

An Investigation of Native and Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers' Cognitions about Oral Corrective Feedback

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Abstract

The present study sought to compare and contrast the perception of native and non-native speakers and experienced and less experienced teachers about CF and to examine controversial issues, such as frequency of CF, timing of CF, types of oral errors that should be corrected, its methods, and the person who should do the correcting. Ninety-nine English language teachers teaching in the preparatory year at Ha'il University participated in the study completed a questionnaire and involved in a semi structured interview. The findings showed that teachers in general have a strong positive perception of oral CF. Although teachers preferred to correct serious errors and frequent errors most frequently, they tended to delay correction until after a student finishes speaking rather than immediately. Moreover, results indicated that elicitation, implicit and repetition were the most frequently used feedback across all types of teachers. The students preferred the CF provided by the teachers. Classmates or peers were the least popular. Further, the results did not show significant differences between types of teachers, except for 'frequent errors, and infrequent errors' where native speakers tended to correct them more than non-native speakers. Additionally, less experienced teachers had more frequent use of CF and used the metalinguistic feedback method more compared to experienced teachers. Implication for teaching speaking are also discussed.

Keywords: Corrective feedback, Native and Non-native, EFL, ESL

1. Introduction

In the process of learning a language the delivery of corrective feedback (CF) in the foreign language classroom seems natural. Over the years, the role which CF plays in the classroom and the language teachers' attitudes they have towards it have changed, and even from one teacher to another. On the other hand, CF has also been theoretically explored in research and been discussed thoroughly in language learning and acquisition over the last decades.

The view and value attributed to CF vary according to the method or approach being used by the teachers or their beliefs about correction in language pedagogy. For instance, within the audio-lingual method, error correction played a vital role as both accuracy and fluency were emphasised. Nonetheless, within the post-method era, Ellis (2009) stated that CF are not explicitly recommended by language-teaching methodologists despite the fact that some acknowledge the cognitive contribution it can make, other researchers counsel teachers about the affective damage it can cause. Further, dictionary 'accuracy' and 'fluency' was used by other methodologists to place CF in the former.

In the past few decades, many second language acquisition researchers have focused on CF (Chaudron, 1977, 1986, 1988; Doughty, 1994a; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2004; Li, 2010). Further, many studies have investigated feedback features and effectiveness. Long (1996) mentioned that implicit negative feedback, activating interactional modification, could facilitate learners' comprehension and this is derived from Interaction Hypothesis. Swain (1985) stated that according to Output Hypothesis, CF, eliciting modified output, could complete the whole language mastery process. CF provided by teachers offers an opportunity for students to perceive the mismatches between their language production and the target discourse forms, potentially reformulating their language outcomes (Gass, 1997 & Schmidt and Frota, 1986), (1986). Moreover, the terms of CF and errors have been defined at different times in a very similar way. Chaudron (1977:31) defined CF as "any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance". Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006:340) describe CF as follows:

"Corrective feedback takes the form of responses to learner utterances that contain error. The responses can consist of (a) an indication that an error has been committed, (b) provision of the correct target language form, or (c) metalinguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these".

According to Zang and Chatupote (2014:242-243), "corrective feedback refers to teachers' responses, comments or reaction to learners' inappropriate utterances, which may include correct forms to elicit learners to make some reformulations of their mistakes".

Moreover, there has been much discussion on errors and their correction in the foreign language classroom given that attitudes towards errors of both teachers and students differ. According to Mendez and Cruz (2012:64), "errors in most cultures are seen as something we should avoid or prevent, as errors can be the cause even of unfortunate events. To deal with them, then, is not easy. When talking about errors in language learning or language acquisition, we cannot help but become part of a very controversial topic, either on the

theoretical or methodological (pedagogical) side". James (1998) point out that language is said to be uniquely human, so an error is likewise distinctive. But how can an error be defined? Corder (1967) and Selinker (1972) 'defined an error as a deviant form which results from lack of knowledge of a particular form and reflects a learner's current stage in interlanguage development'. Hence, it is an attempt to try something out, although a learner does not have sufficient knowledge to produce a given form or item in a correct way. Although many scientists and researchers attempted to provide a definition, which remains problematic, broadly speaking, one can state that an error is a foreign language form produced by a learner, which reflects the learner's contemporary competence and which does not belong to the target language system.

