OBSERVATION ON CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN AN ELC IN THE ARMENIAN SETTING

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The given article dwells upon different types of Corrective Feedback (CF) strategies and analyzes their didactic potential via the application of CF while teaching/learning EFL in Armenian classrooms.

During the research the monitoring on the application of different CF types has been conducted. The groups targeted for the monitoring process were 7-9th grade students of Gandzak secondary school N2 (Gegharkunik region, Armenia), 3rd-year students of the Department of the English Language and Literature and 2nd-year students of the Department of the Armenian Language and Literature of the Faculty of Philology at Gavar State University (Gegharkunik region, Armenia). The study was conducted according to the theory of American linguist James M. Hendrickson.

Key words: CF (corrective feedback), types of CF, error correction, explicit correction, implicit correction, EFL (English as a foreign language), foreign language teaching/learning.

Introduction

The significance of Corrective Feedback(CF) takes an important place in most approaches of second language learning and language pedagogy. Recent

studies have investigated the CF types as well as the use and effectiveness of those types in various contexts and even the impact of those types of error treatment on the process of understanding. Despite these studies, CF remains one of the most disputed issues in L2 teaching and there is no general agreement on its use. There are three schools of thought where the general attitudes about the usefulness of CF fall. The first group of researchers considers that it may disturb learners' language development rather than promote learning by increasing the students' anxiety level. The second group of researchers thinks that errors made by the learners are important for teachers as they reveal the amount of information that the learner has gained, and teachers can then accordingly customize their instruction to fulfill their students' needs[1]. The third group of researchers claims that it is necessary to examine CF strategies in specific contexts and determine what works best for the learners and facilitates L2 learning. The controversy over CF focuses on a number of questions based on Hendrickson's research:

- Should learners' errors be corrected?
- When should learners' errors be corrected?
- Which errors should be corrected?
- How should errors be corrected?
- Who should do the correcting?[2]

Appearing on the surface to be simple and uncomplicated, these questions have been explored by scholars for some period in a number of L2 classrooms and have proved to be rather complicated. A lot of research on CF continues to center on them.

The main goal (objective) of this research was to analyze different types of CF and to check their didactic potential via the application of CF strategies while teaching/learning EFL in Armenian classrooms (based on the analysis of the monitoring process).

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[1] Corder S., Idiosyncratic Dialects and Error Analysis. In J. Richard (Ed.), Error Analysis: Perspectives on second Language Acquisition pp. 158-171. Essex: Longman. 1974

2 Hendrickson J., Error correction in foreign language teaching: Recent theory, research, and practice. Modern Language Journal 62, pp. 387-398, 1978

Methodology of the Research

The methodology of our research was determined by the main goal (objective) of the research and included the following steps:

- to study different approaches concerning CF and to how, when to correct learners, what kind of mistakes to correct and whom to give the responsibility to do the correction;
- to provide a variety of types of CF;
- to carry out a study on the use of CF in an EFL classroom in the Armenian setting based on the monitoring of class activities;
- to analyze the monitoring results and draw conclusions.

The study was conducted according to the theory of the American linguist James M. Hendrickson.

Types of Corrective Feedback

Corrective or formative feedback is defined as "information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify his or her thinking or behavior for the purpose of learning improvement".[1]

CF has been often defined as "…the teacher's response to a student error".[2]

The topic of CF has always been very argumentative, and perhaps a difficult one, as scientists have found little agreement in how to correct students who made mistakes properly and whether the correction will be effective or not. Error correction can be easily described on a continuum, ranging from the idea that it can be harmful and ineffective to very important and useful for some grammatical structures.

According to recent research, error correction has been proven to be effective, necessary, and essential, but the obstacle that prevents error correction from being fully effective is teacher inconsistency and disorganized ways of dealing with errors.

The study Lyster and Ranta carried out in 1997 suggested to a discussion six main ways by means of which errors are corrected: ***explicit correction,***

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[1] Shute V. J., Focus on formative feedback. Review of Educational Research 78(1), pp. 153-189, 2008
[2] Dekeyser R., The effect of error correction on L2 grammar knowledge and oral proficiency, Modern Language Journal 77, pp. 501-514, 1993

recast, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, repetition, and clarification request.

