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EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF IMMEDIATE ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN TWO COSTA RICAN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

PERCEPCION DE ESTUDIANTES DE INGLES COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA DE DOS UNIVERSIDADES PRIVADAS EN COSTA RICA ACERCA DE LA RETROALIMENTACION ORAL CORRECTIVA EN EL AULA

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Abstract

In recent years there has been extensive research focusing on oral corrective feedback (OCF), a key aspect of English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) learning mostly focused on the linguists' and teachers' perspective. On the other hand, very little has been done to know the learners' perspective. The aim of this investigation was to gather students' point of view of oral corrective feedback given by teachers in EFL courses at two private universities from San Jose, Costa Rica. This research is descriptive, cross-sectional, and quantitative in nature. For the data collection, an on-line questionnaire was created which was answered voluntarily by 160 adult students from the levels 1 and 2 (corresponding to A1/A2 CEFR classification) the EFL program from these universities. Participants were interrogated on their general attitude towards corrective feedback and whether they considered it to be important for their learning process, the frequency with which they like to receive feedback, which type of errors they consider should be corrected and the preference of error correction type. The obtained results demonstrate positive perceptions regarding the feedback received from teachers on all types of errors. Learners expect to receive immediate CF as they consider this to be an important part of the learning process. The participants expressed a desire to be corrected in all grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation deviances. The preferred method of corrective feedback was explicit correction, followed by recast and clarification; metalinguistic correction and non-verbal cues were the least liked.

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Resumen

En los últimos años, el interés por el papel que juega la retroalimentación oral en los procesos de enseñanza/aprendizaje de inglés como segunda lengua o lengua extranjera han impulsado varios estudios desde la perspectiva de lingüistas y docentes, pero poco se ha investigado acerca de la percepción de los estudiantes. El propósito de esta investigación es recabar la opinión de estudiantes de dos universidades privadas en San José, Costa Rica sobre la realimentación correctiva que reciben de sus profesores en cursos de inglés como lengua extranjera que forman parte de su malla curricular. Es un estudio descriptivo, transversal y cuantitativo. La recolección de datos se hizo a través de un cuestionario en línea que 160 estudiantes de cursos de inglés de los niveles 1 y 2 (A1/A2 en la clasificación CEFR) contestaron de forma voluntaria. Se les interrogó acerca de su percepción general sobre las correcciones de errores orales, la frecuencia con que desean se les corrija, cuáles son los tipos de errores que consideran se deben de corregir y su preferencia por el método de corrección. Los resultados obtenidos apuntan a una actitud positiva hacia la realimentación de los profesores. Los participantes expresaron su deseo de ser corregidos en todos los errores de gramática, vocabulario y pronunciación cometidos en forma inmediata. Los métodos de corrección preferidos fueron por orden de importancia la corrección explícita, seguida de *recast* (remodelar) y clarificación. La indicación metalingüística y las señales no verbales fueron las opciones menos preferidas.

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of feedback and error correction has been debated extensively by second language teachers and researchers for many decades. While some schools of thought like Behaviorism considered errors as unacceptable and recommended immediate correction, other experts such as Krashen (1982) and Truscott (1999) have argued the limited contribution it has to language acquisition. With the emergence of communicative approaches, errors are seen as evidence of learners' linguistic development, not as an obstacle to be avoided. (Rezaei, et al, 2011)

EFL teachers are concerned with corrective feedback wondering when and how to provide it. Even though errors in oral performance are expected in the classroom as part of the natural process of acquisition, (Edge, 1989 as cited by Eyengho & Fawole, 2017, p.46) there is also a general sense that teachers must promote good communication in their students. There is a general perception among professors that correction might increase anxiety and hinder students' motivation to participate.

Most of the literature about strategies for corrective feedback is based on teachers' and linguists' criteria. Extensive research has examined the values of corrective feedback, revealing that it has a positive role in L2 learners' language development (Russell & Spada, 2006; Mackey & Goo, 2007; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Lyster et al., 2013; Tavacoli, & Nourollah, 2018; Nassaji, 2016 as mentioned by Ha & Nguyen, 2021).

Most investigations have explored facilitators' perspective about oral correction and the correlation between their pedagogical practices and learners' learning preferences (Ha & Nguyen, 2021; Inci-Kavak, 2019; Tsuneyasu, 2016; Lyster et al., 2013; Katayama, 2007; Oladejo, 1993) and most of them have revealed a mismatch. On the other hand, the opinion of learners and their preferences for error correction are almost always disregarded (Oladejo, 1993).

