

EFFECT OF CORRECTION IN WRITING ACCURACY

THE EFFECT OF CORRECTION ON EFL STUDENTS' WRITING ACCURACY

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DEDICATORY

*To my lovely parents, because it is for you that I
even got a chance to begin this whole journey in the first
place. Thank you for your love, support and patience.*

We did it!

We finally did it!

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ABSTRACT

Error correction has been the subject of research in numerous studies for decades now. In spite of this, there is still uncertainty on when to correct students and the most appropriate ways to perform this common teaching practice. Consequently, this action research study intends to shed some light regarding the effects revealed in students' writings when the Elicitation and Explicit correction techniques are implemented to correct grammatical errors. For this purpose, the written compositions of ninth-grade EFL learners were gathered in 14 sessions and later analyzed under the principles of the Error Analysis theory. Findings, supported by interviews and observations, evidence that those two correction techniques have a positive effect on writing accuracy, leading to a decreased in the number of errors committed by the participants. Moreover, the results suggest that the explicit correction technique had an overall higher impact in the reduction of errors, nonetheless, the elicitation technique displays a long-lasting effect on learners' accuracy.

Keywords:

Error correction, Elicitation technique, Explicit correction technique, Error analysis, Grammatical accuracy, EFL learning.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Errors constitute a very important part of a student's learning process and correcting them are an inherent part of teaching. But as important as it is, from my experience as a teacher and student of a foreign language, I could evidence that some teachers are still unsure about the best way to correct their students' errors without discouraging them and inhibiting their communication, and what is more important, they are unaware of the real impact that correction has on their students.

For this reason, in this action research study, a case of error analysis was carried out, intended to explore the possible effects of correction in students' writing accuracy, evidenced in their written compositions. For this purpose, the participants were divided into two groups, both receiving correction for a period of approximately 12 weeks, however, exposed to a different treatment, i.e. two different correction techniques (the elicitation and explicit correction techniques). As there are many variables and possibilities regarding Error Correction, it seemed appropriate to test only the two techniques mentioned before, given that a recent study conducted in the United States (Vásquez, 2007, p. 94) found that those two techniques were among the most used by the teachers when handling learners' errors.

As a language learner of English, I was already aware of the importance of Error Correction (henceforth, EC) because I knew it was alright to make errors since I could learn from them. However, as a teacher, Error Correction only awakened my curiosity while doing an activity with one of the groups in my teaching practicum. Some recurrent errors from my students made me reflect upon the possibility that my feedback was not being effective and

therefore not helpful for the students' learning process. Later on, this idea was reinforced when I worked with another group of students with a completely different background and the same phenomenon repeated, I provided correction, nonetheless, the students continued making the same errors. As a result, I decided to carry out this research project in order to find out, mainly, whether correction has any effects on students' writing accuracy or not, and if so, what are those possible effects evidenced in their writing compositions.

In the following sections of this first chapter, the importance of this project is discussed in the justification. Followed by the problem statement in which the origin and conception of this research project is presented. The first chapter concludes with the presentation of the research question and objectives. In the subsequent chapter the development of the theoretical constructs underlying the study are discussed. Afterwards, the research procedures that were implemented in order to conduct the study are described. In the fourth chapter, the approaches and methodologies that served as the basis for the implementation of this project are presented along with the pedagogical intervention per se. Lastly, for chapters five and six, the analysis of the data collected throughout the implementation as well as the findings and conclusions derived from the analysis, are discussed in each chapter respectively.

Justification

As it was stated in the beginning of this chapter, error correction is essential in the learning process, nevertheless not only students can take advantage of this teaching practice. Corder (1967, p.167) argues that errors are beneficial in several ways: first of all, it allows the teacher to tell how far the progress of the student has come and also tell how much he/she has still to learn. Secondly, it is useful for the student as well, since making errors can be used by

him/her as a learning mechanism. Furthermore, it is beneficial for researchers too, who are interested in knowing how language is acquired, meaning that it reveals the strategies that the learner employs in the learning process.

Correction is a process that occurs in every language classroom whether the teacher is aware of it or not, and it presents itself in several different ways. It may be provided to the learner by the teacher, by other classmates or even by the student himself. Sometimes it is expressed through written or spoken means. Correction occurs at different stages of the lesson and it is not exclusive to any specific population, background, or any given language. Acquiring a deeper understanding of how correction functions and occurs is vital to realize the real impact this language phenomenon has in our students.

By carrying out this experiment, one could increase the already existing knowledge and comprehension about correction and how it affects students. Therefore, it will allow teachers to realize whether this practice that they so often perform in their classroom, consciously or not, actually helps students or if on the contrary, it has no real beneficial effects and may even harm or delay the learning process.

Consequently, students will obtain value from this research by enhancing teachers understanding on the effects of correction, therefore allowing them to use error correction to students' advantage by consciously giving feedback in a more organized, structured manner, perhaps utilizing one of the techniques implemented on this research and giving more importance to his phenomenon of the language classroom. As a result of this research, teachers will be able to help students in a much greater manner by facilitating feedback that could actually improve students' accuracy when making writing compositions, and by doing so, enhancing students' confidence and willingness to take risks in the language and take advantage of the

learning opportunities that correction may offer, and eventually, leading students to consider writing (accurately) as another means to express their ideas, thoughts, feelings, desires, etc.

This research intends, not only to be beneficial to students, but also to enrich our teaching practices. Teachers have to become aware of the procedures they use in the classroom, as Vásquez's study (2007, p. 94) revealed, the teachers who were observed in her research were not conscious of the way they corrected their students, therefore, they were not consistent about how and when best to do it. However, more important than this, teachers have to understand how their actions and practices in the classroom affect students and their learning processes. Hence, it is crucial that correcting becomes a conscious process for teachers and hopefully as a result of this study, they will be able to refine their teaching practices by using suitable strategies in order to help students improve their writing skills by giving an appropriate and suitable feedback.

Regarding the impact on the EFL field, this research attempts to raise awareness on the importance of a conscious correction, meaning that, independently of the effects found on this research, whether positive or negative, it is important to open the discussion about this topic, and study a practice that teachers have been carrying out for years. As a result, doing this research could shed some light into the impact of this practice in teaching, particularly in teaching English, and from this point on (with some further research) determine whether teachers should continue with this practice and perhaps modify it in some way to make it more practical and beneficial for students or if on the contrary, it should be abolished from the classroom for not showing any clear benefits in students' learning process. Unquestionably, this research solely would not be enough to reach such conclusions, nevertheless, it would serve as a means for opening the door to the discussion and highlight the topic of correction in the classroom in order to make teachers and people in the field reflect upon it. Certainly, this research intends to raise

awareness and explore a topic that is not quite thought of in teachers' everyday practice and that it should be more discussed and studied, regardless of your standpoint.

Problem Statement

As important as error correction is, it was never one of the main aspects I focused on when I taught my students. Nevertheless, EC awakened my curiosity some time ago while teaching a group of tenth graders in my teaching practicum, especially in one particular lesson. It was the first session I had with this group and since I had to follow the syllabus proposed by the school and the teacher's previous work with the students, I proposed an introductory activity to get to know them better and get a glimpse of their English proficiency level. In the activity, the students had to introduce themselves and give some personal information including activities that they used to do but no longer did. The activity started and as the students participated, naturally I provided correction to different aspects of their speech, giving particular attention to the use of the grammatical structure "used to". One of the most common mistakes the students made was not on how they used the structure, instead it was the pronunciation of it. I pointed out in different occasions the correct pronunciation, however, what I found interesting (and somewhat frustrating at the time) was that despite my endless corrections, they kept making the same mistake. This phenomenon repeated in other lessons as well.

Sometime after, I was in a different school and was assigned a new group, and even though this group had a completely different background, the same pattern repeated. This time the activity consisted on a series of comparisons the students had to make with the characters of a television show. The focus of the lesson was primarily in the used of comparative and superlative adjectives in order to construct the comparisons after I previously presented the

structures to the students. Once again, even though I had already explained the use of those grammatical structures and corrected the students as they participated, there was some recurrent mistakes.

The experience with the participants of the present study was quite similar to the latter. The first part of the needs analysis began with a meeting with the home-room teacher, which I arrange in order to gather information about the school, the classes she was currently giving the students, her methodology and “dynamics” in the classroom, and of course information about the population for this study. Regarding the methodology and dynamics in her English class, the teacher did not give any concrete information about it. However, when asked about the general students’ level of proficiency in English, she said, and I quote, “They don’t know absolutely anything” which at the time did not felt surprising since you do not expect to find a good level of English in students of a regular public school in Bogota. She also said that they didn’t really like English, and that she tried different activities to motivate them but it didn’t seem to work. Her comments about the students gave me an idea of the population, erroneous, as I would realize later on, however it would serve as a starting point to design my diagnostic activity and prepare my first lesson for the students.

After some days I asked the teacher a few minutes of her class with the population to be able to apply a sociocultural survey to the students and select those who would become the participants of the study. In the two subsequent lessons I applied my diagnostic activities in order to know the students’ proficiency level of English. In the first of those lessons, based on the teacher’s remarks about the students, I prepared a brief list of grammatical topics to review with them that included grammatical categories (subject, verb, adverb, etc.), Verb to be, simple

present, simple past, articles, possessives, among others, in order to check previous knowledge and their overall level in this respect.

I then continued the lesson with an activity in which the students had to introduce themselves and give some information about them. One of the purposes was to start getting to know the students more and also to see their level, now in terms of speaking. However, because of the time, we had to stop the activity only after three students had participated, because they had to go to their next class.

For the second session we continued with the presentations, however this time they had to make a written description of themselves first, and then introduce themselves out loud for their classmates to listen and write a second description, however this time about one of their partners. The purpose of this activity was to check their ability in the writing skill, since given that the emphasis of this project was going to be placed on writing, it was important to revise their level on this skill as well.

At the end of this needs analysis, I was very pleased to find out that the students actually had a pretty good knowledge and understanding of the structures reviewed in the first session. Additionally, after correcting those first writings, I noticed that in fact, the students were able to generate basic sentences using some grammatical structures, which was far from the description their teacher made about their English level in our first meeting. Nonetheless, they still presented some mistakes in their writing compositions, in topics that they apparently seemed to know and understand and therefore should not be making those kinds of mistakes.

As James (2001) would state "the learners know they make mistakes, but, of course, they don't know where the mistakes are, they don't know the importance of their mistakes and even when this is explained, they repeat them". This situation certainly needed further reflection.

Sometimes when we teachers correct a student and this feedback seems not effective, the first thought that comes to mind is that this student has some problem understanding the concepts or that the lesson might be too advanced for him/her. But we rarely think that maybe is not the student who has a problem, maybe the issue is in the correction itself.

All three cases I described above made me reflect upon the way I was correcting these students, and this issue arose different questions. Am I doing it wrong? If so, what am I doing wrong? And if this is not the proper way, then what really is? What is the appropriate way to correct students so they are able to really take advantage of the errors they make? However, there was one question in particular that captivated my full attention and went on to become the motivation to develop this research project. Beyond “how” and “when” best to correct students, I wondered about what really happens when we correct students. In other words, I wanted to know whether there was any influence of teachers’ corrections in students’ performance, and how it would be reflected in students’ writing compositions.

Research Question

What effects are revealed in ninth- grade students’ writings when implementing the Elicitation and Explicit correction techniques to correct grammatical errors?

General Objective

To analyze the effects of implementing the Elicitation and Explicit correction techniques in order to correct grammatical errors in ninth- grade students’ writings.

Specific Objectives

To identify the possible effects displayed in ninth-grade students' writings when exposed to correction techniques for grammatical errors.

To describe the effects found in ninth-grade students' writings when correction techniques were applied to correct grammatical errors.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Before attempting to understand the phenomenon of correction and its impact on students' writing accuracy, it is vital to fully comprehend some key elements and concepts that inevitably arise whenever researchers address the issue of error correction. Those elements are presented in this chapter as "The four 'WH' of correction", explaining *why*, *when*, *how* and *what* to correct. In the first 'WH', the importance of correction is stated, along with some research studies that support this statement. In the second, the matter of *when* to correct according to the type of practice developed in the classroom is discussed. For the third one, the question '*how*' is addressed by presenting several existing correction techniques as well as their strengths and weaknesses. And finally, the matter of *what* to correct includes the description of the different types of errors.

Between the two production skills (i.e. writing and speaking), the first one appears to be the most intriguing of the two. This is due to the fact that in spoken conversations people make sense of the dialogue not only by the words they are saying but also how they are saying them, this includes for example the use of supra-segmental features on their speech or their body language, among others. However, there is no possibility to have this negotiation of meaning in written documents. As a result, problems of misunderstandings are exacerbated (Penman, 1998). Consequently, writing is thought to be an "intricate" and complex task, and it is considered as the "most difficult of the language abilities to acquire" (Allen & Corder, 1974, p. 177).

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that learners at every point of their learning process produce errors of different natures, (e.g. grammatical, lexical and phonological errors).

According to Corder (1967, p 166), these errors account for the knowledge or lack of knowledge of a student at a certain point of his or her learning process and that these errors reflect the learners' transitional competence. Additionally, Corder (1967, p. 167) makes a distinction between errors and errors of performance to which he refers as *mistakes*.

Several studies have been carried out in which some researchers are against and in favor of error correction (henceforth, EC). Ever since Truscott (1996) stated that correcting L2 writings should be abandoned, given its ineffectiveness, researchers such as Whitlow (1997) and Schwartz (1993) agree, claiming that EC serves no purpose at all. Some others (Kepner, 1991; Sheppard, 1992; Truscott, 2007) argue that correcting grammar does not have any positive effect on the development of L2 writing accuracy. Moreover, Truscott (2007) on his research paper titled "The effect of correction on learners' ability to write accurately", claims that corrective feedback is not only ineffective but also potentially harmful to students' language proficiency.

WHY to correct

On the contrary, there are some researchers who argue that EC helps the learner improve his or her proficiency of the language (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Bartran & Walton, 1994; Chaudron, 1988; Hendrickson, 1978; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster 1998; and Schachter, 1981). These researchers believe that EC is an essential part of the learning process since errors help to determine progress. Moreover, they claim that errors should be corrected and also that learners have a positive attitude towards correction more than it is thought. More recently, other researchers (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008a; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2002; Sheen, 2007) claim that EC is of value in developing greater grammatical accuracy.

In a study conducted by Bitchener et al. (2005), which investigated to what extent correcting feedback with and without oral conferencing had an impact in writing new compositions, found that the two types had a considerable effect on the accuracy in new pieces of writing. There is also growing evidence of the effectiveness that correction has on writing accuracy in the long term, evidenced in the writing of new texts (Bitchener, 2008, 2009; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a; Bitchener, Young & Cameron 2005; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, Sheen, Takashima & Murakami, 2008; Robb, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, Wright, & Moldawa, 2009).

