# L1 and L2 Explicit Corrections:

## A case study in an Indonesian EFL classroom

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*Abstract*—**Errors are frequently made by learners as they study a foreign language. Due to the error occurrences, it is necessary for teachers to assist their students in fixing their errors which might be done by giving corrective feedback. Thus, the objectives of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of corrective feedback which focuses on teacher's oral explicit correction delivered both in L1 and L2 which occurred in an Indonesia EFL classroom during speaking section and to find out students' oral responses towards the teacher's oral L1 and L2 explicit corrections. This study involved one teacher of English and 34 students of the first grade in a senior high school. To reach the objectives of this study, data were collected through classroom observations and interview. After the data was qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed, the result of the observations showed that the process of the provision of explicit correction covers 3 steps: trigger (error), explicit correction, and uptake. A pattern coded as "choice" to provide an explicit correction was also found. The result of observation and interview also revealed that teacher offered oral explicit corrections in L1 and L2, in which the language use was emphasized on L1. On the basis of the observation, it also indicated that the oral L1 and L2 explicit corrections were variously responded by the students which resulted in two types of uptake: repair and needs-repair, in which the frequency of repair uptake in the form of peer-repair was frequently produced.**

*Keywords—corrective feedback; EFL classroom; explicit corrections; L1; L2*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In learning English as a foreign/second language, errors are often committed by its language learners. The occurrences of errors are probably due to several differences between learners' native language and the target language. Richard and Schmidt define an error as "the use of linguistic item in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learners in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning" [1]. Errors play a crucial role in second language acquisition and designate how much learners understand the language being learnt and in what ways they requires helps. In language learning classroom, errors can be committed in two ways; written or oral. Yet, this study focuses on oral errors categorized as phonological errors, grammatical errors, and lexical errors [2-5].

Such errors committed by students bring about teachers' corrective feedback. The term corrective feedback is defined as "any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learners' utterance" [6]. Corrective feedback can be offered in written or oral form. Nevertheless, oral feedback is one of the most used types of feedback [7]. Corrective feedback has positive effect on students' learning which is to promote their language acquisition [8], and prevent fossilization caused by uncorrected errors [9]. Corrective feedback has different types. One of which becoming the focus of this study is Explicit Correction.

Explicit correction refers to "the explicit provision of the correct form" [10]. In this case, the teacher provides the correct form by clearly indicating that what the student has said was wrong. The teacher's explicit correction is usually preceded by several phrases which designate students' errors. Phrases that may be used in this type of corrective feedback are "Oh, you mean," "you should say," "not X, but Y", "that's not right …", or "in English we say…" [10-12]. All those phrases might be used if the teacher offers explicit correction in L2 (English) as the target language.

The provision of explicit correction might or might not be responded by students. If it is responded, *uptake* exists. In speaking, uptake takes place when a student's utterance follows a teacher's feedback. Uptake, in this present study, refers to "a student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" [10]. Uptake can also be defined as "a student move," and "the move is optional" Ellis et al. [13]. Uptake, then, reveals the students' attempts to work on feedback provided by the teacher.

Uptake has been classified by Lyster and Ranta into two types namely [10], (1) uptake resulting in *repair* of the error that the feedback focused on and (2) uptake resulting in *needs-repair* where a student's utterance still needs repair. They also distinguished *repair* into four types:

- *Repetition*, refers to a student's repetition of the feedback provided by the teacher which includes the correct form.

- *Incorporation*, refers to a student's repetition of the teacher's correct form, and the correct form itself is then incorporated into a longer utterance generated by the student.

- *Self-repair*, refers to a self-correction in which the students making error responses to the teacher's feedback without being provided the correct form by the teacher.

- *Peer-repair*, refers to peer-correction in which other student responses to the teacher's feedback instead of the student who has made the initial error.

Not only did Lyster and Ranta distinguish *repair* but also divide *needs-repair* into six types [10]:

- *Acknowledgement*, generally refers to a "yes" or "no" in student's response to teacher's feedback.

- *Same error*, refers to the student's response towards the teacher's feedback in which the student repeats the initial error.

