes, A nothing.

One FFE containing more moves of negotiation

Episode 211 below is an example of a longer and complex FFE, in which there are actually several turns of negotiation. However, it was taken as just one episode here. It was triggered by the learner's utterance with a grammar mistake in Line 2, followed by feedback from the teacher by means of repetition in Line 3. The learner seemed to have not realized his mistake by repeating his mistake again in Line 4. This might be regarded as an unsuccessful uptake. Then the teacher tried to give further clues. Actually, in class, the teacher used some gestures to remind the learners of the present and past tense. Then the learner made a further request about why the past tense should be used in Line 6 (preemptive), followed by the teacher's feedback of providing information in Line 7. Then Line 8 indicates that the learner had a successful uptake. In this FFE, the type of FFE and the linguistic focus were coded according to the trigger of the episode, types of feedback

and uptake were coded according to the last moves of negotiation. Episode 211 was coded as a reactive FFE (line 2), the feedback was ‘inform’ (line 7), the linguistic focus was grammar (line 2) and the uptake was successful (line 8).

Episode 211

1. T: what did you choose for number six?
2. L: I choose hat.
3. T: I choose?
4. L: I choose.
5. T: listen, choose, chose. Yes.
6. L: why I use chose? Why I use simple past tense?
7. T: because you are not choosing it now, you have already chosen it. Right?
8. L: I chose hat.

Overlapping FFEs

Some FFEs were complex in that more than one linguistic item, and more than one type of feedback and uptake were involved. Such complex FFEs were separated into several FFEs, as shown in Episodes 39 and 40. In the following two episodes, Lines 2-4 comprised a reactive FFE, with ‘repetition’ as feedback (Line 3), pronunciation as linguistic focus and ‘successful’ as uptake. Lines 4-6 comprised another reactive FFE, with ‘recast’ as feedback (Line 5) and grammar as linguistic focus.

Episodes 39, 40

1. B: a cat, yes.
2. A: in your picture, do you have any flow (should be flower) in window?
3. B: flow?
4. A: flower.
5. B: flowers?
6. A: yes.

6. 5. 3 Reliability of coding

In order to investigate the reliability of the coding, a second experienced rater coded a sample of 20% (n=70) of the FFEs. The inter-rater coding produced the following results in terms of the agreement for each feature. There was an overall agreement rate of 96.4%.

Table 4 Percentage of agreement on features of FFE in the reliability coding

types of FFE	reactive	100 %
	learner-initiated preemptive	96%
	teacher-initiated preemptive	96%
types of feedback	provide explicit information	100 %
	recast	100%
	repetition	100%
	clarification request	100 %
	prompt	100 %
	no feedback	100 %
	incorrect feedback	100 %
	correct feedback	100 %
linguistic focus	grammar	96 %
	vocabulary	96 %
	pronunciation	100 %
types of uptake	successful	98 %
	acknowledgement	100 %
	no uptake	100 %
	incorrect	100 %
	no feedback and no uptake	100 %
	no need for uptake	100 %
	no opportunity	100 %
Overall		96.4%

6. 5. 4 Statistical analysis

Raw frequencies as well as percentages were calculated for the various FFE characteristics. All statistics were calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) 10.0. Chi-square test and Cramer's V coefficient were performed in order to compare the distribution of characteristics of FFEs across the two interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) and across the two class levels (Advanced and Elementary).

The Chi-square test is an inferential test of a null hypotheses about any statistic that has a Chi-square distribution when the null hypothesis is true. The most common use of the test is as a test of an omnibus hypothesis about two categorical variables or an omnibus hypothesis that the proportion of responses in each response category is the same for different groups. Although these hypotheses are used with two different sampling models (the model of independence and the model of homogeneity, respectively), the manner in which the test is conducted is identical to test both hypotheses. Therefore, the Chi-square test is used to search for a possible association or group differences. An alpha level of $p < .05$ was set for all Chi-squares. By using Chi-square analysis, the statistical association or difference between dependent variables (interactional pattern and class levels) and independent variables (characteristics of FFEs) was investigated.

In addition, the strength of association or the real difference between the dependent and independent variables was indicated by Cramer's V (ranging from 0 to 1). Cramer's V is a correlation coefficient that indicates the relationship among two categorical variables. Like Pearson's coefficient, Cramer's V ranges from -1 to 1, with 0 indicating no relationship and

-1 or 1 indicating a perfect relationship. Also like Pearson's coefficient, the square of Cramer's V indicates the proportion of the total possible association that is present in the data. If Cramer's V is in the range of 0-0.3, there is a weak association between the dependent and independent variables. If Cramer's V is in the range of 0.3-0.5, there is a moderate association and if it is above 0.5, there is a strong association (Fielding & Gilbert, 2000). In this study, when Cramer's V is above 0.3, the difference between the two variables is identified to be significant. Despite some similarities between Cramer's V and Pearson's coefficients, Cramer's V is more difficult to interpret than Pearson's correlation coefficient for several reasons. First, the maximum possible association (Chi-square) is related to the sample size and the number of levels of each categorical variable. Thus, just changing the definitions of the levels of a categorical variable can change Cramer's V. Also small values of Cramer's V often correspond to quite large proportional differences between groups, so the proximity of V to 0 can be misleading and ambiguous. These problems suggest that it is more reasonable to use Cramer's V as a secondary index that is interpreted in conjunction with a discussion of proportional difference. Therefore, in this study, both Chi-square analysis and Cramer's V were used. Chi-square analysis would provide the statistical difference while Cramer's V would provide the real difference.

6. 6 The pilot study

In order to understand to what extent proficiency levels and interactional patterns had an effect on the occurrence of incidental focus on forms, also to find some problems relating with data collection, a pilot study was conducted before the main observations started.

In the pilot study, eight observations were conducted in two natural classes, four in an Advanced level class and four in an Elementary level class. Observation One was conducted in the Elementary class in Teacher-learner interactions, performing Task I (Desert island, see Appendix F). Observation Two was in Learner-learner interactions, performing Task II (Lost on the Moon, see Appendix F). Observation Three was still in the Elementary class, in Teacher-learner interactions performing Task III (Park Scene, see Appendix F) and then Observation Four in Learner-learner interactions, performing Task IV (Railway Station, see Appendix F). Observation Five to Eight were conducted in the Advanced class in the same processes with those in the Elementary class.

Time spent on these tasks varied between interactional patterns and pairs. Table 5 shows the length of time spent on each task.

Table 5 Length of time spent on each task in the pilot study

	Advanced class				Elementary class			
Interactions	T-L		L-L		T-L		L-L	
Task	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
Time spent (minutes)	10	20	6, 10, 6, 6, 10 (5pairs)	10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 13 (6 pairs)	12	20	15, 15, 14, 16, 13, 15, 15 (7 pairs)	22, 15, 8, 18, 20, (5 pairs)

For the eight observations, a total of 5.5 hours (355 minutes) audio-recordings (including all students in pairs in each class) were obtained. All recordings were transcribed and FFEs were identified roughly in terms of the frequency rather than any detailed features. Table 6 shows the frequency of FFEs in the pilot study.

Table 6 Average frequency of FFEs in the pilot study

	Advanced class				Elementary class			
	T-L		L-L		T-L		L-L	
Task	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV
Average number of FFEs	2	10	2.	4.2	12	3	2.2	5.2

Based upon the pilot study, the following changes were made to the original proposal: (1) the tasks would not be performed separately in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Instead, the summary part conducted by the teacher in the whole class after students finished their pair discussion would be used as the Teacher-learner interactions. This change was based on the two teachers' comments and suggestions after the pilot study. They suggested that in their class, they would prefer to conduct the communication tasks in pair or group work first, then organize a summarizing discussion of the tasks, rather than performing the task again with the whole class; (2) some new categories of FFE features were added to the framework of the FFE coding system discussed in Chapter Six. It was found in the pilot study that in Learner-learner interactions, sometimes students gave no feedback or incorrect feedback. Therefore, 'no feedback' and 'incorrect feedback' were added to the coding system framework. Only percentages were to be used for comparison since the data from Learner-learner interactions was obtained from five pairs of students, thus, the FFEs would be counted with the task as unit of analysis rather than a standardised time period within a specific task.

6.7 Summary

This chapter has presented the design, the methods and procedures used for data collection and coding of FFEs. Examples were given for each feature. It also identified how FFEs would be analysed using SPSS. The next chapter provides the statistical results gained from the analysis.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the statistical analysis results of the four research questions.

(1) What differences are there in FFE types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (section 7.2)?

(a): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

(b i): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(b ii): In what aspects are there differences in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(2) What differences are there in feedback types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (section 7.3)?

(a): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

(b i): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(b ii): In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(3) What differences are there in linguistic focus in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (7.4)?

(a): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

(b i): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(b ii): In what aspects are there difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(4) What differences are there in uptake types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (7.5)?

(a): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

(b i): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

(b ii): In what aspects are there differences in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

7.2 Results addressing the first research question

What differences are there in FFE types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7.2.1 considers the overall occurrence of the three types of incidental FFE.

Section 7.2.2 presents the results of question (a): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 7.2.3 presents the results of question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7.2.4 presents the results of question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

7.2.1 Overall occurrence of FFE types

In this study, three types of incidental FFE were examined: Reactive, Teacher-initiated preemptive and Learner-initiated preemptive. In total, 336 FFEs were identified in the 20 observations (10.7 hours) of meaning-focused activities in the two interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) across the two proficiency level classes (Advanced

and Elementary). Only percentages were used for comparison since the data from Learner-learner interactions was obtained from five pairs of students.

Table 7 reveals the overall occurrence of the three types of FFE in the collected data: 63.7% (n=214) were Reactive, 31% (n=104) were Learner-initiated preemptive, and 5.4% (n=18) were Teacher-initiated preemptive.

Table 7 Overall occurrence of FFE types

	Frequency	Percentage
Reactive	214	63.6
Teacher-initiated preemptive	18	5.4
Learner-initiated preemptive	104	31.0
Total	336	100

7. 2. 2 To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Because Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs did not occur in Learner-learner interactions, differences in FFE types between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions were compared in terms of Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs.

Table 8 reveals the frequency and percentage of the two types of FFE in the two interactional patterns. A Chi-square analysis reveals that FFE types are not independent of

interactional patterns ($X^2=31.17$; $p<.05$). The association test indicates that there is a moderate association between the interactional patterns and FFE types (Cramer's $V= .313$). Based on these statistical results, it was concluded that there is a significant difference in Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

Table 8 Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
	n	%	n	%
Reactive	68	94.4	146	59.3
L-initiated preemptive	4	5.6	100	40.7
Total	72	100	246	100

$X^2=31.17$; $n=318$; $df=1$; $p=.000$; Cramer's $V= .313$; 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 23.55.

Figure 3, based on the data presented in Table 8, shows more clearly the proportions of the two types of FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. The two bars on the left present the Reactive FFEs in the two interactional patterns and the two bars on the right present the Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two interactional patterns.

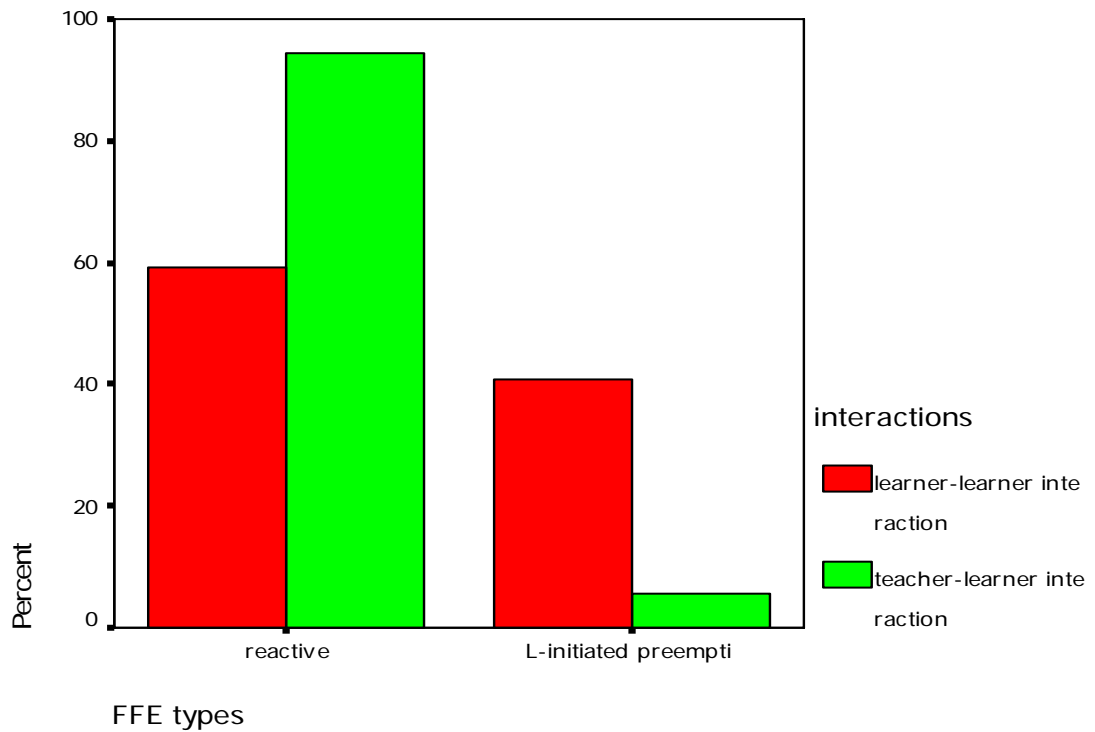


Figure 3 Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in T-L and L-L interactions

7. 2. 3 To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Table 9 reveals the frequency and percentage of each type of FFE in the two classes. In the Advanced class, 57.1% (n=92) were Reactive, 8.7% (n=14) were Teacher-initiated preemptive and 34.2% (n=55) were Learner-initiated preemptive. In the Elementary class, 69.7% (n=122) were Reactive, 2.3% (n=4) were Teacher-initiated preemptive and 28% (n=49) were Learner-initiated preemptive. A Chi-square analysis indicates that the FFE types are not independent of class levels ($X^2 = 9.541$; $p < .05$). However, there is only a weak association between the FFE types and the class levels (Cramer's $V = .169$). Thus, there is a weak difference in FFE types between the Advanced and the Elementary classes.

Table 9 FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Reactive	92	57.1	122	69.7
T-initiated preemptive	14	8.7	4	2.3
L-initiated preemptive	55	34.2	49	28
Total	161	100	175	100

$X^2 = 9.541$; $df=2$; $n=336$; $p=.008$; Cramer's $V=.169$; a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.63.

Figure 4, based on the data presented in Table 9, indicates more clearly the proportions of the three types of FFE in the two classes.

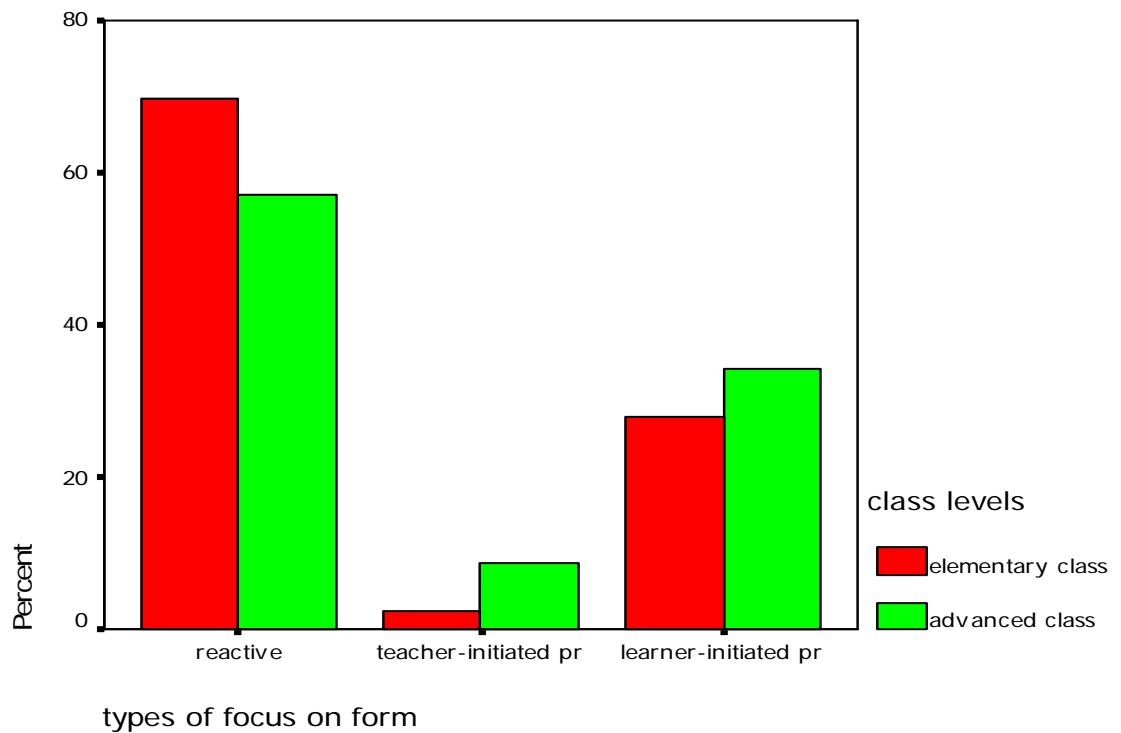


Figure 4 FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes

7. 2. 4 In what aspects are there differences in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed by examining the three types of FFE in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) respectively.

In Teacher-learner interactions, Table 10 reveals that, Reactive FFEs constituted 65.9% in the Advanced class and 83.7% in the Elementary class. Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, which only occurred in Teacher-learner interactions, constituted 34.1% in the Advanced class and 8.2% in the Elementary class. Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs did not occur in the Advanced class and constituted 8.2% in the Elementary class.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that FFEs types are not independent of class levels in Teacher-learner interactions ($\chi^2=11.820$; $p<.05$). The test of association indicates a moderate association between the FFE types and class levels in Teacher-learner interactions (Cramer's $V=.362$). Thus, there is a significant difference in FFE types between the Advanced and Elementary class in Teacher-learner interactions. Although 2 cells (33.3%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.82, these categories were kept as they were, because they were the variables to be compared.

Table 10 FFE types in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Reactive	27	65.9	41	83.7
T-initiated preemptive	14	34.1	4	8.2
L-initiated preemptive	0	0	4	8.2
total	41	100	49	100

$\chi^2=11.820$; $df=2$; $n=90$; $p=.003$; Cramer's $V=.362$; 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.82.

Figure 5, based on the data presented in Table 10, indicates more clearly the proportions of the three types of FFE in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

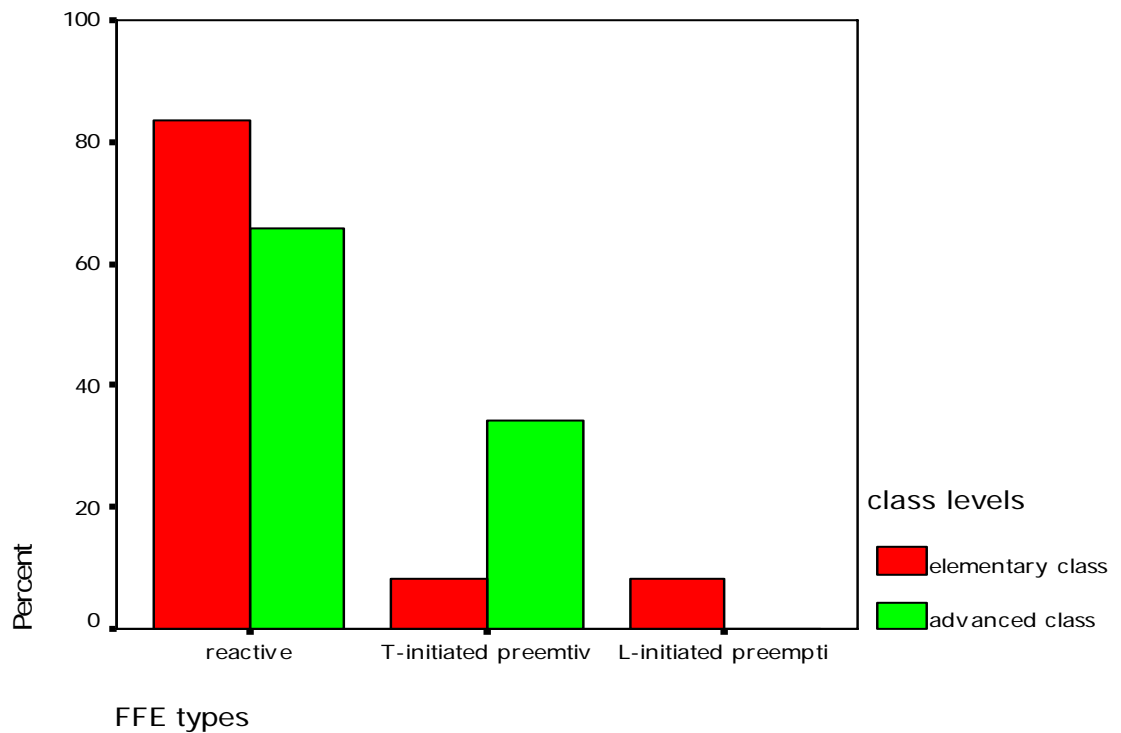


Figure 5 FFE types in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

In Learner-learner interactions, two types of FFE were identified: Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs. Table 11 reveals that Reactive FFEs constituted 54.2% in the Advanced class and 64.3% in the Elementary class. Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs constituted 45.8% in the Advanced class and 35.7% in the Elementary class.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that FFE types are not independent of class levels in Learner-learner interactions ($\chi^2=2.609$; $p>.05$). The association test indicates a weak association between FFE types and the class levels in Learner-learner interactions (Cramer's $V=.103$). Thus, there is a weak difference in FFE types between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions.

Table 11 FFE types in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Reactive	65	54.2	81	64.3
L-initiated preemptive	55	45.8	45	35.7
Total	120	100	126	100

$\chi^2=2.609$; $df=1$; $n=246$; $p=.106$; Cramer's $V=.103$; b 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 48.78.

The Chi-square test for Table 11 resulted in $p>.05$, indicating a non-significant pattern. Thus, there was no graph to indicate the results.

7.3 Results addressing the second research question

What differences are there in feedback types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7.3.1 considers the overall occurrence of feedback types.

Section 7.3.2 presents the results of question (a): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 7.3.3 presents the results of question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7.3.4 presents the results of question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

7.3.1 Overall occurrence of feedback types

Based on earlier research on feedback (Ellis et al, 1999; Lyster and Ranta, 1997), eight types of feedback were selected for examination in this study: ‘inform’, ‘recast’, ‘clarification request’, ‘no feedback’, ‘repetition’, ‘prompt’, ‘incorrect feedback’ and ‘correct feedback’.

Table 12 reveals the overall frequency and percentage of each type of feedback: 33% (n=111) were 'inform', 29.5% (n=99) were 'recast', 10.7% (n=36) were 'clarification request', 8.6% (n=29) were 'no feedback', 7.4% (n=25) were 'repetition', 4.8% (n=16) were 'prompt', 3.6% (n=12) were 'incorrect feedback' and 2.4% (n=8) were 'correct feedback'.

Table 12 Overall feedback types

	Frequency	Percentage
Inform	111	33
Recast	99	29.5
clarification request	36	10.7
no feedback	29	8.6
Repetition	25	7.4
Prompt	16	4.8
Incorrect	12	3.6
correct	8	2.4
Total	336	100

7. 3. 2 To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Table 13 reveals the frequency and percentage of each type of feedback in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. In Teacher-learner interactions, 33.3% (n=30) were 'recast', 30% (n=27) were 'inform', 11.1% (n=10) were 'clarification request', 11.1% (n=10) were 'prompt', 8.9% (n=8) were 'correct feedback', and 5.6% (n=5) were 'repetition'. In Learner-learner interactions, 34.1% (n=84) were 'inform', 28% (n=69) were 'recast', 11.8%

(n=29) were 'no feedback' (none), 10.6% (n=26) were 'clarification request' , 8.1% (n=20) were 'repetition', 4.9% (n=12) were 'incorrect feedback', and 2.4% (n=6) were 'prompt' .

A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of interactional patterns ($\chi^2 = 48.846$; $p < .05$). The association test indicates that there is a moderate association between the feedback types and interactional patterns (Cramer's $V = .381$). Thus, there is a significant difference in feedback types between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Although 3 cells (18.8%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 2.14, the variables were kept for comparison reasons.