As error signaling could cause some anxiety in learners, thus increasing the affective filter, this research aims to examine students' perception toward immediate oral corrective feedback in an attempt to contribute to the development of their communicative skills. The main objective of this study is to describe the attitude of EFL students and their perception towards immediate oral corrective feedback employed by language teachers in private university classroom situations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Errors

In 1967 Corder introduced the distinction between systematic and non-systematic errors describing them as follows: "It will be useful therefore here-after to refer to errors of performance as mistakes, reserving the term error to refer to the systematic errors of the learner from which we are able to reconstruct his knowledge of the language to date"

(1967 p. 167). Addressing every single error made in the classroom would be useless and time consuming. The purpose of correction is to make sure that incorrect structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation are not construed as appropriate by learners.

Regarding the type of errors made in the EFL classrooms, four major categories are described:

a) Grammatical (morpho-syntactic) errors, which according to Nancy Lee (1991) are tackled by teachers who tend to emphasize grammatical accuracy and to provide immediate corrective treatment to morpho-syntactic errors.

b) Discourse errors, especially on spoken discourse, are analyzed to promote accurate communication without undermining the learners' confidence. So, feedback is usually provided at the end of the speech.

c) Phonologically-induced errors are, as the term suggests, errors in pronunciation and/or intonation. This is a sensible area where fossilization tends to take place and where there is a risk of communication breakdown if the unattended error is serious enough to affect intelligibility.

d) Lexical errors: Like morpho-syntactic errors, lexical errors are habitually corrected by teachers, as they are easily pointed out and usually are significant in the conveyance of meaning. (Lee, 1991)

For the purpose of this investigation, only grammatical, lexical, and phonological errors were considered since delayed feedback was not the primary concern.

2.2. Corrective feedback

There are several ways to approach corrective feedback. Corrective feedback is, according to Yang and Lyster (2010, p 237), "a reactive type of form-focused instruction which is considered to be effective in promoting noticing and thus conducive to L2 learning" (cited by Milla Melero, 2011, p. 20). Suzuki (2004) defined corrective feedback as a pedagogical technique teachers use to draw attention to students' erroneous utterances with the intention of modified output (cited by Lee, 2013).

Undeniably, this is a complex phenomenon that serves several functions (Chaudron, 1988; cited by Tavacoli & Nourollah, 2018). The most evident one is showing the learners, who might be oblivious of the situation, that there is a problem in their production. Corrective feedback helps the teachers provide scaffolding and hopefully contributes to the improvement of the learners' use of the L2. Past research (Carroll & Swain 1993; DeKeyser 1993; Havranek & Cesnik 2003; Rosa & Leow 2004) has shown that giving feedback effectively contributes to learners' grammatical, morphological, and phonological development (Tavakoli & Zarrinabadi, 2016).

Lyster and Randa (1997) have distinguished six different types of oral corrective feedback. The first is explicit correction, which refers to a clear indication that the word or utterance is incorrect, and the provision of the correct form. The second form is recast which involves the teacher's reformulation of the part of the student's utterance, correcting the error. The third type is clarification request, when instructors indicate to

learners either that their utterance has been misunderstood by the teacher or that the utterance is ill-formed in some way. Usually this involves using a question for clarification, thus its name. The fourth type, elicitation, refers to three techniques that professors use to directly elicit the correct form from the student: 1) teachers elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to "fill in the blank"; 2) teachers use questions to elicit correct forms (e.g., "how do you say…?"), and 3) teachers occasionally ask students to reformulate their utterance. The fifth type of error correction is repetition which refers to the instructors' repetition of the erroneous utterance, usually adjusting their intonation so as to highlight the error. Finally, there is metalinguistic feedback; it contains either comments, information, or questions related to the correctness of the student's utterance, without explicitly giving the correct form. Metalinguistic information generally provides either some grammatical metalanguage that refers to the nature of the error (e.g., "An adjective is needed") or a word definition in the case of lexical errors.   In addition to the preceding six feedback types, the authors also included in their analysis a seventh category called multiple feedback, which referred to combinations of more than one type of feedback in one teacher turn (Lyster & Randa, 1997).

For the purpose of this investigation, the combination of types was not considered. A seventh option for corrective feedback was included in the survey: the use of non-verbal cues to indicate a problem with the utterance, the words used, or the pronunciation of a word. Many times, professors just shake their heads or signal a no with their fingers, or frown their eyebrows as an indication of error, expecting the learners to react and self-correct the problem. Delayed feedback was not taken into consideration for this investigation.

2.3.   Attitudes and perception

Attitude, according to Dr. Pickens (2020), "is a mind-set or a tendency to act in a particular way due to both an individual's experience and temperament" (p.44) Generally, attitudes are described as positive or negative towards an issue. Attitude surveys are usually designed using 5-point Likert-type ("strongly agree–strongly disagree") or frequency ("never–very often") response formats (Pickens, 2020).

