



EFL Learners' Awareness of Oral Error Correction

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Abstract

This paper aims at investigating EFL learners' opinions, perceptions, and preferences of error correction (EC) including the necessity and acceptance of EC, contribution of EC to their language competency, frequency of EC, timing of EC, types of EC, strategies of EC, and delivering agents of EC. In order to achieve these aims, a 5-Likert scale questionnaire adopted from Fukuda (2004) consisting of 23 items was given to one-hundred-eighty students of second, third, and fourth stages/years of the English Department, College of Basic Education, University of Duhok. The study has come up with the following findings: the participants strongly agree that their erroneous utterances should be treated, EC contributes to developing their language skills, they usually want their teachers to give them feedbacks on their spoken errors and 63.9% of the students agree that their spoken errors are to be treated after they finish speaking. As regard to the types of errors, 46.7% of the students wanted to receive Corrective Feedback (CF) on their serious verbal errors, which might generate poor comprehension. As for the strategies of CF, the clarification request was the most frequent strategy preferred by participants, followed by the recast as the second-ranked strategy; the third-ranked strategy is repetition while the "explicit feedback" strategy is the least and unwanted feedback. Finally, concerning the category of delivering agents of CF, teacher correction is the most frequent agent preferred by the participants.

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وعي متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية بأخطائهم الشفهية في اللغة

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المستخلص :

تهدف هذه المقالة إلى التحقيق في آراء متعلمي اللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية، وتصوراتهم، وتفضيلاتهم لتصحيح الخطأ بما في تلك ضرورة وقبول تصحيح الخطأ، ومساهمة تصحيح الخطأ في كفاءتهم اللغوية، وتكرار تصحيح

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الخطأ، و وقت تصحيح الخطأ، وأنواع تصحيح الخطأ، واستراتيجيات تصحيح الخطأ، ووكلاء توصيل تصحيح الخطأ. من أجل تحقيق هذه الأهداف، تم تقديم استبيان بمقياس 5-Likert المعتمد من (2004) Fukuda يتكون من 23 بنداً إلى مئة وثمانين طالباً من المراحل الثانية والثالثة والرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، كُلية التربية الأساس، الجامعة دهوك. توصلت الدراسة إلى النتائج التالية: يتفق المشاركون بشدة على وجوب معالجة أقوالهم الخاطئة، وتساهم تصحيح الخطأ في تطوير مهاراتهم اللغوية، وعادة ما يريدون من معلمهم إعطائهم تعليقات على أخطائهم المنطوقة ووافق 63.9% من الطلاب أنه يجب معالجة أخطائهم المنطوقة بعد انتهائهم من التحدث. فيما يتعلق بأنواع الأخطاء، أراد 46.7% من الطلاب تلقي ملاحظات تصحيحية على أخطائهم اللفظية الجسيمة، التي قد تولد فهماً سيئاً. بالنسبة لاستراتيجيات تصحيح الخطأ، كان طلب التوضيح هو الإستراتيجية الأكثر شيوعاً التي يفضلها المشاركون، تليها إعادة الصياغة باعتبارها استراتيجية المرتبة الثانية؛ الإستراتيجية الثالثة هي التكرار بينما إستراتيجية "التغذية الراجعة الصريحة" هي أقل الملاحظات وغير المرغوب فيها. أخيراً، فيما يتعلق بفئة وكلاء توصيل تصحيح الخطأ، فإن تصحيح المعلم هو العامل الأكثر شيوعاً الذي يفضله المشاركون.

الكلمات المفتاحية : وكلاء تقديم تصحيح الخطأ ؛ واستراتيجيات تصحيح الخطأ ؛ وردود الفعل التصحيحية ؛ وتصحيح الأخطاء ؛ والمهارات اللغوية

1. Introduction

Treatment of errors in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has been a topic of huge argument over several decades, which has resulted in an abundance of both theoretical and empirical studies being conducted on the topic. Error corrections, on the other hand, can have both positive and negative impacts, hence it is necessary for teachers to exercise caution while delivering corrective feedback, also known as CF.

The beneficial impacts of EC can make language learning more efficient because it allows language learners of a second language (L2 learners) to recognize the space among their words the gap between the utterances and the target correct forms, that motivates uptake or repair. This has the potential to bring about alterations in their interlanguage systems and guide them into a successive level of linguistic development (Park, 2010). In addition, whenever students realize that making errors is a natural part of the learning process and that their teachers strive to help them master target forms, they are more willing to take risks and develop confidence through practice. EC may establish boundaries for teachers and their students and increase the students' level of anxiousness, which might harm the language development of the students rather than aid learning. This can inhibit students from developing communication skills by causing them to be cautious to speak and fearful of making mistakes (Park, 2010).

There are a number of views on the topic of EC with some, like Behaviourism behaviourists in linguistics, viewing errors as taboo and believing they should be directly corrected by the teacher (Brown, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). However, other scholars have argued that EC is not solely redundant, and yet destructive to language learning (Krashen, 1981a; 1981b). A significant change occurred in EC with the appearance of communicative language teaching (Nicholas, Lightbown, & Spada, 2001; Russell, 2009). Critics of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach have struck a middle ground between both the positions of audio-linguists and cognitivists by arguing that errors should be considered indicators of students' progress rather than as taboos to be ignored. Supporters of CLT have acknowledged the importance of fluency, which gives them the freedom to overlook certain errors in the classroom (Rezaei et al., 2011).

Research questions

This paper tries to give answers to the following questions:

1. Should students' spoken errors be corrected?
2. Does EC contribute in developing students' language skills?
3. How often do teachers provide students with CFs?
4. When should the students' spoken errors be corrected?
5. What types of errors should be corrected?
6. How should students' spoken errors be corrected?
7. Who is to correct students' spoken errors?

2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

2.1 Errors

Many scholars have proposed various definitions of errors. From a linguistic standpoint, an error in second language learning and teaching can be defined as the use of a linguistic item (a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in the speech or writing of a second or foreign language learner in a way that a fluent or native speaker of the language considers it to be faulty or incomplete (Richards & Platt, 1998). Corder (1967, p. 25) defines an error in language learning as “systematic errors of the learner from which his knowledge of the language to date can be reconstructed.” Learners produce 'errors' due to an incomplete understanding of the second language's code and formation norms, which they have not yet internalized. They are elements of a conversation or work that stray from a predetermined norm of developed language performance (Dulay, 1982). Furthermore, an error, according to Brown (1994, p. 205), is a “noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner”. This definition of error is sometimes referred to by (Chomsky, 1965) as “competence errors,” which are serious and imply insufficient learning.

2.2 Mistakes

Corder (1981) differentiates between “errors” and “mistakes”. He states that *errors* are “failures in competence” whereas *mistakes* are “failures in performance”. He added that unlike mistakes, errors are systematic because they reveal the underlying linguistic knowledge of language learners. However, mistakes are non-systematic, i.e. learners do not commit mistakes because of deficiency in competence but rather a failure in performance due to their internal and external conditions when they write or speak. In other words, students make mistakes because of “memory lapses, physical states such as tiredness and psychological conditions such as strong emotion” (Corder, 1981, p. 10). In other words, mistakes might occur when learners feel stressed, nervous, tired, anxious, etc. Based on the distinction above, learners' slips of tongue or pen are considered ‘mistakes’ not errors if they are self-corrected, i.e. without external help, whereas they are considered “errors” if not. According to Brown (1994, p. 205), a mistake is “a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip, in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly,” i.e. the learner is aware of the system but fails to apply it.

