

## Impact of Immediate and Delayed Error Correction on EFL Learners' Oral Production: CAF

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**Abstract** *As the purpose of communication in second/foreign language learning can be complex, fluent and accurate speech, the best type of correcting learners' errors need to be taken into consideration. The aim of this study was to investigate an effective error correction method (in this case immediate and/or delayed) in developing learners' complexity, fluency and accuracy in speech. The other aim was to measure the level of anxiety that students experience in the class while the teacher corrects their errors immediately or with some delay. 20 female intermediate EFL learners aged 15 to 20 were chosen from one of the English language institutes in Isfahan, Iran. The participants were divided into 2 groups of 10. For G1 errors were corrected immediately and for G2 with some delay, i.e. after finishing their speech during 30 sessions. At the end of the term, each student was asked to discuss one of the topics they had discussed during the term while their voices were recorded and transcribed later. Measures of accuracy, fluency, and complexity were developed and the results showed that delayed error correction has positive effect on fluency and accuracy but not on complexity. For the second aim, a Foreign Language Anxiety questionnaire was given to all the participants at the end of the term and the results indicated that G2 with delayed correction experienced less anxiety in class.*

**Keywords:** *error correction, CAF, anxiety, fluency, complexity, accuracy*

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### 1. Introduction

The importance of errors and their correction has never been ignored by teachers of second languages as well as practitioners in first language acquisition. It is generally agreed that correction is part of teaching and learning process. Second language acquisition (SLA) researchers have claimed that the feedback provided during conversational interaction facilitates the acquisition process (Long, 1977; Swain, 1985). Helpful interactional processes include the negotiation of meaning and provisions of recasts, both of which can supply corrective feedback to let learners realize that their utterances were problematic.

Lightbown and Spada (1999) claimed corrective feedback is useful. Swain's (1985) study also suggested that treatment of errors helps students learn better, whether the feedback is explicit or implicit. Recasts as a way to provide learners with feedback have also drawn considerable attention. Long (1990) believes feedback can facilitate learning a second language. The findings of a host of other researchers are also in line with what Long says. Some though have focused on the different modes of corrective feedback and wished to find out which of the different methods of giving feedback employed by the teacher is/are more fruitful.

However, there is a fact that over-correction or poor correction techniques can be demotivating for the learners and, especially when oral performance is focused, may lead to reluctant speakers who may never try out a new language or even to speak at all. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of when to correct learners' errors so that learners' speaking abilities will promote without damaging their confidence.

Some language teachers suggest that students' errors should be corrected immediately when the aim of the lesson is to promote accuracy. So attention to errors at this stage may improve the chances of later correct use of language. However, it is believed that when the aim of learning a language is fluency, gentle and delayed correction techniques are required in order not to damage the flow of the activity (in this study speaking) or the confidence of learners.

Thus, since the overall purpose of nearly all language learners taking foreign language courses is improving their oral production, teachers must be aware of this fact and try to help learners achieve this goal. Hence, teachers must be conscious of techniques used in the classroom. They must have enough knowledge for choosing the best techniques of correcting learners' errors to promote their oral proficiency. Based on what was stated above, the purpose of the present study was to investigate the effects of immediate and delayed error correction on the complexity, accuracy, and fluency in students' speaking. The other aim of the study was to investigate the anxiety that students experience in their English classes, especially while speaking, when the teacher corrects their errors on the spot or after finishing their speech. It was done via an anxiety questionnaire which will be discussed in later sections.

The study therefore addressed the following research questions:

1. Does delayed error correction increase complexity in speech compared to immediate correction?
2. Does delayed error correction increase accuracy in speech compared to immediate correction?
3. Does delayed error correction increase fluency in speech compared to immediate correction?
4. Does immediate error correction increase students' anxiety more than delayed correction?

Based on aforementioned questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no difference between delayed and immediate error correction in the amount of complexity they impose on one's speech.
2. There is no difference between delayed and immediate error correction in the amount of accuracy they impose on one's speech.
3. There is no difference between delayed and immediate error correction in the amount of fluency they impose on one's speech.
4. Immediate error correction does not increase students' anxiety.

