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# New Perspectives for Teaching French in Iraq: Principles and Practices

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NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR TEACHING FRENCH IN IRAQ:

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

by

Marwan Ahmed

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Approved:

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Dr. Abdulkafi Albirini  
Major Professor

---

Dr. Karin DeJonge-Kannan  
Committee Member

---

Dr. Sarah Gordon  
Committee Member

---

Dr. Bradford J. Hall  
Department Head

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

Logan, Utah

2017

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## ABSTRACT

New Perspectives for Teaching French in Iraq: Principles and Practices

by

Marwan Ahmed: Master of Second Language Teaching

Utah State University, 2017

Major Professor: Dr. Abdulkafi Albirini

Department: Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies

This portfolio embeds the author's perceptions and beliefs with regard to modern foreign/second language teaching and learning. The first section includes the author's teaching philosophy, which presents the importance of the communicative language teaching (CLT) in a student-centered classroom, the role of grammar instruction in support of communication, and the effective use of technology in language teaching and learning. The second section consists of three research perspectives: the first reflects on the effective types of oral corrective feedback in language classes, while the second includes teaching French apologizing strategies to Iraqi-Arabic speakers, and the third investigates the use of Facebook to improve second language (L2) writing skills. The final section of this portfolio includes three annotated bibliographies highlighting contemporary scholarly work on three topics: enhancing student-centered instruction, using virtual worlds (VWs) to facilitate second language acquisition (SLA), and the matter of foreign language teaching in large classes.

(141 pages)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

2D = Two Dimensions

3D = Three Dimensions

ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

ARS = Audience Response System

CALL = Computer Assisted Language Learning

CD = Compact Disk

CF = Corrective Feedback

CLT = Communicative Language Teaching

DCT = Discourse Completing Test

EFL = English as a Foreign Language

ELC = English Language Center

ELF = English as a Lingua Franca

ESL = English as a Second Language

FB = Facebook

FL = Foreign Language

FFL = French as a Foreign Language

HCED-IRAQ = Higher Committee for Education Development in Iraq

IFID = Illocutionary Force Indicating Device

L1 = First Language

L1s = First Languages

L2 = Second Language

MALL = Mobil Assisted Language Learning

MSLT = Master of Second Language Teaching

NCSSFL = National Council of State Supervisors for Languages

ROC = Republic of China

SATS = Self-Assessment of Teaching Statement

SL = Second Life

SLA = Second Language Acquisition

TL = Target Language

TV = Television

USU = Utah State University

VW = Virtual World

VWs = Virtual Worlds

XJTLU = Xi'an Jiaotong –Liverpool University

ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development



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## INTRODUCTION

This portfolio is a final product that gathers all the work that I produced during my three years of study in the MSLT program at USU. The main focus of this portfolio is teaching French as a foreign language (FFL) in Iraq based on the knowledge that I gained from the reading materials and class observations that I did during the program. The central piece of this portfolio is the teaching philosophy section in which I reflect on my personal experience as a foreign language learner and teacher in Iraq and my intended professional environment after I finish the MSLT program.

In my teaching philosophy statement, I emphasize the importance of using the communicative language teaching approach in a student-centered classroom. I strongly believe that maximizing students' meaningful interaction in the target language (TL) through real-life activities leads to second language acquisition (SLA). Moreover, I discuss the role of input in SLA, specifically input that is adjusted to students' current proficiency level in the TL. Furthermore, I explain the role of grammar instruction as one but not the only component of a communicative language teaching classroom. Finally, I illustrate how technology plays a significant role in expanding students' exposure to the TL.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

## APPRENTICESHIP OF OBSERVATION

My experience in learning languages was unique. While my first attempts of learning my mother language (Arabic) had barely started, I began to be exposed to another language (English) at the same time. In other words, I have been raised in a bilingual environment. I was two years old when my parents moved to London. My father was enrolled in London University to get a PhD degree in English. During our stay in London, I joined an English school that helped me acquire and master my second language. A few years later, we went back to Iraq, and I joined school there. In Iraqi schools, English language started to be taught in the 5th grade, and of course, I had a sort of head start over my classmates in this class due to my English language "proficiency". I earned the highest grades on all exams and quizzes in English. This prompted my classmates to seek my help to overcome their problems and difficulties in learning English. In a sense, that is when my first language teaching attempts started. I was helping my classmates to learn word meanings, pronunciations, and grammar rules.

Furthermore, my brothers and I consider our father, who's an English language teacher, as our idol. My father encouraged me to love and learn foreign languages due to all the cultural, social, and financial benefits that can be gained from being a bilingual or multilingual person. The way my father teaches and deals with his students made us love this career. All these reasons pushed me and three of my siblings to join the college of languages with the aim of learning more English. Unfortunately, I didn't make it to the English language department, and I joined the French language department because the former one was requiring higher grades than I actually gained in high school.

I convinced myself to stay in the French language department and learn French, relying on the fact that speaking two languages, other than my first/mother language, is better than

speaking only one. However, in Iraq, we still lack effective modern language teaching methodologies. We are still following the traditional teaching style which mainly depends on the teacher's instruction, with very little or even no role for the students in class.

Additionally, in Iraq language teaching and learning mainly focus on mastering the grammatical rules and memorizing vocabulary of a certain language which is of course not enough for learners to accomplish the task of communicating with others by using the target language. According to Abid (2012),

The traditional approaches are mainly followed in teaching English whether in schools or at the university level in Iraq, which are based on emphasizing the role of grammar and memorizing vocabulary in learning English. Unfortunately, such a belief would cost the learners a lot since they would invest the majority of their time memorizing lists of vocabulary and grammar rules instead of engaging themselves into serious communicative activities in English (p. 65).

My first official teaching experience started in 2008 after I graduated from college. I taught French as a foreign language in a private college in Baghdad. However, as the English proverb says "When in Rome do as the Romans." In other words, I taught my students French in the same way I have been taught (i.e., I kept following the false trend that shows the teacher as the central figure of the class). I now knew that such a trend shouldn't be adopted in a foreign language (FL)/second language (L2) classroom because it contradicts with modern language teaching methodologies that present the communicative language teaching as the most effective means of teaching/learning a FL/L2.

Therefore, a strong ambition prompted me to join an advanced language teaching program, such as the Master of Second Language Teaching program at Utah State University, in

order to feed my knowledge with the most developed and effective language teaching methodologies, and apply them in my country for the advantage of the field of FL or L2 teaching.

## PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

After graduating from college with a Bachelor's degree in French language, I began teaching this language at a private college in Baghdad. This experience helped me to better perceive my future goal (i.e., to be a professional language teacher). Being a multilingual person, having a full-time teaching position with the Ministry of Higher Education in Iraq, and joining an outstanding program in USU will definitely push me forward in the process of achieving this goal. Therefore, my aim upon finishing the MSLT program is to go back to my country to pursue my French language teaching career at an Iraqi university and offering my services as an English language teacher as well.

I look forward to apply all what I learned from the MSLT program in Iraqi foreign language classrooms. I am eager to expose my future students to the communicative approach as an effective language teaching and learning method. This teaching approach will offer students opportunities to interact by using the TL and it will help them improve their linguistic skills. Furthermore, I will emphasize the role of culture as an important aspect in the process of learning a foreign language because simply we can't learn a language alone without being aware about its culture.



## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

In Iraq, second language teaching is mostly conducted by following the traditional approach. The predominant teaching method is grammar-translation, which requires students to learn grammar rules, memorize vocabulary, and translate from the target language (TL) to Arabic and vice versa, without meaningful interaction between students. This teaching style is very teacher-centered. In other words, the teacher talks almost the entire class-time with little or no participation from students in classroom activities.

As a person who experienced the grammar-translation method, first as a student and then as a teacher, I witnessed its weakness with regard to language learners' ability to use their second language (L2) for effective communications. Shrum and Glisan (2010) report that, "Learning grammatical structures apart from their use and function is pointless unless one wants to be a linguist or describe a language systematically without becoming a communicatively competent user of that language" (p. 218). Therefore, as a current graduate student enrolled in the Master of Second Language Teaching (MSLT) program at Utah State University (USU), my ultimate goal is to gain knowledge and experience related to the most effective and research-based second language teaching methodologies in order to apply them in Iraqi foreign/second language classrooms.

In my teaching philosophy, I will focus on the principles and perspectives that I have learned in the MSLT program. These principles and perspectives will characterize my language teaching style in the future. I anticipate that they will be considered a significant mutation in the field of foreign language (FL) / second language (L2) teaching in Iraq. They will help move the field from traditional approaches toward implementing the communicative approach in teaching languages. Therefore, in this paper I will focus on how the MSLT program will affect my future

teaching style. Specifically, with regard to the following important themes: communicative language teaching (CLT) in a student-centered classroom, grammar in support of communication, and effective use of modern technology.

As a FL/L2 teacher, my first concern is to change my classroom from a teacher-centered to a student-centered classroom. In other words, I will dedicate more class-time for students to produce and interact in the TL. Therefore, instead of facing me the entire class-time, students will face each other and participate in meaningful interactions. I will encourage them to participate in group discussions and collaborative work that increase their use of the TL. According to Muldrow (2013), "in the student-centered classroom, students share responsibility for their learning and become more engaged in the learning process" (p. 28). Meanwhile, I will mainly rely on the communicative approach as the best way to guarantee the continual use of the TL by students who thus develop their communicative abilities, especially when real-life activities are implemented on a large scale. Savignon (1998) maintains that, "the act of communication in most settings involves the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning" (as cited in Lee and VanPatten, 2003, p. 51). From Savignon's definition, I derive the importance of applying the communicative approach in language classes. When students interact in communicative activities, they are actually expressing their thoughts, trying to interpret their peers' messages, and negotiating meaning in the TL.

The communicative method of teaching will mainly characterize my future teaching practice. This method completely contradicts the grammar-translation method that I have been taught in and also used when I taught French in the past. Therefore, instead of being the only person who speaks in class and the only source of knowledge, I will constantly interact with my students. Powell (2013) suggests using "open-ended questions" to maintain meaningful

interaction with students. However, I am not claiming that grammar has no role in the CLT approach, but I will address its role later in this teaching philosophy statement.

In the communicative approach, the teacher's role is to create a classroom environment in which students interact constantly with the teacher, in pairs or in groups using real-life contexts. According to Lightbown and Spada (1999),

When learners are given the opportunity to engage in meaningful activities they are compelled to 'negotiate for meaning,' that is, to express and clarify their intentions, thoughts, opinions, etc., in a way that permits them to arrive at a mutual understanding. This is especially true when the learners are working together to accomplish a particular goal (p. 122).

Therefore, as a teacher, my job is to present a topic supported by a short amount of instruction, to provide a space for students to participate in meaningful interactions concerning a topic, to guide the conversation by posing questions, and to provide feedback and more instruction when needed. Additionally, there is a quote attributed to Benjamin Franklin that I like very much and that fits so well with our career as language teachers. This quote says "Tell me and I will forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I will learn." To apply this quote in my classroom, I have to devote as much class-time as possible for my students to engage in meaningful interactions by using the TL. According to Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001), language learners who participate in group activities are able to improve their linguistic knowledge even without explicit intervention from the teacher or any other expert in the TL. In addition, Ellis (2012) includes studies in which researchers illustrate the effectiveness of making students participate in small group work and how such participation helps develop students' proficiency in the TL. For example, Long and Porter (1985) report that, "small group work

increases language production, improves the quality of the language, creates a positive classroom environment, and motivates students” (as cited in Ellis, 2012, p. 185). Furthermore, Ohta (2001) presents another advantage of making students work in groups. The researcher investigated how beginner learners of Japanese assist each other when working in small groups. Ohta reports that when learners spoke, they produced many errors because of their low proficiency in the TL; however, their peers were able to capture those errors and notify the speaker about them because they were under less stress than their speaking partners were (as cited in Ellis, 2012).

Additionally, students will learn less effectively if I am the only person who uses the TL in class in a one-way delivery approach. The language classroom is the place where I must help my students to learn and not to show off how proficient I am in the TL. Therefore, providing as much class-time as possible for students to use the TL is the ideal way for them to learn. Language teachers know that learners, especially beginners, will face difficulty trying to produce meaningful and coherent language due to their limited linguistic knowledge. However, when teachers implement communicative activities in their classrooms, they enable students to produce and to listen to sufficient amount of the TL, which help them build and support their linguistic knowledge. When students produce language, they are personally experiencing their weakness in their linguistic knowledge, which in turn pushes them to pay more attention to the input provided by their teachers or peers (Swain and Lapkin, 2001). Therefore, the majority of class-time must be dedicated to students’ interaction and not to one-way delivery from the teacher.

Moreover, using real-life contexts as the core of classroom activities helps students improve their communicative competence, which refers to their ability to communicate effectively and appropriately by using the TL in real-life contexts and in a real-time. In addition, a person who is characterized as competent in communication must have the ability to express

himself/herself clearly and interpret a message received in order to respond to it appropriately. Furthermore, to be an effective communicator, a person needs to have a certain level of understanding of the L2 linguistic system and to be aware about the cultural framework in which this L2 is used. Lee and VanPatten (2003) maintain that communicative skills continue to develop when people participate constantly in real-life communications. Therefore, it is important for L2 teachers to implement the communicative approach in their classrooms for the advantage of their students. Savignon (1998) reports that communicative competence consists of four parts:

- 1- “Grammatical competence” - knowledge of the rules of the TL.
- 2- “Sociolinguistic competence” - knowing the appropriateness and inappropriateness usage of the TL in different situations.
- 3- “Discourse competence” - the ability to produce language in a clear and “coherent” manner.
- 4- “Strategic competence” - the ability to access the stored linguistic knowledge and use it to interact and “negotiate meaning” (as cited in Lee and VanPatten, 2003, p. 53).

In addition, strategic competence includes strategies that one can use to convey meaning despite linguistic gaps. For example, when not knowing how to say *Car = Voiture* in French, speakers sometimes rely on their body language and pretend that they are driving a car.

Another crucial factor that facilitates second language acquisition (SLA) is providing/receiving appropriate input. Lee and VanPatten (2003) state that,

Input is to language acquisition what gas is to a car. An engine needs gas to run; without gas, the car would not move an inch. Likewise, input in language learning is what gets the "engine" of acquisition going. Without it, acquisition simply doesn't happen (p. 26).

Now we know that input plays a significant role in the process of SLA. However, what kind of input must teachers provide? Krashen (1982) presents the concept of “comprehensible input” as the key aspect that leads to SLA. He defined this concept as following: “input which is slightly beyond the learner's current level ( $i + 1$ ). When  $i$  represents the current level of a learner, ( $i + 1$ ) represents the stage which is slightly beyond the current level” (p. 21). In other words, teachers must modify input to make it understandable for learners and compatible to their current level of competence. Therefore, the following techniques can be used to simplify input for my students: slowing the rate of speech, using short and easy sentences, repeating frequently, using gestures and body language, using clear visuals, writing and drawing on the board, and making comprehension checks. Larsen-Freeman (1985) states that “input to nonnative speakers is shorter and less complicated and is produced at a shorter rate than speech between adult native speakers...” (p. 436).

Input can be in the form of authentic texts (e.g., written, video, audio, with or without images). Authentic texts are defined as “those written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group” (Shrum and Glisan, 2010, p. 85). Language teachers use authentic materials for instruction because they hold the language as it is spoken by fluent speakers of that language and they reflect the cultural framework in which the TL exists. Authentic texts must be chosen carefully after putting in consideration the current proficiency level of students so that they can fulfill the pedagogical goal and push learners forward in the process of learning the TL. According to Shrum and Glisan (2010), “teachers should remember to choose authentic texts that are age- and level-appropriate and to edit the task, not the text” (p. 196). For example, it is wise to ask low-proficiency level students to identify the main ideas instead of searching for specific details,

when an authentic reading text (such as a newspaper) is presented. This situation represents the task editing and not the text. Meanwhile, other researchers argue that it is fine to simplify an authentic text and make it appropriate to beginner learners. Language learners can benefit from the implementation of authentic materials in language classroom if these materials are modified and made adequate to their proficiency level (Guariento and Morley, 2001). Therefore, students are highly urged to practice their language learning on their own by using appropriate authentic materials even outside the classroom to maximize the amount of their exposure to the TL.

Furthermore, as a teacher I will work on creating an ideal classroom atmosphere in which all students feel safe, free, and motivated to express themselves and their opinions by using the TL. However, the most challenging issue that I will face is how to overcome the reluctant character that overwhelms Middle Eastern students. The majority of students tend to keep quiet instead of participating in class discussions, due to the amount of pressure these students feel when they are using their L2. For instance, Hamouda (2013) observed that Saudi students are hesitant to participate in language classes not only because of their low proficiency level in the TL but also because of the following factors: "shyness, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, and fear of losing face in front of others" (pp. 23-29). Hesitant students avoid speaking in front of class because they fear making mistakes that may cause other students to make fun of them, not knowing that mistakes are part of the learning process in FL/L2 classrooms. Freire (2005) states "humility helps us to understand this obvious truth: No one knows it all; no one is ignorant of everything. We all know something; we are all ignorant of something" (p. 72). When I first read this quote, I thought that it is a good thing for a teacher to say when opening a new course or to put on the syllabus. It presents the process of language learning as a matter of assistance and collaboration not a matter of competition. It is not wise for some students to boast their privilege

over other students even if they do have this academic privilege. All people in the classroom, including the professor, are in the process of learning something new every day. Through cooperation, people can achieve their goals easily.

One strategy to solve the problem of hesitation is to have students write their thoughts first and then share them with others. Writing will provide students with a comfortable space and enough time to think about what they want to say. Macfarlane (2014) claims,

I even recommend that these students write out their thoughts on the assigned readings before coming to class. This gives them the opportunity to choose their words calmly and precisely. Upon arrival at the seminar, they will find that they have a “script” to remind them of exactly what they wished to say.

By using this strategy, I believe that students will gradually build their self-confidence, especially after convincing them that making mistakes and errors during the FL/L2 learning process is normal and that students will overcome these mistakes over time when they become more proficient in the TL.

Another important communicative activity that motivates shy students is *role-play* activities. In these types of activities, students feel as if they are participating in a sort of a pleasant game. Nofal (2012) describes role-play activities as “fun and motivating. Quiet students get the chance to express themselves in a more forthright way” (p. 80). Besides, much meaningful negotiation results from participating in such activities.