2.3 Corrective feedback

Researchers have utilized a variety of operationalized definitions of corrective feedback, and they refer to similar processes using different terms. For example, Schegloff et al. (1977) define corrective feedback as “the replacement of error or mistake by what is correct” (p. 363). Chaudron (1977) also defines corrective feedback as “any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or requests improvement of the learner's utterance” (p. 31). According to Pica (1994), feedback is the information that learners receive about their language production that allows them to make changes.

Corrective feedback, according to Lightbown and Spada (1999), is “any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect” (p. 171). Both explicit and implicit are included in corrective feedback. Finally, corrective feedback can be defined as a process of error correction, whether by teachers or learners, in which learners become aware of their errors and prevent repeating them in the future. Learners have taken use of their mistakes in this way. Lacking feedback, it might be difficult to figure out how much one has been doing well and what areas want development. It does not only improve students’ learning, but also guides them into the right direction (Westberg & Hilliard, 2001). Actually, feedback is a remarkable way of influencing learning (Hattie & Rimperley, 2007).

It is important to make a distinction between EC and CF at this point though this paper considers them interchangeably. Larsen-Freeman (2003, p. 123) elaborates on the same concept by saying “compared to the traditional term, error correction (negative) feedback is broader in scope”. It also has a less punitive connotation. And while error is by definition an externally norm-referenced notion, feedback is not necessarily so”. In other words, the term "error correction" is so widespread that it is extremely doubtful that it will ever be replaced by the term "feedback" in practitioners' explanations of how they interact to students' erroneous production. The term feedback can stand as an umbrella for error correction. However, in the current study, the term error correction, corrective feedback, error treatment, corrective reactions and, corrective moves are used interchangeably to refer to the teachers’ responses to erroneous linguistic elements in students' speaking.

2.3.1 The Role of Feedback

One of the significant factors in learning and accomplishment is the provision of feedback. Freiermuth (1998) as cited in Rezaei et al. (2011) supports the assumption that the feedback provided by teachers can aid in the improvement of students' accuracy and language learning/acquisition. Moreover, Ellis (2009) argues that feedback plays a significant part in most theories of L2 acquisition and language teaching. Feedback is a key component of both behaviourist and cognitive models of second language acquisition. Feedback is seen as a way to motivate students and ensure linguistic correctness in both structural and communicative methods of language teaching.

According to Al-Faki and Siddiek (2013), corrective feedback has an important function to play in the English classroom. An integral role in learning process is played by giving students spoken feedback for their errors. There seems to be a growing agreement among many scholars recognizing the relevance of the function, and the important role performed by corrective feedback in the acquisition and progress of SLA because it encourages students to realize and attempt to say the targeted form, thus encouraging them to correct their errors (Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Long 1990; Carroll et al., 1992; Long, 1996; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Sheen, 2004; Ellis, 2009).

On the other hand, some linguists are not in favour of CF. Krashen (1982), for example, looked upon correcting errors as a "serious mistake" (p. 74). According to Ellis (2009), Krashen’s viewpoint is supported by two main arguments. As a first step, "error correction" puts students on the "defensive" side and causes them to avoid using difficult structures in order to prevent making errors. The second point is that error correction is just effective in the process of developing "learned knowledge," not "acquired knowledge." (p. 75).

It can be partially concluded as teachers' feedback on errors made by the learners reflects learners what and how they perform, highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and pointing them in the right direction, CF plays an important role in foreign language acquisition.

2.3.2 Purpose of Feedback

Değirmenci Uysal and Aydin (2017) postulate that students' erroneous utterances should be treated since the primary goal of speaking lessons should be to teach students how to communicate effectively

and appropriately. So the necessity of treating errors arises. Learners are meant to be taught appropriate English; the reason is that they enrol in English lessons. Furthermore, Hartelius (2013) states that “the purpose of teacher feedback should be to have a long-term positive effect on the students’ ability to monitor his or her own output”. Hence, effective feedback fosters a collaborative, communicative, and productive work atmosphere. Additionally, it stimulates receivers to do better. According to Lewis (2002) as cited in Mastang (2019), feedback serves as a means of informing students about their work and also assisting them in areas of growth.

2.3.3 Forms of Feedback

This section introduces forms of feedback. The CF is either written or oral. According to Cohen (1999, p. 109) there are two proposed forms of feedback, which are as follows:

1) Written Feedback:

Students' written work receives comments, corrections, and/or grades in the written feedback. Words or fast symbols like underscoring, circles, and other symbols may be marked. This structure is appropriate for older learners (late elementary through high school) (Cohen, 1999). Documenting learners’ efforts is most beneficial when it is individualized or typical and when it contains valuable information.

2) Oral Feedback:

Oral feedback, also commonly known as oral discussion, is a personal consultation between teacher and learner during the assessment of communication activities (Cohen, 1999). The most difficult aspect of providing this type of feedback is that the teacher must have a sufficient amount of time.

According to Polio (2001) as cited in Pawlak (2014) timing discrepancies can also be identified. Oral feedback can be provided both online (online discussions) and immediately (face-to-face) when an effort is made to notify students of the fact that they produced an incorrect form shortly after the utterance containing the error, and offline and delayed, when the teacher waits till the student has finished talking or perhaps even wants to delay it until the lesson ends or the next class. On the contrary, written correction is generally offline or delayed, as writing assignments are not evaluated until sometime after they have been finished. There are also notable discrepancies between oral and written corrective feedback in terms of their complexity. This is due to the fact that the former, as it is currently operationalized in SLA research, mainly tends to involve pulling learners' focus to form various types of teaching activities, whereas the latter can be used to respond to numerous aspects of writing, including not only grammatical accuracy but also syntactic and lexical complexity, overall quality, content, mechanics, coherence, or discourse features (Cohen, 1999).

2.3.4 Sources of Feedback

In both research and teaching, corrective feedback (CF) sources, or who should be the people who give the feedback, are very important things to think about (Ellis, 2009) as cited in (Ha & Nguyen, 2021).

Pawlak (2014) postulates that teachers have three options when it comes to the source of corrective feedback, regardless of whether such feedback is supplied on errors in speech or writing: (1) Teachers can correct the error themselves, which is called teacher correction; (2) Teachers can encourage the student who made the error to do so, which is called self-correction; or (3) Teachers can ask another student to give them the correct form, which is called peer-correction. Park (2010) also adds “The most common source of feedback to learners in an L2 classroom is the teacher. If it is not the teacher who treats the error, then it could be either the learner who made the error or peers in the classroom”. As in

most circumstances, the teacher provides a chance for students to correct their erroneous utterances. However, in order for L2 students to improve the system of their interlanguage, they must be able to recognise/notice the gaps in their own speech and make necessary corrections. As a result, teachers must offer students level-appropriate feedback in order to help them progress in their language acquisition efforts.