Furthermore, as it was stated in the justification, Corder (1967) claims that errors are significant in several ways. First, errors serve as a way for the teacher to evidence how much the learner has progressed in achieving proficiency in the target language and also how much he or she still needs to learn. Second, errors are useful for researchers as they give insights on how the language is acquired, as for example the strategies students use in their learning process. Third, errors are useful for the learner himself as he/ she can “learn from his/her own mistakes” (Corder, 1967); also the learner can use errors as a way to test his/ her hypothesis of the target language (p.161). “At the level of pragmatic classroom experience, error analysis will continue to provide a method by which the teacher assesses learning and teaching and determines priorities for future effort.” (Richards, 1974, p.15).

Now, let us consider that teachers have in fact decided to implement correction in their lessons and recognize its importance. Nevertheless, there is still debate on how and when best to do it. Some teachers tend to correct every single error the students make, some others only correct the errors that are directly related to the topic being addressed in the lesson, and another

group of teachers correct exclusively the errors that interfere with the message the students are trying to convey (Vásquez, 2007, p. 94).

WHEN to correct

It is crucial then, to make a distinction between correction in *communicative practice* and correction in *accuracy practice*, since teachers tend to correct students in a different way depending on which of these two contexts they are focusing on. Communicative practice refers to activities in which the main goal is for the students to convey a message, to produce language, whereas accuracy practice relates to activities in which the focus is on getting the correct syntactic, morphological and semantic structures (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Bartran & Walton, 1994; Hendrickson, 1978).

Bartran and Walton (1994), claim that in communicative practice teachers should only correct those errors that interfere with communication while in activities in which the focus is on a specific structure, function or skill the correction should only be made on errors related to that structure, function or skill. Hendrickson (1978) argues that there should be more tolerance to errors in communicative practices as this builds confidence in the students to use the target language.

Allwright and Bailey (1991) claim that communicative lessons should be concerned with students trying to convey ideas and less concerned with students producing grammatical correct sentences. All these researchers agree that correcting is interrupting and that correcting constantly in communicative practices may foster in students negative attitudes towards the target language, also may cause the students to feel frustrated, embarrassed and reluctant to use

the target language. However, they also think that EC improves students' proficiency in the language.

After understanding the principles stated previously, the teacher can now implement a more focused correction depending on the goal of the lesson. For instance, if the goal is to write a composition expressing an opinion about a certain topic then the teacher will focus on correcting only those mistakes that impede the understanding of an idea or sentence. However, if the students are asked to make a composition in which they exemplify the use of a certain structure or structures, then the teacher should only focus on correcting the use or misuse of that structure.

This distinction between accuracy and communicative practice is also useful for the students since they will know what to expect from the teachers' feedback when they receive back their compositions and what is expected from them as well. Once decisions are made upon when to correct students' mistakes and errors, it is time to take a look at the ways in which the teacher can do this.

HOW to correct

There are several correction techniques that have been identified in previous studies (Lyster, 1998; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Bartran & Walton, 1994; Schachter, 1981), some of them involve explicit correction by the teacher while others ask the students to identify and correct their own errors.

For instance, Schachter (1981) argues that some ESL teachers use the interrogative word "*what?*" as a correction technique. By using this word the teacher indicates the learner that something is wrong with the utterance and it needs repair. However, Schachter (1981) also

claims that this technique is not very effective as the teacher also uses “what?” to register shock, surprise or even disagreement with regard to the last utterance” (p.128). A similar technique was identified by Lyster and Ranta (1997) which is the use of *clarification requests*. According to these researchers, this technique is clear in indicating that the learner has made an error and that he or she needs to correct.

Two more techniques were identified in EC, *recasts* and *repetition*. According to Lyster and Ranta (1997) recast is to repeat the wrong utterance without the error and repetition consists on repeating the exact same wrong utterance adjusting the intonation to emphasize the error. These last two techniques are quite controversial, since they are used by teachers not only to highlight errors but also they use them after well-formed sentences produced by the learners.

These two techniques proved to be the least effective in their study, as they lead to the least amount of uptake. Also, Chaudron (1988) noted that recasts are ambiguous because it could serve for several functions and the students often confuse the message the teacher is trying to convey. Bartran and Walton (1994) argue that repetition which they refer to as “echoing”, is not very effective because “it often sounds as if the teacher is trying to make fun of the student” (p.51). Also, they add that repetition does not give any hint on what the error is. Along with the other researchers, Schachter (1981) explains that repetition serves for several purposes as to request information, to challenge the truth- value of a given utterance, and to provide feedback on form so it is very difficult for the students to know the teacher’s intention.

An additional technique for error correction is *Body language*, which has proved to be also very effective. In this technique the teacher uses non- verbal cues to indicate the learner that he or she has made an error without interrupting the speech. Bartran and Walton (1994) suggest that hand movements can be used to indicate errors about word order and tense and that facial

expression such as frowning and doubtful looks can indicate a problem in the utterance the learner is saying. In addition to these researchers, Schachter (1981) claims that teachers should rely less on verbal correction and use more hand signals to indicate errors. She also proposes some hand movements to indicate errors that learners make related to tense, agreement, pluralization, prepositions and word order.

Finally, there are two more correction techniques, *Elicitation* and *explicit correction* (the two techniques implemented in this research). In the former, the aim is to engage the learner on identifying and correcting his/her own errors. Lyster and Ranta (1997) describe Elicitation as the most effective way to correct learners' errors because it involves the students in their own correction process and therefore it leads to the most amount of uptake. Bartran and Walton (1994) add that doing the correction themselves makes the learners feel motivated, independent and cooperative.

The latter, the *overt* or *explicit correction* technique is defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as explicitly giving the student the correct form usually containing grammatical information (Kim & Mathes, 2001). They claim that this technique is the least ambiguous however it did not seem very effective. Hinkel (2011) states that explicit correction occurs "when the teacher directly corrects the learner and/or provides some kind of metalinguistic explanation of the error" (p. 593). Bartran and Walton (1994) noticed that explicit correction is often used in communicative practice however the use of this technique interrupts the student when communicating and hence causes the learner to feel uncomfortable and prevents him or her to communicate in the target language.

These last two techniques are commonly addressed in writing as direct and indirect corrective feedback (explicit and elicitation, respectively). As mentioned before, it is defined as

providing the correct structure or linguistic form above the linguistic error (Ferris, 2003, as cited in Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). Direct corrective feedback as illustrated by Bitchener and Ferris (2012), allows students to edit their writings and improve their performance in future compositions. This type of correction may occur by crossing out an unnecessary word, phrase or morpheme, or by inserting it, or providing the correct form or structure. Another form of direct feedback may include written teacher comments at the end of the compositions referencing the errors in the text.

On the other hand, indirect corrective feedback consists on indicating in some way that an error has occurred (Ferris, 2003, as cited in Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). According to Ferris and Roberts (2001) and Robb et al. (1986), there are four different ways to provide this feedback: “underlining or circling the error; recording in the margin the number of errors in a given line; or using a code to show where the error has occurred and what type of error it is”. This last one was the method implemented in the present study (coding indirect corrective feedback).

Some researchers believe in the value of giving indirect feedback to students’ writings. Lalande (1982) for example, claims that indirect feedback leads students to a guided and solving-problem learning process which is more likely to develop long-term acquisition of the language and promotes the internalization of correct forms and structures. Ferris (2002) on the other hand, states that direct feedback is beneficial for beginner students or when errors cannot be corrected by the students themselves. Leki (1991) and Roberts (1999) suggest that sometimes indirect feedback may not provide the sufficient input for students to make the necessary corrections. Additionally, students are unsure at times that their “hypothesized correction” is in fact correct (Chandler, 2003).

Hopefully at this point the reader will have a better and deeper understanding of the different ways in which correction can be provided, whether is oral or written, direct or indirect. There is however, one more aspect to take into account regarding correction and that is the different types of errors that can be identified, in this case, in students' written compositions.

WHAT to correct

As Hyland (2003) illustrates, one of the major concerns for L2 writers is error-free work, given that their compositions are likely to be evaluated in an academic setting where accuracy is an important matter. For this reason, students require and appreciate feedback to their works. However, if teachers seek to provide an effective feedback, they should take into account, when planning and developing their lessons, the questions posed previously in this chapter, as well as the nature of the different types of errors, which will be presented in the section below.

Among the most common types that have been identified, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) were some of the first to classify errors into omissions, additions, misinformations and misordering. Later, in 1997, Lyster and Ranta presented six types of errors found in one of their studies about French immersion students. Those are: Grammatical, lexical, phonological, L1 unsolicited, gender and multiple. More recently, Jimenez (2006) added to the previous classification, errors of content, discourse and pragmatics. All those errors have been divided into bigger categories by different authors.

For instance, Richards (1974), classified errors into two categories (interlingual and intralingual) according to their source. The first type refers to those errors that are cause by the interference of the mother tongue. The second one, are those errors that occur during the second language learning process when students have not yet acquired the necessary knowledge. Burt

(1975), also proposes a distinction between global and local errors. Global errors impede communication and prevent the learner from comprehending some aspects and elements of the message. Local errors, on the other hand, only affect one element of the sentence, but do not prevent the message from being heard or understood.

According to Hendrickson (1978), global errors do not need to be corrected. Nonetheless, expressions as for example “a news” or “an advice” are systematic errors, and hence they should and need to be corrected. In this regard, Amara (2015) states that teachers can provide the correct form when dealing with presystematic errors (p. 62), defined by Corder (1974) as the errors that “occur when the learner is unaware of the existence of a particular rule in the target language. On the contrary, for systematic errors, since the learners have already acquired the linguistic competence, they can identify, explain and correct the error themselves (Amara, 2015, p.62).

As to what specific types of errors should be corrected, Amara (2015) says that it requires teachers’ intuition and understanding of errors (p. 62). For the present study, all types were corrected when giving feedback to students, however, the focus of the analysis is placed solely on grammatical errors, following Truscott’s main criticism to error correction which was the fact that correction treats different types of error (lexical, syntactic, morphological, etc.) as being equivalent, when in fact “they represent separate domains of knowledge that are acquired through different stages and processes” (Ferris & Roberts, 2001).

In addition to this, it is worth mentioning that the mastery of grammar is an important aspect of the second language learning process, as illustrated by Faerch, Haastrup and Phillipson (1984, p.168) “It is impossible to conceive of a person being communicatively competent without being linguistically competent”. In other words, paying special attention to the correction

of grammatical errors in students' writings will (with time) help the learner become a more successful communicator in the target language.

Overall, when attempting to deal with error correction, it is important to differentiate some relevant concepts related to this issue, as it is for instance, the difference between error and mistake. It has also been presented in this chapter why correcting students should play a major role in teachers' lessons and the most appropriate way to do it depending on the focus of the lesson. Moreover, different correction techniques were exemplified, making a special emphasis on direct and indirect corrective feedback. And lastly, the question of what to correct was addressed in which several types of errors were presented considering different authors' point of view.

Chapter Three

Research Design

In this third chapter all aspects regarding the research methodology will be presented. First, it is important to bring back the research question and objective since they are crucial for the choices made in the rest of the design. The research paradigm underlying the study is introduced along with corresponding type of study. Then, the reader will find a contextualization of where the study took place and the population and participants involved in the study. Later, the data collection techniques and instruments are explained as well as the type of data gathered. And finally, ethical issues regarding the study are discussed.

Research Question

The research question holds a considerable importance in the study since it is the starting point to develop the whole investigation. For the researcher it is of great interest the matter of how teacher's correction may have an influence in students' linguistic performance, and the desire to shed some light on this matter led her to propose the next research question: *What effects are revealed in ninth- grade students' writings when implementing the Elicitation and Explicit correction techniques to correct grammatical errors?*

In the question, key elements of the research are highlighted. For example, the fact that "correction" is represented in this study by only two correction techniques and how this research seeks to find the effect of those techniques on students' writing accuracy, specifically for this study, dealing with grammatical errors.

General Objective

In order to answer the inquiry presented above, the following objective is proposed: *To analyze the effects of implementing the Elicitation and Explicit correction techniques in order to correct grammatical errors in ninth- grade students' writings.* In other words, in order to fulfil the purpose of this study, this research aims to identify and describe the possible effects of the correction techniques over students' ability to write accurately by correcting their grammatical mistakes.

Research Paradigm

The vision and belief system that a researcher has about the nature of research influences greatly the decisions and choices that he/she makes when carrying out an investigation. It is crucial then to state at this point what is the paradigm underlying this study. A research paradigm is defined from the Kuhnian perspective as “a way to summarize researchers' beliefs about their efforts to create knowledge” (Morgan, 2007, p. 50), or as Willis (2007) states “a paradigm is a comprehensive belief system, world view, or framework that guides research and practice in a field” (p.8). Taking this into account, the research paradigm that best fits this study and the researcher's believe is the pragmatic paradigm.

“To a pragmatist, the mandate of science is not to find the truth or reality, the existence of which are perpetually in dispute, but to facilitate human problem-solving” (Powell, 2001, p.884). In the pragmatic paradigm the truth lies in what is useful, since reality is believed to be in constant change and negotiation, sensitive to interpretation, and as a result its purpose is to determine practical solutions and meanings (Morgan, 2007). Pragmatism is outcome-oriented, and its focus is on the product of the research (Biesta, 2010). All of these characteristics make

the pragmatic paradigm the best fit for this research as it deals with the question of “will this intervention improve learning?” and this is exactly what the intention of this study is, to understand how teachers’ practices affect the students’ learning and, in this way, to uncover what are the best practices to implement in the classroom that are effective and beneficial to the students’ learning process.

Another essential characteristic of the research paradigm lies in its methodology. Morgan (2007) claims that the pragmatic paradigm allows for the qualitative and quantitative approach to be combined and complement each other to sort the advantages and disadvantages present within each approach. Pragmatism bridges the gap between the positivist and constructivist by taking what is meaningful from both of them (Biesta, 2010) and hence combining characteristics of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Morgan, 2007) allowing for a “mixed-method way of thinking” (Greene, 2007).

Mixed Method Research

A mixed method research design is the one in which qualitative and quantitative procedures are combined in order to collect, analyze and interpret data to understand a research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The underlying belief is that by using both approaches the researcher will have a better understanding of the phenomenon in question. This method was selected for this study since in order to answer the research question and achieve the objectives, it did not seemed appropriate and fulfilling to the project to just opt for one approach or the other. Instead, as Miles and Huberman (1994) would state by combining the two “we have a very powerful mix” and it is possible to develop a more complex and complete view of the research question and objective (Greene & Caracelli, 1997, p.7).

In addition to getting a better understanding of the research problem, one of the most beneficial characteristics of carrying out a mixed-method research is the fact that it enables the researcher to do triangulation, in other words, it offers the possibility to use, for instance different methods, techniques, data sources, etc., to explore the phenomenon in question from several points of view and using the strength of one approach to compensate the weaknesses of the other (Hanson, et. al., 2005; Trochim, 2006). This characteristic will permit later on in the research to examine the research question and objectives from the two perspectives, that is, to identify the effects of the correction in students' writings in a quantitative manner and analyze the effects from a qualitative perspective.