Table 13 Feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
Repetition	5	5.6	20	8.1
Recast	30	33.3	69	28.0
clarification request	10	11.1	26	10.6
Inform	27	30.0	84	34.1
Prompt	10	11.1	6	2.4
no feedback			29	11.8
correct feedback	8	8.9		
incorrect feedback			12	4.9
Total	90	100	246	100

$\chi^2 = 48.846$; $df=7$; $n=336$; $p=.000$. Cramer's $V=.381$; 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.14.

Figure 6, based on the data presented in Table 13, illustrates more clearly the comparison of each type of feedback between the two interactional patterns.

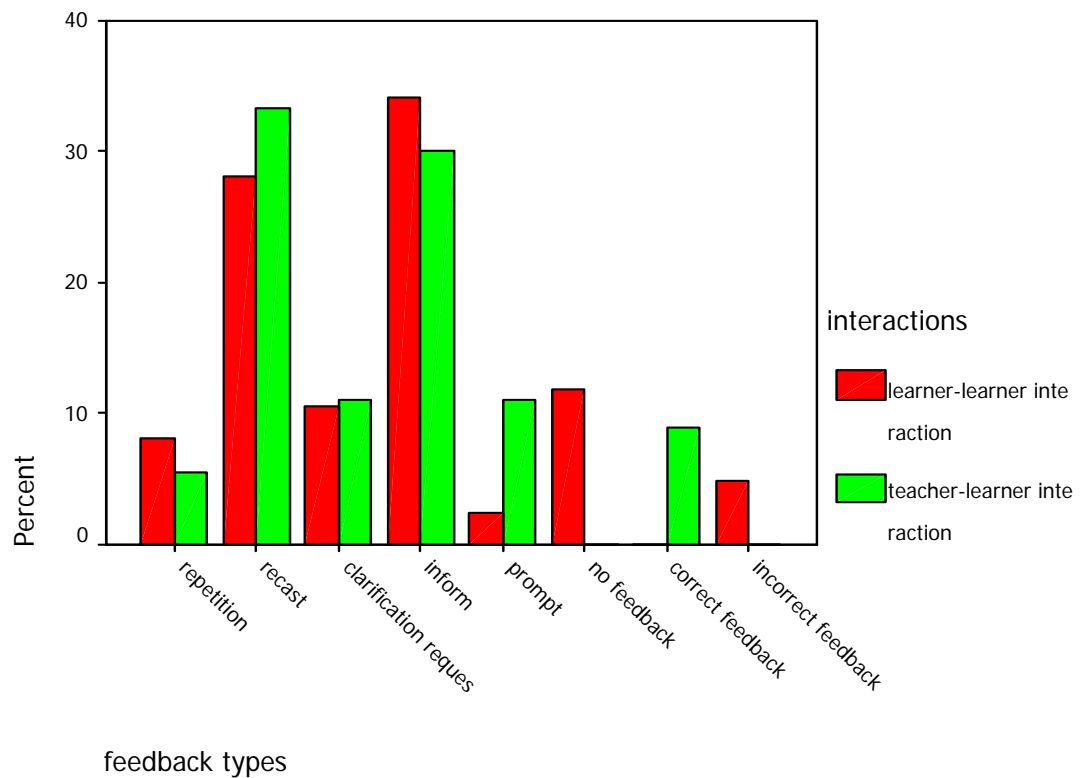


Figure 6 Feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

Differences in feedback types between the two interactional patterns were further analyzed by examining the feedback in the three types of FFE (Reactive, Teacher-initiated preemptive and Learner-initiated preemptive) in the two interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions) respectively in the following sections.

7. 3. 2. 1 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two interactional patterns

In Teacher-learner interactions, feedback in Reactive FFEs was provided by the teacher in response to learners' errors. In Learner-learner interactions, feedback in Reactive FFEs was provided by one learner to the other learner's errors in pair work.

In Reactive FFEs, six types of feedback were identified: 'inform', 'recast', 'repetition', 'clarification request', 'prompt' and 'incorrect feedback'.

Table 14 reveals the frequency and percentage of the six types of feedback in Reactive FFEs in the two interactional patterns. In Teacher-learner interactions, in a descending order, 44.1% were 'recast', 22.1% were 'inform', 14.7% were 'clarification request', 11.8% were 'prompt', and 7.4% were 'repetition'. In Learner-learner interactions, 47.3% were 'recast', 17.8% were 'clarification request', 15.8% were 'inform', 13.7% were 'repetition', 1.4% were 'prompt', and 4.1% were 'incorrect feedback'.

A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of interactional patterns in Reactive FFEs ($\chi^2 = 16.542$; $p < .05$). The association test indicates a weak association between the feedback types and interactional patterns in Reactive FFEs (Cramer's $V = .278$). Thus, there is a weak difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Although 3 cells (25.0%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.91, these variables were kept for comparisons.

Table 14 Feedbacks in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
	n	%	n	%
Repetition	5	7.4	20	13.7
Recast	30	44.1	69	47.3
clarification request	10	14.7	26	17.8
Inform	15	22.1	23	15.8
Prompt	8	11.8	2	1.4
incorrect feedback	0	0	6	4.1
Total	68	100	146	100

$\chi^2 = 16.542$; $df=5$; $n=214$; $p=.005$; Cramer's $V = .278$; 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.91.

Figure 7, based on the data presented in Table 14, illustrates more clearly the proportions of each type of feedback in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

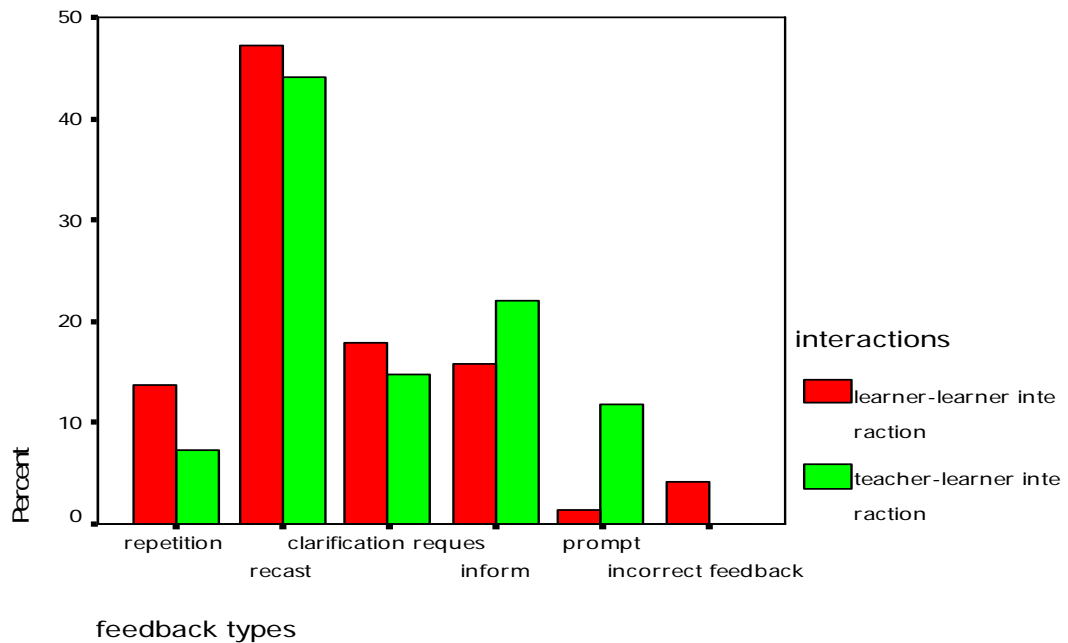


Figure 7 Feedbacks in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

7. 3. 2. 2 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two interactional patterns

In Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, which occurred only in Teacher-learner interactions, the trigger was the teacher who asked a preemptive question about a form. Three types of feedback were identified in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs: 'inform', 'prompt' and 'correct feedback'. 'Inform' and 'prompt' occurred when the learner was not able to provide an answer or provided an incorrect answer to the teacher's question, then the teacher provided these types of feedback. 'Correct feedback' was the correct answer given by the students to the teacher's question.

Table 15 reveals the frequency and percentage of the three types of feedback in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs. 44.4% (n=8) were 'inform', 11.8% (n=2) were 'prompt', and 44.4% (n=8) were 'correct feedback'.

Table 15 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions

	Frequency	Percentage
Inform	8	44.4
Prompt	2	11.1
correct feedback	8	44.4
Total	18	100

7. 3. 2. 3 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two interactional patterns

In Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, the trigger was a learner, who asks questions of the teacher or of another learner. Four types of feedback were identified in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs: ‘inform’, ‘prompt’, ‘no feedback’ and ‘incorrect feedback’.

Table 16 reveals that in Teacher-learner interactions, 100% (n=4) were ‘inform’, which was the only type of feedback. In Learner-learner interactions, 61% (n=61) were ‘inform’, 29% (n=29) were ‘no feedback’, 6% were ‘incorrect feedback’ and 4% were ‘prompt’. No statistical comparison was done for this table. Because in Teacher-learner interactions, there was only one type of feedback occurred and the number was very low.

Table 16 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
	n	%	n	%
inform	4	100	61	61
prompt	0	0	4	4.0
no feedback	0	0	29	29
incorrect feedback	0	0	6	6.0
total	4	100	100	100

Figure 8, based on the data presented in Table16, presents more clearly the proportions of each type of feedback in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

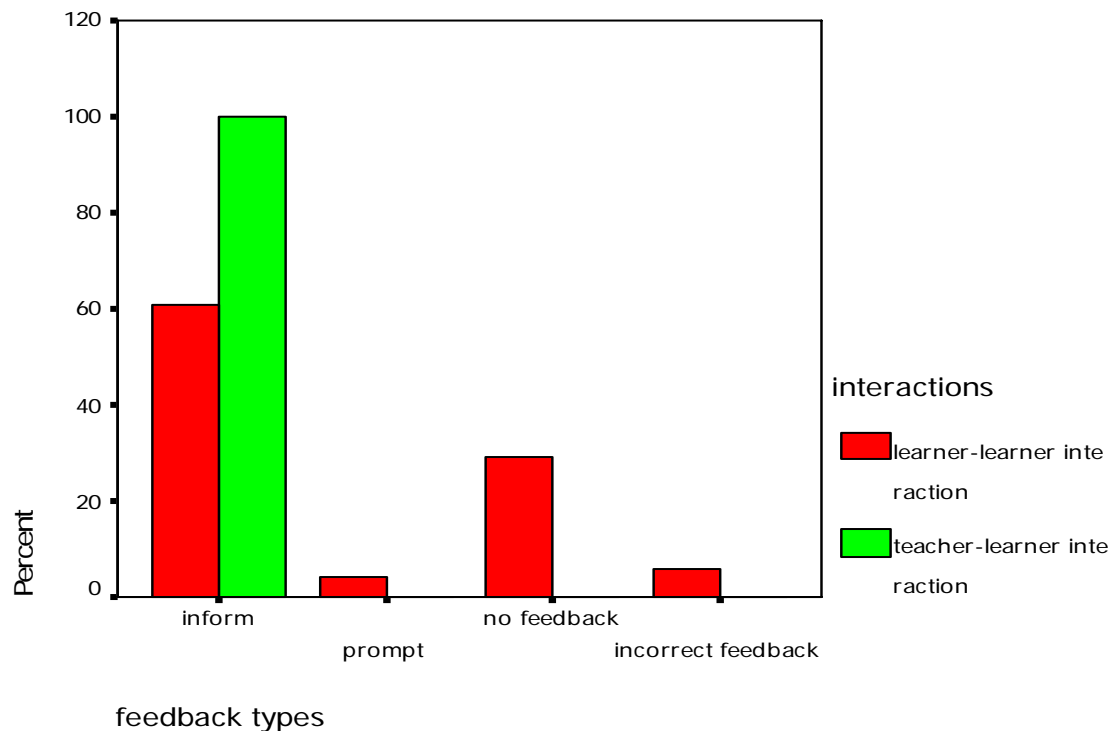


Figure 8 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

7. 3. 3 To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Table 17 presents the frequency and percentage of the eight types of feedback in the Advanced and Elementary classes. In the Advanced class, 22.4% (n=36) were ‘recast’, 34.2% (n=55) were ‘inform’, 5.6% (n=9) were ‘repetition’, 11.8% (n=19) were ‘clarification request’, 10.6% (n=17) were ‘no feedback’ (none), 5.6% (n=9) were ‘prompt’,

5% (n= 8) were ‘incorrect feedback’ and 5% (n=8) were ‘correct feedback’. In the Elementary class, 36.0% (n=63) were ‘recast’, 32% (n=56) were ‘inform’, 9.1% (n=16) were ‘repetition’, 9.7% (n=17) were ‘clarification request’, 6.9% (n=12) were ‘no feedback’ (none), 4.0% (n=7) were ‘prompt’, and 2.3% (n= 4) were ‘incorrect feedback’.

A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of class levels ($X^2 = 19.339$, $p < .05$). The association test indicates that there is a weak association between feedback types and class levels (Cramer’s $V = .240$). Thus, there is a weak difference in feedback types between the Advanced and Elementary classes. Although 2 cells (12.5%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 3.83, the variables were kept for comparison reasons.

Table 17 Feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Repetition	9	5.6	16	9.1
Recast	36	22.4	63	36.0
clarification request	19	11.8	17	9.7
Inform	55	34.2	56	32.0
Prompt	9	5.6	7	4.0
no feedback	17	10.6	12	6.9
correct feedback	8	5.0		
Incorrect feedback	8	5.0	4	2.3
Total	161	100	175	100

$X^2 = 19.339$, $df = 7$, $n = 336$; $p = .007$; Cramer’s $V = .240$; 2 cells (12.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.83.

Figure 9, based on the data presented in Table 17, illustrates more clearly the proportions of the types of feedback in the two classes.

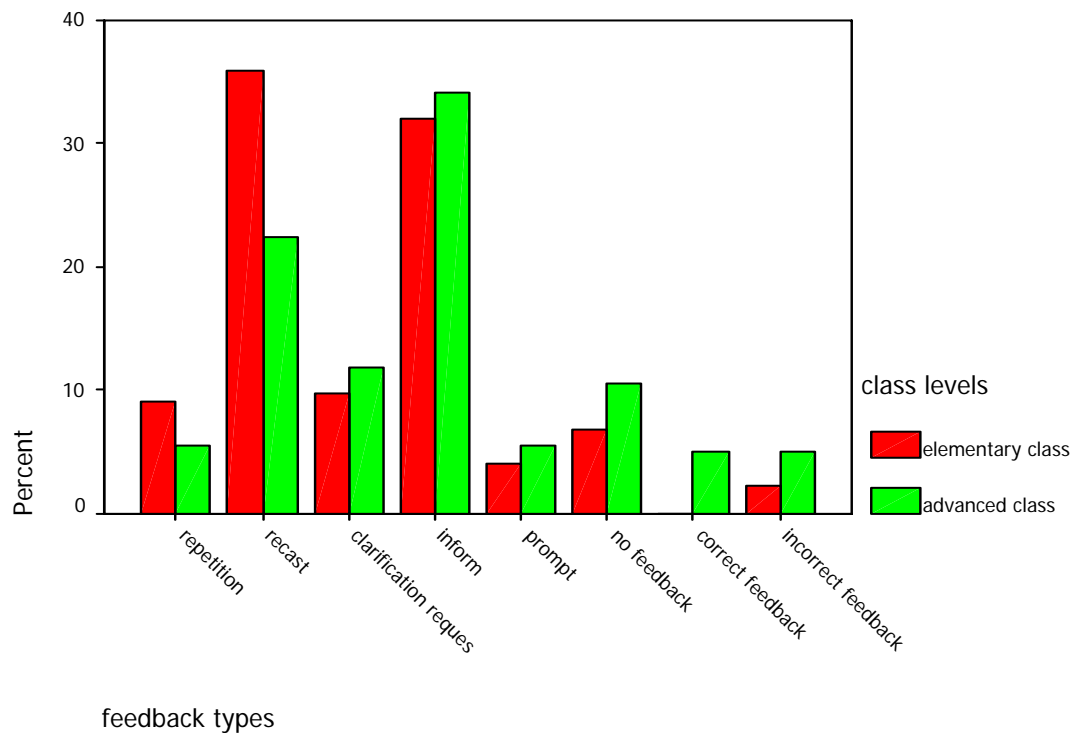


Figure 9 Feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes

7. 3. 4 In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of feedback types in the three types of FFE (Reactive, Teacher-initiated preemptive and Learner-initiated preemptive) in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions).

7. 3. 4. 1 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in the two interactional patterns

Feedback types in Reactive FFEs were compared between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions respectively.

7. 3. 4. 1. 1 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions

Feedbacks in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions revealed how the teachers in the two classes responded to learners' errors.

Table 18 reveals the frequency and percentage of each type of feedback in Reactive FFEs in the Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions. A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of class levels ($X^2=23.828$, $p<.05$). The association test indicates a strong association between feedback types and class levels in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions (Cramer's $V= .592$). Thus, there is a significant difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions. Although 5 cells (50.0%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.99, these variables were kept for comparison reasons.

Table 18 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
repetition	4	14.8	1	2.4
recast	4	14.8	26	63.4
clarification request	7	25.9	3	7.3
inform	5	18.5	10	24.4
prompt	7	25.9	1	2.4
total	27	100	41	100

$\chi^2 = 23.828$; $df=4$; $n=68$; $p=.000$; Cramer's $V = .592$; 5 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.99.

Figure 10, based on the data presented in Table 18, presents more clearly the proportions of each type of feedback in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

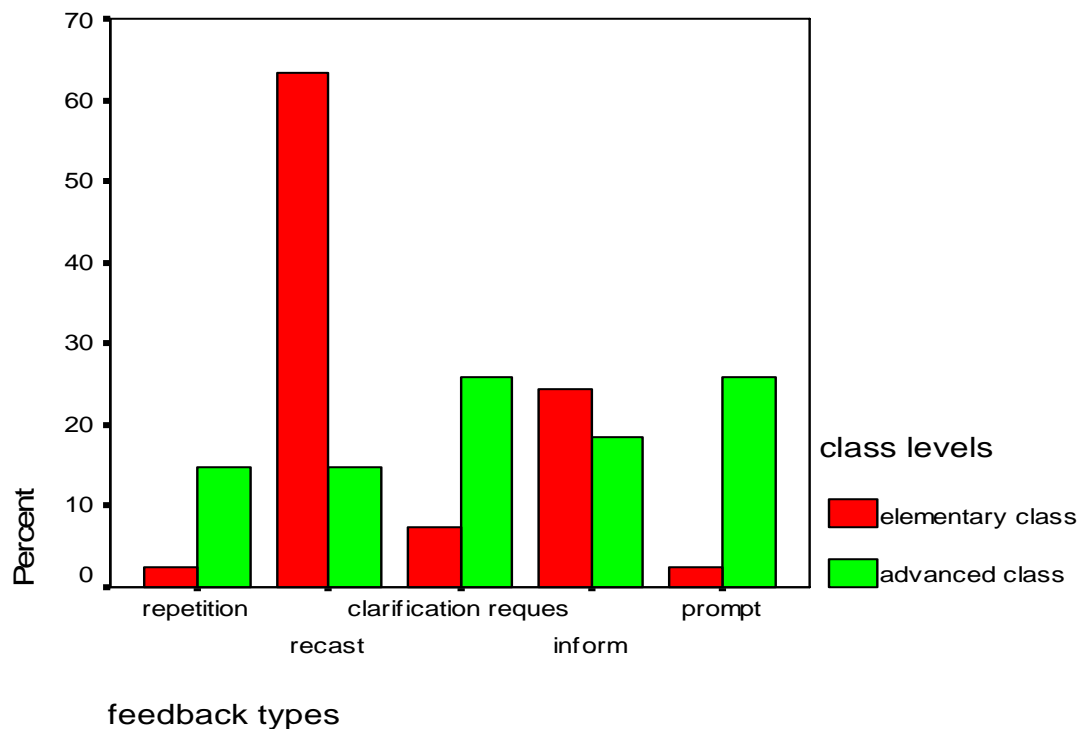


Figure 10 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

7. 3. 4. 1. 2 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions

Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions reveal how learners from the two classes responded to other learners' errors. Table 19 reveals the feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions. A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of class levels ($X^2=7.608$, $p>.05$). The association test indicates a weak association between feedback types and class levels in Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions (Cramer's $V=.228$). Thus, there is no significant difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interaction. Although 5 cells (50.0%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.99, these variables were kept for comparison.

Table 19 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
repetition	5	7.7	15	18.5
recast	32	49.2	37	45.7
clarification request	12	18.5	14	17.3
inform	14	21.5	9	11.1
prompt			2	2.5
incorrect feedback	2	3.1	4	4.9
total	65	100	81	100

$X^2=7.608$; $df=5$; $n=146$; $p=.179$; Cramer's $V=.228$; 5 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.99.

The Chi-square test for Table 11 resulted in $p > .05$, indicating a non-significant pattern. Thus, there was no graph to indicate the results.

7. 3. 4. 2 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in the two interactional patterns

Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were compared between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions respectively.

7. 3. 4. 2. 1 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions

Feedbacks in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions were provided by the teacher in response to learners' preemptive questions. Only one type of feedback was identified and it occurred only in the Advanced class, as revealed in Table 20.

Table 20 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary
	n	%	
inform	4	100	0
total	4	100	0

7. 3. 4. 2. 2 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions

Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions reveal how learners responded to other learners' preemptive questions. Four types of feedback were identified: 'inform', 'prompt', 'no feedback' and 'incorrect feedback'.

Table 21 reveals the feedback types in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions. A Chi-square analysis reveals that feedback types are not independent of class levels ($X=10.111$, $p<.05$). The association test indicates a moderate association between feedback types and class levels (Cramer's $V= .318$). Thus, there is a significant difference in feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interaction. Although 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.80, these variables were kept for comparison.

Table 21 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
inform	32	58.2	29	64.4
prompt			4	8.9
no feedback	17	30.9	12	26.7
incorrect feedback	6	10.9		
total	55	100	45	100

$X=10.111$; $df=3$; $n=100$; $p=.018$; Cramer's $V=.318$; 4 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.80.

Figure 11, based on the data presented in Table 21, presents more clearly the proportions of each type of feedback in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions.

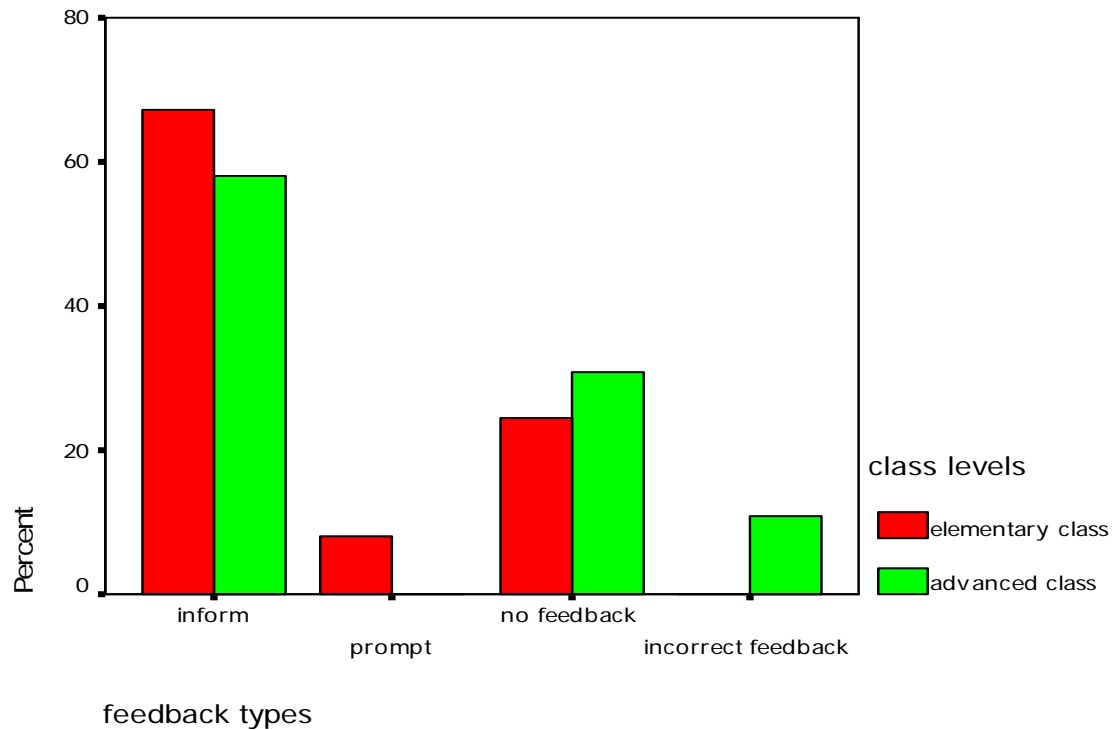


Figure 11 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

7. 3. 4. 3 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions

Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs only occurred in Teacher-learner interactions. Three types of feedback were identified in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, ‘inform’, ‘prompt’ and ‘correct feedback’. ‘Inform’ and ‘prompt’ were provided by the teacher to students when the questions proposed by the teacher received no or incorrect answer from the

students. ‘Correct feedback’ was the correct answer from the students in response to the teacher’s question.