On the other hand, Pickens considered that perception is closely related to attitude which, as explained by Lindsay and Norman (1977), is "a process by which organisms interpret and organize sensations to produce a meaningful experience of the world" (as cited by Pickens, 2020 p. 52),

Studies such as Schultz' (1996) done in foreign language students in a higher-education level, and Ancker's (2000) which expanded over 4 years (as cited by Gutierrez et al 2020, pp. 12-13) have found that most of the learners have a positive attitude towards error correction. Ryan's (2012) research revealed that survey respondents complained about the eventual absence of correction because that would deprive them of learning. (cited by Gutierrez et al 2020, p. 13).

2.4. Previous studies

As mentioned before, there are several studies focusing on oral corrective feedback (OCF) determining which are the most used types from facilitators' point of view, or comparing the perspectives of teachers and learners. Very few focus on the learners' opinion.

In chronological order from most recent, Rashidi and Majdeddin (2023) conducted a qualitative phenomenological case study in Iran about oral feedback from the teachers' perspective. "The results of the study accounted for an obvious role of mediational discourse in the development of teacher's understanding of conceptual thinking through verbally-mediated activity" (Rashidi, & Majdeddin, 2023, p. 784). The results also found that assistance provided by instructors to learners was very helpful in the internalization of their oral errors. The study provided pedagogical implications for second language teachers to be reflective, dynamic, and evaluative in dealing with oral corrective feedback in their classrooms.

Seçkin Can and Daloglu (2022) studied which types of errors lead to which types of corrective feedback in university preparatory classes in Turkey. The frequency and distribution of error types and corrective feedback were examined in English speaking courses at B1 level of the CEFR for Languages. Three teachers' classes participated in the study. The data, collected through video tape, were analyzed according to the system proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997). The results showed that the most used feedback type is recast, followed by a translation and explicit correction. Metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, clarification requests, and repetitions were not common feedback types used by the teachers. Grammatical errors were the most common type but were corrected the least. On the other hand, lexical errors were the least frequent but were the most frequently corrected error type.

Hartono et al. (2022) developed a study focused on the students' psychological problems after receiving teachers' oral corrective feedback, and psychological problems that impede students' speaking performance in English as a Foreign Language. Following a case study, the data were collected using a questionnaire and an interview. The participants were 25 students registered in public speaking class of English Department. The findings showed that OCF induced some psychological problems, namely low self-efficacy and confidence, anger with themselves, and worry to make mistake in the classroom.

Uddin (2022), through structured observations and semi-structured interviews, examined two teachers' CF practices, beliefs, and their impact on L2 learning in Arabic as a Heritage Language (AHL) context in one lower intermediate (LI) and one higher intermediate (HI) proficiency classes in a K-12 school in the USA. A total of 20 hour-observation data from two classes (two teachers) with 30 students were collected and coded based on Lyster and Ranta's (1997, 2007) taxonomy of CF types. The results showed that both teachers shared positive beliefs about CF, and preference for implicit CF and prompts. Whereas the LI teacher largely provided feedback for learners' lexical errors, the HI teacher predominantly responded to learners' grammatical errors. LI teacher's use of elicitation, recast, and metalinguistic feedback proved effective in leading

to high uptake and repair rate. On the other hand, elicitation, and clarification requests in the HI teacher's class were the most effective CF types. The findings suggested that teachers with informed knowledge of CF can provide feedback that might ultimately lead to high uptake and repair. (Uddin,2022)

Alshammari, and Wicaksono (2022) focused on Saudi teachers' motivations regarding their choice of oral corrective feedback forms, such as recasts, elicitations, and metalinguistic feedback in foreign language contexts. The study investigated 207 Saudi teachers' perceptions of OCF, including 100 classroom observations, and 100 stimulated recall (SR) sessions with 10 teachers to further investigate their choices of, and motivations for, particular types of OCF, with reference to their learners' uptake. The findings demonstrated that the teachers consider recasts to be the most effective method of correction for their students' learning, especially in the case of pronunciation errors. The authors concluded by offering insights into some challenges that teachers in FL contexts might face and suggests some possible implications for teachers' practice in these contexts.

The use of oral corrective feedback in a Chinese university EFL classroom context, was explored by Lwin and Yang (2021) focusing on the lessons that teach the use of English articles through narrative stimulus activities. Results showed that elicitation was the most frequently used CF type, while metalinguistic feedback was used least frequently by the teacher. In general, the Chinese university EFL students surveyed in this study had positive attitudes towards receiving CF. Nonetheless, they perceived elicitation as the most effective CF type and metalinguistic feedback the least effective, which interestingly mirrors the two CF types used most and least frequently by their teacher.