- *Different error*, means the student's response to the teacher's feedback where she/he does not correct or repeat the previous error but makes a different one.

- *Off target*, refers to "uptake that is clearly in response to the teacher's feedback turn but that circumvents the teacher's linguistic focus altogether, without including any further errors."

- *Hesitation*, means that the student hesitates to respond the teacher's feedback.

- *Partial repair*, refers to the student's incomplete repair in which she/he corrects the initial error only.

In providing explicit correction, a teacher goes through a process. The process of the provision of explicit corrections is the same as the simple process of corrective feedback proposed by Hong Yun [14], in Su and Tian suggesting that corrective feedback includes three steps [11]: trigger, feedback, and uptake. In this study, students' oral errors are triggers for the teacher's feedback in the form of explicit corrections, and the explicit corrections themselves are the ones which generate students' uptake or responses. Here is the example of an explicit correction:

S: On April. (error)

T: Not on April, in April. We say "I will fly to America in April." (explicit correction)

S: in April. (uptake) (Adopted from Su and Tian [11])

The example of explicit correction above is delivered in the target language (English). Nevertheless, the provision of explicit corrections might be delivered in the teacher and students' native language or L1. In Indonesia, English is studied as a foreign language. Thus, L1 usage in the classroom is still inevitable. Studies found out that L1 could be utilized to provide (corrective) feedback in response to students' errors [15-18].

Previous studies examined types of corrective feedback (including explicit corrections) and uptake following the feedback [10,19-23]. However, those studies did not investigate the involvement of the teacher's use of L1 and L2 in delivering corrective feedback at the same time. Little studies endeavor to capture how L1 and L2 are used to offer corrective feedback (focusing on explicit corrections).

Thus, the discussion above leads to the aims of this study which are to investigate teachers' oral explicit correction delivered in L1 and L2 and to find out students' responses (uptake) towards the provided feedback. At the end, this study is expected to develop both students and teachers' English performance in the classroom, to inspire EFL teachers in terms of explicit correction giving, and indirectly to support the previous research regarding the role of L1 to promote feedback.

## II. METHOD

This study applied both qualitative and quantitative approach. Qualitative research was selected as Creswell [24] and Fraenkel et al. [25] clarify that this enables the researcher to obtain in-depth analysis of the issue being investigated. Also, qualitative research is a naturalistic approach to explore a phenomenon [26], as the researcher wanted to scrutinize the phenomenon of L1 and L2 explicit correction and students' responses towards the explicit correction in natural setting. Meanwhile, quantitative was employed because the researcher also wanted to investigate how many L1 or L2 explicit corrections given by the teacher, and how the frequency of students' responses is.

This study is also considered as a case study because the research was conducted in limited scale. Yin [27] in Zainal [28] suggests that descriptive case studies "set to describe the natural phenomena which occur within the data in question". Besides, the goal arranged by the researcher is to describe the data as they are. Thus, the result of this study is not intended to be generalized [25]. However, the result of study still can be utilized as a valuable insight to this issue [24].

The research site of the current study was one of the State High Schools in Cimahi, West Java, Indonesia, involving one English teacher and 34 students in the first grade. Those 34 students were in the same class, and the class was chosen because the teacher combined the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom.

To gather the data, classroom observation and interview were conducted. The video and tape-recorded classroom observation was taken four times in order to obtain the data and information about the actual teaching learning processes particularly when the teacher gave L1 and L2 explicit corrections to students' errors and when students responded to the teacher's explicit corrections. The classroom session lasted for around 135 minutes per meeting. Another instrument was interview. It was in the form of a semi-structured interview having open-ended questions. The teacher was interviewed regarding L1 and L2 explicit corrections delivered by her. Additionally, the process of interview was recorded to keep the originality of the data.

The data obtained from video and tape-recorded classroom sessions were transcribed on the basis of Jefferson transcription symbol [29]. After transcribing the recording, the next stage involves analyzing and categorizing students' errors based on several literature [2-5], analyzing explicit corrections delivered both in L1 or L2, as well as analyzing and categorizing students' uptake on the basis of the theory proposed by Lyster and Ranta [10].