In addition, Allwright and Bailey (1991) argue that even if the students do the self-repair on their own or with help from someone else, teachers need to give them time to do so. To sum up the idea behind the previous statement, it is worth mentioning that whenever the teacher gives time to students and pauses after asking a question to a student, the likelihood of the learner responding correctly increases. With this time flexibility, teachers may assist students in properly and fluently creating the target language by internalizing the right forms, which would be the long-term purpose of language instruction.

2.3.5 Types/Strategies of Corrective Feedback

To characterize the several kinds of correcting oral errors, Lyster and Ranta (1997) introduced a model that included the terms "explicit correction," "recast," "clarification request," "metalinguistic clues," "elicitation," and "repetition." According to this paradigm, explicitly conveying towards the learner that his/her statement is erroneous and then providing the correct form is referred to as the explicit correction type. Even if recast will not provide an obvious indicator that the learner's statement is inaccurate, the teacher will indirectly express the learner's errors inside the process. An explanation request corrective style uses terms like "excuse me" and "I don't understand". Next, before supplying the right form, the teacher enquires or gives details on the learner's speech. Also, elicitation is a method of Oral Error Correction OEC by posing queries but later just reformulating the learner's statement. Finally, the teacher repeats the learners' error, then alters the tone to catch the learner's awareness.

Furthermore, the six distinct types of feedback established in Oral Corrective Feedbacks Theory were developed by Chaudron (1977) as cited in (Guibanguibang, 2020, pp. 184-5) as follows:

1. *Explicit correction*: the learner is directly told by the teacher that the learner's utterance is incorrect and the teacher explicitly discovers the correct answer/utterance to him/herself.

Example: learner: "He eated."

Teacher: "No, that's wrong. He ate."

2. *Recast*: the answer of the student is correctly repeated by the teacher.

For example, when a learner states, "He eated," the teacher may rephrase the statement as, "He ate".

3. *Clarification Request*: the teacher signals that the learner's speech should be revisited or modified as to its inadequacy inform or just due to teacher's misunderstanding of it.

For example, when a learner states, "He walk to the shore," the teacher may answer, "what?"

4. *Metalinguistic Feedback*: the learner's comments and intonation are repeated by the teacher or the teacher inquiries about the difficulty in the student's speech but does not provide the form that is correct.

For example, a metalinguistic indicator to a student of a grammar error in use of third person singular "s" might be: "No. You need to put an "s" on the verb if the subject is he, she, or it."

5. *Elicitation*: the teacher employs a variety of tactics in order to extract the proper form from the learner.

For example, If the learner states, "Yesterday, he walks to school," the teacher may: (1) repeat the beginning of the utterance of the learner and extract completion through stopping significantly to urge the learner to "fill in the blank" somewhere at the point of the deviation: "No, Yesterday he..." (2) elicit the correct form by asking a question: "How do we talk about the past in English?" (3) request that a student to rephrase his as well as her own statement: "Please repeat that properly."

6. *Repetition*: the incorrect speech of learner is repeated by the teacher, typically, with accented intonation or intensity to draw attention to the learner's inaccuracy or errors.

For example: Student: “He eated.” Teacher: “He eated?” (with strong question intonation to draw attention to the error).

In conclusion, it is obvious that using EC in the classroom may help create an effective and successful learning environment for EFL students. By using these feedback strategies, learners increase their chances of successfully completing their assigned activities and so gaining a feeling of accomplishment (Al-Ghazo, 2016).

2.4 Error Correction and Second Language Acquisition

Learners’ errors are inevitable when attempting to use the target language before mastering it. Therefore, Burt (1975) states that teachers must be prepared to deal with the wide variety of errors that may arise during students' speaking or writing. Corder (1967; 1981) confirms that errors are important to the teacher, the researchers, and the learner. To reiterate, Corder (1981) asserts that errors manifest that the learner is actively contributing to second language acquisition, which is important to both the teacher and the researchers. However, the role of corrective feedback in learning a new language has been debated. In the words of Krashen (1982), corrective feedback may not help learners acquire the proper form if they are not ready to learn. Treatment of errors raises the question of whether or not it will help students acquire the right form faster or if it will be ineffective until they reach a point in their interlanguage development where they can utilize this feedback to improve their ill-formed utterances. A teacher's decision not to correct an inaccuracy in an utterance may lead other students in the class to believe that it is accurate. As a result, some students may learn inappropriate forms, such as fossilization, as a result of this assumption.

Larsen-Freeman (2003) as cited in Bulbula (2018) points out that “feedback on learners’ performance in an instructional environment presents an opportunity for learning to take place”. Ellis (2009) confirms that CF is strong evidence that can help learners to develop their language acquisition.

Furthermore, Ellis (2009) suggests that practicing corrective feedback is a good thing to do because teachers have to decide whether, how, and when to correct their students' mistakes, and the decisions they make are based on their overall theory of how to teach and learn. Reflecting on CF can be used both to look at and maybe change current CF practices and to help teachers better understand how they teach and how they feel about themselves.

Though SLA scholars and language educators have devoted close attention to the concept of corrective feedback (CF), there has been disagreement regarding when, what, how, and even if to use CF to correct errors (cf. Hendrickson, 1978; Hyland & Hyland, 2006) as cited in (Ellis, 2009). For instance, as a result of the fact that direct error treatment can lead a student to be cut off in the middle of a statement, Park (2020) postulates that it might reduce a student's desire to participate in classroom discussions altogether. On the contrary, despite the fact that postponed feedback can provide the learner more time to complete what the learner is attempting to say, the effectiveness of the feedback may decrease as the amount of time that passes between the error and the correction rises. In conclusion, this paper supports the assumption that EC/CF contributes to developing EFL learners’ language skills.

2.5 Error Correction Practices

It is argued by Al-Ghazo (2016) that EC enables teachers to assess their classroom practices and instructional methods in order to increase their students' speech competence. To assess learners' oral competency in the language, learners should be evaluated on a regular basis in order to recommend appropriate solutions and subsequently improve their performance in learning the English language. Accordingly, EC is seen as a critical component of the teaching/learning process.

In the same vein, Bulbula (2018, p. 16) clearly advocates the importance of EC in language acquisition by giving the following statement: “Although there are contentious natures of error

correction practice, according to different scholars and researchers, successful language learning can take place when both teachers and learners have a common understanding on their practices and preferences of error correction process". As a result, proper correction should be offered to foreign language learners in order to assist them in achieving the required language competency.

Finally, to reiterate the issue of EC, whether or not to treat errors and which errors to correct have caused controversy in SLA. According to Hendrickson (1978), attention should be directed to global errors instead of local ones, and the corrective process should be consistent and methodical. Lee (1990) agrees with Bailey and Celce-Murcia (1979) that correcting errors is an indispensable component of language proficiency. Finally, the questions that are to be asked at this point are: what to correct, when to correct, who corrects and how. The answers to these critical questions are given in the following section.