1.   ***Explicit correction*** is used to provide the correct form immediately after the error has been made. Simply pointing out student's incorrect utterance, the teacher suggests the correct form.

Example 1

L: I hurted my arm.

T: No, not hurted. Hurt.

2. ***Recasts*** are used by the teacher's repetition formulating learner's answer entirely or partially, without reformulating the error. Teacher doesn't directly indicate that the learner's answer was incorrect, the teacher implicitly reformulates the student's error, waiting for self-correction or gives the correct answer.

Example 2

L: When you come home?

*T: When **do** you come home?*

 Measuring the characteristics, explicitness, and effectiveness of recasts Loewen and Philp in their 2006 study identified three characteristics of implicit feedback:

1) Recasts are usually given immediately after the error, in focus-on-meaning interaction as a feedback to non-target-like answers.

2) Recasts pertain to the general meaning of the learner's answer modifying the lexical, morpho-syntactic, or phonological form.

3) Rather than providing apparent correction, recasts suggest positive evidence and negative feedback[1].

3. ***Clarification requests*** is a type of CF using which the teacher suggests learners that their answers were misunderstood, erroneous or that the student's utterance contained some kind of errors and that a reformulation is required. Teachers generally implement clarification request by means of such phrases like *"Excuse me?"*, *"I don't understand"*, etc.

Example 3

L: What the man do?

T: Would you repeat your sentence?

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[1] Loewen S., Philp J., Recasts in the adult English L2 classroom: characteristics, explicitness, and effectiveness, Modern Language Journal 90, pp. 536-556, 2006

4. **Metalinguistic feedback** is a type of CF which has either a form of a comment, information, or a question related to the well-formedness of the learner's answers, without clearly giving the correct form. The teacher gives questions or makes comments or suggests information tending to help learners formulate their speech correctly (e.g. *"Do we use that preposition there?" "Is that the correct way to say it in English?", "Is it feminine/masculine?"*).

Example 4

L: He like eating sandwiches.

T: Do we say "he like?"

5. Elicitation is composed in at least three ways and is used in three techniques. Teachers use to directly indicate the correct form from learners.

A. Teachers reformulate students' answers in such a way that only the erroneous expression is left out, providing children time to "fill in the blank" (*"My mother works as a…"*).

B. Teachers put questions after which learners should answer correctly (*"How do we pronounce that in English?"*).

C. Teachers ask learners to reformulate their answers, pretending that they didn't listen (*"Say it again, please."*).

As compared with metalinguistic feedback elicitation questions vary as they require more than a yes/no response.

Example 5

T: How do we use the verb "to have in the past tense, 2nd person?

L: Does she have a doll?

6. **Repetition** is a CF type that is implemented by teacher's isolated repetition of the student's incorrect answer. In case of repetition, the teacher reformulates the student's error and gives it an intonation to focus their attention to it.

Among different types of CF explicit and metalinguistic corrections are considered to be **explicit correction types**, while recast and clarification request are considered to be **implicit correction types**.

Example 6

L: I'll call you next day.

T: Next day?

L: I will call you… hmm …

T: Tomorrow, I will call you tomorrow.

Monitoring Results

Our study addressed the following research questions:

1. *How often does the teacher provide feedback in an EFL classroom?*
2. *What types of feedback does the teacher use?*

During our passive scientific-pedagogical internship in schools and university, we recorded data on errors made by pupils and students during the EFL lessons. The observation was made with 7-9th grade pupils at Gandzak (Gegharkunik region, RA) secondary school N2, with students of two different departments of the Faculty of Philology of Gavar State University: Department of the English language and literature and Department of the Armenian language and literature. As it may be guessed, the methods of teaching as well as the level of language acquisition differs from group to group, so the CF strategies were also different which depends on errors made by students of different groups and the proficiency and skills of their correctors. Not to confuse the results of the surveys, we will discuss all the three cases separately.

It should also be mentioned that in order to keep the natural flow of the lessons examined, to observe teachers' awareness of CF strategies and the way they use them we preferred not to have a discussion about CF types and strategies during the passive stage of our internship. All the information about the CF was provided to the teachers and lecturers after the passive stage of the internship.