As stated earlier, the concepts of error and CF are a controversial issue because of their complexity. There is no doubt that teachers should face a ubiquity of errors among EFL learners the methods that are employed depend on their general views concerning errors and CF. In fact, CF has been considered to play a vital role in language learning, especially through speaking activities. Hence researchers have paid much attention to CF by exploring how it can positively affect language learning and development. Thus, this paper sought to discern how teachers perceive oral errors and their correction.

2. Literature Review

Previous researchers have investigated the relationship between learner's error and teacher's feedback, CF and learner uptake, CF and learner repair, teacher feedback and classroom context types (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004; Suzuki, 2004; Tomczyk, 2013; Salima, 2014; Calsiyao, 2015). Various studies looked at different issues related to CF and tried to find answers for certain questions. They are a) should teachers correct learners' errors? b) If so, when should they correct them ? c) Which learners' errors should be corrected? d) How should learners' errors be corrected? e) Who should correct the errors?. Language researchers have looked into these issues and below are some of their results.

2.1 Necessity of CF

According to Kim (n.d), cited in Mendez et al. (2010), CF seems to be very important to language learners as it motivates noticing and triggers them to identify the gap between their interlanguage and the target norm. Williams (2001) noted that language improvement took place when CF occurred. Mendez & Cruz (2012) conducted a descriptive study at a Mexican university to find out the perception of EFL teachers about CF and its actual practice in their classrooms. He used a semi-structured interview and questionnaire to collect his data. The results showed that teachers in general have a positive perception of oral CF. However, some consider it optional because teachers are very concerned with their students' feelings and emotions. Tomczyk (2013) conducted a study to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of oral errors and CF as an inseparable part of language acquisition. 43 secondary school teachers and 250 EFL learners participated in the study. The data analysis revealed that the vast majority of the teachers agreed that errors should be corrected. They believed that learners need to receive feedback about their errors to enable them not to commit the

same error repeatedly in the future. Moreover, CF helps teachers to control students' utterances and it also improves the effectiveness of teaching. Zhang & Chatupote (2014) also found regardless of the type of teachers, all teachers had positive attitudes toward CF. The similarities among type of teachers and feedback might indicate that CF does not necessarily depend on teacher types. Thus, whether they are native or non-native teachers, they seemed to share some similar understandings of students' errors, correction strategies, and expectations of students' reactions.

Salima (2014) conducted a study to examine undergraduate classes and two questionnaires were administered to the EFL teachers at MKU of Biskara and 30 undergraduate students. The results showed that teachers strongly believe in the importance of CF, as it is the best way to improve their students' output. The majority of the teachers (80%) agreed that providing oral feedback has a positive impact on their students' oral proficiency. Consequently, teachers provide oral feedback in their classrooms on the basis that it strongly affects their students' oral proficiency. They amalgamate their beliefs with the following reasons. Salima (2014: 225) stated that providing oral feedback is useful in terms of:

- “Raising students' awareness about some aspects of language”.
- “Fostering correct linguistic behaviour”.
- “Drawing students' attention to their weaknesses and strengths as well”.
- “Encouraging students to adjust and improve their performance taking into account the teachers' recommendations and comments”.
- “Motivating students to acquire new vocabulary”.
- “Helping students to get used to avoiding mistakes”.

2.2 Frequency of CF

Li (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 33 primary studies, testifying to the effectiveness of CF. The results showed that feedback given during foreign language contexts was more effective and beneficial than second language contexts. Further, native teachers tended to provide more effective feedback than non-native ones. According to Mendez & Cruz (2012), it is important to consider in instructional settings the frequency with which teachers use CF in their classes. Too much correction can sometimes have a negative effect on the learners' attitudes or performances; whereas too little feedback can also be perceived by learners as a hindrance for efficient and effective language learning. Finding the right balance regarding the amount of CF is, therefore, not an easy task. Tomczyk (2013) found that errors have to be corrected very often and they should not be ignored, before the habit-formation takes place and the wrong form becomes part of the students' interlanguage. Slima (2014) showed that the frequency of teachers' oral feedback ranged between ‘very often’ and ‘sometimes’. 50% of participants reported that they provide oral feedback very often and 50% provided it occasionally. These results showed the teachers are aware of the importance of oral feedback to their students' language learning. In 2014, Zhang & Chatupote conducted a study to compare native and non-native English language teachers' CF to students' errors. The

database consisted of 738 minutes of classroom observation, including two types of teachers, six types of CF and two types of student uptake. They found that non-native English speakers provided overwhelmingly more feedback than native teachers and they tended to use more recast