## 2. Background to the Study

### 2.1. Research on Corrective Feedback

Corrective feedback is a response by which the addressee intends to correct the speaker's erroneous utterance. The incorrect utterance can consist of grammatical errors, meaning errors or inappropriate use of lexical items. According to Ellis et al. (2006), corrective feedback is a response to a learner's erroneous utterance by: i) indicating where the error has occurred; ii) providing the correct structure of the erroneous utterance; or, iii) providing metalinguistic information describing the nature of the error, or any combination of these.

Studies on corrective feedback have focused on its nature and its role in language teaching and learning (Panova and Lyster, 2002). One such study is an experimental research which investigated the effects of recast and metalinguistic corrective feedback on the acquisition of past tense -ed in a normal classroom situation (Ellis, Leowen, and Erlam, 2006). The participants were 34 English-as-a-second language (ESL) learners and their proficiency level was lower intermediate. The participants were divided into three groups: two experimental and one control groups. Groups 1 and 2 completed two communicative tasks in two consecutive days. During the tasks, Group 1 received metalinguistic feedback and Group 2 received recast feedback, in response to past tense -ed errors. The control group did not complete the tasks nor did they receive any feedback on the errors. The assessment procedure was carried out in three stages: a pre-test, a posttest and a delayed test. The pre-test was conducted before the instructional tasks. The post-test

and the delayed test were conducted one day and two weeks after the instruction, respectively. During the communicative tasks, Group 1 elicited more correct target forms (56% of total target forms elicited) compared with Group 2 (48%). There was also a significant difference between the two groups' pre-test versus the delayed test results. Overall, the results showed Group 1 performed better than Group 2.

In another study, using on-line chatting technology, Leowen and Erlam (2006) replicated the experiment by Ellis, Leowen, and Erlam (2006). The participants were 31 ESL elementary level learners who were divided into three groups: Group 1 received metalinguistic feedback; Group 2 received recast feedback, and a control group who did not receive any feedback. The assessment phase of the study was the same as that of Ellis, Leowen, and Erlam (2006) (see above); it was carried on in three stages. The pre-test was given before the chatting phase, while the post-test and the delayed test were conducted one day and two weeks after it, respectively. The study concluded that although Group 1 produced more correct target forms (52%) than Group 2 (46%), the results showed no significant difference between Group 1 and Group 2 performance in both pre-test to post-test and pre-test to the delayed test results.

One experimental study investigated which one of three types of corrective feedback (metalinguistic, metalinguistic + elicitation, and repetition + elicitation) is the most effective on learners' uptake while using a CALL system (T. Heift, 2004). Learner's uptake means the student's response to correct his or her mistake(s). The CALL system known as E-Tutor was developed for the learners who wanted to practice various exercises on German vocabulary and grammar. The experiment was done in four stages: a pre-test, the system usage sessions, a post-test, and questionnaires. The pre-test was taken by the participants before using the system. The participants, who were university students, used the system for an entire semester (15 weeks) and completed exercises provided in each chapter. The post-test and questionnaires were given to the participants at the end of the semester.

Results yielded that the participants were most likely to correct their errors (87.4%) when provided with metalinguistic + elicitation, compared to the provision of metalinguistic (86.9%) and repetition + elicitation (81.7%). Overall, the metalinguistic + elicitation is the most effective method for the learners' uptake.

Another work was an experimental study of effective corrective feedback strategies for learning the Spanish subjunctive mood in a Web-based CALL system (A. Ferreira, 2006). The author classified corrective feedback into two different groups: Giving-Answer Strategies (GAS) and Prompting-Answer Strategies (PAS). Examples of GAS are repetition and explicit correction feedback, while PAS includes metalinguistic and elicitation.

The experiment was done in three stages: a pre-test, three treatment sessions, and a post-test. All participants were randomly assigned to form three groups, each consisting of 8 members. The first group received PAS feedback in response to incorrect answers and positive acknowledgment for correct answers during the treatment sessions. The second group received GAS feedback and positive acknowledgment.

The third group, a control group, received only positive and negative acknowledgment during the treatment sessions. Overall results showed that the PAS group had performed better than the GAS group, and both better than the control group.