### **The role of grammar in FL/L2 classroom**

Before I joined the MSLT program, my only understanding of learning a language was to master its grammatical rules. Now, I realize that grammar instruction should be integrated into a lesson to serve in support of a communicative goal. For example, if students are required to



speaking about their family members in French, they will likely use *les adjectifs possessifs* (i.e., *mon, ma, mes*) which all mean the possessive adjective *my* in English. Therefore, as a teacher, I can provide a model by speaking about my own family and emphasizing the possessive adjectives that I use to refer to my father, mother, siblings, wife, etc. (*mon père, ma mère, mes frères et sœurs, mon épouse, etc.*). According to Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001), “Grammar instruction should be thought of as providing the tools that students need for communication, and explanations should be designed accordingly” (p. 37). Again, the focus must be on the communicative goal, and segments of grammar instruction can serve in favor of this communicative goal and not as an ultimate goal per se.

From my own experience learning a foreign language, I was mainly learning how the grammatical system of that language works and the assessment was mainly about testing me to see how accurately I can use these grammatical rules in isolated sentences and decontextualized exercises. There were no opportunities for me to use the TL in a real-life context. This approach didn't help me learn the TL. Learning only grammatical rules seems useless when it comes to face-to-face interaction with a fluent speaker of the TL. However, it doesn't mean that grammar instruction has no role in language classes at all. Its role becomes obvious when a communicative goal requires the knowledge of a specific linguistic form. Then this specific linguistic form becomes one important tool that helps students engage in effective communication. The main role of language teachers is to provide their students with the tools necessary to conduct meaningful interactions in the class (Vygotsky, 1978b).

Moreover, grammar can be taught communicatively. For example, instead of asking students to memorize long lists of verb conjugations in French, I can integrate those verbs in a text that has a communicative nature (e.g., a text that includes a daily routine and then I can keep

switching the subject to illustrate how the verb conjugation changes according to the new subject). Shrum and Glisan (2010) maintain, “When learners are presented with ready-made explanations of grammar by the teacher, they are denied the opportunity to explore and construct for themselves an understanding of the form” (p. 219).

In addition, it is very beneficial to provide students with comprehensible input with enhancement of grammatical features and to let them explore these features by themselves. Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001), suggest the notion “To input grammar.” They explained this notion as following “to allow students the opportunity to make form-meaning relationships. By having to attend to the meaning of a given structure and how it is used, students have the opportunity to process it at a deeper semantic level” (pp. 40-41). In other words, when delivering input that holds a specific linguistic form(s), I must give my students a chance to make form-meaning connections and to negotiate meaning in order to reach a full understanding of the received message. This will improve their abilities to understand how the language structure works.

Contextualizing grammar instruction is not the only manner of teaching grammar. Teachers sometimes have to teach grammar explicitly to meet their students’ needs and learning styles. In other words, some students are able to process and master linguistic features of a L2 when those features are presented implicitly and repeatedly in a given context. This is called language acquisition. However, other students prefer explicit grammar instruction due to their learning styles that drives them to pay close attention on how the structure of the L2 works. This is called language learning. According to Lynch (2017),

Some students are logical or linguistically-biased thinkers who respond well to structured presentation of new material. Logical-Mathematical and Verbal-Linguistic intelligence

learners are prime examples of those that would respond well to explicit grammar teaching in many cases.

Therefore, as a language teacher, I must be aware about my students' learning styles and preferences in order to adopt the best teaching methods that correspond with students' learning styles and meet all my students' needs.

Moreover, adult learners are capable to compare their L2 to their L1 and notice the similarities and differences between the structures of the two languages. Therefore, receiving explicit grammar instruction helps students build such comparisons and consequently facilitate their task of learning the new L2 structure. Moritz-Saladino (2017) states that, "explicit grammar instruction is useful for pointing out the particularities of a language." For example, Arabic L1 speakers do not need auxiliary verbs when saying *the girl is beautiful*. They will just say الفتاة جميلة . However, in French auxiliary verb is needed when saying the same phrase *La fille est belle*. These structural differences can be highlighted when providing explicit grammar instruction.

Additionally, time constraint can be another factor that pushes L2 teachers to deliver explicit grammar instruction. For example, if a particular grammatical form is part of a big communicative lesson, then teachers will more likely not dedicate a full class-time to teach that grammatical form in a communicative or contextualized manner. Teachers will rather present it quickly as one component that helps students reach a bigger communicative goal.

### **The use of technology in FL/L2 classroom**

Technology has entered the field of education on a large scale. Nowadays, the field of FL/L2 teaching benefits from technology because it provides very helpful tools, facilities, apps, and materials that facilitate the processes of teaching and learning. According to Martinez-Lage

and Herren (1998), using technology in language classrooms offers three benefits: first, technology saves more class-time for interaction between the teacher and the students because the students can practice some activities outside the classroom, which also means that exposure to the TL is expanded. Second, students don't have to rely mainly on the teacher to learn a language, but they can set their own learning environment. Third, teachers can use technology to integrate the most up-to-date and rich authentic materials in their instruction. Thus, technology helps language learners build autonomy when learning a FL/L2. Students themselves know what particular aspects of the TL they need improvement in, and they can set their learning sessions at the time they want and in the place they like.

However, the third benefit that Martinez and Herren brought is very sensitive. In other words, when relying on technology to find authentic materials and use them in class, I must be careful and consider the students' proficiency level in the TL. According to Lee and VanPatten (2003), "Language learners, especially beginners, need input that is simplified compared to the free-flowing language that native speakers may use with each other or what might appear on television or radio broadcasts, for instance" (p. 27). Exposing language learners to what I call *not carefully picked resources* can have damaging outcomes. This has two reasons: first, learners will be exposed to an excessive amount of high-level input and second, they will not get a chance to negotiate meaning because it is only a one-way delivery of language. Lightbown and Spada (2013) state that, "impersonal sources of language such as television and radio are not sufficient" (p. 28). The most effective factor in SLA is missing in this one-way delivery. This factor is "interaction," which makes language learners not only attend to the language but also using it in meaningful interactions. Long (1981) claims,

Negotiation for meaning, especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the [fluent speaker] or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways. (pp. 451-452)

Therefore, interactions that allow learners to produce output and listen to the input being produced by other speakers in meaningful negotiations are important for SLA to take place in a more efficient manner.

At its best, technology works as an input facilitator. In other words, instead of providing input only in an oral manner by the teacher, technology can be used to support the input visually, thus making it more comprehensible and understandable for students. It is like having two sources that deliver the same information, the teacher and technology. The teacher provides information in an oral manner and technology supports this information by visualizing it. "Data visualization refers to the use of tools for representing data in the form of chart, maps, tag clouds, animation, or any graphical means that make content easier to understand" (Baralt, Pennestri, and Selvandia, 2011, p. 12). Moreover, written texts as well as images also enhance oral input. Therefore, it is important and beneficial to present data in multiple ways. For example, it is useful to support a scripted text with charts and/or images. These visuals may present data in even better and easier manner. They support the notion of providing "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1982), in a clear and simplified way. In order to do that, teachers can rely on different clarification means such as using PowerPoint, pictures, audio clips, or video clips.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) are two fields that entered the world of FL/L2 learning due to the evolution of technology. They illustrate the integration of computers and mobile devices, with all the apps

that can be installed on them, in the process of language teaching and learning. However, as a language teacher who believes that personal interaction leads to SLA, I do worry that adopting CALL and MALL may be limited in their benefits to SLA because they do not provide human interaction. Nevertheless, Reeves and Nass (1996) maintain that certain interactions between humans and computers are very similar to real-life interactions. For example, if a computer program addresses a person in a courteous or a rude manner then this person will respond in the same manner (as cited in Blake, 2013).

An important benefit of integrating CALL or MALL in language learning is that they provide shy students with a safe environment to practice the TL. I mentioned earlier that students' shyness in the language classroom might be caused by their fear of producing mistakes in front of their classmates. Therefore, as a teacher, I must seek out alternatives for those students. I need to find a safe and encouraging environment for those students to get out of their shells and participate effectively in class. For instance, creating a sort of a classroom network such as a Facebook group and/or Blogs that allow me to initiate discussions, in the TL, about specific posts may serve as safe learning environments for shy students. According to Swaffar (1998) "Networked exchanges seem to help all individuals in language classes engage more frequently, with greater confidence, and with greater enthusiasm in the communicative process" (p. 1). By using computers or mobile devices as a means of interaction in the TL, those students are avoiding the stressful situation of producing language errors in front of other students. Thus, networked exchanges (i.e., online interaction) allow them to overcome the feeling of shyness and/or hesitation and learn the TL more effectively.

Meanwhile, taking a technology course in the MSLT program turned my attention to the importance of using technology in language classrooms. I learned how various technological

tools can fit with and support different language teaching theories and perspectives. For example, as a teacher who will mainly apply both Krashen's "*comprehensible input hypothesis*" and Long's "*interactional hypothesis*" in my teaching philosophy, it is quite easy for me, now, to find technological tools and apps that could fit with these two language teaching methodologies. Facebook, blogs, video games, and virtual realities can serve as language learning means that create spaces for verbal and written interactions through which students can express themselves and interpret the language that their counterparts produce in meaningful ways. Finally, the big evolution of the Internet and technological apps will give both the FL/L2 teachers and learners a great push forward with regard to their teaching and learning experiences respectively.

### **Conclusion**

My personal teaching philosophy is a reaction on the traditional language teaching approach followed in Iraq. This approach relies on the grammar-translation method with little or no classroom interactions between students, and poor use of technology in instruction. I strongly believe that students must learn a language in order to use it in real-life communications and not only to respond to final exam questions. Therefore, I focused in my personal teaching philosophy on adopting the communicative language teaching approach that mainly depends on the implementation of meaningful and interactive activities. Such activities that help students not only build their linguistic knowledge, but their cultural awareness as well. Moreover, these activities will lead to a more student-centered class and consequently increase students' production of the TL. Nevertheless, my intention is not to abandon grammar instruction forever, but to make it limited to serve as a supportive tool that helps achieving a communicative goal.

Input is another important aspect in my teaching philosophy. My role as a teacher is to provide appropriate input that suites students' current linguistic knowledge. Finally, my goal is

to integrate technology in my language classroom. Technological tools are considered effective means that maintain students' exposure to the TL, increase their interaction with native speakers or other learners of the TL, and help them learn the language on their own base.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TEACHING OBSERVATION

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is the teaching approach I want to use in my language classes. The MSLT program exposed me to the various strategies, techniques, concepts, and activities that comprise this teaching approach. To support the perspectives I have gained in my MSLT courses about the CLT approach and to obtain a wider view of how this teaching approach is actually applied in language classrooms, I conducted several classroom observations. My intent was to see how instructors implement the CLT in their classrooms, what classroom activities they use to implement it, and how students perform when a communicative activity is applied. To get a general overview of the CLT, I observed different teachers who teach different languages and different levels. Therefore, the following is a summary of observations conducted in French, English, Spanish, and Arabic language classrooms.

One class that I observed was an **intermediate-level French language class**. The reason I wanted to observe this class is that French is my major and I am planning to teach French as a foreign language in my country. The content of this class was of my interest. The instructor taught his students a grammatical rule in a communicative manner. In other words, he didn't want to teach "grammar for grammar's sake", but his intent was to teach "grammar in service of a communicative goal" (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparo, and Mandell, 2001). Since I experienced mainly a focus on grammatical rules during my study of French as a foreign language, this new teaching method (i.e., teaching grammar through communicative activities) showed me exactly what I wanted to learn.

The subject of the lesson was *passé composé* or the past tense in French. As an introduction to this subject, the teacher asked students, in the target language (TL), what they did during the weekend and students responded in the TL as well. When I was teaching French in my

country, I didn't think about starting friendly conversation with students that can serve as an introduction to the main lesson of the day.

Later on, the teacher presented a few rules of the *passé composé* by using PowerPoint slides. He explained the usage of the *passé composé*, using the TL for his explanations and examples. After that, the teacher presented the first activity. He asked students to sit in small groups and he provided them with photos of daily acts (i.e., waking up, taking a shower, eating breakfast, going to work, etc.). He asked students to arrange these photos in a logical order and then present yesterday's routine by using the past tense. During the activity, the teacher was circulating the room and observing students' performance. Comparing this communicative activity with the ones I used before (i.e., asking students to conjugate verbs without even using them in complete sentences or switching verbs from the present tense to the past tense in a list of unrelated sentences), I will say the communicative activity is much better since it allows students to practice the past tense by speaking about real-life activities. Also, it differs in terms of the cooperative nature that characterizes this activity. Students work together to finish the activity and provide feedback to each other which result in more TL being used. However, this activity had been stopped two times by the teacher because he forgot to present some important rules about the *passé composé*. To avoid the interruption of an activity, I suggest that the teacher prepare and follow a detailed lesson plan that includes all the activities that will happen in class, when and how to perform them, and when to finish them.

The next activity was to speak about a past event. The teacher asked students to sit in groups again and speak about what they did on their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. I liked how all the activities emphasized the usage of the past tense in French and how they were relevant to students' lives. However, a lot of English language was used in class. In this situation, I suggest that the teacher

must set strict rules about speaking only the TL. Since there was a teaching assistant in the class, this goal can be achieved easily by splitting the class in half and asking the teaching assistant to observe students' performance in one half while the teacher observes the students in the other half.

**Beginner-level Spanish** was another class that I observed. The reason I observed this class is to see how the CLT approach is applied with low-proficiency level students and to expand my understanding about how a grammatical feature is taught in a CLT class. The lesson was the past tense in Spanish. The instructor used an event that took place a day before class (the American election) as the centerpiece for the entire lesson. The most important things I observed in this class were that the teacher and students remained in the TL almost the entire class-time and multiple communicative activities were used to practice the past tense in Spanish.

The instructor started by asking students whether they voted in the election or not. All students responded in the TL. When some students respond "No," the instructor asked them "why?". This activity was used as a warm-up or an introductory activity to the lesson. Using warm-up activities draws students' attention to the subject that they will be focusing on during the lesson.

The instructor provided a small amount of lecturing. He presented, with PowerPoint slides, two verbs in Spanish *votar* (to vote) and *sufrir* (to suffer) and he showed the past tense of these verbs. After that, the instructor asked students to conduct an interview activity. He gave each student a handout that consists of several questions about the election and asked students to interview as many peers as possible. Interview activities are very useful. They make students effectively practice the TL and thus meet the communicative goal, because students must attend to the questions, understand them, and then provide answers. I liked how the instructor was

moving around class and interacting with students during the activity and providing more explanations about how to use the past tense in Spanish. Interview activities are considered good task-based activities since they require students to accomplish a task that is very similar to what they normally do in real life (participating in interpersonal exchange).

After finishing the first activity, the instructor presented another activity that fosters the use of the past tense in Spanish. He drew a timeline on the whiteboard and asked students to work in groups and search, by using their smartphones, for interesting events in the winning candidate's life and write them on a timeline. I liked this activity for many reasons. First: it helped students practice the past tense with a different subject. In the first activity, they were speaking about themselves, whereas in this activity they were speaking about a third person. This is especially good when we know that verbs in Spanish, as in French, conjugate differently according to the subject that they follow. Second, the use of technology was integrated in this activity. Students were using their smartphones and searching for information on the Internet. This shows how technology can support language teaching and learning in the classroom. Third, the activity encouraged students to interact and cooperate to accomplish the task.

Finally, to expand students' usage of the past tense in Spanish, the teacher asked students to sit in groups again and speak about what they did at past events such as *Thanksgiving*. This class observation helped me to understand better how a grammatical feature can be taught in a communicative and meaningful way. Also, it shows how choosing interesting topics keeps students engaged and motivated to learn and produce the TL.

My intention is to teach both French and English to college-level students in Iraq. Therefore, I observed a **beginner-level English class** where the instructor used the topic of *Cars* to evoke students' production of the TL in group-discussions. Before he presented the new topic,

the instructor started a short review session about a previous lesson to refresh students' memory. Review helps students recall their stored knowledge and stimulates students to produce the TL because they are speaking about a topic that they already learned in a previous lesson.

After the review, the instructor started speaking about the new topic (Cars). He spoke about his own experience with cars. Then, he asked students to read a text about different car features and to discuss, in groups, what they found interesting. After that, students shared their thoughts with the class. I liked this activity because it was like a three-in-one activity: reading comprehension, meaningful discussion (interaction), and presenting their thoughts to the whole class. However, I observed that the majority of students didn't participate effectively in the activity. They did read the text, but they didn't say much about it. My explanation of that is: perhaps students didn't feel that the topic matched their interest (all of them were international females), or perhaps they didn't have the background knowledge that may help them say something about it. Furthermore, there were many technical vocabulary items in the text that made it hard to understand for beginner learners. Therefore, I recommend that instructors ask students about interesting topics that they would like to speak about and design lesson plans around those topics. This strategy is especially beneficial in courses that do not have a textbook like the one I observed. Also, if I were the instructor, I would have chosen an easier text that better matched students' proficiency-level.

In the second activity, the instructor displayed a video clip about the Lexus Company building a drivable paper sedan, and then he asked students about their reaction to the video. Again, students didn't say very much. This situation confirmed my assumption (i.e., the topic wasn't of students' interest). Furthermore, the video was hard to understand because the speakers used a difficult English dialect. Novice-low students need "simplified input" so that they can

process the information and respond to it. The bottom line of this class-observation is: although the teacher did follow a CLT approach and he did stimulate students to produce language by using some prompts such as speaking about his own experience with cars and asking students questions like *what is your favorite car?*, *what car-color do you prefer?*, etc., students didn't participate effectively because the topic wasn't of their interest or they didn't have much background knowledge about cars. Therefore, choosing an appropriate topic helps the teacher building a successful lesson.

Arabic is difficult to teach and difficult to learn, due to the huge difference between Arabic and most other languages in the world. Therefore, I was curious to observe a **beginner-level Arabic class** to see how the CLT approach was applied there. At the beginning of class, the instructor started a conversation about the weather and the students were able to communicate and describe the weather of that day. Then, the instructor conducted a dictation quiz about weather vocabulary. She circulated around and provided feedback to students, praising those who performed well and promptly correcting other students' errors. Being close to students and building a positive classroom atmosphere help reduce students' anxiety and increase their willingness to learn the TL.