2.5.1 What to Correct (Which learner errors should be corrected?)

One significant question is whether teachers should strive to treat all or part of the language errors in a work. According to Corder (1975, p. 212). "it [EC] relates to the assessment of the gravity of the error in terms of its interference with comprehensibility or the degree of linguistic deviance". Sheen and Ellis (2011) also comment on this question and believe that one of the most important questions for instructors is whether they should focus on correcting all language errors or only some of them. Methodologists in the field of language instruction advocate "selective correction". Sheen (2007) recommends the corrective feedback that focuses on a particular kind of error, which can be called "focused corrective feedback." i.e. instead of correcting all of the wrong grammar, lexis, pronunciation, or pragmatics at the same time, teachers should focus on a single type of error, its phase, or a single activity. In one phase of a lesson, for example, they could focus on how to use the "present perfect" and "present perfect continuous." In another phase, teachers could address how to use recently learned words. In the last phase, teachers could focus on how to pronounce a word that keeps coming up. Sheen and Ellis (2011) raise the reason and state that this is possibly why the bulk of experimental investigations of oral and written corrective feedback have chosen targeted correction rather than broad correction as the default choice in their design.

On the other hand, some applied linguists and language methodologists (Corder,1967; Burt, 1975; Krashen, 1967, 1982, among others) have claimed that teachers should only focus on "errors" and overlook "mistakes," as mistakes are essentially performance phenomena (Corder, 1967). Another strategy to advise is addressing "global" rather than "local" errors (Burt, 1975), claiming that the former are more likely block communication. Local errors impact specific parts of a sentence, whereas global errors damage the whole structure of the phrase (for example, errors in semantics and syntax). Krashen's (1982) as cited in Ellis (2009) proposed that "CF should be limited to features that are simple and portable (i.e., "rules of thumb")".

Albarany (1989) as cited in Barany (2019) clearly explains the question of what to correct i.e. which learners' errors should be corrected as follows:

Which errors to correct depending on the teacher's objectives; i.e. whether the teacher is after developing accuracy or fluency in their students. In communicative language learning, we are after fluency more than accuracy. Accordingly, errors can be classified into two main categories: minor errors and serious errors. Minor errors are those errors that do not impede communication in a way that the message has been conveyed and understood. Serious errors are those errors that impede communication in a way that the message is either not conveyed or misunderstood. The teacher should pay attention to global errors instead of local errors (p. 206).

2.5.2 Who Corrects (Who should correct learner errors?)

Hendrickson (1978) notes that theorists and teachers often respond favourably to this issue since learners are unaware of their errors and just need assistance in recognizing and correcting errors. Many teachers give their learners a space to self-correct in the class, though the teacher is able to treat the student's errors. Thus, teachers need to provide learners with an appropriate corrective feedback level (up to the appropriate level of learners) that can promote their language learning. Hedge (2000) as cited in Ellis (2009) also confirms that teachers are frequently recommended to allow learners to self-correct and, if that fails, to invite other students to solve the problem. Kargozari et al. (2016) also believe that "self-correction" is frequently the most preferred method since it enables the learner to recognize and treat his/her own errors. Peer correction is the second preference. In other words, learners assist one another in identifying and correcting their errors.

When it comes to providing corrective feedback, teachers have three options: (1) they can correct the error themselves, which is called "teacher correction"; (2) they can stimulate the learner him/herself who made the incorrect utterance to correct, which is called "self-correction"; or (3) teachers can ask another student to supply the correct form, which is called "peer correction" (Pawlak, 2015). However, "in most cases the common source of feedback to learners in an L2 classroom is the teacher. If it is not the teacher who treats the error, then it could be either the learner who made the error or peers in the classroom." (Bulbula, 2018, p. 43). In conclusion, teachers might be confused about who should treat the errors. In general, errors can be corrected by: learners themselves (self-correction), learners correct each other (peer-correction), and the teacher (teacher-correction). Finally, although "teacher correction" of errors can be effective, it should be utilized as a last option.

2.5.3 When to Correct (When should learner errors be corrected?)

This is the issue of timing in EC. Undeniably, unlike written corrective feedback which teachers usually provide delayed CF after they have done and gathered the written work of learners, oral corrective feedback (OCF) can be both immediate and delayed. However, in reality, Pawlak (2015) states "things are more complicated than they might seem in the case of the treatment of oral errors because it is, in fact, possible to differentiate not between two but three options here; namely immediate correction, delayed correction and postponed correction". Allwright and Bailey (1991, p. 3) as cited in Pawlak (2015) assert that the teacher can deal with an error right away, or delay treatment a little (for example, until the learner is done with the message she or he was trying to get across), but still treat the error in the same lesson where it happened. Teachers may also put off the treatment for longer periods of time.

Once the teacher finds an issue that needs to be corrected, he/she needs to figure out when the optimal moment is in order to deliver feedback so that it sticks in the learner's memory and thus would be useful to the learner. Harmer (1983) asserts that while students get involved in verbal activity, the teacher need not disrupt by "telling students that they are making mistakes, insisting on accuracy and asking for repetition, etc." (p. 44). Similarly, it is also supported and reported by Barany (2019) who asserts the following statement; "most teachers correct their students before they finish their talking, which can have a negative effect on nervous students because when the teacher corrects them while speaking they may forget what they are talking about" (p. 208). As a result, teachers should write their notes and wait until the learner has completed his topic or task before correcting them.

2.5.4 How to Correct (How should learner errors be corrected?)

Inconsistency and lack of accuracy are two characteristics of teachers' actual EC/CF practices. Hinkel (2005) assumes that the "inconsistency arises when teachers respond variably to the same error made by different students in the same class, correcting some students and ignoring others". Such variability might be a result of teachers' efforts to accommodate learners' particular characteristics as pointed out by Allwright (1975) cited in Sheen and Ellis (2011).

It is worth mentioning and relevant to the subject in question, that there are two ways in correcting errors namely explicit (direct) and implicit (indirect). According to renowned applied linguists (Palmer, 1980; Gass, 1983; Ellis, 2007), correcting learners' errors indirectly by teachers is highly valued. They either urge learners to self-correct using a heuristic (enabling the student him/herself to learn something by themselves) strategy or teachers offer the right form to alleviate any embarrassment.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study aims at investigating students' awareness of the importance of OEC in foreign language learning and teaching at the Department of English, College of Basic Education, University of Duhok (UoD). The study also aims at finding out students' reactions and feelings to EC in terms of timing, type of errors and who corrects them. Accordingly, this paper uses an adopted questionnaire with few modifications as its research tool.

Shulman et al. (2011); Ramírez and Paluay (2015) as cited in Cohen, et al. (2000, p. 276) point out that there are some advantages of the questionnaire such as, it tends to be more reliable because it is anonymous, it may encourage greater honesty. Further, a questionnaire is often more economic in terms of time and money, for example, it can be mailed or conducted online. Davies (2007) confirms that a considerably larger number of respondents employ this method. The researcher adopted this method because it addresses the aims and questions of the current study.

3.2 Data Collection/ Participants of the Study

The study includes one hundred and eighty second, third and fourth year English language students as its samples; there are 60 students, both male and female from each stage, who were chosen randomly from the Department of English, College of Basic Education, UoD.

Table 1: *the student participants of the study*

University	College	Department	Years of Study	Gender		Total
				M	F	
UoD	Basic education	English	2 nd	25	35	60
			3 rd	27	33	60
			4 th	27	33	60
Grand total of student participants				180		

The data were collected by using one questionnaire for the participants as mentioned in table 1 above. The data were collected during the period between mid-February and early March in 2022 and the time spent for answering the questionnaire items was between 15 to 25 minutes, that is, the first student finished responding to the questionnaire within 15 minutes whereas it took the last student 25 minutes.