A good number of studies have distinguished between direct and indirect feedback strategies and investigated the extent to which they facilitate greater accuracy (e.g. Lalanda, 1982; Robb et al., 1986; Ferris, 1995a, b; Ferris and Hedgcock, 1998). Direct or explicit feedback occurs when the teacher identifies an error and provides the correct form of it, while indirect strategies refer to situations when the teacher indicates that an error has been made but does not provide the correction, thereby leaving the student to diagnose and correct it.

A few error correction studies demonstrate the efficacy of direct corrective feedback. (e.g. Komura, 1999; Roberts, 1999; Ferris et al., 2000; Rennie, 2000).

Assuming that the teacher does not ignore errors, s/he has a series of choices to go for (Allwright 1975, p. 46):

1. To treat them immediately or to delay their treatment;

2. To correct the error maker directly or to transfer the treatment to another individual, subgroup, or the whole class;
3. If the treatment is transferred to others, whether to return to the original error maker to see if he is now aware of his error and how to correct it;
4. Whether the teacher or another learner provide the correct treatment;
5. Whether to test for the efficacy of the treatment; (p.46)

Finally, in a more recent study, Dabbaghi (2006) investigated the effects of immediate and delayed error correction on students' oral production. However, the focus of his study was on learners' pronunciation. Dabbaghi chose 70 learners for his study randomly and divided them into two groups, the immediate correction group and the delayed correction group. The treatment was done during some sessions and after that a posttest was used. Students' discussions were recorded and then transcribed. Dabbaghi finally concluded that if teachers are to select one of the two options, i.e. immediate or delayed correction, it would be preferable to them to choose delayed correction.

## 2.2. Oral Production: CAF

The notions of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) have been employed in a number of studies on the acquisition and use of a second language. However, such studies do not constitute a theory or a research program in themselves. They are dimensions for describing language performance, most frequently used as dependent variables to assess variation with respect to independent variables such as acquisitional level or task features. CAF measures can also be used to describe performance by native speakers or first language learners.

Fluency can be defined as 'the capacity to produce speech at normal rate and without interruption' or as 'the production of language in real time without undue pausing or hesitation' (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 139). Both the definitions imply some normative reference, usually assumed to correspond to native speakers' behavior. Fluency is a multidimensional construct, in which sub-dimensions can be recognized, such as breakdown fluency, repair fluency, speed fluency (Tavakoli and Skehan 2005). Once it is established which of these sub-dimensions is at issue, it is in principle relatively transparent what is being measured.

Accuracy is perhaps the simplest and most internally coherent construct, referring to the degree of conformity to certain norms. At least since Bley Vroman's (1983) article on the 'comparative fallacy', it is clear that accuracy per se is not a direct indicator of interlanguage development. Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1998: 33) acknowledge this when they write that 'the purpose of accuracy measures is precisely the comparison with target-like use. Whether that comparison reveals or obscures something about language development is another question'.

Complexity is certainly the most problematic construct of the CAF triad because of its polysemous nature. It would be preferable, following Skehan and differently from Robinson, to call the former 'difficulty', specifying that it means objective difficulty that is inherent to the task, and thus different from subjective difficulty, which arises from the encounter of a subject's (in) competences with a task. Climbing Mount Everest is objectively more difficult (i.e. more difficult for everyone) than climbing Ben Nevis, even though climbing both mountains is for me subjectively more difficult than for an experienced mountaineer.

Even restricting the use of complexity to performance description, it still retains multiple meanings, because it can be applied to different aspects of language and communication. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 153-4) list eight of these aspects, including lexical, interactional, propositional, and various types of grammatical complexity.

It was not until 1989 that measures of CAF were used in the measurement of learners' performance on tasks. It should be noted, though, that even today SLA still lacks suitable measures and that this remains a problem in defining development.

For instance, Ellis (2003) identifies a methodological problem in task-based CAF studies: ‘... the failure of many of the studies to provide precise specifications of the proficiency of the learners’. In his article, Ellis also discusses the differential effects of rehearsal, strategic planning, and within-task planning on the fluency, complexity, and accuracy of L2 production. Ellis’ review shows how complicated it is to ascertain the effects of planning on task performance. Not only do the three dimensions of CAF have to be measured for each of the three types of planning, but also Ellis reports that the learners’ language proficiency, attitudes, and orientation to a task make a difference. In addition, the context in which the study is conducted, a classroom or a laboratory, also affects the CAF of learner performance. Ellis also poses an important question; some would say the important question, of how learner performance on a task at one time connects to acquisition over time.