2.3 Timing of CF

Determining the right time to give CF has been analysed by language researchers. Firwana (2010) studied the impact of Palestinian EFL teachers' attitudes toward oral errors on their students' attitudes and error choice treatment strategies. He found that it is important that the teacher should know the appropriate time of giving CF. This can be done if the teacher knows the students' attitudes and preferences about CF in order for it to be effective. Further, Cohen, Allwright, and Krashen (cited by Pierson, 2005) mentioned that in order to help teachers determine when to give or postpone CF at a more opportune time, the following criteria is suggested: a) the learner is developmentally ready for the correction and s/he has adequate knowledge about the structure involved; b) the learner has time to digest the correction; c) the learner writes down the CF in a notebook; and d) the learner verifies the CF with a native speaker or language teacher. Tomczyk (2013) found that teachers stating that the most crucial argument in favour of CF is that errors should be eliminated as soon as possible. This agrees with Slima (2014), who found that oral feedback is given immediately and received positively by students.

2.4 Types of Error to Corrected

Mendez et al. (2010) argued that when correcting, it is very important to find out the type of error the students make because teachers do not always want or need to correct everything. Calsiyao (2015) stated that teachers need to correct oral errors for several reasons. Firstly, correction helps the learner to comprehend completely how much they have improved in learning the target language. Secondly, when a learner gets corrected, he or she can obtain a better understanding of how the target language works. Thirdly, the confidence of the student is strengthened by CF because they know that they can rely on the teacher to check their expressions. Further, teachers should focus on what will be most productive for the learners in future communication. Pierson (2005) and Karra (2006) mentioned the type of errors that need CF which are: a) errors that impair communication; b) errors that show misunderstanding of the current classroom focus; c) errors that have a high 'stigmatising' effect; and d) errors that are produced the most frequently. In fact, EFL teachers need to be familiar with these types of errors in order to be able to provide suitable correction.

2.5 CF Methods

Lyster and Ranta (1997) observed a variety of lessons in four different classrooms representing two types of immersion programmes. Data were collected in one fourth-grade class in an early total immersion school and in three classrooms in a middle immersion school. The data analysis yielded six different feedback types. Moreover, Yao (2000) added body language as another method and Sheen (2011) added explicit correction with meta-linguistic explanation. This is shown in the following Table:

Table 1. Types of CF Methods (Based on Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Yao, 2000; Sheen, 2011)

Types of corrective feedback	Description
Explicit correction	Clearly indicating the error and the correct form is provided by the teacher.
Recast	Without directly indicating that the student's utterance was incorrect, the teacher implicitly reformulates the student's error, or provides the correction.
Clarification request	By using phrases like 'Excuse me?' or 'I don't understand,' the teacher indicates that the message has not been understood or that the student's utterance contained some kind of mistake and that a repetition or a reformulation is required.
Metalinguistic clues	Without providing the correct form, the teacher poses questions or provides comments or information related to the formation of the student's utterance.
Elicitation	The teacher directly elicits the correct form from the student by asking questions (e.g., 'How do we say that in Arabic?'), by pausing to allow the student to complete the teacher's utterance (e.g., 'It's a..') or by asking the students to reformulate the utterance (e.g., 'Say that again.'). Here the question differs from that defined as metalinguistic clues in that they require more than a yes/no response.
Repetition	The teacher repeats the student's error and adjusts intonation to draw student's attention to it.
Body language	The corrector uses either a facial expression or a body movement to indicate that what the student said is incorrect.
Explicit correction with meta-linguistic explanation	The corrector provides the correct form and a meta-linguistic comment on the form.

Based on the previous studies, flourishing and prosperous findings were presented during different phases. Regarding the most frequent CF methods preferred by teachers, recast was identified as the most frequently used CF by different studies (i.e., Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Ellis et al, 2001; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2004). In fact, teachers tended to use different types of CF methods.

Lyster and Ranta (1997) devised an error treatment sequence which included learners' errors, teacher feedback and learner uptake. Using this sequence in the observation of 4 French immersion classrooms, Lyster and Ranta (1997) studied the frequency and distribution of each feedback type. Results showed that recast was the most frequently used feedback type among all four teachers, followed by elicitation, clarification request, repetition and metalinguistic feedback.

