

Comparing Perceptions of Oral Corrective Feedback Between Beginner and Intermediate Level EFL Undergraduate Students

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the preferences of adult English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners regarding Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF), an essential component of language teaching and learning. The research addressed a gap in the existing literature by conducting a cross-sectional, mixed-methods study with a sample of 21 intermediate-level university students in Costa Rica. The study aimed to determine the participants' overall perception of OCF, the types of errors they considered worthy of correction, and their preferences for different modes of oral correction. The findings were then compared to the results of a previous study conducted by the researcher in 2023 with beginner-level EFL learners. Statistical analysis revealed that, like their beginner counterparts, the intermediate-level students have a significantly positive perception of OCF in language development. Both cohorts appreciated correcting all types of errors, with intermediate students placing slightly more emphasis on pronunciation-related errors. In both groups, the preferred feedback type was an explicit correction, while the least preferred was no correction, metalinguistic indication, and non-verbal cues. These findings contribute to the limited research on adult EFL learners' preferences for OCF in Latin American contexts, providing valuable insights for language instructors and researchers.

Keywords: EFL Students, Latin American Context, Oral Corrective Feedback, Perception, Type of Feedback.

INTRODUCTION

The provision of feedback and error correction in language teaching has been discussed and researched extensively by language teachers and linguists. Ever since Hendrickson published 1978 his article on error correction, there seems to be consensus on the benefits of error amendment by teachers because it creates awareness of the functions and correct linguistic forms (as cited in Ellis, 2017). The discussion arises of the phenomenon's complexity and the ample variety of ways to address the issue because some of the errors committed by English learners are more serious in impairing communication, and others are not (Khansir, 2022).

Many English teachers ponder the advantages and disadvantages of providing immediate Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF). They tend to be cautious in the amount and

way in which they indicate deviations in the usage of language, fearful not to cause anxiety in the learners who are struggling with the language, and aware of the effects of the affective filter on the acquisition of language (Krashen, 1982). Instructors tend to be more concerned with avoiding interruptions in communication (Quinto, 2020). Given this quandary, numerous descriptive studies have dealt with this issue over the last few years, primarily focused on teachers' perspectives. According to Ellis, two general features of teachers' error correction have been exposed: imprecision and inconsistency (Ellis, 2017).

Empirical research has described the most common types of error correction, teachers' perspective on OCF, and the correlation between pedagogical practices and error correction; some have even revealed a disparity in the opinion of facilitators and students (Burri, 2022; Gutierrez et al., 2021; Ha & Nguyen, 2021; Inci-Kavak, 2019; Katayama, 2007; Lee, 2013; Tsuneyasu, 2016), and recently some others have focused on the opinion of learners about OCF in different contexts (Aguilera Leyva, 2020; AlGhafri et al., 2023; Alpiari Sari et al., 2022; Anaktototy & Latumeten, 2022; Aziz & Jayaputri, 2023; Fajriana Tahir & Muhayyang, 2023; Halim et al., 2021, Paul & Al-Mamun, 2024). However, notably absent from this research landscape are studies conducted in Latin American educational contexts, except Gutierrez et al. (2021). The Latin American educational context presents unique characteristics that may influence OCF perceptions and effectiveness. Costa Rica's distinctive educational environment strongly emphasizes communicative competence in EFL instruction, hierarchical teacher-student relationships influenced by cultural norms, limited exposure to English outside formal academic settings, and the predominant influence of Spanish as the first language with specific interference patterns.

These contextual factors shape how students perceive and respond to different types of Feedback, making understanding these cultural and educational dynamics crucial for developing pedagogically sound approaches to error correction in Latin American EFL classrooms (Gutierrez et al., 2021). This research gap motivated an investigation by the researcher in 2023 examining beginner EFL students' perceptions of OCF in two Costa Rican private universities, which found very positive attitudes toward corrective Feedback and preferences for explicit correction, recasts, and clarification over more subtle feedback methods (Ferreiro Santamaría, 2023).

The current study examines perspectives of intermediate EFL learners (CEFR levels B1 and B2) to compare OCF perspectives between proficiency levels, explore correlations between learner proficiency and OCF perceptions, and identify culturally specific factors influencing OCF preferences in the Costa Rican context. By focusing on more advanced learner groups, this research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of how OCF is perceived across different stages of language acquisition in Latin American contexts. Five research questions guide the investigation, examining general attitudes toward OCF, preferred correction extent, prioritization of error types, preferences for correction methods, and perceptions of OCF effectiveness for improving oral communication at intermediate levels.

LITERARY REVIEW

Errors

As the perspectives on language acquisition have evolved, so has the judgment of errors' role in the process. Behaviourists proclaimed zero tolerance for learner errors, insisting that students had to follow structural norms and considering L1 to be the foremost source of errors (Han, 2021). The evolving view on learner error eventually eradicated the vision of errors as a negative phenomenon. Researchers embraced mistakes as a window into the learning process. Corder (1967) has been credited for being the first to elaborate on the significance of learner errors (Han 2021). He was one of the first experts to differentiate systematic errors from non-systematic errors or mistakes (Corder, 1967). In general, facilitators tend to focus on errors of competence, not on mistakes or errors of performance. A significant source of inaccuracies described in the literature is interference in the mother tongue, lack of knowledge or insufficient practice in grammar, particularly in English tenses (Khansir, 2022).