On the other hand, the interview result was also transcribed and analyzed through content analysis to confirm or to validate to the data from observation. In addition, the data gained from the interview were used to supplement the discussion of the findings.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aims of this study were to investigate the teacher's oral explicit correction delivered in L1 and L2 and students' response towards the provided explicit correction. However, before describing the main focus of this study, it is also important to find out students' errors since errors are triggers for explicit corrections. Table 1 presents the findings of this study.

TABLE I. ERRORS-EXPLICIT CORRECTION-UPTAKE

| Meeting | Errors | | | Language Use to Provide Explicit Correction | | Uptake | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Repair Uptake | | | | Needs-Repair Uptake | | | | | |
| | Phonological | Grammatical | Lexical | L1 | L2 | Repetition | Incorporation | Self-repair | Peer-repair | Acknowledgement | Same Error | Different Error | Off Target | Hesitation | Partial repair |
| First | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Second | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | | | | - | 3 | - | 2 | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| | - | 2 | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Third | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Fourth | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 6 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 4 | - | 10 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Percentage | 60% | 30% | 10% | 69.2% | 30.8% | 10% | 20% | - | 50% | 10% | - | - | - | 5% | 5% |

Table 1 shows the result of classroom observation regarding students' errors, teacher's L1 and L2 explicit correction, and students' uptake/responses. Based on the finding, it indicates that in the first meeting, one student made a phonological error and it was corrected by the teacher with an L1 explicit correction. The L1 explicit correction was then responded by the students making the initial error in the form of repetition and by the other student resulting in peer-repair.

In the second meeting, errors corrected by the teacher's explicit correction were various. On the basis of the observation, there found three phonological errors and two grammatical errors. The phonological errors received one L1 explicit correction which generated students' uptake in the form of repetition and peer-repair. In addition, the teacher also offered three L2 explicit corrections to treat the students' phonological errors. In response to the L2 explicit correction, students yielded two instances of incorporation, three peer-repairs, and one hesitation. In the second meeting, two grammatical errors were also noticed by the teacher. Those errors were corrected with L1 explicit corrections as many as four times which then stimulated students' uptake in the form of four peer-repairs, one acknowledgement, and one partial repair.

From the third meeting, the teacher corrected one phonological error using an L1 explicit correction. This feedback induced the student uptake in the form of acknowledgement. Based on the observation in the fourth meeting, it reveals that students' errors provided with explicit corrections were one phonological error, one grammatical error, and one lexical error. The teacher reacted to the phonological error by giving an L2 explicit correction, and this explicit correction generated one incorporation. Meanwhile, the grammatical error was provided with an L1 explicit correction and resulted in one peer-repair uptake. On the other hand, the lexical error received an L1 explicit correction. At the same time, in response to the L1 explicit correction, the student committing the error incorporated her utterance.

### A. Errors Committed by Students

According to the finding, it indicated that phonological, grammatical, and lexical errors received teacher's explicit correction. Out of the three error types, phonological errors ranked first (60%) as the most frequent error made by students, followed by grammatical errors (30%) and lexical errors (10%) respectively. Since phonological errors have the highest frequency, this means that students found English pronunciation difficult. Similar to this finding, Shirkhani and Tajeddin's study identified that errors in pronunciation were mostly produced by students [30]. The occurrence of the errors might be affected by some linguistic factors. Researchers and linguists stated that such linguistic factors are the differences of the sound system between the LI and the L2 and the inconsistency of some sounds in English language [31]. Other causes of phonological errors can be MTI (mother tongue

interference) and the failed teaching of English pronunciation [32].

However, the data showed that the teacher did not correct all of student's error. It is probably because the teacher takes time allocation into consideration [33]. The teacher might also take into account the effects of her feedback, since direct error correction will affect the interaction and communication process [11]. Thus, the teacher only corrects the errors which are too obvious to ignore especially errors in pronunciation [33].

*B. L1 and L2 Explicit Correction*

Regarding the objective of this study which was to investigate the teacher's L1 and L2 explicit correction, it was found that the process of explicit correction both in L1 or in L2 includes three steps; trigger (error), feedback (explicit correction), and uptake. This finding is in line with theory proposed by Hong Yun [14], in Su and Tian [11].

