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**Jimma University**  
**College of Social Sciences and Humanities**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)**

**Teachers' Perception, Students' Perception and Satisfaction on the  
Implementation of Innovative Ways of Written Error Correction in  
English Language Teaching Classes with Special Reference to Grade 10  
Students of Two Secondary Schools in Bako Tibe Woreda**

**By:**

**KIDIST BIRHANU**



**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language  
and Literature in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for Master of Arts in TEFL**

**August, 2015**

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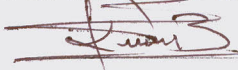
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**Declaration**

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, not presented for any degree in any universities, and that all the sources used for it are duly acknowledged.

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## **Abstract**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the teachers' perception, students' perception and satisfaction on the implementation of innovative ways of learner written error correction in English Language Teaching (ELT) classes. The participants of this study were 8 teachers and 259 students at Bako and Tibe Secondary Schools of the 2007 academic year. The researcher used descriptive survey method. For this purpose, questionnaires (for both the teachers and students), interview for the teachers, and corrected and returned students written documents were used as source of data gathering instrument. The result of the study revealed that the practice of learner written error correction is not innovative. Moreover, the task of giving correction to learner written errors is not the teachers' regular classroom concern. The teachers quite dominantly use teacher correction while other types of correction are employed rarely. They also use few indirect techniques of correction than the direct ones. The study also indicated that the teachers focus more on form and mechanics rather than content and organization when correcting students' written works. Regarding the findings obtained, students lack of getting written feedback regularly from their teacher, teachers are not using innovative ways in correcting students' written works, teachers are being selective when correcting; they focus on form and mechanics drowned as a conclusions. Some of the recommendation include: Teachers should be aware of the theoretical framework of providing correction in an innovative manner and other related areas; they should be understood that correction is an aspect of teaching; they should employ the different techniques of correction in a balanced manner; they should be provided with some orientations so that they could do correction in an innovative way when responding to their students' composition, etc.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the study

Researchers in language learning have come up with different theories regarding how language is learnt. So far, there is no consensus among scholars on how a language particularly a second or foreign language is best learnt. Researchers in second language learning have differing views in learning a second or foreign language. Some view language as a social phenomena, and is learnt in social interactions. Yet, others hold the position that language learning is an individual process

English as a second language is being taught widely all over the world. Among the various language skills, writing is usually regarded as a painstaking activity and debate whether and how to offer second language learners (L<sub>2</sub>) feedback on their written grammatical errors has been of considerable interest to researchers and classroom practitioners (Truscutt, 1996, 1999; Ferris, 2000, 2002, 2004). Most of the time writing is used to measure students' overall performance of the language in examinations. Thus, it is important for English as Second Language (ESL) teachers to find ways to ensure their students' mastery of writing skills to excel in the language.

Everyone makes mistakes, even writers using their own language when they are hurried, 'lost for words', or forced into inappropriate language by a difficult or unusual situation. It is hardly surprising that language learners make mistakes, given the difficulty of the task of comprehending, processing the content of the message and knowledge of the target language, and coming out with a response that is both grammatically correct and appropriate to the situation (Ferris, 1995).

It is generally agreed that correction is part of the teaching/learning process, but that over-correction and poor correction techniques can be demotivating for the learner and may lead to a reluctance to try out new language or even to write at all (Truscutt, 1999). Teachers need to make informed decisions about what, when and how to

correct in order to help learners improve their writing skills without damaging their confidence.

Providing effective feedback is one of the many challenges that any English teacher faces. In a language teaching learning classroom, in addition to organization and punctuation problems, grammar feedback is also a concern, making feedback practices even more challenging. Teachers want to give feedback that will encourage and challenge students to be better writers, but do not always know how the feedback that they are providing is perceived by the students, or how effective it is (Ferris, 1995).

Error correction research will focus mostly on whether teachers should correct errors in student writing and how they should go about it. Although a lot has been written on the subject of error correction in writing, research about its effectiveness is still inconclusive. There are studies that point to the usefulness of error feedback (Ferris, 1995; Ferris & Helt, 2000; Lalande, 1982; Polio, Fleck, & Leder, 1998), however, there is also research that casts doubts on its benefits (Cohen, 1987; Truscott, 1996, 1999). In recent years, Truscott (1996, 1999) has argued, rather radically, that error correction is harmful and should be abandoned in the writing classroom.

While Truscott's idea of correction, free instruction may be welcoming news for writing teachers in reality, it is difficult for teachers to renounce the established practice of giving feedback on student errors in writing. This is especially in the foreign language learning writing classroom (Cohen, 1987).

Moreover, as Tezera (2009) puts, different research findings which have been proposed by applied linguists based on the analysis of foreign language learners' errors state that errors are unavoidable and indispensable part of the learning process. In other words, whenever there is foreign language learning, errors are always there and they constitute the language learning process. They are also considered as signs of learning.

The literature on error correction has highlighted several issues that are particularly pertinent to teachers while they are correcting errors. Teachers have to decide whether to:

1. correct or not correct errors;
2. identify or not identify error types;
3. locate errors directly or indirectly.

First of all, should teachers correct errors for students? Should teachers give direct error feedback? There is research evidence to indicate that indirect feedback (indicating errors without correcting them) brings more benefits to students' long-term writing development than direct feedback (Ferris, 2003; Fratzen, 1995). Should teachers identify error types for students? A prevalent error correction technique is for teachers to underline or circle errors and use error codes to indicate the error types (curriculum Development Council, 1999; Ferris, 2002). This is referred to as direct, coded feedback (as opposed to indirect, encoded feedback where errors are underlined or circled only). In general, error identification may be worthwhile and meaningful as it is a useful starting point for discussing errors with students (Raimes, 1991).

In the processes of learning foreign language, learners face difficulties in writing English due to various factors, and as a language teacher, the researcher believes that the problem is due to the limited experience in writing. So, it is hoped that the current study has some contribution attempting to identify the implementation of innovative ways of students written error correction and its implementation in English language classrooms.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The ability to write well is one of the essential qualities in the world of academics and other concerns of life. Yet, writing is a difficult skill to master because of the different factors pertaining to it. Scholars raise these factors as linguistic, psychological and cognitive aspects (Byrne, 1988 & Heaton, 1988). All these have the potential of causing writing anxiety to students causing low performance in writing. On top of these, the practice of teaching and learning writing seems to be under question in Ethiopia context. This could be well perceived from the low-level performance of students in writing as indicated by some studies in our country (Yonas, 1996; Geremew, 1999 & Solomon, 2001).

On the other hand, Ethiopian researchers like Yonas (1996), Geremew (1999), and Tezera (2009) put the question of teachers' beliefs towards errors and the pressure it exerts upon their corrective treatments as one of the most important professional issues in the second language teaching pedagogy. Dulay et.al (as cited in Tezera, 2009) contend that the generative linguistics, which focused on the creative aspect of language learning, has highly inspired error analysts to raise the status of errors from unwanted form to that of pedagogic indicator of learning and a guide to teaching. The significance of errors in language learning and teaching has further been emphasized by a number of researchers and error analysts.

English as foreign language (EFL) teachers constantly undertake various ways to improve their students' writing skill. However, in spite of them spending numerous hours tediously identifying and correcting their students' errors, students are not taking the trouble to read the comments in order to rectify their mistakes. Hence, EFL teachers need to seek better methods to address this issue. On the students' part, they are not seemed to comprehend the meaning behind the red markings, let alone the illegibility of the teachers' handwriting. Therefore, there should be a better solution to address this problem.

Throughout the feedback provision processes, as pointed out by some feedback specialists, in context practices have not received due attention. Among them, some camps of scholars have mentioned to the crucial role of teachers' having a feedback framework for specifying errors, use of error codes and manners of marking and feedback provision in pinpointing many qualitative and quantitative aspects of teachers' feedback methods. The present study endeavored to search deeper into the issue on teachers' perception, students' perception and satisfaction on the implementation of innovative ways of written error correction.

A synthesis of theory and practice has implied that creating a coherent, accurate and extended piece of writing, to most English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, is far from easy. As a matter of fact, learners need to be guided toward active use of the

target language. One of the steps that teachers should take to do so is through providing an independent learning environment in which constructive feedback to learners can be reinforced as they progress. Some studies which are conducted in Ethiopian context such as Wondwossen (1992) and Getnet (1993) pointed out that the direct corrective feedback practice of teachers to the students' incorrect written works constitute the longest and frequent category of English language teaching (ELT) class behavior.

The current study focused on teachers' perception, students' perception and satisfaction towards written error correction and the techniques teachers implemented to correct learners' written errors in English language classes of grade 10. In addition to this, the research was differing from Tezera (2009) in geographical location, the grade level on which this research was conducted and time when the research was conducted. Tezera conducted his research at Gondar University on the comparison of innovative ways of written error correction and the actual practice in ELT classrooms. The study directly focused on teachers' and students' perception, and students' satisfaction on the implementation.

The findings of this research were instructors of the University were not using innovative ways; written error corrections was not instructors' regular activities nor they have a systematic way of providing correction to learners' written errors. They also used few indirect techniques of correction than the direct ones.

### **1.3. Objectives of the study**

#### **1.3.1. Main objectives**

The main objective of this study was to investigate teachers' perception and students' perception and satisfaction of English language written error correction and to explore the existing written error correction practices in Bako Secondary and Tibe Secondary Schools of grade 10.



### **1.3.2. Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of this study were to:

1. find out the perception of teachers and students on written error correction;
2. identify which written error teachers focus on to provide correction to their students;
3. examine who students' written error regarding innovative ways;
4. find out how students' written errors be corrected in relation to innovative ways of written error corrections;
5. identify how often teachers implement innovative ways of written error
6. find out how far the students are satisfied with the correction they received from the teachers.

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

The findings of this study are expected to have the following significance.

1. It provides important information for those teachers who are engaged in teaching ESL as to the innovative techniques of written error correction and their actual practice in light of what they are doing.
2. The results of the study also help teachers to critically reassess their written error treatment practice and make the necessary adjustments in their future teaching career.
3. Lastly, the study paves the way for other researchers who want to investigate more on the area.

### **1.5. Limitations of the study**

The study was limited to only 8 English teachers who were teaching grade 10 in Bako Secondary and Tibe Secondary schools and 259 students (25% of the total students who were randomly selected from these schools). This may not be adequate to make generalization of the study and may lack reliability. It would be better and more effective if a good number of schools and participants were included in the study to gather sufficient information for the generalization to be more reliable.

### **1.6. Delimitation of the study**

As the researcher attempted to indicate so far, the focuses of this study would address on the investigation of the innovative ways of correcting learners' written errors and the actual implementation in English Language Teaching classrooms in the target study place. Thus, due to time constraints, the study was confined to the investigation of written error correction practice. Hence, it did not touch oral or other skills error correction practice. Moreover, the study was limited to English language teachers of two schools, Bako secondary school and Tibe Secondary school of grade 10. Because of the geographical location and being familiar with the school staff the researcher selected these two schools, as the staff and the students could be more cooperative for the researcher than other schools.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. The writing skills

Writing is a process of encoding (putting messages into words) with a reader in mind (Byrne, 1988, p.183). Similarly, Mc Donough and Shaw (1993, p.182) consider writing as primarily message oriented, so a communicative view of language is a necessary foundation. These scholars indicate that writing is a meaning-laden process that should be addressed to readers. Writing is also a means of exploration and discovery, and today, more than ever, being able to write well is a vital skill: people all over the world communicate, exchange information, and conduct business instantaneously across cyberspace (Kelly & Lawton, 1998). These are some of the reasons we want to master the skill of writing and help learners to master it.

Nevertheless, its mastery is not as easy as we might think because of its nature and different factors pertaining to it. As Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p. 5) contend, unlike that of speaking, writing is only learnt. From this, we recognize that learning to write is subject to formal instruction as opposed to speaking which has more chance than writing out of the formal learning situation.

Writing is also technology, a set of skills which must be practiced through experience. Other scholars (Byrne, 1988; Hedge, 1988 & Heaton, 1988) attribute the difficult nature of writing to three factors: cognitive, linguistic and psychological. With regard to the cognitive aspect, writers are expected to think and process what they want to put down on paper because writing requires much more care and thinking than speaking as the audience is not present at the time of writing like that of speaking. The linguistic factor is related to the need to consider the accuracy of the linguistic elements in the writing activity. The psychological factor is concerned with the production of writing solitarily which may cause anxiety. Thus, compared to speaking, writing requires much more care,

patience, skill and co-operation in its learning. Hedge (1988, p.5), for instance, explains that effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of organization in the development of ideas, a high degree of accuracy to avoid ambiguity, the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis, a careful choice of vocabulary, etc. It is in addressing these problems that scholars are much concerned with the need for much practice in its learning.

## **2.2. Feedback on EFL students' writing**

It is generally accepted that one of the essential elements in the English classroom is feedback, which may be defined as information supplied to learners concerning some aspect of their performance on a task, by a peer or a teacher, with a view to enhancing their learning. Feedback encompasses not only correcting learners, but also assessing them. Both correction and assessment depend on mistakes being made, reasons for mistakes, and class activities. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1999, p.746), "a mistake is an action, opinion or word that is not correct (wrong), and error is the state of being wrong in belief or behavior". The issue of learner errors, it can be written or oral, in learning a foreign language is a highly debated area in foreign language or second language acquisition researches. Many researchers and theoreticians have expressed their different views, attitudes and preferences regarding the roles and practices of errors and error correction in learning and/or teaching a foreign language. The following sections, therefore, briefly presents the theoretical and researched points related to errors in general and written error correction in particular.

Feedback is an expected and an important activity in a given performance. Particularly, in language teaching and learning; it is used to facilitate the process (Hyland 1990; Richards & Lockhart 1994; Ur 1996). Ur (1996, p.242) defines feedback in the context of teaching in general as information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance. As Keh (1990, p.294) also asserts, feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. She defines feedback in the context of writing as an input from a reader with the effect of providing information to

the writer for revision. Explaining the role of feedback in language teaching, Richards and Lockhart (1994, p.188) write:

Providing feedback to learners on their performance is an important aspect of teaching. Feedback may serve not only to let learners know how well they have performed but also to increase motivation and build a supportive classroom climate.