After the dictation quiz, the instructor announced the new topic "to do/to act." The instructor used PowerPoint slides to teach students some daily actions (e.g., to eat, to drink, to read, to write, to sleep, etc.). After this short lecture, the instructor asked students to work in groups on an information-gap activity. She provided one student in each group with a handout with pictures of people doing different actions. Students with the handout asked their peers about what people in the pictures were doing, and peers had to respond in complete phrases. Then students with the handout filled in boxes with missing information. The students were able to

perform actively in the activity. They were able to say the correct actions that people in the pictures were doing. However, I witnessed that some students struggled because of their lower proficiency level while other student had already finished their activity. With regards to this issue, I will put a student of higher proficiency level with another student of lower proficiency level. Then a “zone of proximal development” will be created, where students can help each other to finish a given task.

While some groups were still working on the first activity, the teacher presented the second activity. At this point, it would be better if all students finished the first activity before presenting the second one. It is better to move the class in an organized sequential order in which all students are working on the same activity at the same time. The second activity was another information-gap activity. In pairs, students were given two separate daily schedules with times for two different people. Students were required to fill the schedules by asking each other about what those people do at certain times or what time they do certain things, depending on what information is missing. This time, the instructor asked students to work with different peers, which I think is better because other students will have different background knowledge and different proficiency levels. More meaningful interaction exists in this activity, since all students were asking and responding to questions and then filling the missing information in the schedules.

At the end of class, I was surprised to conclude that a CLT approach allowed students to produce good amounts of the TL despite the fact that Arabic is a difficult language. Also, connecting classes’ topics and activities to real-life contexts motivated students and encouraged them to participate effectively during the entire class-time. The final observation is that the combination of CLT, a professional instructor who applies effective teaching methods, and

persistent participation of students in classroom activities will definitely result in learning the TL.

In conclusion, these observations helped me acquire many positive aspects of foreign language teaching and avoid the negative ones. They helped me to understand how teaching/learning a grammatical feature can take place through a communicative approach. Also, to keep students motivated, teachers need to choose topics that are attached to students' lives and of their interest.



## SELF-ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING STATEMENT

In this section, I will reflect on my own teaching experience after watching a video recording of my teaching at Utah State University. I will use the Self-Assessment of Teaching Statement (SATS) model designed by Dr. Spicer-Escalante (2015) to write this teaching analysis. I will highlight the negative and positive aspects in this teaching experience. Also, I will include the comments of my advisor Dr. DeJonge-Kannan and my classmate Tairon Kimura who both observed my teaching.

On September 28, 2016, I taught the lesson “Ordering Authentic Food in a Restaurant.” In my class, there were 23 students. All of them were novice-level learners of the target language (TL) and their first language (L1) was English. Most of the students were majoring in international studies or business. They wanted to learn the TL so that they could use it in their future careers.

Just like I did every time we began a new lesson, I sent students a list of the new vocabulary that they would be using during the lesson, along with a voice recording of the words. Before class, they familiarized themselves with these new words. Students find this pre-class work very helpful since it allows them to pay more attention to the communicative goal of the lesson, instead of making strong effort to learn the words’ meanings during the lesson. Therefore, students were familiar with food vocabulary before the class started.

The communicative goal was that students would be able to order authentic food (the three daily meals) in a restaurant by using the TL. Also, some students took the role of a server who takes the orders from the other students.

The duration of the class was 50 minutes. I started the lesson by introducing the topic “Ordering Authentic Food in a Restaurant.” I used PowerPoint slides to introduce the names of

the three daily meals in the TL and I used visuals to refer to the time of day when these three meals are eaten. Also, I used images to present the different types of authentic food that people normally eat in the target culture. The name of the food was written underneath each image. I pronounced all the food names twice. Then, I asked students to repeat after me for the third time.

After reviewing the names of the different types of food with the PowerPoint and after checking whether students had questions concerning them, I introduced the first activity. The goal of this activity was to further practice the food vocabulary. I created a PowerPoint slide that had pictures of the food that students reviewed at the beginning of the lesson. The students were divided into two teams and one by one from each team took turns to participate in the activity. I said a food name in the TL and the two students at the screen listened to the word and tried to find a picture that matches with the word on the screen. Each time, two different students came to the screen to participate in the activity. I made sure that all students took a turn. I believe that this activity worked well because it helped students to practice the food vocabulary more and to have fun at the same time. My advisor Dr. DeJonge-Kannan reported that this activity created a good mood in class because the teacher and students were laughing during the activity, while my classmate Tairon Kimura commented on this activity by saying “The game motivated the students to participate and learn the vocabulary.”

Then, I introduced another activity that reinforced the new vocabulary. This time, I provided the students with a handout that has pictures of different authentic foods (these pictures were similar to the ones that appeared on the PowerPoint but not the same ones). Also, there was a list of vocabulary at the bottom of the handout. The vocabulary list was numbered from 1-10. The students were required to first, work individually on matching a vocabulary item with its corresponding picture. They needed to write only the number of the vocabulary item below the

picture that matches with it. Then, I asked students to work in pairs and to check each other's answers. At the end of the activity, the class got back together and I used the document camera to go over the activity again so that all students get a chance to correct their wrong answers. During the activity, I circulated around the class to check on students' performance and to address any question they might have.

After practicing the food vocabulary in several manners (i.e., the vocabulary list with the voice recording sent ahead of time to students, the review of vocabulary in class with PowerPoint slides, and two activities that fostered acquisition of the vocabulary), it was time to focus on the main communicative goal (Ordering Authentic Food in a Restaurant). First, I introduced a slide with restaurant vocabulary in the TL. Again, I pronounced those vocabulary items and asked students to pronounce them after me. Then, I introduced another slide that consisted of a basic conversation, in the TL, between a waiter and a customer in a restaurant. After that, I introduced and explained the third activity which was a role-play activity. I asked students to sit in three big groups and to pretend that they are in a restaurant and want to order authentic food in the TL. One student from each group volunteered to be the waiter, while the rest of the students played the role of customers. A handout was distributed among students to serve as a menu. This menu had food images of the three daily meals and food names in the TL. Before students started the activity, I modeled it with three students. In other words, in front of class, three students played the role of customers and I played the role of a waiter taking their orders. We conducted the basic conversation of ordering food in the TL in front of other students so that they could see how to perform the activity. Such modeling replaced many sentences of explanation. After students ordered their breakfast from the menu in the TL, another student took the role of a waiter and asked the rest of the students what they wanted to eat for lunch, and again students

switched roles when ordering dinner. I believe this was a helpful activity since it had a clear communicative goal in which students can practice the TL in a meaningful manner and it reflected a real-life context (i.e., ordering food in a restaurant). Dr. DeJonge-Kannan observed that students tried their best to conduct the activity and they were laughing during the activity as a sign that they were enjoying themselves.

Finally, as a follow-up activity, I assigned the students homework for which they had to write, in the TL, what they like to eat for their three daily meals.

### **Reflecting on my teaching**

I think I displayed good teaching energy throughout the lesson. The lesson had a clear communicative goal and students were able to achieve that goal by the end of the lesson. Also, when I watched the video, I noticed that students were engaged and appeared motivated to participate. I think I did a good job remaining in the TL as much as possible. I emphasized the pronunciation of the vocabulary words and I gave students the opportunity to pronounce them. The implemented activities helped students learn the food vocabulary. I provided an opportunity for students to role-play ordering food in the TL. I noticed their excitement when practicing this activity since ordering food is something they may encounter in the TL and the target culture. Furthermore, I believe that I followed the lesson plan accurately without overlapping between the lesson sequence and I had a good control over the class. However, I witnessed some negative aspects while watching the video. For instance, I spent a lot of time introducing the vocabulary, whereas this time could have been used by students to produce the TL. I used the students' L1 (i.e., English) a few times, due to students' low proficiency level in the TL. Also, I noticed that some students struggled in terms of pronouncing some words in the TL. Finally, I should have

allotted more time for this lesson. I think a 50-minute class was not enough for this lesson to be fully mastered.

### **Observers' comments**

My advisor Dr. DeJonge-Kannan observed some positive aspects that occurred during the lesson. For instance, she observed that I carefully sequenced the activities for this lesson plan. The PowerPoint was well designed with clear images and the right amount of text. The handouts were “beautiful” with an appropriate quantity of vocabulary items on them. Also, she liked the way I emphasized gender differences by using natural context to help students distinguish between masculine and feminine words. In addition, she mentioned that my lesson plan was targeting an appropriate ACTFL Can-Do Statement. However, the observer had some suggestions that may improve this lesson, such as: instead of pronouncing food vocabulary and make students repeat after me, it would be more beneficial if I add a simple interactive conversation (e.g., I like eggs, do you like eggs as well?).

As far as my classmate Tairon Kimura, he liked my energy when teaching this lesson. He observed my intention to remain in the TL as much as possible and to emphasize the vocabulary pronunciations so that students can learn them accurately. He liked the activities that I designed and he said that they appeared very motivating for students. However, he noticed that there was a lot of English being used among students when performing the activities and this is one negative aspect that I need to treat by setting strict rules of using only the TL in class.

### **Conclusion**

It was very interesting and beneficial for me to video record my personal teaching and to analyze it later. This situation helped me compare between my lesson plan and what I actually did in class. After watching the video, I noticed the effectiveness of using the CLT approach in

my class. This teaching approach helped students to achieve the communicative goal of the lesson (i.e., ordering food in a restaurant). Moreover, using real-life activities facilitated students' task and kept them motivated during the lesson. However, I noticed that I need to improve myself in terms of maintaining in TL and to avoid using students' L1, since I noticed myself using students' L1 in few instances to interact with students due to their low proficiency level in the TL. Finally, I would like to thank my observers Dr. DeJonge-Kannan and Tairon Kimura for devoting time and effort to observe my class and provide me with precious feedback.

## RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

## LANGUAGE ARTIFACT

Oral Corrective Feedback in Second Language Acquisition



## ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In the communicative language teaching (CLT) class, all students are required to participate constantly in classroom activities in order to learn the target language (TL). During these activities, students are producing verbal and/or written forms of the TL. Since students are still in the process of learning the TL, especially low proficiency level students, they will be producing a lot of errors. These errors vary between pronunciation, lexical, or grammatical errors. If these errors are not corrected in an appropriate manner, students will continue producing them, thus becoming part of their linguistic system, because nobody is drawing their attention to these errors. In this paper, I will focus mainly on the oral corrective feedback techniques that serve as a supportive tool to facilitate students' oral production and thus develop their second language abilities.

One of my interests in this subject is in the reason for providing oral corrective feedback. Is our intention, as teachers, only to correct an error and move ahead or do we want students to think about the error that they produced, reflect on what they said, and try to self-detect their errors and correct them if possible? I mentioned in the last sentence *if possible* because self-correcting an error depends on the proficiency level of students (i.e., students with high proficiency levels in a language are more likely to find an error in their speech and self-correct it). Since my goal as a language teacher is to facilitate students' tasks to learn a second language (L2), it is my duty to adopt the most effective teaching strategies that help students achieve their goal. One of these strategies is providing effective oral corrective feedback. This issue leads me to this question: what are the most effective corrective feedback (CF) types that facilitate the process of learning/acquiring a L2?

Therefore, as a language teacher who wants to use the CLT approach in my class, and who wants to adopt the most effective teaching methodologies for the advantage of my students, my concern is to study and understand the best oral corrective feedback techniques. At the same time, I would like to insure that the communicative flow of my lessons is not interrupted when an oral corrective feedback technique is used to deal with students' errors.

The last part of this paper will explore the relation between oral corrective feedback and students' motivation. Part of human nature is an aversion to appearing incapable and weak. In addition, continual corrections based on speech patterns can cause feelings of anxiety and frustration. As language teachers, we know that one of the most important factors in facilitating students' acquisition of the TL is students' motivation, which tends to decrease when students feel anxious. Therefore, in this paper, I will explore scholars' literature that focused on oral corrective feedback techniques that support students' motivation and maintain their desire to learn the TL.

### **Effective types of oral corrective feedback**

In this section, I will present some of the most effective types of oral corrective feedback based on the studies and investigations conducted by researchers who are interested in this field. The term corrective feedback is generally defined as "the specific move that corrects a learner error" (Ellis, 2012, p. 135). My intention is to develop a wide understanding of these feedback techniques in order to apply them in my classroom.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) report that research in the field of corrective feedback started when Hendrickson framed the following questions in 1978:

1. "Should learners' errors be corrected?"
2. "When should learners' errors be corrected?"
3. "Which errors should be corrected?"
4. "Who should do the correction?"

5. "How should errors be corrected?" (p. 38).

Some studies show that *yes*, learners errors should be corrected, especially the ones that affect meaningful interaction (Martínez, 2006; Livingstone, 2015). As a language teacher, I strongly agree with this assumption. This leads us to questions 2-5 above. In order to achieve the best results from providing various corrective feedback strategies, language teachers need to be aware of the most effective corrective feedback techniques. These techniques draw students' attention to the errors in their utterances, help them self-correct these errors, and consequently acquire the correct forms and making them part of their existing knowledge.

A popular classification of corrective feedback types is based on explicit versus implicit. Explicit correction means feedback with direct indication that an error occurred in the learner's utterance, whereas implicit correction means feedback with no direct indication of the error (Yang, 2008). Implicit feedback is often given in the form of recasts (Long and Robinson, 1998), while explicit feedback is often delivered in the form of explicit correction or metalinguistic feedback (Carroll and Swain, 1993; Ellis, Loewen, and Erlam, 2006). Furthermore, Lyster and Ranta (1997) presented six types of corrective feedback strategies. Three are explicit strategies: "explicit correction, metalinguistic clue, and elicitation" and three are implicit strategies: "recasts, repetition, and clarification requests" (p. 139). For a detailed classification of the corrective feedback types, with examples, see Appendix 1, which is adapted from Sheen and Ellis (2011).

During the last two decades, many studies were conducted to compare the different corrective feedback strategies and to examine their effectiveness in correcting students' errors. In this section, I will highlight some of these studies and their findings. Fatemi and Harati (2014) compared two types of oral corrective feedback strategies: recasts (reformulating the student's

utterance and correcting the error), and prompts (drawing students' attention to errors in their utterances and making them self-correct these errors). Prompts include repetition, clarification requests, metalinguistic clue, and elicitation. The researchers examined the effectiveness of these two types of corrective feedback (recasts and prompts) in correcting the grammatical errors that occur in Iranian EFL speech. In their study, the researchers used two experimental groups and one control group. Recasts were used with the first experimental group, all types of prompts were used with the second experimental group, and the control group didn't receive any type of CF. The results revealed that both recasts and prompts helped students improve their grammatical accuracy, compared to the control group. Meanwhile, the group that received prompts outperformed the group that received recasts. The reason for this is that prompts didn't just draw students' attention to the grammatical error in their speech but encouraged students to self-repair their errors, thus focusing more on the correct grammatical structure and making it part of their internal knowledge.

The preceding findings were confirmed in a study conducted by Jafarigohar and Gharbavi (2014). The researchers' goal was to find whether recasts or prompts have a better effect on helping Iranian learners of English improve their grammatical knowledge. The participants were asked to produce relative clauses by using relative pronouns (which, whom, who, etc.) when describing pictures to each other. One experimental group received prompts as a corrective feedback strategy, while the second experimental group received recasts. The third group did not receive any corrective feedback. At the end of the study, students completed a post-test. The results show that the two experimental groups outperformed the control group in terms of grammatical achievement. However, the indicated grammatical achievement was higher in the group that received prompts compared to the group that received recasts.

To further emphasize the feasibility of prompts, Ebadi and Seidi (2014) conducted a quantitative study in which they investigated the comparative effectiveness of two types of oral corrective feedback, explicit prompts (metalinguistic clues) and implicit prompts (clarification requests), on helping Iranian EFL students learn the English present continuous tense. The participants in the study were divided into three groups.

The results showed that the two experimental groups that received the oral corrective feedback far outperformed the control group that didn't receive any sort of oral corrective feedback. In addition, the group that received metalinguistic clues outperformed the other group that received clarification requests. This study revealed that providing metalinguistic clues without correcting learners' errors is more helpful than only asking for clarification requests. Also, it is worth mentioning that these two types of CF rely on prompting learners to self-correct their errors.

In another study, Mollakhan, Rasouli, and Karbalaee (2013), also examined the role of recasts and prompts but with regards to vocabulary learning by Iranian EFL learners. The results confirmed that both experimental groups, where the first group received recasts and the second group received prompts, were able to improve their vocabulary acquisition, compared to the control group. These findings emphasize the usefulness of using recasts and prompts as CF because they facilitate L2 learning.

All the studies mentioned above demonstrate that recasts and prompts are effective CF strategies in terms of helping students overcome their linguistic mistakes. Also, they illustrate that prompts are the most effective correction strategies since they allow students to self-repair their errors.

## **CLT and CF**

As a language teacher, I believe that CLT and CF serve in favor of each other. In other words, the more language students produce in communicative activities the more errors will exist, and consequently, the more CF is needed. On the other hand, persistent participation in communicative activities will definitely improve students' proficiency levels and ultimately decrease the number of errors they produce, especially with the help of effective CF strategies provided by the teacher.

The classroom environment that we create must be one that acknowledges that mistakes do happen and that they have a very important place in the learning process. If the feedback we give to the students is too sharp or perhaps too strong, then it is possible that the students will 'shut down' and not be willing to participate in the future. Meanwhile, I believe that all students in L2 classrooms come with different levels of affective filters, which refers to a mental state that affects students' uptake and thus second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982). Providing inappropriate CF increases students' anxiety, thus raising their affective filters. According to Elsaghayer (2014), "corrective feedback can induce language anxiety, affecting students' self-esteem and motivation in a negative manner" (p. 76). Therefore, this must be avoided at all costs, which is within teachers' power because they have control over what types of corrective feedback they employ, how it is delivered, and what error-types should be corrected. Some researchers indicate that not all students' errors must be corrected but only the ones that affect the meaning of a message. According to Martinez (2006),

Teachers should correct errors which interrupt the interaction.... In the same way, teachers should also encourage students to take risks and make errors if necessary so as to

develop their learning steps which in turn is the main goal of language teaching and learning. (p. 6)

In other words, students should be encouraged to use the TL without fear of producing mistakes. Students and teachers need to accept that mistakes are a normal part of the learning process. Consequently, teachers are not required to correct every single error. If communication is still going smoothly despite small errors here and there that have no effect on the general meaning and the message is still clear, then teachers should not interrupt.

Teachers know that maintaining meaningful interaction with students or between students themselves is the ideal path for SLA to take place. However, providing continuous CF to every single student's error during a communicative activity will interrupt the flow of communication while the main goal is precisely to maintain this flow. Therefore, it is wise to learn about CF strategies that impose meaningful interactions between the students and the teacher or between students. I believe that the continuous use of these CF strategies by the teacher will eventually enable students to use these strategies when interacting among themselves. According to Ellis (2012), "corrective feedback can be didactic (i.e., directed purely at linguistic correctness) and communicative (i.e., directed at resolving a communication problem). In other words, CF can involve both a 'negotiation of form' and a 'negotiation of meaning'" (p. 139). In both cases, the TL is used in an expanded manner.