Table 22 reveals the frequency and percentage of each type of feedback. In the Elementary class, there was only one type of feedback identified. Therefore, no Chi-square test was done.

Table 22 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Inform	4	28.6	4	100
Prompt	2	14.3		
correct feedback	8	57.1		
Total	14	100	4	100

7. 4 Results addressing the third research question

This part considers the results addressing the third research question: What differences are there in linguistic focus in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7. 4. 1 presents the overall occurrence of linguistic focus of FFEs.

Section 7. 4. 2 presents the results of question (a): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 7. 4. 3 presents the results of question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7. 4. 4 presents the results of question (b ii): In what aspects are there difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

7. 4. 1 Overall occurrence of linguistic focus

Three linguistic items were examined in this study: grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Table 23 reveals the overall frequency and percentage of each of the three linguistic items: 58.9% (n=198) were vocabulary, 25% (n=84) were pronunciation, and 16.1% (n=54) were grammar.

Table 23 Overall occurrence of linguistic focus

	Frequency	Percentage
Grammar	54	16.1
Vocabulary	198	58.9
Pronunciation	84	25.0
Total	336	100.0

7. 4. 2 To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Table 24 reveals the frequency and percentage of each of the three types of linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. In Teacher-learner interactions, 53.3% (n=48) were vocabulary, 30% (n=27) were grammar and 16.7% (n=15) were pronunciation. In Learner-learner interactions, 61% (150) were vocabulary, 28% (n=69) were pronunciation and 11% (n=27) were grammar.

A Chi-square analysis reveals that linguistic items are not independent of the interactional patterns ($X^2 = 18.907$; $p < .05$). The association test indicates that there is a weak association between the linguistic items and interactional patterns (Cramer's $V = .237$). Thus, there is a weak difference in linguistic focus between the Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

Table 24 Linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
	n	%	n	%
Grammar	27	30.0	27	11.0
Vocabulary	48	53.3	150	61.0
Pronunciation	15	16.7	69	28.0
Total	90	100	246	100

$X^2= 18.907$; $df=2$; $n=336$; $p=.000$; Cramer's $V=.237$; 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.46.

Figure 12, based on the data presented in Table 24, illustrates more clearly the proportions of the linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

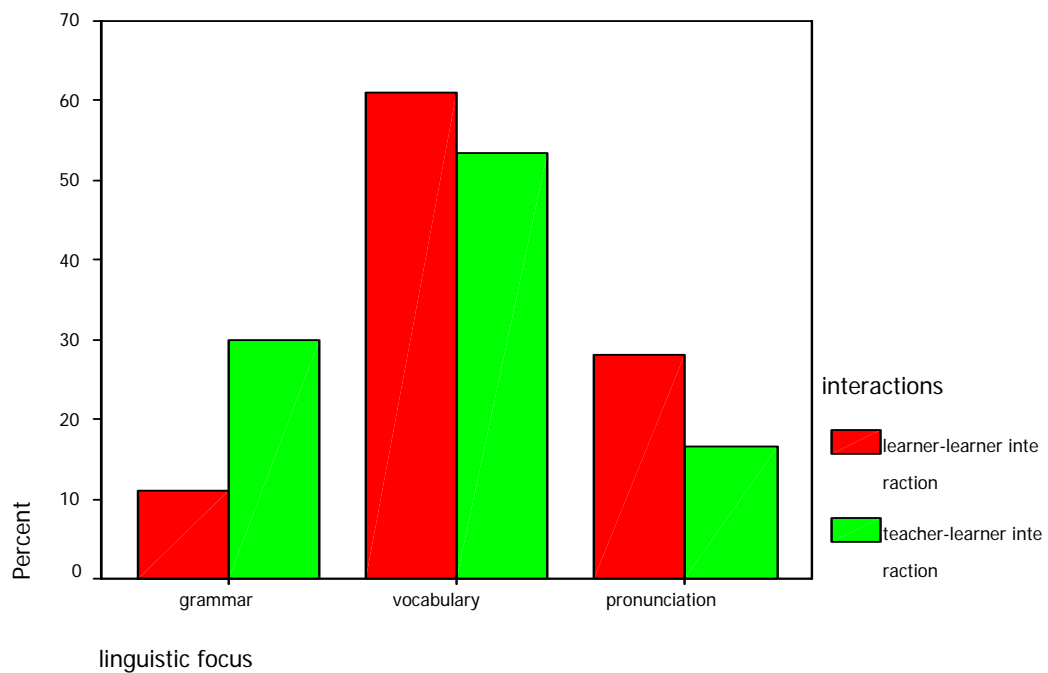


Figure 12 Linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

7. 4. 3 To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Table 25 reveals the frequency and percentage of each of the three types of linguistic focus in the Advanced and the Elementary classes. In the Advanced class, 68.9% (n=111) were vocabulary, 17.4% (n= 28) were pronunciation and 13. 7% (n=22) were grammar. In the Elementary class, 49.7 % (n=87) were vocabulary, 32% (n= 56) were pronunciation and 18.3% (n=32) were grammar.

A Chi-square analysis reveals that linguistic items are not independent of class levels ($X^2=13.534$; $p<.05$). The association test reveals that there is a weak association between the linguistic items and class levels (Cramer's $V= .201$). Thus, there is a weak difference in linguistic focus between the Advanced and the Elementary class.

Table 25 Linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Grammar	22	13.7	32	18.3
Vocabulary	111	68.9	87	49.7
Pronunciation	28	17.4	56	32.0
Total	161	100	175	100

$X^2= 13.534$; $df=2$; $n=336$; $p=.001$, Cramer's $V=.201$; 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 25.88.

Figure 13, based on the data presented in Table 25, illustrates more clearly the proportions of the linguistic focus in the two classes.

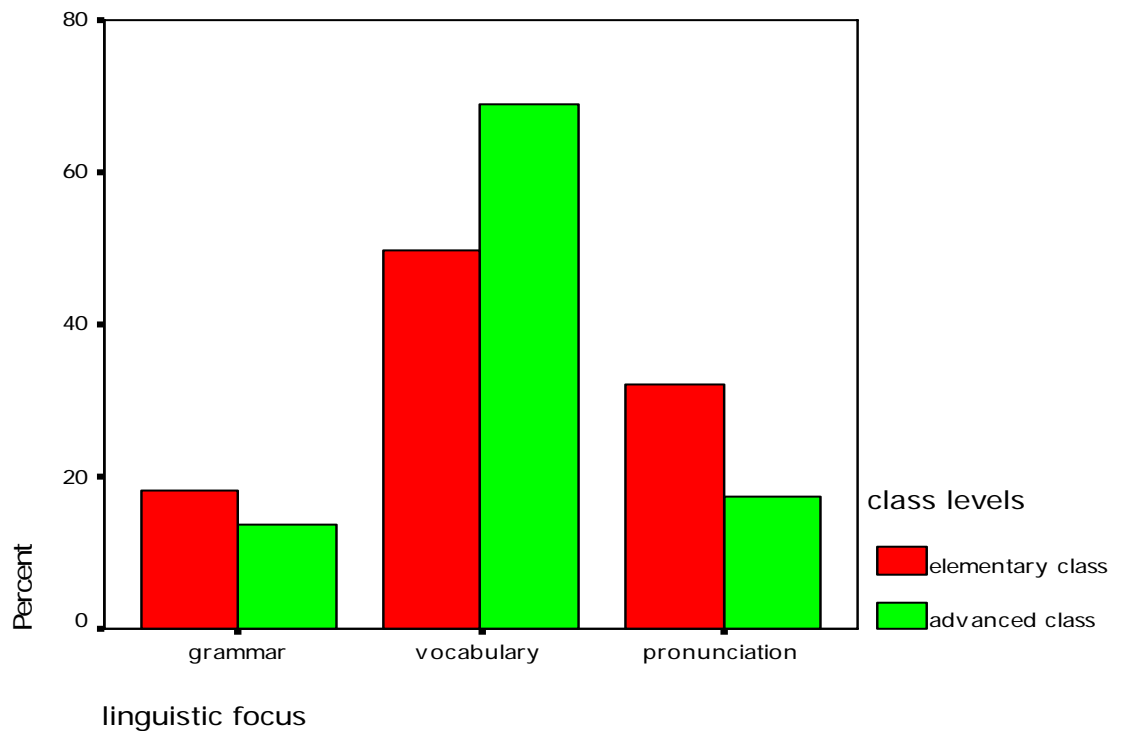


Figure 13 Linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes

7. 4. 4 In what aspects are there differences in linguistic focus between Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of linguistic focus in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) respectively.

In Teacher-learner interactions, Table 26 reveals that, vocabulary constituted 61% (n=25) in the Advanced and 46.9% (n=23) in the Elementary class, grammar constituted 31.7%

(n=13) in the Advanced and 28.6% (n=14) in the Elementary class, pronunciation constituted 7.3% (n=3) in the Advanced and 24.5% (n=12) in the Elementary class.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that linguistic items are almost independent of class levels in Teacher-learner interactions ($X=4.848$; $p>.05$). The association test indicates that there is a weak association between the linguistic items and class levels in Teacher-learner interactions (Cramer's $V= .232$). Thus, there was a weak difference in linguistic focus between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

Table 26 Linguistic focus in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Grammar	13	31.7	14	28.6
Vocabulary	25	61.0	23	46.9
Pronunciation	3	7.3	12	24.5
Total	41	100	49	100

$X^2=4.848$; $df=2$; $n=90$; $p=.089$; Cramer's $V=.232$; 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.83.

Figure 14, based on the data presented in Table 26, indicates more clearly the proportions of the three linguistic items in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

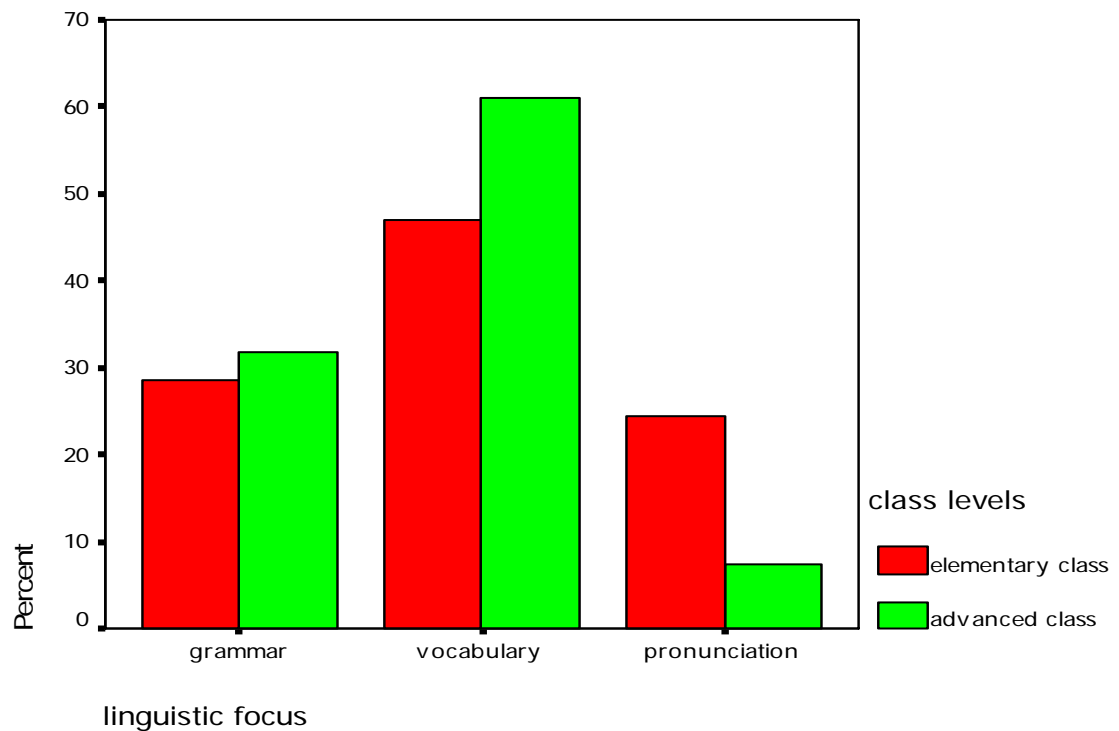


Figure 14 Linguistic focus in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

In Learner-learner interactions, Table 27 reveals that, vocabulary constituted 71.7% in the Advanced and 50.8% in the Elementary class, grammar constituted 7.5% in the Advanced and 14.3% in the Elementary class, pronunciation constituted 20.8% in the Advanced and 34.9% in the Elementary class.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that linguistic items are not independent of class levels ($X^2=11.319$; $p<.05$). Association test indicates that there is a weak association between the linguistic focus and class levels (Cramer's $V= .215$). Thus, there is a weak difference in

linguistic focus between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions.

Table 27 Linguistic focus in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
Grammar	9	7.5	18	14.3
Vocabulary	86	71.7	64	50.8
Pronunciation	25	20.8	44	34.9
Total	120	100	126	100

$X^2=11.319$; $df=2$; $n=246$; $p=.003$; Cramer's $V=.215$; 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 13.17.

Figure 15, based on the data presented in Table 27, illustrates more clearly the proportions of the linguistic focus in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions.

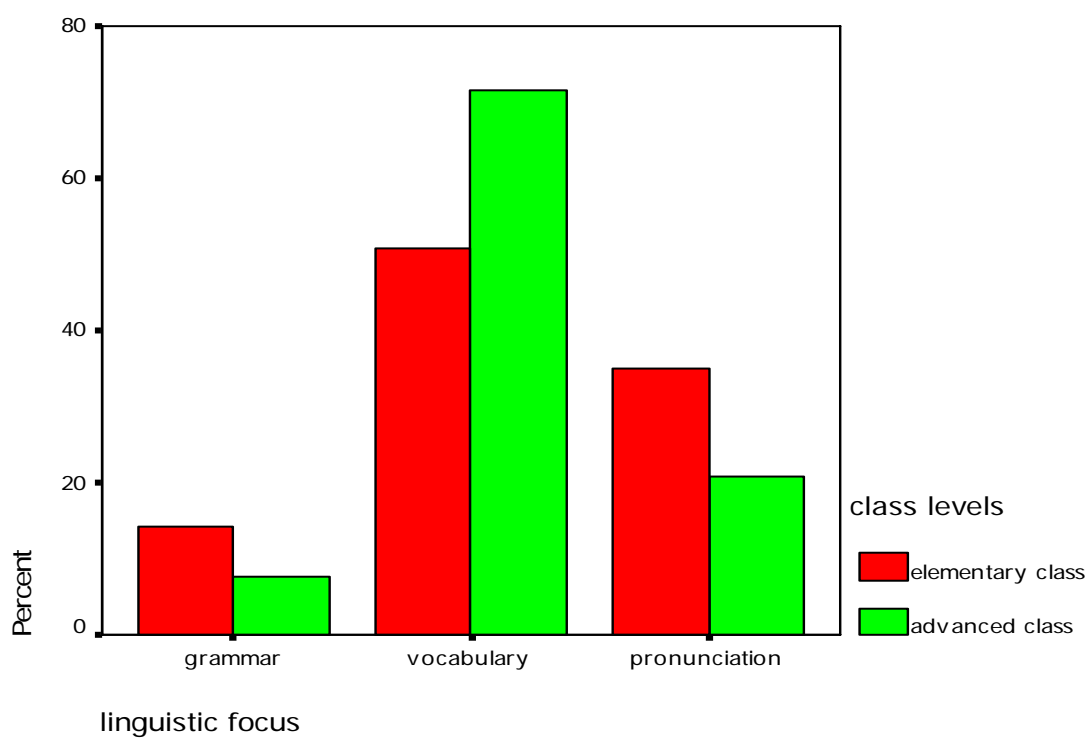


Figure 15 Linguistic focus in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

7. 5 Results addressing the fourth research question

This part considers the results addressing the fourth research question: What differences are there in uptake types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7. 5.1 considers the overall occurrence of uptake types.

Section 7. 5. 2 presents the results of question (a): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 7. 5. 3 presents the results of question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 7. 5. 4 presents the results of question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

7. 5. 1 Overall occurrence of uptake types

In the category of uptake types, seven types of responses following the feedback in FFEs were examined in this study: ‘successful uptake’, ‘acknowledgement’, which were regarded as ‘occurrence of uptake’, ‘no uptake’, ‘no feedback no uptake’, ‘no opportunity for uptake’, ‘no need for uptake’ and ‘incorrect uptake’.

Table 28 reveals the overall occurrence of uptake responses, 53% (n=178) were 'successful uptake', 14.6% (n=49) were 'acknowledgement', 12.5% (n=42) were 'no uptake', 9.5% (n=32) were 'no feedback and no uptake', 6.5% (n=22) were 'no opportunity for uptake', 2.4% (n= 8) were 'no need for uptake' and 1.5% (n=5) were 'incorrect uptake'.

Table 28 Overall occurrence of uptake types

	Frequency	Percentage
successful uptake	178	53.0
Acknowledgment	49	14.6
no opportunity for uptake	22	6.5
no uptake	42	12.5
no feedback and no uptake	32	9.5
incorrect uptake	5	1.5
no need for uptake	8	2.4
Total	336	100

7. 5. 2 To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Table 29 reveals the frequency and percentage of each type of uptake response in Teacher-learner interactions and Learner-learner interactions. In Teacher-learner interactions, 53.3% (n=48) were 'successful uptake', 22.2% (n=20) were 'no opportunity for uptake' , 14.4% (n=13) were 'no uptake', 8.9% (n=8) were 'no need for uptake', and 1.1% (n=1) were for 'acknowledgement'. In Learner-learner interactions, 52.8% (n=130) were 'successful uptake', 19.5% (n=48) were 'acknowledgement', 12.6% (n=31) were 'no

feedback and no uptake', 11.8% (n=29) were 'no uptake', 2.0% (n=5) were 'incorrect uptake' and 0.8% (n=2) were 'no opportunity for uptake'.

A Chi-square analysis reveals that uptake types are not independent of interactional patterns ($X^2= 96.727$; $p<.05$). The association test indicates that there is a strong association between the uptake types and interactional patterns (Cramer's $V= .537$). Thus, there is a significant difference in uptake types between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Although 3 cells (21.4%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 1.34, these variables were kept for comparison.

Table 29 Uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

	Teacher-learner		Learner-learner	
	n	%	n	%
successful uptake	48	53.3	130	52.8
acknowledgment	1	1.1	48	19.5
no opportunity for uptake	20	22.2	2	0.8
no uptake	13	14.4	30	12.2
no feedback and no uptake	0	0	31	12.6
incorrect uptake	0	0	5	2.0
no need for uptake	8	8.9	0	0
Total	90	100	246	100

$X^2= 96.727$; $df=6$; $n= 336$; $p=.000$; Cramer's $V=.537$; 3 cells (21.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.34.

Figure 16, based on the data presented in Table 29, illustrates more clearly the proportions of each type of uptake in the two interactional patterns.

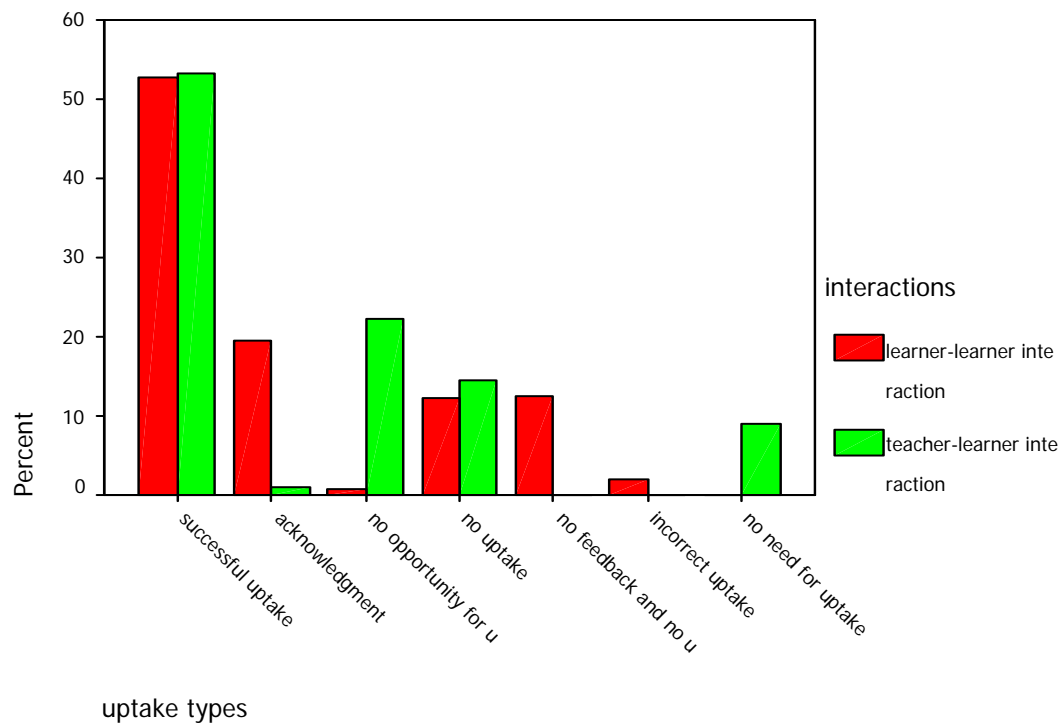


Figure 16 Uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions

7. 5. 3 To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Table 30 presents the frequency and percentage of each type of uptake in the Advanced and the Elementary classes. In the Advanced class, 55.3% (n=89) were 'successful uptake', 12.4% (n=20) were 'acknowledgment', 12.4% (n=20) were 'no feedback and no uptake', 11.8% (n=19) were 'no uptake', 5.0% (n=8) were 'no need for uptake', 2.5% (n=4) were 'no opportunity for uptake', and finally.6% (n=1) were 'incorrect uptake'. In the Elementary class, 50.9% (n=89) were 'successful uptake', 16.6% (n=29) were 'acknowledgment', 13.1% (n=23) were 'no uptake', 10.3% (n=18) were 'no opportunity for

uptake', 6.9% (n=12) were 'no feedback and no uptake', and 2.3% (n=4) were 'incorrect uptake'.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that uptake types are not independent of class levels ($X^2=21.606$; $p<.05$). The association test indicates that there is a weak association between uptake types and class levels (Cramer's $V= .254$). Thus, there is a weak difference in uptake types between the Advanced and the Elementary classes. Although 4 cells (28.6%) have an expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is 2.40, these variables were kept for comparison.

Table 30 Uptake types in the Advanced and the Elementary classes

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
successful uptake	89	55.3	89	50.9
acknowledgment	20	12.4	29	16.6
no opportunity for uptake	4	2.5	18	10.3
no uptake	20	12.4	23	13.1
no feedback and no uptake	19	11.8	12	6.9
incorrect uptake	1	0.6	4	2.3
no need for uptake	8	5.0	0	0
Total	161	100	175	100

$X^2= 21.606$; $df=6$; $n=336$; $p= .001$; Cramer's $V=.254$; 4 cells (28.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.40.

Figure 17, based on the data presented in Table 30, illustrates more clearly the proportions of each type of uptake response in the two classes.