Tsang (2004) conducted a study to investigate the CF occurrence, the relationship between CF and learner repair, and the relationship between CF and type of learner errors such as grammatical and phonological errors. The participants were 13 EFL teachers and 481 high school students learning English language in Hong Kong. The results indicated chose recast and explicit correction were chosen most frequently by teachers. This agrees with previous studies (Panova & Lyster, 2002; Suzuki, 2004; Sheen, 2004; Yoshida, 2008) who found that teachers chose recast most often for several reasons including limited class hours.

Mendez et al. (2010) conducted a study at Universided de Quintana Roo. They interviewed five EFL teachers from the English language department. The results show that the repetition of errors, recast, body language and metalinguistic were the most frequently used methods. However, they favoured implicit CF more than others. According to Mendez & Cruz (2012) unfocused oral CF and implicit methods were predominant in practice. Another study by Park (2010) was conducted to investigate students' preference and EFL teachers' choice of CF among 51 university students taking English conversation in the EFL context in Korea and 24 native English language teachers, utilising both quantitative and qualitative data. The results showed that recast was the most preferred method, followed by clarification request, elicitation, and repetition as measuring the same construct of implicit correction.

The results of Tomczyk's study (2013) revealed that indicating the noticed error by means of gestures and asking for correction by the students who committed a given error was the most common method used by teachers. Furthermore, indicating an error using repetition with a rising tone and waiting for the student who has made the error to correct it was also preferred by teachers.

Zhang & Chatupote (2014) showed that the most frequently used feedback method across all teachers was recast. In fact, both native and non-native English language teachers preferred using a variety of feedback at similar distributions which might suggest that CF did not necessarily depend on type of teachers; elicitation tended to be the most effective feedback type in native and non-native English language teachers' classes. However, the comparison between type of teachers and their use of each type of CF showed that there was no significant difference, which may indicate that the distributions of each feedback type used by native and non-native English language teachers are almost similar. Regardless of teacher types, they tend to use all types of CF to tackle learners' language difficulties.

2.6 CF Correctors

Mendez et al. (2010) found that teacher correction was the most frequently types of correction mostly used by teachers. Further, Mendez & Cruz (2012) found that CF provided

by the teachers was preferred to that provided by classmates. On the other hand, self-correction was the least popular one. This result concurs with Tomczyk (2013), who found that teachers claimed that they themselves do so frequently.

However, in reviewing these early studies, few have examined the effects of teacher types (native vs. non-native, experienced vs. less experienced teachers) on CF. Hence, the current study aimed at comparing the relationship between type of teachers and CF, exploring perceptions about the necessity, frequency and timing of CF, which type of errors should be corrected, and CF methods used. Further, the teachers were also asked about who should correct the learners' errors.

3. Methodology

3.1 Purpose of the Study

CF has been discussed mainly in second language acquisition contexts, but less so in foreign language settings. Additionally, there is little in the extant literature, which focuses especially on the CF of teachers teaching English in the context of intensive English programmes (IEPs) at the university level. This programme is a very important step in developing students' language proficiency, a topic that is receiving increasing attention as a contributing factor to learners' academic success (Cummins, 1979). This study was conducted at preparatory year at University of Ha'il, Saudi Arabia. The main aim was to find out the EFL teachers' perceptions about CF and errors during speaking activities. In addition, the researcher aimed to check how often teachers use CF, when they use CF, and the types of errors they focus on. Further, the researcher aimed at exploring what CF methods are used by teachers and the person they preferred to correct students' errors.

3.2 Participants

Table 2. Background of the participants

Gender	Male				Female		
	41				58		
Mother tongue	Native speaker of English (NS)				Non-native speaker of English (NNS)		
	56				43		
Nationalities	USA	UK	Canada	Arabs	Asia	West Europe	South Africa
	10	14	5	37	5	1	27
Qualifications	CELAT		TEFL Certificates		MA in TESOL, ELT and Applied Linguistics		Other
	17		29		41		12
Teaching experience	One year		2-5 years		6-10 years		More than 10 years
	3		36		31		29