Skehan (1998) suggests that human attention capacity and working memory are limited and that when learners direct their attention to one dimension of CAF, it may reduce their attention for other areas—the Trade-off Hypothesis. In line with Ellis, Skehan (2001) also points out the importance of task characteristics and task conditions in affecting CAF. Also in a note similar to Ellis, Skehan maintains that ‘learners can prioritize attention to particular areas’ and that ‘... task performance seems to be the result of an interpretation by the task participants of what they should do’. In other words, it is the learners who shift their goals and prioritize certain areas—complexity or accuracy—and that what they choose to prioritize is different for different learners, some prioritizing complexity and some others accuracy. As Skehan (2001) suggests, different participants ‘seemed to gravitate to different aspects of form’.

### *2.3. Personality Factors: Anxiety*

Foreign language (FL) anxiety is a complex, multidimensional phenomenon referring to “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language [L2] contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning” (MacIntyre&Gardner, 1994, p. 284). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) identified three components of FL anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people” (p. 127). People who typically have trouble speaking in groups are likely to experience even greater difficulty speaking in an FL class where they have little control over the communicative situation and their performance is constantly monitored. Test anxiety refers to “a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” (p. 127). Students with test anxiety often demand more of themselves than they are capable of achieving and worry about their performance. Fear of negative evaluation involves “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Watson & Friend, 1969, cited in Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Like individuals with communication apprehension, people who fear negative evaluation rarely initiate conversation and interact minimally (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Language students who experience this anxiety “tend to sit passively in the classroom, withdraw from activities that could increase their language skills, and may even avoid class entirely” (pp. 562–563).

The studies revealed that anxiety exists in almost every aspect of L2/FL learning and that much of the anxiety is associated with understanding and speaking the target language. Speaking publicly in the target language is particularly anxiety provoking for many students, even those who feel little stress in other aspects of language learning (Horwitz, 1995). Anxious students are less likely to volunteer answers or to participate in oral classroom activities (Ely, 1986). They also engage in such behavior as skipping classes and postponing their homework (Argaman & Abu-Rabia, 2002).

Qualitative studies have suggested that unwillingness to communicate and anxiety affect each other in L2/FL learning. As a result of anxiety, English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as Second Language learners often choose to remain silent and are unwilling or less willing than other students to participate in speech communication in class; then, because of their silence and unwillingness to speak the language in

class, they become (more) anxious (Hilleson, 1996; Jackson, 2002; Liu, 2006; Tsui, 1996). Few studies to date however have intentionally tried to examine these two factors in the same situation, either qualitatively or quantitatively (Liu, 2006).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 20 female intermediate EFL learners aged 15 to 20, at one of the English language institutes in Isfahan, Iran. All participants took the placement test required for being accepted to study English in the institute. The participants were divided into 2 groups of 10. For one group the errors were corrected immediately and for the other group with some delay, i.e. after finishing their speech.

#### 3.2. Materials

The second book of New Interchange series, third edition (Richards, Hull, & Proctor 2005) which is taught in most of the language institutes nowadays across Isfahan was taught during 30 sessions of an English class. The students studied the first 8 units of the book in these sessions.

#### 3.3. Procedure

As New Interchange series contain many topics for discussion, in order to carry out this research, 5 of these topics were selected randomly and students were involved in discussing them. During the discussions, the errors for one group (G1) were corrected immediately and for the other group (G2) with delay, i.e. after finishing their speech. At the end of the term, each student was asked to discuss one of these 5 topics while their voices were recorded. All the recordings were then transcribed in order to investigate the effects of each type of correction on participants' complexity, accuracy, and fluency in speaking. Measures of accuracy, fluency, and complexity were developed to evaluate the quality of the participants' oral production. These measures were largely the same as those used in other studies (e.g. Crookes 1989; Foster and Skehan 1996; and Wendel 1997). Ellis (2003) defines the measures of CAF as follows (p 117):