Types of errors made by learners can be categorized as follows: morpho-syntactic or grammar mistakes; discourse errors, especially on spoken discourse, which are generally addressed at the end of an oral presentation; phonologically-induced errors persistent in beginner students, prone to fossilization if not appropriately addressed and lexical errors which frequently induce miscommunication (Lee, 2013).

This research only considered grammatical, lexical, and phonological errors since delayed Feedback was not the primary concern.

Oral Corrective Feedback

Chaudron (1977) described corrective Feedback as "any reaction of the teacher which transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance" (p. 31). Therefore, corrective Feedback is a response to a learner's erroneous utterance mainly in four ways described by Rahimi and Dastjerdi (2012): 1) indicating where the error occurred, 2) providing the correct structure, 3) giving metalinguistic information on the error, or 4) any combination of these (cited in Fathimah, 2019).

The value of corrective Feedback is part of the ongoing discussion (Ellis, 2017). Some schools of thought, such as Krashen (1982) and Truscott (1999), insist on the futility of error correction in language acquisition, not to mention that it is excessively time-consuming. Conversely, fear of fossilization might encourage some instructors to overcorrect (Babushko & Solovei, 2020).

Furthermore, some empirical investigations have evidenced that students who receive corrective Feedback while performing communicative activities improved over groups that did not (Lyster & Saito, 2010; Spada & Lightbown, cited in Ellis, 2017; Ugalde, 2023).

Concerning OCF, Doughty (cited in Tesnim, 2019) insisted on opportune correction to allow learners to connect form and meaning since delayed corrective Feedback would only benefit the focus on form.

Types of Corrective Feedback

In the current study, as well as the previous conducted by the researcher, the following six different types of Oral Corrective Feedback were presented to the students for their appraisal, reproducing the classification proposed by Lyster and Randa (1997):

1. Explicit correction refers to a clear indication from the professor that the word or utterance is incorrect and the provision of the correct form.
2. Recast involves the teacher reformulation of the student's utterance and correcting the error.
3. Clarification requests, as the name indicates, involve instructors' indication that the utterance is unclear or somehow incorrect, usually in the form of a question.
4. Elicitation has three varying techniques: a) teachers repeat the incorrect utterance, pausing at the error, eliciting completion by students; b) teachers use questions to elicit correct forms (e.g., "How do you say...?"), and c) teachers occasionally ask directly to reformulate the utterance.
5. Repetition occurs when instructors repeat the incorrect utterance, emphasizing the mistake.
6. Metalinguistic correction refers to the nature of the error; it contains either comments, information, or questions related to the correctness of the student's utterance and relies on linguistic competence (e.g., "an adverb is needed; you are using an adjective")

In addition, Lyster and Ranta (1997) included a seventh category called multiple Feedback, referring to combinations of more than one type, which was not contemplated in the current research.

In the questionnaire for the participants, an extra option was the use of non-verbal cues. On occasions, professors use body language to indicate a deviation, maybe shaking their heads, making a gesture, or frowning their eyebrows in the hope that learners interpret the need for self-correction.

Delayed Feedback was not considered for this investigation nor the previous one (Ferreiro Santamaría, 2023).

Critical Analysis of Previous Studies

Research on OCF preferences has yielded valuable but sometimes contradictory findings. Several methodological limitations affect the generalizability of these studies, including:

1. Sample homogeneity: Many studies focus on specific learner populations, making comparative analyses difficult.
2. Contextual variables: educational settings, cultural factors, and institutional approaches to language teaching vary significantly across studies.
3. Measurement discrepancies: Different instruments used to assess preferences make direct comparisons problematic.

Studies by Arumugam (2022) and Skender (2022) represent these contradictions. Arumugam found that advanced learners held negative views of OCF, while Skender reported consistently positive attitudes across proficiency levels. These contradictions might be attributed to contextual differences, including cultural factors, educational backgrounds, and specific classroom dynamics.

The current study addresses some of these limitations using a consistent methodology across proficiency levels and explicitly considering the Latin American educational context. This approach allows for more valid comparisons between beginner and intermediate learners within a specific cultural setting.

METHODS

This research is descriptive, cross-sectional, and qualitative. It replicated the investigation conducted by the researcher in 2023, modifying the selected population from beginner to intermediate level of language proficiency representing B1/B2 levels according to CEFR classification.

Research Design

This investigation employed a mixed-methods approach with a cross-sectional design. The study primarily collected quantitative data through structured surveys, complemented by qualitative data from open-ended responses. This design allows for both statistical comparisons and deeper insights into the reasoning behind student preferences. The research replicated the investigation conducted by the researcher in 2023, modifying the selected population from beginner to intermediate level of language proficiency representing B1/B2 levels according to CEFR classification.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were twenty-one university EFL students aged eighteen to forty-two, registered in Level 3 and Level 4 English courses. They were taking mandatory courses as part of programs offered by two private universities for students of diverse majors. All participants spoke Spanish as their native language.

A non-probabilistic convenience sampling method was chosen, consisting of students who voluntarily agreed to participate after explaining the research characteristics and providing informed consent. While this sampling approach introduces potential selection bias, it was necessary given the constraints of accessing student populations across multiple institutions. To contextualize the sample, Table 1 compares the key demographic characteristics of the participants with the overall undergraduate population at both universities.