As shown in Table 2 above, 99 English language teachers (41 males and 58 females) teaching at the PY at the University of Ha'il volunteered to participate in this study. Their age ranged

from 25 to 60. The teachers are of different nationalities such as the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, Europe, Asia and Arab world. There were 56 native speakers (NS) and 43 non-native speakers (NNS). They are well-qualified obtaining different qualifications related to teaching English as shown above. Their teaching experiences vary between one year to twenty-five years. Most of them have extensive experience in teaching English at the university level. They have been teaching English in EFL and ESL context in many countries.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information about teachers' perceptions of oral CF. The questionnaire was constructed on the basis of a careful examination of previous questionnaires including: Park (2010); Mendez & Cruz (2012); Aghaei (2013); Tomczyk (2013); Rahimi & Zhang (2014); Calsiyao (2015). The questionnaire was content validated by two refereed professors in applied linguistics. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section was about demographic information with seven questions. The second main section asked about teachers' perceptions of CF with 22 items. The internal reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha to determine the extent to which the items in the questionnaire were related to each other. Cronbach's alpha demonstrated adequate internal consistency, based on the average inter-item correlation, equal to .86.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interview

The researcher used a semi-structured interview to probe teachers' use and preferences of CF and whether they rely on themselves, students' self-correction or classmates. The interview further elicited the type of errors to be corrected, when they preferred to use CF, and the most favoured method of CF. The interview was administered two days after administering the questionnaire. 38 teachers (19 NS, 19 NNS; 20 experienced, 18 less experienced) participated in the interview. The interviews were recorded and analysed considering variables such as teachers' perception about CF (necessity and frequency), timing of CF, types of errors, CF methods, and CF provider.

3.2 Research Questions

Investigating teachers' perceptions about CF, in depth, is a first step to providing feedback in class. In addition, understanding the CF perceived by EFL teachers is essential. Hence, practicing CF in EFL settings is a complex task in which many factors meet and intertwine. Thus thinking about CF and its role in language teaching in this particular context becomes a relevant issue. So, teachers have to ask themselves the following questions which were the research questions addressed in this study:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions about corrective feedback?
2. How often do teachers use corrective feedback on students' spoken errors?
3. When do teachers tend to use corrective feedback for such errors?
4. What types of errors do teachers focus their corrective feedback on?

5. What are the corrective feedback methods teachers use in their classroom?
6. Who is the person who should correct students' oral errors?

The above questions will be discussed in relation to:

1. Native and non-native English teachers.
2. Experienced and less experienced teachers.

4. Results and Discussion

One of the main aims of the current study was to explore the teachers' perception about oral errors feedback in general, and later looking at different issues related to CF as discussed earlier. The collected results from both types of teachers (NS, NSS; experienced & less experienced) were analysed and compared focusing on similarities and differences between them.

4.1 Importance of CF

The answer of question (1) in the second part of the questionnaire is presented in this section. The importance of CF seems to be unquestionable, since the majority of, if not all, teachers (99%) agreed that errors have to be corrected.

Table 3. Teachers' responses to the importance of CF

Statement	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' spoken errors should be corrected	4.39	.623	4.21	.638	4.30	.646	4.33	.621	4.31	.633

As shown in the table 3 above, there is a strong tendency to agree on the need to correct students' oral errors. In fact, this finding was supported with teachers' answers in the interview as a student needs to receive information and have his/her errors corrected so that s/he does not commit the same error repeatedly in the future. Hence, they will gain fluency and accuracy. Such finding is consistent with Mendez and Cruz, (2012) and Tomczyk (2013).

Moreover, at first glance, it is obvious that both NS and less experienced teachers reported greater preference for CF than NNS and experienced ones. However, there was no significant difference between type of teachers overall. Therefore, teachers have positive cognitions about oral CF, as they believe that it is very important for language learning and development.

4.2 Frequency of CF

The answer of question (2) is shown in the following table.

Table 4. Teachers' responses to the frequency of CF

Statement	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
How often do you give CF on students' spoken errors?	4.07	.783	4.12	.762	3.95	.811	4.31	.655	4.09	.771

Table 4 displays the frequency of CF. Generally, one of the most important findings in the quantitative data was that all groups of teachers preferred to give CF as many times as the students make an oral error (90%). This result coincided with the interviews, in which teachers stated that it was necessary to give CF on students' spoken errors as CF helps teachers to control students' utterances and it also improves effectiveness teaching. At the same time, they expressed that it was important to know that their students very well in order to know if CF could be used or not with some students. They said that students had different attitudes toward CF and they should be aware of this and decide whether or not to consider it for the provision of CF. This coincides with Mendez et al. (2010), Mendez and Cruz (2012), and Tomczyk (2013).

