

**INCIDENTAL CORRECTION OF PRONUNCIATION:  
BELIEFS AND CLASSROOM PRACTICE**

by

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### Abstract

In English language teaching, pronunciation had been making something of a “comeback”. Since the late 1970s, in part as a response to structural methods, pronunciation has been generally downplayed. Today, it is being integrated back into communicative and task-based teaching, with the recommendation that it be addressed according to an “intelligibility”, rather than an accurate “native speaker”, model.

With these developments have arisen new considerations regarding error-correction. In the past, in general, all errors were to be corrected, whereas today, errors that interfere with intelligibility are attended to, at the same time providing teachable moments for learning. With a focus on intelligibility, incidental correction occurs during meaning-focused tasks, a subset of “focus on form” instruction (Long, 1991). It is suggested that feedback is effective if it is salient, systematic and engaging for the student.

Despite research suggesting successful techniques for correcting pronunciation (Saito & Lyster, 2012; Saito, 2014; and Lee & Lyster, 2016), studies focusing on incidental correction of pronunciation in an integrated, task-based program are lacking (cf. Foote et al., 2013). In order to examine possible opportunities for integrated pronunciation correction, this study describes instances of observed incidental correction, students’ perceptions of correction and opinions of instructors. Six hours of instruction were observed with five instructors, 54 students were surveyed, and instructors were interviewed regarding their beliefs about pronunciation-related incidental corrective feedback in the classroom.

Overall, results suggest that incidental correction of pronunciation targeted segmental errors (e.g., consonants and vowels), mainly in student-fronted contexts such as presentations or read-aloud activities. Incidental correction focusing on suprasegmentals (e.g., focus words and

connected speech), though minimal, was evident in discussion activities. The survey revealed that students prefer pronunciation correction that involves negotiation rather than direct recasts, i.e., students prefer to be prompted for the correct answer rather than being provided with it. Students, especially in the higher proficiency level classes, tended to be wary of correction that might interrupt their “thoughts”. Without directly being elicited, the predominant theme that arose from the instructor interviews was the need for comfort and trust in the classroom, with instructors believing that correction is necessary and important, but not if it will increase student stress and anxiety.

Based on these findings, a preliminary framework for incidental corrective feedback of pronunciation is outlined, including suggestions for when and how feedback could have occurred in the observed classes. In conclusion, the contemporary definition of “incidental” is revisited, suggesting directions for further research and practice.

*Keywords: Pronunciation, Correction, Focus-on-Form, Incidental, EAP Instruction*

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Literature Review.....	5
2.1 Historical Overview.....	5
2.1.1 Shifting Approaches in Language Teaching Methodology.....	5
2.1.2 Shifting Approaches in Pronunciation Instruction.....	6
2.1.3 Early Research in Methods of Providing Feedback.....	8
2.2 Contemporary Overview.....	11
2.2.1 Theoretical Overview of “Focus on Form”.....	11
2.2.2 Empirical Studies: Correction and Focus on Form.....	13
3. Methodology.....	21
3.1 Research Site.....	21
3.2 Instructor Participants.....	21
3.3 Student Participants.....	22
3.4 Observations.....	23
3.5 Data Analysis.....	25
3.5.1 Observations.....	25
3.5.2 Questionnaires.....	29
3.5.3 Interviews.....	30
4. Results and Analysis.....	31
4.1 Classroom Observations.....	31
4.2 Student Questionnaires.....	33
4.3 Instructor Interviews.....	36
4.3.1 Phonological Priorities.....	36
4.3.2 Interruption.....	38
4.3.3 Appropriate Activities.....	39
4.3.4 “Tangents” (Diversions from planned lesson objectives).....	40
4.3.5 Comfort and Trust.....	42
4.3.6 Feedback Types.....	44
4.3.7 Further Instructor Questions.....	45
5. Discussion.....	46
5.1 Research Question #1: What pronunciation feedback occurs in the adult EAP classroom? .....	46
5.2 Research Question #2: What are the student perceptions and preferences towards pronunciation feedback?.....	49
5.3 Research Question #3: What are the instructor preferences regarding pronunciation feedback?.....	52
5.4 Recommendations for the Classroom.....	57
5.4.1 Phonological Priorities and Meaningful Connections.....	57
5.4.2 Systematic Feedback.....	59
5.4.3 Small Groups and Discussion Activities.....	61

5.4.4 Student Talk .....	64
6. Conclusion .....	66
References .....	68
Appendix A: Classroom Observation Template .....	74
Appendix B: Student Questionnaire .....	75
Appendix C: Instructor Interview Questions .....	78

## 1. Introduction

The other challenge [about giving feedback on pronunciation]... is appropriateness. For example, when we are talking about something completely different, like the *Lecture Ready* or... the media assignment. When is the right time and place to stop the flow of what you're doing and to give feedback? Does it work? Is it the right time? Will the students remember? Or are you interrupting something that's already going well? So that's really one of my questions and challenges. (Intermediate Instructor #3)

An advanced-level student stands in front of the class to give a presentation he has been working on for weeks. At the front of the class, he boldly states, "My topic is ['yʊθənəʃə]". No one would have understood the topic, "euthanasia", had it not been written on a Power Point slide. Instructors sit at the back of the class and, with a deep sigh, ask "How is it that we've been working on these topics for two weeks, and the student never learned to pronounce the most important word?"

Instructors like Intermediate Instructor (hereafter known as II) #3 strive to help students learn and retain language so that they can communicate effectively, but time is precious, and feedback, especially during free practice activities, needs to be prioritized wisely. In II #3's class, although pronunciation is explicitly taught, feedback tends to be given during controlled practice activities, and then commented on after a free summative activity, such as a presentation. Therefore, in an activity not focused on a controlled pronunciation target, when is it appropriate,

and most effective, for an instructor to incidentally<sup>1</sup> teach, review or reformulate a learner's erroneous response?

Though some researchers have doubted the need for pronunciation instruction, especially during times influenced by cognitivist or naturalistic teaching movements (e.g., Krashen, 1981), today, more express certainty. Studies of pronunciation instruction and meta-analyses confirm that explicit pronunciation instruction in a meaning-based context, especially when combined with corrective feedback, can engender improvement in pronunciation (de Bot & Mailfert, 1982; Lee, Jang, & Plonsky, 2014; Saito, 2014; Saito & Lyster, 2012). This improvement can lead to higher levels of intelligibility (Levis, 2005).

Saito and Lyster (2012), Saito (2014) and Lee and Lyster (2016) provide valuable insights regarding the effectiveness of corrective feedback on phonological targets in a form-focused instruction (FFI) classroom. In all three studies, there was a simulated classroom and explicit instruction combined with correction of one or two segmental aspects of pronunciation: /l/ and /ɪ/, /ɪ/ as well as /i/ and /ɪ/, respectively. In the first two studies, the use of corrective feedback, especially using recasts, occurred during controlled practice activities as well as during a meaning-focused task. In all cases, corrective feedback, as opposed to no corrective feedback, proved to be more valuable, especially outside of read-aloud contexts. These studies provide valuable insights from simulated settings; however, there is a lack of research regarding incidental corrective feedback in actual practice.

According to Foote, Holtby and Derwing (2011), even though most ESL instructors across Canada state that they regularly integrate pronunciation instruction and feedback into their classes, the teachers' self-reports suggests that only 6% of class time is spent focused on

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis, "incidental" refers to language correction that is a response to a student error, unanticipated based on the planned class activities. Incidental could be synonymous with "spontaneous", but the term spontaneous is usually reserved for simply extemporaneous speech production.

pronunciation instruction. Foote et al. recommend consistent integration of pronunciation, especially through corrective feedback, since this may be the only instruction a learner receives.

Subsequently, Foote, Tromfimovich, Collins and Soler Urzua (2013) documented incidental focus on pronunciation instruction, including corrective feedback, during 400 hours of sixth grade intensive ESL classes. Findings suggest that instructors focus on pronunciation about 1.5 to 3 times per hour, and all instances were focused on segmental sounds (pp. 7-8). The most common pedagogical approach was incidental correction using implicit recasts; that is, reformulating the student's answer with the correct answer. Foote et al.'s observational study complements the aforementioned studies by demonstrating how and when correctional feedback on pronunciation is actually used in the communicative classroom, rather than just if pronunciation instruction and correction is effective. Foote et al. recommend pronunciation correction based on targets already presented in the class, so that the correction functions as a reminder rather than as new information.

There is relatively little research regarding the appropriateness of how and when to implement incidental attention to pronunciation in actual classroom practice. Even though there are other studies that seek to quantify the effectiveness of feedback on pronunciation development, such as that of Saito and Lyster (2012), Saito (2014) and Lee and Lyster (2016), few researchers ask questions about integrated, incidental use of feedback in classroom-based instruction. Regarding incidental *acquisition* of pronunciation, Loewen (2014), in his latest book, highlights the lack of research, notes that because of this, "there will be no section in this chapter on it" (p. 119).

This is unfortunate given the amount of pressure instructors feel when trying to help students produce intelligible speech within a caring, supportive learning environment (Stevick,

1980). In two textbooks commonly used for TESL training programs, *Teaching Pronunciation* Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) and *The Art of Teaching Speaking* (Folse, 2006), suggestions for giving pronunciation feedback during controlled and guided practice activities are given, but suggestions for implementing feedback incidentally are not. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) recommends that instructors correct frequently while students learn sound discrimination and practice using controlled activities. They also recommend that, during guided and communicative activities, instructors should wait until the end to give feedback. Folse (2006) advises instructors to correct errors that “impede communication”. However, instead of correcting individual errors, instructors should wait and create an all-class activity based on recurring problems (pp. 243-244). Folse speculates that correcting a student during a practice for any language target activity “will only stifle” the students’ language output (p. 210). To summarize, key training texts address the necessity to correct and give feedback, but, in general, limit that feedback to the controlled pronunciation learning activities.

In this study, the question of potential opportunity and appropriateness for correction, in and outside of a controlled learning context, is addressed. This study investigates the attitudes and practice around pronunciation correction in language classrooms. Classes in an EAP (English for Academic Purposes) setting are observed for instances of pronunciation correction, students are surveyed about their preferences for feedback and then instructors are interviewed regarding their beliefs and practices on corrective feedback in the classroom. The discussion suggests possible opportunities for when and how incidental attention to form (i.e., pronunciation) could be appropriate in an EAP setting.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Historical Overview**

#### **2.1.1 Shifting Approaches in Language Teaching Methodology**

Audiolingual and structural teaching methods dominated the mid-twentieth century, at least in North America. Developed out of a need for rapid mass language teaching during WWII, the audiolingual method (ALM) was an intensive, structured, oral approach based in behaviourist learning theories. As characterized by Richards and Rodgers (2001), the primary goal of ALM was native-like fluency with a focus on oral fluency, achieved through use of drills, memorized dialogues and extensive oral correction. By the 1980s, influenced by cognitivist theories, the communicative language teaching movement emerged.

In communicative language teaching (CLT), the emphasis is on negotiation of meaning based in communicative competence. Savignon (1986) highlights appropriate social interaction as a primary component of communicative competence: “Communicative competence has to do with real speaker-listeners who interpret, express, and negotiate meaning in many different settings” (p. 236). In the CLT classroom, the instructor “allows learners to experience language as well as to analyze it” (p. 237) in situations that are meaningful for the students, where learners can recognize appropriate language within different contexts. In other words, learners learn to appreciate the language not just for its finite components of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, but for how those components fit into the experiences they are likely to encounter.

Of course, even though the language focus is primarily on meaning, errors arise and can impede intelligibility. The suitability of a focus on language forms in a communicative classroom has long been debated. Although some believe language learning best occurs with no focus on form, Nunan (2004) posits that attention to form and meaningful tasks are compatible.

### 2.1.2 Shifting Approaches in Pronunciation Instruction

With a shift in instructional methodology, from ALM to CLT, came a significant change in pronunciation teaching. During the ALM period, pronunciation errors were quickly corrected so that a learner might sound more native-like and not form bad habits accidentally. Grant (2014, p. 6) summarizes this traditional approach in Table 1:

**TABLE 1**  
**Traditional and Current Approaches to Pronunciation Instruction**

	Traditional Approaches	Current Approaches
Learner Goals	Perfect, native-like pronunciation	Comfortable intelligibility
Speech Features	All segmentals (consonants and vowel sounds)	Selected segmentals and suprasegmentals (stress, rhythm, and intonation) based on need and context
Practice Formats	Decontextualized drills	Controlled aural-oral drills as well as semi-communicative and communicative practice
Language background of teachers	Native-speaking teachers	Native-speaking and proficient non-native speaking teachers
Speaking models	Native-speaker models	Variety of modes and standards depending on the listener, context and purpose
Curriculum choices	Stand-alone courses isolated from the rest of the curriculum	Stand-alone courses or integrated into other content or skill areas, often listening and speaking

(Grant, 2014, p. 6)

However, as the communicative methods became popular, pronunciation was deemphasized in favour of meaning over form. According to Morley (1991), relevance, effectiveness and location of pronunciation instruction became the primary topics for discussion. More specifically, researchers and instructors questioned pronunciation instruction with regards to learner involvement, intelligibility and correction. At the time, because of the significant changes in teaching methodology, much confusion arose about whether it was even still appropriate to teach pronunciation explicitly, and whether students could achieve intelligibility naturally.

During this period, one quasi-experimental study that seemed to establish the effectiveness of explicit pronunciation instruction was that of de Bot and Mailfert (1982). This study tested the effects of L2 intonation perception training on improved pronunciation. Findings revealed significant improvement on English pronunciation in both Dutch and French L1 contexts. In reflective comments, students made requests for intonation training that used meaningful speech, guided practice, and clearer explication of significance by instructors. This was considered an important study arguing for consideration of suprasegmental instruction in a meaning-based context.

Widespread research, especially in the past 30 years, and meta-analysis, such as that by Lee, Jang, and Plonsky (2014) suggests that explicit pronunciation instruction does in fact engender more intelligible levels of pronunciation. Today, pronunciation instruction is seen as important, but only if and when pronunciation errors impede intelligibility (see Table 1). However, as Baker (2014) finds, even though the underpinnings of the CLT methods involve language based on situational meaning and need, pronunciation instruction tends to still be taught

as controlled, decontextualized practice activities. Baker comments that more observation-based classroom research is needed to find the actual state of pronunciation instruction today.