Similarly, Hyland and Hyland (2006, p.83) explain the role of feedback in writing in relation to the process approach to writing. They write that feedback has long been regarded as essential for the development of second language writing skills, both for its potential for learning and for student motivation. As part of the writing process, there is a shift of view in feedback. Explaining this, Hyland and Hyland (2006) state that over the past twenty years, changes in writing pedagogy and insights gained from research studies have transformed feedback practices, with teacher comments now often combined with peer feedback, writing workshops, oral conferences, or computer-delivered feedback. As these scholars note, this has led to the replacement of summative feedback (product focus) by formative feedback which points forward to the students' future writing and the development of his or her writing process.

### **2.3. Error**

From linguistic point of view, the notion of error in second language learning and/or teaching can be understood as the use of a linguistic item (e.g. a word, a grammatical item, a speech act etc) both in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner in a way which a fluent or native speaker of a language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. In short, error refers to the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of matured language performance (Dulay et al. 1982). Some people consider error and mistake as synonymous terms. They, however, have a difference when viewed from applied linguistics point of view. The next section is intended to clarify this confusion.

#### **2.4. The distinction between mistakes and errors**

It is important to have vivid understanding about mistakes and errors because they are technically different. Brown (1994, p.205) pointed out that "mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip", in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situation."

According to Brown, all people are prone to make mistakes, in both native and second language situations. However, such mistakes are not the outcomes of deficiency in the speaker's or writer's competence of language use or usage. They rather are caused by some sort of breakdown or imperfection that takes place in the process of producing the language. In short, mistakes are random ungrammaticalities or 'slips' which are either uttered or written in producing a certain language, and they occur in both native and second language utterances and writings.

On the contrary, errors refer to a recognizable breakdown of the grammar of a native speaker. Brown has further explained this fact by saying "an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter language competence of the learner." In making a distinction between error and mistakes, Corder (1973) on his part contends that, "the term 'error' refers to the grammatically incorrect form of a language; whereas 'mistakes' refer to the socially inappropriate form." Thus, the above views reveal that, while mistakes are simply "slips of the tongue or the pen", errors purely violate the grammatical rules of the target language; especially in second language learning. However, they are manifestations of the learners' "inter language competence". Moreover, it can be deduced from the above discussion that "slips" or which we have called mistakes can be corrected by the student itself. But, if the student him/herself can not correct it, the slip will resume the status of error. Edge (1989, p. 10) has strengthened this fact by saying that "if a student can not self - correct a mistake in his or her own English, but the teacher thinks that the class is familiar with the correct form, we shall call that sort of mistake an error.

Edge (1989, p.37) divides mistakes into three categories: slips, errors and attempts. "Slips" are mistakes that students can correct themselves; "errors" are mistakes which students cannot correct themselves; "attempts" are student's intentions of using the language without knowing the right way. In this article, similarly as in Edge (1989, p.37), either the most common linguistic term "error" or the students' preferred term "mistake" will be used interchangeably.

## **2.5. Types of error**

Unfortunately, there is no a vividly identified basis for the classification of errors. However, for the sake of this discussion, the writer has made an attempt to present the different types of errors as classified by three different authors; but on a superficial basis. Accordingly, Corder (1981, p.38) has identified the following four types of errors.

1. Errors of Omission: where some element which should be present is omitted,
2. Errors of Addition: where some element which should not be there is present,
3. Errors of Selection: where the wrong item has been chosen in place of the right one, and
4. Errors of Ordering: where the elements presented are correct but wrongly sequenced.

On the other hand, Hubbard et al. (1983) have classified errors as lexical errors (where the errors are related with pronunciation), syntactic errors (where the errors are related with grammar), interpretive error (where there is misunderstanding of the speaker's or writer's intention of meaning) and pragmatic error (where there is production of the wrong communicative effect through the faulty use of a speech act or one of the rules of speaking). Furthermore, Hammerly (1991) has broadly classified errors, (on the basis of their effect on communication) in to two, namely:

1. Global Errors: are errors which cause a native speaker to misunderstand or not to understand the message. These types of errors affect overall sentence organization and significantly hinder communication.
2. Local Errors: these are errors that, given their context, do not interfere with comprehension of the message. In other words, these are errors that affect single

element (constituents) in a sentence; and they do not usually hinder communication significantly.

## **2.6. Attitudes towards errors**

Different intellectual blocks view errors of language learners in a completely different way. Some of the scholars reveal that errors are indicators of learners' failure to acquire the target language. Others are composed of permissive scholars who are highly tolerant of learner's errors; and they consider errors as positive aid to learning. The different attitude of these scholars towards errors is well elaborated by Carroll (1995) in Teshome (1985) in the following quotation:

In the one camp are the purists for whom any mistake in spelling, grammar, pronunciation, is regarded as personal affront. To them, the learning process boils down to the rooting out of errors... In the other camp are the permissive ones who have little time for rules, and who see any attempt to insist on their observance to be an assault on the liberty of the individual and his right to free expression.

The presence of the above two extremities has an implication on language teacher's attitude towards error as there is a reasonable attitude to correctness somewhere in between the two for the ultimate aim is to produce students who can perform both accurately and fluently to certain agreed level of performance, and within agreed levels of tolerance (Carroll, 1975). Like the individuals, there are differing school of thought which hold different views about error; and this is explained by Bell (1981, p.176) as follows.

For instance, the structuralisms and those influenced by the transformational grammar (the behaviorists and mentalists, in psychological terms) differ in their view about errors. For the former, error, the causes of which are always traced back to the mother tongue are bad because they are considered both as breakdowns in the teaching learning situation, and as deviations from the norm of the target



language signaling failure to behave appropriately. For the later, errors, which are considered systematic on their own right as the language of the learner are unavoidable and a necessary part of the learning process indicating the mental effort of the learner; thereby serving as proofs that learning is going on.

Therefore, the above quotation suggests that the mentalist and behaviorists schools of thought in the theory of second language learning have a positive and negative attitude towards learner's errors respectively. While errors are considered as signs of learning by the former and they are sign of failure for the later.

### **2.7. Causes of error**

Recent theory on language acquisition and teaching methodology supports the idea that not all errors should be corrected, which is based on the fact that errors are normal and unavoidable during the learning process. Current theories of how people learn languages suggest that habit formation is only one part of the process. There are many reasons for errors to occur. Different researches which have been conducted on errors of second language learners suggest that there are various sources of errors. Some sources are linguistics, and others are non - linguistic. Some of these sources have been made based on Norrish (1983) as follows:

#### **i. Carelessness**

It is often closely related to lack of motivation. Many teachers will admit that it is not always the students' fault if he loses interest; perhaps the materials and/or the style of presentation do not suit him. One way of reducing the number of 'careless' errors in written works is to get students to check each other's work. This will involve students in an active search for errors and English can be used for a genuine communication while discussing these errors in class.

#### **ii. First language interference**

This cause of error can be discussed in terms of Skinner's theory of the "behaviorists notion of language learning", which postulates: if language is essentially a set of

habits, then when we try to learn new habits the old ones will interfere with the new ones. This is what is called "mother tongue interference."

### **iii. Translation**

It is the most common reason as to why students make errors in learning a second language. This problem usually arises when there is translation word by word of idiomatic expressions in the learner's first language; and it produces classic howlers. .

### **iv. General order of difficulty**

Chomsky (1969) in Norrish (1983) suggests that there is, regardless of the age by which a child has learnt a particular structure, a characteristic order of learning which is almost invariable. Moreover, recent works on learners of English as a foreign language has indicated that this apparent hierarchy of difficulty may explain, at least partly, some of the learner's errors in English.

### **v. Overgeneralization**

According to George (1972), these types of errors emanate from over generalization of rules and are regarded as a blend of two structures in the 'standard version' of the language. This is because the errors are made as a result of blending structures learnt early in the learning sequence.

### **Vi. Incomplete application of rules**

According to Richards (1974), incomplete application of rules is considered as the reverse side of overgeneralization; and it has got two possible causes. One is the use of questions in the classroom, where the learner is encouraged to repeat the question or part of it in the answer. The second cause is the fact that the learner may discover that he can communicate perfectly and adequately using deviant forms.

### **Vii. Material- induced errors**

There are English teaching materials which cause students to make errors by letting them develop 'self-concept' and ignorance of rules of restrictions.

### Viii. Errors as part of language creativity

Learners who are limited in their opportunities of listening to examples of the target language tend to form hypothetical rules about the new language on insufficient evidence. This limitation causes error commission. However, the creativity and adventurousness in students is something that the alert and responsive teacher, at any level, will wish to encourage (Norrish, 1983, pp. 34 -35).

In discussing the sources of errors in second language learning, Brown (1994) has also identified the following four causes.

1. Inter - lingual transfer: it refers to interference of learner's native language with their second language
2. Intra-lingual transfer: it refers to learner's failure to master the rules of the target language.
3. Context of learning: it refers to the classroom with its teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning.
4. Communication Strategies: it refers to the fact that learners' production strategies in order to enhance getting their message across at times can become sources of errors.

Brown has also added that there are countless "affective variables" which can be taken as other equally possible sources of learners errors. Moreover, the cause of errors can be attributed to poor teaching, the teacher, the syllabus, and the teaching materials or the learner, for there is no perfect learning (Broughton cited in Teshome 1985). Furthermore, personal and health related factors such as fatigue and ill- health are another equally important factors causing error commission in both written and spoken productions of learners (Hubbard et al. 1983 & Brown, 1987).

### 2.8. Error correction

Error correction remains one of the most contentious and misunderstood issues in foreign language teaching, and there is no consensus about its application (Ancker, 2000, p.24). In research articles, it is often referred to as feedback, so the latter term



will also be used interchangeably. Errors are part of the students' inter-language, i.e. the version of the language which a learner has at any stage of development, and which is continually reshaped on the way towards language mastery (Harmer, 2000, p.100). The term "inter-language" was coined by L. Selinker (1972, p.209). Interestingly, learners' inter-languages contain rules that are different from the native speakers' competence. The students may temporarily produce sentences that deviate from native correctness.

On the other hand, error correction refers to the remediation or repair of students' errors. Different scholars, however, have provided their own definition of error correction. Long (1977), for example, has defined it by saying that, "error correction is describing the hoped for results of feedback on errors." In this definition, the term "feedback" is used to refer error detection which is designed to promote correction by supplying learners with information about the correctness of their language production. According to Chadron (1988), on the other hand, error correction or error treatment (as used interchangeably in this study) refers to any reaction by the teacher that clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to or demands improvement. And, such treatments may result in the elicitation of a correct response from the learner or in the learner's autonomous ability to correct him/her.

It is generally believed that by making the students aware of the mistakes they make and by getting them to act on those mistakes in some way, the students will assimilate the corrections and eventually not make those mistakes in the future. Some researchers (Mc Garrell & Verbeem, 2007, pp.37-46) suggest that feedback on L2 writing falls somewhere between two extremes – evaluative or formative feedback. Evaluative feedback typically passes judgments on the draft, reflects on sentence-level errors, and takes the form of directives for improvement on assignments. Formative feedback, which is sometimes referred to as facilitative or intermediate feedback, it typically consists of feedback that takes an inquiring stance towards the text. It often consists of questions intended to raise awareness of the reader's understanding of the meaning of the text as a means to encourage substantial revision on the next draft. It should be noted that the nature of teacher feedback differs widely among teachers and classes.

Generally speaking, the factors involved include course objectives, assignment objectives, marking criteria, individual student expectations, strengths, weaknesses, and attitude toward writing.

Thus, the above explanations reveal that the corrections of language learners' errors play a significant role in the teaching of language courses for it is a good mechanism of raising learners' awareness about the rules of the language under study.

To conclude this part, it can be said that error correction is an integral part of language teaching and a language teacher should constantly engage him/her in correcting learners' errors.

## **2.9. Innovative ways of written error correction**

Previously, written errors are typically corrected by the teacher writing the correct forms in and the students copying the compositions into final corrected versions. As a result of this, students learn little or nothing through this passive procedure. Proof of this is that, no matter how many compositions full of red-inked corrections they get back, they keep on making the same written errors month after month and course after course (Hamerly, 1991, p.106).

The use of peer feedback in the English writing classes has been generally supported as a potentially valuable aid for its social, cognitive, affective, and methodological benefits. The affective advantage of peer response over teacher response is that it is less threatening, less authoritarian, and more supportive, but students judge it as less helpful; however, 80% of peers' comments were considered valid, and only 7% seen as potentially damaging (Rollinson, 2005, p.23).

Electronic feedback has drawn researchers' interest for more than two decades (Allah, 2008). Incorporating e-feedback along with face-to-face modes has been shown to yield the best results in terms of quality of feedback and impact on revisions. This technique involves students' learning preferences, which have positive influence on learning. In peer feedback, the teacher should encourage students to comment on many of their classroom writing activities. Even though computers are becoming more and

more an integral part of the writing classrooms, English teachers should deal with integrating electronic feedback with a balance of enthusiasm and caution (Allah, 2008). Rushing to adopt new trends without careful planning before and during e-feedback sessions can negatively influence students' performance in the writing classroom.

Teacher feedback on students' written work appears to be the most common and the most predominant one. Studies also show that students incline towards teacher feedback as a reliable source of information on their writing. Zhang's (1995) study shows that students prefer teacher feedback to peer feedback. In spite of this, according to Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p.358), teacher feedback is often seen as a more traditional overall format. They proceed to contend that until the emergence of the process movement in writing instruction, much feedback to students on their writing appears in the form of a final grade on a paper, often accompanied by much red ink throughout the essay (Grabe and Kaplan 1996, p.388). A more strong criticism on the traditional form of teacher feedback comes from Berkow (2002, p.195). He argues that in a common model of teaching the students give an essay to the instructor, the instructor puts red marks on it; the essay is handed back, and nobody ever reads it again. The student does not develop much a sense of audience.

There is an argument that the writer himself/herself can provide information to improve his or her writing. Reflecting on the role of self-evaluation in which students can make their own revisions and improve their writing significantly, Hyland and Hyland (2006, p.92) write that it is not appropriate to overlook the writers as critical readers and reviewers of their own texts. They also contend, quoting Brinko (1993), that feedback is more effective when information is gathered from the subjects themselves as well as others. Yet, other scholars do not rely on self-evaluation claiming the need to have feedback from other sources. In either way, any form of feedback should be in such a way that it moves the students to a more independent role where they can critically evaluate and correct their own writing.