3.3 Data Collection Instrument

In the current study, as mentioned above, the researchers have used a questionnaire for students. All questionnaire items have been adopted from the research of Fukuda (2004) except for item number 3 which was added to the main study by the researchers. The questionnaire is comprised of two sections. The first section includes 2 demographic variables of students; gender, and stage of study.

The second section of the questionnaire includes 23 close-ended items investigating students' perceptions of the necessity of EC and frequency of EC, preferences for timing of EC, types of errors that need to be corrected, types of corrective feedback, and who should do error correction. The responses to the items of the questionnaire are based on a five - point Likert Scale consisting of three types of scale labels, i.e. (agreement, frequency and effectiveness) according to the types of items, and as follows: 1. A five-point Likert scale for agreement; "(A. Strongly agree B. Agree C. Neutral D. Disagree E. Strongly disagree)" to show the level of agreement of the respondents on the items of the questionnaire, 2. A five-point Likert scale for effectiveness; "(A. Very effective, B. Effective C. Neutral D. Ineffective E. Very ineffective)" to measure how much effective the item is to the respondents, and 3. A five-point Likert scale for frequency; "(A. Always 100% B. Usually 80% C. Sometimes 50% D. Occasionally 20% E. Never 0%)", that aims to measure the frequency of occurrence with other options that will provide respondents with the variations they are looking for. The three types of scales are statistically processed and unified according to the Likert scale. It is worth mentioning that the researchers sometimes translated some items into Kurdish for some students when needed.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of an instrument are essential to be measured before conducting the main study. Each of these is explained in detail as follows:

3.4.1 Validity of the Questionnaires

Ghuri and Gronhaug (2005) state that the term "validity" refers to how effectively the data gathered represent the real area that is being investigated. The validity of a questionnaire basically means measuring what the questionnaire intends to measure (Field, 2005) as cited in (Taherdoost, 2016, p. 28). After the researchers designed the adopted questionnaire, the questionnaire was sent via emails to a group of English language professors who are specialized in Applied Linguistics at various universities as jury members to prove the questionnaire's validity. Members of the jury were asked to judge the items in terms of clarity and relevance to the topic under investigation. They were also asked to suggest any modifications or changes to the instrument though the questionnaire has been adopted from a previous similar study, yet it needs to be retested. Based on the comments and suggestions made by the jury members, slight modifications were made to a few items of the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Reliability of the Questionnaires

Carmines and Zeller (1979) as cited in (Taherdoost, 2016, p. 33) argue that "reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement of a phenomenon provides stable and consistent result". To determine the reliability of the questionnaire, it was first piloted by 18 students (6 male/female students of 2nd stage, 6 male/female students of 3rd stage and 6 male/female students of 4th stage) from the English Department at the College of Basic Education. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS – Version 26) software program was relied upon to perform the statistical analysis of the current study. The results of the variables and items of the students' questionnaire showed that they had an internal consistency of (0.851), which represented a good degree of consistency according to Cronbach's alpha range of reliability. Overall, the piloting results revealed that the instrument was clear, valid, and relevant to the topic. Usually a reliability coefficient of (0.70) and above is acceptable (Nunnally, 1978), but as for the social studies (0.60) is acceptable (Straub et al., 2004).

3.4.2.1 Reliability of Variables and Items for the Students' Questionnaire

Reliability statistics for variables and items of students' questionnaire was first done by using Cronbach's Alpha. The first section which contains 2 variables was tested together with the other 22 questionnaire items. The reliability value was 0.851 which is equivalent to 85% as below:

Table 2: *Reliability Statistics of the Students' questionnaire*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.851	24

4. Data analysis procedure

The raw data from students' questionnaire were analysed quantitatively by using SPSS software (version 26) in descriptive statistics and presented by frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation then interpreted by using mean value and degree of significance. Accordingly, Burns (2000) describes data analysis as the procedure that allows one to “find meanings from the data, and a process by which the investigator can interpret the data” (p. 430). Likewise, according to Boeije (2010), the primary objective of data analysis is to provide “meaning, structure, and order” to the obtained data, whether qualitative or quantitative.

The descriptive statistics of this study describes the responses of the students to the items of the questionnaire understudy based on the aforementioned statistical measures. Within SPSS software and based on a 5-point Likert scale, the responses were coded as No. 5 equals Strongly Agree, No. 4 equals (Agree), No. 3 equals (Neutral), No. 2 equals (Disagree) and No. 1 equals (Strongly Disagree). As for the student respondents, each respondent was given a code (the students from 1 to 180) because the SPSS software only works with figures, not letters. Following this, the findings of the data have been analysed and discussed in terms of the research questions that the present study intends to answer.

It is worth mentioning that the researchers highlight on mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) measures accordingly. The M is calculated by dividing the sum of all values by the total number of data points. The M produces the distribution's mass centre. It measures the centre. Whereas the SD measures data dispersion. A high SD indicates that the data points are, on average, dispersed far from the mean, whereas a lower SD indicates that the data points are clustered closer to the M. In general, the M indicates where on the real line the dispersion situates. The SD indicates how the distribution is dispersed. Typically, SD is used to compare one distribution to another and informs the researchers of the dispersion of the responses.

The descriptive statistics answers all the questions of the study from questions (1 to 7), which ask about whether to correct, what to correct, how to correct, when to correct, who to correct and etc. To reiterate four measurements; namely frequency, percentage, M, and SD were utilized to analyse the raw collected data, in addition to T. test and P. value, which are also used for the analysis of the data and significance of items.

4.1 Statistical Description of the Students' Questionnaire

This section provides a statistical description of the variables and items of the students' questionnaire. The data gathered have been analysed using descriptive statistics, which contains measures of (frequency, percentage, mean (M) and standard deviation (SD)) and ranking and significant statistics which contain measures of (mean, SD, T. value and P. value). Accordingly, the questions of the study can be answered and statistically supported. The demographic statistics are used to show only frequencies and percentages within the first part of the questionnaire, which comprises of non-linguistic variables since none of the questions of the study are answered by the differences among variables, as for students (gender and year of study) are the two variables. However, it is worth confirming that the demographic variables are included in the study in order to show that the participants of the study are actual representative samples of the target population (Salkind, 2010).

4.2 Statistical Analysis, Results and Discussion

As highlighted earlier, all the 23 items of the students’ questionnaire have been explicitly divided and explained into seven separate tables and each table is labelled differently and accordingly addresses the seven research questions of the study individually one by one. The results of all the items will be discussed statistically in terms of percentage, ranking and significance. It is worth noting, for the tables of more than one item, the items’ statistical description is sequenced on the basis of ranking and significance of the items to extract the answers for the research questions of the study accordingly, as follows:

4.2.1 Necessity and Acceptance of EC (Research question No.1)

Table 5 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions, and opinions of the students towards the necessity and acceptance of EC as reflected in item No.1 which states:

“I want to receive CF, e.g. provide a hint for me to self-correct, tell me that I have made an error, or correct my error, **when I make mistakes”**. It gives an answer to the research question No.1 which asks *“Should students’ spoken errors be corrected i.e. do students think it is necessary to accept EC?”*.