Instrument

The instrument was applied in the participants' native language (Spanish) to prevent misunderstanding. The survey consisted of four sections:

1. Demographic information: Gender, age group, major, and course level.

2. General opinions on OCF: Five statements using a Likert scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to agree (5) completely. Questions addressed whether all errors should be corrected and if error correction impacts language development.
3. OCF preferences by error type: Participants rated preferences for correcting grammar, phonology (pronunciation and intonation), and vocabulary on a 5-point scale (1=never, 5=always).
4. Preferred correction methods: Participants rated the eight types of error correction using a Likert scale (1=bad, 5=excellent).

Additionally, an open-ended question asked participants to explain the reasoning behind their preferences, providing qualitative data to complement the quantitative responses.

Instrument Validation

The instrument applied was the same one utilized in the previous study (Ferreiro Santamaría, 2023), which was validated through expert assessment, involving the collection of well-founded opinions from individuals widely recognized as specialists in the field, following the approach proposed by Escobar-Pérez and Cuervo-Martínez (2008). Additionally, a pilot study was conducted with the participation of ten students and four teachers selected through non-probabilistic convenience sampling who were not part of the study's primary sample.

Data Collection and Analysis

Surveys were administered during regular class sessions after obtaining institutional permission. Participation was voluntary, and anonymity was assured.

Data analysis included:

1. Descriptive statistics: Calculation of frequencies, means, modes, and standard deviations.
2. Inferential statistics: Chi-square tests determined significant differences between beginner and intermediate-level students' responses. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare mean ratings across proficiency levels.
3. Qualitative analysis: Open-ended responses were coded thematically to identify student reasoning patterns for their preferences.
4. Visual representation: Findings were presented using graphs and tables to facilitate comparison with previous results.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research standards. Participants provided informed consent and were informed of their right to withdraw at any time. Anonymity was maintained throughout data collection and analysis. Institutional approval was obtained from both universities before conducting the research.

RESULTS

The findings are presented as tables and graphs to illustrate the data, organized by research question. Statistical comparisons with beginner-level data from the previous study are included where relevant.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic Data

Criterion	Category	Percentage
Gender	Female	52%
	Male	48%
	Prefer not to say	0%
Age range	18-21	47.6%
	22-25	19%
	26-29	19%
	30-33	9.5%
	42+	4.8%
Course taken	Level 3	62%
	Level 4	38%
University	Latina de Costa Rica	81%
	Americana	19%
Major	Engineering	29%
	Business	24%
	Psychology	19%
	Design	14%
	Other	14%

Most participants were adults aged 18 to 21 (47.6%). Gender distribution was relatively balanced (52% female, 48% male). Most participants (62%) were enrolled in Level 3 courses, with the remainder in Level 4. The primary majors represented were engineering (29%), business administration (24%), psychology (19%), and graphic design (14%).

General Attitude Toward OCF

Figure 1 illustrates students' opinions about the importance of Oral Corrective Feedback in the classroom.

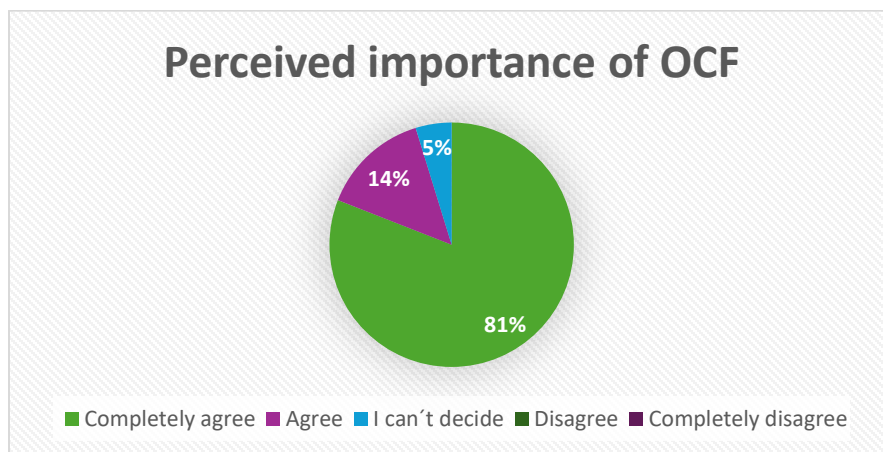


Figure 1: Students' Opinion about the Importance of Oral Corrective Feedback in the Classroom

Participants responded overwhelmingly positively to immediate Oral Corrective Feedback, with 95% considering it essential. There were no negative opinions expressed. A chi-square test comparing these results with the beginner-level data showed no significant difference in overall attitude toward OCF across proficiency levels ($\chi^2(2, N=53) = 2.47, p = .29$).

Figure 2 presents students' perceptions of OCF's contribution to language proficiency improvement.