The pendulum of pronunciation teaching had swung from one extreme to the other and is currently finding a middle ground. Corrective feedback is a key area for review. However, with pronunciation, as opposed to vocabulary and grammar, where is the most appropriate place this to occur?

### **2.1.3 Early Research in Methods of Providing Feedback**

In CLT, errors and feedback are seen as a more natural part of language acquisition: “...learners learn... by forming hypothesis about the target language and by testing their hypothesis to destruction” (Allwright, 1975, p. 92). During such language learning events, the instructors accept or correct the students’ hypothesis based on the intended meaning of the message. Fanselow (1977) comments:

...errors are a part of learning – mistaken hypotheses and wrong connections are normal.

While giving an answer to a student may communicate the message ‘you are wrong; you should not leave out words,’ these tasks may communicate the message ‘...errors provide an important springboard for lessons; they are normal. Your hypotheses about how the language works are the only means I, the teacher, have to find out what you need to know’.

(p. 591)

As much as communicative methodology emphasizes the usefulness of errors while students are hypothesizing, predicting and learning, it was observed that instructors were not aware of how to implement feedback effectively. This section reports on observational and speculative research about oral corrective feedback during this transitional period. Although the studies are not

specifically focused on pronunciation, they do provide insight regarding how intervention might be managed appropriately.

Allwright (1975) recognizes the need to research learning as it relates to error correction, but highlights the need to consider the social nature of the classroom in which the errors occur. An instructor's responses, interpreted in previous studies as ambiguous and unsystematic (cf. Fanselow, 1977), could also possibly be attributed to individual student differences, and definitions of error priorities. Student responses (or lack thereof) to correction, could be attributed to lack of wait time on the part of the instructor. All things considered, Allwright suggests broad categories for how an instructor prioritizes error correction sequences and treatment types that could be used in subsequent observational studies. He concludes by stressing the importance of predicting student reactions to error feedback so that, despite the complexities of the classroom, confusion is reduced and episodes of correction are salient.

Chaudron (1977) specifies further the features and types of corrective feedback strategies in classroom discourse. Chaudron observed three instructors' eighth and ninth grade classes and found four main feedback options: repetition with no change, repetition with no change and emphasis, repetition with change, and repetition with change and emphasis. In all cases, the instructor could either recast didactically, repeating the error in isolation, or recast the utterance correctly integrated into a full expression. Results, based on immediate student response, suggest a positive relationship between a recast with a repetition of the error, especially with emphasis. In conclusion, learners will produce more correct responses when the location of the error is made salient.

Cathcart and Olsen (1976) conducted a survey to determine preferences for corrective feedback. Analysis of 188 student questionnaires and 38 teacher questionnaires reveal that

students wish to be corrected more than instructors feel they should be. Regarding pronunciation, advanced students wish that instructors would correct them more and use explicit recasts to do so i.e., “Don’t say stooody; Say study” (p. 46). Instructors agree that recast is also their preferred feedback method to correct pronunciation. With grammatical or lexical targets, instructors prefer to correct using indirect correction strategies. Cathcart and Olsen’s study is frequently referenced, even in contemporary studies, to give perspective about preferences regarding use of corrective feedback in the classroom.

In a qualitative study, Fanselow (1977) observed and analyzed the corrective strategies of eleven instructors teaching adjective word order and the meaning of the verbs “wearing” and “holding”. Results show that, for the most part, instructors asked for repetition after an incorrect response, which mainly focused on content rather than linguistic errors. When the student did not provide the correct response, the instructor simply gave the correct answer. It is suggested that the students’ incorrect responses resulted mainly from ambiguity in the instructors’ corrections rather than a lack of language. To the instructor, Fanselow suggests that instructors use systematic feedback that includes follow-up tasks to help students “move the [feedback] patterns into long-term memory, establish categories, alter deep-level rules, and point out relationships between different patterns in the language” (p. 588). Similar to Allwright (1975), Fanselow focuses on the role of the instructors and the responsibility they have to enhance or diminish learning opportunities.

Cited in Hendrickson (1978), several researchers summarize early research in feedback and correction by asking and responding to five seminal questions: Should learners’ errors be corrected? When, which and how should errors be corrected? Who should do the correcting? Educators understand that errors play a crucial role in learning (Corder, 1967) and learners want

more correction (Cathcart & Olsen, 1976). Birckbichler (1977) suggests that errors should be corrected more during controlled practice activities rather than in communicative activities. Of those errors, George (1972) recommends the “economics of intervention” be considered: teachers should correct errors when there is an assumed potential for target-language achievement. Concerning which errors, several researchers suggest correcting errors that impede intelligibility or cause “stigmatization” to occur with high frequency. With regards to *how* to correct, Corder (1967) suggests using feedback strategies that involve negotiation rather than direct recast. Instructors are usually the ones correcting (Allwright, 1975; Corder, 1973), but peer and self-correction is also an option, especially for grammatical and lexical errors.

Based on these key studies from the early communicative period, several issues emerge: in CLT, both students and instructors recognize errors as central to learning; however, instructors struggle to prioritize which errors to address and how to address them systematically.

## **2.2 Contemporary Overview**

### **2.2.1 Theoretical Overview of “Focus on Form”**

Over the next couple of decades, error correction became part of a larger instructional strategy in communicative instruction, and can be defined as a subdivision of Focus on Form (FonF). FonF is the term coined by Long (1991) to define both planned and unplanned attention to language within communicative activities. As summarized by Ellis et al. (2002), the instructor can pre-plan and implicitly teach a certain linguistic form or the instructor can incidentally stop the class to briefly address any problematic form as it arises naturally. The instructor can give feedback either by prompting or reformulating implicitly or explicitly (see Figure 1 in the Results Section). Additionally, FonF can occur pre-emptively by either students or instructors. In

this case, no error is made, but students or instructors initiate a FonF episode to question explicitly a form presumed to be crucial for completion of the task at hand.

FonF assumes the superiority of “attended learning” (Schmidt, 2001, p. 3) during a meaning-focused task. When learners consciously notice the “gap between what they can produce and what they need to produce” (Schmidt, 2001, p. 6) in a meaning-focused environment, higher levels of language acquisition can be achieved. This incidental attention to form creates opportunities for what Doughty (2001) calls “cognitive mappings” which result from “a learner’s briefly and perhaps simultaneously attending to form, meaning and use during one cognitive event” (p. 211). In the end, if the language is explicitly practiced, corrected and learned in a task that is meaningful to the learner, the new forms will be “mapped” and will likely transfer to incidental, authentic contexts outside of the classroom (Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013, p. 9).

“Intensive practice” of presented phonological articulations is crucial for students’ automatic retrieval in connected speech (Catford, 1987, p. 96). In order to facilitate automatic processing and retrieval, a language course must include activities designed to increase social pressure and sustain an intertwined focus on the new forms and meaning (Dekeyser, 2001). As the social pressure of the activity increases, so does the necessity to practice form within meaning-focused contexts (Dekeyser). FonF episodes can create attention-raising opportunities for learners to practice and “map” language onto meaningful events. When these forms are intertwined with meaningful activities and corrected regularly, the assumption is that those forms can become automatized both in and out of the classroom.

Important in this regard is the role and definition of learner uptake. In many of the subsequent studies, the success of a FonF episode is observed, evaluated and quantified based on

immediate or delayed student response. Lyster and Ranta (1997, p. 49) define learner uptake as...

...a student's utterance that immediately follows the instructor's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the instructor's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance (this overall intention is clear to the student although the instructor's specific linguistic focus may not be).

The result of this uptake episode could be coded as either "repair" or "needs-repair", that is, the student correctly amends the utterance or the student incorrectly, or does not amend the utterance (p. 49). This definition contrasts with Allwright's (1984) and Slimani's (1992) classification of uptake as what students claim to have learned at the end of a lesson (cited in Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 49). Although Lyster and Ranta's (1997) definition of uptake may not represent full acquisition, Lyster (1998a) argues for Swain's (1995, p. 131) notion of pushed output: "modified, or reprocessed, output can be considered to represent the leading edge of a learner's interlanguage" (cited in Lyster, 1998a, p. 54); therefore, in these studies, repaired uptake is considered practice and an opportunity for long-term acquisition. The following studies define success of FonF episodes based on observed immediate uptake or delayed uptake using individualized post-tests.

### **2.2.2 Empirical Studies: Correction and Focus on Form**

Feedback and correction are widely researched. In a meta-analysis of 33 primary studies of corrective feedback (which includes 11 unpublished studies), Li (2010) analyzes that in general, corrective feedback has a medium effect on language development, which is smaller compared to previous meta-analysis such as those by Russell and Spada (2006) or Mackey and Goo (2007). After reviewing types of feedback, Li (2010) notes that although explicit feedback (feedback that

overtly draws the learner's attention to the form) is shown to be more effective in the short term, implicit feedback (feedback that does not draw the learner's attention to the error) is shown to be more effective in the long term. Li suggests that the transformation of explicit knowledge into implicit knowledge is most beneficial when considering feedback types. For future research, Li recommends more attention be paid to explicit feedback types as well as individual learner characteristics.

In addition, Li's (2010) findings show that feedback yields a larger effect size in discrete-item practice than in communicative activities. It is suggested that this may be because of the possible natural distractions within a communicative setting. However, as useful as effect sizes with discrete-item objectives are, the reality is that instructors struggle to find the proper place and time to correct in the classroom. This includes both "online" and "offline" (errors addressed during or after the task) feedback (Li, 2014).

What follows is a review of individual observation-based studies that evaluate the usefulness of FonF in an "online" communicative setting, considering both feedback types as well as individual characteristics, such as group dynamics, task types and age. Although these studies focus primarily on oral correction for lexical and grammatical targets, they summarize what may be optimal opportunities for pronunciation-related FonF in the communicative classroom.

A study by Lyster and Ranta (1997) is often cited on corrective feedback and FonF. They analyzed error feedback sequences during interaction between students and instructors in an elementary French immersion setting. One of the first analytic taxonomies for corrective feedback techniques was developed: reformulations (the instructor provides the correct response through explicit correction or recasts) and prompts (the instructor elicits the correct response

through elicitation, metalinguistic clues, clarification requests, or repetition of error). Success was evaluated relative to the student's immediate response after feedback. Results showed that instructors use recasts 55% of the time, which led to repair 31% of the time. However, surprisingly, the elicitation feedback type led to a 100% rate of correct student uptake, and this was followed closely by clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback and repetition. Lyster and Ranta propose active learner involvement as the key factor for successful uptake.

Using the same data set, Lyster (1998a) studied feedback moves, error types and learner repair. The instructors tended to correct grammatical and phonological errors using recasts while they corrected lexical errors using prompts for negotiation. There was a higher rate of repair for grammatical and lexical errors when using negotiation feedback strategies, but a higher rate of repair for phonological errors when using recast feedback strategies. In an immersion setting, this preference for recasts for phonological targets seems not to have changed significantly in the last 15 years, as shown by Foote et al.'s (2013) study. Subsequently, Lyster (1998b) used this same data (Lyster & Ranta, 1997) to discuss the function and saliency of recasts. Instructors used recasts to both correct and continue the topic; consequently, it is possible that the combined purpose of the recasts could supersede any corrective function and therefore be confusing for the students. "Recasts have more in common with non-corrective repetition and topic-continuation moves than with other forms of corrective feedback" (p. 71). Lyster maintains that effective corrective feedback must be salient and must also engage learners.

Panova and Lyster (2002) follow-up on the previous studies by applying Lyster and Ranta's (1997) analytic model of feedback types to an adult communicative ESL classroom. They found that instructors corrected half of the errors students produced and used implicit feedback types, such as recasts or translation, 77% of the time. Similar to the previous studies,

correctly formed immediate uptake occurred primarily after prompts, such as elicitation or metalinguistic clues, rather than after recasts or translation. In the observations, successful uptake occurred only 8% of the time and occurred mostly after prompts rather than recasts, results similar to Lyster and Ranta's (1997) findings. Panova and Lyster (2002) suspect that the high amount of recast moves may result from the low level of English proficiency in this class and the possibility that the students were not ready to notice prompt-related feedback episodes (cf. Bardovi-Harlig, 1995 in Panova & Lyster, 2002). Panova and Lyster speculate that recasts can be effective, especially with higher-level students who can notice the negative input (see Schmidt, 2001). They affirm the role of clarification requests and metalinguistic feedback, but due to an uneven distribution of feedback types, the findings are limited.

Expanding on Lyster and Ranta's (1997), Lyster's (1998a & 1998b), and Panova and Lyster's (2002) findings, Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) investigate learner uptake in communicative ESL lessons, not just after corrective feedback, but also after learner and instructor-initiated pre-emptive FonF episodes. Observational findings show that the FonF episodes were just as likely to be reactive as pre-emptive with the rate of successful uptake being 72%. Pre-emptive student-initiated episodes and reactive instructor-initiated corrective episodes engendered a significantly higher level of successful uptake than instructor-initiated pre-emptive FonF episodes. Regarding the types of feedback, both explicit and implicit feedback were given at a similar frequency and resulted in similar amounts of successful uptake, with explicit feedback producing slightly higher levels of uptake. Even though the number of pronunciation-focused episodes was low, phonological FonF episodes resulted in the highest levels of successful uptake. In summary, Ellis et al. (2001) argue the most important variable when considering the positive effects of FonF is neither the type of feedback, nor the linguistic focus,

but rather the initiator and complexity (involving a single or several exchanges) of the episode.

Williams (2001) also departs from Lyster and Ranta's (1997) implicit/explicit continuum of FonF and focuses on delayed language uptake based on the initiator of the episode. In contrast to Ellis et al.'s (2001) study, episodes in this study were all reactive responses to problems or communication breakdowns revolving around grammar or lexicon; neither pronunciation targets, nor any pre-emptive FonF episodes were analyzed. In 65 hours of observation, 303 language-related episodes (hereafter known as LRE) were identified and analyzed. Two weeks later, post-tests were created and administered for each individual learner based on their personal LRE episodes. In general, students scored high on delayed individualized FonF post-tests. Interestingly, regardless of who initiated the LRE, higher-level learners generated and remembered markedly more LREs than lower-level learners. Williams concludes that learner involvement in the LRE is fundamental and finds that as proficiency increases, the learner has more language available to engage in incidental attention to form.