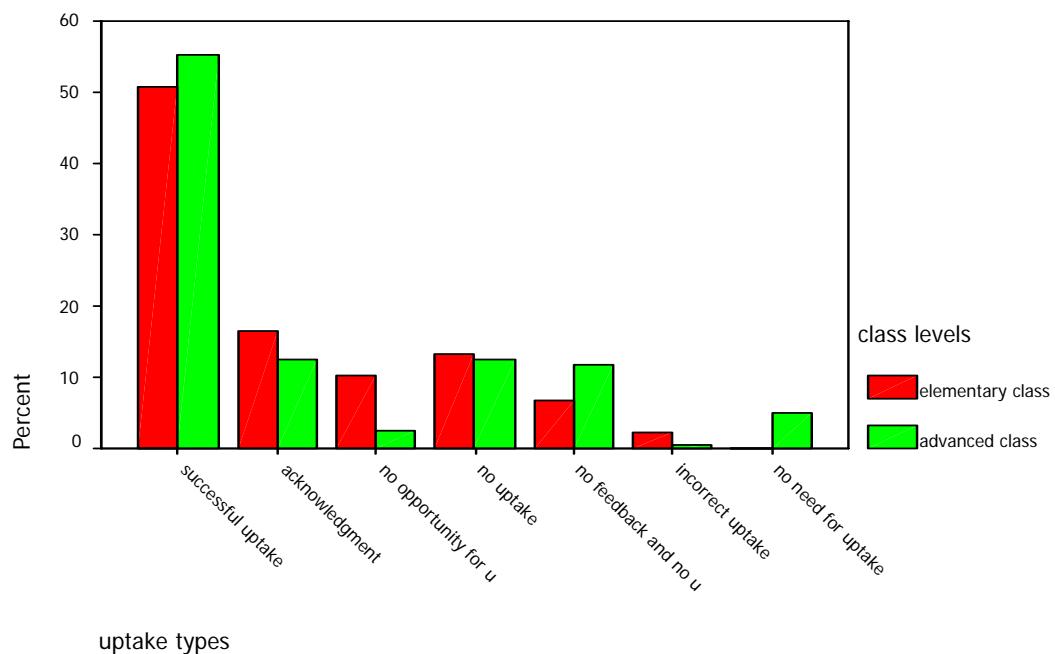


Figure 17 Uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes

7. 5. 4 In what aspects are there differences in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of the types of uptake in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions).

In Teacher-learner interactions, Table 31 reveals that, ‘successful uptake’ constituted 61% in the Advanced and 46.9% in the Elementary class, ‘acknowledgement’ constituted 0% in the Advanced and 2% in the Elementary class, ‘no opportunity’ constituted 9.8% in the

Advanced and 32.7% in the Elementary class, 'no uptake' constituted 9.8% in the Advanced and 18.4% in the Elementary class, 'no need for uptake' constituted 19.5% in the Advanced class and none in the Elementary class.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that uptake types are not independent of class levels in Teacher-learner interactions ($X=17.635$; $p<.05$). The association test indicates that there is a strong association between uptake types and class levels in Teacher-learner interactions (Cramer's $V= .443$). Thus, there is a significant difference in uptake types between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions. Although 4 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5, the minimum expected count is .46, these variables were kept for comparison.

Table 31 Uptake types in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
successful uptake	25	61.0	23	46.9
Acknowledgment	0	0	1	2.0
no opportunity for uptake	4	9.8	16	32.7
no uptake	4	9.8	9	18.4
no need for uptake	8	19.5	0	0
Total	41	100	49	100

$X^2=17.635$; $df=4$; $n=90$; $p=.001$; Cramer's $V=.443$; b 4 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .46.

Figure 18, based on the data presented in Table 31, indicates more clearly the proportions of each type of uptake in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

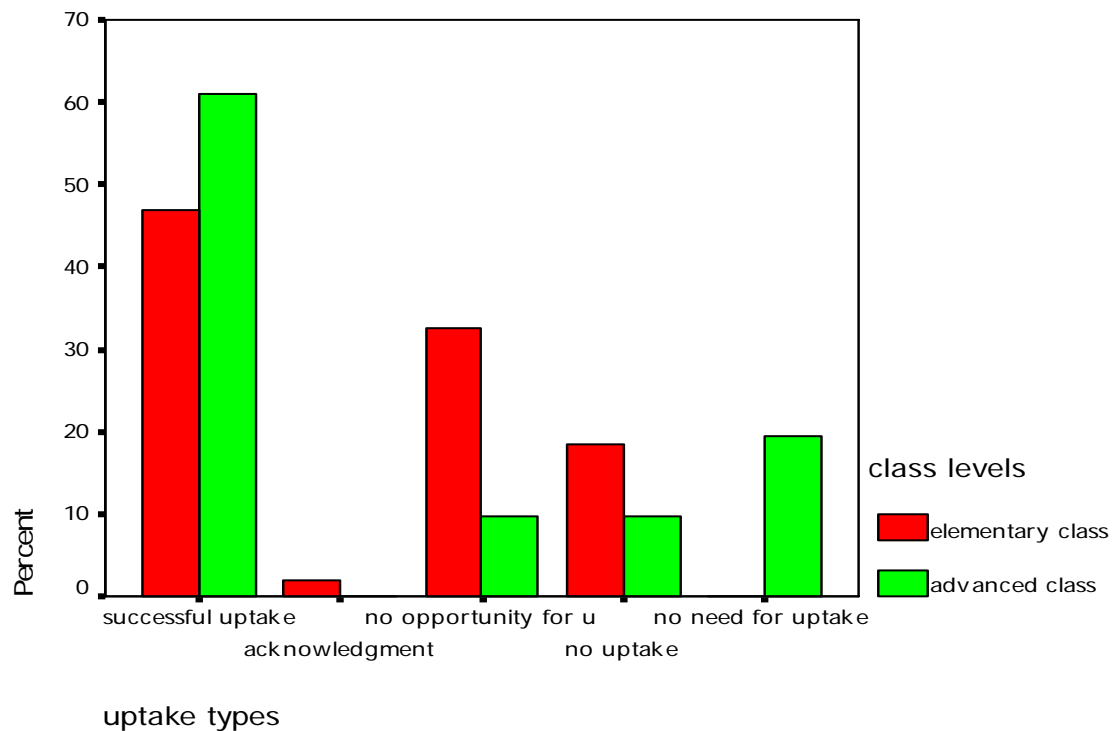


Figure 18 Uptake types in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

In Learner-learner interactions, Table 32 reveals that, ‘successful uptake’ constituted 53.3% in the Advanced and 52.4% in the Elementary class, ‘acknowledgement’ constituted 16.7% in the Advanced and 22.2% in the Elementary class, ‘no opportunity’ constituted 0% in the Advanced and 1.6% in the Elementary class, ‘no uptake’ constituted 13.3% in the Advanced and 11.1% in the Elementary class, ‘no feedback and no uptake’ constituted 15.8% in the Advanced class and 9.5% in the Elementary class, ‘incorrect uptake’ constituted 0.8% in the Advanced and 3.2% in the Elementary class, ‘no need for uptake’ did not occur in Learner-learner interactions.

A Chi-square analysis indicates that uptake types are not independent of class levels in Learner-learner interactions ($X^2=6.736$; $p>.05$). The association test indicates that there is very weak association between uptake types and class levels in Learner-learner interactions (Cramer's $V=.165$). Thus, there is a weak difference in uptake types between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions.

Table 32 Uptake types in the two classes in Learner-learner interactions

	Advanced		Elementary	
	n	%	n	%
successful uptake	64	53.3	66	52.4
Acknowledgment	20	16.7	28	22.2
no opportunity for uptake	0	0	2	1.6
no uptake	16	13.3	14	11.1
no feedback and no uptake	19	15.8	12	9.5
incorrect uptake	1	0.8	4	3.2
Total	120	100	126	100

$X^2=6.736$; $df=5$; $n=246$; $p=.241$; Cramer's $V=.165$

The Chi-square test for Table 32 resulted in $p>.05$, indicating a non-significant pattern.

Thus, there was no graph to indicate the results.

7.6 Results summary

The statistical results addressing the four research questions are summarized in Table 33.

Table 33 Results summary

Comparisons	Chi ²		Cramer's V
	p	x ²	
1. Reactive and L-initiated preemptive FFEs in T-L and L-L interactions	<.05	31.17	.313
2. FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes	<.05	9.549	.169
3. FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes in T-L interactions	<.05	10.82	.362
4. FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes in L-L interactions	>.05	2.609	.103
5. Feedback types in T-L and L-L interactions	<.05	48.846	.381
6. Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in T-L and L-L interactions	<.05	16.542	.278
7. Feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes	<.05	19.339	.240
8. Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in T-L interactions	<.05	23.828	.592
9. Feedback types in Reactive FFEs Advanced and Elementary classes in L-L interactions	>.05	7.608	.228

10. Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in L-L interactions	<.05	10.111	.318
11. Linguistic focus in T-L and L-L interactions	<.05	18.907	.237
12. Linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes	<.05	13.534	.201
13. Linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes in T-L interactions	>.05	4.848	.232
14. Linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes in L-L interactions	<.05	11.319	.215
15. Uptake types in T-L and L-L interactions	<.05	96.727	.537
16. Uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes	<.05	21.606	.254
17. Uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes in T-L interactions	<.05	17.635	.443
18. Uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes in L-L interactions	>.05	6.736	.165

From the above table, it is evident Comparisons 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 15 and 17 (Cramer's V is over .3) revealed both a statistical and substantive difference; remaining comparisons, even where a statistical difference pertained, were not thought to indicate a substantive difference. These findings are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the four research questions:

- (1) What differences are there in FFE types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (section 8.2)?
- (2) What differences are there in feedback types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (section 8.3)?
- (3) What differences are there in linguistic focus in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (8.4)?
- (4) What differences are there in uptake types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes (8.5)?

A summary of the discussion is provided in section 8.6.

8. 2 Discussion of the first research question

What differences are there in FFE types in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8.2.1 discusses the overall occurrence of FFE types.

Section 8.2.2 discusses the question (a): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

Section 8.2.3 discusses the question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8.2.4 discusses the question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8. 2. 5 summarizes the discussion of the first research question.

8. 2. 1 Overall occurrence of FFE types

Of the three types of FFEs, statistical results (in section 7.2.1) reveal that Reactive FFEs were the most frequent type (63. 6%) and the percentage was similar to some studies that had examined both Reactive and Preemptive FFEs. In Ellis et al (1999), Reactive FFEs

constituted 50%, in Loewen (2002), 57.4%. The higher percentage of Reactive FFEs suggested that Reactive FFEs were the type of negotiation preferred most in L2 classrooms. Lyster and Ranta (1997) argued that feedback types in response to learners' errors do not necessarily stop the flow of the classroom interaction. In Reactive FFEs, the participants could accomplish a 'dual focus' without interrupting the 'flow of lesson' (Seedhouse, 1997), that is, they can negotiate forms while they are engaged in meaning-focused activities. Ellis et al (2001a) claimed that Reactive FFEs were not unduly obtrusive, and that they consisted of very short side sequence in which the participants momentarily abandoned using language as a tool to treat it as an object. Ellis et al believed that such behaviour was quite normal for adult, motivated learners, who quite naturally look for opportunities to learn about form even in activities that were meaning-centred. Reactive FFEs have become a part of the L2 classroom discourse to which learners are familiar. Both teachers and learners are able to intervene in the interaction without causing frustration because students appear to expect such interventions. Results of this study provided further evidence that Reactive FFEs were the most frequently used type of focus on form in ESL classes.

Preemptive FFEs in the present study constituted 36.4% (31% were Learner-initiated preemptive and 5.4% were Teacher-initiated preemptive). This percentage was lower than those in Ellis et al (1999) and Loewen (2002). In Ellis et al, the percentage was 50%, and in Loewen, the percentage was 42.6%. Comparatively, the percentage in the present study was much lower. The reason might be due to the research contexts. The above two studies examined teacher-fronted activities, which were part of the natural L2 class. However, the Teacher-learner activities in the present study were the summary part of the learners' pair work. In the pair work of Learner-learner interactions, students had dealt with most

language problems concerning the topics they were discussing. The summary part would certainly reduce the chances of language difficulties, therefore, there were fewer negotiations about form in Teacher-learner interactions.

There have not been more studies of preemptive FFEs. Both researchers and teachers have given their attention almost exclusively to reactive focus on form, particularly to the treatment of error (Ellis et al, 2001a). However, the result of the present study provided evidence for Ellis et al's (2001a) claim that preemptive FFEs occur frequently and they need more attention from teachers and researchers, since preemptive FFEs in the context of meaning-focused lessons constitute a phenomenon of considerable note. More studies concerning teacher-initiated and learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in natural L2 class settings are needed.

8. 2. 2 To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Statistical results (in section 7.2.2) reveal that in terms of Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, there was a significant difference in the two FFE types between the two interactional patterns.

Regarding the Reactive FFEs, more were produced in Teacher-learner interactions (94.4%) than in Learner-learner interactions (59.3%). This would suggest that teachers were more likely to respond to learners' errors than learners to other learners. In Ellis et al (1999),

which examined the FFEs in teacher-fronted class, it was found that 50% were Reactive FFEs provided by the teachers. In Lyster and Ranta (1997), it was found that teachers provided feedback on 62% of the student turns with errors. Thus, Ellis et al (1999) argued that teachers made more contribution to focus on form primarily through Reactive FFEs. Teachers preferred Reactive FFEs, because when they did so, they interacted with students without causing frustration and L2 students appeared to expect such interventions (Lyster and Ranta, 1997).

With respect to Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, many more were produced in Learner-learner interactions (40.7%) than in Teacher-learner interactions (5.6%). This implied that learners asked questions of each other more often than of the teacher. This result was similar to that found in Ellis et al (2001a), where the majority of preemptive FFEs were initiated by students rather than by the teacher. As argued in Ellis et al (1999), when the teacher was organizing the discussion, students were more reluctant to signal a lack of understanding of their teacher in front of the whole class, since this would suggest their lack of competence or lack of attention. This was likely to expose students to the risk of 'public failure' in front of the whole class (Harmer, 2001). Second, teachers could often understand everything that the learners were saying to them and were able to pitch their L2 input at a suitable level of comprehensibility (Ellis et al, 1999).

8. 2. 3 To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Statistical results (in section 7.2.3) reveal that there was a weak difference in FFE types between the two classes.

The three types of FFEs occurred in very similar patterns in the two classes. Reactive FFEs occurred most frequently, constituting 57.1% in the Advanced class and 69.7% in the Elementary class. Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs occurred second frequently, constituting 34.2% in the Advanced class and 28% in the Elementary class. Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs occurred least frequently, constituting 8.7% in the Advanced and 2.3% in the Elementary class.

Some studies that examined the effects of learner proficiency level on attention to form have revealed different results. Williams (1999) found that advanced learners drew more attention to form. VanPatten (1990) found that early stage learners had greater difficulty in attending to both form and content. Mackey and Philp (1998) found that advanced learners obtained more from the interaction by providing intensive recasts than low proficiency level learners. Brock (1985) reported a very low number of clarification requests for higher level learners. Pica (1996) claimed that beginner learners lack the resources to negotiate effectively while the advanced learners tend to focus on opinion and interpretation rather than comprehension or linguistic clarity. However, these studies did not test the learners of different proficiency levels in the same classroom context of performing the same tasks.

Different learning materials and different contents of the tasks used in those studies might have affected the occurrence of FFEs. The use of same type of communication tasks in the same context in this study might have contributed to the similar patterns of the three types of FFEs occurring in the two level classes.

8. 2. 4 In what aspects are there differences in FFE types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed by examining the three types of FFE in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) respectively.

In Teacher-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.2.4) reveal that there was a significant difference in FFE types between the two classes.

With regard to Reactive FFEs, there were more in the Elementary class (83.7%) than in the Advanced class (65.9%). Regarding Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, there were more in the Advanced class (34.1%) than in the Elementary class (8.2%). Reactive and Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions revealed how the teachers in the two classes behaved in focussing on form. The above results suggest that there were significant differences in terms of the two types of FFEs initiated by the two teachers. The teacher in the Advanced class responded to learners' errors less than the teacher in the Elementary class, but initiated more preemptive questions. These differences in the two teachers might be due to the learners' proficiency levels in the two classes. For

advanced learners, the teacher asked more questions, since the students were more capable of dealing with the teacher's questions. On the other hand, the teacher in the Elementary class did not ask many questions since the students were less capable of dealing with questions. Instead, the teacher in the Elementary class responded more to learners' errors. In addition, the differences in the two teacher's performance in focusing on form might also be accounted for by the teacher's preference of focusing on form. Other studies (Loewen, 2002; Basturkmen et al, 2002) concerning the teachers' performance in focusing on form also found that the frequency of focus on form initiated by teachers varied a lot from teacher to teacher. They argued that the difference might be explained in part by teachers' beliefs and feelings about incidental focus on form. According to Loewen (2002; Basturkmen et al, 2002), some teachers may believe that incidental FFEs are effective in addressing linguistic items in meaning-focused lessons. On the other hand, some teachers may not want to raise issues of form in communicative activities. This may raise issues for future research about why some teachers prefer to interrupt their students more often than others.

Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions did not occur in the Advanced class and constituted 8.2 % in the Elementary class. This result indicates that in the Advanced class, the students did not ask their teacher any questions. Again, this result confirmed the argument that as proficiency level improves, learners turn to each other for help more than they do to their teachers (Williams, 1999), as their higher proficiency in language can help them to deal with most of their language problems.

In Learner-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.2.4) reveal that, there was a weak difference in FFE types between the two classes in Learner-learner interactions.

In the category of Reactive FFEs, 64.3% occurred in the Advanced class and 54.2% in the Elementary class. Regarding Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs 45.8% occurred in the Advanced class and 35.7% in the Elementary class. The results indicate that in Learner-learner interactions, both proficiency level learners produced similar rates of the two types of FFEs.

8. 2. 5 Summary of discussion of the first research question

To address the question: To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, the following summary is given. There was a significant difference in Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. Teachers were more active than learners in responding to learners' errors, however, they were less active in initiating preemptive FFEs than learners. On the other hand, learners were more active in initiating preemptive FFEs to each other rather than to their teacher.

To address the research question: To what extent is there a difference in FFE types in the Advanced and the Elementary classes and in what aspects are there differences in FFE types in the Advanced and the Elementary classes, the following results are summarized. There was no significant difference in FFE types between the two classes. Similar patterns

of the three types of FFE were produced in the two level classes. However, in Teacher-learner interactions, there was a significant difference between the two classes. The teacher in the Advanced class employed more preemptive FFEs and fewer Reactive FFEs than the teacher in the Elementary class. On the other hand, the teacher in the Elementary class was more likely to respond to learner's errors but initiated fewer preemptive questions to the students. Learners in the Advanced class did not pose any questions to their teacher in Teacher-learner interactions. Only learners in the Elementary class posed a few questions to their teacher in Teacher-learner interactions. In Learner-learner interactions, there was no significant difference in FFE types between the two classes. Students of both proficiency levels produced similar rates of each type of FFE in pair work activities.

8.3 Discussion of the second research question

What differences are there in feedback types of FFEs in (a) Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and in (b) Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8.3.1 discusses the overall occurrence of feedback types.

Section 8.3.2 discusses the question (a): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 8.3.3 discusses the question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8.3.4 discusses the question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8. 3. 5 summarizes the discussion of the second research question

8. 3. 1 Overall occurrence of feedback types

Of the eight types of feedback examined, statistical results (in section 7.3.1) reveal that the most frequent type of feedback was 'inform' (33%), followed by 'recasts' (29.5%). These two types of feedback constituted 'providing solution', making up more than half of the total feedback moves (62.5%). 'Providing solutions' indicate that in these FFEs, learners received explicit information about the negotiated forms. Thus, more than half of the FFEs identified in this study might be regarded as beneficial to L2 learners in that they provided useful information about how to solve language problems. Detailed discussion of the types of feedback is conducted as they occurred in each of the interactional patterns and in each of the classes (Sections 8. 3. 2 and 8. 3.3).

8. 3. 2 To what extent is there a difference in feedback types of FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Statistical results (in section 7.3.2) reveal that there was a significant difference in feedback types between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

The significant difference in feedback types between the two interactional patterns was mainly caused by the difference in types of 'no feedback', 'correct feedback' and 'incorrect feedback'.

'No feedback' occurred only in Learner-learner interactions, with a percentage of 11.8%. 'No feedback' refers to the situation that one learner pre-emptively asked the other learner about a linguistic form, but the other learner failed to provide feedback of any kind, or the other learner just ignored the problem and concentrated on the discussion. Sometimes it is difficult to say which of the two reasons accounted for 'no feedback'. For example, in Episode 133 below, it is difficult to say whether Learner A in Line 3 ignored the question in Line 2 because he did not know how to explain or he did not want to explain.

Episode 133

- 1 A: generous,
- 2 B: Ah? I like young teacher
- 3 A: I never mind young or pretty.

'Incorrect feedback', occurring only in Learner-learner interactions, refers to the situation that the feedback provided by one learner was incorrect due to his lack of language knowledge. Pica and Doughty (1985) also found that students' production was both ungrammatical in small groups and during teacher-fronted activities. They argued that one effect of group work was that learners were more likely than teacher-fronted activities to access to non-native, potentially ungrammatical samples of target English as produced by their classmates. Porter (1986) also found that learners may provide less accurate grammatical input than native speakers. Thus, group activities might increase the proportion of ungrammatical input to learners. Incorrect feedback given by learners to each other might be a risk for learners, if the immediate uptake affects their language acquisition. Thus, this incorrect feedback could be harmful to both learners, since it might strengthen the non-correct use of the form and may lead perhaps to a stabilized non-target variety (Plann, 1976). However, there is argument (Pica, 1994) that the effect of incorrect feedback is not too detrimental, because incorrect feedback does not occur very often.

'Correct feedback' occurred only in Teacher-learner interactions, at the percentage of 8.9%. It refers to the situation when the learner/learners provided the target answer to the teacher's preemptive questions. It indicates to a certain extent that the teacher was not addressing the real knowledge gap of students. However, when one student or some students provided the target answers, it does not mean that other students could also provide the target answers too. In other words, the teacher's questions might not be a real knowledge gap for some students, but might be a real knowledge gap for some other students. Thus, the teacher's questions can be beneficial to some learners even though not for all students.

Taking 'inform' and 'recast' as 'providing solution' to language problems, there was little percentage difference (1.2%) between the Teacher-learner and (63.3%) and Learner-learner (62.1%). This indicates that in both interactional patterns, learners were able to access the same opportunities of getting information about language problems. Thus, both interactional patterns were equally beneficial to learners in the sense of providing solutions to language problems. This finding was comparable to what was found in Pica et al (1996) that learners could provide opportunities for different types of feedback in simplified form. Pica et al argued that even though L2 learners did provide more utterances of feedback of simple segmentation type than did the NSs, these utterances still contained considerable amounts of L2 morph-syntax and could serve as a source of useful L2 input. Furthermore, Mayo and Pica (2000) found that learners could offer some data of considerable quality and the learner-learner dyads were not significantly different from the learner-NS dyads with respect to their contributions of feedback as they participated in communication tasks.

To be more specific, in Teacher-learner interactions, the most frequent feedback was 'recast', constituting 33.3%. Compared with the results of 55% in Lyster and Ranta (1997), 75% in Ellis et al (1999), 51.4% in Loewen (2002), this percentage was not particularly high. This might be due to the different contexts in which these studies were conducted. In this study, Teacher-learner interactions were a summary of the learner's activities, which might reduce the chances of language difficulties. However, the percentage of 'recast' was still the highest among all the types of feedback in this study. Therefore, the finding in terms of the use of 'recast' by teachers in this study confirmed the findings of previous studies and claims that 'recasts' were the predominant response option by teachers. The studies of Lyster and Ranta (1997), Ellis et al (1999) and Loewen (2002) only examined the

occurrence of teacher 'recast'. The present study found that 'recast' was also used by learners at a very high frequency (28%) and that this was the second most frequently used type of feedback in the Learner-learner interactions. Thus, it might be said that learners were also able to use 'recast' as an effective way of negotiating linguistic problems in their communications.

'Inform' constituted 30% and was the second most frequent type of feedback in Teacher-learner interactions, 34.1% and was the first frequent feedback in Learner-learner interactions. This result indicates that both teachers and learners used inform equally frequently, and that learners in this data set used it even a little more than the teachers. Thus, it might be said that learners can also work as a source of language knowledge for each other.

In terms of 'seeking solution' (clarification request, repetition and prompt), there was no significant difference between the two interactional patterns. They constituted 27.8% in Teacher-learner interaction and 21.1% in Learner-learner interaction. 'Clarification request' constituted 11.1% in Teacher-learner interaction and 10.6% in Learner-learner interaction. 'Repetition' constituted 5.6% in Teacher-learner interaction and 8.1% in Learner-learner interaction. More 'prompt' was used in Teacher-learner interaction (11.1%) and less in Learner-learner interaction (2.4%). 'Prompt' seemed to be employed more by the teacher rather than by learners, since it is a technique requiring more knowledge from the user.

However, strategies of seeking solution used by teachers were different from those used by learners. Teachers used them to help learners solve language problems, particularly in using

‘repetition’ and ‘clarification’, such as in Episode 89 below. In this episode, the teacher was using ‘repetition’ to remind students of the grammatical error (Line 3). This proved to be effective in pushing the learner to produce the correct form (Line 4).