Some other characteristics of the mixed method research are the possibility of using different instruments and techniques for collecting data as well as different techniques for analyzing it, not limiting the researcher to implement exclusively qualitative or quantitative resources. As a result, and in accordance with the pragmatic paradigm, the researcher could use in his/her research, tools from both the positivist and interpretivist paradigms, for example, observation and interviews with testing and experiments. Moreover, he/she can use procedures of "quantizing" as the one used in Arnon and Reichel's (2009) study in which the data gathered was analyzed and integrated by means of triangulation and by "quantizing" the qualitative codes for statistical analysis (p. 182). Taking this into account, in this research the procedures for analysis were selected in terms of their usefulness and appropriateness in order to fulfill the objectives and answer the research question.

Type of Study

Action research was the type of study selected for this research. It fits perfectly with the nature of the pragmatic paradigm and the mixed method research and more importantly, it is the most appropriate research type to fulfil the purpose of this study. By identifying the effect of teacher correction in students' learning, this study seeks to enrich teaching practices by consciously selecting the procedures to use in the classroom. By doing this, the teacher is able to offer students better opportunities for learning and getting the most out of their time in the classroom and this is exactly what action research is about. Defined by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) as a type of research initiated by the teacher in order to develop classroom awareness in both teaching and learning.

Action research, similar to mixed methods research, uses qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments as well as systematic procedures to gather information in order to improve how their educational setting operates as well as teaching practices and students' learning (Mills, 2011). This type of research offers teachers an opportunity to reflect on their own practices allowing them to develop as professionals (Allen & Calhoun, 1998). Consequently, Action research enables teachers to develop their autonomy and thus becoming a more aware, effective and successful teacher by taking *action* on what they do through the implementation of research.

Mills (2011) identifies two different types of action research designs: Practical action research and Participatory action research. The former however, is the one that corresponds to this particular study. According to Schmuck (1997) the purpose of doing practical action research is to focus on a specific problem or issue by carrying out a small-scale research project undertaken generally by individual teachers. Some characteristics of the practical action research illustrated by Mills (2011) are presented below:

- Studies local practices

- Involves individual or team-based inquiry
- Focuses on teacher development and student learning
- Implements a plan of action
- Leads to the teacher-as-researcher

It is worth mentioning that given its pragmatic nature, action research implements a mixed method design, as it was stated before, for this reason it is possible to include traces of the experimental method into the action research type when the research question proposed calls for it. The data gathered in the experimental investigation of language learning can be either quantitative, qualitative or even both (Bielska, 2011). As a result, an uncontrolled experiment was implemented as part of the design in this action research project, in which the participants were divided into two groups and each received a different treatment, meaning that one group received correction through the elicitation technique and the other through the explicit correction technique. The participants were asked to develop different writing tasks with the purpose to see if there was evidenced of any possible effects or changes in the writing compositions after receiving such treatments.

The purpose of implementing experimental studies in an action research project such as this one, is to allow teachers to “make, evaluate, or justify their choices concerning classroom instruction” (Bielska, 2011) and the findings resulting from this action research studies hold value mainly in their usefulness for the classroom and the enhancement of teachers’ practices (Allwright & Bailey 1991; Allwright 1993; Wallace 1998) rather than contributing to the theory of language acquisition.

Research Context and Participants

Context.

This study takes place in a public school from Bogota, Colombia, named I.E.D. Marruecos y Molinos. This school is located in the south of the city in Molinos I neighborhood. This institution is legally approved by the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of education of Bogotá. The facilities of the school, though not large in overall size, offer adequate classrooms for the amount of students which ranges from 38 to 45 students in each class. Nonetheless, it is important to note that for the development of this research project there was not an appropriate place or classroom destined for this purpose. The researcher had to find a different space within the school in each of the sessions which needless to say, compromised the quality and successful development of the intervention in some occasions.

Population and participants.

The population consisted of 37 students (12 men and 25 women) from a ninth- grade EFL class. Their ages ranged from 14 to 16 years old. All the population in the study lived in neighborhoods near the school and they belonged to social classes one and two. Before selecting the participants of the study, a socio-cultural diagnosis was applied to the entire population, consisting of a questionnaire (see Annex No.1) designed to get some insights into the life of the students in a social and more personal level. The questionnaire had a number of 11 questions, regarding family information, interpersonal relationships with partners and teachers, and opinions about certain issues, among others. The questionnaire was design and presented to the students in Spanish, so they did not have a problem answering or misunderstanding any of the questions.

After analyzing the students' answers, the results indicated several things. First of all, most of the students lived near the school in houses where they had to pay a monthly fee. Second, the majority of them lived with their parents and brothers or sisters. Third, when they were asked how many technological appliances they had at home, all of them had at least one TV set, this explains why in the next question one of the activities the participants spent most time doing was watching television. On the other hand, the activity with less percentage was reading. In question number seven, I could notice that there is not much presence of the parents in the students' academic life. However, in question number eight, it is clear that there is some commitment from the students to their performance at school. Another aspect that I thought was interesting is that for almost all the students, their families play an important role in their life. Also, the students show that they have good relationships with their classmates and teachers. Finally, in the last question, all of the students agreed that correction is a very important part of the learning process and according to their answers they all showed a positive attitude towards correction from the teacher. This last question was very important for the sake of this project because it deals directly with the matter of correcting errors and it is very useful to know that they are in favor of correction and think it is important and useful.

Regarding the sampling of the participants, two different sampling methods were applied. One of them is qualitative in nature while the other one is commonly used in the quantitative approach. The former is the purposeful sampling technique which according to Patton (2002) consists in the identification and selection of "information-rich" cases, by selecting participants who are knowledgeable or experienced in the subject matter (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Besides knowledge, it is crucial for those participants to have availability and willingness to participate in the research project (Bernard, 2002). Ten participants were selected from the

population with the help of the home-room teacher, based on their proficiency of English. Since this project was based on the writing skill, the participants were required to be able to write short compositions about different topics. Hence, it was vital that the participants had more than a basic level of English.

On the other hand, given that a small-scale experimental design was developed within this action research, even though the participants could not be randomly selected from the population, they were randomly assigned to both treatment groups, ensuring that the groups were as similar as possible in any way that could possibly impact the outcome, so as to make sure that any personal characteristics that could affect the results were equally distributed among groups (Trochim, 2006). For this purpose, the researcher labelled each treatment group with a color, each color representing one of the correction techniques. Then, she asked each student to select at random a little paper from a bag containing all the names of the participants and she wrote the name of the selected student in the board, one paper for the “blue team” and one for the “red team” until all the participants were assigned to either group.

At the beginning of the intervention, once the participants were selected, a second diagnosis was implemented, aimed to determine the level of proficiency of the students mainly in terms of vocabulary and grammar and the productive skills (speaking and writing). It was developed through an activity in which the students were asked to introduce themselves to the class and to the teacher and a second part was to describe one of their partners using some of the information gathered from the previous activity. After applying the diagnosis, the results showed that they had a fair knowledge of vocabulary and the basic grammatical structures. More importantly, I was glad to see that despite having some difficulties with the use of the language,

they were eager to learn, they were willing to participate and were very disciplined, which would make future instructions a lot easier.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

In order to collect enough data that could at the end of the implementation, evidenced the impact and effects of correction in students' writing accuracy, I implemented three different collection techniques: Document collection, interviews and observations. In the section below, these techniques are presented as well as the instruments used for each one.

The first of the techniques implemented to collect data was document collection, defined by Burns and Hood (1995) as several sets of documents of different type which are relevant to the research context. According to O'Leary (2014), there are three main types of documents. The first one is public records, which are all the "official, ongoing records of an organization's activities". The second type are personal documents, which refer to the "first-person accounts of an individual's actions, experiences and beliefs". The third type corresponds to physical evidence, understood as all "physical objects found within the study setting" (often called artifacts). This third type is the one that applies to this research project since artifacts are the main source of data that was collected from the participants, from which the effect of the correction techniques was identified.

Goetz and LeCompte (1984) describe artifacts as the things that people (in this case, the participants) make and do that are of interest for the researcher. Artifacts serve as a means to collect pertinent and appropriate "traces", "props" or "products" used and made by the participants, or that are somehow relevant to the area being studied (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). The artifacts in this study refer to the compositions that students developed through writing

activities based on a topic for each task. Using this instrument at different stages, I sought to identify whether the students' errors disappeared or on the contrary if they remained the same after students were exposed to the corresponding correction technique.

As stated by Miles and Huberman (1994), if document collection is not used as the only source of data, it is possible for it to be triangulated with other data collection methods. As identifying the effects of correction in students' writings is not the only aim of this research, a second technique was implemented, interviews.

Interviewing is basically the act of asking questions and getting answers from the participants in a study (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). Those questions are commonly general, open-ended questions and the researcher records the answers. After this, the interviews are transcribed into a digital file for later analysis (Creswell 2012). The interviews for this research project were conducted at the end of the implementation with the purpose of gathering a general view of the participants in terms of their perceptions, comments, feelings, perspectives, etc., about their learning process and other aspects of the implementation, in order to see how their visions of the whole process helped to analyze the effects identified from the artifacts collected.

Creswell (2012) identifies four types of interviews: One-on-one interview, in which the researcher questions only one participant at a time. Focus groups interviews which are used to collect shared views or understandings from several participants. The third and fourth type are Telephone and E-mail interviews. These two types are used when the subjects to be interviewed are "geographically disperse" or are unable to gather in a central location. For these interviews the data is collected via telephone by asking a small number and general questions and communicating by E-mail, respectively. The interviews for this research were one-on-one sessions, since the purpose was to collect individual points of view, and also to prevent the

students from feeling nervous or for them to modify their answers because of the presence of other participants or people from the school.

When conducting interviews, it is of great importance to audiotape or videotape the questions and answers, since it will provide an accurate record of the conversation. Creswell (2012) suggests using an adequate recording device and using the help of a microphone to make sure the recordings have the best quality possible. In the case of the interviews conducted in this project, it was only possible to use audio recordings as the instrument to tape the conversations, given that in the consent letter sent to the students' parents, not all of them gave permission to have their children videotaped. However, using only audio to record the interviews, helps students not feel intimidated by the camera and allows them to answer more naturally.

Lastly, as a complementary technique used in this research along interviews and document collection was observations. Equally popular to interviewing in qualitative research, observations are a frequently implemented method of data collection that involves the researcher assuming different roles in the process (Spradley, 1980). Defined by Creswell (2012) as the process of "gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at a research site. Some advantages of doing observations include having the opportunity to "study actual behavior" and to "study individuals who have difficulty verbalizing their ideas" (Creswell, 2012).

On the other hand, one of the disadvantages of conducting observations, is the possibility of being considered an "outsider" by the participants and other people in the research setting, in this case the school (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Nonetheless, this was not an issue for this particular project since the researcher was also the teacher developing the implementation. For this reason, it was possible to make observations from "within" when the participants were

receiving instruction and working on the teacher's tasks, as well as from the "outside" when the students were interacting with the home-room teacher. Both types of observation were equally valuable for this project as they provided insights into the relationship and dynamic of the participants and their teacher, as well as the implementation, the lessons, the school, the researcher, etc.

Given the two different natures of the observation made by the researcher, it was necessary to take on different roles as observer. Spradley (1980) recognizes many different roles, yet Creswell (2012) presents three main types: Role as participant observer, Role as a nonparticipant observer and the combination of both, a changing observational role. In the first one, as a participant, the researcher "assumes the role of an "inside" observer who actually engages in activities at the study site". In the second one, as a nonparticipant, the observer "visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants". In the third type, the researcher "adapts his/her/ role to the situation". As it was stated above, the researcher in this study, acted as both, participant and nonparticipant, adopting a changing observational role.

Regardless of the role, the observer should always keep record of his/her observations. Field notes are a very common instrument used to collect the data from the observations (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006) and was the selected tool for this research. There are two possibilities in which field notes can be recorded: Descriptive and reflective field notes. In the former, the researcher makes a description of the events, activities and people, in other words "what happened". In the latter, the researcher records his/her personal thoughts, insights, general themes or ideas generated during the observation, for instance "what sense the researcher made of the site, people, and situation" (Creswell, 2012). In the case of this research, both types of

field notes were recorded. When the researcher had a participant role, the field notes were more of the descriptive kind. Aspects related to the activities, their implementation, their acceptance from the students, especial events that occurred, etc. In contrast, when the role was as a nonparticipant, the field notes were mostly reflective, since it was easier for the researcher to take a general look at the situation and participants as a whole and have a better perspective from the “outside”.

Type of Data

As stated by Trochim (2006), “the first step in deciding how you will analyze the data is to define a unit of analysis”. It is important to mention, that the data gathered was quantitative and qualitative in accordance with the mixed method design. The former one was used to measure the evolution and improvements of the students’ writings throughout the research process and to evaluate if there were any significant changes to determine possible effects of the use of the correction techniques and how it affected students’ writing accuracy. Therefore, the unit of analysis gather from the writings will be the students’ errors and mistakes evidenced in their compositions.

On the other hand, the qualitative research was utilized to acquire a deeper understanding of the effects, not through the writings but through the perspective of the students themselves, taking into account their perceptions and opinions about the whole research process and the correction provided in particular (being this the unit of analysis for the qualitative approach). In addition to this, observations by the teacher were made and recorded in the form of field notes to have one more insight into the phenomenon under study.

Ethical Issues

As Hesse-Bieber and Leavy (2006) state, ethics are a subject of important consideration and should not be overlooked in any research project, in fact, they should be taken into account in every step of the research process. Ethical issues may arise at any stage of the study, as illustrated by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), they may be generated in the beginning of the research by its nature itself, as well as by the research context or the procedures to be implemented. They can also arise from the methods of data collection or the type of data collected, or even by what is to be done with that data.

In order to avoid any of these issues, researchers must take into account a set of initial considerations, such as presenting an informed consent, obtaining access and acceptance to the research setting, the treatment of privacy, anonymity, confidentiality, etc., ethical problems with the implementation of certain research methods, among others. (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Given the importance of this aspect, I followed certain procedures that will be describe below. As it was mentioned before, gaining access and acceptance to the setting of the study was the first step. For this, a meeting with the Academic coordinator of the school was arranged. In this meeting, I expressed my desired to conduct my study in this particular school and explained to the coordinator in detailed what the project was about. After getting her and the school's permission, the next step was to talk to the teacher in charge of the English lessons for the population. For this stage, the coordinator introduced me to the English teacher, explained broadly my intentions with the project and once the teacher agreed to let me work with her students I proceeded to give her more information about the study and collect information about

the population I was going to work with. We reached some agreements in terms of schedule and in general of my intervention with the students.

The next step was to address the population of the study. For this it was important to take into account that any individual who participates in a research project has certain rights. It's crucial for the participants to know the purpose and aims of the study and at the end how the results will be used. They also have the right to refuse to participate or even to disengage from the study at any time. It is important to make clear that the information that the participants provide will be used only for research purposes and that their anonymity will be protected and guaranteed (Creswell, 2012). I ensured, once I met the entire population for this study, that all the information mentioned before was communicated to the students and that they understood and were willing to participate voluntarily in the project. Then, the participants were selected and I explained more in-depth information about the study, and made some agreements with them in order to begin the implementation.