Turning from FonF as it relates to language uptake, Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis (2004) consider Borg's (2003) call for more investigations regarding instructor cognition. Basturkmen et al. (2004) qualitatively examine the relationship between instructor's stated beliefs about incidental FonF and their classroom practices. Using simulated recall methods, they observed interviewed three instructors from classrooms with the same communicatively-oriented objective. Several inconsistencies were noted regarding instructor beliefs and FonF. One inconsistency regarded "the flow of communication". All three instructors agreed that a FonF episode should not stop the flow of communication, but at the same time believe they should correct or respond with techniques that could potentially hinder communication, such as responding to student questions or correcting previously taught structures (p. 267). There was

also inconsistency regarding the instructors' beliefs and actual practice. Instructors stated that FonF episodes should occur in response to unintelligible student speech, when in fact, many of the FonF episodes had no effect on intelligibility (p. 268). These discrepancies could have been related to situational constraints, but none were discussed. Basturkmen et al. conclude that future research about instructors' beliefs, especially about unplanned elements, be based on both stated beliefs and observed behaviours.

Returning to the most effective characteristics of incidental FonF on long-term language uptake in ESL classes, Loewen (2005) broadens Williams' (2001) research by expanding the participant size of the study from eight participants in four ESL classes to 119 participants in 12 ESL classes. In a span of 17 hours of meaning focused classes, 491 FonF episodes were identified and analyzed. Individual students were then evaluated on their ability to recall the form. In the immediate post-test, 47.6% of the responses to individualized test items were correct, while in the two-week delayed post-test, 39.3% of the responses were correct. Notably, students were nine times more likely to achieve correct scores on the post-tests if they produced the correct form during the actual FonF episode. For phonological targets, the results showed that simple FonF episodes, which resulted from a misunderstanding in meaning, engendered the highest post-test results, but students were less likely to remember correct phonological targets than lexical or grammatical targets. Loewen concludes that quality uptake in a FonF episode is crucial for possible long-term retention. Regarding pronunciation correction, Loewen suggests that pronunciation may be less amenable to incidental FonF, especially if the intervention is complex; however, he notes that this warrants further investigation.

Focusing on classroom structure, Nassaji (2013) studied the effects of incidental FonF in relation to large group, small group or individual participant settings. Over the course of eight

months, 35 hours of data were collected from intensive ESL classes at different language levels. A total of 1,986 FonF episodes were described and detailed according to their characteristics, participation structure and source of initiation. Results revealed that 67% of FonF episodes occurred in large group interaction, 26% of FonF episodes occurred in small group interaction and 8% of FonF episodes occurred in individual interaction. Individualized tests were created and distributed one week after the FonF episode occurred to measure delayed uptake. It was found that 58% of the total FonF episodes were correctly reproduced, findings that echo Loewen's (2005) study. However, this uptake changed significantly depending on the type of FonF episode and the participation structure. Students scored notably higher on FonFs that were student-initiated and in small group or individual interactions. Instructor-initiated FonFs were effective, but again, more so in small group and individual interactions. All students benefited equally from student-initiated FonFs, but advanced students benefited more than beginner students from instructor-fronted FonFs. Once again, it is suggested that learner involvement is fundamental for language retention; moreover, Nassaji (2013) observes that this learner involvement can increase dramatically when the students are engaged in small group rather than large group settings.

Focusing specifically on the nature of linguistic targets and proficiency levels, Li (2014) studied the effects of feedback types and two different linguistic targets on L2 proficiency in meaning-focused instruction. Seventy-eight Chinese learners at a U.S. university were divided into six groups: low or high language level with either recast, direct, explicit metalinguistic or controlled feedback; all of the groups were learning the perfective *-le*, a complex structure, and classifiers, a simpler salient structure. In immediate and delayed post-tests, results showed that metalinguistic feedback was especially helpful for low-level learners to learn the complex

structure, but recasts were more helpful for learning the simpler structure; in contrast, with both structures, recasts were more helpful for high-level learners. Schema is a critical variable when choosing a corrective feedback type: once the learners have the metalanguage for the linguistic structure, recasts can function as a reminder and be effective as a corrective technique.

The effectiveness of correction and Focus on Form has been studied in several respects: feedback types, language settings, immediate and delayed uptake, pre-emptive or reactive episodes, episode initiator, proficiency levels, instructor beliefs, linguistic targets and participation structures. The results of these studies suggest that feedback in a communicative setting is important. What is missing is a focus on pronunciation correction, especially correction which is “online”, errors that are responded to during a task, rather than after the task (Li, 2014). Given the resurgence of interest in the necessity of pronunciation instruction (see Lee et al., 2014), it is surprising that there are few studies that focus on incidental correction of pronunciation targets within meaning-focused instruction. Loewen (2014) states:

“Both [explicit and implicit pronunciation teaching] appear to be helpful for learners, but if instructors already employ numerous meaning-focused tasks, it may be a more efficient use of class time to plan to incorporate brief attention to specific phonological features, as well as to address those that occur incidentally during the tasks” (p. 124).

Understanding the integration of pronunciation instruction using feedback appears to be of paramount importance. The present qualitative study seeks to examine opportune moments for incidental attention to pronunciation forms in the classroom. The research questions follow.

1. What pronunciation feedback occurs in the adult EAP classroom?
2. What are the student perceptions and preferences towards pronunciation feedback?
3. What are the instructor preferences and practice regarding pronunciation feedback?

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Site**

This study focuses on the observed behaviours, perceptions and preferences surrounding incidental pronunciation-related FonF episodes in the classroom. The research site is an EAP school affiliated with a private university located just outside of Vancouver, British Columbia. Upon completion of the EAP program, the students have a direct entry path into the affiliate university. The EAP program is divided into six levels of instruction, ranging from beginner to advanced a pre-master's (PMP) program. As categorized by the program, level 1 students are beginners, level 2 and level 3 students are intermediate and level 4 and level 5 students are advanced. Levels 5P and PMP are advanced and are preparatory classes for a master's degree. In this study, the advanced students come from the 5P and PMP classes and will therefore be coded as PMP. The classes are divided by skill: reading, writing, listening/speaking and then a culture acquisition or research skills class. This program follows a full-time 13-week term and the average class size is 10 to 15 students.

#### **3.2 Instructor Participants**

Instructors in this program are required to have both an undergraduate degree and a level 1 TESL Canada certificate. Four of the six instructors observed and interviewed earned an MA degree in either Linguistics or TESOL. Instructors typically teach multiple skills across multiple levels in a given term; in the following term, instructors might teach completely new courses. All instructors are native-English speakers, with the exception of one who completed university in Canada. The instructors are relatively new to the field and possess one to six years of ESL teaching experience.

Intermediate Instructor #2 is the researcher. The researcher was observed, but not officially interviewed. The researcher was observed to provide another alternative perspective regarding how pronunciation correction might be possible in a task-focused setting. PMP Instructor #2 is a substitute instructor for PMP Instructor #1. PMP Instructor #1 was absent on the day of observation, and because of logistical constraints, the observation could not be rescheduled. Therefore, both the primary and substitute instructor were interviewed.

**TABLE 2**  
**Instructor Information**

Class Level	Educational Background	EAP Experience
Intermediate Instructor #1	TESL Certificate received in 2013	2 years
Intermediate Instructor #2 ( <i>Researcher</i> )	TESL Certificate received in 2010; MA TESOL Received in 2013	3 years
Intermediate Instructor #3	TESL Certificate received in 2003	4 years
PMP Instructor #1	TESL Certificate received in 2010; MA TESOL Received in 2013	1 year
PMP Instructor #2 ( <i>substitute instructor for PMPI #1</i> )	TESL Certificate received in 2013; MLE in Applied Linguistics and Exegesis received in 2014	1 year
PMP Instructor #3	TESL Certificate received in 2014; MLE in Applied Linguistics and Exegesis received in 2010	6 years

(Hereafter, instructors are coded as “II #1”, “PMPI #2”, etc.)

### 3.3 Student Participants

Students in this program are usually 18 to 20 years old and largely plan to pursue academic studies in Canada. The 54 students surveyed in this study are predominantly from Mainland

China. At the beginning of the semester, the students are placed into one of six levels according to an in-house reading and writing test. The students in this study were in listening/speaking classes in levels 2, 3, 5P and PMP.

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**TABLE 3**  
**Student Participant Information**

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Class Level	Native Countries	Gender
Intermediate Classes	China: 81%	Male: 74%
	Taiwan: 13%	Female: 26%
	Hong Kong: 3%	
	Korean: 3%	
Pre-Master's Classes	China: 65%	Male: 38%
	Taiwan: 8%	Female: 62%
	India: 15%	
	Korea: 8%	
	Nigeria: 4%	

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### 3.4 Observations

A total of 5 hours and 50 minutes of class time was observed in five listening/speaking classes. The researcher and the instructor collaboratively chose which session would be best to observe based on appropriate timing and the anticipated level of student-instructor interaction. All classes except for one had objectives principally focused on a task other than a discrete language item. The one intermediate class was focused on word stress, an element of pronunciation that included drills and repetition. The instructors were not told the specifics of what was being observed, simply that the observation focused on “speaking-oriented feedback strategies” (Teacher Consent Form, Para. 2). During the observations, the instructors were given

wireless clip-on microphones for their lapels, and then a main Marantz microphone was centrally placed in the class. As a result, almost all of the teacher-student interaction could be captured and later transcribed. The researcher sat in the back of the class to the side as a non-participant observer and took detailed notes.

**TABLE 4**  
**Observation Information**

Class Level	Task Description	Student Participants	Class Time
Intermediate Instructor #1	Pronunciation - Word Stress patterns in numbers, noun compounds and unstressed syllables	11 Ss observed 11 Ss surveyed	75 minutes
Intermediate Instructor #2	Discussion language and presentation skills using the topic "Diet and Health"	10 Ss observed 10 Ss surveyed	75 minutes
Intermediate Instructor #3	Discussion language and presentation skills using the topic "Leisure Time"	8 Ss observed 10 Ss surveyed	75 minutes
PMP Instructor #2	Vocabulary and schema building to prepare for the next day's note-taking lecture about "Multiple Intelligences"	8 Ss observed 10 Ss surveyed	50 minutes
PMP Instructor #3	Strategies for giving academic presentations	11 Ss observed 13 Ss surveyed	50 minutes
Totals		48 Ss observed 54 Ss surveyed	5h 50 min

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

#### **3.5.1 Observations**

For the observations, a previous analytic model by Lyster and Ranta (1997) served as a basis for collecting detailed notes (See Appendix A) about feedback episodes, types of feedback and student responses. Instances of correction using explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition of error were noted. All corrective episodes were observed and transcribed, regardless of the discrete item targeted. In the case where the researcher herself was instructing, the lesson plan and materials were kept and notes were made afterwards using the audio recording. This researcher's own observation occurred within the same month as the other observations. Afterwards, all of the audible instructor-student interaction were transcribed. The episodes were identified as the discourse from the moment where the attention to linguistic form begins to the point where it ends, as a result of a change in topic back to meaning or occasionally another focus on form episode (Ellis et al., 2001, p. 294).

After reviewing the notes from the observations and transcribing the corrective feedback episodes, it was found the categories specified were too detailed. The observations showed that there were few episodes of corrective feedback and the episodes fell largely under the same two broad categories: reformulations and prompts (Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013 see Figure 1), a subsequent and broader classification of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) six corrective feedback types. Simply put, a reformulation provides the learner with the correct answer, while a prompt facilitates self-repair. Although reformulations are usually implicit feedback and prompts are usually explicit, they could be interchangeable, depending on the situation. Haptic corrective

feedback types<sup>2</sup>, which two of the intermediate instructors and one of the PMP instructors had been trained in, were coded prompts. Corrective feedback using haptic methods is further discussed in the discussion section of the thesis.

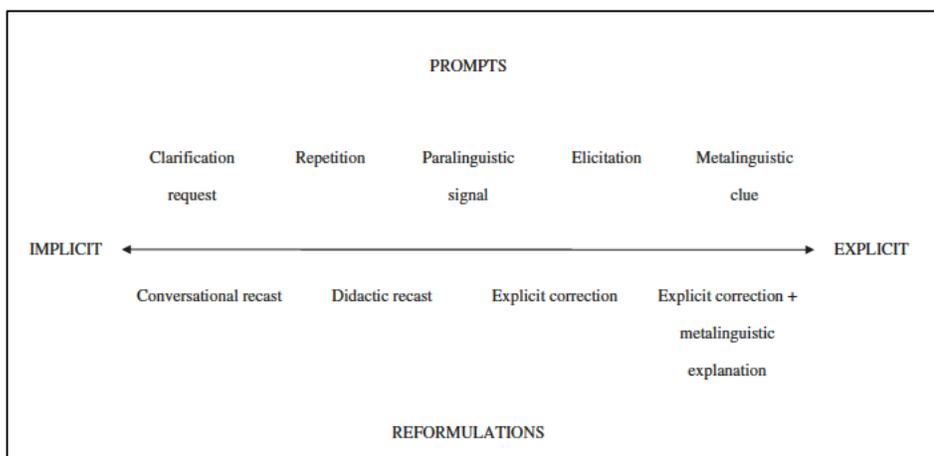


Figure 1: Corrective Feedback Types (Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013, p. 5 adapted from Lyster and Saito, 2010; Sheen and Ellis, 2011).

The primary researcher did all the coding and then the supervising researcher confirmed the analysis. Especially because there were two feedback-type categories, inter-rater agreement was 100%. See the examples below for instances of reformulations and prompts in the data set. Beside each example, characteristics are described for each FonF episode, as defined by Ellis et al. (1999) in Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis (2004).

<sup>2</sup> Haptic pronunciation teaching is a method that uses systematic movement and touch. Haptic is known to enhance learning through active presentation, modeling, feedback and correction. For a full review, see Acton (2013).