There was no statistically significant difference between NS and NNS teachers, while there was a significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers ($t = 2.41$, $p = .018$). In fact, less experienced teachers reported using CF (mean = 4.31, standard deviation = .655) more frequently than experienced teachers (mean = 3.95, standard deviation = .811). This was also in the interviews where less experienced teachers expressed that teachers should correct students' oral errors; they stated that students have to be assured that they are using correct forms. They declared that without giving CF students can be confused. They highlighted their own language learning experience as a source of their beliefs. The experienced teachers also emphasised drawing students' focus to their errors but not as much as less experienced teachers. They believed that students should be helped to develop their interlanguage; however, they attributed their beliefs to their teaching experience as well as to their training courses. In addition, our triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data showed that the findings are in line with previous research (Borg, 2006; Mori, 2011; Junqueira & Kim, 2013).

4.3 Timing of CF

Questions 3 to 6 in the questionnaire were designed to elicit teachers' beliefs about the four different times to correct students' oral production errors. The category comprised four items as shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Teachers' responses on the timing of error correction

statements	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Immediate CF	3.39	1.15	3.28	1.26	3.45	1.28	3.18	1.04	3.34	1.197
CF after	4.13	.788	4.07	.884	4.13	.769	4.05	.916	4.10	.827

students finish speaking										
CF after activities	3.43	1.15	3.49	1.05	3.53	1.11	3.33	1.10	3.45	1.10
CF at the end of the class	2.75	1.33	2.72	1.26	2.63	1.30	2.90	1.29	2.74	1.29

Table 5 shows the teachers' thoughts about CF timing. Among the four options, 'CF after students finish speaking' received the highest mean score from all types of teachers (mean = 4.10, standard deviation = .827). 'CF at the end of the class' received the lowest mean score (mean = 2.74, standard deviation = 1.29). This coincides with Mendez and Cruz (2012). This trend can be understood given teachers' concern with students' feelings, emotions, and their fear of interrupting and inhibiting participation. In the interviews, teachers reported 'CF after students finish speaking' is a suitable time to correct students' erroneous forms. Most teachers mentioned that treating students' errors after students complete their talk can augment the accuracy and fluency of their oral production since it provides opportunities to direct students' attention to their erroneous utterance without interrupting the flow of their oral production. This contradicts other studies such as Tomczyk (2013) who found that teachers preferred to give CF as soon as possible, before the habit-formation takes place and wrong forms become part of the students' interlanguage. The reason for this contradiction might be because the teachers in this study were university teachers and have longer experience, good training and deal with older students, while in Tomczyk's study the teachers were teaching secondary school and they are dealing with young students.

The questionnaire results showed no significant differences either between NS and NNS or experienced and less experienced teachers on the timing of CF. The difference was negligible; almost the same percentage of both groups chose 'CF after students finish speaking'. Such finding concurs with Rahimi and Zhang (2015).

4.4 Types of oral errors that should be corrected

When the teachers were asked about the types of errors they corrected (questions 7 to 11), the majority thought about serious errors (mean = 4.48, standard deviation = .734). The next error types brought up by those teachers was frequent errors (mean = 4, standard deviation = .969). Individual errors and infrequent errors were the least mentioned. These findings (serious errors and frequent errors as main targets) suggest that these teachers pay more attention to important and frequent errors rather than individual and infrequent ones when providing CF. This was demonstrated in the interviews where the teachers clarified that it is very important to correct serious errors and frequent errors and should be not ignored. Summing up, teachers are concerned about correcting errors based on how much they are affecting the meaning of the message being conveyed and the structure of the sentence being formed.

Table 6. Teachers' responses on the types of errors that should be corrected

Statements	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Serious errors	4.54	.687	4.42	.794	4.40	.741	4.62	.711	4.48	.734
Less serious errors	3.59	.930	3.40	.877	3.48	.930	3.54	.884	3.51	.908
Frequent errors	4.23	.809	3.70	1.08	3.88	.976	4.18	.942	4.00	.969
Infrequent errors	3.34	1.18	2.88	1.17	3	1.19	3.36	1.18	3.14	1.19
Individual errors	3.52	1.02	3.14	1.44	3.22	1.19	3.56	1.27	3.35	1.23

Regarding the different groups of teachers and as shown in Table 6 above, 'serious errors' were corrected more than others by both NS and less experienced teachers; however, there was no significant difference between them on this type of error. On the other hand, among NS and NNS, there were significant differences in the type of 'frequent errors' and 'infrequent errors' with $t=2.712$, $p= .008$; $t=1.905$, $p= .060$, respectively. These types were corrected more by NS than NNS.