Observation at school: 7-9th grades

The first group that was examined in Gandzak secondary school N2 for the purpose of observation of CF usage in EFL classroom was the group consisting of pupils of 7-9th grades. It should be noted that English is the 3rd foreign language in Gandzak secondary school, after Russian and German. Therefore, we used 5th grade textbooks with 7th grade students (English 5. Lusine Grigoryan, part 2), with 8th grade students - textbooks or 6th grade (English 6. G. Gasparyan, N. Hovhannisyan, H. Kajberuny, part 2) and with 9th grade students - 7th grade textbooks (English 7. G. Gasparyan, N. Hovhannisyan, H. Kajberuny, part 2) during the internship. Thus, the planning of English lessons is modified.

The first half of the month we made a scientific and pedagogical observation. We met 4 times with each of the groups during the observation. The lessons were 45 minutes long. After half a month of examination nearly all

the students' errors, their corrections and responses were recorded and written down. The first research question investigated the *frequency of teacher feedback*. A total of 102 feedback episodes were observed during the 12 hours of classroom interaction. Pupils made a total of 141 errors of which 102 received teacher feedback. Thus, the teacher provided 72% feedback to pupils' errors.

Table 1. Frequency of feedback types.

Feedback types	Numbers	Percentages
Recast	46	45%
Repetition	22	21.5%
Clarification request	7	6.8%
Explicit correction	10	9.8%
Elicitation	6	5.8%
Paralinguistic signal	3	2.9%
Metalinguistic feedback	8	7.8%
Total	102	100%

Among all the CFs recast was used more frequently. They accounted 45% of all feedback percentage. The second CF strategy which was used most commonly was repetition (21.5%), which was followed by explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, clarification request and elicitation, which together accounted for 30.6% of all feedbacks implemented. The last feedback type – paralinguistic signal accounted for 2.9% of all feedbacks.

Besides the correction process the behavior and activity of children was also recorded to have a further review in order it to be possible to choose appropriate types of CF on behalf of students' acquisition development.

It has to be noted, that children's behavior and response to error correction depends greatly on their age as well. In other words, younger children consider error correction as something negative and try to escape from the correction process. Thus, some of the corrections (especially recast,

repetition, explicit correction) are ignored by pupils. Sometimes teachers insist on their response, making them repeat and correct themselves, but in some cases children get more and more confused and block themselves from the teacher and classroom.

During recent several years, besides provision and efficiency of CF, many researchers pay attention on students' approach towards feedback. It is an important issue as if students do not accept the corrective characteristics of feedback and if their attention differs from their teachers' intention, there will be no benefit from feedback. Because of the uncertainty of recasts, some linguists suggest that recast may not be viewed as CF by students. Meanwhile in higher grade children consider correction as a positive activity for them, as they realize that it is made for their own benefits.

In lower grades teachers use focused correction more often. They pay attention especially on those errors the rules of which the class has recently learned. Teachers try to ignore the errors on grammatical material which is unfamiliar to the class. In higher grades more attention is concentrated on flawless speech formation, thus the correction is more unfocused unless the communication is built on a particular grammatical material.

As for phonological errors – the number of pronunciation errors is considerably big in the Armenian setting. This can be due to the influence of Armenian, Russian and German. However, in most cases, the erroneous pronunciation of pupils is corrected, but as they happen very frequently teachers tend to ignore some of the errors which are of less importance, as correcting every single phonological mistake will be time-consuming. Besides, so frequent interruption of students' speech will hinder their communicative activity and retard the language acquisition process.

The correction in lower grades is made in general with the help of a direct method. This depends on the level of acquisition of the English language by children. The more fluent students are in English the more indirect the corrections become. Students with higher level of English proficiency think and reformulate their thoughts much quicker than the beginners. While only some hints and questions to children of lower grades will not be enough to think logically and find answers quickly to do self-correction as some parts of linguistic field is either unfamiliar for them or they haven't mastered in that field yet. And the contrary: children of higher grades are more often provided by

indirect corrections in order to train their brain to find correct answers by themselves.

As for negative and positive approaches, teachers at school move slowly to the humanistic approach, but it takes much time to get used to it. Though teachers intend to make the correction process as positive as possible emotionally in order not to break pupils' self-confidence, however the CF types they use more often belong to the explicit CF category.