Obviously, the nature of prompts as CF allows language learners to pay attention to their errors and correct them in the context of meaningful negotiation with the teacher or with a peer. Rassaei and Moinzadeh (2010) conducted an interesting study comparing three types of CF: metalinguistic feedback, recasts, and clarification requests. The aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of using these correction techniques on the acquisition of English

wh-question forms by Iranian EFL students. A pretest was conducted at the beginning of the study, an early post-test was conducted at the end of the study, and a delayed post-test was conducted 10 days after the first post-test. The results revealed that the metalinguistic feedback group outperformed the groups that received the other feedback techniques; that is, the students who experienced metalinguistic feedback earned the best results in the early post-test. This confirms that the metalinguistic feedback, which involves negotiation between the teacher and the learner when an error is produced, is effective in helping students acquire the target linguistic feature. However, other interesting findings of this study were that the clarification requests technique, which is another prompting technique, did not effectively help the students acquire the wh-questions from. The researchers attributed that to the fact that the direct indication that an error has occurred is very low in this technique. Another interesting finding was that the recast strategy showed effectiveness in terms of making students memorize the wh-questions forms in the delayed post-test, but the researchers did not explain the reason for this phenomenon. What I derive from this study is that in order to help students acquire linguistic features, teachers need to use CF strategies that are explicit in nature (i.e., they clearly indicate that an error exists in students' utterances) and leave the students to self-correct their errors. "Corrective feedback has a positive effect on improving students' oral accuracy, especially those corrective feedback types that encourage learners to self-correct their errors" (Chu, 2011, p. 458).

The most important thing for teachers is that we have to believe in our students. We should not assume that they are unable to correct their errors and must rely on us for correction. Teachers need to be patient and provide enough time for students to contemplate and correct their errors. Sometimes, a contribution from a teacher might be above a student's proficiency level, which pushes that student either to show some nonverbal expressions indicating that he/she



did not understand what the teacher said or to respond wrongly to the teacher's message. In this case, the teacher needs to redesign the input and make it suitable to the student so that he/she can respond appropriately.

### **Feedback techniques and students anxiety**

The concept of anxiety has been explored in the field of SLA previously and is viewed as falling under the label of "affective filter", which forms part of Krashen's well-known 'Filter-Monitor Theory' (1982). Anxiety is a serious struggle for many L2 learners. When students are anxious, they hesitate to participate in classroom activities and thus are less likely to learn the TL. As stated by Horwitz, "Language anxiety is considered one of the most important factors influencing the success of language learning" (Horwitz, 2001, as cited in Sheen, 2008, p. 843). To reduce my students' anxiety in the L2 classroom, I must create an environment where my students know that it is ok to make a mistake. I must create a routine of interaction among students so they don't feel blindsided when called upon. In addition, I must continuously refine my oral corrective feedback techniques to ensure that I am doing all that I can to provide the students with the best learning environment possible.

### **CF and students' proficiency**

In this section, I will discuss two matters. The first one is: what would I do if students keep producing the same error even after being corrected several times? While the second matter is: how does students' proficiency level affect the selection of the oral corrective feedback technique?

With regard to the first matter (i.e., what would I do if students persist in producing the same error repeatedly?), my strategy to solve this problem is to reconsider my CF technique(s). For example, if I am mainly relying on recasts "the most favorite strategy for language teachers"

(Shrum and Glisan, 2010, p. 284), in correcting students' errors, then I need to use a more efficient technique because recasts are problematic by nature. In other words, recasts provide learners with readymade corrections and do not allow them to question their utterance and self-correct their errors. Moreover Han (2002) reports "when using recasts, learners are not sure whether teachers are echoing what they have said in order to be supportive or whether they are providing them with correction" (as cited in Shrum and Glisan, 2010, p. 286). Therefore, as mentioned in earlier sections, prompts are the most effective techniques since they provide language learners an opportunity to think about what they said and to self-correct their errors.

Additionally, it is important to make other students in class part of the error-correction process especially when a student is struggling to come up with a correct form or meaning. In order to do so, I can encourage peer-correction by turning students' errors to other students in class and ask to provide the correct form. Martinez (2006) highlights that peer-correction is another effective CF strategy. The author stresses that teachers should wait for another student to come up with a correct answer instead of immediately providing the correct form. By following this technique, I will be enforcing a student-centered class by demonstrating that the teacher is not the only source of knowledge and students can come up with a correction on their own. However, peer-correction must be closely observed by the teacher in order to assure the quality of those corrections.

On the other hand, students' abilities at a certain point of the learning process affect their capabilities of acquiring and mastering certain linguistic forms. In order to obtain better results from correcting students' errors, language teachers must be aware of what Krashen named the "natural order hypothesis" that states "we acquire (not learn) the parts of a language in a predictable order" (Krashen, 2013, p. 1). That is, language learners may acquire certain

grammatical features in early stages while other grammatical features are acquired in later stages. Therefore, no matter how much time and effort teachers dedicate on correcting students' errors that are related to the grammatical features acquired in later stages, students will keep producing them over and over again because the forms are simply outside their current linguistic abilities.

Using a specific oral corrective feedback technique highly depends on students' proficiency level in the TL. Beginner learners come with lower linguistic and cognitive skills. Therefore, it is unrealistic to ask them to correct their errors or to make peer-correction. At this point, I will more likely be correcting those students due to their low proficiency level. Kennedy (2010) conducted a study to investigate the types of CF used with learners of different proficiency levels. The results revealed that the teacher used CF with providing the correct form when correcting low-proficiency level learners because those learners do not have the required knowledge to self-correct their errors. Meanwhile, the teacher gave students of high-proficiency level the opportunity to correct their errors since it was believed that those students had the required knowledge to do the correction themselves (as cited in Rashti and Tous, 2016). Therefore, it is important for me as a teacher to gradually pass the task of error-correction to my students when they become capable to do the correction themselves.

### **CF and students' motivation**

The overuse of CF may have negative outcomes. If feedback is provided in a rude or careless manner, or perhaps the teacher's intentions were good but it was simply delivered in a manner ill-suited to the learner, the result can be damaging to the students' desire and motivation to learn the TL, especially if it is offered constantly by the teacher. In his study of how oral corrective feedback can emotionally affect EFL learners, Agudo (2013) maintains "corrective feedback may damage the learners' feelings and discourage the process of learning if used very

frequently” (p. 275). If handled appropriately, however, it has the potential to provide motivation, inspiration, and knowledge to help students learn the TL more effectively. It is all a matter of how the CF is delivered to the students.

As a teacher, I see my students as an important priority. It is my duty to create an environment in which they can learn the TL. In the end, if they succeed, I succeed; if they fail, I fail as a teacher. Since students’ motivation is one crucial factor that affects language learning, it is important for me as a teacher to consider every single aspect that may help my students stay motivated and willing to learn the TL. This leads me to Zoltan Dörnyei, one of the best-known L2 motivation researchers, who has developed what he calls the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009). This is a model which proposes a way to understand the many factors that influence learner motivation. This model consists of three key components which are: 1) The Ideal Self, 2) The Ought Self, and 3) Learning Experience (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2013). Let us first discuss the Ideal Self and the Ought Self.

Dörnyei’s Model relies heavily on contemporary psychological discussions of the “self” and an individual’s ability to visualize himself or herself. To put it simply, when we imagine ourselves in ideal situations, that vision can motivate us to put in the necessary effort to achieve that ideal. This is the Ideal Self component. When we visualize all the things that we wish we could do, we create an image of ourselves that we strive to attain. This image becomes a goal, which is a source of internal motivation. As teachers begin to reorient their thinking to understand that learners are motivated internally when they can see themselves successfully use the language, this will influence the way in which teachers intervene when perceiving student errors. Knowing that ideal self-thinking exists in many students’ minds pushes me to capitalize on it and strengthen it by encouraging students and telling them that they can do the task and

they are able to achieve their goals of learning the TL. One strategy that can be followed is: instead of correcting students' errors myself, I can motivate students with some supportive and encouraging phrases (e.g., you can do it, it is easy, you have done harder than this before, etc.). Even if they do not manage to correct the errors by themselves, then providing some encouraging and thanking phrases will show that their efforts are appreciated.

Another visualization technique that occurs subconsciously within all of us is part of the Ought Self. While similar to visualizations resulting from the Ideal Self, the Ought Self consists of images that we create when we consider the responsibilities and duties that we believe we must fulfill. This is also more typically associated with the images that we create of ourselves that align with the expectations that others have for us. Therefore, while the Ideal Self deals more with internal sources of motivation, the Ought Self is a product of external sources of motivation. One strategy to use in this situation is making students participate in competitive activities, in which each student feels responsible for helping his/her team to win. Encouraging peer feedback in such activities will be more beneficial than only feedback provided by the instructor. Also, competitive activities are often motivating for students.

Finally, there is the Learning Experience. This is the element of the motivational model that teachers have the most power to influence. The Learning Experience consists of all the elements from a learners' L2 learning environment which might inspire motivation or possibly demotivate, such as peer group, the personality of the teacher, the structure of the curriculum, the type of activities and materials used for L2 learning, etc. While factors outside of the classroom are entirely beyond the teacher's control, this experience is an element where a teacher who consciously desires to motivate his or her students can have a real impact.

## **Conclusion**

As a language teacher, my aim is to help my students learn the TL. My priorities in class are to apply the best language teaching techniques and create a classroom atmosphere where all students feel safe to produce the TL and maintain a positive attitude toward the class and its objectives. Therefore, I believe it is important to use CF techniques in certain situations, such as when an error is affecting the meaning of the interaction. Moreover, it is important to give students the opportunity to self-repair their errors by using prompts.

## LITERACY ARTIFACT

Using Facebook to Improve L2 Writing Skills

## USING FACEBOOK TO IMPROVE L2 WRITING SKILLS

Writing in a second language (L2) can be a difficult and frustrating task. When L2 learners are not fully proficient in the target language (TL), writing is even more challenging. To be a good writer in a L2, learners need to build their vocabulary, master the grammatical rules of the TL, and improve spelling. That is why L2 learners need intensive instruction and frequent feedback in their L2 writing classes. However, L2 writing teachers and learners face the constraint of limited class-time in traditional writing classes. This creates a need for expanding instruction and feedback to out-of-class in order to improve L2 writing skills.

The best way to expand class time is to use technology and the internet. One useful technological tool that sustains interactivity between the teacher and students or between students themselves is social networking. According to Zheng, Yim, and Warschauer (2017) “computer assisted language learning (CALL) studies have revealed that students are actively engaged in a wide range of digital literacy activities in out-of-school settings, such as emailing, chatting, gaming, and publishing” (p. 3). As an example of one of those digital literacy activities, the focus of this paper will be on the use of Facebook (FB) for L2 writing practice. Warawudhi (2016) defines Facebook as “the most popular social networking site. Founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, the site is free to members. Facebook offers instant messaging and photo sharing” (p. 935). In this paper, I will focus on the advantages and disadvantages of using FB in L2 writing classes. Also, I will explore its feasibility as a supportive instructional tool in L2 writing teachers’ hands.

### **1. Advantages of FB for L2 writing**

FB as a social network application provides the following features: it allows users to post entries such as texts, images, and videos on its virtual wall. Users can share, like, and comment



on each other's entries. Also, FB provides a translation service for texts. This feature helps users of different L1s to better understand a text and respond to it appropriately. In addition, FB provides a spell-check feature that helps users improve their writing by making it more accurate. The fact that FB is a free and easy-to-use application encourages language teachers to use it in their instruction.

FB offers advantages inside and outside class. Language teachers can be administrators of FB groups and invite their students to them. FB groups allow teachers and students to communicate and share class materials. With FB, teachers can also create "events" and share them with their students. The "creating event" feature allows teachers to announce the event title, time and date, location, and more information. In the following section, I will present the advantages of using FB in L2 writing classes based on the research literature.

### **1.1. Interactive feature of FB**

The most crucial factor in second language acquisition (SLA) is meaningful interaction (Long, 1996). Ideal interaction involves: receiving comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982) and producing comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) between the teacher and students or students themselves. FB as an interactive tool embeds these features especially when it comes to written interactions. FB gathers friends, family members, L1 speakers, and L2 learners on one social interactive platform. "Social media facilitates collaborative communication and the creation of multimodal texts, which can easily be shared in online affinity spaces where readers and writers from around the world interact" (Zheng, Yim, & Warschauer, 2017, p. 1). Therefore, it is advantageous to use FB as an instructional tool, especially in L2 writing classes due to its collaborative and interactive mode.

Additionally, FB helps writing teachers to bring their students together in one big discussion group before requiring them to write their drafts about a given topic or theme. This discussion group enables students to ask questions and receive multiple answers from their teacher and classmates. Furthermore, students can ask questions during the process of writing their drafts. Yunus and Salehi (2012) conducted a study to examine students' reactions to using "Facebook groups" to improve L2 writing. Forty-three undergraduate students who studied English as a second language (ESL) in the University of Kebangsaan -Malaysia participated in the study. The participants were required to share their ideas and participate in a FB group discussion before the actual task of writing. Results show that the group discussion on FB helped them learn new vocabulary words by reading their classmates posts and consequently being able to use these words in their own writing. The researchers also report that students experienced the effectiveness of the *spell-check* feature that FB provides in decreasing their writing errors. The use of the TL in meaningful interactions and the extensive feedback that users receive are important factors that help improving writing skills.

Moreover, Ahmed (2016) conducted a study to examine the feasibility of FB on improving students' grammatical knowledge and writing skills. The researcher chose two level-four English writing classes at the University of Qassim-Saudi Arabia to act as an experimental group and a control group. The experimental groups used FB to discuss grammatical rules and post their essays, while the control group studied writing in a traditional classroom. The study lasted for 3 months. A pre-test was given to all students to determine their current grammatical knowledge in English and their writing abilities. Each week during the study, students in both groups were required to write on a different topic. At the end of the study, a post-test was given to students to examine the effectiveness of studying writing in the two different settings. The

post-test results reveal that the highly collaborative environment of FB helped students improve their grammatical knowledge and writing skills more than the traditional classroom. FB provided an opportunity for learners to interact with the teacher and other students, to ask questions about language structure, and to post comments and give/receive feedback on each other's writing.

The previous studies show that FB provides flexibility in terms of time. In other words, learners can ask questions whenever they want and receive immediate or delayed responses. In addition, when students post their questions or essays, they can be seen by many people (i.e., teacher and peers) at the same time, resulting in more feedback being received. On the other hand, students in traditional classrooms face constraints such as limited class-time or large number of students in class. Such constraints may result in not all students' questions and concerns being addressed by the teachers or other students.

### **1.2. Communicating with L1 users**

Direct interaction with L1 users helps improve students' language abilities, since they are engaged in authentic language exchange. However, not all L2 learners get the opportunity to conduct face-to-face interactions with L1 users. Therefore, L2 students may resort to social networks such as FB to experience the benefits of interacting with L1 users of the TL. "Writing via social media can provide opportunities for L2 learners to communicate with native English speakers and practice their written language in authentic and motivating ways" (Zheng, Yim, and Warschauer, 2017, p. 1). Similarly, Ahmed and Daud (2011) report that, Arabic L2 learners improved their writing skills by interacting with L1 speakers of Arabic via FB. Participating in written interactions with L1 users allows L2 learners to discover new vocabulary and language structure and consequently develop their linguistic abilities in their writing assignments.

It is true that a language embeds the culture of the people using it. Therefore, when interacting with L1 users, students are not only exposed to the TL but to the target culture as well. Alhammody (2014) reports that the ability to interact with L1 speakers of English via FB was very motivating for Iraqi ESL learners since they improved their writing skills and learned more about the target culture as well. Improving sociocultural awareness is important for L2 learners. People with high cultural awareness are more capable to conduct successful communications.

### **1.3. Expanding exposure to TL**

It has been argued that frequent and sustained exposure to the TL leads to vocabulary acquisition (Nation, 1990 and Meara, 1997, as cited in Gu, 2003). Moreover, Huckin and Coady (1999) report that “vocabulary acquisition depends on multiple exposures to a word in different contexts” (p. 185). It is important for L2 learners to develop their vocabulary knowledge. Having good vocabulary knowledge helps L2 learners to employ it in their different writings. Therefore, it is wise for L2 writing teachers to search for sources that may improve their learners’ vocabulary knowledge in a L2.

The use of technology in general and FB in particular expands L2 learners’ exposure to the TL, since technological tools are not limited to school time, but they are part of our daily lives. Sim and Pop (2014) conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of using FB on English vocabulary acquisition. Their study included 127 participants who studied economics at the University of Oradea-Romania. Those participants were taking an English class to study American and British economics vocabulary. All participants took a pre-test to determine their economics vocabulary knowledge in English. Then, the researchers divided the participants into two groups. The experimental groups (70 students) received their class materials via FB and they

continuously interacted with each other and the teacher in their FB group. The control group attended traditional classroom, where they had to read and translate economics texts. The study lasted for one semester. At the end of the semester, the researcher gave students a post-test to measure their improvement in economics vocabulary in English. The results show that both groups improved, with the experimental group slightly outperforming the control group due to the permanent exposure to class materials and constant interaction with the teacher and classmates on FB. Sim and Pop conclude that FB improved L2 learners' vocabulary knowledge.

Furthermore, I have a personal experience with learning words in L2 when interacting via FB. For example, when being exposed to different contexts on FB, I incidentally learned the past tense of certain verbs that I didn't know or wasn't sure about. Consequently, I will be able to use those forms in future writing.

In addition, Rickerson and Hilton (2006) maintain that "success in language learning depends on three things: time on task, motivation, and frequency or intensity of learning sessions" (p. 145). I believe that FB can provide the previous factors especially when it comes to writing. Using FB increases the time that students spend on their writing assignments, since they can use it outside of class. FB breaks the traditional and lonely way of writing (i.e., using a pen and paper) and offers a motivational, collaborative, and intense writing session that may result in a better writing. "Your writing will go best when you alternate the solitary times with times of companionship and sharing. Not only will you enjoy yourself more, but your finished products will come out better" (Weinstein, 2012, pp. 7-8).