Episode 89

1. T: describe that in whole sentences
2. L: the man in my picture wearing glasses
3. T: wearing glasses?
4. L: is wearing glasses!
5. T: the man in my picture is wearing glasses, or wears glasses.

Two reasons could explain learners’ use of ‘repetition’ and ‘clarification request’. One is that the learner was responding in the same way as the teacher, having realized the errors and just reminding the other learner of the errors and pushing the learner who made the errors to modify the utterance by himself. The other possibility is that the learner who was responding to the errors did not recognize the error, but just did not understand the utterance containing the error. Sometimes, it is not clear why the learner produced these types of responses. For example, in Episode 47 below, Learner B used ‘clarification request’ in Line 3. It is not clear whether Learner B was making this clarification request because he had realized that ‘dropping type’ was an error and was trying to remind Learner A of the error or because he just did not understand it. In Line 5, Learner B made a further request, but still got no modification by Learner A. This FFE ended without any uptake. Thus, it might be said that Learner B could not help Learner A to work out a solution to the problem.

Episode 47

1. B: yes, one mouse.
2. A: dropping type?
3. B: pardon?
4. A: dropping type.
5. B: what?
6. A: ok. A man on the desk.
7. B: what?

‘Repetition’ and ‘clarification request’ were used a little more by learners in Learner-learner interactions (31.5%) than by teachers in Teacher-learner interactions (22.1%). Because when learners in pair work used these two types of feedback, it is possible that both learners were having difficulty with the form and sometimes these difficulties could not be resolved. Therefore, Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions were less helpful in terms of solving problems than those in Teacher-learner interactions.

‘Prompt’ is another way of pushing learners to work out the solution to the problems by themselves. Considering the fact that it was used more by teachers (11.8%) than learners (1.4%) in Reactive FFEs, it can be said that Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions were more beneficial in pushing learners to produce output than Learner-learner interactions.

In sum, in terms of ‘providing solutions’ and ‘seeking solutions’, there were no significant differences between the two interactional patterns.

The question of feedback types between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions was further analyzed by examining the feedback in the three types of FFE (Reactive, Teacher-initiated preemptive and Learner-initiated preemptive) in the two interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner) respectively in the following sections.

8. 3. 2. 1 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two interactional patterns

In Teacher-learner interactions, feedbacks in Reactive FFEs were provided by the teacher in response to learners' errors. In Learner-learner interactions, they were provided by one learner to the other learner's errors in pair work.

Statistical results (in section 7.3.2.1) reveal that there was a weak difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs between the Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

Both teachers and learners preferred to 'provide solutions' (recast and inform) to errors in Reactive FFEs. In Teacher-learner interactions, the percentage was 66.2% and in Learner-learner interactions, the percentage was 61.7%. To be more specific, in Reactive FFEs, both teachers and learners preferred 'recasts' to other responses. The percentage of 'recast' in both interactional patterns were the highest among all other types of feedback. In Teacher-learner interactions, the percentage of 'recast' was 44.1% and 47.3% in Learner-learner interactions. 'Recast' did not occur in preemptive FFEs, only in Reactive FFEs. This finding confirms the fact that 'recast' occurred only as a response to incorrect utterances. Some studies (Ellis et al, 1999; Loewen, 2002; Lyster and Ranta, 1997) have indicated that teachers use 'recast' as a predominant response option in Reactive FFEs. The

results of this study indicate that learners also used ‘recast’ as a frequent type of response in Reactive FFEs. In terms of ‘inform’ in Reactive FFEs, teachers used a little more (22.1%) than learners (15.8%). Although there was only a small percentage difference between the two interactional patterns, it still implied that teachers were more likely to respond to learners’ errors by providing explicit information than learners were.

Other studies that examined feedback in response to learners’ errors yielded high frequencies of ‘providing solution’: 81% in Ellis et al (1999), 88.2% in Loewen (2002), and 66% in Lyster (1998). It was argued that in most cases the participants dealt with learner errors by providing rather than seeking a solution, because providing solutions involved brief error treatment sequence which would not break too much of the communicative flow. The above three studies only examined the teachers’ responses in Reactive FFEs. The present study added further evidence to previous studies that learners also preferred and were able to respond to errors in Reactive FFEs by providing solutions. Thus, in both Teacher-learner interactions and Learner-learners interactions, Reactive FFEs were similarly beneficial for learners’ L2 acquisition in terms of providing solutions to language problems.

With regard to ‘seeking solution’ in Reactive FFEs (‘repetition’, ‘clarification request’ and ‘prompt’), they occurred almost at equal frequencies in the two interactional patterns, 33.9% in Teacher-learner interactions and 32.9% in Learner-learner interactions. Thus, in terms of seeking solutions, there are no differences between the Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

The previous paragraphs discussed the differences regarding the feedback types in Reactive FFEs. The following section discusses the feedback types in preemptive FFEs.

8. 3. 2. 2 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions

In Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, which occurred only in Teacher-learner interactions, three types of feedback were identified: ‘inform’, ‘prompt’ and ‘correct feedback’. ‘Inform’ and ‘prompt’ occurred when the teacher asked a question to students and got no answer or incorrect answers from the students, then the teacher provided these types of feedback. Thus, these two types of feedback indicate the extent to which the teacher was addressing the real problems of learners, the real knowledge gap. Statistical results (section 7.3.3.2) reveal that in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, 44.4% were ‘inform’, 11.1% were ‘prompt’. In total, 55.6% of the teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs were addressing the real knowledge gap.

When the feedback was identified as ‘correct feedback’ in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, it indicates that the learners could provide a target answer to the teacher’s question, thus the teacher was not addressing a real knowledge gap. Statistical results (in section 7.3.3.2) reveal that 44.4% were ‘correct feedback’, which might be interpreted that nearly half of the teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs did not address the real knowledge gap of learners. Ellis et al (2001a) argued that when the teachers initiated a preemptive FFE, they had to decide which forms to attend to, they had to use their experience to predict which

forms are problematic and they might not address the actual knowledge gap of the learners. However, the results in this study indicate that more than half of the Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs were addressing a real knowledge gap. The different results might be accounted for by the different preferences or experiences of teachers in the different studies, because teachers' cognition and preference of focus on form might have effects on the real occurrence of focus on form in class.

8. 3. 2. 3 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two interactional patterns

In Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, which occurred in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, four types of feedback were identified: 'inform', 'prompt', 'no feedback', and 'incorrect feedback'.

In Teacher-learner interactions, there was only one type of feedback identified: 'inform', which means that the teacher provided information to learners' questions. The percentage of 'inform' was 100%. The frequency was really very low, there were only four such feedbacks, which indicated that there were only four questions addressed to the teacher by learners in Teacher-learner interactions. Discussion of this part might refer to section 8.2.2.

In Learner-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.3.3.2) reveal that there was no significant difference in feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions.

‘Inform’ constituted more than half of all the feedback types (61%). This indicates that learners were able to help each other by providing some useful information about language problems.

‘No feedback’ and ‘incorrect feedback’ constituted 35% of the total Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, which suggests that, to certain extent, learners were not able to solve problems by seeking help from each other. ‘Inform’ and ‘prompt’ constituted 65% of the total Learner initiated preemptive FFEs, which suggests that to a greater extent, learners were able to solve problems by asking each other.

From the perspective of addressing the real knowledge gap, Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were comparatively more facilitative in L2 acquisition than Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs. As Williams (1999) argued, when learners initiate a preemptive FFE, they can make choices about what they want or need to focus on. It may be that in doing so, they signal that they are ready to acquire the feature. Swain (1998) claimed that when learners pre-emptively ask questions, learners can search their own knowledge, allowing them to perceive ‘holes’ in their L2, which Swain defined as ‘a gap between what they want to say and what they can say, leading them to recognize what they don't know’. It can be said that 100% of Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs addressed a real knowledge gap, and 65% of these FFEs in the present study solved the problems by providing solutions. However, only 55.6% of Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs were addressing the real knowledge gap. Therefore, student-initiated focus on forms are more likely to involve actual gaps in the students’ knowledge than teacher-initiated ones and thus are more facilitative in L2 acquisition (Ellis et al, 2001a).

8. 3. 3 To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Statistical results (in section 7.3.3) reveal that there was no significant difference in feedback types between the two classes.

In terms of ‘providing solutions’ (inform and recast) to language problems, the two classes produced similar percentages, 56.6% in the Advanced class and 68% in the Elementary class. In terms of ‘seeking solutions’ (repetition, prompt and clarification request), they constituted similar percentages too, 22.9% in the Advanced class and 22.8% in the Elementary class. Thus, both proficiency level learners had produced similar rates of providing solutions and seeking solutions to language problems. This result was comparable to the findings in Porter (1986), in which it was found that the intermediate and advanced levels were able to help their conversational partners in similar ways. Thus, Porter suggested that it was necessary to broaden the focus to include the possibility of acquisition through communicative interactions with other learners.

In terms of ‘no feedback’, the percentage in the Advanced class was 10.6% and 6.9% in the Elementary class. ‘Incorrect feedback’ constituted 5% in the Advanced class and 2.3% in the Elementary class. These two types of feedback indicated that language problems were not resolved. The percentage of these two types of feedback in the Advanced class (15.6%) was higher than that in the Elementary class (9.2%). The reason that the Advanced level students produced more ‘no feedback’ and ‘incorrect feedback’ might be that the Advanced level students were using more complicated structures and more sophisticated words in

discussing the same topic. Thus, they had more chances to access more difficult problems and more opportunities to make errors. The following two conversation episodes show the differences in the vocabulary selection and sentence length that learners in two proficiency level classes used in discussing the same topic. Example one was taken from the Elementary class and Example two from the Advanced class. Both class students were discussing the same topic: what to bring with you when you are going to stay at a Kiwi's home as a home stay student. It is seen from the two examples that the Advanced class students were using longer sentences and more sophisticated words than the Elementary class students were.

Example 1 (from Elementary class):

B: I choose the dictionary

A: why

B: if I here, a student, in kiwi house, she or he needs a dictionary.

A: I think so, because my English is not enough.

B: I think this is necessary.

Example 2 (from Advanced class):

B: I think maybe my English is not very good, I need a dictionary, and I need the pen and notebook to write down something. Sometimes I write down and then check the dictionary.

A: yes, sometimes you can not understand your kiwi friends, your family, you can write down them and check your dictionary, especially, at the very beginning, maybe you will have a lot of trouble problems, you can't--- you can't---

B: communicate with them.

A: yes, you can't communicate with them like friends! so maybe you will ---

In terms of 'correct feedback', it occurred only in the Advanced class, at the percentage of 5%. The discussion of 'correct feedback' was referred to section 8.3.3.2.

8. 3. 4 In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of feedback types in the three types of FFE (Reactive, Learner-initiated preemptive and Teacher-initiated preemptive) in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions).

8. 3. 4. 1. Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in the two interactional patterns

Feedback types in Reactive FFEs were compared between the Advanced and Elementary class respectively in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in the following sections.

8. 3. 4. 1. 1 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions

Feedback in Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions was provided by the teachers to learners' error. It implied how the two teachers investigated in the study responded to learners' errors in the two classes.

Statistical results (in section 7.3.4.1.1) reveal that there was a significant difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions.

In terms of 'providing solutions' (inform and recast) to language problems, the teacher in the Advanced class used fewer 'inform' and 'recast' (33.3%) than the teacher in the Elementary class (87.7%). This might indicate that lower level students need more help from their teacher. On the other hand, the teacher in the Advanced class used more strategies for seeking solutions from the students. Thus, given the students higher level of proficiency, the teacher was able to push students to produce more of their own output and to rely less on the information provided by the teacher (Lyster and Ranta, 1997).

In terms of 'recast', the percentage was 14.8% in the Advanced class and 63.4% in the Elementary class. It is seen that 'recast' was used much less by the teacher in the Advanced class. This result confirms what Lyster and Ranta (1997) found in their study that the teacher in the higher proficiency level class used recasts considerably less often than the teachers in lower proficiency level classes.

‘Inform’ was used with similar frequency by the two teachers, 18.5% in the Advanced class and 24.4% in the Elementary class.

In terms of ‘correct feedback’, which means that the students provided target answers to the teacher’s preemptive questions, it was found to occur only in the Advanced class, at the percentage of 19.5%. This might suggest that in the Advanced class the teacher asked more preemptive questions of her students, giving them more opportunities to provide answers. On the other hand, the teacher in the Elementary class did not ask any questions of her students. As discussed in section 8.3.2.2, differences in teachers’ performance in initiating preemptive FFEs might be accounted for by the different preferences of teachers.

8. 3. 4. 1. 2 Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions

Feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions reveal how learners responded to the other learner’s errors in their pair work activities.

Statistical results (in section 7.3.4.1.2) reveal that there was a weak difference in feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions between the two classes. However, some minor differences were found in terms of some types of feedback.

In terms of ‘providing solutions’ (inform and recast), 70.7% occurred in the Advanced class and 56.8% in the Elementary class. To be more specific, in terms of ‘recast’, the percentages were 49.2% in the Advanced class and 45.7% in the Elementary class. ‘Inform’

constituted 21.5% in the Advanced class and 11.1% in the Elementary class. It still provides some evidence that the Advanced level students were more capable than the Elementary level students of helping each other in providing information to language problems. This result confirms the claims by Porter (1986) and Mayo and Pica (2000) that the Advanced learners can be a better input source.

‘Seeking solution’ (repetition, clarification request and prompt), constituted 26.2% in the Advanced class and 38.3% in the Elementary class. Thus, learners in the Elementary class used more strategies of seeking solutions.

8. 3. 4. 2 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in the two classes in the two interactional patterns

Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were compared between the Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions and Learner-learner interactions respectively in the following sections.

8. 3. 4. 2. 1 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interactions

Feedback in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Teacher-learner interaction was provided by the teachers in response to learners’ preemptive questions. Statistical results reveal that only four preemptive questions were proposed by learners in the Elementary class to their

teacher, and the feedback was ‘inform’. This indicates that only in the Elementary class, the students proposed some preemptive questions to their teacher and the teacher provided explicit information to their language problems. Discussion of this question may be referred to section 8.3.2.3.

8. 3. 4. 2. 2 Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions

Feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions indicate how learners responded to other learners’ preemptive questions. Four types of feedback were identified: inform, prompt, no feedback and incorrect feedback.

Statistical results (in section 7.3.4.2.2) reveal that there was a significant difference in feedback types in Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs between the Advanced and the Elementary classes in Learner-learner interactions.

Differences mainly occurred in terms of ‘prompt’, which did not occur in the Advanced class and ‘incorrect feedback’ which did not occur in the Elementary class. However, in terms of ‘inform’ and ‘no feedback’, there were no significant differences. ‘Inform’ constituted 58.2% in the Advanced class and 64.4% in the Elementary class. Thus, both proficiency level learners were able to provide useful information to other’s questions by providing the feedback of ‘inform’. ‘No feedback’ occurred at similar percentages, 30.9% in the Advanced class and 26.7% in the Elementary class.

8. 3. 4. 3 Feedback types in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs in Advanced and Elementary classes in Teacher-learner interaction

Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs only occurred in Teacher-learner interactions. Three types of feedback were identified: ‘inform’, ‘prompt’ and ‘correct feedback’. ‘Inform’ and ‘prompt’ were provided by the teacher to students when the questions proposed by the teachers received no or incorrect answer from the students. ‘Correct feedback’ was the correct answer from the students in response to the teacher’s question. Overall, the teacher in the Advanced class proposed more questions to the students, and more than half of the questions received correct answers (57.1%). However, the frequency was very low. Discussion of this question may be referred to section 8.3.2.2.

8. 3. 5 Summary of discussion of the second research question

To address the question: To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, the following summary is provided. Overall, there was a significant difference in the types of feedback between the two interactional patterns. The difference was mainly caused by the differences in types of ‘no feedback’, ‘incorrect feedback’ and ‘correct feedback’. However, there were no significant differences in the aspects of ‘providing solutions’ and ‘seeking solutions’. Both teachers and learners were using these types of feedback in the FFEs with very similar rates. Specifically, learners were similarly able to employ the techniques of ‘providing solutions’ as their teachers were. In this sense, Learner-learner interactions were equally beneficial for

L2 learning. However, it should be pointed out that sometimes learners could not resolve some language problems by themselves due to their same proficiency level; thus, teacher's help was still needed.

To address the question: To what extent is there a difference in feedback types in Advanced and Elementary classes, the following summary is given. There was no significant difference in the types of feedback between the two proficiency level classes. Both proficiency level students produced similar rates of each type of feedback.

To address the question: In what aspects are there differences in feedback types in The Advanced and the Elementary classes, the following summary is given. In Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions, the teacher in the Advanced class used many fewer strategies of 'providing solution' and more strategies of 'seeking solution', given that students of the Advanced level could solve more of the language problems by themselves. On the other hand, the teacher in the Elementary class used more strategies of 'providing solution' and fewer strategies of 'seeking solution', given that students of lower level need more help from their teacher. In terms of feedback types in Reactive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions, there was no significant difference. In terms of Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, only learners in the Elementary class proposed some questions to their teacher in Teacher-learner interactions. There were no significant differences in providing solutions and seeking solutions in Learner-learner interactions. In terms of Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, which only occurred in Teacher-learner interaction, the teacher in the Advanced class proposed more questions to the students while the teacher in the Elementary class did not propose any.

8. 4 Discussion of the third research question

This part discusses the results addressing the third research question.

Section 8. 4. 1 discusses the overall occurrence of linguistic focus.

Section 8. 4. 2 discusses the question (a): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Section 8. 4. 3 discusses the question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8.4 4 discusses the question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8. 4. 5 summarizes the discussion of the third research question

8. 4. 1 Overall occurrence of linguistic focus

Statistical results (in section 7.4.1) reveal that, of the three linguistic items examined in the study, vocabulary (58.9%) was the most attended to form, followed by pronunciation (25%) and grammar (16.1%). These results were similar to the findings of previous studies. William's (1999) study of learner-generated focus on form in small groups reported an even

higher percentage about 80% of lexically oriented FFEs. In Loewen (2002), the results indicated that on average vocabulary constituted 42.7% of the linguistic focus, followed by grammar (33.3%) and pronunciation (21.9%).

Several reasons can explain why lexical errors receive more attention than grammatical and phonological errors. According to Pica et al (1993) and Pica (1994), negotiation was primarily about lexical meaning because it focuses on the comprehensibility of message meaning and on the message's form only when it contributes to its comprehensibility. Pica (1997) noted that learners rarely negotiate morphosyntactic form and other less salient features, not because it is not possible to do so, but because the kinds of activities in communicative classrooms rarely require learners to do so. Incidental FFEs often involve requests for the meaning of words. Such requests fit easily into meaning-centred activity and account for why they would not interfere with the communicativeness of the lessons (Ellis et al, 2001a). Williams (1999) claimed that although focus on form is typically associated with increased accuracy in the use of grammatical features, research on input and negotiation in the classroom has long pointed to the strong tendency for learners to concentrate on lexical meaning rather than morphosyntactic features. Harley (1998) noted that in content-based classes, which are the most meaning-focused of all second language classrooms, learning tends to be lexically oriented, with learners noticing phonologically salient, high-frequency lexical items.

Some studies, however, have reported different results. Ellis et al (1999, 2001b) found almost equal levels of vocabulary (38%) and grammar (37%). Lyster (1998) found much higher levels of attention to grammar (46%) in comparison to lexis (24%) and phonology

(19%). Loewen (2002) argued that these differences might be due to the difference in coding rather than to actual differences in linguistic focus. Ellis et al (1999, 2001b) included difficulty with word formation in grammar, Lyster (1997) and Loewen (2002) included word formation difficulty in vocabulary. The differences might also be due to the types of classroom context (eg, immersion versus ESL). The immersion context may be responsible for decreased attention to linguistic form and more attention to meaning, since the emphasis in an immersion program is not on studying the language, but using the second language to study particular subjects (de Courcy, 2002). Students in language schools are likely to pay more attention to language as subject, particularly to grammar.

In this study, the students were L2 learners, so their focus was on language. Also their engagement in meaning-focused communication tasks drew more attention to vocabulary rather than other linguistic items.

8. 4. 2 To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Statistical results (in section 7.4.2) reveal that there was a weak difference in linguistic focus between the two interactional patterns.

In both interactional patterns, vocabulary was the most attended form, 53.3% in Teacher-learner interactions and 61% in Learner-learner interactions. Comparatively a little more attention was drawn to vocabulary in Learner-learner interactions. Ellis et al (2001b)

also found that students were more likely to deal with vocabulary problems. A little more attention was also given to pronunciation in Learner-learner interactions too: 28% in Learner-learner interactions and 16.7% in Teacher-learner interactions. Thus, compared with the teachers, learners had more problems or difficulties in phonological area. The teachers might have fewer difficulties in understanding the pronunciation of their students because they had a better knowledge of the language (Ellis et al, 1999) and more experience in accessing various accents.

Grammatical errors received more attention in Teacher-learner interactions (30%) than in Learner-learner interactions (11%). Grammatical errors were regarded as a little more difficult than vocabulary and pronunciation, and teachers were more able to deal with the difficult problems than the students were. From this perspective, it seems that teachers are more helpful to learners in providing linguistic knowledge.

In sum, a little more attention was drawn to grammar in Teacher-learner interactions and a little more attention was drawn to vocabulary and pronunciation in Learner-learner interactions. However, the percentage differences between the two interactions in the three linguistic items were not significant. Thus, in both interactional patterns, the teachers and learners were addressing the similar patterns of linguistic focus in the FFEs. Some studies that have examined the linguistic focus of FFEs mainly investigated the linguistic focus in Teacher-fronted activities (e.g. Ellis et al, 1999, 2002; Loewen, 2002; Lyster, 1998; Williams, 1999). Most of these studies, as discussed in section 8.4.1, found that vocabulary was usually the most focused on linguistic form. The findings concerning the linguistic

focus in Learner-learner interactions in the present study add to those studies that learners were similarly able to negotiate different aspects of language problems as teachers were.

8. 4. 3 To what extent is there a difference in linguistic focus in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Statistical results (in section 7.4.3) reveal that there was no significant difference in linguistic focus between the two classes overall. However, there were some differences in each of the three linguistic items between the two classes.

Vocabulary drew a little more attention in the Advanced class (68.9%) than the Elementary class (49.7%). It is seen that the Advanced level students focused more of their attention on vocabulary. This result confirms the argument that as learner's proficiency level improves, their language problems are mainly vocabulary (Williams, 1999). In terms of pronunciation, 17.4% occurred in the Advanced class and 32% in the Elementary class. This result is comparable to the findings in Mackey et al (2000), which examined learners' perceptions about feedback that they got from their teacher when learners performed communication tasks with their teacher. In this study, the learners were at the beginner or lower-intermediate level and the percentage for pronunciation was 32%, the percentage for grammar was 42% and for vocabulary was 26%. Thus, pronunciation is an area that is likely to produce more errors for lower level learners.

In terms of grammar, there was no significant difference between the two classes, with 13.7% in the Advanced class and 18.3% in the Elementary class. Comparatively, the Elementary level students had more problems in pronunciation and grammar due to their low language proficiency.

8. 4. 4 In what aspects are there differences in linguistic focus between Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of linguistic focus in the two classes in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions respectively.

In Teacher-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.4.4) reveal that, there was a weak difference in linguistic focus between the two classes.

The linguistic focus occurred in similar percentage patterns in the two classes in Teacher-learner interactions. Vocabulary was first attended to in both classes, 61% were in the Advanced and 46.9% in the Elementary class. Grammar was the second most focused on, 31.7% were in the Advanced and 28.6% in the Elementary class. Thus, in Teacher-learner interactions, the teacher in the Advanced class and the teacher in Elementary class did not have any differences in their attention to vocabulary and grammar. Pronunciation was the least attended to in both classes. However, there was a little difference in terms of pronunciation between the two classes: 7.3% were in the Advanced and 24.5% in the Elementary class. The teacher in the Elementary class drew a little more

attention to pronunciation. This might be due to the lower proficiency level of elementary students who experience more problems in pronunciation than higher proficiency level students.

In Learner-learner interactions, statistical results (section 7.4.4) reveal that there was a weak difference between the two classes.

Vocabulary was the most attended form in both classes in Learner-learner interactions: 71.7% were in the Advanced and 50.8% in the Elementary class. A little more focus on vocabulary was found in the Advanced class. Thus, it might be said that learners in the Advanced class paid a little more attention to vocabulary than the learners in Elementary class did. In terms of grammar, 7.5% occurred in the Advanced and 14.3% in the Elementary class. In terms of pronunciation, 20.8 % occurred in the Advanced and 34.9% in the Elementary class, which indicates again that more attention was given to pronunciation in the Elementary class.