The most often used types of CF are recast, clarification request, repetition and explicit correction. Some of the correction examples are provided in the table below.

Table 2. Examples of CF in Gandzak secondary school N2.

Explicit correction	Recast
L: What happened [ˈhæpənɪd]? (Phonological error) **T: No, we don't pronounce the vowel *e*. What happened [ˈhæpənd]?**	L: On March 1 T: On the 1st of March L: On the 1st of March
Repetition	Elicitation
L: to look that cat in garden **T: to look?** **L: to see if the cat is there** **T: to search for** **L: to search for the cat in the garden**	L: I think it is help… T: Helpful. L: I never got lost T: You forgot a word L: I have never got lost
Clarification request	Metalinguistic feedback
L: He failured… **T: Sorry?** **L: (silence)** **T: Do you mean that he was a failure?**	L: When she will come. T: Do we use shall/will after *when*? L: When she will come T: When she comes.

During the observation it was noticed that children respond differently to the error correction. Some pupils after being corrected once or twice became more attentive and corrected themselves immediately after repeating the same mistake (L: In Sunday. *On*, on Sunday I…). In this kind of cases any correction can work and give satisfactory results. However, habits and level of attention differs from child to child. Some pupils listened to the corrected version after repetition and went on speaking. The teacher had to repeat the correction several times indicating to repeat it after themselves. As a result, the error and corrected version didn't focus enough attention to be remembered. Thus the observation led to discover what type of CF will correspond better to the pupils' habits. In these cases the correction should be a different one, for example clarification request or elicitation. These methods that demand concentration, make pupils think about the right answer and remember the learned material will be more profitable to use, because self-correction fosters the remembering process.

Observation at university: Department of the English language and literature

Observation at the university was slightly different from the one carried out at school. Frankly speaking students make less errors in comparison with pupils. However, we recorded as more errors as possible to extend the scope of our observation. Considering that in the university in different groups the types of errors and their corrections would be different too, we took two groups separately – group of students who study English as their major and a group of students who study Armenian as their major and learn English as a second language. The errors and their correction results are recorded and will be presented separately.

The first half of the month we made a scientific and pedagogical observation in this group. We met 4 times with each of these groups too during the observation. The lessons were 70 minutes long. After half a month of examination nearly all the students' errors, their corrections and responses were recorded and written down. A total of 36 feedback episodes were observed during the 4 hours of classroom interaction. Students made a total of 36 errors of which 27 received teacher feedback. Thus the teacher provided 75% feedback to pupils' errors.

Table 3. Frequency of feedback types.

Feedback types	Numbers	Percentages
Recast	10	37%
Repetition	3	11.1%
Clarification request	5	18.5%
Explicit correction	1	3.7%
Elicitation	2	7.4%
Paralinguistic signal	1	3.7%
Metalinguistic feedback	5	18.5%
Total	27	100%

Among all the CFs recast was used more frequently. They accounted 37% of all feedback percentage. The second CF strategy which was used most commonly were clarification request and metalinguistic feedback (18.5%). The remaining four types – repetition, explicit correction, elicitation and paralinguistic feedback ranged from 3.7% to 11.1% of all feedbacks.

The case with students of department of English had slight similarities with higher grade pupils – the most part of the errors needed more implicit correction than explicit. It was also noticed that university teachers didn't correct some errors which were made accidentally – if they were sure their students knew the correct form, they ignored the small errors. Frequently used CF types at the university were clarification request, metalinguistic correction, elicitation and recast (Though recast is an explicit corrective feedback, it was used the most in each group, as it is not time-consuming and is comfortable to use in less important cases of errors). Errors can be of two types – general and local. In contrast to school children students made generally global errors (incorrect word order, missing or misplaced sentence connectors, etc.). Although students of the English language department made less errors than pupils we have managed to record some examples from each type of error correction discussed. The results are presented below in the table.

Table 4. Examples of CF in the Department of the English Language and Literature in GSU.