Edge (1989, p.51) underlining the need to give the first chance to the student to self-correct, points out that for self-correction to work, we have to give a little time at the beginning of a lesson for students to look at their marked work and try to correct any mistakes. What she emphasizes here is that feedback from other sources should promote self-correction. Makino (1993, p.338) also argues saying, "In the process of language learning, learners sometimes notice some of their errors by themselves, through the strategy of monitoring, and they can also correct some of their errors when other people such as teachers or peers, give them cues or hints about them".

### **2.10. Should second language learners' errors be corrected?**

Researchers and applied linguists have been arguing against and for concerning the question: should learners' errors be corrected? To make a mention of some of these arguments, Sheorey (1986) is of the view that error correction is important because most people, including native speakers, are less tolerant of written errors than spoken errors. Hendrickson (1980), on his part concluded that error correction does improve the proficiency of learners. He further explained that error correction in the adult foreign language classrooms helps many learners to become aware of the exact environment for applying grammatical rules and for discovering the precise semantic range of lexical items. Lalande (1982) also believes that unless all errors in writing are identified, the faulty linguistic structures, rather than the correct ones, may become ingrained in the students' inter-language system.

On the other hand, for Freeman (1991), though error correction can be intrusive and unwarranted during communicative phase activities, focused error correction is highly desirable because it provides the negative evidence students often need to reject or modify their hypothesis about the target language. Ellis (1990) on his part argues that bringing errors to the learners' attention helps learning. He considers error correction as a contributory task in the process of consciousness rising, which he thinks is important for language acquisition. Furthermore, he has the view that error treatment is not a manipulative process as it was seen to be by advocates of audio-lingual learning theory.

As opposed to the above views, there are also researches which claim that students' errors should be ignored because their correction does not significantly affect learning. Their views were forwarded, according to Ellis (1990), by inter-language theorists who argued that it was pointless correcting errors which for them were inevitable and an integral part of second language acquisition. Furthermore, Chaudron (1988) states that it seems extremely difficult to verify the effect of correction and the correction of students' written errors is often ineffective in reducing errors because teachers correct errors inconsistently. In like manner, others like Krashen (1982); Krashen and Terrel (1983) expressed similar doubts about the effectiveness of error correction. Their argument is that the errors made by learners are simply indicators of a certain stage in their inter-language continuum which will develop naturally into more accurate and appropriate form. Regardless of the above contending arguments, most students understand the importance of error correction in helping them to test their hypothesis about how the target language is formed or functions. As a result, they often deliberately and regularly seek error correction to assist them with their language learning task (Larsen & Freeman, 1991). Makino (1993) has strengthened this argument by saying that, "most students expect and want their teachers to help them to correct their own written errors so that the chance of recurrence will be reduced, if not eradicated."

To sum up, although error correction is not always welcomed, its importance in ELT classrooms is not questionable; especially in countries like Ethiopia where English is learnt and taught as a second or foreign language, it has never lost sight.

### **2.11. Which learners' errors should be corrected?**

It is an obvious fact that errors occur in the process of language learning. It is equally true that the quantity of errors that occur in the classroom is enormous. Consequently, a considerable number of errors pass without any comment in the language classroom (Chaudron, 1986). There are a number of reasons for this. To begin with, the sheer amount of errors makes it impossible for the teachers to attend to all the errors that occur within the space of a lesson period. Another reason which is particularly true of



non-native speakers refers to the gap in the teachers' knowledge of the target language (Allwright & Bailey, 1991).

The research into the effects of error correction is far from conclusive. On the one hand, J. Truscott (1996, pp.327- 369) suggests that error correction of grammar, spelling, punctuation is ineffective and should be abandoned. On the other hand, C. G. Kepner (1991, pp.305-313) argues that feedback on content and organization is very important. Surprisingly, little research has explored important aspects of teachers' and students' preferences for feedback in error correction.

In spite of the above arguments, it is necessary for teachers to have a principled basis for a hierarchy of errors which they can use to determine what is important to correct (Burt & Kiparsky, 1974). Accordingly, in response to the need for establishing pedagogical priorities, researchers have proposed a variety of criteria for judging the relative importance of errors. Hendrickson (1978, p. 396), for example, suggested that the following three types of errors receive greatest attention in the language classroom: "errors that seriously impair communication, errors that have stigmatizing effect upon the listener or reader, and errors that students produce frequently." Other people like Burt and Kiparsky (1974) have suggested that errors that render communication difficult (global errors) should have a priority over those that affect single elements or constituents (local errors). While frequency may not always be a good guide in deciding which errors to correct, the criterions which focus on the effect of communication are appealing.

#### **2.12. When should learners' errors be corrected?**

Once the teacher has decided to correct errors, the next major task he or she faces involves decision about when to treat it. Hendrickson (1978) argued that there are both affective and cognitive justifications for tolerating errors produced by language learners. It is argued that while tolerating some errors encourages taking risks and developing more confidence in using the language, trying to correct each minor error is likely to destroy their confidence and erode their willingness to take risk. Moreover, Hendrickson (1978) again suggested that reserving error correction for manipulative

grammar practice and tolerating more errors during communicative practice can have a beneficial effect on the feelings and performance of learners. This claim is supported by the finding that students reacted negatively when a teacher tried to correct all their errors.

### **2.13. How should learners' errors be corrected?**

Several studies have been attempted to describe the feedback behavior of language teachers and the strategies they opt to correct errors once they have detected an error in the learners' utterance or composition. For instance, Allwright (1975) identifies seven basic treatment options together with a further nine possible features. The basic options open to the teacher include: to treat or to ignore completely; to treat immediately or delay; to transfer treatment or not; to transfer to another individual, a sub- group or to the whole class; to return or not to original error make after treatment and to call upon or permit another learner or (learners) to provide treatment. The aspects of treatment which he refers to as features deal with the purposes of treatment such as indicating the commission of an error, identifying the type of error committed; locating the error etc.

### **2.14. Who should correct learners' error?**

After a teacher has decided to treat learner error, the next issue in the series of questions involved in the decision making process leading to treatment concerns the question of who should correct a noticed error. The teacher has three choices here: to give the error maker the chance to self - correct (self correction), to call on other learners to provide correction (Peer correction) or to do the correction by himself or herself (teacher correction) (Long, 1977).

Among the aforementioned types of correction, self-correction is favored by many researchers. This is because self - correction seems to be a more appropriate way of training students to monitor their own target language speech or composition (Chandron, 1988). Self correction has also another equally important advantage of being less threatening, more motivating and cognitively more engaging for the learner

(Van Leer, 1988). Even here In Ethiopia, there are researches which assure the effectiveness of self-correction. A typical example is the one conducted by Tesfaye (1995). His research was conducted on the effectiveness of learner self - correction of written errors in EFL classrooms. One of the major findings of Tesfaye's study was that procedures which invited students to self - correction were associated with improved student performance.

However, Krashen (1982) argued that the efficiency of self - correction is likely to vary according to the conditions in which the correction is done. It seems that the more learners' attention is focused on form, the more likely they are to successfully edit their output. On the other hand, the rate of successful correction is likely to fall when the focus is on communication and no attempt is made to draw learner's attention to form by alerting them to the existence or location of an error by pointing out the rules broken. Peer correction is also another option. All Wright and Bailey (1991) have speculated that more actual learning may result from a substantial proportion of the corrective task being carried out by the learners' themselves i.e. either the learner who committed the error (self - correction) or another member of the class (peer correction). Here in Ethiopia, a study conducted by Italo (1999) on the effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback on Addis Ababa University Students writing revision, indicate that both techniques led to a comparable result in improving student written performance.

### **2.15. Different forms of correcting written errors**

Correction of written errors is generally considered as a private and confidential transaction between the teacher and the student. This section, therefore, is mainly intended to discuss some of the different forms (mediums) a teacher or a reader, who is correcting learner's written works uses to communicate his/her comments to the student writer. These forms mainly include: error identification, writing comments, conferencing, taped commentary, and reformulation. A brief discussion of each technique is presented as follows.

### **i. Error Identification**

This is done by using shorthand of correcting codes written in the margins or above the error. This form of correction is time saving and easy to use. However, error identification is problematic because the correcting codes could be ambiguous and confusing for different advocates of the form tend to suggest different codes for the same language feature. For instance, Byrene (1988, p. 125) suggests **S** for spelling; whereas Norrish (1983, p. 75) suggests **SP** for spelling. The other problem with this form of correction is that it focuses on the surface errors in spelling, lexis, syntax, and punctuation and hence overlooks the central issues of composition such as cohesion, content, and clarity of meaning. However, Brumfit (1980) remarks that if learners errors are identified and left to the students for correcting, the students can benefit from group discussions that arise while correcting errors and this could help the learners to develop oral fluency amongst other advantages of error identification.

### **ii. Writing Comments**

This technique seems to be the most common form used by classroom teachers when they respond to students' writing. However, writing comments is said to be disadvantageous because it is time- consuming and taxing. Moreover, it is quite doubtful that students read these comments and use them to improve their writings. Teachers might think that they have done their job properly by writing all kinds of errors they come across in the student paper. But, Keh (1990) suggests that teachers should distinguish between 'high order' and 'low order' concerns when giving written comments and keep in mind that students can not pay attention to everything at once. This form of correction could be effective if the comments are clear, genuine, relevant, and specific to the work of the students and if the teacher reader suggests some helpful strategies so that the student writer could use them to improve his/her work (Zamel, 1985).

### **iii. Conferencing**

This technique enables the teacher and the student to come face to face with each other. The teacher is a 'live' audience, and he/she is able to ask for further clarification, check

the comprehensibility of oral comments made, help the writer to sort through the problems, and assist the student in decision making. Therefore, the role of the teacher can be perceived as a participant in the writing process rather than as a grade-giver. Compared to writing comments, conferencing also allows more correction and more accurate feedback to be given in the relatively shorter period of time. The drawback with this form of correction might be that it is demanding and time-consuming. Besides, some students might be reluctant to confer with their teachers due to their low English proficiency and/or shyness though the problem could be overcome by encouraging students and explaining the benefit of conferencing to them (Keh, 1990).

#### **iv. Taped commentary**

This technique is used with advanced students by giving remarks on a tape recorder. It may help the students to improve their listening skills; especially if the teacher is a native speaker or has a near - native proficiency in English. It also allows more detailed, natural, and informative remarks while increasing teacher-student rapport (Hyland, 1990). However, this technique is problematic for some institutions would be hesitant to use it because it incurs money and students may not have tape recorders of their own.

#### **v. Reformulation**

It is an attempt made by a native writer to understand what a non - native writer is trying to say and then re-write it in a form more natural to the native writer (Allwright, 1988). The re-writing may necessitate making changes of many kinds and at all levels as Allwright further explains. It seems interesting but its feasibility is questionable, especially in an EFL context where writing is, in most cases, exclusively taught by non - natives and the students' English proficiency is incredibly low and there are no native speakers of English in the class as it is the case in our country Ethiopia. Moreover, its effectiveness could be undermined due to the fact that writing teachers tend to misread students texts, are inconsistent in their comments and write contradictory comments.

Hendrickson (1992), on his part propose the use of the combination of direct and indirect treatments for correcting written errors. Indirect correction treatments may be done in either one or combinations of four of the following ways: -

1. By underlining incorrect orthographic and morphological forms,
2. By circling an inappropriate word,
3. By inserting an arrow to indicate a missing word, and
4. By placing a question mark alongside a confusing word or structure

Direct correction treatments, on the other hand, may be done in the following ways, beginning with the least direct correction treatment:

1. By underlining a word and providing a written tip,
2. By bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and indicating its proper place in a sentence,
3. By crossing out a superfluous word, and
4. by providing a correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase.

In addition to these techniques, Wingfield (1975) has identified a variety of techniques typically used in classrooms for correcting written errors. These include:

1. Providing sufficient clues to enable self - correction,
2. Correcting the script by the teacher,
3. Providing marginal comments and footnotes,
4. Oral explanations, and
5. Using the errors as illustrations for class explanations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the study area, the research design, methodological steps and procedures used to carry out the study.

#### 3.1. The study area

The research was conducted in two schools found in Oromia Regional State in West Shoa Zone Bako Tibe Woreda of Bako Secondary school and Tibe Secondary School. It is located at a distance of 250kms far from Addis Ababa and 125kms from Ambo.

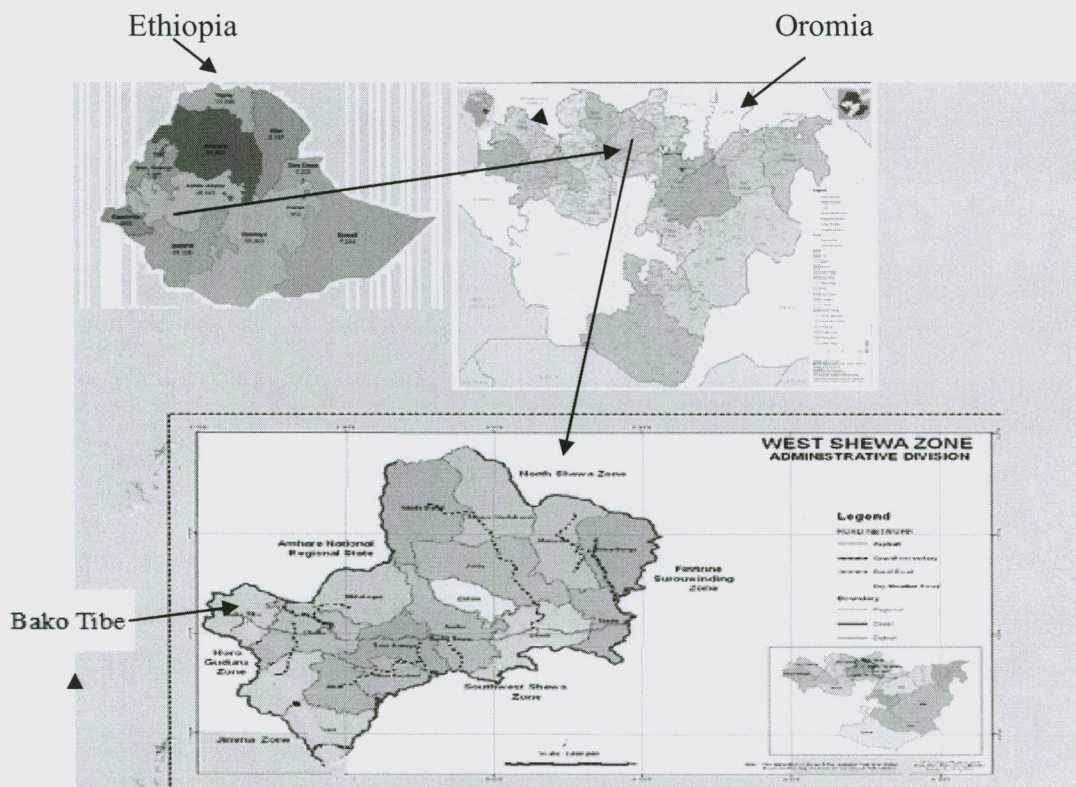


Figure 1: Map of the study area

### **3.2. Research design**

The study attempted to describe the extent to which innovative ways of written error correction were implemented in English Language Teaching (ELT) classes. To this end, a descriptive survey method was chosen as it enables the researcher to describe the current status of an area of the study. This kind of research involves a collection of techniques used to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation (Seliger & Shohamy, 1989). The study used survey because the researcher hoped that it helps to collect appropriate information in specific areas within short periods of time and within limited budget. Besides, the analysis mainly was quantitative and qualitative, which put teachers and students open ended questions in to account. Sharma (2000) describes that a descriptive survey is helpful to identify present conditions and point to present needs. Besides, it is useful in showing immediate status of a phenomenon.