#### **1.4. Motivational writing environment**

FB is a motivational environment for writing classes. It allows teachers to post different writing topics or themes on its wall. These topics and themes may be in the form of a printed text, an image, or a video.

Posting videos were very interesting and motivating for students because they were not allowed to be used during face to face instruction due to the limited time. They allowed students to comment, answer questions and post their own videos as well.

(ElsayyedSanad, 2016, p. 22)

The author also indicates that FB can encourage shy students to produce language and make them more engaged in class activities. In addition, FB provides the feature of registering with a nick name or an avatar that doesn't show the real identity of the user. This feature can motivate shy students since it allows them to work in a safer environment. However, in a FB group set by a teacher, it is fine to use avatars by shy students to hide their real identity from other students, but it is important to convey these identities to the teachers.

#### **1.5. Peer feedback**

Some students consider the teacher as the only source of knowledge, and they only ask teachers when they need explanations or feedback. However, other students, especially shy ones, can rely on their peers when they have questions. For example, less proficient students can seek help from more proficient students in a given task. Such situations offer what Vygotsky (1978a) described as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). In a L2 learning setting, students approach the ZPD by interacting with students of a higher proficiency to solve a given task in the TL until they master it and are able to perform it on their own. In writing classes, the use of FB provides a chance for work within the ZPD to take place between students due to its interactive

nature. Gamble and Wilkins (2014) report that students enjoyed the learning environment that FB provides. They wrote feedback on each other's works and they discussed the shared posts. Therefore, FB provides an alternative for teachers outside the classroom. Students can ask their more proficient peers about various aspects in their writing, such as formulating phrases and sentences, using vocabulary, and reading their drafts and posting feedback on them.

However, in writing classrooms, teachers must highlight the importance of peer feedback for students' progress. Teachers need to explain that collaborative writing improves students' work, since two or more brainstorming, as a pre-writing activity, is better than one. Weinstein (2012) proposed the notion of having a "sounding board" (p. 29). This sounding board can be a classmate or a friend who can brainstorm, review, and edit learners' work. Meeting with a sounding board does not have to be in person. FB can be an alternative for physical meetings. Shih (2011) reports that peer feedback on FB improved students' writing skills, made them more engaged in the writing class, and caused greater willingness to interact with classmates. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to implement FB in their writing classes and ask their students to interact and share their thoughts on each other's writing. However, teachers need to highlight what aspects of writing students need to focus on (content, structure or both). They can use the "like" feature that FB provides when students write good feedback as an encouragement for them to keep doing that.

## **2. Disadvantages**

In the previous section, the advantageous of using FB in writing classes were presented. Despite the many advantages, the use of FB in L2 writing classes still has some drawbacks. These drawbacks are summarized in the following sections.

### **2.1. Distraction of other apps**

FB is a broad social network tool. It was developed for users to conduct social interactions and have fun. However, when implementing FB in L2 writing classes, teachers need to set some strict rules of its use. For example, they could ask students to create a different FB account, separate from the one that they use for fun. In addition, writing teachers can set a specific time of day other than school time for all class to interact in a FB group created to discuss writing assignments. According to Yunus and Salehi (2012), “The main challenge that teachers need to take note of is the distractions by other features of FB such as FB chat, games, and other applications” (p. 95). This is particularly true in the Iraqi context because FB in Iraq is mainly used for entertainment and not for learning purposes. Therefore, Iraqi students may easily get distracted by the other features of FB during a learning session. However, setting a specific time during the day and with close observation by the teacher, this challenge can be handled.

### **2.2. Inappropriate input**

The social and informal nature of FB may enable linguistically inappropriate input and output. Derakhshan and Hasanabbasi (2015) claim that FB users tend to use informal language instead of academic language. For example, when communicating with L1 speakers of the TL they may use informal words or slang words, because this is normally what they use when they communicate with their native interlocutors. French people may use the word *une bagnole* instead of *une voiture* (*car* in English), in English people may use *wanna* instead of *want to* or *how r u?* instead of *how are you?* Therefore, social media such as FB might result in adopting a non-academic writing style. However, this issue can be treated when FB is used within a pedagogical framework designed and observed by the teacher.



### **2.3. Facebook for short entries**

FB in its everyday use is for limited writing and reading texts (e.g., short comments and posts), while L2 writing may encompass 2 or more paragraphs. Blake (2016) indicates that “Twitter or Facebook are for shorter text entries” (p. 135). In other words, it may be boring for L2 learners to read or write long texts on FB pages, compared to the short texts or even *emojis* (i.e., like, love, surprised, and sad) icons that they normally use to respond to FB posts. However, it is not impossible for teachers to offer a little training for their students to integrate this highly collaborative tool in their writing classes.

### **2.4. Inadequate Internet service**

In order to use FB in and outside the classroom, L2 learners need a reasonably reliable internet connection. However, not all students have adequate access to internet service. For example, the weakness of infrastructure and unpredictable electricity affect internet usage in Iraq (Alhammadany, 2011). These barriers potentially exist in many third-world countries and affect the implementation of technology in language classes.

### **2.5. Social and religious restrictions**

As being part of a conservative Islamic society in Iraq, I may face the situation of students not willing to interact with people they don't know or with classmates of other gender through social networking such as FB. To overcome this problem, I need to convince students that FB groups are set for educational purposes under my supervision and they will be terminated when the course ends. If students are still hesitant to participate in mixed gender groups then I can suggest they become part of an only female or only male FB group.

In Iraq, all people are free to practice their religious traditions and customs. It is not acceptable to criticize people based on their religious or ethnic affiliations. Therefore, as a

teacher I must clearly mention that interfering with people's freedoms and beliefs is prohibited throughout the course. All students' FB entries and contributions must be related to our course materials and objectives.

### **3. Facebook as instructional tool**

FB helps writing teachers to promptly address their students' needs, provide them with necessary feedback, and correct their writing errors. Also, FB provides a new instructional method that breaks the traditional mode of face-to-face classes and expands teachers' instruction and assessment to more than regular class-time.

The nature of the student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions is more multi-dimensional than in traditional writing assignments. For example, in many cases the traditional writing assignment is accompanied by one-time feedback and assessment from the instructor. In the Facebook environment, feedback can be delivered more dynamically. It can be more easily given and can be done so immediately. In addition, this type of more informal feedback often comes from both the instructor and other students, which further promotes the sense of collaboration that accompanies the social media environment. (Terantino and Graf, 2011, p. 47)

Furthermore, White (2009) conducted a study to investigate FB group discussions and teacher's feedback on improving students' writing abilities. Nine students from an ESL writing class at the University of Ritsumeikan-Japan participated in the study. The study lasted for 5 weeks. Each week, a question was posted on the FB wall and students needed to respond to all the questions. During the five weeks, the teacher instantly addressed each student entry individually. However, when highlighting common writing mistakes, the teacher posted a general feedback on the FB wall for all the students. The study's findings show that "grammar mistakes reduced by 2/3

during the five weeks and students' spelling improved" (p.29). Moreover, the teacher maintains that students gain advantage from the immediate feedback that they received during the study. FB group discussions provided the feature of receiving immediate feedback from the teacher, whereas in traditional classrooms, students need to wait until next class to get their teachers' feedback on their writing assignments. In other words, the frequent and rapid feedback that FB group discussion provides helped the teacher and the students to save time.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, studies show that the implementation of Facebook in L2 writing classes has many advantages. It increases student-teacher and student-student interaction. Students receive immediate feedback from their teachers and peers on their work. They are able to post written comments on their peers' entries. Studies show that using FB motivates and encourages students to participate effectively in discussions and improve their L2 writing skills. With regard to the disadvantages, L2 writing teachers can set some strict rules and closely observe students' use of FB in order to reach better outcomes of implementing this technological tool in their L2 writing classes. Finally, studies show that FB can expand teachers' instruction by extending it beyond the classroom regular time.

## CULTURE ARTIFACT

Teaching French Apologizing Strategies to Iraqi-Arabic Speakers

## TEACHING FRENCH APOLOGIZING STRATEGIES TO IRAQI-ARABIC SPEAKERS

My experience with foreign languages informs my understanding of effective practice. I was an English language learner in primary, middle, and secondary schools. In college, I became a French language learner. Later, I became a foreign language teacher of French in a private college in Iraq. Based on these experiences, I know that language teaching in Iraq remains focused on developing students' linguistic competence (knowledge of lexical, phonological, morphological, and grammatical aspects of a certain language), while ignoring the importance of developing their pragmatic competence, which refers to FL/L2 learners' ability to interpret and produce the intended meaning in order to reach and maintain a successful communication.

One reason of pragmatic failure among Iraqi EFL learners is the teaching approach as well as the syllabi adopted in our schools and universities are defective since their prime concern is accuracy of usage rather than appropriateness of use and as such they are of no help in raising the pragmatic awareness of the learners (Al-Hindawi, Mubarak, & Salam, 2014, p. 41).

Linguistic, cultural, and philosophical differences mean utterances such as apologies (or nuances like expressing regret or admitting fault) will differ from language to language, and also over time. The L2 teacher must be sensitive to these differences and encourage students to observe them and make cultural comparisons. It is also clear that cultural differences affect how language users produce and perceive different speech acts. Several variables make a culture distinct from other cultures in terms of choosing words and utterances to interact with people. These variables are: social status, social distance, age, and gender. For example, it is normal for parents to utter apologies to their children in western cultures, while we don't see Arabic parents apologizing to their children. Rizk (1997) claims that "Arabs do not apologize to children and they offer food as

compensation" (as cited in Abu Humei, 2013, p.148). This phenomenon illustrates one of the many differences between Western and Arabic cultures. These differences point to the importance of studying cultural variables of a foreign language (FL) and not just focusing on its linguistic aspects.

On the other hand, the linguistic and cultural similarities between learners' L1 and L2 may facilitate students' task in learning the L2. Therefore, in my paper, I will first focus on the speech act of apology as produced by Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers, supported by examples. Second, I will highlight the similarities and differences in the use of apologizing strategies by the two groups in different situations. Finally, I will explore the effect of explicit instruction on developing language learners' speech act of apology.

### **The objectives of the paper**

The first objective of this paper is to better understand the similarities and differences between Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers' and French L1 speakers' apologizing strategies in the L1. From this, we can develop approaches to teach the speech act of apology to Iraqi learners of French. According to *ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1999)*, students distinguish the features of the target language (TL) and culture by comparing it with their native culture and language (as cited in Shrum and Glisan, 2010). The second objective is to explore the benefits of explicit instruction in raising pragmatic awareness of French L2 learners in terms of perceiving and producing the speech act of apology. In sum, students must grasp the linguistic and cultural similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2 to become effective communicators.

## **The speech act of apology**

This section focuses on the definitions of the terms involved in the speech act of apology, and the different strategies used by Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers to perceive and produce the speech act of apology. According to Schmidt and Richard (1980), "*speech acts* are all the acts we perform through speaking, all the things we do when we speak and the interpretation and negotiation of speech acts are dependent on the discourse or context" (as cited in Kampusü, 2009, p. 16). Thus, all the utterances, body movements, gestures, emphasis and elongation of words, and negotiating of meaning are all aspects of speech acts. The main concern of this paper is the speech act of apology. Holmes (1990) defines "*apology* as a speech act addressed to B's face needs to remedy an offence for which A takes responsibility, and thus to restore the equilibrium between A and B" (as cited in Al-Sobh, 2013, p. 150). In other words, A admits an offence or mistake and offers an apology to B to maintain harmony and social relations. In the speech act of apology, person A is seen to be "the wrongdoer- the person who has committed the act warranting apology and who is supposed to apologize for what he/she has done," while person B is "the victim- the person who was harmed, whether psychologically, physically, or materially, by the act warranting apology" (Bataineh & Bataineh, 2008, p. 793). Soliman (2003) adds that certain factors affect the speech act of apology, such as the relationship between the wrongdoer and the victim (i.e., how close they are with each other), the severity of the deed requiring an apology, the social distance and status difference between the wrongdoer and the victim, age differences and gender differences between the interlocutors, and the place in which the speech act of apology occurs.

In the following section, I will illustrate the apologizing strategies used by Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers supported by translated examples. The Iraqi apologizing

strategies are derived from Muzhir and Raheem (2012), and the French apologizing strategies are presented in Bodapati (2009) based on Olshtain and Cohen (1983) classification, while all the examples are of my creation.

## 1. Iraqi-Arabic apologizing strategies

According to the findings of Muzhir and Raheem (2012), Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers use a variety of apologizing strategies. Below is a detailed description of these strategies, arranged sequentially, starting with the most and ending with the least frequently used strategy, supported by examples:

### 1.1. "Offer of compensation" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)

*Example 1: person A borrowed a pen from person B and he lost it.*

*Person A will say: إن شاء الله أ عوضك بقلم جديد*

*God willing, I will compensate you with a new pen.*

### 1.2. "Statement of remorse (regret)" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)

*Example 2: person A promised person B to be on time, but she came late.*

*Person A will say: والله اني حيل اسفة عيني*

*By Allah, I am very sorry my dear.*

### 1.3. "Offer of reparation" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)

*Example 3: person A borrowed an iPad from person B, and accidentally broke it.*

*Person A will say: إن شاء الله أصلحك الأي باد*

*God willing, I will fix the iPad.*

### 1.4. "A promise not to repeat offense" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)



*Example 4: person A borrowed a notebook from person B and she highlighted inside it some notes that she think they are important, but person B is angry because of this irresponsible act.*

*Person A will say: والله هالشي بعد ما يتكرر*

*God willing, this will not happen again.*

#### **1.5."Accounts or explanation" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)**

*Example 5: person B asked person A, who was studying for a difficult exam, to wake him up at 5:00pm but person A forgot.*

*Person A will say: جنت مشغول حيل بالدراسة وما انتبهت للوقت*

*I was very busy studying, and I didn't pay attention to the time.*

#### **1.6."Description of damage" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)**

*Examples 6: Person A borrowed a book from person B, and while he was reading it a few drops of tea fell on it.*

*Person A will say: شوية وكع جاي عالكتاب*

*A few drops of tea fell on the book.*

#### **1.7."Contextualization/justification" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)**

*Example 7: Person A asked person B to buy her headache pills from the pharmacy, but person B left work late in the evening and all the pharmacies were closed.*

*Person B will say: طلعت من الشغل متأخر ولكيت الصيدليات معزلة*

*I left work late, and all the pharmacies were closed.*

#### **1.8."Explicit assessment of responsibility" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)**

*Example 8: person A stepped on person B's foot.*

*Person A will say: طبعا ما جنت متقصد*

*Of course, I didn't do it on purpose.*

**1.9.**"Self-castigation or admitting self-responsibility of the offense" (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012)

*Example 9: both person A and person B were assigned to work on the same project but person A forgot to do her part.*

*Person A will say: اسفة, الصوج مني*

*Sorry, it's my fault.*

**2. French apologizing strategies**

People apologize for many reasons such as to show that they are sorry, to provide an explanation about why they committed an offense, and to offer a repair for the offense in order to maintain a good relationship with the offended person(s). Olshtain and Cohen (1983) list the possible strategies to make an apology by L1 speakers of four European languages, including French. These strategies are (as cited in Bodapati, 2009, p. 37):

**2.1.**"Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID)." This includes 3 subcategories- "expression of regret, offer of apology, and request for forgiveness" (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 10: Expression of regret: Je suis désolé(e)—I am sorry.*

*Offer of apology: Je m'excuse—I apologize.*

*Request for forgiveness: Je te prie de me pardonner—I beg you to forgive me.*

**2.2.**"Intensification of the apology" (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 11: Je suis tellement désolé(e)—I am so sorry.*

**2.3.**"Explanation or account of the situation" (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 12: Le bus était en retard—The bus was late.*

**2.4.**“Acknowledgement of Responsibility.” This includes 4 subcategories- “accepting the blame, expressing self-deficiency, acknowledging other person deserves apology, and expressing lack of intent” (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 13: Accepting the blame: C’est ma faute—It’s my fault.*

*Expressing self-deficiency: Je suis pressé(e).* En se heurtant à quelqu'un dans le bus. *I am in a rush.* When bumping into somebody in the bus.

*Acknowledging other person deserves apology: Vous avez raison (formal)*

*Tu as raison (informal)—Both mean You are right.*

*Expressing lack of intent: Je ne l’ai pas fais délibérément—I didn’t do it on purpose.*

**2.5.**“Need to apologize is rejected.” This includes 2 subcategories- “not accepting the blame and blaming the other person” (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 14: Not accepting the blame: Ce n’est pas ma faute—It’s not my fault.*

*Blaming the other person: C’est ta faute—It’s your fault.*

**2.6.**“Offer of repair” (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 15: Je vais réparer la montre—I will fix the watch.*

**2.7.**“Promise of forbearance” (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 16: Je ne le referai pas—I will not do it again*

**2.8.**“Concern for the hearer” (Olshtain and Cohen, 1983).

*Example 17: Est-ce que tu vas bien?—Are you okay?* When unintentionally hitting someone in a soccer game.

Currently, there is only one study (Muzhir and Raheem, 2012) that focuses on the speech act of apology as produced by Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers. On the other hand, Olshtain (1989) conducted a study to examine the similarities and differences between four languages (English, Canadian French, German, and Hebrew) with regard to the speech act of apology. Her results show that the most frequently used strategies were the *IFID* and *acceptance of responsibility* among these four languages (as cited in Bodapati, 2009). Moreover, Bodapati (2009) wrote a dissertation on the speech act of apology as produced by French L1 speakers. In her study, she elicited French L1 speakers' apologizing strategies with regard to situations that require an apology from a wrongdoer. In the following section, I will mainly focus on the findings of the two studies Bodapati (2009) and Muzhir and Raheem's (2012) to reach a better understanding of how French L1 speakers and Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers differ from each other in terms of apologizing.

### **3. Apologies perceived and produced by the two groups**

A comparison between the classifications of the speech act of apology in the two contexts shows that certain apologizing strategies exist in both contexts. These strategies are: *statement of remorse/regret, offer of reparation, promise not to repeat, account/explanation, and self-castigation*. However, the following strategies: *offer of compensation, description of damage, and contextualization/justification*, are used in the Iraqi context but not in the French context.

To further examine the similarities and differences between the apologizing strategies produced by speakers of the two languages, I will present the findings of the studies mentioned in the previous section. Also, I will compare and contrast these findings in order to achieve a broad understanding of apologies produced by the two groups.