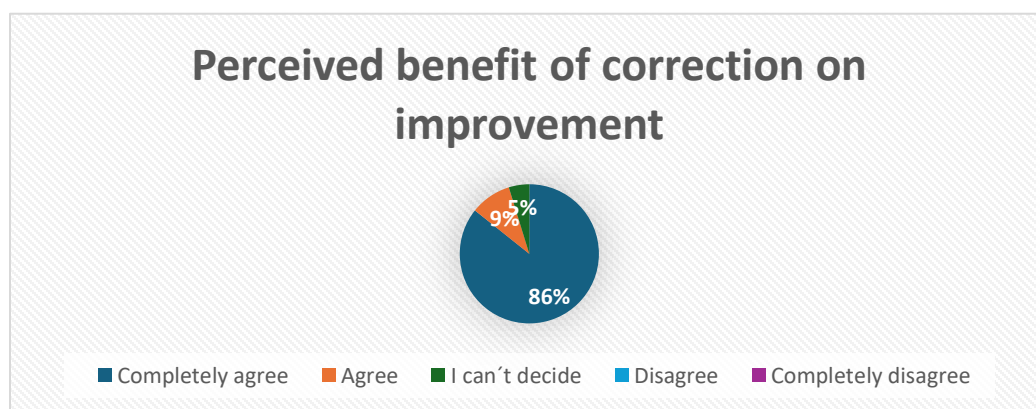


Figure 2. Students' opinions about corrective Feedback contributing to the improvement of their proficiency

Likewise, the perception that Feedback enhances proficiency, shown in Figure 2, is equally positive among the participants, with no negative responses. Results are very similar to those found in beginner students (Author, 2023).

The perception that feedback enhanced proficiency was equally positive among participants, with no negative responses. An independent samples t-test comparing mean ratings between intermediate ($M=4.81, SD=0.40$) and beginner students ($M=4.72, SD=0.45$) from the previous study revealed no significant difference ($t(51) = 0.79, p = .43$).

Frequency of Error Correction

Figure 3 shows students' opinions on the preferred frequency of correction.

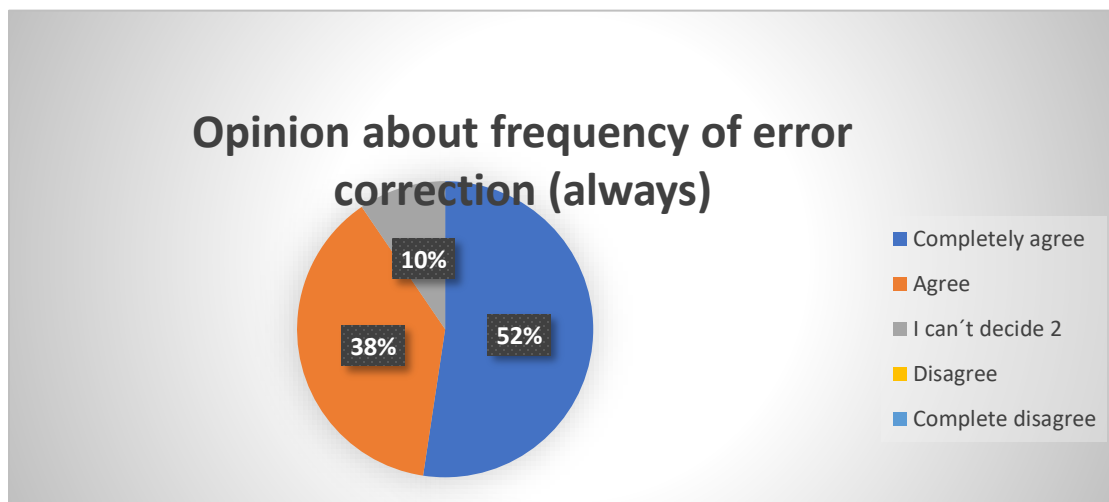


Figure 3. Students' opinion on the frequency of error correction

Regarding correction frequency, 90% of the participants agreed or agreed with constant OCF. This finding indicates that students expect corrective Feedback and consider it an integral part of the teaching process. Compared with beginner students from the previous study, chi-square analysis revealed no significant difference in preferences for correction frequency ($\chi^2(3, N=53) = 1.96, p = .58$). Figure 4 displays opinions about which instructors should address errors.

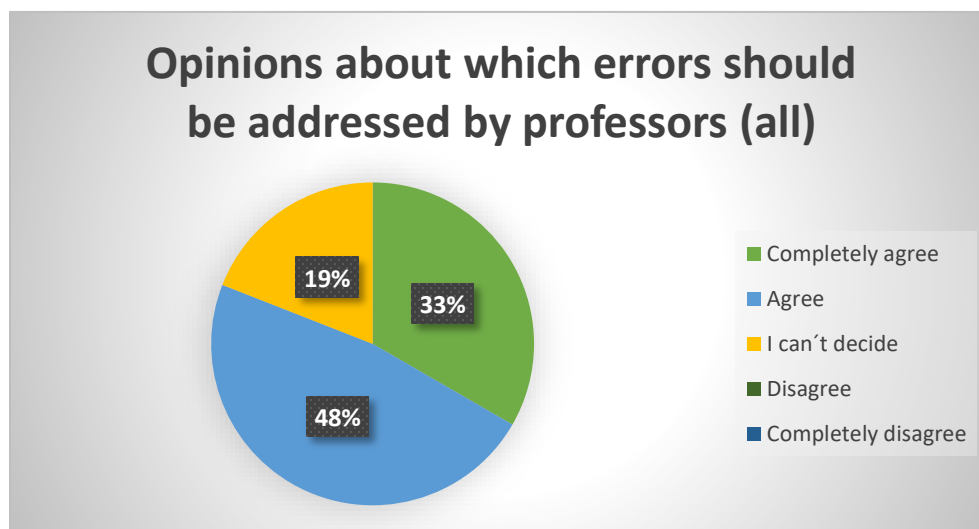


Figure 4. Opinions about Which Professors Should Address Errors

As shown in Figure 4, the majority agreed (38%) or completely agreed (52%) with the statement "I believe all oral mistakes should be corrected." There were no disagreements with error correction in class, and the findings closely parallel opinions expressed by beginners in the previous study.