### **3.3. Population and sampling technique**

The target populations of this study were Bako Secondary School and Tibe Secondary School grade 10 English language teachers and students in 2007 academic year. The sample sizes of the student participant were 259 selected from the total students.

Students were sampled based on Seliger and Shohamy (1989). According to these writers, the sample size depends on the type of investigation. Neuman (2003) also indicates ten to twenty five percent is an adequate sample in a descriptive study. The total numbers of students learning in grade 10 were 1041 (543 in Bako and 498 in Tibe secondary schools) in 2007 academic year. Among these, 25% (259 students), including both male and female students, were taken for this research purpose. Concerning Bako Secondary School, 135 students were taken. From Tibe Secondary School 124 students were taken. Accordingly, female and male students were taken into consideration and selected according to stratified sampling. The following is the sample size of male and female students taken based on stratified sampling.



$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Bako secondary school} = \text{Total- 543} \\ \text{Female- 211} \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{l} 25\% \text{ of Total} - 135 \\ \text{Male- 332} \end{array}$$

Therefore: - Female/male =  $\frac{25\% \times \text{Number of Females/males}}{\text{Total Number of Students}}$

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Female} = \frac{135 \times 211}{543} = 52 \\ \text{Male} = \frac{135 \times 332}{543} = 83 \end{array}$$

The same step was applied for Tibe Secondary School; male (76) and female (48). Total size of this school was 305 and 193 male and female students respectively. The next procedure was to determine who should be the actual participant of the study. In order to get sample population, the researcher got the attendance of the students and placed their names into two different categories based on sex. Systematic random sampling method was used and every the first seventh students were taken until the desired number was achieved.

### **3.4. Data collection instruments**

To obtain the necessary data, various instruments were used. First, the researcher prepared questionnaires for both the teachers and students as the major data gathering instruments. Besides this, the researcher designed interview for the teachers and corrected written documents which were returned to students was observed to triangulate the information.

#### **3.4.1. Questionnaire**

Two sets of questionnaires were employed in the study. The first one was used to elicit information from the teachers while the second one was used to obtain information from the students in line with the research objectives. The questionnaires included

both open-ended and close-ended items. Best and Kahn (2005) indicate that both kind of items can be used in questionnaires. They also point out that the open-form probably provides a greater depth of response. Therefore, the respondents revealed their frame of reference and possibly the reasons for their responses.

In case of the close-ended items, the rating scale was used. Best and Kahn assert that the rating scale involves qualitative description of a limited number of aspects of a thing or of traits of a person. The classifications was set up in five categories in terms of always, often, sometimes, rarely and never/ strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. Kerlinger (1964) also confirms that a convenient way to measure both actual behavior and perceived or remembered behavior is with rating scales. Questionnaires were designed to investigate teachers' and students' perception and teachers implementation of innovative ways of written error correction.

#### **3.4.2. Teachers' questionnaire**

The questionnaires were designed to get the teachers' reflection about their overall perception towards written error correction and the techniques they implemented while correcting them. The questions that required the teachers' reflection about their perception towards errors were designed because teachers' attitude towards errors has an impact on their correction policy. In addition to this, the researcher attempted to gather data on written texts to check the kinds of feedback given by the teachers' when correcting their students' written errors.

#### **3.4.3. Students' questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed for the students to crosscheck the data that were found from the response of the teachers. To do so, the students were asked questions which were more or less similar in nature with that of the questions presented to the teachers. Almost all the questions presented in the teachers' questionnaire were incorporated with a very simple modification. For the ease of communication as well as to make the

questions more comprehensible, the researcher translated the items to Afaan Oromo to gather an appropriate data.

#### **3.4.4. Teachers' interview**

For the sake of obtaining additional data about teacher's attitudes and the actual practice of innovative ways of written error correction, semi-structured interview were applied. Its flexibility made the interview one of the most important tools. Roger (1997) clearly emphasizes the importance of interview as it is the most flexible means of obtaining information since face to face interaction lends itself easily to questioning in greater depth and detail.

Interview was used to elicit detailed information from the teachers. The purpose of interview was to obtain information by actually talking to the subject (Selinger and Shohamy 1989; McDonough and Shaw 1993). The semi-structured interview consisted of specific and defined questions determined beforehand, but at the same time, it allowed some elaboration in the questions and answers (Nunan 1992). Roger (1997) also clearly emphasizes the importance of interview as it is the most flexible means of obtaining information since face to face lends itself easily to questioning in greater depth and detail. The interviews were taken from the questionnaires so that to cross check teachers' responses.

#### **3.4.5. Corrected and returned students written work**

In order to triangulate the information gathered from the teachers and students on corrective behavior and techniques, the researcher tried to collect corrected and returned texts from the students. This was done by requesting the students to provide their corrected texts. For the purpose of keeping the corrected text confidential, the students were told to erase their names. While collecting these texts, the researcher got each text photocopied and returned the original copy to the students.

### **3.5. Data collection procedures**

In the middle of the second semester, after an orientation about the content and purpose of the questionnaire were given by the researcher, students were given questionnaire to complete; teachers, then, were given the questionnaire to complete in regular classrooms. The data were gathered on a normal teaching day. Semi-structured interview was then conducted with teachers after distributing and having the teacher questionnaire filled. Explanations in English, Amharic and Afaan Oromo were given as needed with the hope that the target students were capable of understanding and responding to them. Moreover, the students were told to feel free and ask for clarification when they encounter any difficulty while they fill the questionnaire. This was done for the purpose of avoiding confusion and ambiguity when the students were responding to the items in the questionnaire.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

According to Selinger and Shahamy (1998), data analysis refers to “shifting, organizing, and synthesizing the data so as to arrive at the results and conclusions of the research.” To analyze the data, the researcher arranged the information obtained through questionnaire. Thus, she did the analysis by employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. To do the analysis, the responses which were obtained from both the teachers' and students' questionnaires (especially those responses which were obtained from the items designed by using the Likert scale) were tallied, tabulated, interpreted; and they were used for the quantitative analysis. Furthermore, percentage and frequency were the dominant ones which used in the analysis of the data because this methods best suit the descriptive analysis of the data. Moreover, the responses that obtained from the "Yes" or "No" and open - ended items were used for the qualitative analysis because these items invited the students and the teachers to write comments regarding the practice of written error correction. The analysis of corrected and returned texts was another equally important source of data for the qualitative analysis.

Generally, teachers' and students' responses to the Likert Scale items of the questionnaire were tallied. Then, the frequency and the percentage were summarized to discuss how each item was responded. To support the results of the above statistical analysis, the responses obtained from the "Yes" or "No" and open-ended questions along with the analysis of the corrected and returned written texts were organized and used for the qualitative analysis of the study. Moreover, the interpretation, analysis and discussion were given based on the results obtained accompanied by what the literature (that has been presented in chapter two) says about the issue under study. Finally, depending on the interpretation and findings; summary, conclusions and the possible recommendations were drawn.

### **3.7. Ethical considerations**

The ethics of research refers to what is and what is not permissible to do when carrying out research. Researchers have professional and moral obligation to meet ethical standards. In this regard, “Governments, professional organizations, universities and funding agencies have established ethical guidelines and codes of conduct for researchers to follow” (Kalof, Dan & Deitz, 2008, as sighted in Getachew, et al. 2014). According to these authors, a research project that is conducted by this researcher was followed by the necessary steps in order to be beneficiary from the study participants and respects participants’ rights to minimize the risks.

From the very beginning, the research title and proposal was approved by the research review boards of Jimma University Social Science College and Humanities of English Language and Literature Department. Further more, showing them the letter she received from Jimma University, the researcher explained to the principals of Bako and Tibe Secondary Schools the purpose and the concept on which she conducts the research,. This made easier for her to get the required subjects who helped her to accomplish the study and material support from those schools.

Before collecting data from the participants, an orientation about the content and purpose of the questionnaire were given by the researcher and then teachers' and students' questionnaires were distributed. In doing so, some terms and words that were happened unfamiliar to the students were explained in their native language by the researcher and data collector. Moreover, in her study, she acknowledged scholars work in collecting data, analysis of data and report findings.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained through questionnaire, interview and corrected and returned written documents. The chapter has four main sections. In section one, the analysis of teachers' questionnaire is presented and discussed. Next, the data collected through students' questionnaires were discussed. Then, teachers' interview was presented. Finally, corrected and returned written document analysis is presented.

#### **4.1. Teachers' questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed to get the teachers' reflection about their overall perception towards written error corrections and the technique they implemented while correcting. In this process, eight teachers were involved, five teachers from Bako secondary school and three teachers from Tibe secondary school. The questions that required the teachers' reflection about their perception towards errors were used because teachers' perception towards errors has an impact on their correction policy.

##### **4.1.1. Teachers' perceptions and responses towards written error correction**

The tables listed under this section, Tables 1, 2, and 3, summarize the data on teachers perception towards the importance of correcting students' written errors (Table 1); teachers' response towards who should correct learners written errors (Table 2); and teachers' response towards which learners' written errors be corrected (Table 3). Before directly asking teachers' practical implementation of innovative ways of written error correction, it is important to know their perception and response towards the questions as they might have positive or negative influences on their written error correction practice.

**Table 1:** Teachers' perceptions towards written error correction.

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Learners' written errors should be corrected so that they will be aware of the rules of the target language.	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	6	75	1	12.5	8	100
2	Written error correction helps to minimize faulty linguistic structures from the students' written works.	1	12.5	1	12.5	-	-	4	50	2	25	8	100
3	Students written errors should be ignored because their correction doesn't significantly affect learning	2	25	4	50	1	12.5	1	12.5	-	-	8	100
4	Teachers' error correction helps the students to discover the precise usage of vocabularies.	-	-	-	-	2	2.5	3	37.5	3	37.5	8	100

As it is shown in Table 1, concerning the importance of learners written error correction which are presented in items 1, 2, and 4; teachers' response were positive because majority of them responded to the items by choosing agree and strongly agree options. This result showed that teachers attitude towards the importance of learners written error correction is promising. Furthermore; teachers' response on item 3 which was negatively stated statement can be taken as evidence as they disagreed on it.

In line with this study, Sheorey (1986) states that the view that error correction is important because most people, including native speakers, are less tolerant of written errors than spoken errors. In addition, Hendrickson (1980) concluded that error correction



does improve the proficiency of learners. He further explained that error correction in the adult foreign language classrooms helps many learners to become aware of the exact environment for applying grammatical rules and for discovering the precise semantic range of lexical items.

Even if some scholars like Freeman (1991) and Chadron (1988) opposes the importance of learners' written error correction, this idea is rejected by the teachers' response as they seem to be well aware of the benefits of their written correction render to their students and for learning writing as well. They states that students' errors should be ignored because their correction does not significantly affect learning. They added, focused error correction is highly desirable because it provides the negative evidence students often need to reject or modify their hypothesis about the target language and also extremely difficult to verify the effect of correction and the correction of students' written errors is often ineffective in reducing errors because teachers correct errors inconsistently.

**Table 2:** Teachers' responses of their perception on who should correct students' written error.

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
5	Encouraging your students to exchange written feedback on each other as peers is very important.	-	-	1	12.5	-	-	5	62.5	2	25	8	100
6	Teachers should give chance for students who to correct his/her written error by him/herself.	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	75	2	25	8	100
7	It is the teacher who corrects students' written error	-	-	3	37.5	-	-	-	-	5	62.5	8	100

**Table 2**

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
8	The teacher should let his students exchange their written works and correct it.	-		1	12.5	-		4	50	3	37.5	8	100
9	Students will learn more if the teacher corrects their written errors.	-		2	25	1	12.5	4	50	1	12.5	8	100

As indicated in Table.2 above, 5(62.5%) of the teachers agreed that encouraging our students to exchange written feedback on each other as peers are very important. Six (75%) of the teachers ranked teachers should give the chance for the student who makes the error to correct his/her written error by him/herself and 5(62.5%) of them strongly agreed that it is the teacher who corrects students' written error. On the idea the teacher should let his students exchange their written works and correct it, is agreed by 4(50%) of the teachers and strongly agreed by 3(37.5%) of them. 4(50%) of the teachers agreed that students will learn more if the teacher corrects their written errors.

From the data obtained in the above Table, it is possible to conclude that, the majority of teachers have positive attitude towards who correct learners written errors. Their perception is teachers, students themselves, and peers have equally important responsibilities in correcting learners' written errors. The literature also suggests that, the teacher has three choices here: to give the error maker the chance to self correct (self correction), to call on other learners to provide correction (Peer correction) or to do the correction by himself or herself (teacher correction) (Long, 1977).