### 3.1. The Iraqi-Arabic context

In the Iraqi context, gender plays a significant role in perceiving and producing the speech act of apology. Therefore, Muzhir and Raheem (2012) conducted a study to discover Iraqi males' and females' apologizing strategies when faced with three different situations that require apologizing to people of higher, equal, and lower status. Thirty participants were involved in the study (15 males and 15 females). The results of the study revealed that the *statement of remorse/regret* is the most commonly used strategy by the two groups when apologizing to people of different statuses, while *accounts/explanations* and *self-castigation* are the least-used strategies by Iraqis. After committing an offense, Iraqi people rarely admit that it is their fault, although it could be a very effective strategy in absorbing the victim's anger and maintaining solidarity and harmony between the wrongdoer and the offended. This phenomenon could be attributed to the fact that Iraqis may be considered "angry" and "stressed" due to the uncomfortable and unstable situation in which they have been living for a long time.

Moreover, the authors noticed that Iraqi females use *compensation* strategy more frequently than Iraqi males. On the other hand, Iraqi males use the *reparation* strategy more than females do. The authors attribute that to the tendency of men to adjust things rather than compensating for them. Also, Iraqi females use the strategy *promise not to repeat offense* more than males. They consider it a symbol of politeness. Furthermore, the authors notice that females tend to use sympathetic expressions more than males in order to be more amiable (see example: 2). Also, it is worth mentioning that Iraqis often include an oath (*Wallah*) or the phrase *Insha'Allah* which means *God's will* in their apologies as a reflection of Islamic identity.

Regarding social status differences, Muzhir and Raheem (2012) found that Iraqi males who are of higher status do not apologize directly to victims of lower status nor do they express

regret over the offense. On the other hand, females do use this strategy with victims of lower status. It is also found that Iraqi females tend to use the same apologizing strategies in addressing victims of all social statuses (e.g., they use *statement of remorse (regret)*, and *compensation* frequently with all statuses). Conversely, Iraqi males tend to use more apologizing strategies with higher status victims (e.g., *reparation*, *statement of remorse (regret)*, and *compensation*). In other words, status differences are less important for females than for males when offering an apology in the Iraqi context. Finally, the researchers report that Iraqi females pay more attention to children's feelings comparing to Iraqi males, thus they apologize to their children using one of the strategies above.

Additionally, Abu Humei (2013) reports that Iraqi females apologize more than Iraqi males and they also use more apologizing strategies. He attributes this to the fact that, in the Iraqi society, men experience more freedom in terms of acting and talking. Additionally, women are more discreet and polite than men due to religious and traditional factors. Thus, women tend to apologize more than men even if they aren't actually guilty. This shows that gender and status differences play a notable role when it comes to offering an apology in the Iraqi context.

### **3.2. The French context**

In francophone countries around the world, from Québec to Morocco to Tahiti and beyond, cultural and linguistic customs vary widely when it comes to apologies. However, in this section, I will mainly focus on the speech act of apology as produced by French L1 speakers living in France. Bodapati (2009) conducted a pilot study to confirm previous findings that state, *IFID* and *accepting responsibility* are the most-used apologizing strategies by French L1 speakers in France (Olshtain, 1989). In addition, the researcher reported other apologizing strategies used by French L1 speakers.

Seventy two participants (24 males and 48 females) responded to a questionnaire that included 20 situations in which they needed to offer an apology to people of higher, equal, or lower status. Seven participants were personal friends of the researcher, while the rest of the participants were random people who responded to the questionnaire via Facebook. It is worth mentioning that although the study didn't focus on gender differences in terms of producing the speech act of apology, the findings are still important since they illustrate how French L1 speakers apologies in different situations.

The overall findings of the study reveal that *IFID* and *accepting the responsibility* are the most frequently used strategies by French L1 speakers in France (i.e., previous findings were confirmed in this study). More interestingly, the results show that French L1 speakers may use more than one apologizing strategy in a single situation. For example, the researcher states that “*IFID, an intensifier, acknowledgment of responsibility, and forbearance* are all used to apologize to a teacher for not returning a book on time” (Bodapati, 2009, p. 39). Therefore, the social distance in this situation pushed the student to apologize in this way. On the other hand, the overall results show that *offer of repair, intensifying the apology, refusing to provide an apology, and promise not to repeat the offense* are the least frequently used strategies by French L1 speakers.

To better understand the similarities and differences between the Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and the French L1 speakers in terms of apologizing, I chose three situations that require an apology in Bodapati (2009) and another three situations in Muzhir and Raheem (2012). These situations are similar in their nature. That is, in the three situations picked from Bodapati (2009), French L1 speakers are required to offer an apology to a person of higher status (teacher), equal status (friend), and lower status (niece). Similarly, Iraqi participants are required to offer an

apology to a person of higher status (teacher), equal status (friend), and lower status (son) in Muzhir and Raheem (2012). The situations requiring an apology were picked carefully so that they resemble each other in terms of the relative severity of the offence. Table (1) illustrates the three compared situations.

Table 1: situations requiring an apology in Mizhir and Raheem (2012) and Bodapati (2009)

<b>Status</b>	<b>Mizhir and Raheem (2012) situations</b>	<b>Bodapati (2009) situations</b>
<b>Higher</b>	Accidentally damaging a book borrowed from a teacher.	Not showing up for an important exam.
<b>Equal</b>	Borrowing a friend's device and accidentally breaking it.	Damaging a friend's only copy of a CD.
<b>Lower</b>	Forgetting to bring a gift for your son in an occasion.	Not fulfilling a promise to a niece to help her learn how to ride the bike due to important work.

According to Bodapati's (2009) findings, with regard to the three situations above, French L1 speakers mostly used *providing an explanation* and *the IFID* to apologize to a person of higher status (teacher). On the other hand, *offer of repair*, *forbearance*, and *rejecting to apologize* are least commonly used in the same situation. However, the results show that *no apology* was also noticed in this situation.

When apologizing to a person of equal status (friend), the results show that French L1 speakers mostly used *offer of repair* and *IFID*, while *forbearance* and *rejecting to apologize* were least frequently used strategies.

Finally, French L1 speakers used *offer to repair*, *explanation*, and *IFID* when apologizing to a person of lower status (niece), while *no apology* was also noticed on a large scale in this



situation. By contrast, *intensifying the apology* and *forbearance* were the least frequently used in this situation.

### Comparing the Two Groups

This section will present a comparison between Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers in terms of the apology strategies used by the two groups when faced with situations that require them to apologize to people of higher, equal, and lower status. When comparing the findings of Muzhir and Raheem (2012) with those of Bodapati (2009), I noticed that both groups frequently use explicit apologies such as *statement of remorse/regret* and *IFID* in all three situations. However, Bodapati (2009) also illustrates that *admitting self-responsibility* of the offense was the second most used strategy in the French context, which differs from the Iraqi context, since Iraqis rarely express explicit self-responsibility about an offense. In addition, providing *explanations* is the least-used strategy among Iraqis, whereas *offer of repair*, *intensifiers*, *rejecting the blame*, and *promise not to repeat the offense* are the least-used strategies among French L1 speakers. Moreover, different from Iraqi females and French L1 speakers, Iraqi males do not use explicit apology (i.e., *IFID*) when apologizing to people of lower status, whereas the researchers observed instances in which Iraqi females and French L1 speakers used this strategy to offer an apology in this situation.

For Iraqi females, people's statuses do not play a significant role in the selection of an apology, since the researchers noticed that Iraqi females mainly use *statement of remorse* and *compensation* in the three situations. This phenomenon doesn't exist among Iraqi males who tend to use different apologizing strategies when they are addressing people of higher status (e.g., they use *reparation*, *statement of remorse*, and *compensation*). In the French context, the researcher noticed that *explanation* and *IFID* are mainly used when apologizing to someone of

higher status, *offer of repair* and *IFID* are mostly used in an equal situation, while *offer of repair*, *explanations*, and *IFID* are used when the interlocutor is of lower status.

Furthermore, it has been noticed by Bodapati (2009) that *no apology* was found several times in French L1 speakers' responses, especially in the higher status and lower status cases. This does make some sense for me in the lower status case, but it is very surprising to know that French L1 speakers sometimes do not apologize to people of higher status when conducting an offense. In the Iraqi context, it is considered very rude not to offer an apology to the teacher when missing an exam, for example.

Additionally, Iraqi females care about children's feelings and they use different apologizing strategies when they feel they have offended a child. In this case they resemble French L1 speakers, since the latter do offer apologies to their children.

Finally, in the Iraqi context, people may include *oaths* in their apologies by using God's name *Wallah* (see 1.2 and 1.4), and they use phrases such as *Insha'Allah* that literally means *God willing* (see 1.1 and 1.3). However, such expressions do not exist in the French context.

The following examples highlight some cultural differences between Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers with regard to offering an apology. I believe by helping my students understand these cultural differences, they will become more proficient communicators.

**Death:** Chevalier-Karfis (2017) provided examples of the types of apologies used when hearing bad news such as death. In this situation French people say: "Oh, quelle terrible nouvelle. Je suis désolé pour toi et ta famille" (Oh, what a terrible news. I'm sorry for you and your family) or they will say "Je suis sous le choc. Je vous présente toutes mes condoléances" (I am in shock. I offer you all of my condolences) (Chevalier-Karfis, 2017). Such types of apologies do not exist in the Iraqi context because it will sound like the person who is offering

the apology is the one who caused the death. However, in the same situation Iraqis will say something like ‘البقاء في حياتك’ which literally mean (The remaining is in your life) or ‘خاتمة الأحران إن شاء الله’ (May God make it the end of sadness).

**Hearing bad news:** French people also offer an apology when hearing bad news, such as somebody lost his job or had an accident. In these situations, French Entrée (n.d.) suggests this type of apology: “Je suis vraiment navré(e) d’apprendre cette triste nouvelle” (I’m really sorry to hear this sad news). Again French people show that they are sorry to hear the bad news, such an apology that doesn’t exist in the Iraqi context. Iraqis will say:

Such a big loss for them      همه الي خسروك

God willing, you will find a better job      تلكه وظيفة أحسن إن شاء الله

Thank God you’re safe      الحمد لله عالسلامة

### **Pragmatics instruction**

As I mentioned before, the main concern of many, if not all language teachers in Iraq is to focus on linguistic aspects of a given language, ignoring socio-pragmatic aspects. Thus, as a L2 speaker of French, my intention is to improve my pragmatic awareness concerning the TL. This will enable me to help my students develop their cultural awareness in parallel with teaching them linguistic aspects of the TL. LoCastro (2012) argues that the first concern of foreign language teachers and learners should be to achieve the improvement of pragmatic competence through instruction, especially when the TL is being taught far away from where it is actually used as a L1 and there are few opportunities for L2 learners to interact face-to-face with L1 speakers. Furthermore, LoCastro (2012) claims that although the internet can be a good source for students to be exposed to the TL and culture, they may still not be able to conduct successful communications after using it. Nevertheless, for language teachers in Iraq, the internet

seems to be the only available tool that can bring the TL and culture into class, especially knowing that it is difficult nowadays to send Iraqi students abroad. For example, we can search the internet for movies and TV programs where a particular speech act (e.g., the speech act of apology) is performed by L1 speakers, and then we can have our students conduct a role-play activity to see what they have learned. Additionally, the internet can provide face-to-face interaction between L1 and L2 speakers (e.g., using Skype).

The effect of explicit instruction on developing students' pragmatic competence was investigated in a study conducted by Rajabi, Azizifar, and Gowhary (2015). In this study, the researchers examined the role of explicit instruction in improving pragmatic competence of Iranian EFL learners in terms of conducting the speech act of apology. Seventy-three female Iranian EFL learners participated in the study. The participants were divided into two groups, an experimental group and a control group. A discourse completion test (DCT) was used as a pre-test. The DCT was in the form of a questionnaire that included four different situations requiring apologies. Results of the pre-test showed that both groups were at the same level of competence. After the questionnaire, both groups received regular instruction. In addition, the experimental group received special instruction concerning the speech act of apology, while the control group didn't receive any extra instruction. At the end of the term, another DCT was used as a post-test. The results revealed that the experimental group witnessed significant improvement in terms of choosing the appropriate apology type, while the control group didn't show any improvement in the post-test compared with their performance on the pre-test. Thus, the results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of explicit instruction on developing pragmatic competence of learners.

## **Conclusion**

Languages exist to facilitate communication between people, especially those who are from different backgrounds. Therefore, people learn languages to make their lives easier. However, learning or acquiring a language must encompass all aspects of that language (i.e., linguistic aspects and pragmatic aspects). Any lack in one of these aspects may result in communication failure. Therefore, this paper explored the speech act of apology as produced by Iraqi-Arabic L1 speakers and French L1 speakers accompanied with illustrative examples. Understanding the similarities and differences between the two groups will help teachers formulate appropriate instruction that facilitates students' tasks of approaching and mastering the speech act of apology in the two contexts. Researchers have shown that there are differences between the French and Iraqis in terms of producing apologies. In my classroom, I will emphasize pragmatic instruction to ensure that Iraqi students will fully perceive and master the speech acts as produced by French L1 speakers.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

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Enhancing Student-Centered Instruction

## ENHANCING STUDENT-CENTERED INSTRUCTION

During both my foreign language learning journeys (i.e., learning English in K-12 and French in college) and my foreign language teaching experience (i.e., teaching French at the college level), I wasn't aware what the terms *teacher-centered* and *student-centered* classrooms meant. However, since joining the MSLT program, I have learned those concepts as my eyes have been opened to a variety of perspectives concerning second language teaching and learning. As I have reflected on my learning and teaching journeys, I realize now that I experienced both learning and teaching a foreign language in what can only be called an "extreme" teacher-centered classroom. In a teacher-centered classroom, the teacher is the central figure of the class and the only source of knowledge. He/she speaks almost the entire class-time. Also, there are very few or sometimes no instances of student participation in such classrooms. In the MSLT program, I have learned that FL/L2 learning happens only when students participate in interactive activities and meaningful negotiation about real-life contexts. Therefore, my future goal is to transform my classroom into a more student-centered one, especially after having been exposed to all the techniques and benefits of this kind of foreign language classroom.

As an Iraqi person who is aiming to join the field of FL/L2 teaching as a professional teacher, it is useful for me to have a general idea about Iraqi students' perceptions concerning learning a foreign language at an Iraqi university. **Abid (2012)** conducted a study titled "*Investigating EFL Iraqi Learners' Beliefs about Learning English as a Foreign Language.*" The researcher investigated not only the learners' beliefs concerning learning English as a foreign language but also how these beliefs affect their learning process. The study involved 101 undergraduate students who were studying English as a foreign language at the University of Basra. The researcher's findings show that Iraqi learners bring numerous beliefs to the classroom



and that these beliefs may affect their learning of English. Some of these beliefs include using the translation method as a learning strategy and the necessity of using correct pronunciation and grammatical rules so that they will not feel embarrassed when using the target language (TL). The later could be seen as a potential cause of students' tendency to remain silent. Furthermore, the researcher illustrates that the traditional teaching methodologies followed by Iraqi teachers, focusing mainly on teaching grammar and vocabulary, negatively affect learners' perceptions of learning a language. This study is significant because it offers an overview of attitudes toward teaching and learning a foreign language in my country, Iraq.

Additionally, in his study "*An Exploration of English Language Teaching Pedagogy in Secondary Yemeni Education: A Case Study*," **Al-Sohbani (2013)** explores English language teaching pedagogy in Yemeni classrooms. The researcher concludes that the pedagogies followed by Yemeni teachers of English are characterized as a traditional approach, with a teacher-centered classroom, a focus on grammatical rules of the language, and no evidence of communicative language teaching (CLT). I include this article in this annotated bibliography because it presents another example of how foreign languages are mainly being taught in the Arabic world. Al-Sohbani explored the ineffectiveness of the teaching approach used by these Yemenis teachers in terms of helping students to use their L2 effectively. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the teacher's role in language classroom shift to that of a facilitator. Moreover, he advises that more classroom time be given for student-student or student-teacher interactions and more communicative activities be used for the advantage of students in order to facilitate their task of learning English (or any other foreign language).

To be a successful foreign language teacher, I have to be aware about the most effective language teaching strategies and methodologies. Clearly, in the last four decades the

communicative approach has been shown to be an effective approach for language teaching. Adopters of this approach emphasize the importance of applying communicative activities in language classrooms. Such activities allow students to interact by using the TL and consequently to serve in forming the class into a more student-centered one.

To better understand the communicative approach and its effectiveness in FL/L2 teaching and learning, I read the book “*The Communicative Classroom*” by **Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001)** which focuses on CLT. Based on their collective teaching experiences and their observations of many foreign language classrooms around the United States, the authors begin with the claim that “teacher-centered grammatical instruction” is still the predominant type of teaching in these classrooms. Therefore, the authors published this book for the purpose of making available a good source for language teachers who want to apply the CLT approach in their foreign language teaching. The authors provide a variety of examples and lesson plans that include communicative activities and how they can be applied in language classrooms. For me, reading this book is like getting a shortcut to an effective language teaching approach that leads to a more student-centered classroom.

Another book that reports the importance of the CLT and its role in facilitating the existence of a more student-centered classroom is “*Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*” by **Lee and VanPatten (2003)**. This book critiques the traditional approach of teaching a foreign language (i.e., the approach that mainly relies on teaching grammar and in which the teacher delivers knowledge and information without any significant role for students in the classroom). Therefore, Lee and VanPatten provide instruction for teachers to apply the communicative approach in their classrooms. They show that the best way to make FL/L2 learning happen is to encourage a student-centered classroom where students produce the TL in

“meaningful and real-life contexts.” Also, the authors emphasize the role of “comprehensible input” in FL/L2 classrooms and how it is the facilitator's role to modify and simplify input and make it appropriate to the learners' current levels.

Lowering students' anxiety and raising their motivational levels are important strategies that teachers must follow in order to promote an active student-centered classroom. Students' willingness to participate will be fostered only when they experience self-confidence and motivation. In their study “*Ten Commandments for motivating language learners: Results of an empirical study*,” **Dörnyei and Csizér (1998)** present a sort of pathway that second language teachers can use in order to keep their students motivated during the process of learning a L2. The researchers conducted a study that investigates the motivating strategies most frequently used by Hungarian English foreign language teachers and the effectiveness of these strategies on improving students' motivation. The outcome of this study shows that all the participants (teachers) most frequently use 10 motivational strategies that the author called “*The Ten Commandments*.” Some of these strategies are: creating a comfortable class environment, designing helpful and appropriate activities, building good relationships with the students, providing interesting materials and activities, encouraging autonomous learning, and improving the learners' cultural awareness (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998).