Types of Errors Requiring Attention

Figure 5 presents students' opinions on which types of errors require more attention.

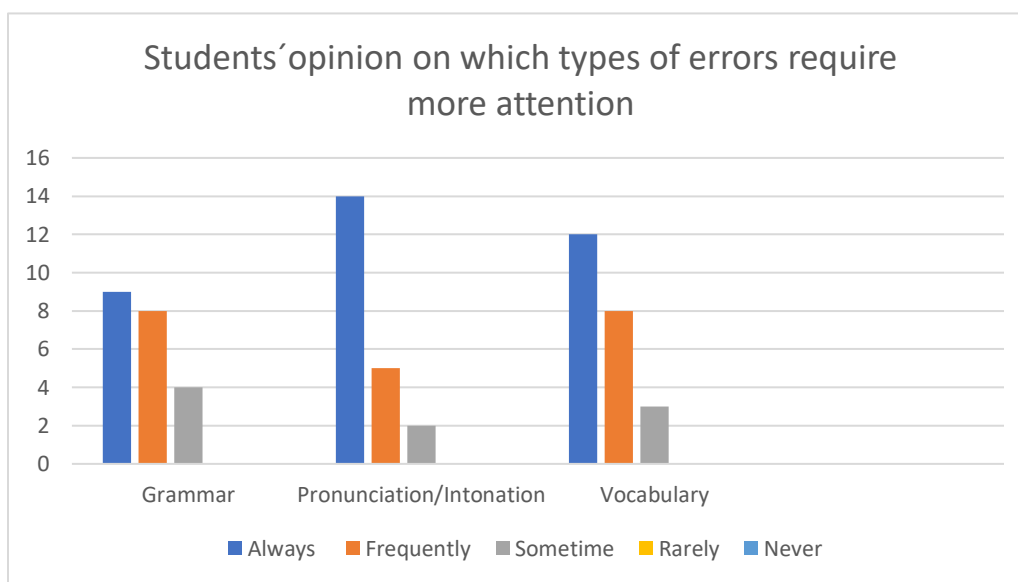


Figure 5. Student's Opinion on Which Errors Require More Attention

While participants indicated that all error types should be corrected, a slightly higher emphasis was placed on pronunciation errors (M=4.52, SD=0.68) compared to grammar (M=4.33, SD=0.73) and vocabulary (M=4.29, SD=0.78). A one-way ANOVA comparing these preferences showed no statistically significant difference ($F(2,60) = 0.78, p = .46$).

When compared to beginner-level data using independent samples t-tests, intermediate students showed a significantly stronger preference for pronunciation correction ($t(51) = 2.18, p = .03$) but no significant differences for grammar ($t(51) = 0.52, p = .60$) or vocabulary ($t(51) = 0.47, p = .64$) correction.

Timing of Correction

Figure 6 illustrates preferences regarding the timing of correction.

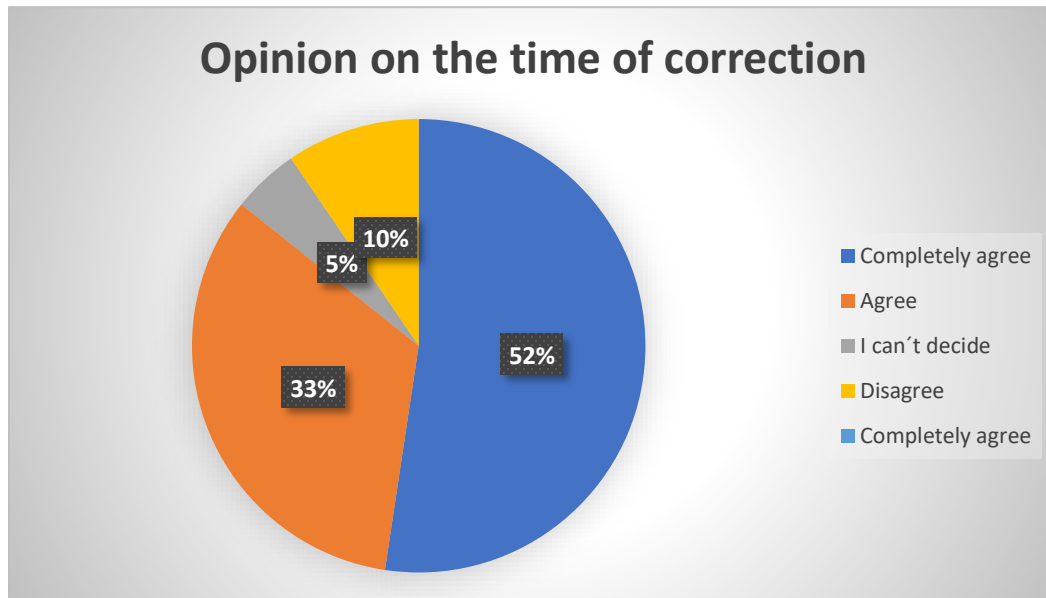


Figure 6. Time of Correction

Regarding correction timing, 52% of participants completely agreed, and 33% agreed that correction should be immediate, with only 10% disagreeing and 5% neutral. This finding challenges the hypothesis that students in high-context cultures might reject immediate correction. No significant difference was found between beginner and intermediate learners regarding timing preferences ($\chi^2(3, N=53) = 1.74, p = .63$).

