

## **Dissertation Title:**

# **The Effect of Oral Feedback in Secondary Classrooms on Arab Female Students' Acquisition of English Past Tense**

## **Abstract**

The present study investigated the effect of oral feedback on Arab female students' uptake and acquisition of English regular and irregular past tense in the context of secondary EFL classrooms in the UAE. It adopted a mixed methods approach in which qualitative and quantitative data was collected. In the qualitative phase of the study, the interaction between 2 EFL teachers and 48 EFL high-school female students in fourteen lessons was video recorded. The frequency and distribution of the teachers' feedback types as well as the students' uptake were identified and coded using Lyster and Ranta's (1997) corrective feedback model. Video recordings were followed by stimulated-recall interviews with four participants from each class to check their noticing of the teachers' corrective feedback. Interviews with the participating teachers were also conducted. The quantitative phase included measuring the students' past tense accuracy rate in three tests: pretest, posttest, and delayed test.

The findings of this study indicate that a variety of feedback types was used in the EFL classroom with prompts (72.7%) exceeding the number of recasts (23.3%). The study also shows that elicitations and metalinguistic feedback were the most successful in eliciting student-generated repair with a 64.7% and 44% respectively. Recasts were found to be the least noticeable with only 12% resulting in successful uptake. Interviews with students reveal that prompts were the most noticeable and favored feedback type. Results of one-way repeated measures ANOVA show an increase in the overall past tense accuracy scores across time. A significant difference was found between the regular past tense scores of the class which predominantly received prompts. The results of this study confirm the positive impact of feedback on the acquisition of English past tense.

## عنوان الرسالة

### دراسة حول تأثير التغذية الراجعة الشفوية في المرحلة الثانوية في دقة استخدام الطالبات العربيات للأفعال الماضية في اللغة الإنجليزية

#### خلاصة البحث

يدرس البحث الحالي تأثير التغذية الراجعة الشفوية في دقة استخدام الطالبات العربية للأفعال الماضية المنتظمة وغير المنتظمة في اللغة الإنجليزية داخل حصص تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في المرحلة الثانوية في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. وقد استخدم الباحث مزيجاً من أساليب البحث لجمع البيانات النوعية والكمية. ففي المرحلة النوعية من الدراسة، تم تسجيل التفاعل بين اثنين من معلمات اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية وثمانية و أربعين طالبة من المرحلة الثانوية في أربعة عشر درساً. وقد تم استخدام نموذج ليستر و رانتا (1997) للتغذية الراجعة لتحديد أنواع التغذية الراجعة الشفوية المستخدمة و طريقة توزيعها بالإضافة إلى ردود أفعال الطالبات لتصحيح أخطائهن. وتلت تسجيلات الفيديو مقابلات مع أربعة مشاركين من كل صف دراسي للتأكد من ملاحظة الطالبات لأقوال المعلمات التصحيحية، كما أجريت مقابلات مع المعلمات المشاركات. وتضمنت مرحلة جمع البيانات الكمية لقياس دقة استخدام الطالبات للأفعال الماضية ثلاثة اختبارات: الاختبار الأولي، البعدي، و المؤخر.

و تشير نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن مجموعة متفرقة من أنواع التغذية الراجعة كانت تستخدم في الفصول الدراسية و أن عدد أنواع التغذية التي تحفز الطالبات على تصحيح أخطائهن (72.7%) يفوق تلك التي قامت فيها المعلمة بتصحيح الخطأ بشكل غير مباشر (23.3%). وتبين الدراسة أيضاً أن أنواع التغذية التي تحفز الطالبات على تصحيح أخطائهن و تلك التي تذكرهن بقواعد النحو كانت الأكثر نجاحاً في مساعدة الطالبات على تصحيح أخطائهن بنسبة 64.7% و 44% على التوالي. كما أظهرت الدراسة ضعف ملاحظة الطالبات لمحاولات المعلمة لتصحيح الخطأ بشكل غير مباشر. و قد كشفت المقابلات مع الطالبات عن أن نوع التغذية الأكثر تفضيلاً لديهن هو أكثرهم وضوحاً. و أخيراً أشارت نتائج أحصائيات الأنوفا إلى وجود تحسن في دقة استخدام الأفعال الماضية لدى الطالبات. إن نتائج هذه الدراسة تؤكد الأثر الإيجابي للتغذية الراجعة الشفوية على استعمال الطالبات العربيات للأفعال الماضية في اللغة الإنجليزية.

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## Definition of Terms

<b>Affective filter</b>	The learner's negative emotions in response to one's environment which impedes learning and affects second language acquisition (Krashen 1982, pp.30-33).
<b>Clarification request</b>	The teacher's indication that a learner's utterance has not been understood.
<b>Corrective feedback</b>	The teacher's "response to a learner utterance containing a linguistic error" (Ellis 2009, p.3).
<b>Elicitation</b>	A type of feedback "in which the teacher directly elicits a reformulation from the student by asking questions such as "How do we say that in English?" or by pausing to allow the student to complete the teacher's utterance, or by asking the student to reformulate his or her utterance" (Yang 2008, p.5).
<b>Explicit correction</b>	The teacher's overt indication that an error has been made and provision of the correct target form.
<b>Metalinguistic feedback</b>	The correction which "contains either comments, information, or questions related to the well-formedness of the student's utterance, without explicitly providing the correct form" (Lyster and Ranta 1997, p.47).
<b>Modified output</b>	Language production after restructuring and reprocessing of an utterance in response to corrective feedback.
<b>Primary linguistic data (PLD)</b>	"Linguistic input necessary for language acquisition to occur" (Krashen 1976, p.157).
<b>Repetition</b>	A type of feedback in which the teacher repeats a learner's incorrect utterance.
<b>Recasts</b>	The teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's erroneous utterance (Gitsaki and Althobaiti 2010, p.116).
<b>Second language acquisition</b>	The learning of a second language, often in the country in which this language is spoken, after having acquired the first language (Askland 2010, p.8).
<b>Uptake</b>	"[A] student's utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback and that constitutes a reaction in some way to the teacher's intention to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (Lyster and Ranta 1997, p.49).

## **Abbreviations**

<b>ALE</b>	Arab Learners of English
<b>CF</b>	Corrective Feedback
<b>ESL</b>	English as a Second Language
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>L2</b>	Second Language
<b>NNS</b>	Non-native speakers
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>SLL</b>	Second Language Learning
<b>TL</b>	Target Language