Taking into account that all the participants in the study were still minors (under age of 18), it was necessary to send an informed consent letter (Annex No.2) to their parents or tutors in which they were informed of the research I intended to develop, as well as the treatment of their personal information, and how the findings would be published. In the last part of the letter, I asked for authorization to have their children video and audio recorded as part of the data collection process. Finally, some of the sessions in the implementation took place after academic hours, for this reason parents' permission was required which they communicated with an annotation in the consent letter. For those extra lessons, students were given a printed notification of the session, which had to be returned with their parent or tutor's signature indicating that they were notified. An example of this document can be seen in Annex No.3.

To sum up, the research question and objective were revised again to account for the research paradigm and type of study selected, both according as well to the researcher's conception of research. Then, an insight into the setting and participants' context was given. Later in this chapter, three data collection techniques and the instruments used in this implementation were detailed. Additionally, the type of data gathered with those instruments was presented to the reader. Finally, important ethical issues concerning the research project were discussed.

Chapter Four

Instructional Design

This chapter depicts the pedagogical intervention that was applied to a group of ten students of ninth grade from a public school in Bogotá. The chapter will begin with the theoretical foundation of the implementation, which introduces the several visions of language, learning and approaches that serve as the base for this study. Later on, the reader will find the instructional objective and a detailed description of the implementation illustrated in a chart. Then, all the assessment criteria used in this implementation will be presented and finally, the teacher and students' role as well as the role of the materials are explained at the end of the chapter.

Vision of Language

The vision of language teachers have influences their teaching practices and choices in the classroom. I was able to evidence this phenomenon during some sessions with the class selected for my project. The English teacher of this group believed on the importance of teaching grammar rules, which she did at the beginning of the school- year and occasionally during some lessons. However, she implemented translation activities in a regular basis with the students. I came to realize that the language for this teacher was seen as a linguistic system and that her teaching practices in the classroom were clearly influenced by this belief.

This vision of language as a linguistic system sees the language as a body of knowledge that can be organized and structured in an accessible way for the learners. According to Cunningsworth (1995) this linguistic system is divided into six categories as follow: grammar,

vocabulary, phonology, discourse, style and appropriacy, and varieties of the Target Language (TL). In this study the students were corrected in all aspects, however the data analysis will be focus solely on grammar, understanding the term grammar as “the structural regularities or patterns in language by which speakers organize messages” (Tudor, 2001) and this category includes the study of morphology, word formation, tenses, and expressions of quantity, among others.

This structural view of the language has some advantages in terms of the design of programs and the preparation of materials. Moreover, a system- based presentation of the language can be advantageous in terms of the learning process itself. This is especially true for students who do not have a regular contact with the TL and may find it useful to encounter the language in a systematic and structured way as in the form of a coursebook or a study program. I share the same system- based approach to language as the English teacher mentioned above, for I believe that in order to communicate effectively, that is to be able to get your message across; you need to have at least some basic knowledge of the more structural part of the language, hence the interest of this study in the grammar category. As Tudor (2001) states, “language is a system, and mastering this system (or parts of it at least) is a prerequisite for any meaningful form of communication”. In other words, we must learn to walk before we can run.

Nevertheless, my conception of language does not simply fall on the learning of certain grammatical structures. Even though I consider this as an important aspect in the initial language learning process, I do believe this is just a step in the greater purpose of learning a language which is to communicate. This is why I also have to make reference to the vision of language as self-expression, in which the language is considered as the means to build our personal relations, express our interests, emotions and desires (Tudor, 2001).

When the language is viewed as a linguistic system the teaching goals are set in order for the students to learn that system. On the contrary, when the language is viewed as self-expression the teaching goals are set based on what the students want to express and therefore each student has a different learning process. Hence, the importance of being able to combine in the classroom these two different conceptions of the language because in order to learn a language is not enough to merely know the grammatical aspect of it but also to give students the possibility to express their desires and concerns so they do not feel the class and the language as something that is “out there” but instead as something meaningful and useful for them to learn.

Vision of Learning

As explained in the previous section about the visions of language, there are two visions of learning that best fit the purpose of my study and my personal beliefs. The first of them, according to the vision of language as a linguistic system, is an analytical approach to learning. The second one is learning as habit formation: developing automaticity.

The first vision refers to the use of the learners’ analytical skills to study explicitly the regularities and communicative patterns that a language has, supported by the idea that adolescents and adult learners possess and use a wide range of cognitive skills in their everyday lives, for example when analyzing certain situations or making decisions on different matters. It would be unthinkable then, that these students do not use these sets of skills in their language learning process as they do in order to learn any other activity. In other words, these students should be able to apply the cognitive and analytical skills they put in practice every day and use them to make sense of the regularities that emerge in the target language. An analytical approach

to learning therefore, emphasizes the explicit study of the TL as a linguistic system but also as a communicative system as well.

In this analytical view of learning, the language is divided into smaller parts in order for the students to master each part individually and eventually be able to put them back together in different ways in order to communicate and use the language as a whole. This division into smaller parts is a very common strategy when learning other activities such as playing a musical instrument. Someone who is playing, say the guitar for example, first he/she will have to acquire certain subskills before attempting to put a whole piece together. According to Tudor (2001) the same principle applies to learning a language in this particular vision.

The vision of learning as an analytical approach places itself in two different types of learning activities: deductive and inductive. The former refers to the explicit presentation of an aspect of the TL, usually by the teacher. Then, the learner is asked to work with that structure presented previously by the teacher in some very controlled tasks or exercises. The latter on the other hand, requires the students to derive by themselves a specific structure from a sample of language given. This last type of activities encourages students to use their cognitive skills in a problem solving mode in order to identify a certain aspect of the target language, (Tudor, 2001). It is important here to take into account the students' expectations and ideas about learning in general and specifically, learning a language. Also, to know the students' perception of the methodologies and activities they are asked to develop throughout the course. Teachers have to keep in mind how the students learn and what the best approaches and strategies to apply with them are, because if a teacher uses an approach that differs greatly from what the students are used to, they will find it difficult to develop the activities proposed. As a result, they will have a hard time internalizing and making sense of the information they are given.

Before moving onto the explanation of the second vision of learning, it is important to mention that to some extent, certain forms of communication not only ask for the knowledge of a given language form but also for the ability to use such form in a fluent and automatic way. This process is what Johnson (1996) calls “automatization”. He states that by doing this the learner creates a link between declarative and procedural knowledge, that is, a relation between the knowledge of the language and the ability to use it fluently¹ for communicative purposes. According to Rivers (1981) students need extensive practice in the use of the language skills and formal structures in order to develop this automaticity. This practice should be presented first in the form of very controlled activities and then progress to more open-ended ones.

In every process of automatization of linguistic competences, there is the process of habit formation, in the sense that learners will use at first some language forms in a very controlled and mechanic way, to eventually be able to use these forms in a natural and to some extent unconscious way. This is what the habit-formation based approach is about: The teacher selects a set of structures and presents these to the learners so they can use them confidently and automatically in different pre-define interactive situations. Some of these situations rest on a degree of predictability and habitual response, for example aspects of the language such as greetings, interactional exchanges and conversational routines, are predictable in terms of what people can respond or what would be appropriate to say in these situations. For instance, there are a number of responses to the question “hello, how are you?”, someone could answer, “Fine, thank you”, “Can’t complain”, or “Hanging in there” among others, depending on the context or how well the interlocutors know each other (Tudor, 2001).

¹ In the case of the present study, fluency and communication does not refer to the speaking skill, as it usually does, instead, it refers to the students’ writing skill in which both terms (fluency and communication) can also be applied to (Abdel 2008).

Learners especially at low levels, as is the case of the participants of my study, cannot be expected to use these responses naturally. For this reason, in this vision of learning the teacher provides the students with different possibilities they can choose from in order to convey what they want to express. At first, it may not be a very spontaneous interaction; however, with enough practice the students will eventually internalize these structures and will be able to use them in a more natural way. Moreover, the students will develop fluency and communicative confidence as they will have more elements to express their ideas without conscious reflection and planning. This habit-formation approach to learning is meaningful for the students, in the sense that these set of elements can be understood as a compilation of resources that can be used in future interactions.

Pedagogical Approach

Throughout the years some principles of different theories of language and learning have been collected and turned into several approaches, methods and materials. However, it cannot be said that all these methods apply to all kinds of classrooms and learners. The appropriate selection of the methodology depends on the classroom dynamics and the participants' preferences and their visions of language and learning as well as the teacher's. Therefore, there are two approaches that are consistent with the visions of language and learning presented above. On the one hand, there is the cognitive code approach and on the other hand is the task-based approach.

The former (the cognitive code approach) states that the language learning should involve a constant mental process and that the learning of the grammatical structures of the target language has to be followed by meaningful practice, meaning that the materials are constructed

based on a grammatical syllabus, however allowing for usage of the language and, as stated before, meaningful practice (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Furthermore, in the cognitive code approach the grammatical structures are presented inductively, meaning that the grammar rules come after some exposure to examples (British council, 2008). Nonetheless, in some occasions deductive activities are also practiced, as stated by Chastain (1971) who suggested that grammar explanations should be taught preceding the examples of its usage.

This approach shares the same type of activities as the analytical view of learning mentioned before. With regard to the deductive activities, some teachers use the PPP methodology (Presentation, Practice, and production) in which the learners get a clear understanding of the grammatical rule before they use it in any meaningful context. Basically, in this approach the most distinctive aspect is that there has to exist a “rule and example relation”, as Carroll (1971) would state “it hardly matters whether one starts with the rule or the example, as long as this alternation [between rules and examples] exists”.

With regard to the task- based approach, it is important to mention that this approach serves as complement to the cognitive- code approach since the two approaches exemplify the relation I have been constructing throughout this chapter between the learning of grammatical structures and the use by the students of these structures in order to express their ideas, desires, feelings, etc.. These two approaches were combined in the implementation of this project in order to achieve the intended objectives.

Some of the principles behind the task- based approach to learning (TBL) according to Feez (1998) are that the emphasis of the class is put on process rather than product and the activities and tasks are meaningful and purposeful allowing the students for communication. In addition to this, the activities and tasks could have two different natures. They can have a

similarity with the ones the students would develop in real life or those that simply have a pedagogical purpose to the classroom. Regardless of the type, these activities and tasks should be presented to the students according to its difficulty. Another aspect of the task- based approach to learning (TBL) rests on the fact that the teacher does not select the language to be studied, instead the lesson develops around one task that will be assigned to the students and the language studied is the one that arises from what the students produce.

There have been some attempts to categorize the tasks into types. Willis (1996) proposed six categories for tasks based on “knowledge hierarchies” named as follow: Listing, Ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences and creative tasks. On the other hand, Pica, Kanagy and Falodun (1993) presented a classification of tasks in terms of the interaction students have in the development of the activity. For these authors the activities could involve different types of tasks, for example: jigsaw tasks, information- gap tasks, problem solving tasks, decision- making tasks and opinion exchange tasks. The main aspect was that these activities should be developed to some extent by some form of interaction among the students.

The task- based approach follows 6 stages as proposed by Willis (1996). I should mention though, that these stages are not to become a straitjacket for the teacher but rather a suggestion on how the task should be developed according to the students’ needs.

The first stage is the Pre- task. In this stage the teacher explains the topic to be used and gives the students clear instructions of what they are expected to deliver in the task. Moreover, the teacher may also help the students recall some useful language that they can use in the task. In this stage, sometimes the teacher plays a recording of people developing the activity. In addition, the students can spend some time making notes and preparing for the task. For some of

the activities that were implemented, the students were shown a sample of a piece of writing similar to the ones they had to hand in at the end of the class.

The next stage is the development of the actual Task. In this part the students work individually, in pairs or groups, depending on the activity, and they use the language resources they have while the teacher monitors and encourage the students to develop and complete the task.

The third stage is called Planning. At this point, the students prepare an oral or written report on what happened during the realization of the task. They practice in their groups (if that is the case) what they are going to say and again the teacher is available to help the students with whatever question they might have.

A fourth stage is giving the Report made in the previous one. The students can do it orally or read it if they have made a written report. The teacher chooses the order of participations and may give a quick feedback to the students. Finally, the teacher might also show a recording of other people performing the same task for the students to compare.

Then, it comes the Analysis stage, in which the students will “analyze” the recording used by the teacher or the products made by their partners. The teacher may ask the students to highlight aspects they find relevant about the works and the teacher can also make emphasis on the language used by the students and reflect upon it.

Finally, the last stage is Practice. At this stage the teacher will select aspects of language he/she considers the students need to practice according to what he/ she noticed in the task and report stages. Then, the students do some practice activities that will reinforce the language used and will make them confident to use the language for real purposes.

The correct implementation of these two approaches will allow the students to be able to give a meaningful use to the knowledge they have of the different language forms in a way that they can communicate and express themselves on a wide variety of topics. Not only will they reinforce what they know about the language but also they will use it in a significant way, mixing in the classroom two approaches that usually are used apart.

Finally, I will bring back again the idea that the teacher has to maintain some flexibility in the classroom. The use of these approaches as the theory states, cannot be thought as an imposition for the teacher and even less from the teacher to the students, rather as an initial plan that will be open to negotiation with the students in order to achieve some agreement that will fulfill the students learning needs and expectations. This is true especially for the beginning of a course, since the students in a classroom are always different in many ways, as well as the learning processes and teaching conditions.

Instructional Objective

Given certain topics, the students will be able to write short compositions in which they will express their opinions, feelings or ideas, or give answer to certain tasks, using accurately language forms appropriate for each activity.

Pedagogical Implementation

In the pedagogical intervention, the 10 students selected for the study were assigned different writing tasks. These activities followed the principles from the methodologies presented in the pedagogical approach, i.e. the cognitive-code approach and the task based approach, as well as the theory presented before this. As a result, the tasks were meant to promote a

meaningful use of the language as well as to provide opportunities for communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The tasks followed some of the stages proposed by Willis (1996). The process varied depending on the session or task but essentially the teacher presented the topic to the class. After this, she showed an example of what the students were expected to deliver in the task, then the students would develop it, producing a writing composition as a result of the activity. In some occasions, they had the opportunity to socialize it with the class. And finally, in a subsequent session, they received the feedback of their writings and in general about their work in the tasks.

Regarding the type of activities, some of them were deductive (description, dialogue, routine), following the PPP methodology, while others were inductive (letter and story). In the deductive ones, the teacher reviewed and explained some grammatical structures useful for the task to be developed. In the other ones, the students were free to use whatever grammatical structures and language they thought was needed and appropriate to convey their message. Consequently, the students combined free and controlled practice in their lessons. Moreover, each writing task was followed by a feedback session. In this session, the teacher handed out the students' writing compositions and they had to re-write them incorporating the corrections and feedback given by the teacher.