4.5 Methods of CF

The fifth category of items in the questionnaire targeted the teachers' cognitions about the effectiveness of CF methods (questions 12 to 19). The category comprised eight methods of CF, including clarification request, repetition, implicit, explicit, elicitation, metalinguistic, recast, no corrective feedback as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Teachers' responses on the methods of CF

Statements	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Clarification request	3.84	.912	4.09	.947	3.90	.986	4.03	.843	3.95	.930
Repetition	3.98	1.03	4.16	.785	4	.902	4.15	.988	4.06	.935
Implicit	3.95	.883	4.14	.774	3.93	.861	4.18	.790	4.03	.839
Explicit	3.77	.953	4.07	1.07	3.82	1.01	4.03	1.01	3.90	1.09
Elicitation	4.18	.834	4.12	.823	4.05	.872	4.31	.731	4.15	.825
No CF	2.68	1.14	2.65	1.36	2.55	1.17	2.85	1.32	2.67	1.23
Metalinguistic	3.75	.919	3.40	1.15	3.40	1.07	3.90	.912	3.60	1.03
Recast	3.34	1.24	3.47	1.24	3.45	1.56	3.31	1.36	3.39	1.23

Elicitation was the most frequently used feedback method (mean = 4.15, standard deviation = .825). Repetition (mean = 4.06, standard deviation = .935) and implicit (mean = 4.03, standard deviation = .839) were the second most frequently used methods. In other words, the majority of teachers, regardless of their group, preferred to use these methods more than others. In the interviews, the teachers clarified that using 'repetition' and 'implicit' were better as students' emotions are not affected. Additionally, communication was not inhibited

as they let students speak, and the correction is indirect so students do not feel any ‘harm’ from the correction provided. This finding is consistent with Mendez et al. (2010). However, some teachers mentioned that there are some problems observed in using repetition as some students do not even notice the correction. However, they still insisted on using such method. The least frequently used CF methods were recast and no CF, which exhibited a decreasing trend (mean = 3.39, standard deviation = 1.23; mean = 2.67, standard deviation = 1.23, respectively). Recast feedback, which accounted for a large proportion in previous studies (Panova and Lyster, 2002; Tsang, 2004; Yoshida, 2008; Zhang and Chatupte 2014), seemed to be the least frequently used in this study. This may due to the fact that teachers in this study preferred not to reformulate the students’ errors, or provide the correction. They directly elicited the correct form from the students by asking some questions. Through the interviews, teachers agreed that recast was not as helpful as expected because students mostly failed to notice the teacher’s reformulation of the students’ errors.

Moreover, regarding different groups of teachers, the results showed that there were no significant differences among teachers in the use of CF methods, which may indicate that the distribution of each feedback method used by different groups are similar, except for metalinguistic feedback where there was a significant difference between experienced and less experienced teachers ($t= 2.46, p= .018$). As illustrated in Table 7 above, less experienced teachers seemed to use this method more than experienced teachers (mean = 3.90, standard deviation = .912; mean = 3.40, standard deviation = 1.07, respectively). Overall, no matter the group of teachers, they tended to use all methods of feedback to tackle students’ language difficulties in oral activities.

4.6 Choice of Correctors

Another important questions (20-22) in the process of teachers’ decision making is who should provide the correction. The answer for this question is illustrated in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Teachers’ responses on the choice of correctors

Statements	NS		NNS		Exp.		Less exp.		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Classmates	3.55	1.04	3.63	1.21	3.63	1.05	3.51	1.21	3.58	1.11
Teachers	4.50	.632	4.58	.499	4.57	.533	4.49	.644	4.54	.577
Students themselves	4.18	.855	3.93	1.09	4.10	.896	4.03	.986	4.07	.929