Preferred Methods of Error Correction

Figure 7 shows learners' preferences for different types of error correction.

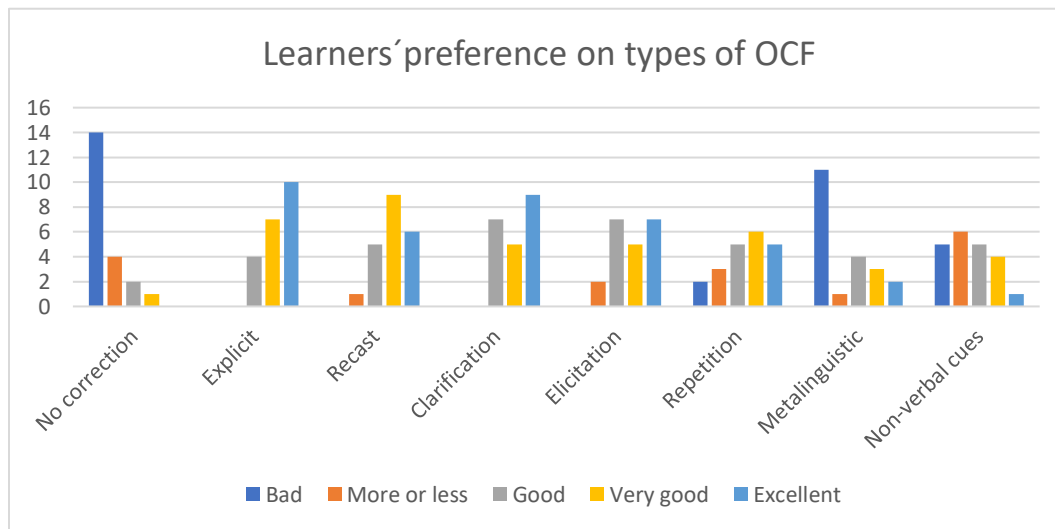


Figure 7. Learners' Opinions about Types of Error Correction

Participants rated seven types of error correction frequently used by professors. As shown in Figure 7, explicit correction was most preferred ($M=4.62$, $SD=0.59$), followed by clarification requests ($M=4.24$, $SD=0.77$) and recasts ($M=4.10$, $SD=0.83$).

Among the least preferred methods, ignoring mistakes ranked worst ($M=1.62$, $SD=0.97$), followed by metalinguistic indication ($M=2.71$, $SD=1.19$) and non-verbal cues ($M=2.81$, $SD=1.33$).

A comparison with beginner-level data using independent samples t-tests revealed no significant differences in preferences for explicit correction ($t(51) = 0.68$, $p = .50$), recasts ($t(51) = 0.72$, $p = .48$), or clarification requests ($t(51) = 0.83$, $p = .41$). However, intermediate students showed marginally higher ratings for elicitation techniques ($t(51) = 1.98$, $p = .053$).

Qualitative Insights

The open-ended responses revealed several themes explaining learners' preferences. Many students (62%) cited the clarity and immediacy of explicit correction as key factors in their preference, with one participant noting: "When I make a mistake, I want to know exactly what went wrong so I can fix it immediately." Intermediate learners (43%) mentioned their ability to "process and remember" corrections better when explicit and immediate. Several participants (38%) expressed concern about developing bad habits if errors are not promptly corrected, showing awareness of fossilization risks. A minority of respondents (24%) mentioned concerns about being corrected in front of peers, though most indicated that learning accurately outweighed these concerns. Some responses (19%) referenced cultural expectations about teacher roles, noting that in Costa Rican educational contexts, teachers are expected to provide direct guidance and correction, which reflects the influence of cultural context on feedback preferences.

DISCUSSION

Importance of Oral Corrective Feedback in Language Improvement

As illustrated in Figure 1, the highly positive perception of Oral Corrective Feedback among intermediate students aligns with reports from numerous empirical studies spanning different geographical areas and cultural backgrounds (AlGhafri et al., 2023; Alpian Sari et al., 2022; Anaktototy & Latumeten, 2022; Aziz & Jayaputri, 2023; Babushko & Solovei, 2020; Fajriana Tahir & Muhayyang, 2023). This finding contradicts Arumugam's (2022) report that advanced students have negative views of OCF.

Several factors may explain the contradiction with Arumugam's findings. First, Arumugam's study was conducted in a different cultural context (Malaysia) with other educational traditions. Second, that study focused on advanced learners (C1/C2), while the current research examined intermediate (B1/B2) students. Finally, methodological differences in how OCF was presented to participants might have influenced responses.

Compared to the study conducted with beginners (Ferreiro Santamaría, 2023), intermediate students showed even higher agreement with OCF's importance. This progression suggests that as learners advance in proficiency, they may develop a stronger appreciation for correction as they become more invested in accuracy and fluency. This

finding aligns with the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 2001), as intermediate learners' greater linguistic awareness may enhance their ability to perceive and value Feedback.

The positive effect of OCF shown in Figure 2 agrees with the findings of numerous studies (Anaktototy & Latumeten, 2022; Aziz & Jayaputri, 2023; Fadilah et al., 2017; Gamlo, 2019; Gutierrez et al., 2020; Muslem et al., 2021). This consistent finding across proficiency levels suggests that regardless of the language development stage, learners recognize OCF as beneficial to their progress.