**EXAMPLE 1***Reformulation*

Context: Mini-presentations – Negative Reasons for Leisure Activities at Work (II #3: 1:10:53-1:11:42)	Characteristics	Category
S: Mm, second point is umm, bad attitude and uh, (unintelligible attempt)	Type	Reactive
T: Efficiently <sup>3</sup>	Linguistic Focus	Pronunciation
S: efficiently...efficiently and cause a lot of fun place, a lot of fun place in the company and people the work attitude will will down.	Source	Message
	Complexity	Simple
	Response	Reformulation: Didactic Recast

**EXAMPLE 2***Reformulation*

Context: Textbook Read aloud - Problem-Solutions in Academic Discourse (PMPI #2: 47:38-47:52)	Characteristics	Category
S: ...Educators may be asked to justify their curriculum design, or psych <u>o</u> logists to...	Type	Reactive
(T Interrupts)	Linguistic Focus	Pronunciation
T: Psych <u>o</u> logists	Source	Code
S: ...psych <u>o</u> logists to defend their choice of treatment plan.	Complexity	Simple
	Response	Reformulation: Didactic Recast

<sup>3</sup> In this episode, it is assumed that the instructor meant to recast the noun form “efficiency” rather than the adverb form “efficiently”.

**EXAMPLE 3***Prompt*

Context: Discussion Language in Small Groups (II #2: 22:56 – 23:38)	Characteristics	Category
T: Ok, so now [student name] say that again. I mean, you said, you said you agree, right?	Type	Reactive
S: Yes.	Linguistic Focus	Pronunciation
T: You said this one?	Source	Accuracy
S: Yah I agree with you because... (T Interrupts)	Complexity	Complex
T: Ok, now say that again but which one is the focus word here?	Response	Prompt:
S: Agree with... Agree...		Clarification;
T: So now move your hand on the focus word, and give your... (S Interrupts)		Paralinguistic signal;
S: I <u>agree</u> with you.		Metalinguistic clue
T: Now continue your sentence. Make sure you pay attention to the focus word. So repeat your idea.		
S: I <u>agree</u> with you because I think uhh, when you didn't do it, don't eat breakfast you will make noise and disturb your, your classmates.		

**EXAMPLE 4***Prompt*

Context: Large group discussion about Diet and Health (II #2: 9:00-9:30)	Characteristics	Category
T: [Student name] what's your opinion?	Type	Reactive
S: Umm. My opinion is uhh you must control uhh the meal meals ca- ca- <u>calrie</u> ....	Linguistic Focus	Pronunciation
Peers: <u>calries</u> ...	Source	Message
T: That's a vowel 5 (æ).	Complexity	Complex
S: <u>Calories</u>	Response	Prompt: Metalinguistic clue;
T: Yah, there you go. Calories.		Reformulated
S: <u>Calories</u> . (æ)		Explicit correction
T: Ok, so you must control milk calories? Is that what you said?		
S: No. Meal, Meal.		
T: Oh meal. Meal.		
S: Meal ca- ca- <u>calories</u> . (æ)		

After commencing the coding process, another defining feature of correction was needed: an episode of correction is only coded as such when there was added emphasis or there is enough turns to demonstrate a correction. If an instructor simply repeats a student's response and provides no time for a student to uptake, this is coded as "topic continuation" rather than correction. This was frequently observed and is discussed in the Practical Application section of this thesis.

**3.5.2 Questionnaires**

Approximately two weeks following the observations, questionnaires were distributed to the students. The questionnaires contained questions regarding planned and unplanned pronunciation instruction and feedback (See Appendix B). Questions included Likert scale items,

multiple choice items and short-answer questions: “I would like my teacher to correct my pronunciation more” is an example of a Likert scale question; “How does your teacher correct you? (options given)” is an example of a multiple choice question; “What is one reason you DO NOT like your teacher correcting you?” is an example of a short-answer question.

For students in the intermediate levels, the questionnaires were translated into the students’ L1, either Mandarin or Korean. Native speakers from a Master’s program in the affiliate university translated the questionnaires for the students, and then translated the short-answer student responses back to English from those questionnaires. For each level of instruction, the Likert scale and multiple choice items were counted and given percentages and the short-answer questions were categorized according to repeated vocabulary and themes that arose.

### **3.5.3 Interviews**

At the end of the semester, five of the instructors were interviewed regarding their perception and preference of pronunciation-related correction in the classroom (See Appendix C). The interviews took about 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the instructor and depending on how much the instructor wanted to discuss the topic. Although the questions were structured, deviation from the questions was allowed. For example, a question such as “Is there a time when it may be appropriate to interrupt a student to give feedback?” might have led to a conversation about trust as it relates to feedback in the classroom. This deviation was initiated by the instructor. The interviews were recorded and transcribed almost in entirety for thematic analysis. Generally, the themes arose naturally from the questions themselves. However, there were a couple of times when the interviewees gave responses that deviated from the question asked. In the case that this deviation was repeated, a new theme was created.

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1 Classroom Observations

*Research Question #1: What pronunciation feedback occurs in the adult EAP classroom?*

In all, 43 instances of correction were observed (see Table 5); 81% of those corrections were focused on pronunciation (See table 6). Instructors used prompts 57% of the time, while they used reformulations 43% of the time. In all circumstances, students responded with an accurate reformulation of the corrected form.

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**TABLE 5**

*Observed Correction of Errors in all Linguistic Categories*

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Correction Type	Intermediate Classes	PMP Classes
Prompt	22 episodes	1 episode
Reformulation	15 episodes	5 episodes

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**TABLE 6**

*Observed Correction of Errors in Pronunciation*

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Correction Type	Intermediate Classes	PMP Classes
Prompt	20 episodes	0 episodes
Reformulation	10 episodes	5 episodes

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Of course, the planned objectives for each class effect the number of corrective episodes. Following is a brief description of each class and especially highlighted are the periods of time when correction occurred, or periods of time when correction could not have occurred.

In the first intermediate class, the objectives were focused on word stress patterns in numbers, compound nouns and then unstressed syllables. Throughout the class, the instructor elicited responses to questions from the course text (Hewings & Goldstein, 1998) while in front of the class. Most of the time, the class responded chorally to the instructor and the instructor corrected if necessary. A few times, the instructor had the students come to the front of the class to write answers on the board. While the students were writing, the instructor reformulated or prompted if necessary. Almost all correction was focused on pronunciation errors.

In the other two intermediate classes, the objectives were focused on discussion and then presentation strategies based on the lecture heard during the prior class (Sarosz & Sherak, 2013). While the unit topics for the classes were different, “Diet and Health” and “Leisure Time”, the textbook (Gilbert, 2012) was the same. In both classes, there were large group discussions, small group discussions and then a mini-presentation skill. In the researcher’s class, the students were corrected in all three activities using a mixture of prompts and reformulations on both segmental and suprasegmentals aspects of pronunciation. In the Intermediate Instructor #3’s class, although there were also large group discussions, small group discussions, and a mini-presentation, the students were corrected twice during the mini-presentation.

PMP Instructor #1’s class was about schema building to prepare for a lecture about “Multiple Intelligences” (Frazier & Leeming, 2013). There were three distinct parts: schema building, listening/reading and outlining. The class was largely instructor-fronted except for about 20 minutes of small group work while the students were completing discussion questions and an outlining activity. Especially notable in this class was the high level of instructor-talk and fragmented student responses. For instance, in the initial schema building activity, the instructor was eliciting vocabulary to describe images. The students volunteered responses, but their

responses were only one or two words. In this introduction phase of the lesson (4m10s), the instructor initiated 17 turns and used 437 words; the students responded with 16 turns and used 19 words. A similar ratio was found throughout the rest of the class.

PMP Instructor #2's class was focused on professional speech-giving strategies (Reinhart, 2013). The students were learning to explain graphs in a problem-solution speech. The instructor facilitated achievement of the objective through small group activities, large group elicitation and student read-aloud activities. Correction occurred during the read-aloud activities. Similar to the first PMP class, this class was also largely instructor-fronted. Even though student responses were generally longer than one word, the responses were still short and comprehension based. To illustrate, during one period of the lesson, the instructor was eliciting responses to a mix and match activity organizing sections of a problem-solution speech. In this period of about six minutes, the instructor initiated 13 turns and used 668 words; the students responded with 12 turns and used 60 words. A similar ratio was found throughout the rest of the class.

## **4.2 Student Questionnaires**

*Research Question #2: What are the student perceptions and preferences towards pronunciation feedback?*

When students receive feedback on pronunciation, it appears that they appreciate prompts as opposed to reformulations. With regards to interruption, it seems that intermediate students are more open to “online” correction, that is, correction during a task rather than after a task.

**TABLE 7***Select Student Questionnaire Results*

Question	Level	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
When my teacher corrects me, I like it when my teacher helps me to find the right pronunciation, instead of just giving me the right pronunciation.	Intermediate	0%	42.0%	57.6%
	PMP	0%	35.5%	60.5%
I like it when the teacher interrupts me when I am speaking to correct my pronunciation.	Intermediate	19.6%	47.6%	32.6%
	PMP	37%	27.5%	31.5%

Within the short answer section of the questionnaire, students stated that speeches and discussion activities are most valuable for learning pronunciation (see Figure 1). To contextualize, in each level, students are required to give about four, 5-minute speeches on various pre-chosen topics. Generally, the instructor gives summative grades and written comments on the speeches, but rarely interrupts the speaker to give formative feedback. The PMP class stated that correction is helpful to improve pronunciation. Again, to contextualize, the PMP class does not receive explicit pronunciation instruction. The pronunciation instruction the PMP students receive is through correction, after speeches.

As demonstrated in Figure 2, students do not appreciate being interrupted, and this becomes more apparent in the advanced levels of learning. What is not shown is that several of these students combined word “interruption” with “speech”. Therefore, it can be assumed that students view speeches as one of the most relevant ways to practice their pronunciation, and at the same time, one of the least preferred ways to receive feedback on pronunciation.

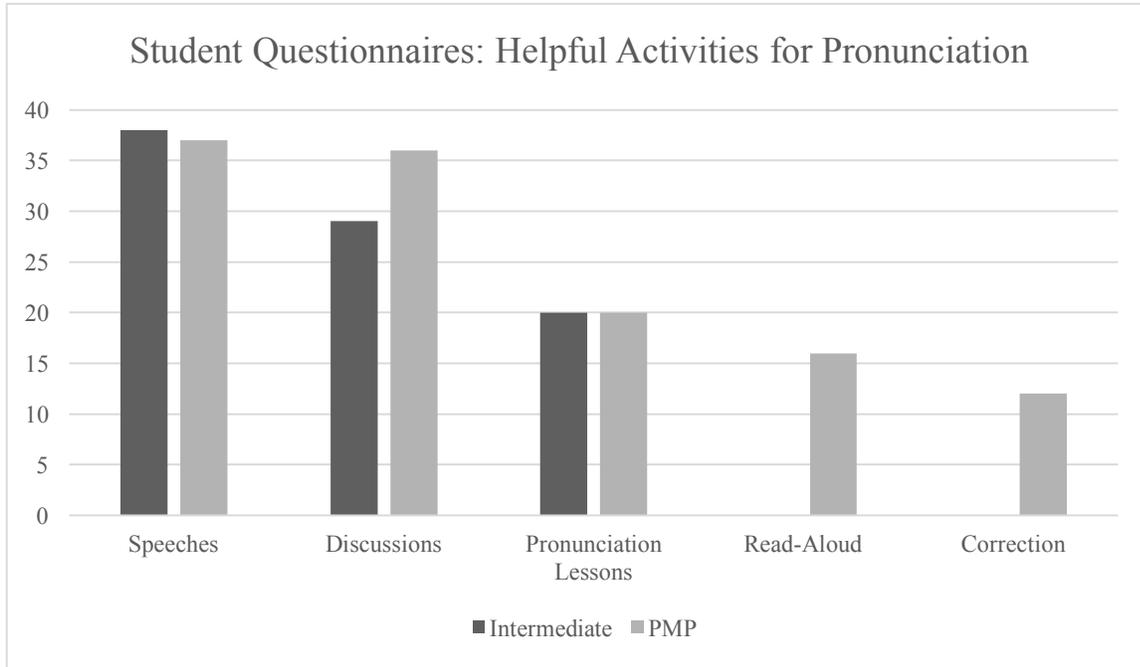


Figure 2: Student Questionnaires – Short Answer Question: “What kinds of classroom activities help most to improve your pronunciation?”

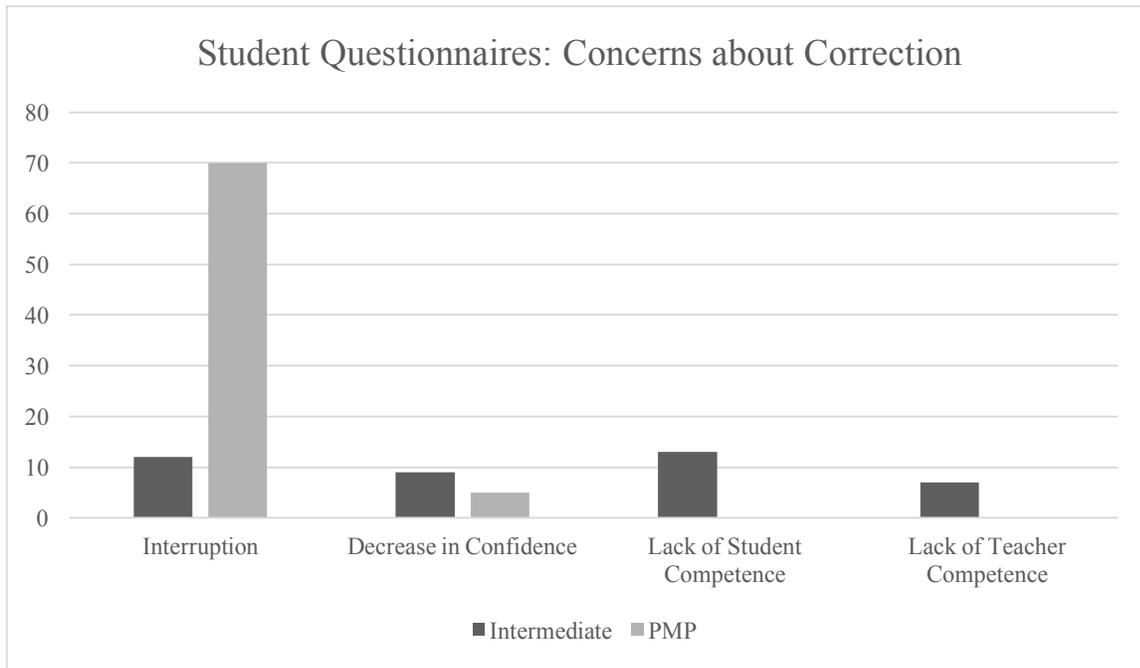


Figure 3: Student Questionnaires – Short Answer Question: “What is one reason you DO NOT like the teacher correcting you?”

