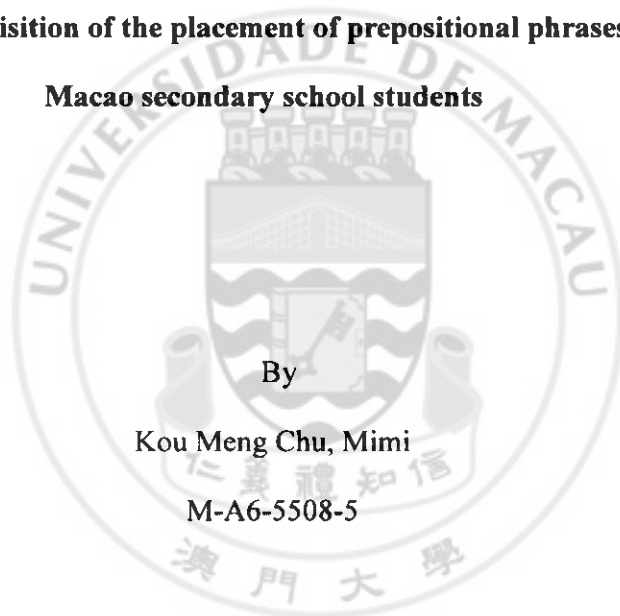


**A consciousness-raising approach to error correction—A case study of the
acquisition of the placement of prepositional phrases by
Macao secondary school students**



By

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M-A6-5508-5

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Applied English
at the University of Macau

Abstract

This study investigates the effectiveness of giving remedial instruction to secondary students in Macao using a consciousness-raising (CR) approach to error correction. The focus of remedial instruction is a high-frequency error which appears in secondary students' writing, namely, the placement of a prepositional phrase (PP) before a verb phrase (VP) in a sentence. The instrument consists of three tests: pre-test (before treatment), post-test and delayed post-test. Each of the three tests consists of three tasks: (i) sentence translation, (ii) sentence rearrangement and (iii) grammaticality judgement task.

Two Form-two classes from a Chinese-medium secondary school were selected as the subjects of the study. The subjects were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group received treatment using a CR approach, while the control group received traditional error correction (i.e., overt correction with the teacher writing the correct sentences for the student). The results of the study show the effectiveness of remedial instruction in the form of proceduralized steps in helping students notice and overcome the erroneous structure, and the experimental group showed significant improvement in their performance in both the post-test and the delayed post-test. It is argued that the CR approach to error correction is effective in enhancing learners' language accuracy in their L2 output in the Macao secondary school context.

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