Table (5): Necessity and acceptance of EC
Item (1)

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		M	SD	T. value	Prob.*
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%				
1	73	40.6	88	48.9	19	10.6	0	0	0	0	4.30	0.651	92.654	0.000

The table demonstrates that the highest percentage of the agreement scale on the content of item No. 1 is 48.9%, and the percentage of neutral in the responses is 10.6%. There are no percentages given to the two disagreement scales on the content of this item. Due to responses clustered around the agreement scales, the M value reaches a high score 4.30 and SD reaches 0.516. This is why the T value reaches 92.654 (the greater it is, the better results), which is much greater than the default level (1.651) and the P. value is 0.000 which is lower than the significance default level of (0.05), which statistically indicates that item No. 1 of the questionnaire is highly reliable and significant. In conclusion, the total results of the above table indicate that students think CF is necessary for them, and they accept to receive CFs when they make mistakes because learners believe EC let them know which part of their utterance needs correction and also EC is a method for enhancing language learners' proficiency in a second/foreign language learning. This result corresponds with the results of Bulbula (2020) who investigated “EFL Teachers’ Practice and Learners Preferences for Oral Error Corrective Feedback in EFL Speaking Class”. Also in Fathimah’s (2020) study, it was revealed that students responded well to the errors corrected by the teachers. The majority of respondents expressed happiness when obtaining feedback. Additionally, students viewed EC as valuable to their learning. Thus, an appropriate answer is attained

to the first question of the research understudy which asks “*Should students’ spoken errors be corrected i.e. do students think it is necessary to accept EC?*”

4.2.2 Contribution of EC (Research question No.2)

Table 6 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions and opinions of the students towards the contribution of EC as reflected in item 2 which states:

“Error correction contributes in developing my language skills”. That gives an answer to research question No. 2 “*Does EC contributes in developing students’ language skills?*”.

Table (6): Contribution of EC
Item (2)

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		M	SD	T. value	Prob.*
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%				
(2)	50	27.8	116	64.4	11	6.1	3	1.7	0	0	4.18	0.612	86.772	0.000

The table above shows that the highest percentage in terms of agreement scale on the content of the item (2) is 64.4.9% and the percentage of neutral in the responses is 6.1%, while there is only 1.7% of the two disagreement scales on the content of this item. Due to responses gathered around the agreement scales, the M score reaches 4.18 and SD reaches 0.612. This is why the T value reaches 86.772 (the greater it is, the better results), which is greater than the default level of (1.651), and it is statistically significant as the P. value is 0.000 that is greater than the default level of significance (0.05).

In conclusion, all the above results indicate that students think EC contributes to their language skills when their spoken errors are corrected because learners become aware of their errors, and being aware of their errors makes them progress in the upcoming steps of learning (Faqeih, 2012). These results are similar to the results obtained by Yoshida (2008) stating that EC contributes to developing learners’ language skills. Thus, an appropriate answer is attained to the second question of the research understudy, which asks “*Does EC contributes in developing students’ language skills?*”

4.2.3 Frequency of EC (Research question No.3)

Table 7 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions, and opinions of the students towards the frequency of EC as reflected in item 3 which states:

“How often do you want your teacher to give corrective feedback on your spoken errors?”.

Table (7): Frequency of EC

Item (3)

(3)	Always		Usually		Sometimes		Occasionally		Never		M	SD	T. value	Prob.*
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%				
	19	10.6	93	51.7	66	36.7	2	1.1	0	0	3.72	0.662	62.274	0.000

Table 7 reveals that the highest percentage goes to the point of the scale “usually” on the content of item 3 that is 51%, and 36.7% goes to the point of the scale “sometimes” with 10.6% to “always”, 1.1% to “occasionally”, and the last and least percentage 0% is received by the point of the scale “never”. Since more of the responses are gathered around the “usually” and “sometimes” points of the scale, the M score reaches 3.72 and SD reaches 0.662. This is why the T value reaches 62.274 (the greater it is, better results), which is greater than the default level (1.651) and it is significant as the P. value is 0.000 that is lower than the default level of significance which is (0.05).

In conclusion, all the results above indicate that students usually want their teachers to give them feedback on their spoken errors as it receives 51.7% because students believe that correcting their spoken errors usually makes them aware of their errors and consequently they avoid making such mistakes in the future, and consequently that will add to their language acquisition development. These results are consistent with (Ancker, 2000; Schulz, 1996, 2001) whose students usually had the expectation that teachers would point out and correct their mistakes. Thus, an appropriate answer is attained to the third question of the research understudy, which asks “How often do teachers provide students CFs?”.

4.2.4 Timing of EC (Research question No.4)

Table 8 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions and opinions of the students towards the timing of EC (the appropriate time to correct students’ spoken errors) category as reflected in items 4 to 7 as follows:

- ※ “When do you want your spoken errors to be corrected?”
- 4. “As soon as errors are made even if it interrupts my conversation.”
- 5. “After I finish speaking.”
- 6. “After the activities.”
- 7. “At the end of class.”

Table (8): Timing of EC
Item (4 to 7)

(4)	(7)		(6)		(5)		Item	
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%
6	20	11.1	6	3.3	36	20.0	Strongly Agree	
3.3	18	10.0	53	29.4	115	63.9	Agree	
18	19	10.6	80	44.4	25	13.9	Neutral	
10.0	70	38.9	38	21.1	3	1.7	Disagree	
22	53	29.4	3	1.7	1	.6	Strongly Disagree	
12.2	2.34	1.300	3.12	0.834	4.01		M	
90	1.020	28.19	0.000	0.000	0.677		SD	
50.0	24.639	0.011	0.000	0.000	75.521		T. value	
44	0.013	0.011	0.000	0.000	0.000		Prob.*	
24.4								
2.18								

Table 8, and based on the ranking and significance of the items, exhibits that more than a half of the participants agree that their spoken errors are to be corrected after they finish speaking as the two agreement points of scale “agree” and “strongly agree” receive 63.9% and 20.0% respectively. Approximately, half of the participants agree that their spoken errors to be corrected after they finish activities as the two agreement points of scale “agree” and “strongly agree” receive 29.4% and 3.3% respectively. However, less than a half of the participants agree that their spoken errors are to be corrected at the end of the class as the two agreement points of scale “agree” and “strongly agree” receive 10.0% and 11.1% respectively. Finally, the least participant students agree that their spoken errors are to be corrected as soon as they occur even if it interrupts their conversation as the two agreement points of scale “agree” and “strongly agree” receive 10.0% and 3.3% respectively. Thus, these results give an answer to the research question 4., which asks, “When should the students’ spoken errors be corrected?” The results of the current study go in line with study of Bulbula (2018) whose results revealed that the participant learners also do not prefer their errors to be corrected as soon as they occur neither by the teachers nor by the students included in the study, and they always prefer to be corrected after they finish their speech.

4.2.5 Types of Errors (Research question No.5)

Table 9 provides the results of the preferences, perceptions and opinions of the students towards the types of errors category as reflected in items 8 to 12 of the questionnaire, as follows:

※ “How often do you want each of the following types of errors to receive corrective feedback?”

- 8. “Serious spoken errors that may cause problems in a listener’s understanding.”
- 9. “Less serious spoken errors that do not affect a listener’s understanding.”
- 10. “Frequent spoken errors.”
- 11. “Infrequent spoken errors”
- 12. “My individual errors (i.e., errors that other students may not make.)”.