### 4.3 Instructor Interviews

*Research Question #3: What are the instructor preferences regarding pronunciation feedback?*

Each instructor was interviewed about his or her beliefs regarding pronunciation correction. As part of these interviews, the instructors recalled experiences and shared beliefs about planned and unplanned pronunciation correction, specifically related to their current teaching load. The interview data were transcribed almost in their entirety and then coded according to the focus of the research. This qualitative design is similar to that used by Baker (2014) to explore teacher cognition and practice regarding pronunciation. In addition to the expected themes, a few supplementary themes arose and were examined to provide possible insights into other contextual factors impacting the main research questions. Represented are selections from each theme. Following each theme, the instructor's beliefs are discussed in light of the classroom observations and the student questionnaires.

#### 4.3.1 Phonological Priorities

Instructors were directly asked about which elements of pronunciation were most important for correction. The researcher termed segmentals as pronunciation: consonants, vowels and possibly word stress. The researcher termed suprasegmentals as fluency: thought groups, focus words and intonation. This definition was made clear to the participant instructor.

- **Pronunciation** correction is most important. Glaring obvious mistakes. These are the building blocks for linking and thought groups. It's a mess if you can't just pronounce words alone. (II #3)
- I find [**pronunciation** problems] to be the most hindrance to understanding. Eg. Produce instead of produce. Something like that. Or, the wrong consonant – it can be confusing for the native speaker listening to you. Whereas intonation, linking... those can go by a little easier. (PMPI #2)
- **Pronunciation** [segmentals are] so much more apparent. It's so much more clear when a word isn't pronounced correctly. Fluency you can kind of let go – but then

you notice it... but it doesn't necessarily seem to influence understanding as much as pronunciation. (PMPI #3)
---

When asked about *what* was most important to correct, there was not much hesitation. All instructors correct segmental sounds more than suprasegmental sounds. II #3 describes segmentals as the “building blocks” of suprasegmental production and therefore segmental sounds must be accurate before learning any prosodic features. PMPI #2 explains that segmentals are more “apparent” and affect comprehension more than suprasegmentals. If prosodic elements are inaccurate, “it doesn't necessarily seem to influence understanding as much as pronunciation (segmentals),” PMPI #3 states. In the questionnaires, the students were not asked about segmental or suprasegmental correction. However, when asked in the short answer section, “What specifically do you need to improve?”, students mentioned skills like reading aloud, listening and speaking as well as more specific pronunciation elements such as word stress, vowels, and consonants. In the PMP levels, the most frequently mentioned area for improvement were consonants and vowels; this was stated by nine of the 23 students. In the intermediate levels, the students did not clearly articulate which elements of pronunciation needed improvement, just that their pronunciation in general needed development. In the classroom observations, II #3 and PMPI #2 corrected consonants, vowels or word stress and did so using didactic reformulations (see examples 1 and 2). Other than in II #1's class, in which the lesson objective was word stress, II #2 (the researcher) was the only one who corrected a suprasegmental element: focus words. PMPI #1 speculates that she corrects segmental sounds more because it is easier to show students “the gap” between their language and the target language.

### 4.3.2 Interruption

Though instructors were asked a direct question about interruption at the end of the interview, the instructors spoke about interruption throughout the interview when referring to incidental correction. The quotes presented below come from responses to the direct question about interruption, as well as responses from other areas of the interview.

- [I would correct] **unintelligible** speech...The student will keep saying the same word wrong every single time and because that one **word is key** to their phrase, their meaning, everyone's just losing it and I'm like, sorry, do you mean \_\_\_\_ (this word) and they'll be like, "yes" and then everyone's like... "oh, now I understand the point of everything you've said". So I think that's... It's gotta be like. There needs to be a good reason to interrupt them. (II #1)
- I will interrupt if what they're saying is blatantly **offensive**. Or, yes, **unintelligible**, completely unable to communicate what they want to say. (II #3)
- With spontaneous correction, I've never interrupted a speech because **I felt it was wrong**... [but students] get up and the whole point of their speech, that **key word** that's throughout the whole thing...they say it wrong through the whole speech. Because I feel it **would disrupt the flow** because then they would be thinking about that one word throughout the whole speech so you lose everything else. But that's really disturbing. It has to be a **glaring error** before I do spontaneous correction. It has to seriously affect **intelligibility**. (PMPI #1)
- Sometimes when students will be asking questions at the end of their **student led discussion**, and they'll have a word that's completely off base and it affects the meaning of the question. And then the students aren't able to respond because they don't understand. I would just ask for clarification. Like, "do you mean...? And they're like, yup. Ok. Can everybody understand now?" (PMPI #3)

Four instructors discuss their hesitancy to interrupt students at any time, unless a key word is completely unintelligible; even then there is reticence. Speeches, which also include student-led discussions, are key activities that can centre a discussion. PMPI #1 contends it may be inappropriate to incidentally interrupt during planned speeches, especially because it could discontinue the topic. In the short-answer section of the questionnaires (see Figure 3), a few of the intermediate students mention interruption as a concern when being corrected, especially

compared to the PMP students. Of the 15 PMP students who responded that they would not like to be interrupted, six students associated interruption with a speech activity. One student states, “In speech, it means I will lose mark. If just I’m reading, it is ok [*sic*]”.

In the observations, PMPI #3 reformulated several mispronunciations during a read-aloud activity. Both II #2 and #3 reformulated mispronunciation during a non-graded mini-speech activity. In neither class did the correction cause the student to discontinue the speech. II #2 also interrupted and corrected during whole-class discussion time; this also did not lead to a discontinuation of the student’s speech (see Examples 3 and 4). II #1 and PMPI #3 suggest that if incidental correction, which may interrupt, is necessary, it should be done implicitly rather than explicitly.

### 4.3.3 Appropriate Activities

Instructors were directly asked about during which class tasks pronunciation correction might be appropriate. Instructors were first asked about their general approach to teaching pronunciation and then asked more specifically about when in the semester and when in the day’s lesson pronunciation correction might be appropriate. The quotes below are in response to a question regarding the appropriate timing of pronunciation correction.

- I correct on the days I’m actually teaching a specific **pronunciation point**. On **speeches** I give written correction but never verbal correction. When students are taking notes, there’s no opportunity to do it. So, for me it’s when I’m actually doing the pronunciation skill and we’re doing drills in class and they’re doing their group work or pair work and that’s when I go around and that’s when I would do the correction. (PMPI #1)
- When a student **finished their student-led discussion**, I will write words on the board and say, “let’s go over these words and talk about them... how do you pronounce them?” (PMPI #3)
- Going through the **textbook** when we’re just reading through it together and learning about the content. Those would be the best days [for spontaneous correction].

Sometimes, I hesitate to give spontaneous feedback during **speeches**. I want their true pronunciation to shine through because I'm grading them on it. (PMPI #3)

According to the instructors, incidental pronunciation correction should happen either during a pronunciation lesson, while the students are reading out loud or after a speech. Speeches are opportunities when instructors can provide feedback, but according to the instructors, it should not be given until after the presentation. According to the questionnaires, almost all students want the instructor to correct their pronunciation, both in classes focused on pronunciation as well as classes focused on other communicative objectives. Even though students feel discussions and speeches are most valuable for learning and practicing pronunciation, many did not want to be interrupted during these times. Interestingly, in the multiple choice section of the questionnaire (not shown), students currently perceive correction as most prevalent during in-class practice and presentation activities, but think that correction should occur mostly during the former activities. In the observations, PMPI #3 provided feedback on pronunciation during a read-aloud activity, II #3 during mini-presentations, II #2 during discussions and mini-presentations and II #1 all throughout the controlled practice. Even though corrective feedback and speeches are both commented on as helpful for learning pronunciation, there are no comments regarding how pronunciation correction can be integrated into the speech activities.

#### **4.3.4 “Tangents” (Diversions from planned lesson objectives)**

One instructor referred to incidental correction as taking a “tangent” from the planned lesson objectives. Concerns about lesson coherence were not directly elicited, but as shown, it is quite a concern. Listed below are selected quotes from instructors highlighting their perspectives about digressions from the pre-planned lesson objectives.

- I think it's important too with spontaneous [correction] that the students know that [spontaneous instruction and correction are] not part of the lesson too. Especially if I take a break to talk about it because if they don't know it's separate – then they can just confuse it – like – “I remember that day I learned this!” But that's not part of like, connected speech. **I really try to keep a momentum.** That they really know what's going on all the time and they feel comfortable. I don't want to confuse that. (II #1)
- If it's **an ongoing error** – with one student or among multiple students - then maybe perhaps that's worth doing. (II #1)
- Also [I need to avoid] **tangents**. The lesson for that day is that day. And if every lesson is always full of incidental [correction]... then you're teaching every lesson every day. (II #1)
- I did [correct spontaneously]. But, there is hesitancy. In a couple of situations, I could have spent **the entire class** going back and correcting everything. (II #3)
- Another real lecture day, a couple of times I realized I did do some spontaneous correction. They were talking about what they heard in the lecture. Especially if they had the words from **Monday, and now it's Wednesday**, and they're not pronouncing them correctly and it was their vocabulary group then that's when I would. So that's when I found it was more appropriate and relevant. (II #3)

Taking time away from planned objectives could be appropriate in three circumstances: when there are repeated errors, when the erroneous form had just recently been taught, or when the incidental correction is quick and efficient. In the questionnaires, students did not refer to lesson coherence. In the L2 class, which was focused on teaching word stress, II #1 corrected frequently and focused all corrections on the target outcome planned for that day: word stress. II #3 chose to correct vocabulary pronunciation during student mini-presentations; as this vocabulary had been presented just two days prior, this choice aligns with her stated beliefs that she prefers to correct a target that has just been taught. II #2 corrected pronunciation and vocabulary that had previously been presented as well as pronunciation of other words used by the learner during discussions and presentations. In PMPI #3's class, however, it is unclear whether the pronunciation of the vocabulary corrected during the read aloud activities had been presented prior to that class.

### 4.3.5 Comfort and Trust

Words such as “comfort”, “trust”, “shame”, “offense”, and “exposure” repeated themselves throughout the interviews. The concept of facilitating a comfortable atmosphere for learning was not an interview question, but because of this repeated vocabulary, it seems that this was important for instructors within the context of correction. Any quotes that contained these words, or synonyms, were coded as “comfort and trust”.

- I try to correct in a way that’s least **shaming** as possible... I try to create a tone that it’s ok to experiment. That making mistakes is a good thing because you’re the one that’s now improving English. Especially when they’re beginners they’re very willing to try to fix their pronunciation. But, I still need to be mindful not just to be like, “oh wrong, switch, oh wrong, correction... soo...” (II #1)
- Regarding spontaneous correction, ideally students have an openness and willingness to receive. Because of the uniqueness of the **haptic** system, if the students can see that it works and that there’s value in it, that it’s actually effective, that builds the **trust** for them to buy in. Then the ones that did that, I found, were open and receptive. The ones that still had a chip on their shoulder and fully didn’t really fully buy in and still had their own way, I found that those were the hardest ones to give spontaneous feedback or... Doing the vowel clock at the beginning... the students are testing it out. “Ok, we’re gonna do this for you. We’re gonna go along with this silly thing that makes me feel weird and I’ll see.” The ones that see, “oh yah, this helps me, I get it”. (II #3)
- The feedback can actually lower the frustration level quite a bit. So, it’s such a sensitive thing. You have to know your students and you have to choose appropriate times because if you do it too much, I don’t want those students to always feel like they’re being put down or picked on. There has to be wisdom on the instructor’s part to know what’s the appropriate time. **Appropriate means already studied or something offensive** that **MUST** be corrected. Beyond that, I just let them go because I want them to have that freedom to communicate and not always feel like everything’s under a microscope. (II #3)
- We don’t want to offend, but we want to encourage. Because they know they’re learning language, they do expect the instructor to be listening and so if there isn’t any feedback, then I wonder what kind of effect that would have as well. **Maybe the feedback actually builds more trust than we actually realize.** I don’t know. (II #3)
- There needs to be a balance of correction and cultural sensitivities; singling out students can be embarrassing. I approach correction while students are in **smaller groups** so that it was either one on one or in a pair, not **exposed** in front of everyone.

In the lesson plan, correction I saved for the end. When I was circulating, I would target the individuals. If the whole group sounded off, I would correct everyone together. I tried not to correct students individually. (II #3)

- I probably am afraid to give feedback in class, depending on the student. If it was a student who might feel **put-down, saving face, that whole thing**. I'm probably a bit reticent to do that. (PMPI #1)
- Providing a **comfortable atmosphere** for students is important. If I see that correction is going to destroy that, then I choose not to. Or at least I limit it to a **smaller group setting** – one on one. (PMPI #1)
- Correction is more appropriate at the dialogue again, because again it's a small group thing. I can go around and single out a student, but it's a **private thing**... (PMPI #1)
- The biggest challenge is that students take correction personally or **get really discouraged**. (PMPI #2)
- With a student response to my correction, comfort level is foundational. I consider the affective filter. It's not something that I really teach or focus too much on, but it's something that is embedded in how I go about teaching. **I try to always lower the affective filter**. It allows you to do a lot more with them. (PMPI #2)

According to the instructors, comfort and trust is created and sustained in several ways. II #1 suggests creating an environment conducive to correction, which means possibly avoiding correction that is direct and confrontational. II #3 recommends clear explication and correction based on schema: in order to trust the feedback, the students need to understand its effectiveness and how it relates to what has already been presented. Correcting in this way will encourage rather than discourage the students, as well as give them confidence in the instructor and materials. PMPI #1 and II #3 both agree that if a single student needs to be corrected, it is better to do so in small groups or individually. According to the instructors, correcting from the front of the class could create a sense of shame or embarrassment. PMPI #1 would rather not correct than possibly lose the trust of a student. PMPI #2 agrees that the comfort level of the class is a

primary consideration. When correction does occur, it is most productive when the students feel comfortable in the classroom.