8. 4. 5 Summary of the third research question

To address the question: To what extent is there a difference in the linguistic focus of FFEs that occur in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, the following summary is given: There was no significant difference in the linguistic focus of FFEs between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions. However, in Teacher-learner interactions

a few more grammatical errors were discussed. In Learner-learner interactions, a little more attention was given to vocabulary and pronunciation.

To address the question: To what extent is there a difference in the linguistic focus of FFEs that occur in Advanced and Elementary classes, the following summary is reached: There was no significant difference in the linguistic focus between the Advanced and the Elementary classes. However, the Advanced class focused a little more of their attention on vocabulary, while the Elementary class focused a little more on pronunciation and grammar.

To address the question: In what aspects are there differences in linguistic focus in the two classes? There was no significant difference in linguistic focus between the two classes in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions overall. However, some minor differences were still found. The teacher in the Advanced class paid a little more attention to grammar and the teacher in the Elementary class paid a little more attention to vocabulary and pronunciation. The learners in the Advanced class focused more on vocabulary and learners in the Elementary class discussed more on grammar and pronunciation.

8. 5 Discussion of the fourth research question

This part discusses the results addressing the fourth research question: What differences are there in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8. 5. 1 discusses the overall occurrence of uptake types.

Section 8. 5. 2 discusses the question (a): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions.

Section 8. 5. 3 discusses the question (b i): To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes.

Section 8. 5. 4 discusses the question (b ii): In what aspects are there differences in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Section 8. 5. 5 summarizes the discussion of the fourth research question

8. 5. 1 Overall occurrence of uptake types

Statistical results (in section 7.5.1) reveal that 'occurrence of uptake' (successful uptake and acknowledgment) constituted more than half of the total uptake responses (67.6%), with

'successful uptake' constituting 53% and 'acknowledgement' constituting 14.6%. This result was comparable to the 74% rate found in Ellis et al (2001b), 73% in Loewen (2004), but higher than the 55% found in Lyster and Ranta (1997), the 33% reported in Mackey and Philp (1998), the 35% in Oliver (1995), and 52% in Mackey, Gass & McDonough (2000). These studies examined teacher-fronted activities, so the uptake moves were only learners' responses to teacher's feedback. The present study included both Teacher-learner interactions and Learner-learner interactions, so uptake moves also included responses to learners' feedback. The high level of uptake for interactions between learners and between the teacher and the whole class indicates that both interactional patterns make similar contributions to L2 acquisition. As Ellis et al (2001b) reminds us, there are theoretical grounds for believing that uptake might contribute to acquisition, even though it is not necessarily evidence of acquisition. First, uptake may facilitate acquisition by providing opportunities for learners to proceduralize target language knowledge already internalised in declarative form. Thus, producing the correct form may help learners automatize their L2 production and lead to increased fluency. Second, uptake constitutes one type of pushed output (Swain, 2000). Pushed output occurs when learners process language syntactically rather than semantically, and it allows learners to "re-analyse and modify their non-target output as they test new hypotheses about the target language" (Lyster, 1998: 191).

The other types of uptake constituted 32.4%, indicating that no uptake moves had occurred. These types of uptake are discussed in the following section (8. 5. 2).

8. 5. 2 To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions?

Statistical results (in section 7.5.2) reveal that there was a significant difference in terms of uptake types between the two interactional patterns.

Differences in uptake responses mainly occurred in ‘no opportunity for uptake’, ‘no uptake’ and ‘incorrect uptake’. ‘No opportunity for uptake’ occurred at the percentage of 22.2% in Teacher-learner interactions, and 0.8% in Learner-learner interactions. In Teacher-learner interactions, the teacher would be likely to proceed with her talk after she provided feedback, leaving no chance for learners to show their uptake. However, ‘no opportunity’ in Teacher-learner interactions does not mean that students were not producing uptake moves at all. Sometimes students were busy taking notes instead of responding orally to the teacher. Learner-learner interactions involved only two learners interacting with each other, learners were not likely to skip the chances to respond.

‘No uptake’ occurred at almost equal rates in Teacher-learner interactions (14.4%) and in Learner-learner interactions (11.8%). It should be pointed out that the identified ‘no uptake’ moves do not mean that students did not really understand the provided information. One possible reason for ‘no uptake’ might be that the students simply did not show their uptake, as in Episode 16. In this episode, the uptake was identified as ‘no uptake’. In Line 2, the teacher provided the target form of ‘brush’ instead of ‘clean’. The learner in Line 3 did not indicate whether he understood or did not understand the provided form, but only concentrated on the discussion. In this case, there were two possibilities in terms of the

learner's understanding of the provided form. One possibility is that the learner had understood the form, but did not indicate his understanding. The other possibility was that the learner did not understand the form at all, so he just ignored the provided form and went on with his discussion.

Episode 16

1. L: I always clean teeth.
2. T: you always brush your teeth, every day.
3. L: three times.

Some uptake moves were identified as 'no uptake' due to the difficulties in recording all students' voices in the classroom setting, as sometimes it was difficult to hear clearly whether there was an uptake move or not.

'Incorrect uptake', occurring only in Learner-learner interactions (2.0%), was determined by the feedback provided. When incorrect feedback was provided, sometimes the other learner took it as correct feedback and integrated it into his own production. As discussed in the previous section on incorrect feedback, group work has the risk of exposing learners to ungrammatical language. Porter (1986) also found that learners sometimes miscorrected other's errors (3%), but argued that the low frequency of miscorrected errors was not a serious problem of learner input.

'No feedback and no uptake' and 'no need for uptake' were two types of uptake determined by the types of feedback too. 'No feedback and no uptake' occurred only in Learner-learner

interactions. When there was no feedback provided, the uptake was identified as 'no feedback and no uptake'. 'No need for uptake' occurred mainly in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs where the learner provided a correct answer to the teacher's query. The discussion of these two types of uptake might be referred to as the discussion of 'no feedback' and 'correct feedback'.

However, in terms of successful uptake, there was no significant difference in the two interactional patterns. In both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, the most frequent type of uptake was 'successful uptake', which constituted 53.3% in Teacher-learner interactions and 52.8% in Learner-learner interactions. This means that in both interactional patterns, learners might have equal opportunities to produce successful uptake. Pica et al (1996) found that learners' negotiation with other learners was not any more limited than negotiation between learners and NSs in helping learners in producing modified output.

The difference in terms of 'successful uptake' between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions is that in Teacher-learner interactions, the successful uptake moves might be responses produced by another learner rather than by the learner who produced the error. For example, in Episode 18 below, the learner in Line 2 made a mistake in using 'watch news'. In Line 7, the teacher provided information about whether the correct form should be 'watch news' or 'read news'. In Line 8, there were learners indicating a successful uptake of the correct form of 'read news'. However, it is hard to tell whether the learner in Line 8 is the same learner in Line 2.

Episode 18

1. T: computer. Why?
2. L: play game, watch news,
3. T: can you watch news on computer?
4. Ls: yes.
5. T: you can watch news by going on the----
6. Ls: Internet.
7. T: yes, the Internet. Do you watch news or read news on computer?
8. Ls: read news!
9. T: yes, you read news on computer, because you watch what?

Thus, in Teacher-learner interactions, to a certain extent, the ‘successful uptake’ might not indicate the real uptake move by the learner who produced the error. It might be some other learners who knew the answer already.

‘Acknowledgement’ constituted only 1.1% in Teacher-learner interactions and 19.5% in Learner-learner interactions. The low percentage of acknowledgement in Teacher-learner interactions does not mean that there was no acknowledgement from the students. It might be due to the difficulties in recording all students’ voices in a classroom setting where only the teachers had microphone attached to them. As observed in the class, when the teacher was providing feedback either orally or writing the answers on the board, students would like to respond by taking notes down, instead of responding orally. Thus, ‘acknowledgement’ might have occurred at a much higher rate in Teacher-learner interactions. On the other hand, ‘acknowledgement’ in Learner-learner interactions might

not indicate a real understanding of feedback. For acknowledgment might not really indicate whether the learner had understood that form or not. Saying 'yes' or 'oh, I see' does not guarantee that the learner has a real understanding of the form (Loewen, 2002). However, acknowledgment indicates at least that students have noticed the provided information.

'Successful uptake' and 'acknowledgement' were regarded as 'occurrence of uptake production'. In Teacher-learner interactions they constituted 54.4% and 72.3% in Learner-learner interactions. Some studies about the occurrence of uptake only considered the teacher-fronted activities, without considering the learner-learner interaction. Ellis et al (2001b) investigated the association of certain characteristics of focus on form with higher levels of successful uptake. They examined teacher-learner interactions and found that uptake was more frequent in reactive and student-initiated FFEs, whereas teacher-initiated FFEs had significantly lower levels of successful uptake. Slimani (1989) reported that the advantage of student-initiated focus on form was that it was more likely to lead to a higher level of uptake than teacher-initiated focus on form did, and successful uptake was clearly more likely to occur in student-initiated exchanges. The present study considered the occurrence of uptake in Learner-learner interactions and the higher percentage of occurrence of uptake in Learner-learner interactions might suggest that this type of interaction was equally beneficial as Teacher-learner interactions in providing chances for learners in uptake production.

8. 5. 3 To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

Statistical results (in section 7.5.3) reveal that there was a weak difference in uptake types between the two classes.

‘Occurrence of uptake’ (successful uptake and acknowledgement) occurred at almost equal rates in the two classes, constituting 67.7% in the Advanced class and 67.5% in the Elementary class.

In terms of ‘no opportunity for uptake’, the percentage was 2.5% in the Advanced class and 10.3% in the Elementary class. ‘No opportunity for uptake’ might mean that either the teacher or that the students were concentrating on their discussion, leaving no chance for uptake moves to occur, or the students did not realize what was being provided in the feedback. The higher percentage of this type of uptake in the Elementary class might indicate that the Elementary level students failed to realize what they were provided with and thus made no uptake moves.

In terms of ‘incorrect uptake’, the percentage was .6% in the Advanced class and 2.3% in the Elementary class.

Some minor differences were found in some types of uptake. In terms of ‘no feedback and no uptake’, the percentage was 12.4% in the Advanced class and 6.9 % in the Elementary class. ‘No need for uptake’ was found to occur only in the Advanced class at the percentage

of 5.5%. Discussion of ‘no feedback and no uptake’, ‘no need for uptake’ was referred to the discussion of ‘no feedback’ and ‘correct feedback’ in section 8.3.2.

Overall, it can be said that both level students were able to help their conversational partners in similar ways, particularly by looking at the occurrence of uptake in the two classes. This result is comparable to what Porter (1986) found, that learners at the intermediate and advanced levels are able to help each other in similar ways.

8. 5. 4 In what aspects are there differences in uptake types in Advanced and Elementary classes?

This question was analyzed in terms of types of uptake in the two classes in each of the interactional patterns (Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions).

In Teacher-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.5.4) reveal that there was a significant difference in uptake types between the two classes.

In terms of ‘successful uptake’, 61% occurred in the Advanced class and 46.9% in the Elementary class. Therefore, the Advanced learners were able to better understand what the teacher provided in the feedback, and thus make more successful uptakes.

‘No opportunity’ occurred a little more in the Elementary class (32.7%) than in the Advanced class (9.8%). This difference can be explained by the fact that the teacher in the

Elementary class concentrated more on the discussion of the tasks, thus leaving little time for students to make uptake moves. ‘No uptake’ occurred a little more in the Elementary class (18.4%) than in the Advanced class (9.8%). The only significant difference was found in terms of ‘no need for uptake’, which occurred only in the Advanced class. This means that in the Advanced class, the teacher’s questions received correct answers from learners, the teacher addressed some non-knowledge gap of the learners.

In Learner-learner interactions, statistical results (in section 7.5.4) reveal that there was a weak difference in the types of immediate uptake between the two classes. Learners of different proficiency levels produced similar rates of each type of uptake responses in FFEs in Learner-learner interactions.

8. 5. 5 Summary of discussion of the fourth research question

In addressing the question: To what extent is there a difference in uptake types that occur in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, it is evident that there was a significant difference in uptake types between the two interactional patterns, mainly in ‘no opportunity for uptake’ and ‘no uptake’. They occurred a little more in Teacher-learner interactions. However, it does not mean that students did not produce any responses to the teacher’s feedback. Usually at this time, students were taking down notes instead of responding to the teacher’s questions. One type of uptake that occurred in Learner-learner interactions was the ‘incorrect uptake’, which followed an incorrect feedback. This ‘incorrect uptake’ suggests that sometimes students were not able to distinguish between the correct and

incorrect form due to their limited language knowledge. In terms of ‘occurrence of uptake’, which includes ‘successful uptake’ and ‘acknowledgment’, there was no significant difference between the two interactional patterns. Thus, it was concluded that Learner-learner interactions were as beneficial as Teacher-learner interactions in the aspect of uptake production.

With reference to the question: To what extent is there a difference in uptake types in the Advanced and the Elementary classes, it appears that there was no significant difference in uptake types between the two class levels. Some minor differences were found in terms of some types of uptake. In terms of ‘incorrect uptake’, they occurred a little more in the Elementary class, which might be explained in terms of lower level students not being able to make proper judgments about the provided information.

Differences in uptake types in the Advanced and the Elementary classes revealed that in Teacher-learner interactions, there was a significant difference in uptake types between the two classes. The Advanced class learners produced more successful uptakes in Teacher-learner interactions. The teacher in the Advanced class addressed more non-knowledge gap of learners. The teacher of the Elementary class concentrated on more of the discussion leaving fewer chances for uptake to occur. In Learner-learner interactions there was no significant difference in uptake types between the two classes. Both proficiency level students produced similar rates of uptake types.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

9. 1 Introduction

After a discussion of the findings of this study in Chapter Eight, this chapter considers the implications of these findings. First a summary of the results is given (section 9.2), then theoretical and pedagogical implications are drawn (section 9.3). Next, some limitations of the present study are pointed out (section 9.4), followed by directions for future research (section 9. 5). Finally, conclusions are drawn (section 9.6).

9. 2 Results summary

9. 2. 1 FFE types

Overall, Reactive FFEs constituted more than half of all of FFEs, Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs constituted one third and Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs constituted the rest.

In terms of Reactive and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs between Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, a significant difference was found. There were more Reactive FFEs in Teacher-learner interactions than in Learner-learner interaction. This implies that teachers were more active than learners in responding to learners' errors. And the teachers

were less active in initiating preemptive FFEs than learners. There were more Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions than in Teacher-learner interactions. This implies that learners were likely to ask questions to each other more often than to their teacher.

Regarding FFE types between the two proficiency level classes, no significant difference was found. Both level classes produced similar rates of the three types of FFEs.

To be more specific, in Teacher-learner interactions, a significant difference was found in FFE types between the two classes. The teacher in the Elementary class produced more Reactive FFEs than the teacher in the Advanced class, but fewer Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs than in the Advanced class. Learners in the Elementary class initiated some preemptive FFEs to their teacher, however, learners in the Advanced class did not initiate any preemptive FFEs to their teacher. In Learner-learner interactions, there was no significant difference in FFE types between the two classes. Learners in the two classes produced similar rates of Reactive FFEs and Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs.

9. 2. 2 Feedback types

Of the eight types of feedback, ‘providing solutions’ constituted more than half of all the feedback types. Thus, incidental FFEs benefited L2 learners in that most of the FFEs provided useful information about language problems.

Regarding the feedback types between the two interactional patterns, a significant difference was found. The differences were mainly occurring in ‘no feedback’, ‘incorrect feedback’ and ‘correct feedback’. However, no significant difference was found in the aspects of ‘providing solutions’ and ‘seeking solutions’. Both teachers and learners employed similar rates of ‘providing solution’ strategies (recast and inform), and similar rates of ‘seeking solution’ strategies (repetition, clarification request and prompt) too.

Regarding the feedback types between the two classes, no significant difference was found. To be more specific, in Reactive FFEs, in Teacher-learner interactions, the teacher in the Advanced class used much fewer strategies of ‘providing solution’ (recast and inform) than the teacher in the Elementary class. In Learner-learner interactions, learners in both classes used similarly rates of strategies of ‘providing information’ (recast and inform’). Learners in the Advanced class used fewer ‘seeking solution’ (repetition, clarification request and prompt) than in the Elementary class. In terms of Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, only learners in the Elementary class proposed some questions to their teacher in Teacher-learner interactions. No significant difference was found in providing solutions and seeking solutions in Learner-learner interactions. In terms of Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, which only occurred in Teacher-learner interaction, the teacher in the Advanced class proposed a few questions to the students and the teacher in the Elementary class did not propose any, however, the frequency was very low.

9. 2. 3 Linguistic focus

Of all the FFEs in the present study, more than half of them dealt with vocabulary, secondly, they dealt with pronunciation and the least with grammar.

Regarding the occurrence of linguistic focus in the two interactional patterns, no significant difference was found.

Regarding the occurrence of linguistic focus in the two classes, no significant difference was found. To be more specific, in Teacher-learner interactions, no significant difference was found between the two classes. Both teachers in the two classes paid similar patterns of attention to the three linguistic items. In Learner-learner interactions, no significant difference was found between the two classes. Learners in the two classes allocated similar patterns of attention to the three linguistic items.

9. 2. 4 Uptake types

Of all the FFEs, occurrence of uptake (successful and acknowledgment) constituted more than half of all the uptake responses. This further supports that incidental FFEs are beneficial in L2 learning in that learners are able to make uptake responses.

Regarding the uptake types in the two interactional patterns, a significant difference was found, but mainly in terms of 'acknowledgment', 'no opportunity for uptake', 'no feedback and no uptake' and 'incorrect uptake' which only occurred in Learner-learner interactions, and 'no need for uptake' only occurred in Teacher-learner interactions. In terms of 'successful uptake', there was almost no difference between the two interactional patterns.

With regard to the uptake types between the two classes, no significant difference was found. In terms of 'occurrence of uptake' (successful uptake and acknowledgement), both classes produced similarly high percentages. Some types of uptake occurred also in similar frequencies in the two classes, such as 'no uptake' and 'incorrect uptake'.

To be more specific, in Teacher-learner interactions, a significant difference was found between the two classes. There was a little more 'successful uptake' in the Advanced class than the Elementary class. 'Acknowledgement' occurred at a low frequency in both classes. 'No opportunity' occurred a little more in the Elementary class than the Advanced class. 'No uptake' occurred also a little more in the Elementary class than the Advanced class. 'No need for uptake' occurred a little more in the Advanced class and none was found in the Elementary class.

In Learner-learner interactions, there was no significant difference between the two class. Each type of uptake occurred in similar rate in the two classes. Thus, both level learners produced similar patterns of uptake in Learner-learner interactions.

9.3 Implications

The findings of the present study confirm aspects of previous theory and add some new implications theoretically and pedagogically. The following sections discuss the theoretical and pedagogical implications.

9.3.1 Theoretical implications

With regard to focus on form, SLA theorists (Doughty, 1999, 2001; Ellis et al, 2001a; Ellis et al, 2001ab; Long and Robinson, 1998; Pica, 1996, 1997; Skehan, 1998; Spada, 1997; Swain, 2000; Williams, 1999, 2001) have emphasized the importance of an integration of meaning-focused and form-focused instruction in the L2 classroom, claiming that such an approach will benefit L2 learners' fluency and accuracy. This study examined incidental FFEs while learners were performing meaning-focused communication tasks. The teachers and students were not aware that the focus of the research was observing how they focused on linguistic forms, so the occurrence of these incidental FFEs can be seen as natural classroom behaviour. Therefore, the results of the study confirm that incidental FFEs do occur in the process of meaning-focused communication, and that they are used by learners and teachers as a means of dealing with linguistic difficulties either in the interaction between learners or between the teacher and learners. Both teachers and learners are actually doing what SLA theorists claim is needed for L2 acquisition.

This research goes further by adding to our understanding of how incidental FFEs occur between learners and between teachers and learners. The results of the study show that in both interactional patterns, Reactive FFEs constituted more than half of the total FFEs. Both teachers and learners were providing similar amounts of ‘information’ on language problems in the FFEs. In both interactions, vocabulary was the form most frequently attended to. In both interactions, successful immediate uptake constituted more than half of the total uptake moves. These results suggest that Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions make similar contributions to the occurrence of incidental focus on form.

In recent years, research has begun to examine the occurrence and role of preemptive FFEs (Ellis et al, 2001a; Williams, 1999, 2001). These studies claim that preemptive FFEs, particularly the learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, play an important role in promoting L2 acquisition. Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs may address those linguistic gaps at the moment they arise, while teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs sometimes don't (Williams, 2001). In addition, preemptive FFE are argued to be beneficial to learners because there is a much higher use of metalanguage in preemptive FFEs (Basturkmen et al, 2002). In the present research, in Teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs, nearly half of the feedback was ‘provide information’, which means the teacher provided explicit information to learners related to their language problems. In Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs, more than half of the feedback was ‘provide information’. Thus, it confirms the argument (Basturkmen et al, 2002) that preemptive FFEs are potentially beneficial for L2 learning in that they supply more explicit information about the language problem. The results in the study indicate that more than half Learner-initiated preemptive FFEs in Learner-learner interactions received

‘inform’ as feedback, so learners might work as well as teachers in providing some useful language knowledge to each other.

The cognitive approach on SLA and Gass’s model of five stages of the mental process emphasized how the L2 knowledge system is developed and used in communication. It is claimed (Gass, 1997) that for learners to develop their new language knowledge, the first step is to apperceive the input, that is, to ‘notice the gap’ between what they already know and what they need to know. The second step is to have a comprehension of the input before learners assimilate the new linguistic material and correlate the input data with their existing knowledge. Then learners can process the input data and finally make use of the target language knowledge to produce an utterance. The FFEs from the data of this study reveal how in the process of focus on form, these five stages occurred. For example, in Episode 18, in line 2 (see below), the learner made an error in lexical choice. In Line 3, the teacher responded to the error with negative feedback, as one means of input. With this negative feedback, the teacher was drawing the learner’s attention to the error. Although the learner did not realize the error immediately, by further negative feedback from the teacher in Line 5 and Line 7, the learner finally noticed his error and comprehended the input. We assume that the learner has processed the input data and finally made use of the target words ‘read news’ in his final output.

Episode 18:

1. T: computer. Why?
2. L: play game, watch news,
3. T: can you watch news on computer?

4. Ls: yes.
5. T: you can watch news by going on the----
6. Ls: Internet.
7. T: yes, the Internet. Do you watch news or read news on computer?
8. Ls: read news!

Therefore, it might be said that the process of focus on form provides a context in which the mental process for language development occurs.

With respect to interactions, Long (1996) argues that through negotiation, learners and their interlocutors signal that they do not understand something. Through the resulting interaction, learners have opportunities to understand and use the language that was incomprehensible. Additionally, they may also get more input and have more opportunities for output. These acts are evident in the process of focus on form.

In the course of negotiation, learners receive feedback on their production, which makes input comprehensible and results in further opportunities for communicating a message in a meaningful context (Pica et al, 1993). In addition, learners modify their output when they are pushed to reformulate their production to make it more comprehensible. Both comprehension and modified production are closely tied to learners' attention to L2 forms. The present study examined the occurrence of FFEs in Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions and found that Reactive FFEs, which involved negotiation of the incorrect form, occurred more frequently in both interactions (75.6% in Teacher-learner and 59.3% in Learner-learner). The high percentage of Reactive FFEs in the study suggests the

theoretical position that interaction is an important variable in the learning process. Moreover, they add to previous findings that Learner-learner interactions might be similarly beneficial to L2 learning to Teacher-learner interactions in terms of the output of Reactive FFEs.

9. 3. 2 Pedagogical implications

As argued in the above section, incidental FFEs in the process of meaning-focused communication are beneficial for L2 learners. Therefore, teachers should think about how they can incorporate activities into their lessons that will provide learners with opportunities to attend to incidental FFEs. However, the extent to which the teacher should try to provide such opportunities needs to be carefully managed. If teachers regularly focus on form, they can create conditions that promote the acquisition of language but run the risk of inhibiting language fluency. Thus, teachers might make decisions concerning the extent to which they draw attention to FFEs in meaning-focused communication based on the focus of the lesson, that is, whether it is focussing on accuracy practice or fluency practice. When the focus of the L2 classroom is on accuracy, more attention should be given to FFEs; on the other hand, when it is on fluency, less attention should be given. In this case, it is recommended that the teachers make a note of forms that cause students problems during the communicative activities and address them when this phase of the lesson is finished (Williams, 1999).