In the chart below, there is a general layout of the activities developed during the pedagogical implementation. It is important, however, to keep in mind that the tasks presented in the chart do not constitute all the work developed with the students in each session, only the main tasks relevant for the implementation.

Table 1. Instructional Unit.

INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT				
DATE	TIME	TOPIC	GOAL	TASK /ACTIVITY
Session #1-A July 28th	10 min	Introduction to project	To understand the purpose of the project and implementation.	Students will express any doubts or suggestions they may have about the project or implementation explained by the teacher.
Session #1-B July 28th	20 min	Socio- cultural Diagnostic	To provide information about their social background.	Students will be asked to fill out a survey given by the teacher in which they will provide information about their social and cultural background.
Session #2-A August 12th	60 min	Diagnostic test	To review some grammatical topics with the help of the teacher.	The students will receive an explanation by the teacher in order to review some grammatical topics and show students' dominance over those structures by giving examples and using them accurately to answer the teacher's questions.
Session #2-B August 12th	25 min	"Introducing myself"	To introduce themselves by making a short description providing some information about them.	Students will introduce themselves one by one to their classmates and teacher giving basic information about them, such as name, age, likes or dislikes, hobbies, etc.
Session #3 August 19th	60 min	"Getting to know each other"	To describe a classmate using the information shared by	The students will write in a piece of paper the description about themselves as they did orally. After this, each student will gather

			him/her previously.	information about one of their classmates by asking him/her certain questions and use this information to write a description like the one they did about themselves.
Session #4 August 26th	40 min	Feedback Session	To review the feedback given by the teacher and re-write the exercise including the corrections received.	The students will receive corrected the two descriptions written in the previous session and they will re-write their compositions taking into account the feedback given.
Session #5 August 31st	45 min	“Words unspoken”	To express their emotions or feelings for a person in the form of a letter.	The students will write a letter to one person, expressing something special, personal or simply something that they would normally struggle saying face-to-face. Students will be allowed, if necessary, to write the letter in Spanish and then translate it to English.
Session #6 September 2nd	60 min	“Words unspoken” B	To express their emotions or feelings for a person in the form of a letter.	In this session the students will translate the letter they previously wrote in Spanish with the help of the teacher when needed.

Session #7 September 7th	30 min	Feedback Session	To learn and understand the formal structure of a letter. To review the feedback received and re-write the exercise.	The students will receive their letters corrected. After this, they will re-write the letters incorporating formal aspects of structure and form explained by the teacher previously in this session, in addition to the feedback and corrections in the letters.
Session #8 September 9th	60 min	"Making conversation"	To simulate a dialogue between two people in a specific situation.	The students will write a dialogue between two people based on an image which will provide some context for them to imagine a conversation in that possible situation which should be close to their everyday day lives.
Session #9 September 21st	45 min	Feedback Session	To review the feedback received and re-write the exercise.	The students will have to re-write the dialogue from the previous session taking into account the feedback given by the teacher.
Session #10 September 24th	60 min	"Welcome to my life"	To express and describe their everyday routines.	The students will work together to organize pictures of people doing daily activities in order to describe the routine of the day. After this, some students will write in the white-board the sentences describing the pictures. Then, they will have to describe individually in a piece of paper their own daily routines. One from

				a week-day and the other from weekend.
Session #11 September 29th	45 min	Feedback Session	To review the feedback received and re-write the exercise.	The students will have to re-write the routines from the previous session taking into account the feedback given by the teacher. At the end of the session the teacher will explain the guidelines for the final task, which consists on writing their own short story about a topic they choose. They have again the opportunity to write it first in Spanish and then translate it if they wish to do so.
Session #12 October 15th	60 min	“Now it’s my turn”	To create a short story based on a topic of students' choice.	The students will present their stories and begin translating with the help of the teacher. They will have to finish this exercise at home if necessary.
Session #13 October 26th	60 min	Feedback Session	To revise the short story alongside the teacher to incorporate the feedback in the final draft.	The students will meet with the teacher one by one to receive feedback on their stories. Meanwhile, the other students have to work on a graphic representation of their stories to help socialize with their classmates their compositions in the next session.
Session #14 October 29th	80 min	Presentation Final Project.	To socialize with the entire class their short stories.	The students will each have some time to present their stories to the class and the teacher using the

				illustrations from the previous sessions.
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Assessment

The Assessment in this implementation played a great role in my research project given that I proposed two specific correction techniques to give feedback to the students' compositions in order to see what the effect of this feedback was in their writing skill. The students received feedback in every session, however, in different ways. On one hand, in the lesson in which they developed the writing task, the feedback given by the teacher included helping the students in any possible questions they might have had about the task or any language form. On the other hand, in the "feedback session" the teacher handed out to the students their compositions corrected so this feedback was given to the students in a written form.

The two techniques that were selected to give feedback are "the elicitation technique" and the "explicit correction technique". The first one is *Elicitation*, this is a technique whose aim is to engage the learner on identifying and correcting their own errors. Lyster and Ranta (1997) describe Elicitation as the most effective way to correct learners' errors because it involves the student in their own correction process and therefore it leads to the most amount of uptake. Bartran and Walton (1994) add that doing the correction themselves makes the learners feel motivated, independent and cooperative.

The second one is the correction technique known as *overt or explicit correction*. Lyster and Ranta (1997) defined this technique as explicitly giving the student the correct form. They claim that this technique is the least ambiguous among other correction techniques however according to them, it did not seem very effective. Bartran and Walton (1994) noticed that explicit correction is often used in communicative practice nonetheless, the use of this technique

interrupts the student when communicating and hence causes the learner to feel uncomfortable and prevents him or her to communicate in the target language. On the other side, when writing, this technique does not interrupt the learner while doing the task, and therefore does not lead to the effect stated before by Bartran and Walton (1994).

The use of the techniques in the feedback was given to the students according to each research group, as it was explained in the chapter of the Research Design, stating that in order to gather the data, the 10 participants were going to be divided into two groups and one of the techniques was going to be applied to half of the participants and the other technique to the other half. That is, one of the groups of participants received all the feedback through the Elicitation technique and the other group through the Explicit correction technique.

The way in which these two techniques were applied to the corresponding groups varied greatly given the different nature of the techniques. The Explicit correction technique has a “simpler” implementation; due to the fact that the correct form of the language is given explicitly to the students. For instance, one of the participants describing his daily routine, wrote: “I *has* breakfast”, the mistake in the sentence is the conjugation of the verb “have”. The feedback given to this student following the principles of the Explicit technique, was similar to: “the correct way is “have”, remember that the verb “have” changes only when it refers to third person, in this case “I” is not third person”. In this way the student was given the correction of the mistake and was reminded of the correct rule.

On the contrary, a student from the other group, i.e. the one with the elicitation technique, describing one of his classmates wrote “he live with his brother”. The feedback given was as follows: “there is a mistake in this sentence...”, “what is the verb missing?”, “do you remember what happens to the verb when we refer to third person singular?”. In this type of feedback, the

teacher pointed out the mistake however, she did not give the student the correct answer, instead, the teacher gave her clues so she was the one who found the correct answer.

The previous examples illustrate the type of feedback given to the students while performing the tasks in class. Additionally, when the teacher gave the written feedback after the students finished the compositions, the two techniques remained the same for each group. This is possible because the teacher could also give written feedback in a direct and indirect manner.

The direct one, corresponding to the explicit technique, does not differ much from the one given orally, since in both cases the teacher provided the correct form of the mistake (See Annex No.4). In the indirect way (Elicitation technique), the principle stays the same, that is to provide the student with clues so he/ she finds the correct answer. Nevertheless, when correcting written work, the clues took the form of codes used to indicate that there was a mistake without explicitly saying which one it was (See Annex No.4). These correction codes may vary from one teacher to another and they can be modified to meet the needs of the students. They are presented in the form of symbols (e.g. “^” for a missing item) and abbreviations (e.g. Pl / Sing for Plural / Singular) as well as initials (e.g. “WW” for Wrong Word to indicate the misuse of some vocabulary) (Hendrickson, 1984).

However, it is important that these codes are the same throughout the lessons and that the students are well familiar with them beforehand. For this purpose, a chart with the correction codes was given to each of the students so they could use them as reference when revising their written corrections (See Annex No.6). Some of the most common ones are presented below:

S – Spelling mistake

WO – Word Order

Gr – Grammar mistake

(VT – Verb Tense, S/P – Singular/Plural agreement, Mod – Modals, GI – Gerund/Infinitive, Com – Comparison, A/P – Active/Passive, Prep – Prepositions, etc.)

S/V – Subject/Verb agreement

Seg – Sentence Segment

^ - Something is missing

WW – Wrong Word

P – Punctuation

C – Capital letter

Inc. – Incomplete sentence

? – Not clear, what do you intend to mean

It is important to keep in mind that not all of these symbols are use at the same time; their use depends on what the teacher is correcting in any given task. In addition to this, as it was mentioned before, the students have to be quite familiar with the symbols so they understand what the teacher is correcting and later be able to correct themselves. According to Harmer (1991) “the use of codes reduces the negative psychological effect of red ink on students’ texts”. Another advantage of using codes for implicit feedback is that it gives students an opportunity to “look up their errors” (Corpuz, 2011).

Learner Roles

The students did not have one specific role, but instead it varied depending on the activity they were doing. For example, during the explanation of the language forms they were expected to be active participants in their learning process because even though the class was mainly mediated by the teacher at that point, the students also had previous knowledge that they brought

to the classroom to enrich the lesson with their experience and help their partners as well. While performing the tasks, the class became student-centered, as a result, the students were more independent and they were working at their own pace and around their personal interests.

In Addition to this, the students were also viewed as group participants, since some of the activities were developed in pairs and the students were frequently placed in the classroom divided into the two groups selected for the research. The learners also had to act as monitors of their own learning in the activities in which the grammatical structures were not explicitly given by the teacher but instead had to be explored by the students as they work on the tasks. For this reason, they also performed as risk-takers, given that in those types of activities they had to use aspects of the language in which they were not yet competent in order to convey their message and carry on the activities. (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Teacher Roles

The role of the teacher according to the visions of language and learning and the two approaches mentioned earlier in this chapter, is not only one, because as there were different stages in all the lessons, the teacher played different roles in each one. For example, in the presentation of the language forms, the class was more teacher-centered because the teacher was considered as the “knower” or the person who had the knowledge the students needed to develop the task. However, the students also had some prior knowledge, as mentioned before, that they could use and share with the rest of the class and it is an important aspect to keep in mind. The role of the teacher changed when the students were developing the tasks as she became a guide and advisor, helping the students achieve and complete the tasks.

Regarding the task-based approach, Richards and Rodgers (2001) proposed two more roles that apply appropriately for this implementation. One of them, regards the teacher as selector and sequencer of tasks. This role refers to the creating, selecting or planning of all the tasks or activities that were used in the implementation. The second role of the teacher, according to the authors, is preparing the learners for the tasks. This may include all the pre- task activities, presentation and review of vocabulary necessary for the tasks, demonstrating the task through examples, etc.

The Role of Materials

The role of the materials is very important because depending on their design and implementation, they can serve as great support for the lesson, keeping in mind that they should not replace the teacher in any way, instead, the materials should be a tool for the teacher to accompany his/ her lessons. For this implementation, the materials needed to be attractive in a way that the students felt engage towards the class and the topic of the lesson. They also needed to be provocative in the sense that the students felt motivated and were able to express their thoughts about the topic which is one of the main purposes of the class. Finally, the materials had to be appropriate for the class and the students' learning styles. They had to be closely related to the topic of the lesson so they did not become a distraction but a support. In addition, the material had to be designed in a way that was easily integrated with the students' previous knowledge and had to be reviewed regularly. (McLaughlin, 1987).

Overall, two visions of language and two of learning have been surveyed in this chapter. Each one of them represents the teacher's beliefs and convictions towards language and learning and they constitute, along with the approaches to learning, the theoretical foundation of this

implementation. Moreover, in this chapter it was proposed one instructional objective which drove the teaching practice on the search for the students' ability to express themselves through writings, however, in an accurate way. Then, the assessment criteria was developed, which is a significant part of this implementation. In this part the reader was presented the two techniques that were used in order to give feedback to the students' writings, as well as the way they were applied depending on the case. Finally, the reader was able to find the role of the researcher as teacher and the role of the students and the materials that were used in the implementation.

Chapter Five

Data Analysis

The process followed for the data analysis is presented in this chapter. First, some general aspects of the data collection process are brought back in this section. Then, the theory for error analysis that guided this chapter is introduced. Next, the steps for EA are explored in detailed illustrating the treatment given to the data collected. As a result, the final section in this chapter, presents the results of the analysis that allow in the subsequent chapter to answer the research question proposed for this study.

To preface the data analysis process followed in this study, it is relevant to first share some information with the reader about the data collection process. The data was gathered in fourteen sessions, during a three-month period from July 28th, 2015 to October 29th, 2015. During this time, the instruments presented in a previous chapter were implemented in different moments throughout the whole implementation. In the first session, the socio-cultural diagnosis was applied to the students in the form of a survey. While this was mainly used for the purpose of planning future sessions, there was some questions in the survey asking students' opinion about English learning and correction in the classroom which was relevant to the research itself. One the other hand, the last session carried out (#14), was devoted to interviewing the participants. The interviews were purposefully schedule for the last session, since they were meant to collect information about the pedagogical implementation in general, as well as students' perceptions about the research process overall.

The collection of artifacts took place in nine out of the fourteen sessions, which were divided into the collection of students' originals texts (sessions 3, 6, 8, 10 and 13) and the

collection of the revised texts (sessions 4, 7, 9 and 11). Finally, the observations took place throughout the whole sessions, and field notes were written when there were any reflections, ideas, perceptions or situations worth recording and relevant for the study, the pedagogical implementation or future research. Some observations also involved the home-room teacher, her lessons, her class methodology and the relationship teacher-student and student-teacher. This last aspect was also explored with informal talks between the researcher and the home-room teacher, as well as the researcher and the students.

Data Interpretation

Harishima (2006) claims that in order to gain a better understanding of the nature of language learning, error analysis (EA) has been widely used among SLA researchers as an alternative to the previous contrastive analysis, back in the 1960s. EA is based on the premise that errors can be associated with a variety of factors and not exclusively to interference from the native language. Through error analysis researchers are able to examine and hopefully explain, a second language learner's linguistic competence by collecting a raw sample of language and analyzing the errors within it (Falhasiri, 2011).

EA is defined by Brown (2000) as “the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by the learner”. However, for the purpose of this study, EA will not be viewed as a theory of language acquisition but rather as a methodology for analyzing data. As such, AbiSamara (2003) defines EA as “a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on errors committed by learners”. Crystal (2003) complements this definition by stating that EA is “the technique of identifying, classifying, and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms, produced by someone

learning a foreign language using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics” (p. 165). More recently, Amara (2015) states that EA “is concerned with the analysis of the errors committed by L2 learners by comparing the learners’ acquired norms with the target language norms and explaining the identified errors (p. 60).