Table 8 shows the teachers’ responses about who should correct the students’ oral spoken errors. Teachers’ CF was the most highly valued by all teachers regardless of their type (mean = 4.54, standard deviation = .577). As far as students correcting themselves is concerned, the teachers stated that they gave a student a chance to correct him/herself, so student correction had the second highest mean (mean = 4.07, standard deviation = .929). Their classmates giving CF was the least favoured CF (mean = 3.58, standard deviation = 1.11). This finding coincides with some previous studies (Mendez and Cruz, 2012; Tomczyk, 2013). In fact, NS preferred to correct the students themselves and later have the students

correct themselves more than other types of teachers. However, there was no significant difference when comparing types of teacher and choice of correctors. In the interviews, all teachers agreed that the teacher is the responsible for giving CF in the classroom. Moreover, they did not believe that classmates are good at correcting their peers; in fact, they mentioned that sometimes peer correction could be harmful for the relationships among students. Generally speaking, teachers prefer teachers' CF, followed by self-CF and lastly classmate CF. These results concur with Mendez and Cruz (2012).

5. Conclusion

This study sought to explore teachers' perceptions about oral CF and their practice in EFL classrooms. The results indicated a very strong positive attitude toward CF. Most of them reported correcting all the oral errors made by their students. However, they needed to know more about its effects and role in interlanguage development because they look at CF only as a technique to improve accuracy and fluency. The teachers should provide CF to the students in order to facilitate L2 acquisition. Hence, teachers should always focus on the purpose of the activity which frequently has an impact on the decision whether to correct an error or not, and how much CF should be provided to the students. Also, the activity might influence the decision concerning when it is appropriate to correct an error. Further, the results showed that contrary to immediate correction, which is usually considered as disruptive, delayed correction is used most frequently by teachers, in spite of the fact that it may not be as beneficial, since students' processing mechanisms are less likely to be activated. Furthermore, serious errors and frequent errors should be corrected first and most frequently, while individual errors and infrequent errors might be addressed later. Thus, teachers should not forget that it is always useful to correct students' errors in a positive manner and clarify the wrong form to the students so that the correct ones will be better noticed and remembered in the further process of learning a language.

Moreover, among many methods that might be used in providing CF, the results revealed that repetition and implicit methods of CF were the most favoured and used most frequently by the teachers. Yet, teachers have to know the effectiveness of both implicit and explicit methods and choose the ones proven to be more effective. The teacher's attention should be switched from neglecting students' errors to providing appropriate feedback on the errors. The logical next concern is how to provide CF to students more effectively. The results of this study imply that teachers should use multiple corrective methods, so that each method can compensate for each other and, in turn, align with individual differences in students' preference of CF.

Regarding the choice of correctors for the teachers, the most suitable person to provide CF was the teacher, followed by the student doing self-correction; peer correction was the least favoured. Nevertheless, adopting autonomous learning is a vital task in the teachers' agenda as is collaborative learning. Teachers should be aware of the advantages that self and peer correction have, as they can raise or increase language awareness and help students to test hypotheses in the target language.

Regarding teacher types, however, there were no big differences when comparing types of

teachers and types of feedback, except that NNS preferred to provide overwhelmingly more feedback, especially more recast than NS. This might be because NNS would sometimes interact with students using L1 which may possibly lead to translation, while NS tended to use all types of feedback equally. Hence, this may indicate that it would be better if teachers provide the type of feedback which can generate interaction or communication between teacher and students about students' inappropriate utterances. Further, no significant difference was found between experienced and less experienced teachers' use of type of feedback or total provision of feedback, except metalinguistic feedback, which may indicate that the uptake distribution to each type of feedback did not rely on types of teachers in this study.

Summing up, with regard to the development of teachers' cognition about CF, Ellis' (2009) guidelines for CF should be used to raise teachers' awareness of different types of CF, timing of CF, and necessity of CF, among others. Oral CF in the English language programme in the preparatory year at University of Ha'il plays an important role in the teaching of English as a foreign language as it is used frequently in the classroom by the teachers questioned and interviewed. Even though this study presented several important findings, generalisation of these findings should be made with caution because this study was conducted with a small sample of English teachers at one university. Thus more studies should be conducted with different participants across ages and learning context (rather than preparatory year) utilising both quantitative and qualitative data. Future research should focus on the perceptions of CF held by teachers not only for oral errors but also for written errors and L2 acquisition after CF. Future research can contribute to developing more complete L2 acquisition theories and teaching methods and activities.

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