**Table 3:** Teachers response of their perception towards which learners' written error should be corrected

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
10	Written errors that seriously inhibit communication should be corrected first.	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100
11	Errors that have stigmatizing effect up on the reader should be corrected immediately.	1	12.5	-	-	1	12.5	6	75	-	-	8	100
12	Errors that students produce frequently should be given priority when correcting written error.	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100
13	Correcting each and every error is expected from the teacher to correct in order to encourage students' confidence and improve their writing proficiency.	3	37.5	2	25	-	-	2	25	1	12.5	8	100
14	All written errors of learners should be corrected.	1	12.5	3	37.5	2	25	2	25	-	-	8	100

As can be seen in Table 3 above, on items 10, 11, and 12, teachers were asked to give their response on the nature of errors that need correction. With this regard, the responses of the teachers told that they are well-aware of the nature of learner written errors that call for teacher correction. This is confirmed by the substantial majority of the respondents, that is 5(62.5%), 6(75%) and 5(62.5%) respectively, because they agree with the fact that written errors that seriously inhibit communication, stigmatize the reader, and are produced frequently should be corrected.

On the other hand, the majority of the teachers disagreed on the idea that correcting each and every minor error is expected from the teacher to correct in order to encourage students' confidence and improve their writing proficiency (> 3 teachers, 37.5%) and all written errors of learners should be corrected (3 teachers, 37.5%).

The above teachers' responses go in line with what the literature regarding innovative ways of learner written error correction states. For instance, J. Truscott (1996, pp.327-369) suggests that error correction of grammar, spelling, punctuation is ineffective and should be abandoned. On the other hand, C. G. Kepner (1991, pp.305-313) argues that feedback on content and organization is very important. The number of respondents who have an opposite view is insignificantly very few.

#### **4.1.2. Teachers' responses on the frequencies they implement innovative ways of written error correction in English language classroom.**

The next four Tables, Tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 revealed the frequencies of teachers practical implementation of innovative ways of written error correction focusing on, how often teachers implement different innovative ways/ techniques of written error correction in their English classrooms (Table 4, Table 5, and Table 7), and who frequently corrects learners' written errors in English language classroom (Table 6).

**Table 4:** Teacher Responses on How Often They Practiced **Indirect** Techniques to Correct Students' Written Error

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
15	I correct written errors by writing <b>SP</b> for spelling error, <b>WO</b> for word order, etc., in the margin or above the error.	-	-	3	37.5	3	37.5	2	25	-	-	8	100
16	I give correction by underlining incorrect orthographic and morphological forms.	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	75	1	12.5	8	100
17	I give correction by circling inappropriate words.	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	100	-	-	8	100
18	I place a question mark alongside a confusing word or structure.	1	12.5	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5	1	12.5	8	100
19	I insert arrow to indicate a missing word.	2	25	2	25	3	37.5	1	12.5	-	-	8	100

Table 4 above illustrates, the highest percentage (37.5%) of the respondents responded that the teacher rarely or sometime correct students' written error by writing **SP** for spelling error, **WO** for word order, etc. in the margin or above the error. This method of error correction invites the learners to correct it by themselves and they can benefit from the group discussion that arises when correcting the already identified errors (Brumfit, 1980). The practice of correcting written errors by underlining incorrect orthographic and morphological forms and by circling an inappropriate word (as

indicated in item 16 and 17 respectively) are the ones which have received the highest frequency as they used this techniques often, that is, 6(75%) and 8(100%) respectively.

The rest two indirect techniques i.e. item 18, placing a question mark alongside a confusing word and item 5, inserting arrow to indicate a missing word are practiced "rarely" and "sometimes" respectively. Hendrickson (1992) proposes the use of the combination of direct and indirect treatments for correcting written errors. Indirect correction treatments may be done in either one or combinations of four treatments for correcting written errors (underlining incorrect orthographic and morphological forms, circling an inappropriate word, inserting an arrow to indicate a missing word, and placing a question mark alongside a confusing word or structure).

But based on the result, this may be indicated that, there is an ability to use one or two indirect techniques of correction, which is not good. The teacher rather should have used all the indirect techniques of correction so that they could create variety in their correction techniques.

**Table 5:** Teacher Responses on How Often They Practiced **direct** techniques to correct learners' written error

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
20	I correct written errors by underlining a word and providing a written tip.	-	-	2	25	4	50	2	25	-	-	8	100
21	I correct written errors by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and I indicate its proper place in a sentence.	1	12.5	3	37.5	3	37.5	1	12.5	-	-	8	100

**Table 5**

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
22	I cross out a superfluous (unnecessary or rude word) word in correcting written errors.	-	-	1	12.5	2	25	3	37.5	2	25	8	100
23	I correct written errors by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase.	-	-	1	12.5	2	25	3	37.5	2	25	8	100

Concerning the techniques indicated in table 5 above, 4(50%) of the respondents responded that they correct written errors by underlining a word and providing a written tips sometimes. Others used this technique rarely and often. On item 2, equal percentage was shown (37%) that teachers use this technique rarely and sometimes. Regarding crossing out the superfluous (unnecessary or rude word) word, only 3(37.5%) the respondents use this technique. However, some teachers practiced this technique sometimes and often that is 2 (25%) respondents were responded respectively. The techniques of correction by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase have been practiced often (3(37%) teachers responded). When 2(25%) teachers practiced this technique always, 2(25%) respondents applied it sometimes.

As the literature indicates it is good to use the combination of direct and indirect treatments for correcting written errors (Hendrickson, 1992). Direct correction treatments, on the other hand, may be done in the following ways: by underlining a word and providing a written tip, by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and indicating its proper place in a sentence, by crossing out a superfluous word, and by providing a correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase beginning with the least direct correction treatment. Therefore, from the result, we can conclude that teachers' use of direct techniques is not satisfactory. To direct students improve their writing skill, it is

better to apply all or some of the direct methods of written correction starting from the least correction treatments.

**Table 6:** Teacher responses on how often the teacher, learner himself, or peers correct students' written errors

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
23	I give the chance for the students who makes the error to correct his/her written error by him/herself	2	25	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5	-	-	8	100
24	It is me who corrects students' written error	-	-	-	-	2	25	3	37.5	3	37.5	8	100
25	I let my students exchange their written works and correct it.	3	37.5	2	25	1	12.5	1	12.5	1	12.5	8	100

As shown in the table 6 above, the teacher is frequently take part in correcting students written errors. This is clearly can be seen from the responses given by the teachers, that is, 3(37.5%) teachers replied that they correct often and the other 3(37.5%) respondents responded that they do it always. On the other hand, greater number of teachers 3(37.5%) totally reject students exchange their written works and correct. But, to some extent 3(37.5) teachers rarely give the chance to the students correct their written works by themselves even if it is not satisfactory.

From the result, we can conclude that teachers were not giving the chance for the learners themselves and peers to correct students' written errors rather teachers



monopolized in correcting. Therefore, this way of giving correction neither go along with what the literature says nor what local research proved. Among the types of correction, self-correction is favored by many researchers. This is because self-correction seems to be a more appropriate way of training students to monitor their own target language speech or composition (Chandron, 1988). Self correction has also another equally important advantage of being less threatening, more motivating and cognitively more engaging for the learner (Van Leer, 1988). Even here In Ethiopia, there are researches which assure the effectiveness of self-correction. A typical example is the one conducted by Tesfaye (1995). His research was conducted on the effectiveness of learner self - correction of written errors in EFL classrooms. One of the major findings of Tesfaye's study was that procedures which invited students to self - correction were associated with improved student performance. On the other hand, a study conducted by Italo (1999) on the effectiveness of teacher and peer feedback on Addis Ababa University Students writing revision, indicate that both techniques led to a comparable result in improving student written performance.

**Table 7:** Teachers' responses concerning the practice of correcting students' written error by writing comments, conferencing and taped -commentary.

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
26	I correct written errors by writing comments.	-	-	2	25	4	50	1	12.5	1	12.5	8	100
27	I use conferencing (a procedure where the teacher and the student come face to face with each other) to correct written errors.	5	62.5	1	12.5	1	12.5	1	12.5	-	-	8	100
28	I use taped commentary (a technique where remarks about students' written errors is given on a tape recorder) to correct students' written error.	8	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	100

As can be observed in table 7 above, half (4(50%)) of the respondents sometimes correct students' written errors by writing comments. However, from the remaining (2(25%)) teachers used this technique rarely. Concerning the use of conferencing and tape commentary techniques to correct students' written errors, the majority 5(62.5%) and

8(100%) teachers were never used. Based on the literature, Correction of written errors is generally considered as a private and confidential transaction between the instructor and the student. Therefore, some of the different forms (mediums) that a teacher or a reader, who is correcting learner's written works uses to communicate his/her comments to the student writing are writing comments, conferencing, taped commentary, etc.

As Keh (1990) suggests that teachers should distinguish between 'high order' and 'low order' concerns when giving written comments and..... Zamel (1985), on the other hand, suggests that the form of correction could be effective if the comments are clear, genuine, relevant, and specific to the work of the students and if the teacher reader suggests some helpful strategies so that the student writer could use them to improve his/her work. Conferencing enables the teacher and the student to come face to face with each other. The teacher is a 'live' audience, and he/she is able to ask for further clarification, check the comprehensibility of oral comments made, help the writer to sort through the problems, and assist the student in decision making. Some students might be reluctant to confer with their teachers due to their low English proficiency and/or shyness though the problem could be overcome by encouraging students and explaining the benefit of conferencing to them (Keh, 1990).

Taped commentary is used with advanced students by giving remarks on a tape recorder. It may help the students to improve their listening skills; especially if the teacher is a native speaker or has a near - native proficiency in English. It also allows more detailed, natural, and informative remarks while increasing teacher-student rapport (Hyland, 1990). Generally, from the respondents' response, we can deduce that teachers were never practiced conferencing and taped commentary techniques of correcting written error even if they are helpful to sort through the problems, assist the student in decision making, and improve their listening skill.

## 4.2. Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaires were designed to get the students reflection about their overall perception and response towards written error corrections and the technique their teacher used to correct them in order to crosscheck the data that were found from the response of the teachers. In this process, 1039 students were involved. 543 students from Bako secondary school and 498 students from Tibe secondary school; the questions that required the students' reflection about their perception towards error corrections were designed because students attitude towards error correction has an impact on teachers' correction policy.

### 4.2.1. Students' perception on the importance of written error correction and their response on who should correct students' written error in English language classroom.

The following tables under this section, tables 8, and 9, revealed students perception of the specific objectives; the importance of correcting students' written errors (table 8); and students' response towards who should correct learners written errors (table 9).

**Table 8:** Students' perception concerning the importance of written error correction.

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	My teacher should correct my written error constantly.	-	-	-	-	-	-	123	47.5	136	52.5	259	100

**Table 8**

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2	Correction improves students' writing proficiency, and thus teachers should practice it	-	-	-	-	-	-	105	40.5	154	59.5	259	100
3	Teacher's correction of my written works helps me to become aware of the exact environment for applying grammatical rules and for discovering the precise context of using words.	45	17.4	50	19.3	-	-	58	22.4	106	40.9	259	100
4	My teacher's correction helps me to minimize faulty linguistic structures from my written works.	43	16.6	55	21.2	-	-	95	36.7	66	25.5	259	100
5	Teachers should correct my written errors so that the chance of making mistakes will be reduced.	50	19.3	69	26.6	-	-	78	30.1	62	24	259	100

The students' responses to item 1 in the above Table assured that they have a keen interest to constantly get correction from their teacher. This implies that teacher correction of written errors is taken as his/her constant business in the teaching of English. This has been clearly confirmed by almost all of the students. This indicates the students' great desire to get correction for their writing tasks. The response to item 2, which is about the importance of teacher correction to improve students' proficiency, more than 105 students vividly indicate that teacher correction improves students' writing proficiency and thus teachers should practice it. The responses of the students to the items 3, 4 & 5 brought one tangible finding. That is, greater numbers of students are well - aware of the purposes of correction. Thus, the correction of written errors is well regarded, which is a kind of discovery that should be encouraged.

**Table 9:** Students' response concerning their perception on who should correct students' written errors

No	Items	Responses											
		SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
6	Teachers should order the whole class to exchange and correct written works.	40	15.4	47	18.1	34	13.1	80	31	58	22.4	259	100
7	Teachers should correct my written work.	-	-	-	-	-	-	127	49	132	51	259	100
8	Teachers should give students the chance to correct their errors by themselves.	44	16.9	60	23.2	30	11.6	58	22.4	67	25.9	259	100

As can be seen in Table 10 above, students were asked to give their opinions about their attitude on who should correct students' written error. From the table, students responded that, more than 58(22.4%) students believed that teachers should order the whole class to exchange and correct written works. Regarding item 2, the whole students agreed that teachers should correct students' written work. As far as the chance teachers should give to students to correct their errors by themselves is concerned, the students response reveals that when 67(25.9%) like to correct their error by themselves, 60(23.2%) students dislikes to correct their compositions by themselves. This may be because of their poor command of the target language and it also re-assures their over dependence on teacher correction, which is a kind of tradition that need to be reversed. From this we can conclude that greater number of respondents have positive attitude that learners composition can be corrected by the teacher, peers, and/or by the writers themselves.

#### **4.2.2. Students' response on how often their teacher practice in correcting learners' written errors**

The following four Tables, Table 10, 11, 12, and 13 indicates the frequencies of teachers practical implementation of innovative ways of written error correction focusing on, the frequencies how teachers implement different innovative ways/ techniques of written error correction in their English classrooms (Table 11, Table 12, and Table 13), and who frequently corrects learners' written errors in English language classroom (Table 10). These questions are presented for the students to cross check the teachers' response on implementing innovative ways of written error correction.

**Table 10:** Students responses on how often the teacher, learner himself, or peers correct students' written errors

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
9	My teacher gives me the chance to correct my written error by my self.	70	27	81	31.2	59	22.8	49	19	-	-	259	100
10	My teacher corrects my errors by him/her self.	38	14.7	44	17	45	17.4	70	27	62	23.9	259	100
11	My teacher orders the whole class to exchange and correct written works.	70	27	79	30.5	40	15.4	36	14	34	13.1	259	100

The response in the above Table, concerning the question who corrects written errors, clearly shows that the teacher is the one who is taking the priority to correct learners' written error. Self correction and peer correction, based on the above statistics, are almost impractical. According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p.358), teacher feedback is often seen as a more traditional overall format. They proceed to contend that until the emergence of the process movement in writing instruction, much feedback to students on their writing appears in the form of a final grade on a paper, often accompanied by much red ink throughout the essay (Grabe & Kaplan 1996, p.388). A more strong criticism on the traditional form of teacher feedback comes from Berkow (2002, p.195). He argues that in a common model of teaching the students give an essay to the instructor, the instructor puts red marks on it; the essay is handed back, and nobody ever reads it again. The student does not develop much a sense of audience.