In order to carry out the analysis of the data, five stages were followed taking into account the model presented by Corder (1974) for EA and further developed by James (1998) and Ellis (2008):

1. Collection of data
2. Identification of errors
3. Description of errors
4. Explanation of errors
5. Evaluation of errors

The last stage (evaluation of errors) was not included in this research, as the purpose of this stage alone was far from the scope of the present study and it requires its own methods of inquiry. The remaining stages will be discussed in further detail in the section below.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study was divided into two stages. In the first one, the steps for error analysis mentioned above were carried out in order to identify, classify and quantify the types of errors made by the participants, performing a more detailed analysis of the grammatical errors found in both versions of each student’s compositions, i.e. original and revised. For the second stage, a comparison was made so as to see if there were any significant changes between the original writings and the revised ones for each correction technique separately, namely, the

explicit correction technique (group A) and the elicitation technique (group B)², by analyzing the difference in the number of errors in terms of the workshops developed.

In the first stage of the analysis, the steps for EA were followed. They were first applied with the original version of the compositions and later the same process was followed, but this time with the revised versions. Nonetheless, both analysis are shown simultaneously in each step below.

In this section, the qualitative and quantitative treatment given to the data will be presented following the steps of EA mentioned previously.

Collection of data.

This first step in EA consists on the selection of a corpus of language (Ellis, 2008 and Hubbard et al., 1996), in other words, it involves the collection and selection of a sample of learner language which can be spoken or written. The latter is the one that corresponds to the selection made in this study. By the end of the implementation six workshops were carried out. For each workshop the ten participants wrote two types of compositions, the original and the revised version. For the sake of the analysis only four of the six workshops were taken into account, since those activities had an accuracy- practice nature. Even though the other two were also given feedback, this was more focused on content than on form, and therefore not relevant for the analysis intended. As a result, there was a total of 89 writings collected and analyzed.

Identification of errors.

² See Annex No.7 for complete description of nomenclature.

In the error identification step, the categories and subcategories of errors were identified. This categorization was based on the model proposed by Richards (1974), Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) and James (1998), in which errors are classified in terms of the different types of taxonomy, that is: Linguistic category, Surface strategy, Comparative taxonomy and Communicative effect. The first one being the most appropriate taxonomy for the analysis in this particular project.

In the linguistic category, errors are classified in terms of where they are located in reference to the component of language that is affected by the error (James, 1998, p. 105). In this taxonomy, five categories of errors are identified by James (1998), including grammatical errors (adjectives, adverbs, articles, nouns, possession, pronouns, prepositions and verbs); substance errors (capitalization, punctuation and spelling); lexical errors (word formation and word selection); syntactic errors (coordination/ subordination, sentence structure and ordering); and finally, semantic errors (ambiguous communication and miscommunication).

In order to analyze writing accuracy, it is required to find the number of errors in a written text, or as Wolf-Quintero et al. (1998, p. 33) states, finding accuracy means “counting the errors in a text in some fashion”. This error count and classification approach to data analysis, has a high reliability according to Polio (1997, p. 128), since it requires counting errors and classifying them into different types which is more detailed and accurate when establishing the levels at which the learners have improved instead of treating errors as if they were only one type (Mubarak, 2013, p. 133).

Consequently, a quantitative frequency analysis of the errors was implemented, similar to the one used by El-Farahaty (2017), who describes the process as “using simple statistical methods for identifying and categorizing the errors, counting them and calculating the

percentages for each category” (p. 7). Tables 2 and 3 illustrate the results of the error identification phase for the original compositions and the revised versions, respectively.

The total number of errors identified in the original texts were 337 errors. Table 2 shows that grammatical errors encompass half (56%) of the total errors identified in the original compositions made by the participants. In second place come lexical errors with 19%, closely followed by substance errors with 42 errors identified, representing the 13% of the total number. Finally, the last two categories with the least percentage of errors are syntactic and semantic with 7% and 5%, respectively.

Table 2. Linguistic categories distribution: Original texts.

Linguistic categories	Number of errors	Percentage of errors
Grammatical errors	188	56%
Substance errors	42	13%
Lexical errors	64	19%
Syntactic errors	25	7%
Semantic errors	18	5%
Total	337	100 %

The distribution of errors across the different linguistic categories identified in the revised texts is shown in table 3. Similar to the chart presented above, grammatical errors constitute the highest percentage (39%) compared to the other categories. Substance errors represent the second highest number of errors, 31 out of 117 in total; followed by lexical errors with only 18%. Once again, the lowest percentages correspond to the syntactic (4%) and semantic (2%) categories. There is one additional category that emerged in the identification phase when

analyzing the errors found in the revised texts. This category was labeled “misinterpretation errors” and represents the 10% of the total errors identified in the second version of the participants’ compositions.

Table 3. Linguistic categories distribution: Revised texts.

Linguistic categories	Number of errors	Percentage of errors
Grammatical errors	46	39%
Substance errors	31	27%
Lexical errors	21	18%
Syntactic errors	5	4%
Semantic errors	2	2%
Misinterpretation errors	12	10%
Total	117	100 %

This last new category was identified when contrasting the correction given in the original text, with the errors found in the revised ones. The analysis of the revised texts showed that this type of error was originated when the correction given to a certain error in the original text was misunderstood or misinterpreted (hence, the label of the category), leading the participant to commit a new error when rewriting the second version of the text.

Due to the focus of this research project, only errors at the grammatical level will be discussed. The grammatical subcategories analyzed in this section were taken from the ones identified by Mubarak (2013, p. 108) and Amara (2015, p. 65), these include: Verb tense, Subject/verb agreement, auxiliary verb, pronouns, articles, prepositions, possession and singular vs. plural. These subcategories will be further explained in the section below.

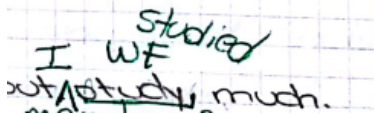
Description and explanation of errors.

The purpose of this stage of EA is to explore each of the grammatical subcategories presented in the section above. These subcategories will be further illustrated with samples of errors taken from the participants' compositions. In every subcategory, the examples given will represent samples taken from both the original texts as well as the revised texts.

Verb tense.

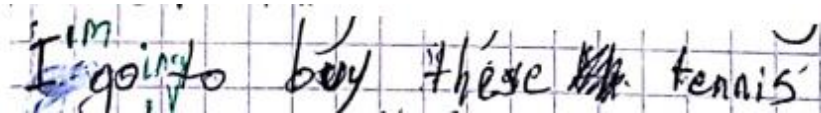
Errors of wrong tense occur when the learner fails to conjugate the verb in the appropriate tense and form taking into account the context of the sentence and the meaning they are trying to convey.

Example 1. (S3A, W3ORG, September 9th)



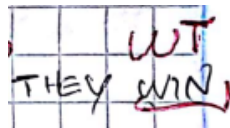
I WF studied
out study much.

Example 2. (S4A, W3ORG, September 9th)



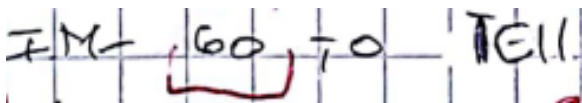
I'm going to buy these tennis 😊

Example 3. (S6B, W3RVS, September 21st)



WT
THEY WIN

Example 4. (S6B, W3RVS, September 21st)

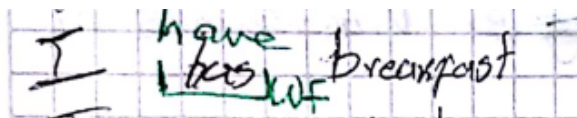


I M GO TO TELL

Subject- verb agreement.

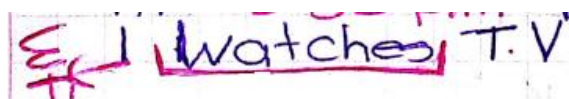
Subjects and verbs must agree with one another in number. In other words if the subject is singular, then its verb must also be singular, or if on the contrary, the subject is plural, then the verb must be too. Additionally in this category, errors of wrong conjugation of the verb when the subject is third person and the sentence is expressed in simple present, are also included.

Example 1. (S4A, W4ORG, September 24th)



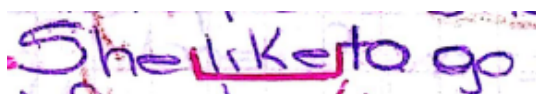
I ~~have~~ ^{has} breakfast

Example 2. (S7B, W4ORG, September 24th)



~~E~~ watches T.V

Example 3. (S7B, W2RVS, August 26th)



She ~~like~~ to go

Example 4. (S8B, W4ORG, September 24th)

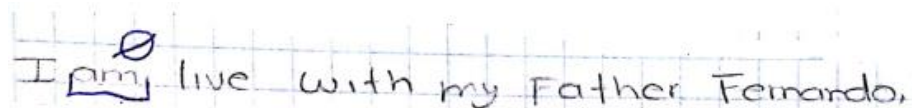


m I ~~has~~ breakfast

Auxiliary verb.

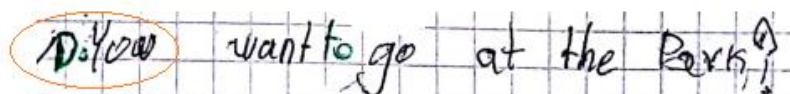
This subcategory refers to the wrong use of an auxiliary. It also includes the addition or omission in a sentence of the auxiliary verb.

Example 1. (S2A, W1ORG, August 19th)



I am live with my Father Fernando.

Example 2. (S4A, W3ORG, September 9th)



Do you want to go at the Park?

Example 3. (S6B, W3RVS, September 21st)

I WATCHING

Example 4. (S1A, W3ORG, September 9th)

Juan: call you

Pronoun.

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun in a sentence. They are used in order to make a sentence less repetitive when the noun is already been mentioned previously. The most common error regarding this category, was the omission of the personal pronoun in the sentences.

Example 1. (S10B, W3ORG, September 9th)

Could take coffee?

Example 2. (S2A, W4ORG, September 24th)

At 12:00 pm. I take a shower.

Example 3. (S8B, W4ORG, September 24th)

At 12:30 arrive from school.

Example 4. (S4A, W4ORG, September 24th)

I go to sleep

Article.

There are two types of articles in English: “the” and “a/an”. They are referred to as definite and indefinite articles, respectively. When analyzing the errors, it was found that students often had trouble using correctly “a” and “an” depending on the first letter of the noun. Addition and omission of the definite article was also a common issue identified.

Example 1. (S4A, W3ORG, September 9th)

to buy ^{some} a Pants

Example 2. (S8B, W3ORG, September 9th)

x Juan a Coffee Please

Example 3. (S2A, W4ORG, September 24th)

I arrive to the house

Example 4. (S5A, W1ORG, August 19th)

My favorite color is the red

Preposition.

This type of error occurs when there is a missing preposition or in cases when the students use the wrong one. In this category the omission of the preposition “to” before the infinitive of the verb, was often identified.

Example 1. (S2A, W1ORG, August 19th)

and listen to music

Example 2. (S10B, W1RVS, August 26th)

I like ~~to~~ play soccer

Example 3. (S3A, W4RVS, September 29th)

I ~~to~~ change my clothes

Example 4. (S8B, W4ORG, September 24th)

I go to ~~in~~ the park

Possession.

In terms of expressing possession, one of the most common issues found was the misuse of the possessive adjectives, especially in cases in which “her” was used to refer to the subject he, and “his” was used to refer to the subject she.

Example 1. (S4A, W2ORG, August 19th)

~~his~~ eyes are Brown
~~her~~

Example 2. (S3A, W4ORG, September 24th)

I arrive ~~to~~ ^{my} house

Example 3. (S2A, W2RVS, August 26th)

She lives with ~~her~~ ^{my} mother,

Example 4. (S4A, W2ORG, August 19th)

~~his~~ favorite
~~her~~

Singular vs. Plural.

In this category errors in which the participants used plural forms where singular were needed or vice versa, were identified.

Example 1. (S9B, W1ORG, August 19th)

I have two pet.

Example 2. (S10B, W1ORG, August 19th)

My favory colors is blue

Example 3. (S2A, W4ORG, September 24th)

I do homeworks.

Example 4. (S7B, W2ORG, August 19th)

blacks

Overall, in this first stage of the data analysis, the aforementioned steps in the process of EA were followed. As a result, the linguistic categories and grammatical subcategories of the errors committed by the participants were identified and presented, illustrating the latter with representative samples taken from both the original and the revised compositions. For the second stage of the data analysis in this research project, a comparison was made between the number of errors identified in the original texts, and the number of errors that emerged in the revised versions that students were asked to write after receiving feedback with one of the correction techniques selected for this study.

This final stage will be presented separately for each technique, in order to seek what effects or changes occurred in students' writing accuracy, after the implementation of the correction techniques. These effects will be evidenced from the results obtained from the quantitative analysis and interpretation of the grammatical errors presented in the previous stage. The comparison will be made between the original texts and the revised versions examining each of the workshops developed in class.

Table 4 illustrates the results of the analysis for the first group of participants (Group A), i.e., those who received feedback through the explicit correction technique. This table shows the distribution of the errors identified in the grammatical category, corresponding to the number of errors identified in the original compositions opposite to the number of errors in the revised versions, presenting the results for each of the workshops separately.

Table 4. Group A: Distribution of grammatical errors per workshop.

Workshop	Original texts		Revised texts	
	Number of errors.	Percentage of errors	Number of errors.	Percentage of errors
W1	23	22%	2	10%
W2	18	17%	1	5%
W3	28	27%	16	80%
W4	36	34%	1	5%
Total	105	100 %	20	100 %

Overall, the number of grammatical errors committed by the participants after receiving feedback with the explicit correction technique decreased considerably, changing from 105 errors to only 20 errors in total. Nonetheless, as indicated in the table, the reduction in the

number of errors was not progressive throughout the four workshops. While the decrease in the frequency of errors for the first, second and fourth workshops was roughly similar (91%, 94% and 97% respectively), the results for the third workshop reveal a reduction of only 43%, indicating that possibly the effect of the explicit correction technique does not affect writing accuracy in terms of the time the participants were exposed to it, but rather the nature of the activities developed.

The distribution of the number of errors across the different workshops developed is shown in table 5. These results correspond to the contrastive analysis performed between the original texts and the revised versions for the participants in group B, that is, the students who receive the elicitation technique for corrective feedback.

Table 5. Group B: Distribution of grammatical errors per workshop.

Workshop	Original texts		Revised texts	
	Number of errors.	Percentage of errors	Number of errors.	Percentage of errors
W1	28	34%	6	23%
W2	24	29%	12	46%
W3	21	25%	8	31%
W4	10	12%	0	0%
Total	83	100 %	26	100 %

As shown in table 5, the number of grammatical errors for group B in the revised texts went down, compared to the total number identified in the original compositions. The number of errors in the original texts represent the 76% of the total number of errors identified for group B,

while only the 24% was accounted for the errors committed in the compositions written after receiving the treatment with the elicitation technique.