In the questionnaires, the students indicate a lack of comfort and trust in the short answer questions. As mentioned previously, students might feel uncomfortable when being corrected because the correction will interrupt their “thoughts”, especially during a speech at the advanced levels. Two students in the intermediate level feel that sometimes they do not understand the instructor. That is, either the student does not agree with the instructor’s correction, or the student does not understand why the instructor is making the correction. In the short answer questions, this mistrust was categorized as “lack of teacher or student competence”.

As observed, most episodes of correction occurred in a large-group setting. This contrasts with the stated beliefs of the instructors regarding the necessity of small-group correction to avoid shame or embarrassment. However, for the most part, correction was given as a direct recast, and although the correction may have interrupted the student, the student was still able to continue his or her speaking turn.

#### 4.3.6 Feedback Types

Instructors were asked about types of feedback throughout the interview. Types of feedback were grouped into three major categories: explicit correction (direct negative response), recast (any kind of reformulation) and negotiation of form (metalinguistic clues, elicitation, clarification, or repetition of error). These feedback types are based on Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) taxonomy of feedback types. The researcher gave the interviewee feedback options and then the interviewee commented on their general preference and practice.

- If I know the Ss can figure out their mistake, then I’ll do kind of a **negotiation**. But if I don’t think so, but I still think it’s necessary for them to learn, then I’ll just **recast**. Just because I don’t want to put them through the ringer of trying to figure out that

they probably don't know. (II #1)

- [The best situation is when] **peers** [are] giving feedback and not me. In a peer group, as I started to give feedback, someone within the group would actually do the correction “oh no that's not **2**, **it's 1y!**” So that was really great. The other Ss in the class were listening and they could hear it too. That peer situation is really great. (II #3)
- When correcting spontaneously, using **haptics** is very useful to show students the gap. You can make a sign to them. It tweaks something but it doesn't stop them in their tracks. (PMPI #1)
- [I use] 90% **recast** because of time – we're in the moment – we're reading through [the textbook] and I don't want to take time away from the content. If it's a weird word, then they'll kind of say it quietly and then keep going. So they're still a little bit unsure. But usually they'll respond and say it correctly. (PMPI #3)

It appears that instructors prefer to correct quickly on targets previously presented so that the student is engaged but the activity is not stopped. If this can be done using some kind of negotiation, such as haptic methods<sup>4</sup>, this is preferred. In the questionnaires, the students show a preference for prompts. The majority of feedback types in the observations are reformulations or implicit clarification. There is a lack of prompts in the observations, which does not align with II #3's stated beliefs. Even though two of the interviewees had been trained in haptic pronunciation teaching methods, and discussed the effectiveness and usefulness of the technique, it was observed being used as a corrective technique in the researcher's own class.

#### 4.3.7 Further Instructor Questions

At the end of the interview, the instructors were asked if they had any other general questions about pronunciation correction. These questions and queries are listed below.

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<sup>4</sup> Haptic pronunciation teaching is a method that uses systematic movement and touch. Haptic is known to enhance learning through active presentation, modeling, feedback and correction. For a full review, see Acton (2013).

- Trying to make [spontaneous correction] **coherent**. Not random. Trying to somehow find a way that the students know where that is coming from – that correction – “oh that’s a vowel correction and we learned that before” It’s not part of this lesson. Just that they know that. (II #1)
- **Appropriateness**. When we are talking about something completely different, like *Lecture Ready* (listening textbook) or a media assignment. When is the right time and place to stop the flow of what you’re doing to give feedback? Does it work? Is it the right time? Will the students remember? Are you interrupting something that’s already going well? So that’s really one of my questions in challenges. (II #3)
- I think [spontaneous correction] is appropriate. But I think it’s a pretty general answer... I’m still trying to figure out how and when. And **prioritize**. Do I just correct what I’ve taught that week, or last week? Or do I go all the way back to the beginning of the semester and keep trying to hammer that? Or do I just focus on the most recent? So, I honestly have more questions than answers. (II #3)
- I expect repetition and incorporation, but I don’t know that I do **facilitate** it. I need to do this more intentionally. I’d like to see the student incorporate it. And I don’t think that that necessarily happens. I don’t know that I provide opportunities for them to incorporate it and I haven’t figured out how to do that yet but I think that that’s what I don’t do. (PMPI #1)

Organized, systematic integration seems to be the overarching issue for these instructors.

These instructors believe pronunciation correction is valid, even in an incidental context, but need more instruction about how to integrate that correction effectively and efficiently.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Research Question #1: What pronunciation feedback occurs in the adult EAP classroom?

The observations reveal a greater focus on phonological correction in the classes, especially when compared to lexical or grammatical corrections. It is important to note that the first intermediate class was focused on “word stress” as the objective for the day, the second intermediate class was taught by the researcher, who was aware of the focus of the study.

Therefore, any insights drawn from the five classes observed must be qualitative in nature, brought out from the class, and referred to individually, rather than from generalization of correction across classes.

As noted, there were 43 episodes of correction. Of the 43 episodes, six corrections were in the PMP classes, while the rest were in the intermediate classes. Total, 35 (81%) of the corrections were focused on pronunciation. In general, prompts and reformulations were evenly used. II #1 corrected word stress, the class objective of the day, using prompts and reformulations. II #2, the researcher, corrected vowels, consonants and focus words in a task focused on discussing “diet and health” using prompts and reformulations. II #3 corrected the word stress and a vowel in one word using a reformulation. PMPI #2 corrected no pronunciation errors. PMPI #3 corrected consonants or word stress in five words during read aloud activities using reformulations. Every instructor focused on segmental phonemes such as consonants and vowels for correction. Three of the instructors corrected word stress and one of the instructors, the researcher, corrected focus words in thought groups.

It is not always easy to determine which phonological elements are most important to correct. No instructor wants to correct every single mistake, and similarly, no student wants to be corrected on everything. Instructors need to prioritize episodes of correction for the most critical elements of pronunciation so that their feedback has the greatest impact on the intelligibility of the learner and the rest of the class.

Catford (1987) recommends teaching consonants with the “functional load” principle. According to Catford, phonemic errors with a high functional load, such as /p/ and /b/, change the semantics of a word in more circumstances than phonemes with a low functional load, such as /d/ and /ð/. Tested by Munro and Derwing (2006), it was found that indeed, learners with high

functional load errors were less intelligible and comprehensible than learners with low functional load errors to native speakers of English.

In this study, instructors did correct consonants with a high functional load. Examples of words corrected include *clries* → *calories* (see Example 4), *sweet* → *sweat*, and *hot pop* → *hot pot*. The front near-open æ vowel, the distinction between i and ε, and the production of final consonants are all errors with high functional loads (Catford, 1987). In addition to the high functional load, vowels and final consonants are both common errors for Chinese students (Swan & Smith, 2001; Kenworthy, 1987). Therefore, it is appropriate that these words were corrected.

Suprasegmental sounds can tend to have just as great or greater impact on intelligibility as segmental sounds. Gilbert (2008) describes prosody as central to communication and that the inability to demonstrate prosody can lead to immediate breakdowns in communication. To visualize prosody, she suggests instructors use the “prosody pyramid”: peak vowels (nuclear stress) are taught within the framework of word stress, focus words and thought groups (p. 10). Hahn (2004) studied the impact of speech with correctly placed, misplaced or missing nuclear stress based on native-speaker ratings of intelligibility, comprehensibility and accentedness. Findings demonstrate that speech was comprehended and evaluated more favourably when nuclear stress was correctly placed. Hahn’s study is one of several which show the importance of prosody on intelligible speech.

In this study, instructors corrected errors in word stress. Examples of corrected words include economic → economic, machine → machine, psychologist → psychologist. Word stress is particularly important for Chinese learners. It is well established that Chinese students struggle with English rhythm and stress (Kenworthy, 1987), especially since they tend to fully enunciate reduced vowels (Swan & Smith, 2001). It seems appropriate that the instructors corrected the

stress placement in these words. Thought groups and focus words were corrected in the researcher's intermediate class (see Example 3). In three feedback studies focused on pronunciation correction, segmental phonemes were highlighted for correction (Saito & Lyster, 2012, Saito, 2014 and Lee & Lyster, 2016). After observing 400 hours of instruction, Foote et al. (2013) find that 100% of all pronunciation elements addressed incidentally in class were segmental sounds, most of which were of a high functional load. Foote et al. suggest that the high focus on segmental sounds may be attributed to the inconspicuous nature of suprasegmentals and/or the inability to address them quickly without referring to specialized terminology (pp. 12-13). Further research for correcting suprasegmentals is suggested.

It is unsurprising that the instructors in this study focused almost solely on segmental elements, and then on word stress. These elements are quick and easy to address and are important for intelligibility. However, it is worth considering whether or not it is appropriate to correct suprasegmentals sounds and, if so, how this might be possible. If equipped with more feedback types and strategies, instructors could correct suprasegmentals, and then students might recognize the importance of prosody for intelligibility.

## **5.2 Research Question #2: What are the student perceptions and preferences towards pronunciation feedback?**

In the questionnaires, students state that they feel their pronunciation needs improvement and they want instructors to correct their pronunciation errors. In the short answer questions, students report that discussions and speeches are among the best activities to learn pronunciation. According to the Likert Scale questions, when students are corrected, they prefer to be prompted for the correct response rather than given the correct response. In the short answer questions as well as the Likert Scale questions, students state they prefer not to be interrupted or corrected

during a presentation. This opinion is much stronger in the PMP classes than the intermediate classes.

Speeches, discussions and pronunciation lessons are reported to be classroom activities most useful for pronunciation development. Although students invite more pronunciation correction, some are hesitant to receive correction during speeches. It is possible, therefore, that students believe correction is best done in small groups. According to research, feedback given individually or in small groups has the greatest impact on learning. Nassaji (2013) finds that instructors give feedback to students about twice as much during one-on-one interaction and in small groups than they did in large group “participation structures” (p. 852). In addition, students initiated FonF episodes three times more in an individual or small group context than they did in large group settings. Short-term and long-term successful uptake, no matter who initiated or reacted, was most prevalent in individual or small-group settings. Nassaji suggests the effectiveness of small groups could be a result of students and instructors feeling more balance in power, which in effect, creates a more comfortable and less intimidating atmosphere for more questions and correction to occur. In the questionnaires, although the students did not mention small groups as a participation structure, it is possible that they view discussion as a small group activity. Ellis et al. (2001) note that even though pronunciation-related FonF targets were low in their data (18%), successful uptake of pronunciation was higher than any other linguistic target. It is possible that small groups might be a good locale to implement correction.

When receiving correction, students are quite concerned that they will be interrupted and then they will forget their ideas. Stopping the flow of conversation does not need to be a primary concern if the topic of conversation is meaningful to the student and the student is given the opportunity to continue speaking. Reviewing the episodes of correction in a French Immersion

classroom, Lyster and Ranta (1997) determine that none of the corrective episodes hindered the flow of conversation; in fact, after the corrective episodes, “the student [had] the floor again” (p. 57) and was able to continue the topic, giving the student a sense of security in the corrective episode. Ellis et al. (2001) also report that even with a high number of FonF episodes, teachers and students seemed able to periodically integrate a focus on form while maintaining the overall intention of the conversation. If the instructor corrects during meaningful conversation, the student will be empowered and able to continue rather than disempowered and stopped, regardless of whether the speaking turn is in a small group discussion or in a formal speech. In this set of data, no episode of correction “stopped” the flow of conversation in the class. In the PMPI #3’s class, the instructor corrected during a read-aloud activity, the students accepted the correction, reformulated the response, and continued with the activity. In II #3’s class, while the student was completing a mini-presentation, the instructor corrected the word “efficiently” (see Example 1), the student reformulated the response and kept speaking. In no circumstance was the student stopped.

“Giving students the floor again” assumes the students are doing most of the talking. However, as observed in the PMP classes, it was in fact the instructors who were doing most of the talking. In this case, it is possible that if the instructor had corrected during a task other than a reading activity, the corrective episode might have disrupted the student, since the student’s speech was so limited to begin with. The optimal structure for correction is within a form of task-based language teaching where student responses are full of meaningful analysis, evaluation, creation and application. When students are engaged with meaningful content, the instructor can rotate through groups and give corrective feedback in a way that “gives the students the floor

again”. Consequently, the students can be assured that they are the leaders of the discussion and even though the instructor may interject, the instructor will not overtake the “the floor”.

### **5.3 Research Question #3: What are the instructor preferences regarding pronunciation feedback?**

All instructors agree that pronunciation instruction and correction is important, and it should be integrated into the speaking and listening curriculum. However, there are concerns and questions surrounding integration. One primary concern regards the flow of the the class objectives. Instructors do not want to spend too much time reviewing an element of pronunciation when the class objective is focused on a task that appears to be unrelated. As a result, the feedback type needs to be quick and efficient so that the students stay focused on the primary objective of the lesson. Secondly, if an instructor does correct, he or she wants the correct form to be applied, remembered, and integrated into the students’ daily speech patterns; however, instructors are unsure about how to facilitate this application. Finally, instructors want to maintain a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom; they do not want students to feel reticent to come to class for fear of being corrected.

Instructors agree that intelligible pronunciation is important, but generally do not want to divert from the planned objectives. According to research, correction need not be a diversion and does not need to be too time consuming. Feedback should be quick and efficient.

As shown in Figure 1, feedback types can be either reformulations or prompts. Both types can be effective in different circumstances. In their review of literature discussing the differences between reformulations and prompts, Lyster, Saito and Sato (2013) highlight advantages and disadvantages of each. Reformulations can be an option for quick, expedient feedback in communicative activities but can easily be interpreted as non-corrective repetition (Lyster,

1998a). Prompts can be an option for negotiation of meaning and create a higher level of student engagement (Lyster and Ranta, 1997), but tend to take more effort and class time. Regarding effectiveness, empirical findings are mixed: implicit or explicit prompts and reformulations can both be effective for learning in different contexts (Ellis et al., 2001; Li, 2014; Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013).

One way to prompt or reformulate relatively quickly is use of haptic-integrated teaching techniques developed by Acton (2013) and inspired by Lessac's (1997) unique methods of teaching public speaking and drama. Haptic teaching is a way to teach pronunciation through "movement and touch": a kinesthetic embodiment of vowels, stress, rhythm, intonation and fluency which impacts conceptual development of pronunciation (Acton, Baker, Burri, & Teaman, 2013). Two haptic techniques include the "vowel clock" (Acton et al., 2013) and the "rhythm fight club" (Burri, Baker & Acton, 2016). (See demonstration videos at <http://www.actonhaptic.com/videos/#/demovideos/>.)