**Table 11:** Students' response on the frequency how often their teachers' implemented **indirect** technique to correct students' written errors.

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
12	My teacher corrects my written errors by writing <i>SP</i> for spelling error, <i>WO</i> for word order, etc in the margin or above the error	82	31.7	70	27	41	15.9	35	13.5	31	11.9	259	100
13	My teacher gives correction by underlining incorrect forms of sentences.	-	-	56	21.6	78	30.1	60	23.2	65	25.1	259	100
14	My teacher corrects inappropriate words by circling them.	38	14.7	40	15.4	50	19.3	55	21.2	76	29.3	259	100
15	My teacher inserts arrow to indicate a missing word.	61	23.6	70	27	45	17.4	42	16.2	41	15.8	259	100
16	My teacher places a question mark along side a confusing word or structure.	33	12.7	42	16.2	63	24.3	85	32.8	36	14	259	100

Concerning the indirect techniques of correcting students' written error, students' response to item 12 indicates that there seems an even distribution of response. However, greater number of students responded that their teacher never (82 students) and rarely(70 students) corrects their written errors by writing *SP* for spelling error, *WO* for word order, etc in the margin or above the error when compared to other options. On the contrary, item 13 seems more practical even though the degree vary from student to student. As the result indicates, 78(30.1%), 60(23.2%), and 65(25.1%) respondents confirm that teachers give correction by underlining incorrect forms of sentences sometimes, often and always respectively.

When we come to item 14, which is circling inappropriate words, their response indicates that it is much more frequently practiced (greater than 76, 29.3% of students assured that teachers always practiced this technique). Inserting arrow to indicate a missing word is practiced rarely because 70(27%) respondents witnessed this. But 61(23.6%) students responded that there are teachers who never practice this technique. Based on item 15, 85(32.8%) respondents indicate that teachers often apply this technique. From the discussion, we can conclude that teachers practiced all indirect techniques except item 12 even if their degree varies. This result perfectly coincides with what was obtained from the teachers' response.

**Table 12:** Students' responses on the frequency how often their teachers' implemented direct technique to correct students' written errors.

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%
17	My teacher corrects written errors by underlining a word and providing a written tip.	-	-	65	25.1	78	30.1	60	23.2	56	21.6	259	100

**Table 12**

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%
18	My teacher corrects written errors by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and by indicating its proper place in a sentence.	89	34.4	94	36.3	76	29.3	-	-	-	-	259	100
19	My teacher crosses out superfluous words in correcting written errors	-	-	-	-	100	38.6	85	32.8	74	28.6	259	100
20	My teacher correct written errors by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase	66	25.5	90	34.7	61	23.6	42	16.2	-	-	259	100

Concerning the direct techniques of correction in the above Table, the majority of the respondents (78 students which is 30.1%) vividly confirm that teachers correct written errors by underlining a word and providing a written tip sometimes. On the other hand, regarding item 18, correcting written errors by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and by indicating its proper place in a sentence and item 20, correcting written errors by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase, are techniques which are practiced rarely. This is confirmed by the greater number of students' response that is 94 for item 18 and 90 for item 20. When we come to item 19, crossing

out superfluous words in correcting written errors, it has similar practice with item 17. 100(38.6%) respondents responded that teachers practiced this technique sometimes.

This result, on the one hand, perfectly coincides with what was obtained from the teachers' response. For example, the result that is obtained from the students for item 17 directly coincides with that of teachers'. But on the other hand, students' response for item 18 shows teachers practiced this technique rarely; teachers responded that, they practiced correcting by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and by indicating its proper place in a sentence rarely and sometimes. Equal number of teachers responded this (3, 37.5% each). In addition, regarding item 19 and item 20, students confirmed that teachers practiced these techniques sometimes and rarely respectively. Teachers' response is directly opposite to this, which is often for both.

Therefore, we can conclude that teachers practice in using direct techniques in correcting learners' written error is not permissive. Teachers were only practicing one and/ or two techniques, techniques under item 1 and 3 even if teachers responded that they were practicing all.

**Table 13:** Students' response regarding the frequencies teachers practice correct by using other techniques, such as: writing comments, taped - commentary, and conferencing.

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		FR	%	F	%	FR	%	F	%	FR	%	FR	%
21	My teacher corrects written errors by writing comments.	36	13.9	63	24.3	87	33.6	38	14.7	35	13.5	259	100

**Table 13**

No	Items	Responses											
		Never		Rarely		sometimes		Often		Always		Total	
		FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%	FR	%
22	My teacher uses conferencing (a procedure where the teacher and you come face to face) to correct written errors.	14.4	55.6	59	22.8	56	21.6	-	-	-	-	259	100
23	My teacher uses taped -commentary (a technique where remarks about students' written error are given on a tape recorder) to correct students' written errors.	149	57.5	58	22.4	52	20.1	-	-	-	-	259	100

Since writing comments is believed to be one of the most common techniques used by classroom teachers when they respond to students' writing; having look at this concept, teachers seems good in using this technique even if writing comments is said to be disadvantageous because it is time- consuming and taxing. The students' response (87, 33.6%) indicate that teachers were used the technique 'correcting written errors by writing comments' sometimes; but to the contrary, using conferencing (a procedure where the teacher and you come face to face) to correct written errors and taped - commentary (a technique where remarks about students' written error are given on a tape recorder) to correct students' written errors (item 22 and item 23) seems impracticable.

This result is witnessed by students' response (144, 55.6% and 149, 57.5% respectively) in that they never used these techniques. This is what the teachers were also confirmed.

The negligence of the two techniques makes the students to lose the benefits they could get from. Conferencing enables the teacher and the student to come face to face with each other. The teacher is a 'live' audience, and he/she is able to ask for further clarification, check the comprehensibility of oral comments made, help the writer to sort through the problems, and assist the student in decision making (Keh, 1990). Tape commentary helps the students to improve their listening skills; especially if the teacher is a native speaker or has a near - native proficiency in English. It also allows more detailed, natural, and informative remarks while increasing teacher-student rapport (Hyland, 1990).

So far, the results of data that have been obtained from the teachers' and students' close-ended questionnaires have been presented and interpreted. Next, the discussion based on the response of the teachers and the students to the open ended question will proceed in the following section.

#### **4.3. Teachers' comment regarding their implementation of students' written error correction**

Open ended questions were asked to identify whether written error correction was teachers' regular concern or not and if they vary their techniques of correcting errors or not. As their response confirms, even if they do correction; it is not their regular concern. The response of almost all the teachers to this question was 'No'. But regarding varying techniques of correcting written error, teachers confess that they tried to use varieties of techniques. Those reasons which hinder them not to make correction regularly are presented as follows.

- ❖ Learners' English text book is too large to correct the whole writing activity. This large volume of the text even is not easy to cover the portion within the period allotted. So, teachers' intention is running to cover the portion.
- ❖ Students are not motivated to participate in writing activities. Because of this they do it carelessly, without interest, with full of errors and such work makes teachers tiresome and boring.

- ❖ Because of the number of students in a class is large (67-75 students in a class are assigned). This large class size makes difficult to provide correction to all students within limited time.
- ❖ Most teachers replied that, “we have shortage of time. Attending weekend MA program, participating in different committees and clubs, having additional personal work to gain additional income, etc., are some of our reason having shortage of time that hinders us to correct students writing works regularly.”
- ❖ Some teachers believed that students didn't have interest to do writing activities. As a result, they didn't think they improve their writing skill from our written correction. Therefore, we took written error correction is simply killing time.
- ❖ Another comment teachers forwarded was the period allotment of the week was not faire when they compared with the volume of the text and the activities presented in the text. They had four periods in a week.

Another open ended question that was asked to know if they give chance for their learners to exchange written feedback on each other's writings as peers or not. Greater number of teachers witnessed that they did not give the chance for them. Teachers themselves do it instead. Still they are practicing traditional way of correcting written error. According to Grabe and Kaplan (1996, p.358), teacher feedback is often seen as a more traditional overall format. Hamerly (1991) states that previously, written errors are typically corrected by the teacher writing the correct forms in and the students copying the compositions into final corrected versions. As a result of this, students learn little or nothing through this passive procedure. Proof of this is that, no matter how many compositions full of red-inked corrections they get back, they keep on making the same written errors month after month and course after course.

The above literature indicates that, teachers must not correct learners' written error by themselves only; they should also use other techniques like peer, self correction, etc, because the use of peer feedback in the English writing classes has been generally supported as a potentially valuable aid for its social, cognitive, affective, and

methodological benefits (Rollinson, 2005, p.23). Edge (1989) underlining the need to give the first chance to the student to self-correct, points out that for self-correction to work, we have to give a little time at the beginning of a lesson for students to look at their marked work and try to correct any mistakes.

Teachers were also asked to respond on what do the feedback they give focused on? Almost all teachers replied that when they correct students' written errors; organization, content, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics are taken in to consideration. This is positive.

Generally, all the above comments of the teachers have clearly pointed out that learners' written error correction was not practiced in an innovative manner properly. In the next section, the students' general comments regarding open ended questions are brought in to discussion.

#### **4.4. Students' general comment regarding the practice of written error correction**

Open ended questions were also prepared for the students in order to give their comment on whether they are satisfied with the correction they get from their teacher or not. They commented that they are not satisfied with the correction they get from their teacher and they raised the following reasons.

- The teacher doesn't give me clear feedback that I could learn from it.
- Most of the time I can't get the chance in correcting my written works. After he/she corrects for some of them who are sitting in front, he/she leave the class.
- The teacher simply tells me that I am wrong without any correction.
- The teacher simply writes the result without indicating the error.
- The correction doesn't give me any hint and I could not correct it by myself after the paper is returned.
- The correction I received from my teacher mostly focused on grammar and mechanics rather than organization, vocabulary, and content.



- Sometimes teachers give writing activities when they are not interested to give the lesson. He/she gives writing activity to kill the time of that period and leaves the class. As a result, they don't like to read students writing.

From the above comments of the students one can observe their dissatisfaction with the correction they get from their teachers. These have magnified the teachers' malpractice in giving correction for their students. It also suggests that teachers seem to have forgotten one of their professional obligations.

Moreover, the students have witnessed that the teachers are not consistent in correcting written works. The reasons students raised are teachers said that correcting written activities are time consuming as the text is bulky. As a result, they said that our intention is on portion coverage. They added, the school principals also always forced us to cover the portion. Greater numbers of students (198 students) have also reported that teachers are not interested to correct our written works regularly because of large class size.

Regarding teachers focus in correcting students' composition, almost all students replied that they focused on form and mechanics. This idea contradicts what the teachers responded (they replied we focus on form, content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics). As the students respond, this result is discouraging because, as Dheram (1995); Lip and Ockey (1997) suggest, teachers should give comments and corrections on both content and form, but emphasizing more on content. This result will be compared and contrasted with what the teachers actually employ in the marked papers.

More than 173 students witnessed that teachers try to vary their written correction techniques like circling, underlining, writing comments when they give us written activities. Students' general view on getting encouragement from their teacher to correct their written work by themselves or peers, students have different opinion. 58 students expressed their idea that our teachers give chance for self correction rarely but for peer correction sometimes. When 116 students said "We are not confidential to say our teachers give us the chance to correct our written compositions, but we can't deny that they are doing it rarely within a long time interval." The rest 85 students replied that

they never give chance for us to correct our written work by peers or the students themselves.

To sum it up, all the discussion made in this section vividly indicate that the correction made by the teachers is inadequate. Nor it goes in conformity with the innovative practice of doing so.

#### **4.5. Analyses of Teachers Interview**

In this study an interview was held with the teachers. In the analysis, the teachers' responses were categorized based on whether or not they expect errors in their students' written works, who do they think should correct learners' written errors and their practices, whether or not they correct students' errors in terms of what mechanism/s they use, which written errors they focused on to correct, whether or not they correct students' written errors regularly, if they give the chance for the students to correct their written works by themselves, and how often they correct students' written error were analyzed. The analysis of the teachers' responses is presented as follows.

1. Regarding whether or not teachers expect errors in their students' written works, all the interviewees expressed their feeling that they expect errors from the students' written work. It could be deduced from their responses that they appeared to compare with their native language writings. They said we hear even their native language teachers complain that they made a lot of errors in their written composition. Therefore, all teachers' response was, yes, we expect.
2. The next question was who they think should correct learners' written errors and what their practices are. Four teachers believed that learners' written errors could be corrected by teachers and/ or peers. Two teachers responded that written errors should be corrected by teachers. The rest two teachers forwarded their opinion that teachers, peers, and students themselves should correct learners' written errors. Concerning their actual practice majority of the teachers confirmed that it is good if we apply the concerned bodies in correcting written errors (teachers, peers, students themselves, etc.) as the proverb says, "Many hands make light work". The implication of this proverb is that when students

exchange comments, their writing would be done more effectively and easily than when it is done without such practice. But we doubted that students' ability to give comments on grammar, organization, vocabulary, mechanics may not improve their writing skill. As a result, we ourselves correct written errors whenever we give the activity on writing.

3. Concerning the mechanism/s teachers use so as to correct students written error, five teachers expressed that they used circling, underlining, putting question mark on the incorrect words or sentences, which are indirect techniques. The rest three teachers replied in addition to what others said they write comments and try to give the correct form of the sentence or the word.
4. The teachers were also asked on which students' errors they are focused on in correcting students' written error. The teachers seem to have different views. Three teachers replied that most frequently they focused on spelling and grammar. The other four respondents responded their concern is on punctuation, form, and spelling. But one teacher said, "My written error correction is depending on my purpose. For example, if I want to observe learners understanding on mechanics, my attention will be goes to correcting their usage on punctuation, capitalization, indentation, and spelling."
5. Regarding the areas of regularity in correcting students' written error, all teachers confirmed that they do not do it regularly. Because of different factors like the larger volume of the text, untimely starting of the lesson, rushing to portion coverage, being de motivated of learners in writing activities, etc., we are not bothering to give written composition always.
6. Teachers' general view on how often they correct learners' written error was rarely (3 teachers) and sometimes (5 teachers).