Since reactive FFEs will involve negative feedback (recast, clarification request, repetition) and they don't interrupt the 'flow of lesson' (Seedhouse, 1997), teachers might respond to learners' errors more regularly. This is not likely to cause frustration because students, particularly L2 learners tend to expect teachers to provide such feedback. In addition, the feedback usually does not stop the flow of classroom interaction and that uptake clearly does not break the communicative flow (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). Lyster and Ranta

recommend that teachers should avoid direct and unmitigated negative evaluation of learners' linguistic errors, so that those errors might be treated as unimportant and unembarrassing. Ellis et al (2002) suggest that teachers should not pre-empt attention to form during a communicative activity. Since in most cases teachers might not address the real knowledge gap of students, teacher-initiated preemptive FFEs are not encouraged. Only when teachers are quite familiar with the students and quite sure of their language problems, should they pre-empt attention to forms.

Since learner-initiated preemptive FFEs were argued to be beneficial to L2 learning in that they mostly address the real knowledge gap of learners (Ellis et al, 1999), learners should be offered more opportunities in which to produce more preemptive FFEs and therefore involve more metalanguage (Basturkmen et al, 2002). In L2 classes, when students are involved in communicative activities, usually they are just told to complete the tasks. No emphasis is made on the point that they should pay more attention to language problems during their performance. As Skehan (1998) argues, it is the learners, prioritising meaning, who most clearly influence where the activity will go. It might be useful and important for learners to be instructed on how and why to collaborate, so that they can take greater initiative or assume more responsibility for their own learning.

The present research found that learners of different proficiency levels focussed on different linguistic items. Advanced learners attended to vocabulary more and to grammar and pronunciation less than the Elementary learners. Isik (2000) claims that it is worth considering the amount of meaning-focused and form-focused instruction given to learners at different levels. This corresponds with Van Patten's (1991) view that the proportion of

meaning-focused and form-focused instruction should be changed in accordance with the learners' proficiency level. Therefore, teachers should carefully take into account their learners' level of L2 proficiency when they make decisions about giving feedback.

However, in the light of the limited frequency of 'incorrect feedback' provided by students, caution must be exercised in the use of group work as a means of promoting linguistic competence in the classroom. Pica and Doughty (1985) have pointed out that the amount of time and opportunities provided for students to develop fluency or accuracy should be given good consideration, since group activities might increase the proportion of ungrammatical input directed toward the classroom learners. This classroom situation, as suggested by the research of Plann (1976), may lead perhaps to a stabilized non-target variety. Mayo and Pica (2000) suggested that more targeted, grammar-oriented approaches might be in order in addition to communicative activities in light of the linguistic inaccuracies of learners.

9.4 Limitations of the study

The aim of this study was to provide a description of the occurrences of FFEs across the two interactional patterns and two proficiency levels. It did not compare the effects of the interactional pattern and proficiency level upon the learning outcomes. In this respect, it is no different from earlier descriptive studies of FFEs (Ellis et al, 1999, 2001a, 2002; Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Oliver, 2000; Williams, 1999). However, this study adds to the above studies with its findings on the nature of types of FFEs initiated either by learners or by teachers, and learners of different proficiency levels.

Limitations of the present study include the number of classes, the proficiency of students, the coding of FFEs, the number of teachers, and the interactional patterns and time allocated for each task.

In designing the study, two proficiency level classes were chosen according to the internal placement test at the School of Languages of Auckland University of Technology. Thus, no external measure of proficiency, for example, an IELTS score or a TOEFL score, was used. Future studies may wish to use an external measure of proficiency to be completely sure that the two groups of students are sufficiently different from each other.

In coding the FFEs, when an FFE contained several linguistic items, this FFE was multi coded as several FFEs, each with a different linguistic focus. For example, Episode 56 contains two linguistic errors. Lines 1-3 provide the discourse context in which this FFE occurs. In Line 4, the student described the man's shirt in one picture as being white and in the other as having some spots. The student made two errors: one was a grammar error in using 'is' instead of 'has', the other was a vocabulary error using 'point' for 'spots'. In Line 5, the teacher corrected the two errors. Such an episode was identified as two episodes, differing in linguistic focus: in one episode, the linguistic focus was grammar, and the other was vocabulary. This multi coding might have affected the amount of FFEs in the data. Future studies may wish to hierarchicise the errors and select the most salient in terms of comprehensibility for each episode, so that each episode is treated as having only one error.

Episode 56

1 T: ok, how many difference?

- 2 Ls: 11
- 3 T: David?
- 4 L: man's t-shirt, the t-shirt's color is different. One is white, one is point.
- 5 T: ok, the man's shirt. One is white, the other has spots, or has prints. Any
others?
- 6 L: the woman's handbag, the handbag near the table, B have/
- 7 T: stripes,

This study examined only two ESL classes and only two teachers. Thus, the results from this study might not be typical of other ESL and EFL classes. With only two teachers involved in the study, it is difficult to generalize about features of teacher-initiated FFEs. Different features might be found with other teachers; Zephir (2000) argues, for example, that teachers have definite ideas about what language learning is and how languages ought to be taught. 'A given theory of language influences classroom practice only to the extent that the theory corresponds to the teacher's own mental model of language' (Fox 1992: 192). It is not clear whether the two teachers in this study were very clear of the teaching theories related to form-focused instruction, or where they were just teaching so without any theoretical convictions. Moreover, attention to forms might be affected by teacher's perceptions of communication tasks. Some teachers might tell students to be careful about grammar during certain activities but at other times teachers just tell them to do their best to communicate clearly and complete the task. Some teachers do not distinguish between the focus of the activities, but some subtle cues would also affect the attention of learners. Some teachers prefer to encourage their students to provide feedback to one another and to seek answers from their classmates before they approach their teachers (Williams, 1999).

The length of time allowed for performing the tasks could be another factor that had affected the results of the study. As observed in class, the length of time allocated to different tasks varied due to the availability of time in class. When there was longer time left for the task, more attention would be given to forms, both reactively and pre-emptively. When there was shorter time left for the task, more attention was given to the content of the task.

The interactional patterns in which the tasks were performed might have affected the production of FFEs. Teacher-learner interactions were the summary part of the task after students had performed them first in pairs. As Bygate (1996) and Bygate, Skehan & Swain (2001) argue, the repeated performance of a task can result in greater precision and lexical research, more complex subordination and more complex argument structure in verb phrases. This study did not investigate the effects of repetition of performance of tasks. However, the summary part organized by teachers surely carried some characteristics of repeated task performance. Thus, the outcomes in terms of features of FFEs, feedback types, linguistic focus and uptake responses might be affected to a certain extent.

9.5 Directions for further research

This study only examined features of FFEs that occurred in Learner-learner and Teacher-learner interactions, but did not examine which interactional pattern would benefit L2 acquisition more. As learners in language classrooms are given major responsibility in the learning process and the teacher takes a more facilitating role, more research might

focus on aspects of the learners' role in fostering an increased awareness of form and accuracy (Williams, 1999), and of the learners' role in facilitating their own L2 acquisition. As Williams (1999) pointed out, a long term research question might be whether second language acquisition is actually enhanced when learners take an active part in drawing attention to form rather than relying on the instructor to do so.

Ellis et al (1999) indicate that error treatment is likely to vary considerably from teacher to teacher regarding the frequency with which errors are corrected and the preferred manner in which they are corrected. Teachers often simultaneously provide more than one kind of feedback on the same error. And they do not correct all errors and are less likely to correct an error if it occurs frequently. They believed that the teacher, more experienced in making sense out of interlanguage productions, would be less likely to seek clarification or confirmation of students' utterances (Doughty and Pica, 1986). This study only examined two teachers, so further research should consider more teachers' performance in generating attention to form in ESL classes, to find out more about the general tendency of teachers in attending to forms. Also the teachers' cognition and perception of focus on form should be considered as part of the study area too.

In order to reduce the effects of repetition in the performance of communication tasks, further research should observe the teachers' performance in communication tasks engaged in for the first time, rather than when they organize the summary of those tasks after the students have completed them in pairs or groups. It would be of interest to find specific ways in which such tasks could be managed. If there is a lot of work between the teacher and an individual student, the other students may be bored and inattentive. If there is a lot

of work between students, it is often considered by both students and some teachers as time-wasting by students.

In addition, proficiency level of learners should be more carefully classified according to some standardized scales or scores, so that clear comparisons between the different proficiency levels can be made.

9.6 Conclusion

The present study was motivated by questions and concerns generated in earlier research (Ellis et al, 1999, 2001a, 2002; Williams 1999, 2001) about form-focused instruction. It has made further contributions to form-focused instruction with respect to the effects of interactional patterns and learner proficiency levels on incidental FFEs in an L2 setting- their occurrence, the feedback types of FFEs, the linguistic focus of FFEs and immediate uptakes of FFEs. The study found that in both Teacher-learner and Learner-learner interactions, incidental FFEs occurred frequently, and this was particularly so with Reactive FFEs. This indicates that learners were equally able to respond to each other's errors with useful information (different types of feedback) to solve their language problems as their teachers were. Thus, learners employed similar types of feedback in response to others' errors. In addition, learners were more active in preempting questions to each other than to their teachers and therefore could address more of their knowledge gap, and they were able to provide or receive useful information about their language problems. In this sense, learner-learner interactions were more beneficial than Teacher-learner interactions. The high rate of immediate uptake in these FFEs, especially 'successful uptake' and 'acknowledgment', might be indirectly effective for L2 learning. Thus, learners were able to work as a knowledge source for each other in their L2 learning. Therefore, spoken interactions should be encouraged between teachers and students and between students themselves. These findings apply not only to the Advanced level students, but also to the Elementary level students.

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Appendices

Appendix A Ethics forms

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced: 10/11/2003



Project Title Incidental focus on form in Teacher-Learner interaction and Learner-Learner interaction

Invitation

Dear student:

I would like to invite you to help me in my Ph. D research. You are invited to participate in 2-3 communication tasks in your English class. If you agree to take part, you will do as you usually do in your English classes, and follow the teacher's instructions. I believe your participation in this project will not affect your study negatively.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study is designed to find out the progress that our students are making in their oral English.

How are people chosen to be asked to be part of the study?

You are chosen because I am comparing the language learning of students in elementary and advanced classes.

What happens in the study?

I will observe and record the conversations you have with your teacher and with other students when you are doing some communication tasks.

What are the discomforts and risks?

The only discomfort you might have is about the small microphone attached to your desk.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

I would like you to try to ignore this equipment and talk as you usually do in class.

What are the benefits?

The results of the study will help the teachers learn about the progress you are making and think about ways in which they can help you more.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your name will not be mentioned. In my study your conversations will be referred to with made-up initials.

How do I join the study?

If you agree to take part in the study, you will sign a Consent form. Then you just attend your class and do as you usually do in class.

What are the costs of participating in the project? (including time)

The whole project will be done in class time.

Opportunity to consider invitation

I will give you three days to think about the project. If you decide to take part, you will sign the Consent Form and give it to your teacher. If you decide not to take part, you will still do the communication tasks in a separate group with other students who do not wish to take part in the project. This means that your conversations will not be recorded and transcribed, and therefore not included in my project.

Opportunity to receive feedback on results of research

If you are interested in the results of the research, I can give you a copy of an article I will be writing about the project.

Participant Concerns

If you have any concerns or questions about this project, you should talk to your class teacher or Programme Leader about them.

Questions about the conduct of the research should be given to the Executive Secretary, AUTECH, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz , 917 9999 ext 8044.

Researcher Contact Details: Susan Yuqin Zhao 917 9999 ext 6110

Zhaoyuqinsusan@hotmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details: John Bitchener 917 9999 ext 7830

John.bitchener@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on

10th Nov. 2003 **AUTECH Reference number** 03-181

Consent to Participation in Research

This form is to be completed in conjunction with, and after reference to, the AUTEK Guidelines (Revised January 2003).



Title of Project:

Incidental focus on form in Teacher-Learner interaction and Learner- Learner interaction

Project Supervisor: **John Bitchener**

Researcher: Susan Zhao

-
- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project

(Participant Information Sheet dated 10th November 2003.)

- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that the interactions will be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project up to a week after being recorded.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of an article based on the research.

Participant signature:.....

Participant name:

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 10 th Nov. 2003 AUTEK Reference number 03-181

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix B.

General characteristics of Form-Focused Episodes (Ellis et al, 1999: 80):

Characteristics	Definition	Example
I. Approach		S: I clean them for you.
A. Responding	A participant reacts to problematic utterance produced by another participant.	T: I'll. S: I'll clean them for you.
B. Initiating	A participant breaks from the main focus of the conversation by drawing attention to some aspects of language.	S: is this an American word? T: no no no, it's very common.
II. Instigator		
A. student	The student is responsible for bringing about a focus on form	S: sorry, I don't understand sightseeing.
B: teacher	The teacher is responsible for bringing about a focus on form	T: what does frustrating mean?
III. Linguistic focus		
A. Grammar	Includes word order, tense, plural, negation, question formation, and closed class items such as determiners, prepositions and pronouns.	T: but remember question, when you're making a question= S: =do you like
B. Vocabulary	The meaning of open class lexical items including single words and idioms.	S: opportunity means? T: the chance.
C. Spelling	Orthographic representation	S: how do you spell it?

D. Discourse	Includes the appropriate use of specific forms according to social context.	S: if I say this, not good? T: you have to be careful who you say it to.
E. Pronunciation	Supra-segmental and segmental aspects of the phonological system	T: Okay the stress, CHEmist, everyone.
IV. Timing		
A. Immediate	Attention to a linguistic form occurs adjacent to its production	S: I think world people will don't need any food. T: will NOT need any food.
B. Delayed	Attention to a linguistic form occurs after some intervening discourse.	T: to space (commenting on S's written work) S: space?
V. Source		
A. Message	A participant fails to comprehend another participant's utterance	S: how do you <inaudible>? T: what?
B. Code	A participant (usually the teacher) chooses to pay attention to a linguistic form even though he/she has understood the utterance.	S: Ireland, German, Greece. T: Germany.

Types of FFEs

In terms of approach and instigator, Ellis et al (1999) further divided the FFEs into the following three types:

Type I: Responding FFEs (instigator = teacher /student)

Type II: Initiating FFEs (instigator = teacher)

Type III: Initiating FFEs (instigator = student)

Type I: Responding FFEs

Categories comprising responding FFEs

- i. Trigger (utterances perceived as problematic)
- ii. Response (attempt to address the problem in the Trigger)
 - A. Provide Solution (Seeks to address the problem directly)
 - 1. Inform (provides explicit information)
 - 2. Recast (reformulate all or part of the Trigger by correcting the linguistic error)
 - B. Seek solution (Request that the participant who produced the Trigger (or another participant) address the Trigger)
 - 1. Request clarification (asks to make a previous statement clearer)
 - 2. Repeat (repeats all or part of the Trigger)
 - 3. Prompt (attempts to get the participant who produced the Trigger to correct the error, often by means of a clue)
- iii. Uptake (optional signal of reception of the Response by the student)
 - A. Acknowledge (accepts the Response, but does not reformulate the error)
 - B. Successful Repair (Correctly reformulate the Trigger)
 - C. Unsuccessful Repair (Repeats or incorrectly reformulates the Trigger)
 - D. None (Fails to react to the Response)

Type II: Initiating FFEs (instigator = teacher)

Categories comprising Teacher-initiated FFEs

- i. Trigger (introduction of a linguistic form focus)

- A. Query (asks a question about a linguistic form)
 - B. Advise (draw attention to a linguistic form by modeling or reminding)
- ii. Response (an attempt to address the Trigger either by students or teacher)
 - A. Repeat (students repeat part or all of an Advise Trigger)
 - B. Provide (supplies information to answer a Query)
 - C. None
- iii. Uptake (optional reaction to the Response by students)
 - A. Recognize (Acknowledges the Response, often by means of linguistic tokens such as oh or ah)
 - B. Apply (Incorporates the information supplied in the Response, often by repeating or rephrasing part of it)
 - C. None (Fails to follow-up on the Response)

Type III: Initiating FFEs (instigator = student)

Categories Comprising student –Initiated FFEs

- i. Trigger (questions raised about a linguistic form)
 - A. Solicited question (teacher invitation to ask about potentially problematic linguistic forms)
 - B. Free question (Unsolicited question, typically beginning with a WH question word, or a statement indicating non-comprehension)
 - C. Request confirmation (question testing a possible solution to the linguistic focus)
- ii. Response (Attempt by either teacher or another student to address the Trigger)
 - A. Provide solution (supplies information about the linguistic focus)

- B. Seek solution (attempts to elicit information to address the Trigger and may be directed at the Instigator or at another participant)
 - C. Refuse (a participant declines to respond to a Trigger)
 - D. Refer (guides the Instigator to a reference source, such as a dictionary)
- iii. Uptake (optional reaction to the Response by the Instigator)
- A. Recognize (acknowledges the Response, often by means of linguistic token such as oh or ah)
 - B. Apply (incorporates the information supplies in the Response, often by repeating or rephrasing part of it)
 - C. None (fails to follow-up on the Response)

Appendix C Tasks for pilot study

Task I:

1. The Desert Island (For Teacher-Learner interaction)

You are on a sinking ship. There are rubber boats available for your rescue. The boats could hold only a limited number of things and people, though. You can see a small desert island in the distance. If your boat makes it there safely, you will need things to help you survive until you are rescued. Look at the list of things below. You can take only ten of them. Together you must decide (and agree completely) on which things to take and which things to leave behind. Number the first ten according to the necessity for survival and give the reasons.

Things:

A map of the desert, Matches, Oil lamps, Batteries, Can opener, Sleeping bags, Coats and jackets, Fresh water, Canned juices, Salt, Flour, Dry milk, Water- cleaning tablets, Knives, Gun, Bullets, First-aid kit, Ropes, Dries fruits, Dried vegetables, Canned beans, Dry soup

No. 1:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 2:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 3:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 4:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 5:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 6:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 7:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 8:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 9:	_____
Reason:	_____
No. 10:	_____
Reason:	_____

Task II:

2. Landing on the moon (For Learner-Learner interaction)

The group has landed on the moon, but has become separated from the main party at the base, and has 200 miles to cover in order to reach it. Because of the special situation on the moon, such as no gravity, no air, no water, no light, they can not take everything with them. They have to choose the most important things to take. Please help them to choose the first ten important things from the following items, and number them according to the necessity for survival.

Things:

Box of matches, Food concentrate, 50 feet of nylon rope, Parachute, milk, Portable heating unit, Two 45-calibre pistols, One case of dehydrated milk, Two 100-pound tanks of oxygen, Map of the stars as seen from the moon, Life-raft, Magnetic compass, Five bottles of drinking water, Signal flares, First-aid-kit, Solar-powered receiver transmitter,

No. 1: _____

Reason: _____

No. 2: _____

Reason: _____

No. 3: _____

Reason: _____

No. 4: _____

Reason: _____

No. 5: _____

Reason: _____

No. 6: _____

Reason: _____

No. 7: _____

Reason: _____

No. 8: _____

Reason: _____

No. 9: _____

Reason: _____

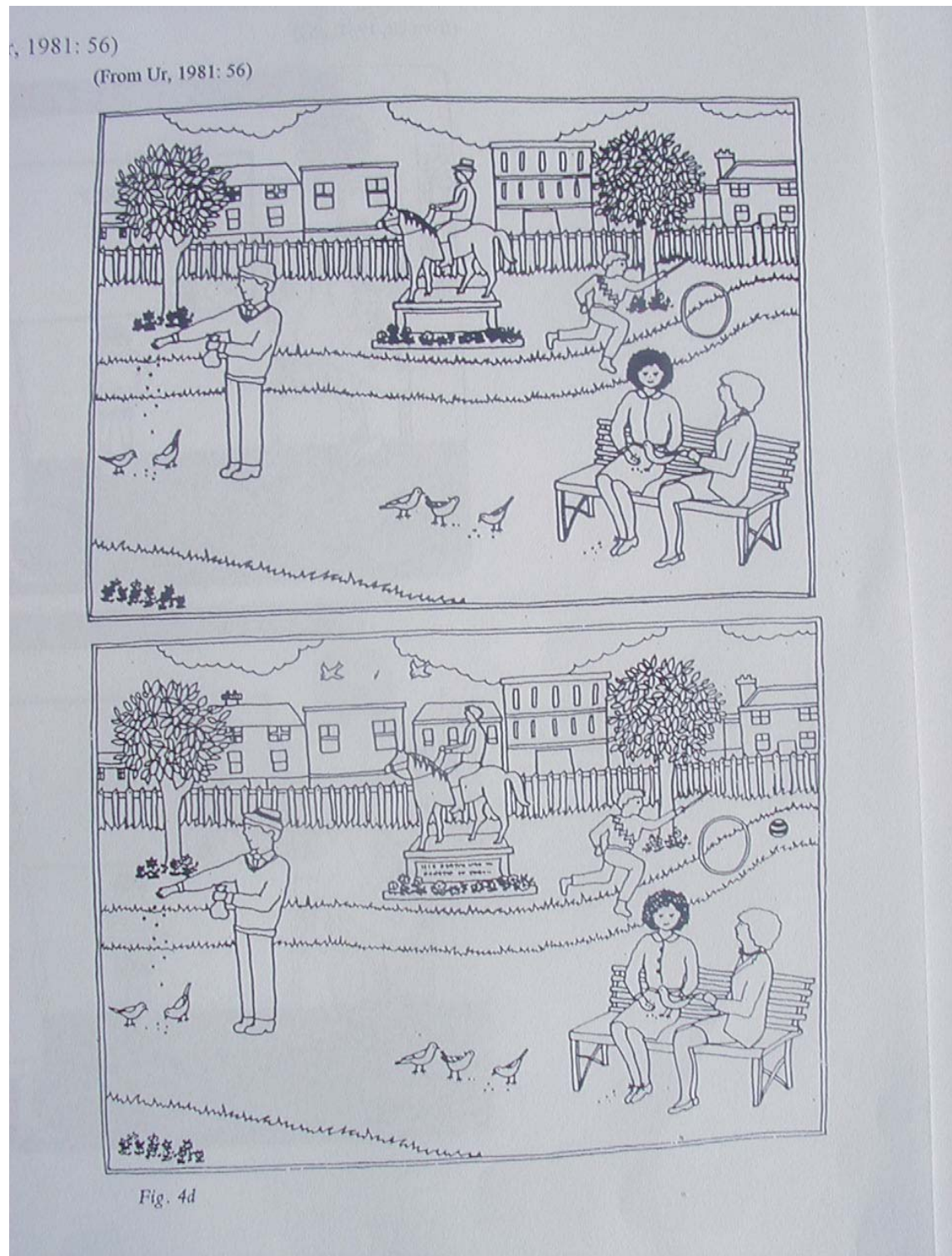
No. 10: _____

Reason: _____

Task III:

1. Park Scene (for learner- learner interaction)

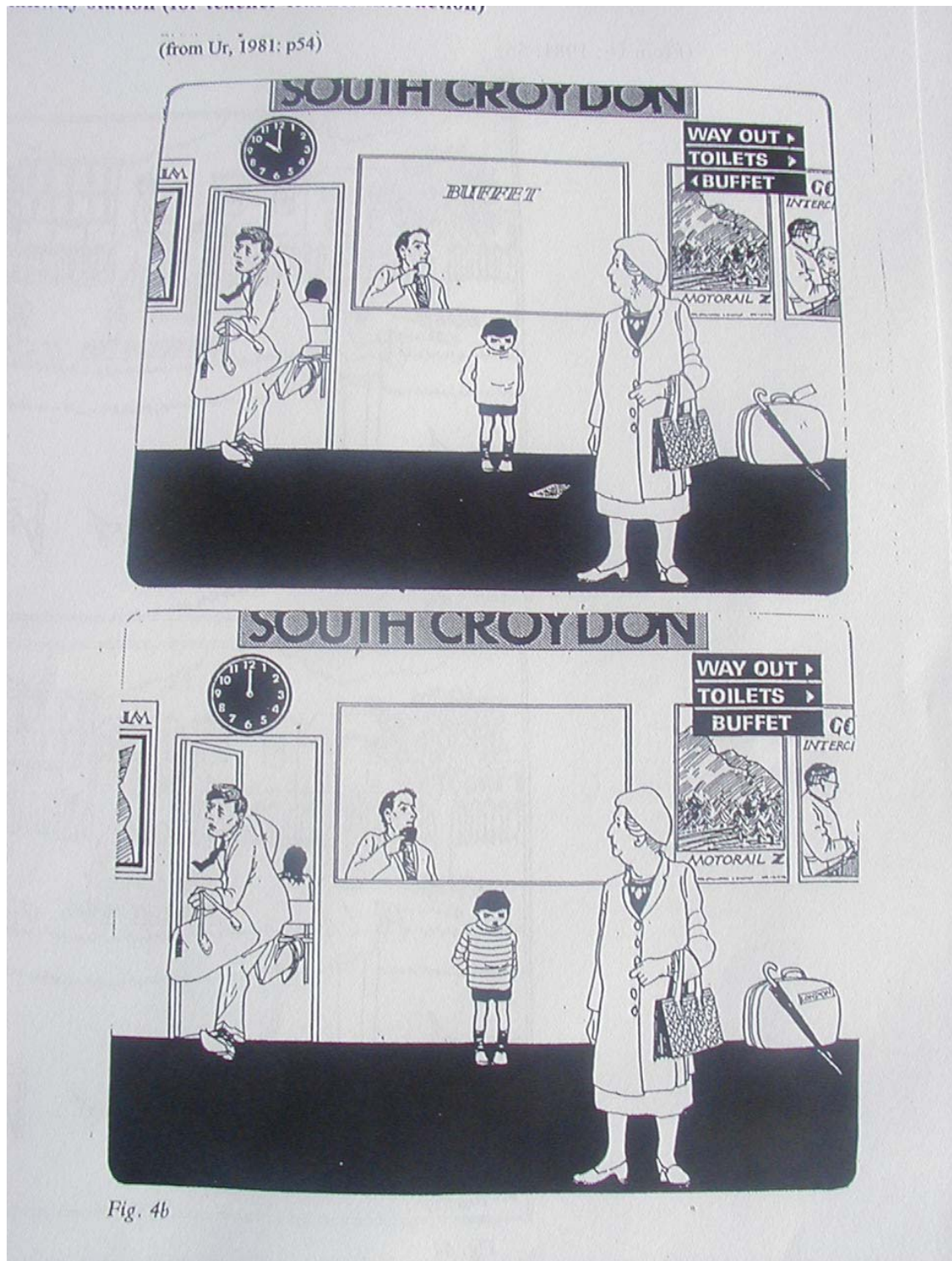
(From Ur, 1981: 56)



Task IV:

2. Railway station (for teacher-learner interaction)

(from Ur, 1981: p54)



Appendix D. Tasks used for data collection

Task 1

A home-stay student

You are going to live in a Kiwi's home as a home-stay student. You are learning English at a language school. You go to school every day by bus. When you are back home, you can talk to the Kiwi people. But your English is not very good. What do you need to take with you for living and studying? You have to circle the ten things from the following and number them in order of importance.