For vowels, each vowel is assigned a specific "node position" on a clock and corresponds systematically to a position on the body (Acton, 2013). The numbers on the clock roughly correspond to the IPA vowel chart. For example, the node position for [i] is 1 o'clock. A student holds one hand just to the side of the head where the eyebrow is located (as if it were one o'clock) and says "she" as the student raises the other hand, grazing the "one o'clock" hand, moving on toward the forehead. This movement encourages the student to feel the vowel as the tongue originates in the high, front, unrounded position and then glides higher to the [y] semi-vowel position. For many students, this hand movement seems to quickly dispel confusion between [i] and [ɪ].

For rhythm, each stressed syllable in a thought group is assigned a gesture, either short or long. In the Rhythm Fight Club (Acton, 2013), a student performs a controlled boxing-like movement where the strong or long punch culminates on the stressed syllable. As students practice speech using the rhythm fight club, they learn to highlight prominent syllables and distinguish stressed and unstressed syllables (Burri, Baker and Acton, 2016).

Once haptic techniques are introduced, they are available for incidental correction. When a student is unintelligible for lack of a correct vowel or lack of prominence, the instructor can quickly do a haptic movement with the student, and then have the student to repeat what was just said using more appropriate pronunciation. A mini-lesson does not need to be created. Two examples of haptic integration can be found in II #2's class, in Examples 3 and 4 (Data Analysis section). Both of these examples demonstrate how a segmental or a suprasegmental can be corrected quickly and efficiently in the context a class discussion, not directly related to pronunciation. Even though the instructor interrupted the student to correct, the correction functioned as a form of empowerment and the students did not seem to be "stopped in their tracks", but were able to continue with more intelligible speech.

PMPI #1 was not observed, but commented on in the interview, "Haptics is very useful to show students the gap. You can make a sign to them. It tweaks something but it doesn't stop them in their tracks". For pronunciation, haptic-teaching methods could be one alternative to the commonly used recast (a student says an erroneous response, and the instructor verbally says the correct answer), although further evidence is needed to investigate this technique empirically (Grant, 2014). Although recasts for pronunciation, especially when accompanied with a change in stress or intonation, are observed to be effective (e.g., Cathcart and Olsen, 1976; Chaudron,

1977; Ellis et al., 2001), there is a need for more strategies that prompt pronunciation repair, especially with a suprasegmental focus (Foote et al., 2013).

In general, instructors want to correct more when they assume that there will be some long-term effect. There are several studies that can give insight into the effectiveness of pronunciation correction in the regular classroom setting.

To correct pronunciation, it is hypothesized that recasts or reformulated feedback types can be most effective. Although a recast on a grammatical or lexical target may be understood as an alternative option rather than an explicit correction, a recast on a phonological target can be more direct and salient (Lyster, 1998a; Lyster and Saito, 2010). Observing primarily recast feedback types in a classroom setting, Lyster and Ranta (1997) find that students are more likely to correctly reformulate pronunciation errors than grammatical or lexical errors. In a simulated setting, Saito and Lyster (2012) observe the effectiveness of recasts, vs. no recasts, on the target form /ɪ/ in a FFI (form-focused instruction) setting. Also in a FFI setting, Saito (2014) analyzes and describes the positive effects that corrective recasts can have on the development of /ɪ/, especially when the learner is at a beginner level and also when he or she immediately repeats the correct form. Researching the differences between corrective feedback and no corrective feedback, Lee and Lyster (2016) observe Korean learners' perception of the forms /i/ and /ɪ/ in a FFI setting. It is found that any corrective feedback is more effective than no feedback. Prompts that involved repetition of error with rising intonation were helpful when there was no ambiguity in the form being corrected. Explicit recasts (e.g., Not X, but Y) were most helpful when the error being reformulated might be ambiguous. For example, when a student writes a word being dictated and then is corrected through repetition or error, the student may be confused about

whether it is the phonological vowel, or the spelling that is inaccurate. In this case, explicit feedback may be necessary (pp. 18-19).

An important element of these studies is the use of FFI. FFI facilitates the integration of pronunciation into a meaning-focused task. That is, instead of teaching pronunciation as a “pull out” class, one teaches an element of pronunciation, provides controlled practice, and then focuses on that element as the student is engaged in a meaningful task. Foote et al. (2013) suggests FFI as one way an instructor can incidentally correct most effectively and efficiently in the regular classroom. Perhaps incidental correction is not as incidental and spontaneous as instructors might have assumed. Incidental correction can be yet another way to guide students to re-explore a previously introduced concept systematically. If this is the case, then incidental correction should seldom be a surprise, but a matter of reusing and recycling pronunciation, both segmentals and suprasegmentals. As the instructors begin to view regular correction as a way to develop “automaticity” of learning (DeKeyser, 2001), perhaps the students will also. The integration of pronunciation correction into the task-based curriculum should not be seen simply as a diversion, but as an effective tool to review concepts previously presented.

Instructors do not want to embarrass or shame the students by correcting them. Instructors want students to feel comfortable and free to make mistakes in the classroom. In contrast, students want more correction, especially through prompt feedback types. Comfort and trust in the classroom could be maintained while using several of the aforementioned strategies. Correcting pronunciation errors with a high functional load, correcting errors in small group discussions, creating more opportunities for student talk outside of formal speeches, as well as integrating quick and efficient feedback types are all ways to correct while fostering an atmosphere of positive learning.

Seedhouse (1997), in his article “The Case of the Missing ‘No’”, explains that the pedagogical practices of this day do not match the philosophy of education to which we subscribe. That is, if it is appropriate to make mistakes in task-based learning, then instructors need not be wary of telling students that they are making mistakes. Although it is possible that an instructor can correct with a humiliating overtone, Seedhouse explains that by continually mitigating corrective feedback, by avoiding explicit feedback, students may be trained to view explicit corrective feedback as embarrassing, when in fact, according to Lee and Lyster (2016), explicit error correction can be the most useful to help students see the gap in language. If students were constantly engaged in communicative activities and systematically corrected, one could expect that correction would become a routine tool from which learning could occur. Correction, judiciously chosen and appropriately implemented, could become so regular in occurrence that “comfort and trust” would not be a topic of concern anymore.

## **5.4 Recommendations for the Classroom**

### **5.4.1 Phonological Priorities and Meaningful Connections**

Instructors should prioritize correction for times when there is an error with a high functional load and the interaction is meaningful to the student. Described is an activity in an intermediate class where the objective was to practice word stress. Although there were many examples of correction found in this class, examples of where pronunciation correction could have occurred are given, based on the prior discussion.

Several times, as the students were focused on learning word stress, they made mistakes with the vowels of the stressed syllable. For example, as the instructor was introducing stress in compound nouns, he elicited the meaning of the word “ice cream”. One student excitedly responded “cake”. She used the vowel /ɛ/ instead of /eɪ/. Not only does this vowel contrast have

a high functional load of 42.5% (Catford, 1987), but Chinese speakers tend to substitute /ɛ/ for /ey/ when the latter vowel is followed by a consonant, such as with the word “cake” (Kenworthy, 1987). Even though this vocabulary word was not part of the planned objective, because this word was spoken with such a strong emotional connection (see Stevick, 1980), the student could have been interrupted for an episode of correction, and then been able to continue her story about how ice cream is related to cake, had she been given the opportunity. In order not to disrupt the flow of the class, the instructor could have made a quick haptic sign to the student using the 3 o’clock node position /ey/ simultaneously recasting the correct pronunciation.

In the same class, one student asked about the difference between the two words “woman” and “women”. When the students learned that “women” meant more than one woman, several boys burst into laughter and said “yah! Women!” This distinction was funny for them and carried an emotional connection. However, when the students repeated the word “women”, they produced an /iy/ vowel, rather than the /I/ vowel. This error has the second highest functional load for vowel contrasts and is a common difficulty for Chinese speakers. The Chinese language has no distinction between /iy/ and /I/, making the contrast difficult to hear and produce (Swan and Smith, 2001). According to Kenworthy (1987), in the Chinese language, there are restrictions when this vowel is followed with certain consonants, such as /m/. This could have been another optimal opportunity to correct explicitly because not only does the vowel carry a high functional load, but there was also a strong meaningful connection for the students.

Peak vowels are clearly difficult for international students to produce. Especially as a focus word, it is important that they are corrected regularly. Haptic correction focuses solely on these critical peak vowels. With regards to the flow of classroom objectives, these students had already

been presented with vowel contrasts earlier in the semester, and therefore in both circumstances suggested, the correction would have functioned as a reminder rather than a new lesson.

#### **5.4.2 Systematic Feedback**

Instructors should provide direct feedback on phonological elements already presented in class. Examples given originate from an intermediate class as well as a PMP class being presented with academic discussion and presentation strategies.

From the front of the class, as the intermediate instructor was eliciting information about personal leisure time activities, karaoke and night clubs came up as a topic. Over the course of several turns, students volunteered descriptions of a typical karaoke club in China: “sing songs, drink alcohol, TV, music, relax, and make friends.” For the most part, even though students were speaking using sentences, they did not speak with nuclear sentence stress or clear thought groups. According to the class syllabus, these students had just been presented with lessons about focus words, and how to choose focus words in a thought group. It is known that Chinese students struggle with English rhythm and stress (Kenworthy, 1987), especially since they tend to fully enunciate what should be reduced vowels (Swan and Smith, 2001). Thus, this could have been an optimal opportunity not just to correct, but to remind students about the importance of English prosody and intelligibility. The instructor could have stopped and asked the student to repeat while making a gesture at each focus word, an implicit form of the haptic “fight club” (Burri et al., 2016). The students in this class were already familiar with haptic methodology and therefore no explicit metalinguistic explanation would have been necessary, simply a paralinguistic prompt. Because the students were so interested in the topic being discussed, and they were already aware of focus words, this interruption would probably not have disrupted the

flow of conversation and helped generate longer term uptake. This could have been a “mind-mapping moment” (Doughty, 2001) for the learner.

In the PMP class, the students were studying academic presentations. In this lesson, the students were explaining graphs and then organizing sections of a problem-solution speech. The instructor corrected several segmental sounds while the students were reading aloud. Proposed is one suggestion for correcting prosody during the read-aloud activities.

To practice problem-solutions speeches, students were asked to introduce a problem, using a graph as evidence. One student provided the following:

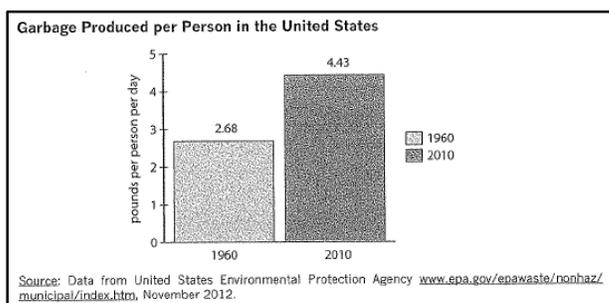


Figure 4: Garbage Produced per Person in the United States (Reinhart, 2013, p. 140)

“Umm, this graph compare the garbage produced per person in the United States from umm, 19, 1960 to 2010 [*sic*]” (PMP: 17:27-17:39). When asked what the graph reveals, this student stated: “A lot of garbage... a lot more than before...” (PMP: 18:00-18:14). The student used little emphatic prosody and as a result, the students’ peers may have lost interest quickly. Erikson (2010) explains that syntactic prosody is for thought grouping and phrasing, while emphatic prosody is for audience interpretation, a tool for expressing special intent. Though syntactic processing is important for intelligibility (Gilbert, 2008; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010), this might have been a good time to focus on emphatic prosody.

At the beginning of Reinhart’s (2013) textbook chapter, rapport with the audience is presented as essential to an introduction to a problem-solution speech (p. 135). One can do this

through personal, relatable experiences, but also, according to Erekson (2010), through emphatic prosody and expressiveness. Problems could be presented in a sincere manner, denoting a serious situation that needs a solution. While offering evidence, if a speaker does not use a tone that expresses the appropriate gravity of the situation, the audience may not interpret the problem as a serious matter. One way to express gravity is through a sustained focus on particular words, a contrast, an evaluation of the situation. The following could be example of such described emphasis (italics denote emphasised vocabulary): “About 50 years ago, close to two and a half pounds of garbage were produced per person per day; *however*, in 2010, this number has almost doubled. *Unfortunately*, this means that the environment is being polluted today now more than ever before”.

Attending to emphatic prosody may seem “out of the blue”, but in this case, the correction simply follows-up on problem-solution specific vocabulary presented earlier in this same chapter (Reinhart, 2013, p. 136). Because of this, the correction would simply be a reminder rather than a diversion from the stated class objectives. If students can use emphatic prosody, their read-aloud tasks will be easier to understand and interpreted as significant within the specific speech genre. Essentially, through tone and emphasis, classmates or colleagues would not need to know the genre before the student started speaking; rather, they could infer it based on the emphatic prosody mapped on the key vocabulary.

### **5.4.3 Small Groups and Discussion Activities**

Instructors should create more opportunities for long turn speaking practice, outside of summatively evaluated speeches. Correction during speeches is a strong theme that arose from both the student questionnaires and the instructor interviews. This correction can cause undue stress, especially since the speeches are graded. Described are two classes in which students’

long-turns could have been integrated into small group settings during which time correction might have been more appropriate and effective.

In one intermediate class, a student was corrected during a presentation. In this instance, a student told the class that his partner's favourite food was "hot pot"; however, the final /t/ consonant was not released and came out sounding like a /p/. The instructor asked for clarification. Although there was immediate repair, the instructor could have rotated and corrected while the students were practicing in small groups. If the instructor had corrected individually or in small groups first, it's possible that the error could have been reformulated before the presentation, and, according to Nassaji (2013), could facilitate a higher level of uptake.