Based on the responses of the teachers, it is possible to say that these teachers expect error from learners' written work. They also appeared to sense the uses of correcting error in the process of writing. But the problems which are observed from the teachers' response are having less or no awareness on whom correct learners' error and the techniques (direct and indirect) that they have to use in doing so. Because for the factors they raise which hinders them not to implement written error correction in English

classrooms, peer correction and self correction, for example, for direct and indirect techniques can be the solution. Teachers also give less value for the abilities of students to give comments in improving their writing skill rather than let them to practice. Moreover, the responsive bodies are better to work on the teachers to solve the problems for the students' success in their writing skill.

#### **4.6. Analysis of corrected and returned written documents**

The last part of this chapter has dealt with the analysis and discussion of the data available on the students' marked and returned compositions. In so doing, it attempted to prove that the majority of the teachers are not said to be correctors. Because in most of the papers, it has been observed that the use of imbalance way of correcting students' written works, even teachers are simply put the result with out giving any correction.

As to the techniques teachers employ, whether underlining incorrect words or sentences or whether circling inappropriate word or phrase, they replied that they employ indirect way as the most frequent techniques. One direct technique (underlining and providing a written tip) tried to be used by two teachers (see appendix-D 2&3). Writing comments, although it is very rarely, is another techniques observed from the document. Other techniques are totally under practiced. This is not motivating because, as Hendrickson (1992), on his part proposes the combination of direct and indirect techniques should be treated in a balanced way for correcting written errors.

The other thing which is clearly observed from the corrected compositions was, the available comments and corrections made by the teachers were focusing on form and mechanics rather than content and meaning related issues. The result reached regarding this issue indicates that the comments and corrections were made on grammar and mechanics. To the opposite, educators advise that corrections should equally focus on both form and content (Dheram, 1995; Lip and Ockey, 1997).

Generally, the results revealed that teachers almost do not have the habit of using different correction techniques side by side. They rely on only one or two, either direct or indirect, ways of written error correction. This might not helpful for the students to

improve their writing skill. Moreover, the researcher recommended that teachers better practice the reverse of what they were practicing in their written error correction techniques.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains three sections. The first section summarizes the major findings of the study. The second section provides the conclusion. Finally, the recommendations are presented in the last section.

#### 5.1. Summary

This section presents the main highlights of the whole study by touching upon the introduction, the statement of the problem and the research questions, the literature review, the methodology, and the findings (GETACHEW et al. (2014).

Among the various language skills, writing is usually regarded as a painstaking activity and debate whether and how to offer second language learners (L<sub>2</sub>) feedback on their written grammatical errors has been of considerable interest to researchers and classroom practitioners (Truscott, 1996, 1999; Ferris, 2000, 2002, 2004). Most of the time writing is used to measure students' overall performance of the language in examinations. Thus it is important for English as Second Language (ESL) teachers to find ways to ensure their students master of writing skills to excel in the language.

It is hardly surprising that language learners make mistakes, given the difficulty of the task of comprehending, processing the content of the message and knowledge of the target language, and coming out with a response that is both grammatically correct and appropriate to the situation. It is generally agreed that correction is part of the teaching/learning process, but that over-correction and poor correction techniques can be de motivating for the learner and may lead to a reluctance to try out new language or even to write at all. Teachers need to make informed decisions about what, when and how to correct in order to help learners improve their writing skills without damaging their confidence.

The ability to write well is one of the essential qualities in the world of academics and other concerns of life. Yet, writing is a difficult skill to master because of the different factors pertaining to it. On the other hand, Ethiopian researchers Yonas (1996), Geremew (1999), & Tezera (2009) put the question of teachers' beliefs towards errors and the pressure it exerts upon their corrective treatments has come to be one of the most important professional issues in the second language teaching pedagogy.

As the literature states feedback is an expected and an important activity in a given performance. Particularly, in language teaching and learning; it is used to facilitate the process (Hyland 1990; Richards & Lockhart 1994; Ur 1996). Ur (1996, p. 242) defines feedback in the context of teaching in general as information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance.

Previously, written errors are typically corrected by the teacher writing the correct forms in and the students copying the compositions into final corrected versions. The use of peer feedback in the English writing classes has been generally supported as a potentially valuable aid for its social, cognitive, affective, and methodological benefits (Rollinson, 2005, p.23). Electronic feedback has drawn researchers' interest for more than two decades (Allah, 2008). Incorporating e-feedback along with face-to-face modes has been shown to yield the best results in terms of quality of feedback and impact on revisions. Even if there were an argument between scholars, Edge (1989, p.51) underlining the need to give the first chance to the student to self-correct, points out that for self-correction to work, we have to give a little time at the beginning of a lesson for students to look at their marked work and try to correct any mistakes.

The very nature of learning and teaching writing skills in English language classes where students show weakness, and the predominant way, yet English teachers' feedback were what initiated this research. In other words, it was with the hypothesis

that innovative ways of written error correction can contribute to the students writing skills development that this study was designed.

As stated above, this study was concerned with investigating the implementation of innovative ways of written error correction of English as a second language (ESL) student. The study attempted to find out if teachers were implemented the innovative ways to correct students' written error.

In this descriptive study the following six research questions were asked. These are:

1. Is it important to correct learners' written errors?
2. Who should correct learners' written errors?
3. Which written errors should be corrected?
4. How should written errors be corrected?
5. How often do teachers implement innovative ways of written error correction in English language classroom?
6. Do students satisfied with the correction they received from their teachers?

In line with these questions, three techniques of data gathering were devised. In other words, in order to achieve these objectives, data were gathered from teachers and students of Bako and Tibe secondary schools using questionnaire (as a major tool), teachers interview, and corrected and returned written documents were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis as presented in chapter four. The major findings using these techniques are reported below.

1. Teachers and students have good understanding that it is important to correct students' written error and should be corrected.
2. Teachers have less awareness on the concerned bodies who corrects learners' error. As a result, the study reveals that most frequently written errors are corrected by the teacher. The rest are impractical.
3. Errors that seriously impair communication, errors that have stigmatizing effect upon the listener or reader, and errors that students produce



frequently receive greatest attention in written error correction (Hendrickson, 1978). But the study reveals that teachers focus on form and mechanics not content or organization that render communication difficult.

4. Written errors can be corrected by using direct, indirect or using other techniques, such as: writing comments, taped - commentary, and conferencing techniques. Among those, teachers sometimes or rarely use underlining and circling inappropriate word or clause, crossing out superfluous words, providing written tips, and commenting.
5. Both teachers and their students were asked to give their idea on whether written error correction is teachers' regular concern or not. The result clearly indicated that written error correction is not teachers' regular activity.
6. Finally, students were asked to give their response whether they satisfied the correction they received from their teacher or not. They commented that they are not satisfied with the correction they get from their teacher.

## **5.2. Conclusions**

Based on the findings and discussions made in this study, the following conclusions are made. Students in this study have serious problems in getting written feedback regularly from their teachers. Teachers do not correct written errors consistently based on their students' desire. The study also reveals that teachers are not using innovative ways in correcting students' written works.

Students do not get sufficient support from their English language teachers to improve their writing skill. They considered providing written feedback is tiresome and time consuming. The finding of the study also shows that less attention was given to writing skill as compared to the other skills and most emphasis was given to grammar teaching.

Moreover, regarding teachers practice on correcting errors, the teachers very dominantly employ teacher correction. Teachers are using the traditional method to improve

students writing skill. Nevertheless, other correction types like peer and self correction are used either rarely or never. This has been witnessed from both the students' and instructors' responses.

Even though teachers have good awareness on the importance of correcting learner written errors, their practice vividly revealed that they are almost non-correctors. Regarding the issue as which error to correct, teachers are being selective when correcting; they focus on form and mechanics. Teachers seem to have good understanding, but their actual practice doesn't indicate it.

Concerning the correction techniques implemented by the teachers is concerned; greater numbers of teachers predominantly practice correction by underlining and circling incorrect orthographic and morphological forms. These proved to be the most frequently practiced from the indirect techniques. Providing a written tip by underlining incorrect words, providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase; and crossing out superfluous words or clauses are practiced rarely and sometimes among the direct techniques. Regarding other correction techniques like writing comments, conferencing, and using taped commentary; teachers sometimes employ writing comments technique. But the advanced techniques of correction as conferencing and taped-commentary are totally impractical.

Finally, regarding teachers' focus in correcting learners' written error, although teachers replied we focus on organization, form, vocabulary, content in correcting students' written works, the students confirmed that teachers are focusing on form and mechanics only. This has been learnt from the students' response and the sampled corrected papers.

## **5.2. Recommendations**

Investigating students' written error correction is a fundamental element useful to promote students' writing skill. Based on the findings and the conclusions made above, the following recommendations regarding correction to learner' written errors are forwarded:

1. Both teachers and learners must see errors as the key to understand and solve accuracy problems in English writing skill. Then, teachers take a responsibility to adopt, modify and develop different techniques or procedures that can improve the students' level and minimize their difficulties. Teachers should pay attention to give feedback for their students while they practice writing skill.
2. Nowadays, teaching is becoming helping students to learn by themselves. One way of doing so is by letting students learn from self and each other. To this effect, peer and self feedback have roles in letting learners learn from each other how to write and rewrite in addition to teacher correction. Thus, English teachers are advised to employ all correction techniques to have students comment on spelling, grammar, etc. instead of being dependent on one technique.
3. Teachers should focus on form, content, mechanics, vocabulary, and organization in correcting students written work rather than form and mechanics only. Because concerning on all helps students to communicate with the target language confidentially.
4. Responsible bodies and higher institutions should prepare short term training and seminars for teachers on innovative ways of written error correction and related issues so that they will be well informed with innovative ways of providing correction.
5. Further studies in the area are highly recommended to substantiate the findings of the present study. The more research we have, the more reliable our conclusions would be.

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## Appendix -A



**Jimma University**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**College of Social Sciences and Humanities**

### Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear Teacher,

I am conducting a research on **Implementation of Innovative ways of Written Error Correction and the Actual Practice in ELT Classes**. This questionnaire is intended to obtain information about the practice of written error correction in your English language teaching classes. The information will be used for research purpose and its findings are hoped to improve the practice of written error correction. Hence, the success of the research is directly dependent on the care and truthfulness with which you answer each item. Your cooperation is found very important and decisive for the research to attain its objectives. The researcher, therefore, requests you to devote your precious time to complete the questionnaire genuinely. Since your answers will be kept strictly confidential, feel free to answer the questions frankly. It would be of great help if you return the questionnaire quickly. Please do not omit any of the questions. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. There is no need to write your name.

Thank you in advance!!

Kidist Berhanu

**PART I**

The following are different statements with which different Teachers agree and disagree. There is no **RIGHT** or **WRONG** answers since many teachers have varying opinion. The researcher would like you to indicate your opinion about each statement by putting a 'tick' (✓) mark alongside it and below the alternative which best indicates the extent to which you disagree or agree with that statement.

**N.B:- SA = Strongly Agree    A= Agree    U = Undecided**

**SD = Strongly Disagree    D = Disagree**

No	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	Students will learn more if the teacher corrects their written errors.					
2	Encouraging your students to exchange written feedback on each other as peers are very important.					
3	Students written errors should be ignored because their correction doesn't significantly affect learning					
4	Correcting each and every minor error is expected from the teacher to correct in order to encourage students' confidence and improve their writing proficiency.					
5	Errors that have stigmatizing effect up on the reader should be corrected immediately.					
6	Errors that students produce frequently should be given priority when correcting written error.					
7	Learners' written errors should be corrected so that they will be aware of the rules of the target language.					
8	Written errors that seriously inhibit communication should be corrected first.					
9	Written error correction helps to minimize faulty linguistic structures from the Students' written works.					

10	All written errors of learners should be corrected.					
11	Teachers should give the chance for the student who makes the error to correct his/her written error by him/herself.					
12	It is the teacher who corrects students' written error.					
13	The teacher should let his students exchange their written works and correct it.					
14	Teachers' error correction helps the students to discover the precise usage of vocabularies					

## PART II

Please read the following items carefully and put a tick (✓) mark indicating the most appropriate rating scale for each of the given items based on your written error correction practice in your classroom.

No	Statements	Rating Scale				
		Never	Rarely	Sometime s	often	Nearly always
1	Teachers should give chance for students to correct his/her written error by him/herself					
2	It is me who corrects students' written error					
3	I let my students exchange their written works and correct it.					
4	I correct written errors by writing <b>SP</b> for spelling error, <b>WO</b> for word order, etc., in the margin or above the error.					

5	I correct written errors by writing comments					
6	I use conferencing (a procedure where the teacher and the student come face to face with each other) to correct written errors					
7	I use taped commentary (a technique where remarks about students' written errors is given on a tape recorder) to correct students' written error.					
8	I give correction by underlining incorrect orthographic and morphological forms					
9	I give correction by circling inappropriate word					
10	I insert arrow to indicate a missing word					
11	I place a question mark alongside a confusing word or structure					
12	I correct written errors by underlining a word and providing a written tip.					
13	I correct written errors by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and I indicate its proper place in a sentence					
14	I cross out a superfluous word in correcting written errors					
15	I correct written errors by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase.					

### PART III

This section contains different types of questions regarding your actual practice of written error correction. Please give your genuine reactions to each of them. Put an X

mark in the appropriate box for 'yes' or 'no' questions and circle on the alternative/s that reflect/s the actual practice of written error correction in your English class.

1. Is written error correction your regular concern when you teach writing?

Yes

No

If No, why

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2. On the basis of the information you get from your students' written error,

- 2.1. Do you vary your techniques of correcting errors?

Yes

No

If No, why?

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- 2.2. Do you correct written errors consistently?

Yes

No

If No, why?

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3. Have you ever encouraged your students to exchange written feedback on each other's writings as peers?

Yes

No

If No, why?

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4. Which technique/s of written feedback do you use to correct your students writing proficiency?