*1) First meeting:*
Excerpt 1: A phonological error corrected with L1 explicit correction

- 612 S4: Self /seləf / *trigger/error

- 613 T: *Bukan* (not) self /seləf/ (.) [self /self/] *L1 EC

- 614 S16: [Self /self/] *uptake, peer-repair

- 615 S4: Self /self/ *uptake, repetition

As seen in the line 612, the student pronounced the word *self* incorrectly. In the line 613, the phonological error was corrected with an explicit correction in which the indication was delivered in L1 (Indonesian). As a reaction to the provided feedback, the student making the error produced uptake as seen in the line 615.

Sometimes, the explicit correction was also repeated by the teacher [11], which means that one error can be corrected by more than one explicit correction.

*2) Second meeting:*
Excerpt 2: A phonological error corrected with L2 explicit correction

- 944 S4: Humans in the world who smoke for the first time are Indian tribe in

- 945: America /ʌmerikʌ/ [(feurinwok)] *trigger/error

- 946 T: [America /ʌmerɪkʌ/] or America /əˈmer.ɪ. kə/? *L2 EC

- 947 S4: Americ /ʌmerɪk/ *uptake, hesitation

- 948 S3: [America /əˈmer.ɪ. kə/] *uptake, peer-repair

- 949 T: [America /ʌmerɪkʌ/] or America /əˈmer.ɪ. kə/? *repeated L2 EC

- 950 S3: America /əˈmer.ɪ. kə/ *uptake, peer-repair.

In the line 945, the student made a phonological error. Then, as seen in the line 946, the teacher offered an explicit correction which was delivered in L2, and such feedback generated uptake as seen in the line 947 and 948. Apparently, the teacher wanted to make sure that her student could really fix their error and the student's self-revise can be strengthened [11]. Thus, in the line 949, the teacher repeated her explicit correction and, as seen in the line 950, the feedback promoted the students' response. Surprisingly, the student committing the initial error performed an incomplete response. Such a repeated explicit correction led to peer-repair uptake indeed.

In offering explicit correction, the teacher might go through phrases. In this study, it revealed that "not X, but Y" was the phrase or the pattern mostly given by the teacher to provide an explicit correction in L2. The teacher also utilized the same pattern to correct students' errors using explicit corrections delivered in L1. Nonetheless, the word "not" and "but" were turned into the teacher and students' first language. The example of such pattern was put in excerpt 1. This finding is similar to what Su and Tian explain in their research in which they provided an example of a teacher' use of "not X, but Y" pattern to correct a student's error [11]. The implementation of such pattern will be likely to make students aware of their errors and enable the students to recognize the correct form of their error utterances.

The current study also reveals another pattern employed by the teacher to give explicit corrections which is coded as "choice." In this case, the teacher repeated the students' incorrect utterance as she indicated that the utterance was wrong and provided the correct form as a choice. An example of this pattern was presented in excerpt 2. Such finding has not been widely found or identified, or, if any, has not been explored in similar research. Even in the study conducted by Lyster and Ranta, such a pattern was not discovered [10].

As previously mentioned, the result of the study shows that the teacher used both L1 and L2 when providing explicit correction. The teacher delivered explicit corrections in L1 (Indonesian or sometimes Sundanese) as many as 69.2% (9 times) and 30.8% (4 times) for delivering L2 explicit corrections. This designated that the frequency of L1 usage is higher than L2. This finding is confirmed by the result of the interview indicating that the teacher used L1 most of the time. The teacher suggested that the reason why she used L1 was because the students she taught were the first graders, in which the majority of them had finite English proficiency. This means that the teacher had her own belief why it was necessary for her to combine the use of the target language and the first language. Such beliefs can derive from the teacher's experiences as a language learner, the experiences with schooling, and the experiences as a teacher or the experiences of what works best [34].

