

## Tutor Tip

### Correcting ESL learners speech

When working with ESL students there are several ways to give oral feedback to students when an error has occurred.

Student: "I eat cereal for breakfast yesterday."

1. **Explicit correction.** To tell the student they have made a mistake and give the correct answer. For example: "That is incorrect. It's ate".
2. **Recast.** To reformulate or paraphrase what the student said excluding the error. For example: "I ate cereal for breakfast yesterday."
3. **\*Clarification.** To ask questions about what the student said. For example: "Sorry? What?"
4. **Metalinguistic Clues.** To give information or ask questions related to well-formedness of the utterance so the student must find the error. For example: "eat-past tense?"
5. **\*Elicitation.** To ask the student to complete the utterance or reformulate the utterance. For example: "You....cereal....".
6. **\*Repetition.** To repeat the student's utterance. For example: "I eat cereal?"

**Clarification, Elicitation and Repetition** have been found to be the most effective types of giving corrective feedback.

**Recasts** are the most frequently used but are the least effective in student learning. Students often will not notice the difference between what they said and your paraphrase excluding the error.

It is important for students to recognize the error and to correct it themselves, as they are more likely to learn the correct form and apply the correct form next time it is used.

#### References

- Chaudron, C. (1977). A descriptive model of discourse in the corrective treatment of learners' errors. *Language Learning*, 27(1), 29-46.
- Panova, I. & Lyster R. (2002). Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36(4), 573-595.