*Fluency measures:* number of words per minute, number of syllables per minute, number of pauses of one/two second(s) or longer, number of repetitions

*Accuracy measures:* number of self-corrections, percentage of error-free clauses, target-like use of verb tenses, target-like use of articles, target-like use of vocabulary, target-like use of plurals, target-like use of negation, ratio of indefinite to definite articles

*Complexity measures:* number of turns per minute, frequency of use of conjunctions, frequency of use of prepositions, amount of subordination, e.g. total number of clauses divided by the total number of c-units

Also, a Foreign Language Anxiety questionnaire by Horwitz et al., (1986) was given to all the participants at the end of the term in order to measure their level of anxiety while speaking English regarding the impact of immediate and delayed error correction. Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) measures three dimensions of FL anxiety: fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety. There are 12 items (2, 3, 10, 13, 19, 20, 25, 30, 31, 33, 35, and 36) that indexed the first FLCAS component (FLCAS1), fear of negative evaluation. All the FLCAS1 items made reference to the fear of making mistakes, or of being negatively evaluated in English classrooms, or both, and seven items (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, and 32) reflect the second FLCAS component (FLCAS2), communication apprehension, or fear of speaking English in class. Two items (8 and 21) comprise the third FLCAS component (FLCAS3), test anxiety, which entailed feelings about English tests. In this study, I chose just 13 of these questions which are related to the first and second subcomponent of FLCAS as they are appropriate for the present study.

Students were asked to choose agree or disagree to answer the questions. One score was considered for each positive answer and zero score for negative answer, i.e. disagreement.

#### 4. Results

After transcribing the recordings, CAF measures were put to use. For fluency, all the measures mentioned above were calculated but for accuracy, just the number of self-corrections, percentage of error-free clauses, and target-like use of verb tenses were considered. Also for the complexity measures, the frequency of conjunctions, frequency of use of prepositions, and amount of subordinations were considered. Mean and T-test were applied to compare the results between two groups. The following tables show the obtained results:

**Table 1. Fluency measures for groups 1 and 2**

Fluency measures		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Number of words per minute	G1	64.10	8.15	-3.90	.004
	G2	74.90	7.54		
Number of syllables per minute	G1	73.20	8.21	-4.59	.001
	G2	86.60	9.09		
Number of pauses of one/two second(s) or longer	G1	5.80	1.93	5.23	.001
	G2	2.60	1.57		
Number of repetitions	G1	9.30	2.79	5.66	.000
	G2	5.70	1.33		

**Table 2. Accuracy measures for groups 1 and 2**

Accuracy measures		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Number of self-corrections	G1	1.80	1.61	-6.22	.000
	G2	4.30	1.33		
Percentage of error-free clauses	G1	52.80	12.26	-4.07	.003
	G2	67.90	8.02		
Target-like use of verb tenses	G1	1.13	19.97	-4.30	.002
	G2	1.52	28.21		

**Table 3. Complexity measures for groups 1 and 2**

Complexity measures		Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Frequency of use of conjunctions	G1	9.20	2.14	-.95	.363
	G2	9.90	1.44		
Frequency of use of prepositions	G1	21.20	5.32	-.29	.773
	G2	21.90	5.13		
Amount of subordination	G1	69.20	12.32	.59	.568
	G2	65.70	11.39		

Also the results of Anxiety questionnaire are as follows:

Table 4. The results of the anxiety questionnaire

	G1	G2
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in my class.	%60	%40
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in the English class.	%30	%80
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in the English class.	%58	%42
4. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the English class.	%73	%58
5. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.	%57	%30
6. I feel confident when I speak English in class.	%40	%60
7. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	%80	%32
8. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	%25	%48
9. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English in class.	%49	%38
10. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.	%71	%53
11. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	%81	%46
12. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	%83	%66
13. I get tense and nervous when I have to discuss things unfamiliar to me in English.	%76	%45

## 5. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Many researchers and language practitioners believe that the constructs of L2 performance and L2 proficiency are multi-componential in nature, and that their principal dimensions can be adequately, and comprehensively, captured by the notions of complexity, accuracy and fluency (Skehan 1998; Ellis 2003; Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005). CAF have been used both as performance descriptors for the oral and written assessment of language learners as well as indicators of learners' proficiency underlying their performance; they have also been used for measuring progress in language learning.