*3) Interview:*
Excerpt 3

*At first, I use English as many as 40 % while Indonesian is 60%. … that is because they are still in the first grade.*

*When correcting students' oral errors, I use both Indonesia and English because students might not be able to understand it (English)…*

*Indonesian is frequently used to give explicit correction, because students' understanding of English is limited.*

Therefore, this finding confirms other previous studies regarding the function of L1 in the classroom as a mean of providing (corrective) feedback [15-18].

Looking at the connection between errors and explicit corrections, this study discloses that both L1 and L2 explicit corrections were offered to treat students' phonological errors most of the time. Regardless of the language use to promote explicit correction, the present study is in line with Shirkhani and Tajeddin's study which found that explicit corrective feedback (in which explicit correction is a part of explicit corrective feedback) was frequently used to correct students' pronunciation errors [30]. This can be inferred that explicit correction is an appropriate strategy to fix errors related to either phonology or pronunciation.

### C. Students' Uptake / Responses

Having corrected by the teacher with L1 and L2 explicit corrections, students produced uptake variously. The findings suggested that students' responses towards the teachers' L1 and L2 explicit correction resulted in two types of uptake which are repair uptake and needs-repair uptake. This finding is similar to other previous studies [10,21,22,35]. The frequency of repair uptake was 80% in which 10% were repetition, 20% were incorporation, and 50% were peer repair. On the other hand, students also produced needs-repair uptake as many as 20%. The needs-repair uptake was in the form of 10% acknowledgement, 5% hesitation, and 5% partial repair. This shows that explicit correction (delivered both in L1 and L2) as a type of explicit Corrective Feedback (CF) can promote students repair uptake meaning that students are able to repair their errors. Also, these explicit corrections help student acquire their foreign language acquisition. This finding confirms the previous results of study [36-39] that explicit corrective feedback is more effective than implicit CF because the explicit one can be easily noticed.

As a result of the provision of L1 and L2 explicit corrections, most repair uptake were made in the form of peer-repair. Although the responses were mostly given by other students rather than the ones who made initial errors, the students–who committed the initial error–could, at least, hear and know what the right one should be. Also, the occurrences of peer-repairs gives clear evidence that there were more students noticing the teacher's feedback. On the contrary, this finding is contradiction to the research conducted by Alsolami and Elyas where explicit corrections received no peer-repair at all [40]. From these two significant different results of study, it can be assumed that what triggers students' uptake following teachers' explicit correction (or any types of corrective feedback) is students' motivation [41]. Students have different types and level of motivation [41]. They possess intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as well as a motivation and such conditions can affect students to perform their uptake [41]. Regarding motivation, the overall study found that the teacher's L1 and L2 explicit corrections were followed by 80% repair uptake. Apparently, this can be considered that the students have high motivation to perform uptake. Therefore, indirectly, this finding corresponds to Uzum's study suggesting that "the higher the intrinsic motivation, the lower number of errors and uptake-need repair learners produced" [41].

## IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Overall, the process of explicit correction consists of three steps which involved trigger (error), feedback (in the form of explicit correction), and uptake. The explicit corrections were given both in L1 and L2, where the teacher emphasized the use of L1. Phrases used by the teacher to offer explicit corrections varied, but mostly the feedback was preceded by "not X, but y" phrase/pattern. Besides, this study also revealed another pattern coded as "choice". In response to such explicit corrections, students produced two types of uptake; repair and needs-repair, in which the frequency of the students' repair uptake was higher than the needs-repair uptake. The repair uptake was generated in the form of peer-repair. Additionally, the occurrence of uptake is more likely caused by students' motivation. Despite this, the result of the study cannot be generalized because this study was carried out in a limited period and had limited participants.

Thus, for further researchers having the same interest to the similar topic, they are recommended to gain more detailed data. A long period of classroom observation is necessary to be taken. Since, this study happened to meet students' motivation in providing uptake, further studies are also suggested to investigate and discover such issues. For teachers, they are suggested to be very careful as they correct students' errors with explicit corrections since this type of corrective feedback points out students' incorrect utterances. It is really important to make sure that the correction will not discourage students in learning English. Furthermore, teachers should take suitable phrases into consideration when they are about to offer explicit corrections.

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