The figures obtained from the analysis of the revised texts per workshop in Table 5, although together they evidence an improvement in the overall percentage, when examined individually, there is no sign of a constant or progressive decrease. Even though, the difference in the percentage of this fluctuation is not considerable (W1=23%, W2=46%, W3=31% and W4=0%), it is in fact quite irregular, suggesting that the changes in accuracy may be influenced by more factors than just the exposure to the elicitation technique.

The contrary was found when analyzing the number of errors in the original texts. As illustrated in table 5, the percentage of errors committed by the participants decreased steadily, showing a reduction of the errors in each new composition the students made after receiving feedback in each previous text (W1=34%, W2=29%, W3=25% and W4=12%). These results possibly demonstrate that the implementation of the elicitation technique may have a greater effect on learners' internalization process on the long term, rather than on the immediate re-drafting of their current work.

All in all, when contrasting the analysis for both groups (Tables 4 and 5), it is possible to evidence that both correction techniques, namely, the explicit and elicitation techniques, had a positive effect on students' writing accuracy, as shown in the decline of the number of errors committed by the participants (105 to 20 and 83 to 26, for each group, respectively). These findings serve as a counter-argument for Truscott's review of studies by Kepner (1991), Semke (1984), and Sheppard (1992), in which he claims that error correction does not have any positive effect on improving L2 writing. Additionally, these results are in line with the findings of several

studies that support the beneficial effects of correction in students' writings (Bitchener et al., 2005; Chandler, 2003; Ellis, 2008; Falhasari, 2011).

This positive effect is not only evident in students' compositions. The analysis of the interviews applied to the participants at the end of the implementation, evidenced that there is a general agreement for all the participants in that correction was beneficial for their learning process. Regardless the technique that was used with them, they appreciated receiving feedback in their written work because it helped them to be aware of their errors and not commit them again in the future.

Another effect found after examining the figures for both groups, was the fact that the reduction in the errors for the revised texts was not constant or stable in any of the cases. It was suggested previously during the analysis of the elicitation technique that this may be due to the intervention of more factors in the improvement of accuracy other than the mere exposure to the correction techniques. The nature of the activities developed was highlighted as one possible cause for the fluctuation in the figures for the revised texts in the analysis of group A, since it was precisely the percentage of reduction in W3 the one that showed the least amount with a 43%. Nonetheless, there was another indicator to support this conclusion. When contrasted, the results obtained for group A and the ones obtained for group B, evidenced that for both groups, it was W4 the one with the highest percentage of reduction, reaching a 97% and 100%, respectively; indicating that the nature of the activity developed has an influence in the effectiveness of the correction technique implemented. However, more research would be needed on this particular subject to further support this statement.

It was stated previously that both correction techniques had a positive effect in student's writing accuracy. Nevertheless, contrasting each group's results, it was found that group A

reached the highest percentage of improvement with a reduction rate of 81%, against the 68% obtained by group B. This may be due to the fact that explicit correction allows students to compare the structure in the target language with that of their interlanguage, facilitating the internalization of the correct form (Falhasari, 2011, p. 256). As Ellis (1991) states, learners must “notice, compare and integrate the feedback” in order for acquisition to take place. Therefore, explicit correction not only helps students notice their errors, but also provides the correct form, enabling them to make the necessary comparisons to make sense of the language they are acquiring.

In one of the declarations from the interviews, the participant S1A, describes how this process of contrasting the target form with his interlanguage seemed beneficial for him: “one does the activity, gives it to you, and you correct what was wrong, next to it and what was right, this way one already knew what to do and why it was wrong” (See Annex No.8 for original declaration). According to him, he could take advantage of the fact that both forms, correct and incorrect, were given to him, and this made the process of correcting the piece much easier. In a similar study, Dabaghi and Basturkmen’s (2009) findings showed how explicit error feedback proved to be more effective in raising awareness of the corrected feature, resulting in a decreased in the number of errors compare to the group who received implicit feedback. It could be concluded that this awareness created by the use of the explicit correction technique might be one of the possible explanations for the difference in performance between group A and B.

In addition to this, Dabaghi and Basturkmen (2009), present in their article a number of reasons as to why the explicit technique may have a greater impact compared to the implicit one. Only two of those reasons are presented in this study, for being more relevant to the results presented above. The first argument supports the contrasting theory explained before; they state:

“the fact that learners were explicitly corrected on their errors created a contrast with the form in their interlanguage.

The second reason provided by the researchers explains that the provision of the correct form may not have been effective since “it was less clear to learners what was wrong with their erroneous utterances and without such understanding, hypothesis revision was not possible”. This situation was further evidenced in the present study with the emergence of the category of “misinterpretation errors” when developing the stage of error identification. This category was found exclusively when analyzing the revised texts and represents those errors in which students failed to comprehend or make sense of the corrections given.

The participant S7B, refers to this phenomenon in the interviews by saying that correction codes were useful for her to receive the feedback, however, in her opinion, it was necessary to learn them by heart to be able to understand and interpret correctly the corrections given by the teacher, which sometimes could be difficult for her (See Annex No.8 for original declaration).

In some cases, however, it is not the misunderstanding of the correction what makes the explicit feedback apparently more effective, in some occasions it has to do with the lack of knowledge of the structure being pointed out. By giving explicitly the correct form, learners will not encounter this issue. On the other hand, when the linguistic feature is beyond the students’ current developmental stage, implicit corrective feedback will be unlikely to work (Dabaghi & Basturkmen, 2009).

It was mentioned previously that one of the effects found was the superiority of the explicit technique over the implicit technique in terms of the overall percentage of errors decreased. Nonetheless, the results in table 5, show that the latter technique presents a constant improvement with less errors committed by the participants in each new composition they made.

It was suggested before that these findings were a possible indicator of the beneficial effects of implicit correction on learners' internalization process in the long term. Chandler (2003) supports this theory by stating that the provision of direct feedback was "best for producing accurate revision while simple underlining was best for students' learning and benefit" (p. 267), which in turn lead to long lasting acquisition. In contrast, explicit correction may be more beneficial "for better revision and a more accurate second draft" (Mubarak, 2013, p. 214), which may explain the improvement for group A in the writing accuracy for the subsequent original texts.

The declarations of two students help exemplify this last statement. The participant S9B, argues that she found the use of correction codes beneficial, because the error was pointed out, however, it was up to them to analyze, interpret and understand what the error was and how to fix it, and this way acquiring a better understanding of the grammatical form used. On the other hand, the participant S4A, said that it was difficult to remember all the corrections he received, but that it was good in the sense that it helped the process of rewriting the second draft, since all the correct forms were already there (See Annex No.8 for original declarations).

All in all, this chapter depicts the process carried out in order to analyze the data collected in this research project. The analysis was developed in two stages: In the first one, the steps in the process of error analysis were followed. In turn, the linguistic categories and grammatical subcategories were identified and quantified examining the errors committed in the participants' compositions. In the second stage, the effects of each of the correction techniques on students' writing accuracy were identified by comparing the number of errors found in the original texts and the revised versions, for each workshop developed. One of the overall conclusions is that both techniques are beneficial for the improvement of learners' writing accuracy. In the next

chapter, the conclusions of this research project along with the pedagogical implications will be further discussed.

Chapter Six

Conclusions

Throughout the five previous chapters, the whole process carried out in this research study was depicted. From the research question proposed and the objectives suggested to answer this research question, to the presentation of the theory underlying this study and the development of the research design and the pedagogical implementation which allowed the researcher to collect the data that was later analyzed in the development of the previous chapter. Finally in this chapter, the research question will be answered taking into account the results obtained from the analysis performed. Furthermore, the pedagogical implications that arose from this study will be discussed, along with the limitations encountered in the development of this project and issues of interest for future research.

This research study was carried out in order to answer the question proposed by the researcher in the first chapter. The findings obtained after applying the procedures depicted in each chapter of this research project to this particular population at the time of the implementation, show that there are several effects revealed in ninth grade students' writings when implementing the elicitation and explicit correction techniques to provide feedback to grammatical errors. The first effect reveals that there is in fact a reduction in the number of errors committed by the participants after they were exposed to the correction techniques. The second effect shows that such reduction in the frequency of errors may be influenced by factors other than the correction itself. The third one, illustrates how the implementation of the explicit technique seems to produce a greater improvement over the implicit one. Nonetheless, the last

effect identified, shows how the elicitation technique may have a greater impact on the long term.

After analyzing and comparing the effects found for each of the groups (Explicit and Elicitation), it was discovered that some of those effects were similar in both groups, while some others were identified exclusively for each of the techniques. The first effect that was similar, was the fact that both groups showed an improvement in the reduction of the errors committed by the participants. This discovery supports the argument that error correction has a beneficial effect on students' writing accuracy, contrasting with the theory suggested by some researchers that correction has no effect at all on the writing skill. Some even argue that correction may have a negative impact on students' accuracy. This positive effect found after the implementation of the two techniques, allow the findings from this research to join the plethora of studies that support the argument that error correction is in fact beneficial and should be an integral part of teachers' practices.

The second effect similar in both groups was identified when comparing the figures obtained in the revised texts. It was noticed that the reduction of errors in the two groups, did not occurred uniformly or progressively. Even though, the overall number of errors decreased (compare to those made in the original texts), the percentage of reduction for each workshop in the revised texts was different. In addition to this, the contrastive analysis between the two groups also revealed that the last workshop developed by the participants was the one that showed the highest improvement. This finding suggests that not only there may be other factors that influenced the overall improvement in the participants' writing accuracy, but also that one of those factors might be the nature of the activities developed. This conclusion is supported by the outstanding improvement achieved by students in the same workshop in the two different groups.

As it was stated in the previous chapter, to further support this conclusion, more research on this subject is required.

Regarding the third effect, the first difference identified after the contrastive analysis of the results from both groups, is that even though the implementation of both techniques showed positive effects in the improvement of learners' writing accuracy, there were better overall results obtained by the explicit group than the ones obtained by the elicitation one. Some of the reasons presented to support this finding suggest that the implementation of the explicit correction technique, enables students to make a comparison between the correct form provided by the teacher and the incorrect form pointed out in the writing, raising awareness of their interlanguage and hence facilitating the internalization process. Another reason proposed, was the fact that by giving the correct form of the language explicitly, there is no room for misinterpretations of the corrections provided, which can be a difficulty when the feedback is given implicitly. And finally, the fact that sometimes students fail to correct their compositions, is not due to unclear corrections, but rather the lack of knowledge of the linguistic forms misused. Clearly, these situations can be avoided if the feedback given is explicit and in turn, it will produce a greater improvement in the participants' accuracy.

The fourth effect identified deals with the fact that even though the implicit correction technique showed a lowest percentage in the overall reduction rate in the revised texts compared to the explicit group, the analysis evidenced that there was a progressive reduction in the number of errors in every new composition the students made. This discovery suggests that the implementation of the elicitation technique may have a long-lasting effect on learners' writing accuracy. It is possible to conclude from the analysis that the irregular improvement in students from group A, though successful, indicates that this technique may have a greater benefit for the

immediate re-drafting of the compositions, by indicating clearly the corrections to be made. On the other hand, the elicitation technique may foster in students the internalization of the corrections given, facilitating a long-term acquisition of the language being studied by requiring students to apply a more analytical approach to the corrective feedback given.

The development of this research project, along with its findings suggest a number of implications for the different actors that intervene in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. These implications will be discussed in the section below.

Pedagogical implications

The findings that resulted from this research project, help support the already existing research on the field of error correction and error analysis. There has been debate on the effects and benefits of error correction in learners' writing accuracy. Some researchers argue that correction does not present any significant benefit for learners and should be excluded from teachers' practices. This research offers a counter-argument, not only in favor of error correction but strongly suggesting its practice in educational environments, supported by recent research that also demonstrates the positive effect and importance of error correction in students' learning process.

Another pedagogical implication deals with the fact that error correction and error analysis offer teachers an opportunity to identify problematic linguistic areas in the students' learning process, enabling teachers to readdress their methodology and make the necessary adjustments, to the course, syllabus or the programs and to create and implement new materials that benefit and help students to overcome difficulties in their learning process.

A third implication is reflected on a more personal level. As a result of this research, my knowledge on this topic increased considerably, as well as my awareness on the way I was correcting my students and the impact of my practice in their learning process. Hopefully this research, will bring the discussion of error correction to the classrooms and teachers will feel motivated to learn and become more aware of their teaching practices, improving their craft and hence being able to help students get the most of their learning process, being this the ultimate goal of carrying out action research.

Learners value receiving feedback in their work. As it was expressed by them in the interviews and informal conversations with the researcher, they consider that part of their learning comes from knowing what is correct and incorrect, and consider that corrective feedback allows them to be aware of their errors so they don't commit the same mistakes in the future. Error correction implemented properly in the classroom, teaches the learners to see errors not in a negative way, but rather as an integral and beneficial component of their learning process and as another tool to keep improving and progressing in their acquisition of a foreign language.

Limitations

There were two major limitations that were present throughout the whole time of the implementation. The first one, was the fact that I could not fulfill my schedule as planned, due to sudden changes and the unpredictability of the school's schedule. In this school, they had a system in which the academic days did not correspond to the days of the week but to a number, e.g. Day one, day two, day three, and so on, from Monday to Friday. I had schedule two sessions a week to work with the students. Those days were Monday and Thursday, which at the

beginning of the implementation corresponded to Day one and two. However, during the time of the implementation there were several academic activities at the school that caused the days “to move”. Going from Day one being Monday, to Day one being Tuesday, and so on. These changes conflicted with my personal schedule and the time I had available for the data collection process.

The second major limitation was undoubtedly issues with the spaces available at school to carry out my classes with the participants. The beginning of every session was devoted to find a place at the school where we could develop the lessons. In some occasions we could find an empty classroom, but in some others we had to work on common spaces at the school, even so, that in more than one session, there was no other place for us to work that in some of the stairs from the institution. Needless to say, this affected greatly the appropriate development of the activities, by not having a comfortable and quiet space for the students to concentrate and write. This issue was clearly upsetting for the participants, who expressed their desired of having better facilities, should the project be ever implemented again.

Further research

Certainly, what makes error correction and error analysis appealing for researchers, is the fact that there is plenty to research about. This study dealt with the effects of the implementation of two correction techniques to correct specifically the grammatical errors of ninth- grade students. Should any of these variables changed in a future study, the results are likely to evidenced different data that the one obtained in this research. Research in error correction and error analysis like the one presented in this document could be even extended to other target languages.

Nonetheless, there are two main interests of research that arose from the findings obtained in the present study. One of them deals with the possibility that improvement in the participants' writing accuracy, is not solely achieved by the correction provided, but for other factors. It was proposed the hypothesis that the nature of the activities developed also influenced the decreased in the frequency of errors committed by the participants. Then, it would be worth exploring what correction techniques should be used or how should these be implemented taking into account the type of activity and possibly the language forms used.