Communicative language teaching requires teachers to be creative, in the sense that teachers must develop lesson plans and activities that foster communication. For example, with the aid of technology, teachers can expand their students' exposure to the TL by finding supportive resources and creating out-of-class activities that students can do outside of class.

To learn how the creativity of the teacher can serve to promote a student-centered classroom, I read **Muldrow (2013)**, who presents a new language instruction approach called

*"Flipping the classroom."* The idea of the flipped classroom is that, with the aid of technological tools, the students will be exposed to "recorded lectures" before coming to class and discussing, under the supervision of their teacher, what they have learned from these lectures. The goal of this new language instruction approach is to encourage students' autonomous learning where students know that they are responsible for their own learning process. By designing this new language instruction approach, the teacher's role minimizes to only providing short periods of instruction and feedback when needed. Therefore, the majority of class-time is devoted to students' interactions. In my own teaching experience with novice low students, I have been using this technique to some extent. Before a lecture that includes new vocabulary, I send a vocabulary list with an audio clip that includes the pronunciation so that students can practice the words before coming to class. Class time is mainly devoted to performing interactive activities that involve the use of these vocabulary items and addressing students' needs as they work on communicative goals.

Another important thing about CLT is that classroom activities must be inspired by reality. In other words, they must be designed to help students use the TL for real-life communication. The *"Teacher's Handbook"* by **Shrum and Glisan (2010)** better enhanced my understanding of student-centered instruction based on meaningful communication. The main idea of this book is that language teaching and learning must be conducted in a contextualized approach. The teacher's role is to design activities that are derived from real-life contexts (e.g., ordering food, introducing a friend, or setting up an appointment, among other tasks), whereas the learners' role is to participate in these activities in order to improve both their linguistic competence and socio-cultural competence. By following these teaching and learning methods,

the classroom will directly move from teacher-centered to student-centered since the majority of class-time will be devoted to students' interactions.

Finally, knowing and following **NCSSFL and ACTFL** (2013) guidelines and *Can-Do-Statements* helps foreign language teachers in a student-centered classroom setting. They are considered significant references that help teachers measure their students' proficiency at different levels (novice, intermediate, and advanced), and language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Also, they help the teacher to design appropriate activities that correspond with learners' proficiency levels. These Can-Do-Statements are very important because as a future teacher who is planning to apply the communicative approach, following NCSSFL's and ACTFL's Can-Do-Statements will help me create activities for students that are meaningful for them.

### **Conclusion**

One of my future teaching goals is to transform my classroom to a more student-centered class. In order to achieve that goal, I will need to apply the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach. In this approach, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator, while students are encouraged to participate and to interact with the teacher or with other students in a meaningful way. Also, the teacher's role is to design activities that embed real-life contexts. Students are required to participate in such activities in order to learn the TL and the target culture.

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Foreign Language Teaching in Large Classes

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN LARGE CLASSES

As a novice foreign language teacher, my first concern is to adopt the most effective and practical language teaching methodologies and apply them in my classroom to facilitate students' learning of the second language (L2). As many studies show, the best way for students to develop their L2 is to be part of what are called “student-centered classrooms.” In such classrooms, students are required to constantly interact with the teacher and peers by using the target language (TL). The teacher’s role is to design activities (i.e., task-based, jigsaw, or information gap activities) to stimulate students' interactions. These activities must enable students to interact in a meaningful manner in real-life contexts.

However, in places such as Iraq, both teachers and students suffer from the large number of students in foreign language classrooms. In some courses, enrollments range between 80-100 students per class. Such large class sizes impede the teachers' and the learners' work. Therefore, this annotated bibliography highlights the most significant problems that undermine the process of L2 teaching and learning in large classes. Additionally, this annotated bibliography offers some effective strategies that teachers can follow to manage large classes, including the types of activities that teachers can implement in their classes and the types of technology that teachers and students can use in such classes.

The issue of teaching large classes has received considerable attention. Practical questions include: when is a class considered too large? who decides that a class is too large? for what reason is a class considered too large? etc. In her report “*Teaching English to large classes: Large classes and student learning*” **LoCastro (2001)** investigates what she calls “the main theoretical issue” (LoCastro, 2001, p. 493). That is, how large classes impact the process of learning compared to small classes. Since many language classes in Iraq consist of at least 50

students, it is important for me to understand the effect of the large number of students in class on the instructional process.

LoCastro highlights three factors that can affect the process of teaching and learning a language in large classes. First, large classes prevent students from participating in meaningful interactions that are important for language learning. For, example it is very hard for teachers to communicate with all the students in class due to the large number of students. A solution might be to make these interactions between students themselves, rather than between the teacher and students. However, this leads us to the second factor: pedagogical and management difficulties. It is difficult for teachers to manage and observe all students' performance during an activity. Moreover, it is challenging to address all students' needs and to provide feedback when a class is large. The last factor is the "sociocultural variable" (LoCastro, 2001), which refers to the fact that large classes will include students from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds. This may prevent the existence of a homogeneous class group which can interact easily in order to learn the TL. Reading this article made me aware about the instant challenges that arise when implementing the communicative approach in large classes.

To further investigate the challenges faced by foreign language teachers in large classes, I read the article titled "*Interaction and uptake in large foreign language classrooms*" by **Ekembe (2014)**. The author conducted a study that aimed to examine 1) the difficulties faced by EFL teachers when trying to engage their learners in interactive activities in large classes in Cameroon, and 2) the amount of achieved uptake by these students compared to another group of students being taught in a traditional teacher-centered class. By uptake, Ekembe means the extent to which students learn the linguistic form and make it part of their internal linguistic system.



The researcher conducted the study in a Cameroonian school in a rural area in Cameroon. Secondary school participants were selected as subjects for this study. The participants were divided into two groups. The first group had 84 students and received traditional instruction about English present continuous, whereas the other group had 78 students and studied the same linguistic form in a teacher-led interactional method, with focus on form. Three tests were designed by the researcher: a pre-test to show students' knowledge before the experiment, a post-test to assess students' uptake of the linguistic form after the study, and a delayed post-test to keep tracking students' uptake several weeks after the experiment. According to the researcher the "tests were of discrete point types made up of gap-filling tasks, sentence construction, and picture description of frequently occurring actions that reflected the learners' real life experiences: sleeping, running, walking, etc." (Ekembe, 2014, p. 244)

Results of the study revealed that the group that received traditional instruction outperformed the group that was taught in an interactive manner, with regard to learning the linguistic form and students' uptake. The author attributed the results to many factors: first, the social aspect of the interactive method reduced students' attention to the linguistic form. In other words, students were making a tremendous effort to produce language in front of their classmates, and were therefore not focusing so much on the linguistic form. Second, students' timidity caused anxiety and made them hesitant to speak because the interactive method was entirely new for them. Therefore, the amount of uptake was affected. This is true when students are surrounded by a large number of students. Third, real-life activities work better when a class consists of learners that have similar language abilities, and this situation is hard to achieve in large classes.

The author acknowledges that more time would have been needed to get students used to the new learning/teaching experience. Nevertheless, the interactive method did increase students' abilities to conduct real-life communications compared to their counterparts who were only trained to use the language in an academic setting (i.e., performing well in an exam). The study showed that the two teaching approaches can suit large foreign language classroom contexts but with different results with regard to students' uptake.

In order to study how to cope with large classes, **Nan (2014)** conducted a research called "*A Feasible Study on Cooperative Learning in Large Class College English Teaching.*" Nan states that it is hard to find an EFL classroom in China that has less than 45 students, and that large classes will not soon disappear in China due to the large number of students enrolled in Chinese universities every year. The author concludes that, foreign language teachers need to be creative with regard to their foreign language teaching methodologies and make them more effective. Specifically, Nan suggests the "cooperative learning method" as a potential solution for large Chinese foreign language classrooms.

Cooperative learning is defined as group learning activities organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. (Nan, 2014, p. 1862)

The author also indicates that this learning method will increase students' autonomy and help them build their own learning environment.

To explore the effectiveness of the cooperative learning approach with regard to learning English at the university level in China, the researcher acted as the English language teacher of two different classes at Guangxi University of Science and Technology. The first class was the

experimental group. This group consisted of 78 students from the financial management department. Students in this group were exposed to the cooperative learning approach in their EFL class. The second class was the control group. This group consisted of 98 students from the computer engineering department, whose EFL class followed the conventional teacher-centered method. The study lasted for one semester. At the beginning of the semester, there was a pre-test to determine students' English levels. The pre-test showed no significant differences between students in the two departments. At the end of the semester, students in both groups took a post-test to compare the two groups' achievement. Results of the test show that students in both groups did improve their English language abilities, however, the experimental group outperformed the control group.

Nan claims that the cooperative learning approach was effective in three areas: a) "it stimulated students' interest in English learning and improved students' comprehensive abilities", b) "it increased students' participation and made teaching more effective", and c) "it changed the teaching model from the traditional teacher-centered to the student-centered model" (Nan, 2014, pp. 1866-1867). Thus, it appears that the cooperative learning method turns the language classroom into a student-centered class where students share responsibility for learning and supporting each other. This study provides evidence of the effectiveness of a strategy that language teachers can use in large classes.

To better understand teachers' perceptions of applying the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in large classes in the Middle East, I read the article titled "*Investigation of the Application of Communicative Language Teaching in the English Language Classroom – A Case Study on Teachers' Attitudes in Turkey*", by **Coskun (2011)**. The author examined two Turkish EFL teachers' attitudes and practices with regard to implementing

a CLT approach in their English language classrooms. By “attitudes” the author means the teachers’ perceptions and beliefs concerning the CLT approach, whereas, “practices” means the teachers’ actual in-class teaching methods.

To measure the degree to which the teachers’ attitudes matched their actual in-class performance, the researcher designed an open-ended questionnaire. Both teachers were to describe their understanding of the CLT approach and their attitudes toward implementing it in their EFL classroom. Additionally, in-class observations were conducted to see the extent to which these two teachers applied the CLT approach in their teaching.

Results revealed that although the two teachers showed a good understanding of and a positive attitude toward the CLT approach when answering the questionnaire, neither of them actually implemented this approach in their EFL classrooms. In other words, there was a mismatch between the teachers’ attitudes toward the CLT approach and its implementation in their classrooms. Also, the results indicate that “classroom size (i.e., large number of students per class), the lack of time to prepare communicative materials, and traditional grammar based examinations” are the main factors that impact the integration of the CLT approach in these instructors’ teaching practices (Coskun, 2011, p. 19). In sum, although the two teachers do believe in the CLT approach as an effective method of language teaching, they didn’t use it in their classes due to the large class size, which they perceived as preventing them from effectively observing their students’ performance during a communicative activity and providing feedback when needed. Also, they cite time as a crucial factor. The teachers maintain that communicative activities are time consuming, in that planning for them and applying them in class requires a lot of time. However, I believe that applying even one communicative activity in class is much

better than focusing only on grammatical rules which don't give students the opportunity of practicing the TL in meaningful interactions.

Not far from Turkey, another study was conducted in Saudi Arabia to highlight the challenges that Saudi teachers who teach English in large classes face, and some of the strategies that these teachers use to tackle these issues. **Bahanshal (2013)** conducted a study entitled "*The Effect of Large Classes on English Teaching and Learning in Saudi Secondary Schools.*" The aim of the study was to investigate how large classes impact the processes of learning and teaching EFL in Saudi secondary schools and to provide practical strategies that teachers can use to approach the goal of teaching English effectively in large classes.

The researcher conducted the study in two secondary schools in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Six teachers (3 from each school) participated in the study. All six taught English to large classes, ranging from 35-48 students per class. The researcher interviewed the teachers and asked them about their experiences in teaching large classes, the challenges they face in these classes, and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges.

Based on these interviews, the researcher highlighted the following challenges that may hinder teaching and learning EFL in large Saudi secondary level classes: a) due to the large number of students per class, teachers are not able to correct all students' errors effectively; b) teachers are not able to provide effective assessment to measure their students' language proficiency levels; c) students appear unmotivated due to the limited support that they receive from their teachers, resulting from the large number of students in the classroom; and d) only a limited number of students seize the opportunity to participate in classroom activities and produce the TL. All these factors affect the classroom environment. I believe it is important to make all our students feel supported. Therefore, I often repeat to my students that I am ready and

available at any time to address learning issues in and out of class. However, having a large class does negatively affect my ability to do this well.

Moreover, the researcher indicates that although the challenges listed above may hinder the process of teaching and learning EFL, all six teachers agreed that teaching in large classes was an “enjoyable” experience for them. Facing these challenges encouraged them to be creative and to find strategies to overcome the problem. Some of the strategies that these teachers use are: a) setting solid and strict rules to manage the classroom; b) transforming to a more student-centered class by encouraging students’ participation and group work; and c) putting students into small groups to make the process of observing them and providing feedback much easier.

So far, I have highlighted some of the challenges that language teachers face when teaching in large classes. However, in their report “*Teaching Large Classes in China – English as a Foreign Language*” **Qiang and Ning (2011)** changed some of my perceptions by listing advantages of teaching large classes. The researchers maintain that the concept of large class differs from “context to context.” For example, they state that Lancaster project, a project conducted in the United Kingdom related to teaching in large classes, considers a class of 50 students as a large class, whereas, in China a large class may exceed 100 students per class. The later also occurs frequently in my home country, Iraq. The researchers state that teachers’ perceptions play a role in determining whether a class is considered small, average, or large. For example, if some teachers are used to teach in classes that consist of 100 students or more, they may consider a 40 student class a small class.

The researchers maintain that, “many language teachers hold a negative view on teaching English in large classes” (Qiang and Ning, 2011, p. 2). They describe many problems related to the issue of teaching and learning English in large classes. These problems are typically similar

to those presented in this annotated bibliography so far. The authors mention such challenges as “out of control”, “hard to organize class activities”, “impossible to communicate”, and “difficulty in addressing each student’s needs” (Qiang and Ning, 2011, p. 2).

However, Qiang and Ning (2011) report that despite all the challenges that confront teachers when teaching English to large classes, some advantages can also be identified. For example, they illustrate that teaching large classes enhances teachers’ creativity and adaptation, and pushes them to try new teaching methodologies. Also, the large number of students increases the number of ideas presented in class and potentially increases the amount of interaction between students. Finally, the large number of students encourages cooperative work (i.e., putting students in groups to tackle a given task or activity). From this investigation, I learned that when facing a challenge such as teaching a large class it is worth taking the risk of finding new teaching strategies that help teachers overcome the problem. For example, after a few classes it is easy for the teacher to tell that certain students are at higher level than their peers in class. Thus, it is wise, when doing cooperative work and group activities, to put at least one student of a higher proficiency level in each group so that s/he can help his/her peers throughout the activity.

In order to overcome the issue of large classes, the researchers provide some new strategies derived from other scholarly works. These new strategies are: a) building good relationships with students, b) moving around the class to observe students’ interactions and productions of the TL, c) asking students to provide peer feedback, and d) using technology in teaching and learning English (Qiang and Ning, 2011, pp. 4-6).

After exploring some new strategies in the previous section, with regard to language teaching in large classes, it is worthwhile to investigate the role of technology in such classes. In

this section, I would like to highlight the importance of using technology when teaching languages in large classes. **Jordan and Crofts (2012)** conducted a study to investigate the effectiveness of using “*ARS (Audience Response System) Clicker*” in this teaching context. The authors review several studies on the topic of using ARS Clicker when teaching a language. For example, Schmid (2008) states that ARS Clicker improves “interactivity” between students. Cardoso (2010) reports that ARS Clicker increases students’ “participations and motivational levels,” while Agbatogun (2011) illustrates that this technological tool supports students’ “communications” (as cited in Jordan and Crofts, 2012, p. 1).

Jordan and Crofts (2012) conducted their study in an ELC (English Language Center) in XJTLU University in China. The aim of their study is to understand teachers’ and students’ perceptions related to using ARS clickers in large English language classes and to investigate the problems that teachers and students faced when using this technological tool. Seven teachers and 258 students were selected as subjects for the study. The teachers and the students were asked to use the ARS clicker during the entire research period. After finishing the course, the teachers provided answers to an open-ended questionnaire, whereas the students were asked to respond to an online survey.

Findings of this study reveal that students’ interest and engagement in the lectures improved and the tool facilitated learning. However, some students responded that they did experience some difficulties trying to make their clickers work appropriately. From the teachers’ side, they also maintained that the tool was very useful in terms of increasing students’ interactions and it making them more engaged with the lectures. Additionally, more than half of the teachers stated that the tool helped them recognize areas of weaknesses in students’ learning and to work more on improving them. As for the problems detected by the teachers with regard



to using ARS clicker, they were similar to those mentioned by the students (i.e., technical problems). Finally, the researcher states that, the ARS clicker encouraged shy students to participate in classroom activities due to the tool's "anonymous nature" (Jordan and Crofts, 2012, p. 4).

To further examine the feasibility of using technology in language classes, I read the article "*Enhancing communication competence through free messaging apps in EFL classes*" by (Zhang, 2016). The intention of the author is to illustrate how "free messaging apps and smartphones" can develop students' communicative competence in a L2, especially in classes with a large number of unmotivated students. Also, the researcher suggested the use of "smartphones and messaging apps" for language learning to break the routine of using traditional class activities and to make all students in class engaged in the process of learning. "If the students are good at their smartphones it is reasonable that teachers can make great use of that potential to assist language learning" (Zhang, 2016, p. 2598). The author presents free messaging apps that are globally used such as "We-Chat, QQ, Whats App, Kakao Talk, and Tango." These apps could be very beneficial if used appropriately in a language learning setting because they allow students to communicate by text, audio, or video chatting.

Furthermore, the author presents many factors that make the use of "smartphones" very beneficial for L2 learning. The first factor is its "availability." Smartphones are available for many people and they use them on a daily bases. Also, they are not very expensive. The second factor is its "capability." Due to the communicative feature that smartphones provide, all students, including shy ones, are able to participate in the learning process in a more motivating environment. Also, the problem of large classes can be solved since using "smartphones" enables all students to participate at the same time in and outside the classroom. The third factor is its

“creativity.” That is, the continuous development of messaging apps addresses all learners’ needs. For example, some learners prefer text messaging, while others like video chatting.