This study investigated the effects of two types of error correction, i.e. delayed and immediate error correction, on complexity, accuracy, and fluency of intermediate EFL learners. As the results of this study in the previous part show, delayed error correction has positive effect on fluency and accuracy but not on complexity. For G1, errors were corrected immediately and for G2, with some delay, i.e., after finishing their speech. There were four measures for fluency. The result of t-test for number of words used by two groups indicate that the second group with delayed error correction used more words per minute compared to G1 (MeanG1=64.1; MeanG2=74.9;  $p=.004$ ). G2 also used more syllables per minute in comparison to G1 (MeanG1=73.2; MeanG2=86.6;  $p=.001$ ). G2 had fewer pauses in speaking (MeanG1=5.8; MeanG2=2.6;  $p=.001$ ). Also, they had fewer repetitions in speaking which lead to more fluent speakers (MeanG1=9.3; MeanG2=5.7;  $p=.000$ ). All of these measures show that G2 had better performance compared to G1 and they were more fluent speakers. Therefore, it can be claimed that delayed error correction had positive effect on fluency.

As for accuracy, three measures were considered. G2 had more self-correction for their errors than G1 (MeanG1=1.8; MeanG2=4.3;  $p=.000$ ). It means that G2 were more cautious about English rules and they were more accurate than the first group. G2 also used more error-free clauses (MeanG1=52.80; MeanG2=67.90;  $p=.003$ ). Use of target-like verb tenses for G2 was more than G1 (MeanG1=1.13; MeanG2=1.52;  $p=.002$ ). Like fluency, delayed error correction had positive effect on accuracy.

Unlike fluency and accuracy, complexity did not improve with delayed correction. The reason might be the proficiency level of participants in this study. They were all intermediate learners and could not use

complex grammatical structures frequently. G2 used more conjunctions and prepositions. However, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant and they used less subordination.

The results of the anxiety questionnaire indicate that G2 with delayed correction experienced less anxiety in class and they were more relaxed to answer the questions or participate in discussions.

The result of this study which is on oral performance is in line with findings on writing. For instance, Lalande's (1982) experimental group of U.S. students of German as a second language improved in grammatical accuracy on subsequent writing after using an error code to rewrite, whereas the control group, which received direct correction from the teacher, actually made more errors on the essay at the end of the semester. However, the difference between the groups' improvement was not statistically significant. On the other hand, in

Frantzen's (1995) study of U.S. college students of intermediate Spanish, both the grammar-supplementation group receiving direct correction and the non-grammar group whose errors were marked but not corrected improved in overall grammar usage on the post essay. Neither group showed significant improvement in written fluency over the semester, however. All four of Robb et al.'s (1986) treatment groups of Japanese college students learning English improved in various measures of accuracy after receiving different types of error feedback-direct correction, notation of the type of error using a code, notation in the text of the location of error, and marginal feedback about the number of errors in the line. All of Robb et al.'s treatment groups improved in fluency and in syntactic complexity. Also Chandler, J. (2003) in his study concluded that correction resulted in the largest increase in accuracy both for revisions and for subsequent writing.

A final word here is that error treatment is not a new realm of study in SLA. When it comes to correcting the learner's errors, millions of ways might emerge according to what the philosophy of the teacher is, what his or her attitude towards correction is, what method of teaching is being used and a host of other factors which could play major parts in the game of correction. DeKeyser (1993) believes correction works in case of high ability and also low-anxiety learners. Swain's (1985) study also suggests that treatment of errors helps students learn better, whether the feedback is explicit or implicit. There are myriads of ways to respond to errors and it can be rightfully claimed that these different ways are inexhaustible. Likewise the attitudes towards error correction seem to widely vary from extremely negative to the other extreme on attitude continuum.

What this study suggests as a concluding statement is that correcting student' errors with delay, i.e. after finishing their speech, can be of greater impact on the EFL learners at intermediate level to enhance their speaking ability, i.e. it might be helpful in improving the fluency and accuracy of speech. Further research is needed to investigate whether it has the same results for advanced learners and beginners or not. Also other researches can be done to compare the effects on learners of different age and sex groups.

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