Brown and Yule (1983) emphasize the difference between short turns and long turns. In a short turn, students interact with basic sentence structure, or no structure at all. In a long turn, students express themselves through in a specific structured genre, for example summarizing a film, telling a story, or explaining how something works. According to Brown and Yule, practice speaking in short turns does not automatically guarantee success when speaking in long turns. Although Brown and Yule were not writing about pronunciation specifically, pronunciation is a critical component of speaking ability, and the ability to be understood in a basic interactional setting is not the same when expressing a full idea in a non-interactive setting. Students need controlled practice with long turns in class. Correction during that practice is potentially important to their success when standing in front of the class. In this situation, the instructor could have given more time for the students to work in partners, and been more attentive to notice key words that carried a high functional load and focused on correcting those words. In a

smaller group setting, the students are freer to ask questions and repeat the new reformulated words within their presentation before asked to stand in front of the class.

In the PMP class, the students were reading a text about “Multiple Intelligences” to prepare for a lecture the following day. The main activity in this class centered on an outlining activity: students had to read an article, create an outline from the article and answer some comprehension questions. After the introductory activity, the instructor read the text aloud twice and elicited answers to comprehension questions. There was very little student speech. In order to create more opportunities for student speech, and pronunciation correction, the instructor could have had the students read the text aloud in partners or small groups. This could have been followed by small group and large group discussion time.

During this read-aloud and discussion opportunity, the instructor could have rotated through the groups to check for correct pronunciation of high frequency academic vocabulary in the text, which can affect nuclear stress patterns. Specifically, the instructor could have used Acton’s (2013) haptic techniques, or Murphy and Kandil’s (2004) notational system to quickly correct misplaced word stress on academic vocabulary. For example, according to Murphy and Kandil (2004), the word “intelligence” is on the academic word list, and, according to Murphy and Kandil, has the second most common stress pattern in academic vocabulary: 3 syllables, 2<sup>nd</sup> syllable stressed (p. 69). This could be noted as a 3-2 word. As the instructor rotated through the groups, he or she could have stopped a student and briefly explain, “no, that’s not a 3-1 word, it’s a 3-2 word” if the word were mispronounced.

During the interviews, the “affective filter” was a key concern of each instructor. By incorporating more small group speaking opportunities, instructors can facilitate more occasions

to correct while at the same time lowering stress a student might have felt had they been corrected in front of the group.

#### **5.4.4 Student Talk**

In general, pronunciation correction presumes the presence of speaking activities. In communicative-based classrooms, this speaking practice revolves around choice, information gap and student-initiated speech. From the class observations came one noticeable finding: when an instructor elicited a response from the class, for the most part, students responded with one-word answers or short fragmented sentences. In many cases, the instructors seemed to affirm these fragmented answers by echoing the response after the student (see Topic Continuation Examples 5 and 6 below). This repetition could not be coded as an episode of correction since the instructor provided no apparent emphasis to indicate correction, nor gave an opportunity for the student to respond. Even though uptake, as defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), is not always needed for corrective feedback, some kind of “intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student’s initial utterance” is needed (p. 49). These instances of “topic continuation” occurred more than 100 times in the data set. If constantly repeating students’ utterances, the instructor could be confusing the learner, making any actual pronunciation recasts more “ambiguous” than they already might be (Lyster, 1998b).

**EXAMPLE 5***Topic Continuation*


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Context: Schema building “Multiple Intelligences” (PMPI #2: 9:25-10:24)

---

T: ...What about here?

Ss: **Reading**

T: **Reading**

Ss: **Patience**

T: **Patience** (laughter)... What about here?

Ss: **Passion.**

T: **Passion** (laughter). That’s right. You can’t dance if you’re not **passionate**. Haha. What do you use in order to dance?

Ss: **Body control.**

T: Right, **body control**. That’s right.

---

**EXAMPLE 6***Topic Continuation*


---

Context: Lecture Discussion – Leisure Activities (II #3: 14:53-15:30)

---

T: So, what's the most important leisure activity that people do, your age group, that you do in your country? What do you think?

S: Uhh... **Use Facebook**

T: Ah, **use Facebook**. Ok, so can you tell me why it's so popular?

S: Because, we **can contact each other** easily.

T: You **can contact each other**... ok

S: Wherever you are...

---

As a result, even if the instructors had chosen to correct more, they could only have corrected consonants or vowels in individual words since there was not enough student speech available to correct prosody. This could speak to the reasoning behind each instructor’s strong feelings towards comfort and trust in the classroom. If the students are not saying very much to begin with, the instructors might be hesitant to correct what is being said. This could also speak to the reasoning behind the strong theme of “speeches” as a classroom activity where correction could occur, and where the students feel most hesitant to be corrected. If the students are not

regularly offering long-turn stretches of speech in a setting where there is no summative assessment, then corrective measures may seem overwhelming.

All in all, if the instructors wish to incorporate more pronunciation correction into their classes, they need to incorporate more opportunities for the students to speak with longer turns, and then respond in a way that is salient to the learner. During speaking activities, any correction is better than no correction. Students who receive correction, as long as they recognize it as correction, will most likely improve their pronunciation. In the end, long-term retention of a corrective episode may not necessarily be the result of a specific feedback type, but rather may come from “the opportunities afforded by corrective feedback for consolidating oral skills through contextualized practice” (Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013, p. 5), which could mean a recycling of elements of pronunciation through similar, contextualized activities to aide the students with long-term retention.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study examined possible opportunities for pronunciation feedback in a task-based setting. At the beginning of the project, it was assumed that incidental feedback was mere extemporaneous, unplanned correction of pronunciation. However, based on the literature, data collected through the observations, questionnaires and interviews, that perspective may need to be revisited. In this setting, pronunciation instruction appeared to never go unplanned. Instructors present pronunciation regularly through the semester using either a textbook or, in the case of one PMP class, pronunciation-focused strategies and goals. Therefore, almost any pronunciation correction is form-focused instruction, rather than incidental focus on form. The students have already been presented with pronunciation metalanguage and controlled practice; “correction” is using those forms in a task-based setting. Opportunities for future research, therefore, do not

necessarily lie in pronunciation correction itself, but in the systematic strategies and techniques an instructor takes to draw the students' attention back to those forms, correction being one of those techniques.

In conclusion, perhaps effective incidental correction is not as "incidental" and spontaneous as earlier seemed to assume. Perhaps it is but another way to guide students to systematically re-explore a previously learned concept. If this is the case, then incidental correction should rarely be a surprise, or a diversion, but a matter of "reminding" and "recycling" pronunciation, both segmentals and suprasegmentals, to enhance intelligibility. In the end, as the instructors begin to view regular correction as a way to develop "automaticity" of learning (DeKeyser, 2001), perhaps the students will also. Correction, appropriately implemented, should become so normal in occurrence that "comfort and trust" would no longer be a topic of concern anymore.

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Appendix B: Student Questionnaire

Class Level: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pronunciation Correction in the Classroom**

*Dear Students,*

*As you know, I'm doing research about pronunciation teaching. The purpose of this survey is to help me understand how you feel about how your teacher corrects your pronunciation. Your answers are completely anonymous – that means – that no one will know your name. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask me.*

*Rebeka*

**Part 1**

**Please tell me how you feel by putting a check mark in the appropriate box beside each statement.**

<b>Closed Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1. This semester, my teacher frequently corrects my pronunciation (vowels, consonants, fluency...)					
2. In a lesson focused on pronunciation, I like it when my teacher corrects my pronunciation.					
3. In a lesson focused on reading, writing or listening skills, I like it when my teacher corrects my pronunciation.					
4. When my teacher corrects me, I like it when my teacher simply gives me the right pronunciation, with no explanation or rule.					
5. When my teacher corrects me, I like it when my teacher helps me to find the right pronunciation, instead of just giving me the right pronunciation.					
6. I like it when the teacher corrects other students' pronunciation. (I learn from other students' corrections)					
7. I like it when the teacher interrupts me when I am speaking to correct my pronunciation.					
8. I like it when the teacher waits for me to finish talking and then corrects my pronunciation.					
9. I would like my teacher to correct my pronunciation more often.					
10. I understand how to improve my own pronunciation.					

**Part 2**

**In this section, please circle ALL answers that apply.**

1. In general, what errors does your teacher most often correct?
  - a. Grammar (inaccurate uses of verb tense, helping verbs, subject-verb agreement...)
  - b. Word Forms (inaccurate choices of vocabulary in nouns, verbs, adverbs...)
  - c. Pronunciation (inaccurate pronunciation when reading aloud or in conversation...)
  - d. Unsure
  
2. In your opinion, what errors **SHOULD** your teacher most often correct?
  - a. Grammar (inaccurate uses of verb tense, helping verbs, subject-verb agreement...)
  - b. Word Forms (inaccurate choices of vocabulary in nouns, verbs, adverbs...)
  - c. Pronunciation (inaccurate pronunciation when reading aloud or in conversation...)
  - d. Unsure
  
3. In general, when does your teacher correct you?
  - a. Introduction activities (hook, initial introduction...)
  - b. In class practice activities (textbook activities, partner discussions...)
  - c. Presentation activities (speeches, panel discussions, group presentations...)
  - d. Unsure
  
4. In your opinion, when **SHOULD** your teacher correct you?
  - a. Introduction activities (hook, initial introduction...)
  - b. In class practice activities (textbook activities, partner discussions...)
  - c. Presentation activities (speeches, panel discussions, group presentations...)
  - d. Unsure
  
5. Does your teacher correct your pronunciation? If yes, how does your teacher correct your pronunciation?
  - a. The teacher tells me I'm wrong and gives me the correct answer.
  - b. The teacher repeats what I say with the correct pronunciation.
  - c. The teacher asks me to repeat when he/she doesn't understand.
  - d. The teacher tells me I'm wrong, but makes me find the right answer.
  - e. The teacher begins a sentence (or a word), and asks me to finish it.
  - f. The teacher repeats my mistake, and then I understand the right answer.
  - g. Unsure
  
6. After your teacher corrects your pronunciation, what do you do?
  - a. Repeat the correct form.
  - b. Say nothing.
  - c. Unsure
  - d. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What kinds of classroom activities help most to improve your pronunciation? (Look at your class calendar if you need ideas)
8. In a listening, reading or writing focused lesson, do you want the teacher to correct your pronunciation? If yes, how would you like the teacher to correct your pronunciation? (Look back at Question 5 for possible answers)
9. What is one reason you **DO NOT** like the teacher correcting you?
10. How do you feel about your pronunciation abilities? What specifically would you still like to improve?

## Appendix C: Instructor Interview Questions

Incidental Pronunciation Feedback in the L/S classroom  
Teacher Interview Questions

*The purpose of this interview is to review your beliefs and teaching practices specifically with regards to feedback and correction in the classroom. This conversation will help to complement the observations and the student questionnaires with your personal opinions and experiences. As noted in the consent form you signed, your responses will be recorded, but are confidential. Please take the time to review the following questions before our meeting time. This conversation should take about 30 minutes.*

**1. Background, Experience and Beliefs:**

- a. What kind of training did you do to become an ESL teacher? What is your teaching experience?
- b. What kind of training did you do to become a listening/speaking teacher? What is your l/s teaching experience?
- c. What kind of training did you do to teach pronunciation? What is your teaching experience?
- d. Did you ever receive any training regarding feedback and correction, specifically pronunciation correction?

**2. Current Situation**

- a. Describe your L/S class syllabus and calendar: What are the major objectives in your course? What do you expect the students will be able to do once they're finished your course? Specifically, what are the major pronunciation learning objectives?
- b. Using your class textbook, what is your general approach to teaching pronunciation?
  - i. Do you tend to use more of the controlled pronunciation-building activities that have no communicative purpose? (Eg. Minimal pairs, minimal exchanges, controlled responses...)
  - ii. Do you tend to use more uncontrolled pronunciation-building activities that have communicative purpose? (Eg. Dialogues, role-plays, group discussion...)
  - iii. Do you tend to use a mixture of both controlled and uncontrolled activities?

**3. Pronunciation Feedback: Situational Examples**

*The following questions refer to pronunciation feedback in the classroom. Feedback can be defined as correction relating to any target objective in focus. In other words, if the class objective for the day were discussion skills, correcting the students' use of those specific discussion skills being taught would be classified as correction. Responses to the following questions can be examples from experience in-class, hypothetical in-class, or even first-hand language learning.*

- a. What is your initial, general belief regarding the appropriateness of pronunciation correction as a classroom teaching method?
- b. When in your class calendar is it most appropriate to give feedback and comments regarding pronunciation?
- c. In a one-day lesson plan focused on pronunciation, when is it most appropriate to give feedback and comments regarding pronunciation?
- d. What elements of pronunciation do you find yourself most often correcting?
- e. How do you find yourself correcting pronunciation most often?
- f. In general, how do you expect the student to respond to your feedback? How do you facilitate uptake?
- g. What is the perfect situation where there is feedback and response?
- h. What are some of the challenges you face when giving feedback and expecting a response?

#### 4. Incidental Pronunciation Feedback: Situational Examples

*The following questions refer to incidental pronunciation feedback in the classroom. Incidental feedback can be defined as feedback relating to a target objective other than the one on any that day's lesson plan. In other words, if the class objective for the day were discussion skills, correcting intonation in a group discussion would be classified as incidental correction. Responses to the following questions can be examples from experience in-class, hypothetical in-class, or even first-hand language learning.*

- a. What is your initial, general belief regarding the appropriateness of incidental correction as a classroom teaching method?
- b. When in your class calendar is it most appropriate to give incidental feedback and comments regarding pronunciation? (Scope and sequence)
- c. In a one-day lesson plan **NOT** focused on pronunciation, when is it most appropriate to give incidental feedback and comments regarding pronunciation? Is it ever appropriate?
- d. What elements of pronunciation do you find yourself most often incidentally correcting?
- e. How do you find yourself incidentally correcting pronunciation most often?
- f. In general, how do you expect the student to respond to your feedback? How do you facilitate uptake?
- g. What is the perfect situation where there is incidental feedback and response?
- h. Is there a time when it may be appropriate to interrupt a student to give feedback? When and how might this be appropriate?
- i. What are some of the challenges you face when giving incidental feedback and expecting a response?

### **5. Student Questionnaires: Initial Response**

*In this section, you have the opportunity to review and comment on the student questionnaire responses from your own classroom.*

- a. What responses stand out to you?
- b. Does anything surprise you?
- c. Do these responses confirm or alter how you think about correction in general, or incidental correction?
- d. Is there anything else you would like to add?