Explicit correction	Recast
Explicit correction **L: All in my country gets worse** **T: Not all, everything** **L: Everything in my country**	L: He has a love for wine… T: He loved drinking… L: He loved drinking wine. L: Ideal [ˈɪdeal] (pronunciation error) T: Ideal [aɪˈdiːəl]
Repetition	**Elicitation**
L: The pharmacist give her **T: Gave her…** **L: The pharmacist gave her medicaments**	L: I will apply to the birthday organizing company T: *Address* will suit better L: I will address to the birthday organizing company
Clarification request	**Metalinguistic feedback**
L: The parsley dried **T: Sorry, what was the verb?** **L: The parsley get dry** **T: Do you mean withered**	L: Didn't pay attention on… T: Be attentive. Do we say pay attention *on* or pay attention *to*? L: Didn't pay attention to details.

Observation at university: Department of the Armenian language and literature

When compared to the English language and literature department, students of Armenian language department were free in their communication process – they expressed their thoughts and opinions quicker and without hesitation (this advantage in my opinion will help them develop their communication skills quicker) while the prior group was confused to be mistaken. This was conditioned with the fact that students of the first group

were afraid to appear mistaken in a language they have been studying for years. While students of English focused their attention to the form (paying too much attention on the form students of the English language will dismiss the importance of communication), students of Armenian paid more of their attention to the meaning. As a consequence, students with Armenian as their major, like children at school, made local errors (morphological, lexical errors). Correspondingly, the correction required to be an explicit one – recast, repetition, clarification request and others.

The first half of the month we made a scientific and pedagogical observation. We met 4 times with this group too during the observation. The lessons were 70 minutes long. After half a month of examination nearly all the students' errors, their corrections and responses were recorded and written down. A total of 48 feedback episodes were observed during the 4 hours of classroom interaction. Students made a total of 48 errors of which 35 received teacher feedback. Thus the teacher provided 73% feedback to students' errors.

Table 5. Frequency of feedback types.

Feedback types	Numbers	Percentages
Recast	19	48.7%
Repetition	3	7.6%
Clarification request	5	12.8%
Explicit correction	1	2.5%
Elicitation	3	7.6%
Paralinguistic signal	1	2.5%
Metalinguistic feedback	7	17.9%
Total	39	100%

Among all the CFs recast was used more frequently. They accounted 48.7% of all feedback moves. The second CF strategy which was used most commonly were metalinguistic feedback (17.9%) and clarification request (12.8%). The remaining four types – repetition, explicit correction, elicitation and paralinguistic feedback ranged from 2.5% to 7.6% of all feedbacks.

Some examples of their errors and provided corrective feedback are presented in the table below.

Table 6. Examples of CF in the Department of the Armenian Language and Literature in GSU.

Explicit correction	Recast
L: He had difficults T: No, not difficults, it's an adjective. Say *difficulties* L: Yes, he had difficulties	L: Get divorced [daɪ'vɔːrst] (phonological error) T: Divorced [dɪ'vɔːrst] L: We met two person. T: Two people… L: We met two people.
Repetition	Elicitation
L: He was died T: He was died? L: He died L: In the following day T: *In* the following day? L: *On* the following day	L: You made us to guess… T: You made us …? L: Because in this age they become uniform T: Uniform? L: հասուն T: we say *mature*
Clarification request	Metalinguistic feedback
L: You can spend your time with both T: Sorry? L: With both T: Do you mean *together?* L: Yes, you can spend your time together	L: Going back to home… T: Do we put to in this collocation? L: Back home? T: Yes, going back home. We say *go home*

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Equally important is the factor of negativity and positivity. Though researchers and linguists advise to avoid negative approach, it is a long and distant process. However, taking into account cases, when negative approach harms more than usual, teachers do their best to avoid it. When we compare the two groups (students of the department of the English language and literature and students of the department of the Armenian language and literature), we notice that their estimation towards performance in the English language differs. The first group tries to fulfill the expectation of their lecturers, act carefully not to make errors thus reducing their speech, avoid to express their thoughts, meanwhile the other group is free in expressing ideas as they don't consider shameful the correction by the lecturer who teaches a less important language for them. Here the same lecturer can use different approaches to the groups. In case of the first group he/she has to be careful not to activate the defense mechanisms of students with negative corrections, they should try to make an easy and comfortable atmosphere so that students feel free to speak as much as possible. The lecturer can use such CF as metalinguistic and paralinguistic corrections, elicitation, clarification request, make the correction only after the student's speech if possible. In case of the second group the lecturer can feel free to use his/her methodological approaches and techniques and meanwhile focus attention on errors.