Table (9): Types of errors
Item (8 – 12)

(11)	(10)	(9)	(12)	(8)	Item		M	SD	T. value	Prob.*
					Fr.	%				
3	15	2	15	84	Always					
1.7	8.3	1.1	8.3	46.7	Fr.	%				
31	46	b	65	71	Usually					
17.2	25.6	41.7	36.1	39.4	Fr.	%				
70	85	77	68	21	Sometimes					
38.9	47.2	42.8	37.8	11.7	Fr.	%				
70	31	22	21	4	Occasionally					
38.9	17.2	12.2	11.7	2.2	Fr.	%				
6	3	4	11	0	Never					
3.3	1.7	2.2	6.1	0	Fr.	%				
2.75	3.22	3.27	3.29	4.31						
0.838	0.886	0.776	0.989	0.763						
34.019	48.003	51.608	52.629	93.713						
0.008	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000						

Depending on the overall responses of the participants to the items of table 9 and based on their statistical ranking and significance, the following results are revealed: for the first ranked item, more than a half of the participants want to receive CF on their serious spoken errors that may cause problems in their understanding as the two points of scales “always” and “usually” have received the highest percentages of 46.7% and 39.4% successively. As for the second ranked item, half of the participants want to receive CF on their individual errors as the two points of scales “usually” and “sometimes” have receive the highest percentages as 36.1% and 37.8% successively. Consistent with the third ranked item, nearly half of the participant students want to receive CF on their less serious spoken errors that do not affect their understanding as the two points of scales “usually” and “sometimes” have receive the highest percentages as 41.7% and 42.8% respectively. Whereas for the fourth ranked item, less than a half of the participant students want to receive CF on their frequent errors as the point of scale “sometimes” receive the highest percentage of 47.2%. Finally, according to the last and least ranked item, the least participants want to receive CF on their infrequent errors as the two points of scales “sometimes and occasionally” receive the highest percentages as 38.9% and 38.9% equally. Thus, these results of item 8 to 12 give an answer to the fifth question of the research understudy, which asks, “*What types of errors should be corrected?*”. In correspondence to the previous related studies, Oladejo (1993) discovered that ESL learners at both the high school and university levels in Singapore favoured "comprehensive, not selective" corrections to improve their language accuracy. According to Katayama's (2007) research, the majority of 249 Japanese undergraduate EFL students desired all the erroneous utterances to be treated. Similarly, Zhu and Wang (2019) found in a recent study with Chinese undergraduate EFL learners that the learners desired all types/kinds of errors to be corrected, such as those did not inhibit communication. Zhang and Rahimi (2014) who examined the CF beliefs and anxiety levels of Iranian undergraduate learners discovered that learners valued communication-impacting errors the most, followed by frequent errors. Similarly, advanced ESL students in the United States believed that the most frequent errors in their speech should be prioritised (Lee, 2013).

4.2.6 Strategies of CF (question No. 6)

Table 10 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions and opinions of the students towards the strategies of CF category as reflected in items 13 to 20, as follows:

※ **“How would you rate each type of spoken error correction (strategy) below?”**

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 13. | <p>Teacher: Where did you go yesterday?
 Student: I <u>go</u> to the park.</p> | <p>“Could you say that again?”
 (Clarification request: the student's above contained an error or a which requires a CF strategy of</p> |
|-----|--|--|
- utterance mistake, repetition or reformulation).”
14. **“I go?”** (Repetition: The teacher highlights the student’s grammatical error by using intonation.)”
15. **“I went there yesterday, too.** (Implicit feedback: The teacher does not directly point out the student’s error but indirectly corrects it.)”
16. **“(Go) is in the present tense. You need to use the past tense (went) here”.** “(Explicit feedback: The teacher gives the correct form to the student with a grammatical explanation.)”
17. **“Yesterday, I... (Elicitation: The teacher asks the student to correct and complete the sentence.)”**
18. **“Really? What did you do there?”** (No corrective feedback: The teacher does not give corrective feedback on the student’s errors.)”. According to Fukuda (2014), this point is added within strategies in the questionnaire of students.
19. **“How does the verb change when we talk about the past?”** (Metalinguistic feedback: The teacher gives a hint or a clue without specifically pointing out the mistake.)”
20. **“I went to the park.** (Recast: The teacher repeats the student’s utterance in the correct form without pointing out the student’s error.)”

Table (10): Strategies of CF

Item (13 – 20)

(18)	(19)	(15)	(17)	(14)	(20)	(13)	Item	
							Fr.	%
4	13	22	19	26	25	33	Very Effective	
2.2	7.2	12.2	10.6	14.4	13.9	18.3		
35	73	86	94	104	117	106	Effective	
19.4	40.6	47.8	52.2	57.8	65.0	58.9		
74	70	53	58	36	24	33	Neutral	
41.1	38.9	29.4	32.2	20.0	13.3	18.3		
51	18	13	8	9	9	5	Ineffective	
28.3	10.0	7.2	4.4	5.0	5.0	2.8		
16	6	6	1	5	5	3	Very Ineffective	
8.9	3.3	3.3	.6	2.8	2.8	1.7		
2.78	3.38	3.58	3.68	3.76	3.82	3.89	M	
0.937	0.886	0.915	0.745	0.861	0.833	0.787	SD	
39.77 9	54.226	55.561	61.244	63.601	64.535	66.353	T. value	
0.004	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000	Prob.*	

(16)	17	9.4	29	16.1	29	16.1	78	43.3	27	15.0	2.62	1.197	29.32 4	0.009
------	----	-----	----	------	----	------	----	------	----	------	------	-------	------------	-------

The data suggest that the students had good perceptions of the teacher's corrective feedback. From the obtained results, it seems that the majority of the respondents have expressed satisfaction after being given feedback. Additionally, students have regarded corrective feedback as a helpful means to their language development. Therefore, students are able to differentiate between the appropriate and erroneous forms. In addition, teachers' feedback is viewed as a useful tool for the linguistic knowledge of the target language. It is worth noting that the eight corrective feedback strategies have been rated by the student respondents, which indicates that they are aware of them.

The following is the descending order of the CF strategies as ranked by the respondents. The clarification request strategy, item 13, is the most frequent strategy used by the students as it receives the “effective” with 58.9%, M value 3.89 and SD 0.787, followed by the recast strategy as the second ranked strategy, item 20, which receives the “effective” with 65%, M value 3.82 and SD 0.833. It is worth noting that the recast strategy is one of the CF strategies that has gained popularity among researchers since it does not interrupt the natural flow of speech; hence, fluency may be preserved (Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Lyster & Panova, 2002). The third ranked strategy is repetition, item 14, receives “effective” with 57.8%, M value 3.76 and SD 0.861. The fourth ranked strategy is elicitation, item 17, receives the “effective” with 52.2%, M value 3.68 and SD 0.745. The fifth ranked strategy is the implicit feedback, item 15, which receives “effective” with 47.8%, M value 3.58 and SD 0.915. The sixth strategy is the metalinguistic feedback, item 19, receives “effective” with 40.6%, M value 3.38 and SD 0.886. Whereas, the seventh strategy of no CF, item 18, receives “neutral” 41.1%, M value 2.78 and SD 0.937 followed by the least and eighth ranked strategy preferred by respondents is the explicit feedback, item 16, which receives “ineffective” with 43.3%, M value 2.62 and SD 1.197. Based on the above results, the answer for the sixth research question is attained, which asks, “*How should students’ spoken errors be corrected?*”. In corresponding to a previous related study, “clarification requests,” “repetition,” and “recasts” were the three most often used forms of oral corrective feedback, according to Doughty’s (1994) study of different forms of oral corrective feedback used mostly by different respondents. As for the current study, “clarification request, recast, and repetition feedbacks” are the most frequent forms preferred by the respondents of the current study.