Frequency of Error Correction and Type of Error to Be Corrected

The preference for comprehensive error correction (Figure 3) contradicts the assumption that intermediate learners might prefer more selective Feedback. This finding is consistent with studies by Alpian and Sari (2022), Asmara et al. (2022), and Gamlo (2019), suggesting that learners across proficiency levels value thorough attention to their errors.

Theoretically, this preference for comprehensive correction challenges assumptions within the Communicative Language Teaching approach, which often advocates for selective Feedback focused on communicative breakdowns rather than formal accuracy (Brown, 2014). The discrepancy between pedagogical recommendations and learner preferences highlights the need for instructors to consider student expectations when developing feedback strategies.

Regarding error types (Figure 5), intermediate students slightly preferred pronunciation correction, which differs from beginners, who rated all errors equally. This emerging focus on pronunciation might reflect intermediate learners' more significant concern with phonological accuracy as they develop conversational fluency. This shift aligns with skill acquisition theory (DeKeyser, 2007), which suggests that as declarative knowledge becomes standardized, learners' attention shifts to refinement and accuracy of production.

The greater emphasis on pronunciation among intermediate learners also corresponds with findings by Arumugam (2022), Saeli et al. (2024), and Stuckel (2022). This convergence suggests that phonological accuracy may gain importance in their perception of proficiency as learners progress.

Time of Correction

The strong preference for immediate correction (Figure 6) contradicts the hypothesis that students in high-context cultures like Costa Rica might reject immediate intervention. This finding aligns with studies by Alamri and Fauwzi (2016), Asmara et al. (2022), and Van Ha et al. (2021) but contradicts results from Putra and Salikin (2020) and Syakira and Sahril (2022).

This cultural contradiction warrants further investigation. While high-context communication styles typically discourage interruption (Zakirovich, 2023), the educational context may override this cultural tendency. In formal learning environments, Costa Rican students prioritize accuracy and learning efficiency over cultural communication norms.

From a theoretical perspective, the preference for immediate correction supports the cognitive processing advantages proposed by Fu and Li (2022), who found that immediate Feedback facilitates more efficient form-meaning connections compared to delayed Feedback. This preference remained consistent across proficiency levels, suggesting that the cognitive benefits of immediate correction are valued regardless of the language development stage.

Preferred Method of Delivering OCF

The hierarchy of preferred feedback methods (Figure 7) reveals essential insights about learner preferences. More direct approaches to Feedback—explicit correction, clarification requests, and recasts—were consistently favoured across proficiency levels. This preference pattern aligns with findings from multiple studies (Aguilera Leiva, 2020; Alamri and Fawzi, 2016; Alpian and Sari, 2022).

The preference consistency between beginner and intermediate learners contradicts the theoretical expectation that more advanced learners might prefer implicit Feedback that encourages self-correction. This finding challenges the assumption in skill acquisition theory that feedback preferences would evolve with proficiency level.

The researcher analyzed the data and identified several underlying factors that might explain students' consistent preference for explicit Feedback across proficiency levels. Cultural influences appeared significant, as the traditionally teacher-centred educational approach prevalent throughout Latin America seemed to create student expectations for direct correction from authority figures. Practical considerations also emerged in student responses, with many expressing that they valued the clarity and immediacy of explicit correction because they viewed it as the most efficient path to language improvement. Additionally, the cognitive demands of language learning appeared to influence preferences, as the researcher noted that even intermediate-level students likely found that processing implicit Feedback required additional mental resources—resources they might prefer to dedicate to other aspects of language production during communication tasks. The consistent rejection of "no correction" across proficiency levels confirms learners' strong desire for Feedback, regardless of their language development stage. This finding aligns with Alamri and Fawzi (2016) and Quinto (2020), reinforcing the critical role of OCF in students' perception of effective language instruction.

Interestingly, the marginally higher rating for elicitation techniques among intermediate students ($p = .053$) suggests a potential preference shift as proficiency develops. This slight difference might indicate that learners become more receptive to feedback approaches that encourage self-correction as they gain confidence and linguistic resources.

Cultural and Contextual Considerations

The qualitative data revealed critical cultural dimensions influencing feedback preferences. References to teacher roles and expectations in Costa Rican educational contexts suggest cultural factors shape how Feedback is perceived and valued.

In Latin American educational settings, teachers traditionally maintain authoritative roles as knowledge providers (Hofstede, 2001). This cultural expectation may lead students to anticipate and value direct correction from instructors as part of their responsibilities. Furthermore, the strong emphasis on accuracy in formal education in Costa Rica may reinforce preferences for comprehensive and explicit Feedback.

The limited exposure to English outside classroom settings in Costa Rica also likely influences students' reliance on teacher feedback. Without extensive opportunities for authentic language use, classroom correction becomes a crucial resource for language development.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings from this study offer several practical implications for EFL instructors working with students at different proficiency levels in Latin American contexts:

Embracing Explicit Correction

Given the strong preference for explicit correction across proficiency levels, instructors should not hesitate to provide clear, direct Feedback when errors occur. This approach aligns with student expectations and appears valuable throughout the language learning journey. For example, teachers might say at beginner levels, "That is incorrect. The correct form is 'he goes' not 'he goes'"; while at intermediate levels, more detailed explanations may be appropriate: "You used the simple past tense here, but since this is an ongoing action, you should use the present continuous: 'I am studying' rather than 'I studied'."