A. Teacher

B. Peers

C. Conferencing

D. writers themselves

E. Electronic feedback    F. Tape commentary

5. Do you have any other techniques that you use to correct learners written errors?

Yes

No

If yes, what are they?

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6. What do the feedback you give focus on?

A. Organization    B. Content    C. Grammar    D. Vocabulary    E. Mechanics    F. All

7. Please write a general comment about your practice of written error correction

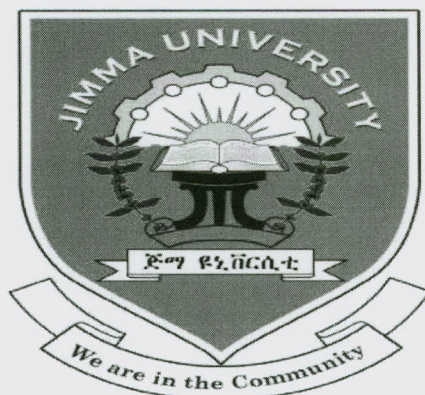
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## Appendix -B



**Jimma University**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**College of Social Sciences and Humanities**

### **Student's Questionnaire**

*Dear student,*

This questionnaire is designed for research purpose. Its primary aim is to collect data about the practice of written error correction in your writing classes. The success of the study greatly depends on your genuine response to the questions. The researcher, therefore, requests you to respond to each item honestly and frankly. Your response will be kept confidential with the strictest confidence. There is no need to write your name.

Thank you very much for devoting your time in adva

### **Part I**

The following are different statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please indicate your opinion about each statement by putting a tick (✓) mark alongside it and below the alternative which best indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.



**N.B:** SA =strongly Agree    A=Agree    U= undecided    SD= Strongly Disagree  
 D= Disagree

No	Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	Teacher correction of my written works helps me to become aware of the exact environment for applying grammatical rules and for discovering the precise context of using words.					
2	My teacher's correction helps me to minimize faulty linguistic structures from my written works.					
3	Teachers should order the whole class to exchange and correct written works.					
4	My teacher should correct my written error.					
5	Teachers should correct my written errors so that the chance of making mistakes will be reduced.					
6	Correction improves students' writing proficiency, and thus teachers should practice it					
7	Teachers should correct my written work constantly					
8	Teachers should give students the chance to correct their error by themselves					

## Part II

please read the following items carefully and put a tick (✓) mark indicating the most appropriate rating scale for each of the given items based on the practice of written error correction in your writing classes.

No	statements	Rating Scale				
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	My teacher gives me the chance to correct my written error by my self.					
2	My teacher corrects my errors by him/her self.					
3	My teacher orders the whole class to exchange and correct written works.					
4	My teacher corrects my written errors by writing <i>SP</i> for spelling error, <i>WO</i> for word order, etc in the margin or above the error					
5	My teacher corrects written errors by writing comments.					
6	My teacher uses conferencing (a procedure where the teacher and you come face to face) to correct written errors.					
7	My teacher uses taped -commentary (a technique where remarks about students' written error are given on a tape recorder) to correct students' written errors.					
8	My teacher gives correction by underlining incorrect forms of sentences.					
9	My teacher corrects inappropriate words by circling them					

10	My teacher inserts arrow to indicate a missing word.					
11	My teacher places a question mark along side a confusing word or structure.					
12	My teacher correct written errors by underlining a word and Providing a written tip.					
13	My teacher corrects written errors by bracketing a misplaced word and phrase and by indicating its proper place in a sentence.					
14	My teacher crosses out superfluous words in correcting written errors					
15	My teacher correct written errors by providing the correct form or structure of an incorrect word or phrase					

### Part III

This' section contains different types of questions regarding the practice of written error correction in your writing classes. Please give your genuine responses to each of them. Put an **X** mark for 'yes' or 'no' questions.

1. Are you satisfied with the correction you get from your teacher?

Yes

No

If No, why?

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2. Is written error correction your teachers' regular concern?

Yes  No

If No, write some of his reasons (if you know any)

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3. Is your teacher consistent in correcting your written works?

Yes  No

If No, write some of his reasons (if you know any)

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4. What is the main focus of your teacher when he corrects your compositions?

A. Form    B. Content    C. Organization    D. Mechanics    E. Vocabulary  
F. All

5. Which ways of written feedback does your teacher use to improve your writing proficiency?

A. Teachers    B. Peers    C. Conferencing    D. Writers themselves  
E. Electronic feedback    F. All

6. Does your teacher vary his written error correction techniques?

Yes  No

If No, why, write some of his reasons (if you know any)

---

---

---

7. Does your teacher encourage you to exchange written feedback on each other's writings as peers?

Yes  No

8. Does your teacher encourage you to correct your written work by yourself?

Yes

No

If No, why, write some of his reasons (if you know any)?

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9. Please write a general comment about your teacher regarding his written correction strategies.

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## Appendix –C

### Questions for Teachers' Interview

#### Dear Teacher,

The purpose of this interview is to gather information for research purpose about Written Error Correction and the Actual Practice in ELT Classes. This Interview questionnaire is intended to obtain information about the practice of written error correction in your English language teaching classes. Therefore, please answer these questions with respect to the skill you have been offering in writing sections and with all students in your classes.

Thank you very much for devoting your time in advance!!

1. Do you expect errors in your students' written works?
2. As you are an English teacher teaching different skills including writing, it is obvious that second language learners are expected to make errors in their writing. In your opinion, who do you think should correct learners' written errors? And what is your practice?
3. Do you correct students' written errors? If so what is /are your mechanism/s that you use?
4. When you correct learners' written errors, which students' errors do you focused on?
5. Do you regularly correct students' written error?
6. Do you give the chance for your students to correct their written errors for themselves or as peers?
7. From your actual experience, how often do you correct students' written error?

Appendix - D1

English is my favourite subject. My favourite subject is English. <sup>stare. Kessape chaska</sup>  
 Most of the world's people use it in different areas as a communication language.

→ My favorite subject

① My favorite subject is English. subject Bk 0  
 It is global communication across the world.  
 English is the international language <sup>reputation</sup>  
 which <sup>that is</sup> <sup>all</sup> <sup>is</sup> <sup>spread</sup> <sup>over</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>world</sup>.

In many <sup>other</sup> countries it is the official language  
 e.g. it is an official language in many countries in Africa.

English is the best subject for <sup>How can we generalize it</sup> human beings to understand what somebody is talking and communicate with each other.

Here's <sup>an unnecessary</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>idea</sup> <sup>is</sup> <sup>not</sup> <sup>clear</sup> <sup>enough</sup>  
 we should have to talk English fluently with each other after trying to find a time and become ~~success~~ <sup>successfully</sup>.  
 English is playing a significant role in many countries.

I need <sup>To express what</sup> <sup>did you use this phrase?</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>improve</sup> <sup>my</sup> <sup>English</sup>. <sup>It could give</sup> <sup>other</sup> <sup>meanings.</sup>  
 It is spread in many countries and used as a language of international communication throughout the world.

Generally, English <sup>is</sup> <sup>very</sup> <sup>essential</sup> for us.

(3/10)

## Appendix - D2

## My future plan

Nobody wants to have unsuccessful and dark future. So we plan and work out having on a bright future. Before thinking about the future success, we have to decide on what profession and a way to be succeed. So personally <sup>it is not necessary</sup> I decided to learn and follow my education attentively. Even if we are doing sth confidently and hardly <sup>to show negative</sup> some times it went wrong. Therefore, it's important to follow a correct procedures & analyse what we are doing. So if we work hard & have specific goal, nothing make us to be unsuccessful.

<sup>it is better to study</sup> The base of my plane is learning and keeping wisdom throughout my life. But the way in which I learn wisdom may be either in formal and in informal way. As a profession I want to study about life and solve the issues concerning life and human health. In addition to this, with my leisure time I would like to study or read all books about social concepts, history, political issues and spiritual ideas. As well as, I've an ambition to write all journals and books on social issues and ideas which I think about.

I always consider God as my guarantee to be succeed. Since I have understood this, I'm ready to live a spiritual life until the end of my life on the earth. In the will of God I believe as I'll succeed on my plans. Later on, I wish to have a family (wife and child). After I finished my struggle of my young age, I've plan to live while regaining all knowledges with informal ways and share my knowledge for the generations by all arts.

7/10



Appendix -D3

WATER CONSERVATION METHOD IN OUR TOWN

Many people know how our town is affected by water shortage. This is due to mis conservation of water and mis management of our town water supply organization.

Water conservation is a conserving of water in proper way. Water conserving method uses during drought. In our town water conservation has been become an essential practice even in areas where water seems abundant. Water conservation helps us prevent water pollution in nearby lakes, rivers & local water sheds. conserving water can also extend the life of our town septic systems by reducing soil saturation & reducing any pollution due to leaks.

The problem of our town solved by conserving water in the work place by knowing its usage, identifying and fixing leaks, maximizing the efficiency of your cooling tower, installing water efficiency equipment, minimizing the use of water for less purpose, growing more efficient crops and adopt less wasteful of irrigation.

Generally, to solve all this problem making people to conserve is very important due to water is essential for our life & other living things.

The above Note is not use the appropriate punctuation marks and it has miss letters and also Capitalization

13/20

English Assignment  
Name ~~R~~ ~~(A)~~ ~~(S)~~ ~~(S)~~

Appendix -D4

The happy day in my life. And I am 1980 and 1981

People around the world have in their own ways done  
 happy day if the day that is very special and I am sure that with  
 literature memory. It may be done in many ways but one  
 for people around the world happy day is that they do the day of the year for  
 the memory of the day that is very special and I am sure that with  
 memory (and for the cause of the day) I am sure that you will be  
 get I am sure for you  
 And what is that (I hope memory) if the only problem that we can solve  
 you and we must can find it from you and if you find it  
 I wish happy day will be yours but what makes happy day special day is  
 it is not date or month or year but the day in your life

January 22, 1980 was my first special day for me.  
 The night it still was over and I had dreamed do not give me to the day like  
 I am on my bed but what I can have it all is about tomorrow  
 I was thinking how I am found do it in front of the entire class in my  
 talk with you. I just think about my personal life I can beat and with I can  
 fear and give me present each other to face place  
 but accidentally when I see dream I was on my bed and all the success and  
 I am giving the journey of my life.  
 I sleep like I have to.

January 22, 1980 I leave home around 12 o'clock to do some business and meet with  
 some of the teachers at Jackson for the last time.  
 Around the 6:00 o'clock the program started, we see our picture and  
 showing the program we are in and I feel it really special and I can  
 only say how exciting was it to stand before many people and attention was  
 on me and thank to God I did it in best way I can and the program  
 ended around 11:30. And now the next program is to receive our belt and I  
 for what I expect and I was so happy and I don't remember when  
 I was so happy like this day and I hope that day till now.  
 The special day of my life was for

But what if I say that if that (I hope) I mean I wouldn't be so much happy  
 but at that time my happiness is immeasurable because I was just a kid  
 but it was not a bit of my happiness because the day was so special that day  
 now like when I received my master's degree and for that I have started  
 4:00 point but still I was not happy like January 22, 1980 Sunday  
 I am not so proud about it because my master's degree but I know that  
 I can do more. So January 22 is not only happy day but also special day.  
 Please pray for me to see more happy days in my life.  
 God Bless Me! Thank you teachers for giving me a chance to do  
 my happy day with you.

*[Handwritten signature and scribbles]*

## Appendix -D5

Name ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

## The things I wish for My Country

I wish many things for my country Ethiopia. These includes all wishes we are not only my wish, also of all the citizens of the country. Although Ethiopia has along history in African Civilization, I can't develop as much as possible. so, there is a extreme poverty, means Ethiopia has an economic problem. We leads our citizens to a poverty. A poverty suffered our citizens in all ways.

Migration is one effect of poverty. A tangible problem that we are seeing today across the country is due to the existence of economic problem. Many migrants are died by terrorists, in ocean and other places on the territories/boundaries. Another thing I wish for my country is that we are all familiar with innovations. In the modern world, we have to ~~be~~ export things, not only importing goods.

Generally, I have a great wish for my country in terms of economic, political & social life. finally, I wish for all citizens to strengthen the transformation and development of Ethiopia we is called ADI in order to avoid this poverty.

9.5/10 Very good

## Appendix - D6

## Water Saving in Oromia Region.

Oromia <sup>which</sup> is a region <sup>which</sup> is awarded by water resource. Even if water resource is enough, its conservation or use is much less due to saving of water. If water is saved properly, it may be used for drinking, electric power and production of crops and vegetables. As well as the use of water properly also used for a greenness or beautiness of the cities and best condition of the country.

There are so many ways in which water is conserved in Oromia. The best way in which water is ~~used~~ conserved and used for production, electric power is making a dam. In Oromia there are many rivers <sup>which</sup> are made a dam such as, Gibe river, Finchahe <sup>lake</sup>, Wabe Shebelle and Genale. In another way it's possible by making a canal through which the water goes on. Making canal is mainly used for the production of crops and vegetables. In Oromia Awash, Gibe, Didesa, Gudar, Laga Sama, Hulukete etc are some waters which are used for the production of vegetables. Beside those methods you can use some materials to save water such as Jotto, Jarcken, pots and etc to preserve water in home, as well as water could be preserved by digging a hole and construct it with cement then when the rain is ~~not~~ rained it take the rain & preserve it for months. In another way, the preservation of water by dam making and making canal may also be used for the production of fish.

So if water is preserved <sup>fish</sup> properly by these methods, we may have beautiful environment, best condition, high amount of crop production, and enough yield of fishes throughout the region and the country as well as enough distribution of the electric power throughout the region and the country. So having a focus of saving water is the basic method for the development of the country and best life of the people throughout the region.

6.5

## Appendix -D7

Improvements that Our School Should make

Our school is a famous on a process of learn & learning and respecting rule & regulation. although have many students and teachers follows on process of learn and learning.

Our school is have more facilities of materials which can important on learn and learning. such as classroom, text books, library, ICT class, Technical drawing (TD) class.

when we say all materials fulfilment, on other hand it is false. that is when we see the ICT class, students can not practice. In short not on words. but in that place many materials related such as Computer and in library class many books and Guides present but students can not proper use.

In general, Our school have many materials which we use on process of learn & learning. but have problems on using and some important materials same or facilities cannot fulfilment. so, you should solve this problems.

Mamta K. Khatiwada

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