4.2.7 Delivering Agents of CF (Research question No.7)

Table 11 below provides the results of the preferences, perceptions and opinions of the students towards delivering the agents of CF category as reflected in items 21 to 23 as follows:

※ “**The following person should correct students’ errors.**”

- 21. “Classmates”
- 22. “Teachers”
- 23. “Myself”

Table (11): Delivering agents of CF
Item (21 – 23)

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		M	SD	T. value	Prob.*
	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%	Fr.	%				
(21)	16	8.9	44	24.4	89	49.4	27	15.0	4	2.2	3.23	0.890	48.679	0.009
(23)	51	28.3	97	53.9	32	17.8	0	0	0	0	4.11	0.673	81.886	0.013
(22)	58	32.2	105	58.3	15	8.3	2	1.1	0	0	4.22	0.637	88.861	0.011

To sum up the overall responses on the items of Table 11, and based on the ranking and significance of the items, the first three ranked items are summarised and sequenced as follows: For the first ranked item 22, teacher to correct, which is the most frequent agent preferred by the student participants as it receives the point of the scale “agree” with 58.3%, M value 4.22 and SD 0.637. According to Matsuura et al. (2001), the majority of students preferred that their mistakes be treated by their teachers, but they were afraid of losing face during conversation. Following item 23, students themselves to correct, which is the second agent preferred by the student participants as it receives 53.9% of the respondents' choices with M value of 4.11 and SD of 0.673. The least responses on the statement “errors to be corrected by their classmates” go to the “neutral” point of the scale with 49.4%.; M value 3.23 and SD 0.890. Hence, based on the above results, these results of the ranked items 8 to 12 give an answer to the seventh question of the research understudy, which asks, “*who to correct students’ spoken errors*”. These results are consistent with the results of Ha and Nguyen’s (2021) study investigating teachers and students’ beliefs on CF in EFL classes. Their learners’ choices for CF sources favoured teacher correction above self-correction and peer correction. The result of this part of the study is also consistent with that of earlier research (Schulz, 1996, 2001; Park, 2010; Agudo, 2015). For instance, Schulz (1996, 2001) discovered that only approximately 15 percent of Columbian university EFL students and 13 percent of American foreign language learners preferred to have their errors treated by their classmates during small group work. Agudo (2015) reported that just 42 percent of undergrad Spanish EFL learners approved of hearing feedback from their classmates during small group work, which is partially similar to the findings of Schulz. Furthermore, students preferred instructor feedback over peer and self-correction (Méndez & Cruz, 2012; Tomczyk, 2013; Zhu, 2010).

5. Conclusion

1. The students included in the study are aware of the necessity of the EC as they strongly agreed and accepted to be corrected.

2. The students included in the study believe that EC contributes to developing their language skills.
3. The students included in the study believe that correcting their spoken errors usually makes them aware of their errors and consequently they avoid making such mistakes in the future.
4. In terms of timing, “after I finish speaking” item, is regarded as the most frequent time by the students as it does not stop the flow of communication.
5. The type of error, “serious spoken errors”, is regarded as the students’ first preference to be corrected. This means students think that not all errors should be corrected; errors that impede communication should only be corrected.
6. The students included in the study prefer EC even on their “individual errors”.
7. Students have different attitudes towards EC and CF provided by both teachers and students.
8. Students regarded “clarification request, recast, and repetition” strategies as the first three most frequent strategies among other strategies while “explicit feedback” was the least and unwanted feedback in students’ belief as they indicated it as ineffective.
9. The delivering agent “teacher to correct” is regarded as the most frequent corrector of errors by the students.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

“EFL Learners’ Awareness of Oral Error Correction at the Department of English, College of Basic Education”

Dear student,

This questionnaire is for purely research purposes. Data collected from this anonymous questionnaire will be used for completion of a master’s degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at the College of Basic Education, University of Duhok.

This study aims at investigating students’ awareness of the importance of oral error correction in foreign language learning and teaching at the Department of English, College of Basic Education.

Your answers or responses will be kept anonymous (i.e. they won’t be shared with other students or teachers). The researchers will be grateful if you can kindly fill in and respond to the items of this questionnaire where appropriate. We thank you in advance for your contribution and cooperation.

Part one

General Information (demographic details)

Please tick out (✓) what applies to you below

1. Gender: **Male** **Female**
2. Year of study: **2nd** **3rd**
3. Date: / /2022

Part two

Please circle the information that applies to you. Make sure to mark only one.

1. I want to receive corrective feedback (e.g., provide a hint for me to self-correct, tell me that I made an error, or correct my error.) **when I make mistakes.**

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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2. Error correction contributes in developing my language skills

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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3. How often do you want your teacher to give corrective feedback on your spoken errors?

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
---------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------

※ **When do you want your spoken errors to be corrected?**

4. As soon as errors are made even if it interrupts my conversation.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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5. After I finish speaking.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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6. After the activities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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7. At the end of class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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※ **How often do you want each of the following types of errors to receive corrective feedback?**

8. Serious spoken errors that may cause problems in a listener's understanding.

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
---------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------

9. Less serious spoken errors that do not affect a listener's understanding.

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
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10. Frequent spoken errors.

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
---------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------

11. Infrequent spoken errors

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
---------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------

12. My individual errors (i.e., errors that other students may not make.)

Always (100%)	Usually (80%)	Sometimes (50%)	Occasionally (20%)	Never (0%)
---------------	---------------	-----------------	--------------------	------------

※ **How would you rate each type of spoken error correction below?**

<p>Teacher: Where did you go yesterday? Student: I <u>go</u> to the park.</p>
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13. Could you say that again?

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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14. I go? (Repetition: The teacher highlights the student's grammatical error by using intonation.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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15. I went there yesterday, too. (Implicit feedback: The teacher does not directly point out the student's error but indirectly corrects it.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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16. "Go" is in the present tense. You need to use the past tense "went" here. (Explicit feedback: The teacher gives the correct form to the student with a grammatical explanation.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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17. Yesterday, I.... (Elicitation: The teacher asks the student to correct and complete the sentence.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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18. Really? What did you do there? (No corrective feedback: The teacher does not give corrective feedback on the student's errors.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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19. How does the verb change when we talk about the past? (Metalinguistic feedback: The teacher gives a hint or a clue without specifically pointing out the mistake.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
----------------	-----------	---------	-------------	------------------

20. I went to the park. (Recast: The teacher repeats the student's utterance in the correct form without pointing out the student's error.)

Very Effective	Effective	Neutral	Ineffective	Very Ineffective
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※ The following person should correct students' errors.

21. Classmates

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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22. Teachers

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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23. Myself

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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"Thank you for your contribution and cooperation"