Things:

toilet paper, Desk , bowls and plates, computer, a tea cup, toothbrush, bathing towel, a knife for cooking, bed sheet, pens and note books, TV, microwave, small mirror, canned food, coffee, DVD player, first –aid kit, rain-coat, a small recorder, a dictionary.

(** You don't have to write down the reasons)

- | | | |
|----------|---------|-------|
| No. 1 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 2 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 3 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 4 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 5 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 6 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 7 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 8 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 9 & | Reason: | _____ |
| No. 10 & | Reason: | _____ |

Task 2

A BBQ

You are going to have a barbeque with your classmates next Sunday at Mission Bay. You will stay there for the whole day and have BBQ at lunchtime. You have to take many things with you, something to eat, to drink and to use. But you can take only ten. You must choose 10 things, circle them first and then number them in order of importance and give reasons.

Ten items:

tissue paper, food for BBQ, beer, bread, fruits, hat, umbrella, pocket knife, a blanket, iced box, camera, bottle of wine, matches, cards, a volleyball, bottles of drinking water, forks, paper plates, paper cups, sun-cream

(** You don't have to write down the reasons)

- No. 1 & Reason: _____
No. 2 & Reason: _____
No. 3 & Reason: _____
No. 4 & Reason: _____
No. 5 & Reason: _____
No. 6 & Reason: _____
No. 7 & Reason: _____
No. 8 & Reason: _____
No. 9 & Reason: _____
No. 10 & Reason: _____

Task 3

People in the office

(from Klippel, 1985:149)

(from Klippel, 1985:149)

What are the differences?



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149

13 Differences

	Picture A	Picture B
1	Three vases on the window	Four vases
2	Two birds	Three birds
3	A cat looking through the window	No cat
4	On the first woman's desk, the paper has writings	The paper is blank
5	The first woman's' bag is plain	The first woman's bag has three lines
6	The man's pen is black	The man's pen is white
7	The cup on the shelf is white	The cup on the shelf is black
8	On the desk in front of the woman with glasses, there are two pieces of paper under the documents	No paper
9	The man's coat has dots	The man's coat is plain
10	The middle woman wears ear-rings	No ear-rings
11	The mouse is black	The mouse is white
12	The chair has rollers	No rollers under the chair
13	The drawer of the cabinet has a handle	No handle

Task 4

Useful things for learning English

There are many things you can do to learn English outside your class, Think about ten things you can do to help yourself learn English quickly, then exchange your idea with your partner. Tell each other why and how these things may help you learning English.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Task 5

The library

(From Yorkey, 1983: 13)



15 differences:

1. man's hair colour;
2. no glasses vs. glasses;
3. woman's hair colour;
4. war and Peace vs. War or peace;
5. dictionary vs. English book;
6. no notebook vs. notebook;
7. left bookshelf HISTORY vs. Science;
8. right shelf Biography vs. History;
9. Calendar February vs. October;
10. calendar house on right vs. left;
11. calendar tree on left vs. right;
12. sign word order;
13. double door and window vs. single door and window;
14. sign above door, School Library vs. Library;
15. shape of clock.

Task 6

Five thousand dollars

You have NZD 50,000 and you can spend it only on yourself. You are going to buy something very special that you have wanted for a long time. List those things that you want to buy very much and tell each other the reasons.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Task 7

The best English teacher

What do you look for in a very good English teacher? Some people say that a good English teacher should be young, kind and pretty. What do you think that a good English teacher should be like? Discuss with your partner and see if you have same opinions.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Task 8

NO TV

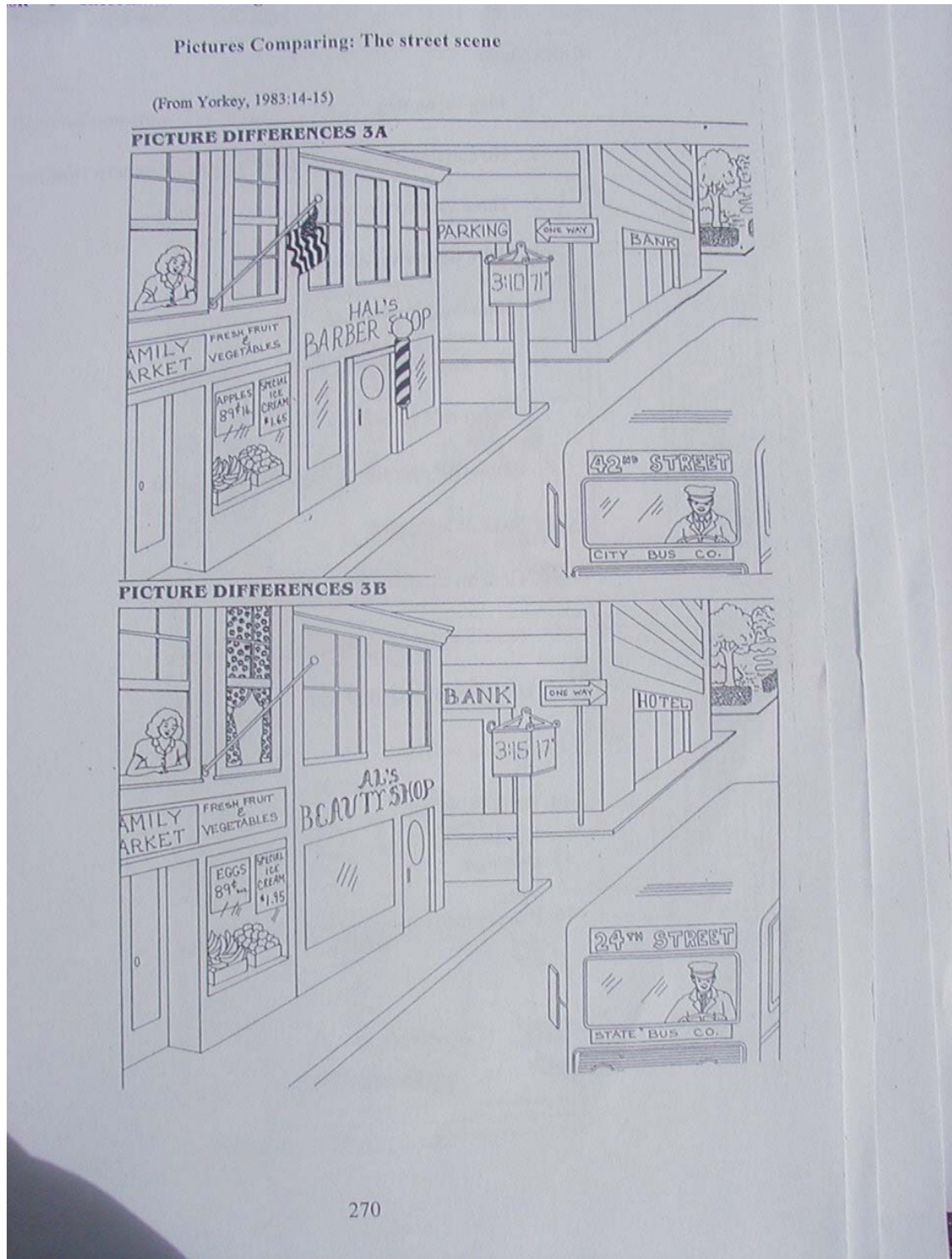
Do you watch TV a lot? Nowadays, everyone spends the evening watching TV. If you don't have a TV at home, what would you do? Think about something that you can do to spend the evening time everyday.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Task 9

The street scene

(from Yorkey, 1983: 14-15)



16 differences:

1. Flag vs. no flag
2. No curtains in closed window vs. curtains in open window
3. Three vs. two top windows in corner building
4. Hal's Barber vs. Al's Beauty shop
5. Shop door in centre vs. right
6. Two shop window vs. one
7. Barber role vs. none
8. Apples 89 cent /lb vs. eggs 89 cents /dozen
9. Price of ice cream
10. Time on clock
11. Temperature
12. Direction of one-way sign
13. Parking vs. Bank
14. Bank vs. Hotel
15. Bus sign
16. Bus company name

Task 10

Gifts

We all like to have gifts from others. Every year, we can have gifts for birthday, New Year, Christmas, etc. Sometimes we have gifts that we like very much, but sometimes we have gifts that we don't like at all. Tell each other about some gifts that you like and some gifts that you don't like, and tell **WHY!**

Gifts you like:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Gifts you don't like:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Appendix E: Transcription Key

Symbol	Meaning
A:	Student A
B:	Student B
L:	Any one of the students
T:	Teacher
LS:	More than one student
Sound:	There is an error in pronunciation
Reactive 1	Reactive FFEs
Preemptive 2	Teacher-initiated preemptive focus on form
Preemptive 3	Learner-initiated preemptive focus on form
Ele	Elementary class
Adv	Advanced class
L-L	Learner-learner interaction in pairs
T-L	Teacher-learner interaction, teacher with the whole class
T 1	Task One Opinion Exchange: Home-stay student
T 2	Task two Opinion exchanging: <i>BBQ</i>
T 3	Task Three Information gap: (Pictures comparing) <i>People in the office</i>
T 4	Task Four Opinion exchanging: <i>Useful things for learning English</i>
T 5	Information gap (Pictures comparing) <i>In the library</i>
T 6	Opinion exchanging <i>Five thousand dollars</i>
T 7	Opinion exchanging <i>What makes a good English teacher.</i>

T 8	Opinion exchanging <i>No TV</i>
T 9	Information Gap (Pictures comparing) <i>Street Scene</i>
T 10	Opinion exchanging <i>Gifts</i>
—	Lengthening
?	Rising intonation
.	Falling intonation
/	Being interrupted
<>	No answer
Utterances being underlined	Episodes of FFE
!	Being corrected

Appendix F. Samples of transcription (Task I, Home stay student)

Elementary class

Learner-Learner interactions

Pair 1. ele, t 1

A: include bed

B: include bed in New Zealand

A: a notebook, toothbrush

B: yes

A: bathing towel, computer, toilet paper, small mirror, coffee, 1...8.

B: dictionary first

A: yes.

B: desk no, same the bed.

A: bathing towel?

B: yes.

A: canned food

B: yes.

A: I don't like canned food.

B: I need canned food, when there is no power.

A: Number one is ...

B: we need light,

A: I don't need food.

1. B: I need canned food, and I sleep at mid...

A: midnight

B: yes.

(reactive1, recast 2, vocabulary2, acknowledgment 2)

A: ten is a notebook

B: because ... I am a teacher, I really need this. I need pen, notebook,

A: which is number one?

B: is computer.

A: ah.

B: yes.

A: because computer can help me know, use and study English. I think because...

B: toothbrush

A: some coffee?

B: yes.

A: some landlords think they are expensive.

B: I think number one is toothbrush, number two is toilet paper, number 3 is computer and number five is bathing towel and number seven is coffee, number eight ...

2. A: record, usually record

B: small recorder.

A: small mirror, man need small mirror too.

(reactive1, recast 2, vocabulary2, none4)

B: small TV?

A: yes.

B: ten.

A: ok, number one I choose toothbrush. You?

B: yes, because toothbrush I use by myself.

A: number two I choose toilet paper

B: toilet paper? The landlord will provide.

A: maybe woman is different, I go to toilet many times.

B: yes.

A: number two is bathing towel.

B: yes, I take shower everyday.

3. A: How many times?

B: times?

A: How many times you take a shower everyday?

B: everyday.

(pre-emptive3, repeat1, vocabulary2, wrong 5)

A: many Chinese don't like wash hair.

B: ah,

A: some Chinese people, not wash the hair, why?

B: I don't know.

A: some Chinese don't like wash hair,

4. B: I think perhaps (not clear sound)

A: per...

B: perhaps, perhaps, maybe, maybe he is high, often wash is better, but long is dirty.

(reactive1, prompt5, pronunciation3, successful1)

A: I live in Hong Kong ten years ago, some people; men did not wash the hair.

But did not wash ...no nice,

5. B: do you know when we can, another people, wash with soap (sounds like super), without soap.

A: super, how to ...?

B: sorry, soap. Without soap. Every time, with soap.

(reactive1, repeat1, pronunciation3, successful1)

A: No, I think some people did not wash with soap.

B:

Pair 2. ele, t1

A:

B: if I haven't understand, I ask Kiwi people, but if I don't know new words, I need the dictionary.

A: first thing is a dictionary?

B: yes

A: another choice?

B: I think maybe a microwave

A: I think kiwi home only have microwave for heat, maybe you want to have your own one.

B: how about computer?

A: yes.

B: computer is

A: can do my homework,

B: I see

A: number three?

B: canned food is important.

A: canned food is Chinese food. I will go to a Korean shop

B: it is very important. Everyday you have to eat Kiwi food.

A: so you need a microwave.

B: first-aid kit. Last year my cousin, when he lied down, his kiwi owner helped him.

A: I need the toothbrush.

B: you come from Korean, you come here, of course you bring.

A: I can use my own one.

B: bathing towel, I think you also, just like toothbrush.

6. A: I think I need very thic (wrong sound)..

B: thick!

A: thick? Yes, I need thick toothpaste, so I need my own toothbrush.

(reactive 1, recast 2, pronunciation 3, successful 1)

B: I think teacup is also important.

A: Chinese like tea.

B: yes

A: very good for your body.

7. B: they say green tea, if you always drink like that, no cancer

A: cancer?

B: cancer, a disease that kills people.

A: Ah, cancer. I know, yeah.

(L-pre-emptive 3, provide 4, vocabulary 2, successful 1)

B: Chinese women, they always drink it.

8. A: before I also like drinking green tea, but my teacher told me, I am skinny.

B: Skinny?

A: not fat,

B: ah. (Laughing)

(L-pre-emptive 3, provide 4, vocabulary 2, acknowledgment 2)

A: CD is important. Sometimes I like to listen to some Korean music.

B: yes. I listen to Chinese music.

Pair 3, ele, t 1

A: how about you think the first one?

B: I choose the dictionary

A: why

B: if I here, a student, in kiwi house, she or he needs a dictionary.

A: I think so, because my e/English is not enough.

B: I think this is necessary.

A: how about second

B: I think the pen and the notebook, because I come here to study.

A: I need a pen and notebook, because I learn English.

B: third is computer.

A: it is expensive

B: I know, but in the house, I can study and can play games, about you?

A: I think the teacup. I drink tea every day, I need my own cup.

B: but how about number four?

A: I thinking you decide, number four

B: number four?

9. A: teabrush, that one.

B: tea-brush? Toothbrush. (With correct sound), yeah.

A: because you need it every day.

(reactive 1, provide 4, pronunciation 3, none 4)

B: yes. I think so. I need it too. I think same as you,

A: number five, I think coffee, sometimes I am tired I drink coffee and I feel better.

10. B: I think the small mirror (sound)

A: mirror (following the wrong sound)?

B: this one.

A: oh, mirror!

B: oh mirror! yes, I can look my face.

(reactive 1, recast 2, pronunciation 3, successful 1)

A: I think it is very important. Because I want to my face. How about TV?

B: I think TV, microwave and bed are already in the home. If you need these,

A: I think the microwave don't need. TV and DVD player, I think number seven is a TV.

B: I think number seven is toilet paper. Knife for cooking, sorry change it, bathing towel, I want clean.

A: how long she stay here?

B: half year.

A: now you are very lucky, because your mother is here.

B: how about number eight?

A: ah, I think, we need a small recorder, it comes number four. Learning English,

B: how about number nine?

A: number nine is a desk.
 B: I think desk is already in the home.
 A: they got a desk for you.
 B: but sometimes the desk is very bad and very small, I can't put the computer.
 A: I think number nine knives for cooking. Because no cooking, at midnight, when I want to eat, I need the knife to cut something. Do you like watching DVD or TV?
 B: yes. I told you I choose, number one is... 2 is... 3 is4 is ... 5 is ... 6 is ... 7 is... 8 is TV 9 is DVD and 10 is desk. How about you?
 A: 1 is..2is ...3 is.. 4 is ...5 is ...6 is ...7 is....8 is... 9 is ...10 is knife for cooking. I think you have much money, you need much money, I think no good to live in Kiwi.
 B: yes. But you
 A: home stay do not allow you watch TV after 9.
 B: you can watch DVD on computer.
 A: but computer is different. No TV is better.
 B: I know.

Pair 4 , ele t1

A: I think this one, bed sheet,
 B: why?
 A: because it is a kiwi house, no my bedroom, kiwi home, I need a bed sheet. Bed sheet on the bed, second I need a toothbrush, every time I have meals, I wash my teeth. Third I need a plate, I put food. Fourth is a tea cup. I like coffee, sometimes I use the water, because different people live in the kiwi house, and five is a desk, because I learn English, number six is a computer, anything and seven is bathing towel, I need taking a shower two times a day, number eight is dictionary, I look the new words and number 9 is toilet paper, number ten is pen and notebook. Can you tell me?
 B: dictionary
 A: why
 B: because I look the new words. Computer.
 A: using the computer every day?
 B: yes, I use the computer every day. At five clocks, I read the Newspaper.
 A: Newspaper?
 B: yes.
 A: small recorder

11. B: yes, sometimes, I take tape (sound)

A: tape!

B: tape! play English sentence.

(reactive 1, recast 2, pronunciation 3, successful 1)

A: English listening

B: and fourth?

A: fourth teacup, I like drink tea

B: what kind of tea do you like?

A: green tea.

12. B: old people usually like green tea, young people and old people like red tea (sound)

A: red? Oh, red tea! (first repeat the wrong pronunciation of red , then gives the correct pronunciation)

B: red tea! Because in the day, do homework, music,

(reactive 1, recast 2, pronunciation 3, successful 1)

A: pen and notebook, yes.

B: because my English is no good.

A: next?

13. B: bed sheet. I tired, go to bed, canned food (sound)

A: canned food (stressing Canned), why?

14. B: canned food! sometimes, I no cooky,

(reactive 1, recast 2, pronunciation 3, successful 1)

A: no cooking.

B: no cooking, no cooking, I sometimes eat canned food.

(reactive 1, wrong 8, grammar 1, wrong uptake 6)

A: ok, do you cook Chinese food?

B: but, myself, no cooking,

A: you change to making food. I think Chinese men usually making food, yes?

B: sometimes.

A: I think long time. Sometimes my watching TV, because my children watch TV, I want to learn English, so together I watch TV.

15. B: toilet paper, everyday, I use toilet paper, bath towel, because every day I bath, bath.

A: bath?

B: bath.

A: shower, taking a shower?

B: yes, taking a shower!

(reactive 1, provide 4, vocabulary 2, successful 1)

A: How often do you take shower?

B: one, at night,

A: why Chinese people do not take shower in the morning?

B: I don't know.

A: what is first? what is important thing?

B: dictionary.

A: second is? My second is toothbrush.

B: toothbrush, ok.

A: toothbrush, the same?

B: yes.

A: that is third?

B: teacup

A: how many times do you drink tea?

B: tea?

A: after food, Chinese people drink tea/

B: yes, every time, we drink tea.

A: kiwi different culture, kiwi people eat each, Chinese and Korean people eat food together, share food, kiwi people own bowl and cup. Korean people use the cup together. My son uses my cup. Number five?

B: number five is ...

A: number six is

B: number six is computer.

A: I use it e-mail checking. What is number seven?

B: number seven is bathing towel

A: what is number eight.

B: toilet paper

A: number nine?

B: notebook

A: number ten?

B: is canned food.

Pair 5 ele, t1

A: in a kiwi house, I need a toothbrush, second I am a student, and I need a pen and a notebook, a computer, a small mirror

B: yes, woman needs a small mirror. Man is different.

A: same. I like watching TV. I need a small TV

B: yes. No toilet paper?

A: no. Kiwi's home give already, already toilet paper. I don't need ..

B: I don't need to take, already.

A: yes.

B: microwave no,

A: I agree, because it is kiwi house.

B: I am going to live in kiwi home, I need to a computer.

A: yes, because computer can learn a lot, small recorder.

B: the small recorder, I record my speech and I listen.

A: about the sound.

B: DVD player.

A: I don't need, you watch video?

B: yes.

T-L ele, T1

T: let's say form the first one, what did you choose for the first one?

L: Bed sheet.

T: why?

L: sleeping is very important. Different house, cleaning...

T: don you think the kiwi home will give you a bed sheet?

L: yes.

T; why not use their bed sheet?

L: for cleaning.

T: so you think the bed sheet in the kiwi home is not clean. Why not?

L: because just afraid. . Many people might have slept on it.

T: Do you agree?

L: yes.

T: what do you choose?

L: number one is toothbrush.

T: why?

L: useful.

T: why it's useful.

16. L: I always clean teeth.

T: you always brush your teeth, every day.

L: yes, brush my teeth, three times.

(reactive 1, recast 2, vocabulary 2, successful 1)

T: yes, do you think kiwi home will give you toothbrush. What is the next one? Your group?

L: first one maybe a dictionary.

T: why?

17. L: because I don't prepare something, I can ask them, I can search dictionary new words, and tell them and say I need this.

T: so if you want to talk to the people, you can look up the dictionary? Do you all agree?

L: yes.

(reactive 1, recast 2, voc, 2, no opp 3)

T: so next one, number four,

L: we think number four is bathing towel,

T: why this one?

L: we think, toothbrush is more important than bathing towel, many people used the bathing towel.

T: what about your group?

L: we choose pens and notebooks

T: why?

L: we think because we study.

T: any other choice?

L: desk.

T: Have all of you chosen desk?

L: No.

T: why not?

L: we think the house already has the desk.

T: so usually if you are a home stay student, the home will give you a desk, the chair, bed, so you have to choose another one. How about you?

L: I think computer.

T: computer. Why?

18. L: play game, watch news,

T: can you watch news on computer?

Ls: yes.

T: you can watch news by going on the----

Ls: Internet.

T: yes, the Internet. Do you watch news or read news on computer?

Ls: read news!

(reactive 1, request 3, vocabulary 2, successful 1)

T: yes, you read news on computer, because you watch what?

Ls: TV.

T: any other use of computer.

L: typing.

T: typing what?

Ls; homework.

T: any other use?

L: email.

T; why do you send e-mail?

L: to friends.

T: others.

L; we can chat.

T: you can talk to each other and see each other. On computer, you can also, is it has a cd rom, you can watch---

LS: movies, karaoke,

T: watch cds, dvd, If you have a cd rom program, you can learn English, you can practice speaking, reading, listening.

The end