When analyzing the possible reasons to account for the higher results obtained from the explicit correction technique compared to the elicitation one, it was suggested that giving the correct form helped students that were not yet in the capacity of finding the correct forms themselves due to lack of knowledge of that particular form. In contrast, the elicitation technique, by not giving the correct answer explicitly, required from students a more complex analysis process to recognize the error and be able to correct. These results generate the question of whether certain correction techniques are more appropriate depending on the level of proficiency the learner has. This issue would be of great interest for future research.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Socio Cultural Diagnosis.



Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas
Facultad de Ciencias y Educación
Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés
Colegio Marruecos y Molinos I.E.D

Nombre Completo: _____ Edad: 14

Sexo: F M Curso: 902

Con la siguiente encuesta se pretende recoger información sobre algunos aspectos básicos como información familiar y escolar. Por favor responda las siguientes preguntas con la mayor sinceridad posible.

1. ¿En qué barrio vive? Molinos
2. ¿Cuál es su estrato socioeconómico? 2
3. ¿En qué tipo de vivienda vive? Marque con una x la que corresponda.
 - a. Casa propia
 - b. Arriendo
 - c. Casa familiar
 - d. Otro
4. A continuación indique las personas que componen su núcleo familiar con su respectiva profesión.

Parentesco	Edad	Profesión
Papi	42 años	Policia
Mami	37 años	Cometóloga
Hermana Mayor	17 años	Estudiante
Hermana Menor	2 años	Jardin

5. ¿Cuántas de estas cosas tiene en su casa?
 - a. Televisores 2
 - b. Computadores 2
 - c. Tabletas 0
 - d. Consolas de video juegos (wii, play station, X-box, etc) 0
6. Aproximadamente cuánto tiempo dedica cada día entre semana a realizar las siguientes actividades?

	Nunca	1 hora o menos	De 1 a 2 horas	De 2 a 3 horas	Más de 3 horas
Ver televisión		X			
Jugar en el computador		X			
Entretenerme en internet		X			
Usar redes sociales (facebook, Twitter, etc)		X			
Leer libros, novelas, poesía.			X		
Salir a la calle	X				

7. En su casa...

	Nunca/ casi nunca	Pocas veces	Bastantes veces	Siempre
Me marcan un tiempo de estudio.		X		
Hablamos del trabajo escolar y las tareas que tengo.				X
Mi familia acude al colegio para hablar con mis profesores.				X

8. Indique si está de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones.

	Nunca	Muy pocas veces	A veces	Bastantes veces	Siempre
Mi madre/ padre o familiar me revisa las tareas.					X
Acabo las tareas escolares que me mandan para la casa.					X
Cuando corregimos en clase las tareas las tengo bien.					X

9. Califique las siguientes preguntas de 1 a 5, siendo 1 el de menos importancia y 5 el más importante.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. ¿Considera importante pasar tiempo con su familia? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | X | 5 |
| b. ¿Goza de buenas relaciones con sus compañeros de curso? | 1 | 2 | 3 | X | 5 | |
| c. ¿Disfruta trabajar en equipo? | 1 | 2 | 3 | X | 5 | |
| d. ¿Qué tan importante es para usted pasar tiempo con sus amigos? | 1 | 2 | X | 4 | 5 | |
| e. ¿Cómo considera su relación con los maestros? | 1 | 2 | 3 | X | 5 | |
| f. ¿Qué importancia tiene para usted el estudio? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | X | 5 |
| g. ¿Le gusta aprender cosas nuevas todos los días? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | X | 5 |
| h. ¿Considera que aprender inglés es importante para su vida? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | X | 5 |

10. En su opinión, ¿cuál es el papel del maestro en su proceso de aprendizaje?

El papel del profesor es muy importante ya que nos enseña cosas que no sabíamos o no teníamos muy claras.

11. ¿Considera que es importante que los maestros los maestros le corrijan cuando desarrollan una actividad en clase?

Si, ya que aprendemos y corregimos lo que no teníamos bien

Annex 2

Consent letter.

Bogotá, Agosto 4 de 2015

Señores
PADRES DE FAMILIA
Colegio Marruecos y Molinos I.E.D
Ciudad

Respetados padres de familia:

Por medio de la presente, yo, Karen Lorena Poveda Lasprilla, docente investigadora en formación de la Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, me permito solicitarle su autorización para que su hijo(a) participe en el proyecto de investigación que estoy llevando a cabo en el colegio como trabajo de grado. Esta investigación busca analizar los efectos de dos técnicas de corrección cuando son implementadas para corregir los escritos de los estudiantes.

En el transcurso de la investigación, los estudiantes llevarán a cabo distintas actividades en las cuales realizarán escritos que serán corregidos con alguna de las técnicas según corresponda, estas actividades tomarán lugar en las instalaciones del colegio y en las horas correspondientes al espacio de la asignatura de inglés; de ser necesario se tomarán muestras de audio o video como complemento a las producciones escritas del estudiante. Cabe resaltar que la información personal del participante será estrictamente confidencial y de uso exclusivo de esta investigación. Los resultados de la misma podrán ser divulgados oralmente o en artículos académicos, sin embargo, la identidad de su hijo(a) permanecerá en anonimato y sus nombres serán reemplazados por unos ficticios.

Autorización de participación en la investigación:

Yo ([REDACTED]) identificado(a) con cédula de ciudadanía No. [REDACTED] autorizo a mi hijo(a) [REDACTED] a participar de la investigación anteriormente descrita. Además, por este medio autorizo al proyecto en mención para tomar, usar y divulgar el medio específico marcado a continuación:

Grabaciones de video Grabaciones de audio

YO AUTORIZO A MI HIJA PARA PARTICIPAR EN LAS CLASES EN HORAS DE LA TARDE.

De antemano agradezco su colaboración y atención. [REDACTED]


Cordialmente,

Karen Poveda

Karen Lorena Poveda Lasprilla
C.C. [REDACTED]

Annex 3

Permission afternoon sessions.

 **Colegio Marruecos y Molinos I.E.D**

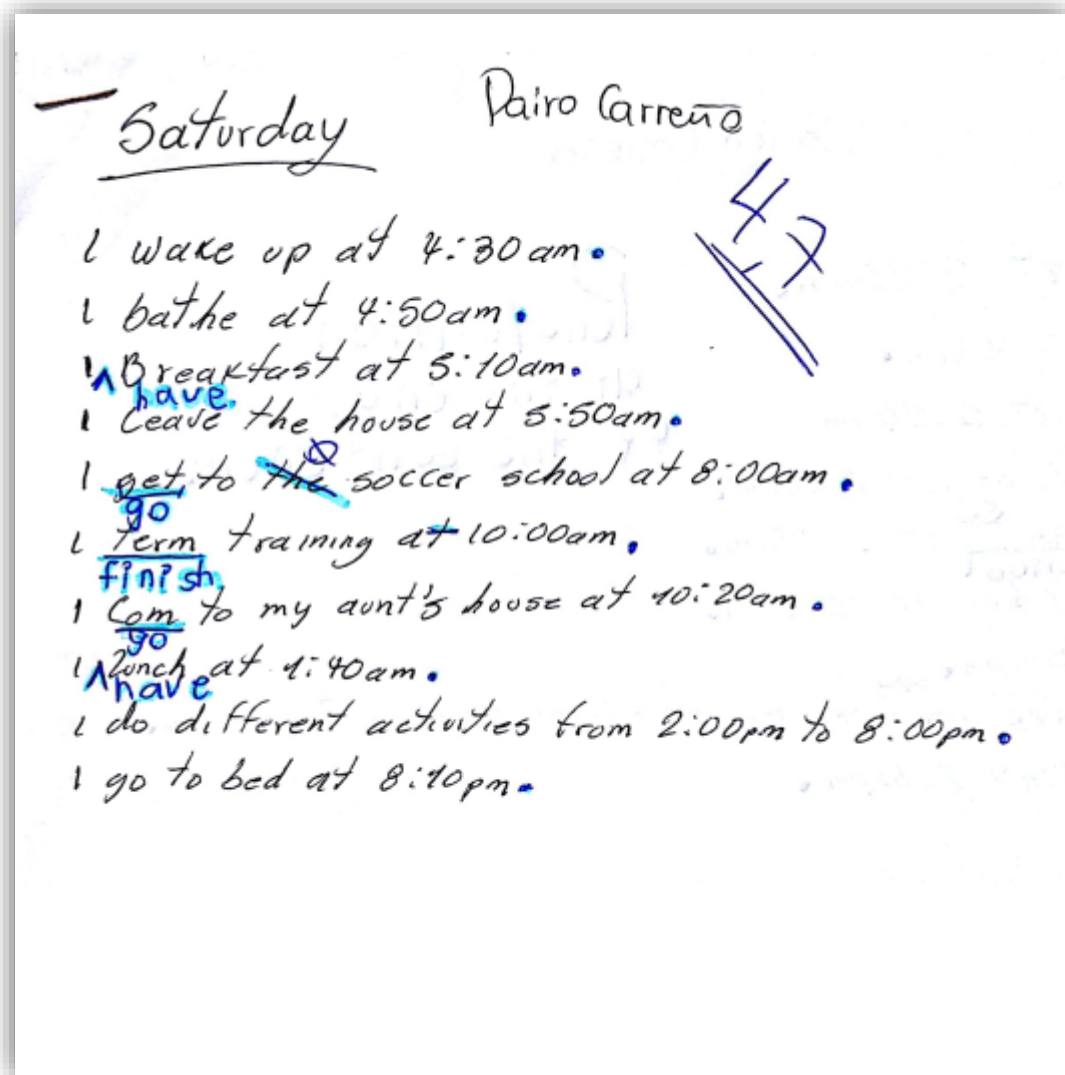
El estudiante _____ estuvo en la clase de inglés a cargo de la profesora Karen Poveda, el día Lunes 31 de agosto, desde la 1:10 hasta las 2:30 en las instalaciones del colegio.

Firma profesora: Karen Poveda

Firma Acudiente: _____

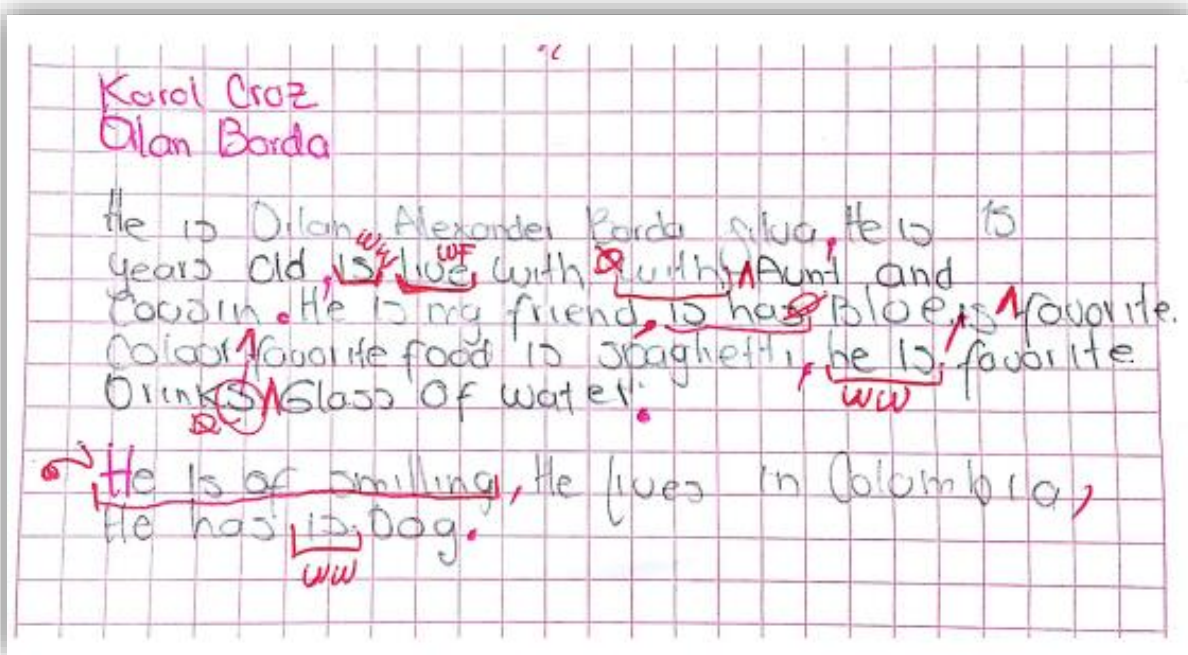
Annex 4

Sample of Direct Correction.



Annex 5

Sample of Indirect Correction.



Annex 6

Correction Codes.

CODE	ERROR INDICATED	EXAMPLE
WW	Wrong Word	As our plane flew <u>on</u> the mountains we saw snow.
WT	Wrong Tense	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>see</u> snow.
WF	Wrong Form	As our plane flew over the mountains we <u>was seeing</u> snow.
WO	Wrong Order	As our plane over the mountains flew we saw snow.
MW- Λ	Missing Word	As our plane flew over the mountains Λ saw snow.
Λ	Missing preposition, Article, subject, verb.	As our plane flew over the mountains Λ <u>subj</u> saw snow.
SP	SPelling	As our plane <u>flue</u> over the mountains we saw snow.
P	Punctuation	As our plane flew over the mountains; we saw snow.
EW- Ø	Extra Word- Not necessary	As our plane flew over <u>to</u> the mountains we saw snow.
RW	Try Re- Writing	<u>Our vehicle flies, we snow find, over the mountains you saw it.</u>
?	Not clear	As our plane flew over the mountains we saw snow.

Annex 7**Nomenclature charts.**

Correction Technique	Nomenclature
Explicit correction Technique	Group A
Elicitation Technique	Group B

Participant	Nomenclature
Student 1.	S1A
Student 2.	S2A
Student 3.	S3A
Student 4.	S4A
Student 5.	S5A
Student 6.	S6B
Student 7.	S7B
Student 8.	S8B
Student 9.	S9B
Student 10.	S10B

Type of composition	Nomenclature
Original text	ORG
Revised text	RVS

Workshop	Nomenclature	Date (ORG/RVS)	
		Introducing myself (Diagnostic test)	W1
Getting to know each other	W2	August 19 th	August 26 th
Making conversation	W3	September 9 th	September 21 st
Welcome to my life	W4	September 24 th	September 29 th

Annex 8**Sample of participants' original declarations (Interview).**

Participant	Spanish declaration
S1A	“uno hacia la actividad, se la pasaba [a la profesora] y le corregía a uno lo que estaba mal, la de al lado y lo que era correcto, entonces uno ya sabía que era lo que tenía que hacer y cómo porque le quedó mal”
S7B	“pues tocaba era aprenderse las cosas, entenderlas, porque sin eso pues difícil”
S9B	“no, así, porque uno sabe, osea, que nos quedó mal y nos toca a nosotros mismos mirar por qué y así uno como que aprende más”
S4A	“está complicado aprendérselo todo pero... si, está muy bien... si dice esta palabra no va acá, bueno me sobró, aj, o si va más al frente o más atrás, es muy bueno porque cuando voy a hacer el otro escrito corregido, pues lo tengo ahí todo”