Conclusion

As a result of the observation on CF in EFL classrooms in Armenian schools and university it was discovered that recasts are the most frequently used feedback type. Second type of CF in frequency is clarification request. The other types of corrective feedback discovered were elicitation, explicit correction, metalinguistic and paralinguistic feedbacks and repetition, which were implemented rather rarely.

CF is a complicated aspect of teaching/learning. The fact of its being so complex is represented in the differences that refer to various topics for discussion such as which is the right choice: to do correction or not, does each error need correction or not, what methods, types, strategies to use while correcting errors, and whether to correct immediately or after a while. The above mentioned issues were discussed by various researchers and, however,

most of them stated that CF is an extremely complex phenomenon and it works differently in different situations and needs further research.

References

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ՍԽԱԼՆԵՐԻ ՈՒՂՂՈՒՄԸ ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ԴՊՐՈՑՆԵՐՈՒՄ ԱՆԳԼԵՐԵՆԻ՝ ՈՐ-ՊԵՍ ՕՏԱՐ ԼԵԶՎԻ ՈՒՍՈՒՑՄԱՆ ԸՆԹԱՑՔՈՒՄ

ԱՎԵՏԻՍՅԱՆ ՄԱՐԻԱՄ
ԳՊՀ բանասիրական ֆակուլտետի
անգլերեն լեզվի և գրականության բաժնի
մագիստրատուրայի շրջանավարտ
էլփոստ՝ mariam.a.avetisyan@gmail.com
ՍԱՐԳՍՅԱՆ ՌՈՒԶԱՆՆԱ
Մանկավարժական գիտությունների թեկնածու, դոցենտ,
ԳՊՀ օտար լեզվի և գրականության ու
ՀՊՏՀ լեզուների ամբիոնների դասախոս
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Հոդվածը նվիրված է սխալների ուղղման տարբեր ռազմավարությունների և վերլուծում է դրանց դիդակտիկ ներուժը հայկական լսարանում անգլերենի դասավանդման ընթացքում:

Հետազոտության ընթացքում անցկացվել է սովորողների սխալների ուղղման տարբեր միջոցների կիրառման մշտադիտարկում /մոնիթորինգ/: Այդ նպա-

вакоվ թիրախավորվել է 3 խումբ. 1-ին խումբ՝ ՀՀ Գեղարքունիքի մարզի Գան-
ձակի N2 միջնակարգ դպրոցի 7-9-րդ դասարանների աշակերդներ, 2-րդ խումբ՝
Գավառի պեդական համալսարանի բանասիրական ֆակուլտեդի անգլերեն
լեզվի և գրականության բաժնի 3-րդ կուրսի ուսանողներ, 3-րդ խումբ՝ հայոց լեզ-
վի և գրականության բաժնի 2-րդ կուրսի ուսանողներ։ Ուսումնասիրության հիմ-
քում դրվել է ամերիկացի լեզվաբան Ջեյմս. Մ. Հենդրիքսընի տեսությունը։

Բանալի բառեր՝ սխալների ուղղում, հեդադարձ կապ, անգլերենը որպես
օտար լեզու, սխալների էքսպլիցիդ ուղղում, սխալների իմպլիցիդ ուղղում, ան-
գլերենի ուսուցում:

НАБЛЮДЕНИЕ НАД ИСПРАВЛЕНИЕМ ОШИБОК (КОРРЕКЦИОННЫМ ФИДБЕКОМ) НА УРОКЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В АРМЯНСКОЙ АУДИТОРИИ

АВЕТИСЯН МАРИАМ

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В данной статье рассмотрены различные стратегии исправления ошибок и проанализирован их дидактический потенциал на основе использования последних на уроке английского языка в армянской аудитории.

В ходе исследования был проведен мониторинг процесса применения различных способов исправления ошибок учащихся. Целевыми группами во время мониторинга являлись учащиеся средней школы N2 с. Гандзак (Гегаркуникская область, РА), студенты 3-го курса отделения английского языка и литературы и студенты 2-го курса отделения армянского языка и литературы филологического факультета Гаварского государственного университета (Гегаркуникская область, РА). Исследование проведено в соответствии с теорией американского лингвиста Джеймса Хендриксона.