### **Conclusion**

In this annotated bibliography, I reviewed many studies and research papers related to the issue of teaching/learning a foreign language in large classes, a situation that exists in my home country, Iraq. My intent was to better understand the challenges that foreign language teachers face when teaching large classes. Also, I noted several strategies presented in these works with regard to how to overcome the difficulties face foreign language teachers face when dealing with this type of teaching context. Finally, I learned about useful technological tools, such as ARS Clickers and smartphones’ apps that may help teachers and students to cope with the large number of students in their language classes.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Impact of Virtual Worlds Such as Second Life on  
Second Language Acquisition

## THE IMPACT OF VIRTUAL WORLDS SUCH AS SECOND LIFE ON SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Effective Second Language Acquisition (SLA) requires an ideal teaching and learning environment. This ideal environment needs to provide a high level of communication and interaction in the target language (TL) between learners and the teacher or between learners themselves. Also, it should raise students' desire and positive attitude toward learning the TL by providing engaging learning experiences. Therefore, in this annotated bibliography, I will review scholarly work that demonstrates how Virtual Worlds (VWs), specifically Second Life (SL) can promote such a useful learning environment for second language (L2) learners. This annotated bibliography was co-written with my classmate Tairon Kimura as a final project for our Technology class in the Master of Second Language Teaching (MSLT) program in Utah State University (USU). However, I revised this paper on my own after the Technology course ended.

It is beneficial for L2 teachers to become aware of the diversity of communications that VWs provide and the connections between these communications and the achievement of SLA. Also, teachers should be informed about the effectiveness of these communications on developing L2 learners' linguistic and sociocultural competencies. In addition, my intent is to emphasize the different motivational aspects of VWs and the role they play in promoting TL learning.

This work will highlight the benefits of VWs on SLA, with specific focus on the multiple features of SL that enhance the teaching and learning environment for L2 students. It will also show how SL can work as a language learning tool not only in English but also in other languages such as French, Spanish, and Chinese. In addition, VWs provide opportunities for students to become immersed in the TL.

I wasn't aware about the effective role that VWs can play in L2 teaching and learning until I took the Technology class in the MSLT program. In this class, I learned that a well-designed and teacher-controlled VW can provide a rich communicative environment where all students are encouraged to interact by using the TL. Furthermore, VWs are not limited to a certain course curriculum. Language learners can find many out-of-class sources that they can use for fun and for practicing their L2.

As an opening for this annotated bibliography, I would like to begin with a discussion on how SL functions as a language-learning platform. In the study conducted by **Liang (2012)**, students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) participated in the online world of SL. The article "*Reimagining Communicative Context: ELF Interaction in Second Life to Learn EFL*" investigates the interactions between L1 speakers of English and EFL students. The study demonstrates that English language learning can be accomplished in the context of SL.

In this study the author details how the students interact with SL through text chat. Students are able to 'travel' through the VW and explore different theme-based areas within SL while using the TL. Especially notable are instances when users help each other in the TL to guide and support each other in the use of the software platform.

The EFL students undertake a wide range of conversations within different cultural and social situations. The VW platform provided students the opportunity to converse with a variety of people from various backgrounds. "The virtual environment was a communicative context for building speaking skills, interests, and relationships" (Liang, 2012, p. 31). SL enables students to not only utilize text chat, but also control virtual representations of themselves called "avatars" that engage in rich nonverbal communication. SL contains realistic scenes and visible

participants. Each user in the VW appears as an avatar that expresses various emotional graphics and gestures.

Additionally, SL has been used in other contexts as a language learning tool. **Liou (2012)** reports on a study where SL was used as the environment for a computer-assisted language learning (CALL) course. This article "*The roles of Second Life in a college computer-assisted language learning (CALL) course in Taiwan, ROC*" discusses the benefits of using a VW to facilitate L2 acquisition. The author designed four tasks for the students to accomplish while using SL. The tasks allowed the students to gain a better understanding of their online environment as well as improving their TL (English). Communication in this study occurred via text-based chat in SL. Students were found to take on an in-game persona as they progressed through the study.

Students were most impressed with the virtual reality that existed in the SL world. Also, the text chat function and the 3D scenes were perceived as impressive aspects of SL. These features of SL offered the students a world that was immersive and enjoyable. Students travelled in-world and participated in different game features found in SL like riding animals in the zoo, riding on amusement park rides in the theme park, and travelling to in-world cities like Paris where they could see life-like examples of the Arc de Triomphe and the Eiffel Tower.

These features of the SL environment made the experience pleasurable for the students, which they credited with reducing their anxiety level in learning English. Through the game, students were able to chat with people they would not have had the chance to interact with in a regular classroom. Student feedback showed that students were learning skills such as correct sentence building, which was needed to communicate effectively. While exploring the in-game

world, students improved their reading skills by reading various instructions and menus that present themselves for the user to interact with the surroundings.

Looking at the VW from a teacher's perspective, **Varli (2013)** offers the book chapter "*An Exploration of 3D Virtual Worlds through ESL/EFL Teachers' Perspectives in Second Life.*" Varli claims that the use of 3D VW in education is becoming increasingly more common. Educators are attracted to these venues because of the educational opportunities that are found there. "Thanks to their multimodal nature, they promote the sense of social presence, and therefore support life-like collaboration and social interaction experiences" (Varli, 2013, p. 63).

Varli looks at the online world of SL from the teacher's perspective and in doing so has found that teachers are satisfied that the tools available in the VW set up a conducive learning environment for L2 acquisition. Teachers find that students interact with other characters in the world through voice-chat or text-chat. These modes of communication are very effective and promote an online learning experience of language. "3D VWs support the integration of highly sociocultural activities in online language classes" (Varli, 2013, p. 66). Varli notes how these online VWs are motivational for teachers because of the high potential for participation and interaction. VWs are also highly acclaimed by teachers for their potential in distance education.

In this book chapter, Varli explains how roleplaying is an important aspect in the learning process, particularly as participation is key in the learning process and influential in acquisition. The VW forces students to be active participants as they play a role in the game and interact in the virtual environment. By providing a setting to participate, SL engages the participants in content that leads to a learning community. For example, by conjuring an airport check-in desk and having the students pretend to be in that scenario, the teacher can simulate real-life interactions.

The multicultural aspect of SL is evident from the number of people logging in from all over the world. This provides an important sociocultural perspective to students who must attempt to utilize different communicative approaches when handling various cultural situations. While culture is a significant aspect of the SL world, students are less hesitant to interact with the different features of SL because of the relative anonymity that the online environment has to offer. This anonymity allows users to be less hesitant. Users are not as shy and vulnerable as in their classroom. Students are more relaxed when they are behind their avatars.

To further explore the benefits of SL on SLA, I read the article “*The effects of Second Life on the motivation of undergraduate students learning a foreign language*” by **Wehner, Gump, and Downey (2011)**. The authors studied how participation in SL motivated Spanish language students to learn. In this study propensity or motivation is a major factor in the success of L2 learners. The article describes social integration as a hindrance to language learning. In other words, L2 learning requires creating a new social identity that may contradict or overlap with students’ existing social identity. However, given that students are hesitant to lose their social identity within a linguistic context by integrating into a new language community, SL allows students to create this new identity within a medium that is outside of standard social constructs.

Motivation is defined as what drives a student to learn a language. Social integration is one of three motivations for students. In a language learning classroom students are not immersed in the TL or culture and therefore are less likely to feel the need to integrate socially. Students are hesitant to lose their social identity in this context. However, in SL students create an avatar and are able to immerse themselves in the VW. Anonymity provides a safe environment for the student to communicate unrestricted by gender, race, or ethnicity.



Communicative needs are the second motivator for language learners. This is the student's perceived necessity to communicate in the TL. Just like in real life, the reason for communicating with other people in VWs is to achieve a communicative goal that lies behind a certain communication (e.g., talking to a car rental agent to reserve a car or calling a restaurant to order food...etc.). There is a goal behind this participation that all the stakeholders want to achieve. This shared goal creates opportunities for using the TL in order to facilitate the achievement of that goal. The third motivation behind language learning is attitude and this describes whether or not students want to learn the language. In other words, the strong desire to learn the TL pushes students to search for means that facilitate their learning process. And of course, VW is an option for many students to seek for such learning opportunities.

These students of Spanish used SL to engage in text-chat and voice-chat with fluent users of the TL. They explored Spanish-themed areas of SL and made presentations in Spanish on subjects such as global warming, history, science, and art. These students were then administered a survey to gauge their motivation to learn the TL through SL. The survey measured the "major affective components shown to be involved in second language learning" (Wehner, Gump, & Downey, 2011, p. 284). Students who learned with SL had a more positive view towards learning culture in the TL than students who did not use SL to learn. Furthermore, students involved with SL voiced less anxiety about learning than those who did not use SL. In terms of motivation, the group of students who participated in SL reported more positive feelings towards motivation than the group of students who learned without SL.

Similar to the above findings, **Lan (2014)** reports on the practicality of studying Mandarin Chinese through the online medium of SL. In this study two groups were used, an experimental group that used SL for learning and a control group that took traditional classroom

learning. The article titled “*Does Second Life improve Mandarin learning by overseas Chinese students?*” further details how SL was able to benefit the learner by providing a learning environment where students could interact online.

When comparing the two groups, it was found that the students “behaved more actively in interpersonal interactions and talked more frequently in SL than in the conventional classroom” (Lan, 2014, p. 48). The author concludes that SL was a success for this Mandarin language course. Improvements in oral output, performance, and learning attitudes were found among Mandarin-learning overseas Chinese students who used SL.

On a separate note, connectivity issues were raised in this article reflecting the need for reliable Internet service and capacity in order to carry out the desired lessons in SL. This study was conducted in Taiwan and Internet bandwidth was a challenge for some students who experienced difficulty due to inadequate Internet connectivity.

More than providing a rich interactional environment and improving students’ learning attitudes, SL helps to build students’ sociocultural awareness which is one important aspect that facilitates SLA. Building social relations with fellow learners helps students cooperate and get advantage of other people’s knowledge and experiences. For this reason, I was interested in reading the article “*EFL learner collaborative interaction in Second Life*” by **Peterson (2012)**. The researcher studied the collaborative social interaction by EFL students, SL facilitation of TL output, and learners’ attitudes towards SL. In the first area of study, collaborative social interaction, the researcher notes instances of collaborative dialogue involving assistance. Students were able to help each other with interpreting and understanding difficult vocabulary and with game tasks that were not easy to grasp. Students were found to collaborate with one

another and even support one another in the various aspects of specific tasks and also with general in-game support.

Regarding the second focus of the study, the results showed that SL facilitated the consistent production of TL output. Some of the language learners expressed initial difficulties trying to acclimate with the online environment. However, as the students continued their use of the software they gradually became familiar with the VW. Learners reported being happy with the computer-based communication because the interaction allowed for easy correction of errors. The availability of scrolling in the chat appeared to prevent communication breakdowns. Another positive finding in this research was the ability of students to review transcripts of chat logs to review their conversations. The use of personal avatars further enhanced participants' enjoyment of the learning experience.

As for the third research area, participants widely agreed that they enjoyed participating in this learning method and that it was a beneficial experience. The environment was also perceived as less stressful than a regular classroom for the production of TL output. The majority of learners expressed that a high degree of engagement and interest was fostered to the extent that the participants desired to take part in another language learning experience through the medium of SL in the future.

In an earlier investigation, Peterson examined students' interaction in the 3D virtual world of SL through a study he conducted involving intermediate EFL learners. The study specifically targets the area of communication in the 3D environment. The article "*Learner participation patterns and strategy use in Second Life: An exploratory case study*" by **Peterson (2010)** describes the use of different strategies by participants in the study. The students in the study participated in three sessions where they experienced the 3D virtual world. In each of these

sessions, the researcher recorded strategies used to interact in the online collaborative learning environment.

In this particular study, the author researched the effects of specific tasks designed to motivate students and elicit strategies promoting SLA. In the first task, students were given an open-ended activity where they were asked to explore the scenario. The students were tasked to familiarize themselves with the new in-game environment. Students described their surroundings to peers, responded to several questions, and explored the various features of their in-game characters (the avatars).

For subsequent tasks, the author provided more directed activities than in the first task. For the second task the author promoted a discussion among the students on the topic of a recent influenza outbreak in Japan. The third and final task was divided into two stages where the first stage saw the participants researching virtual worlds and the second stage involved a short presentation and answering questions. The collected data for this research consisted of text chat messages that allowed the researcher to analyze the number of turns produced by each participant as well as the volume of output produced by the participants.

Results for this research were divided into the three sessions that were studied. All participants were actively engaged by the first session, which was designed to encourage participation and familiarization for the students. The messages recorded in this session were highly task-centered and there was not much off-task discussion. The record indicates that much of the TL chat was transactional and facilitated the smooth exchange of information. The author notes politeness and manners in the speech which showed interaction between individuals that were formal and demonstrated rapport. In session two, the task elicited longer discussions and the messages reflected this. For session three, students were given the opportunity to practice

their English presentation skills. The high degree of task focus continued throughout the sessions.

The study revealed that using a 3D virtual world environment was very motivating for students and it increased the level of participation and consequently the amount of TL use. Also, high levels of interaction and cooperation between students were witnessed during the study, resulting in improvement in the quality of language being produced. Students provided feedback to each other in a highly student-centered learning environment.

To investigate other benefits of making L2 learners participate in SL and learn about some negative aspects as well, I read the chapter “*From 2D to 3D: Implementation and Evaluation of Second Life as Supplement to Language Study*,” by **Li (2014)**. The author studied the chat logs of students who participated in exploration of virtual theaters in SL. The author shows the benefits of an online virtual environment such as SL for English language study. The chapter highlights the positive commentary provided by students in their chat logs. The study further describes the difficulty of actually travelling to the theater for a group as large as the one that participated in the online study comparing to exploring the same place by the same group of students through participating in SL. The study focused on several questions that were answered through the chat log, essays, and a questionnaire administered to the students. The analysis reveals that participants were mostly positive about their experience of SL. There were some remarks about the frustration of speaking to strangers and also about the technology difficulties that arose.

## **Conclusion**

The literature reveals how beneficial VWs can be for L2 learners, since they provide a potential learning environment that can be sustained. It is full of examples of how VWs such as

SL can be an interactive portal for language acquisition. SL can be a great asset to the language teacher, and when properly implemented, even a supplement to the language curriculum in the classroom. The multiple modalities of SL offer a great opportunity for teachers to engage with learners through online communication software. The limitations that teachers face in classrooms can be overcome by the limitless potential of online learning. SL creates opportunities for learners to try out new learning strategies in a synthetic virtual environment. Although there are some drawbacks of using SL, such as inadequate Internet service in some places or some awkwardness in interacting with strangers online, nevertheless, I believe that the potential benefits outweigh these drawbacks and make SL an engaging option for L2 learning.

## LOOKING FORWARD

My three years of study in the MSLT program completely changed my perspectives about second language teaching. I have learned a lot about the communicative language teaching approach and have decided that it will mainly characterize my own teaching in the future. My current plan is to go back to Iraq and apply in Iraqi universities all that I have learned from the MSLT program. At the same time, I want to continue learning about the communicative approach by following the most recent literature and studies.

My future plan is to start my doctoral degree in the field of second language teaching and/or pragmatics. I find the latter very interesting and useful for language learners since learning about language pragmatics makes them more successful communicators. Finally, I want to keep developing my French and English language abilities and I will seize any opportunity to do so abroad.

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APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

### Oral Corrective Feedback Types

Sheen and Ellis (2011) suggested a new classification for the oral corrective feedback types. I am highlighting below their new classification supported by examples of my own.

1. Reformulations: providing learners with correct reformulations and avoiding the necessity of self-correct. This form of corrective feedback is divided into two branches:

- a. Implicit reformulations:

- Conversational recasts- a reformulation of a student utterance in an attempt to resolve a communication breakdown.

Example of reformulation using conversational recasts:

**Learner:** Elle ne suis pas qui a frappé à la porte.

**Teacher:** Oui, elle ne sait pas qui a frappé à la porte.

- b. Explicit reformulations:

- Didactic recasts- a reformulation of a student utterance in the absence of a communication problem.

Example of reformulation using didactic recasts:

**Learner:** Ils travailler beaucoup.

**Teacher:** Oui, ils travaillent beaucoup. (The teacher corrected the learner's error even if no communication problem exists).

- Explicit correction- a reformulation of a student utterance plus a clear indication to the error.

Example of reformulation using explicit correction:

**Learner:** Il joue le football, hier.

**Teacher:** Oh, tu veux dire qu'il a joué au football, hier.

- Explicit correction with metalinguistic explanation- in addition to signaling an error and providing the correct form, there is also a metalinguistic comment.

Example of reformulation using explicit correction with metalinguistic explanation:

**Learner:** Je chante au théâtre, demain.

**Teacher:** Tu dois dire, Je vais chanter au théâtre, demain. (Explicit correction)

**Teacher:** Parce que on utilise le verbe aller pour se référer au future. (The teacher provides a metalinguistic comment)

2. Prompts: withholding the correct form and encouraging learners to self-correct the error. Also, this form of corrective feedback is divided into two branches:

a. Implicit prompts:

- Repetition- a verbatim repetition of a student utterance, often with adjusted intonation to highlight the error.

Example of prompts using repetition:

**Learner:** Je vais au magasin avec ma père.

Here, the teacher will adjust his/her intonation to highlight the error, but without providing the correct form:

**Teacher:** Je vais au magasin avec *ma* père?

**Learner:** Je vais au magasin avec mon père.

- Clarification requests- phrases such as “Pardon, Excusez-moi, and Je ne comprends pas” following a student's utterance to indirectly signal that an error has occurred.

Example of prompts using clarification requests:

**Learner:** Je marche tellement?

**Teacher:** Pardon?

**Learner:** Je marche lentement?

b. Explicit prompts:

- Metalinguistic clue- a brief metalinguistic statement aimed at eliciting a self-correction from the student.

Example of prompts using metalinguistic clue:

**Learner:** Qu'est-ce qu'il faire?

**Teacher:** Uh, pouvez-vous penser à votre grammaire? Comment conjugons-nous le verbe faire avec le pronom Il?

**Learner:** Qu'est-ce qu'il fait?

- Elicitation- directly eliciting a self-correction from the student

Example of prompts using elicitation:

**Learner:** Elle a pris le dîner ce matin.

**Teacher:** Elle a pris .... [the teacher stops talking to allow the learner to correct his error].

**Learner:** Elle a pris le petit déjeuner ce matin.

- Paralinguistic signal- an attempt to non-verbally elicit the correct form from the learner.

Example of prompts using paralinguistic signal:

**Learner:** La fille est beau.

**Teacher:** here, the teacher will use the body language (e.g. move his head or hands) to indicate that there was an error in the learner's utterance.

**Learner:** La fille est belle.