Balancing Comprehensive and Selective Correction

While students prefer comprehensive correction, instructors should consider a balanced approach that addresses all error types but prioritizes errors that impede communication, high-frequency errors that might lead to fossilization, and errors related to recently taught structures. This strategic approach acknowledges student preferences while managing time constraints and cognitive load during communicative activities.

Timing Considerations

The strong preference for immediate correction suggests instructors should address errors promptly when they occur. However, in activities focused on fluency development, instructors might use quick hand signals or facial expressions to note the mistakes without interrupting the flow, briefly note errors for comprehensive review immediately after a speaking activity concludes, and explicitly explain to students when delayed Feedback is being used and why. These adaptations help maintain the balance between accuracy and fluency development.

Differentiated Approach Based on Proficiency

While preferences were broadly consistent across proficiency levels, some nuanced differences suggest room for adaptation. For intermediate students, increased attention to

pronunciation errors may be warranted. Teachers should gradually introduce more elicitation techniques alongside explicit correction as students progress. With intermediate students, pairing explicit correction with brief metalinguistic explanations can deepen their understanding of language structures and patterns.

Cultural Sensitivity in Feedback Delivery

In the Latin American context, instructors should be mindful of the authoritative role expected of teachers, the public nature of correction in classroom settings, and the collective orientation that may make group-oriented Feedback more acceptable. Instructors can frame Feedback as a collaborative process rather than focusing on individual errors, which may help mitigate potential face-threatening aspects of correction while respecting cultural norms.

Building Metacognitive Awareness

To help students become more autonomous in their language development, teachers should explicitly discuss different feedback types and their purposes, introduce peer feedback activities with clear guidelines, and develop self-monitoring strategies through guided reflection on common error patterns. This approach helps learners take greater responsibility for their language development over time.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study provides valuable insights into OCF preferences across proficiency levels in a Latin American context, but several limitations should be acknowledged:

Sample Size and Representation

The relatively small sample size (N=21) for intermediate learners and the use of convenience sampling limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research should include more extensive, more representative samples, use random sampling techniques where feasible, and include participants from diverse institutional contexts to strengthen the validity of conclusions about OCF preferences.

Methodological Considerations

The cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of preferences but does not capture how individual preferences might evolve. Future studies could employ longitudinal designs tracking the identical learners as they progress, mixed-methods approaches incorporating classroom observations, and experimental designs testing the effectiveness of different feedback types. These methodological improvements would provide more robust evidence about the dynamics of OCF preferences.

Contextual Expansion

Future research should compare preferences across Latin American countries to better understand the role of cultural and educational contexts, investigate how institutional policies influence feedback practices and preferences, and examine how exposure to different teaching methodologies shapes student expectations. This

comparative approach would help identify which aspects of OCF preferences are culturally specific versus universally applicable.

Deeper Exploration of Intermediate Learner Dynamics

The subtle differences observed in intermediate learners warrant further investigation into how increased metalinguistic awareness influences feedback reception, whether proneness to fossilization affects feedback preferences, and how intermediate learners incorporate Feedback into their developing interlanguage. These inquiries would help clarify the relationship between proficiency development and changing feedback needs.

Implementation Studies

Research is needed on how teachers might effectively implement feedback approaches that balance student preferences with pedagogical best practices. This study could include classroom-based action research on differentiated feedback strategies, studies examining the relationship between preferred feedback types and actual language gains, and investigation of technology-enhanced feedback approaches in Latin American contexts. Such implementation research would bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application.

CONCLUSIONS

The preceding findings indicate a predominantly favourable perception of Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF) among beginner and intermediate-level learners, consistent with most reviewed studies. Learners anticipate and value immediate interventions when they deviate from correct English utterances, recognizing the significance of appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structures, and pronunciation in effective communication. Contrary to potential assumptions held by educators, students demonstrate a preference for error correction in these linguistic domains. Notably, pronunciation received marginally higher emphasis at the intermediate level than at the lower level.

The evidence suggests that learners actively embrace oral corrective Feedback now that errors are committed. Students prefer consistent correction and appreciate when facilitators address all errors as they occur.

In alignment with Watcharapol et al. (2023), it can be concluded that learners, regardless of proficiency level, prefer more direct OCF techniques. These include explicit correction, recast, and elicitation while showing less favour towards indirect forms such as metalinguistic correction or non-verbal cues like gestures or facial expressions.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support aspects of the Noticing Hypothesis and Interaction Theory, highlighting the crucial role of Feedback in drawing learners' attention to form-meaning connections. However, the persistent preference for explicit Feedback across proficiency levels challenges assumptions within Skill Acquisition Theory that feedback preferences would evolve significantly as learners advance.

The cultural context of Latin American EFL instruction appears to influence these preferences, particularly regarding expectations of teacher roles and the value placed on

formal accuracy. These contextual factors should be considered when developing pedagogical approaches to OCF in similar settings.

These observed similarities and differences in corrective feedback preferences across varying proficiency levels contribute significantly to the expanding literature on adult English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' perspectives regarding oral error correction in Latin American contexts.

Educators must consider multiple factors when delivering Oral Corrective Feedback, combining OCF types (Quinto 2023) and considering student preferences while attending to pedagogical best practices and cultural sensitivities.

Further research opportunities lie in exploring the intake of OCF and quantifying its impact on language proficiency enhancement. Specifically, future studies could investigate potential correlations between OCF intake, learner preferences, and measurable language proficiency gains. This study could contribute valuable insights into second language acquisition and inform evidence-based practices in language instruction within Latin American educational contexts.

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