Martakush (2020) in his thesis, "The Role of Corrective Feedback and Individual Differences in Second Language Learning", investigated the effects of recasts as an OCF strategy on learning English past tense and how students' individual differences in anxiety, motivation and attitude were affected. The investigation covered two areas: whether recasts lead to learner uptake/repair of past tense errors and whether recasts help learners improve accuracy in the use of past tense, and if so, "whether recasts effectiveness are mediated by the type of the target structure and learners individual differences" (Martakush, 2020, p. ii). 40 participants at a lower-intermediate level in English took part in this study. The results demonstrated that recasts led to a very high rate of uptake for regular and irregular past tense errors. Among the three factors investigated in this study (anxiety, motivation, and attitude), only anxiety had an impact on the role of recasts used in the oral test. On the other hand, motivation and attitude did not seem to impact the way recasts work on the learning of the simple past tense.

In their research in a Chilean university in 2020, Gutiérrez et al. (2020) concluded students had a positive perception of the corrective feedback. In relation to its effectiveness, students mentioned progress in their linguistic and communicative skills. During the discussion, all of them agreed on CF as one of the key elements to achieve this progress. Regarding their preferences towards a specific approach or CF category, the results of the questionnaire suggested Metalinguistic Feedback as the best evaluated by students (5,4) closely followed by Recast and Explicit Correction.

Youssef, (2019) conducted an action research as a thesis at Cardiff Metropolitan University (UK) in which he examined teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding the use of oral corrective feedback (OCF). The investigation examined intermediate EFL Egyptian students' beliefs on OCF. Five Egyptian English language teachers participated in the study, each teaching a class of first year students. Previous to the intervention phase, data collected indicated that both teachers and learners considered the role of OCF as a valuable component of classroom interaction. However, most students referred to past experiences as lacking OCF or cited negative affective effects concerning how feedback was provided by their teachers. In the five teachers, various degrees of incongruency between beliefs and practices were found. In addition, there was an apparent lack of familiarity with OCF techniques, especially among the less experienced teachers. Analysis of the post-intervention indicated a more positive outlook on students' part concerning their teachers' approach to the correction of oral errors. Findings highlight the importance of focusing on OCF training and suggest potential benefits for incorporating this training component in teacher development programs.

Inci-Kavakk (2019) found a strong discrepancy in the opinions of teachers' and students' views "regarding preference for which error correction techniques to use, how much correction to provide, and how to correct errors" (p.137)

Ananda et al. (2017) reported as the aims of their research discovering which kinds of oral error corrective feedback students prefer. The subjects were76 students of English Department of Lambung Mangkurat University in 2015 who were taking Speaking I course. The results showed repetition was the preferred kind of OCF. About how oral error feedback should be given, most of students wished to be given corrective feedback privately or individually for every error which they made. Last, most students preferred being corrected in the classroom immediately. Overall, the students demonstrated a positive attitude towards OCF.

In 2016, Lee performed a study with advanced-level adult English as a Second Language on how their previous EFL classroom experiences influenced their perceptions of their teachers' oral corrective feedback. It used in-depth qualitative data to characterize the participants' prior English learning, and to determine how their experiences influenced how they perceived OCF in ESL classrooms. The findings reflected a poor previous experience with corrective feedback. The research concluded that having sufficient opportunities to practice and output the target language in ESL classroom contexts plays a significant role in improving students' productive English competence

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

3.1. Aim and research questions

This research is descriptive, cross-sectional   and quantitative in nature aiming at addressing the following research questions:

1. What is the general attitude toward oral corrective feedback among EFL students in two Costa Rican private universities?
2. To what extent do students prefer to be corrected?
3. Which errors do students consider should be prioritized in their correction (pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar)?
4. What are the students' preferences for types of error correction methods?
5. Do students perceive corrective feedback as effective for the improvement of the oral communication?

3.2. Sample

The data collection took place from August 2022 to February 2023 and the participants were 160 university EFL students ranging from 18 to over 40 years of age who were at the time taking one of the courses from Level 1 and 2 of the program offered by two private universities as part of the curricula for majors not related to education. Some of the majors were Business Administration, Accounting, Engineering, Education, Design, and Psychology. All the participants' native language was Spanish. The sample represents the students who were willing to participate in the on-line survey and answer voluntarily.

3.3. Instrument

The instrument was applied to all the participants in their native language (Spanish) to avoid misunderstanding. Because classes were conducted mainly remotely, the instrument was digital. (See appendix 1) It was validated through expert judgement.

The first section includes general information about the learners' background such as gender, age group, major and level of course. The second section addressed research questions 1, 2 and 5 about the students' general opinions about the correction of oral errors in the classroom and its effectiveness. The section contained five statements: whether or not learner errors should be corrected; how students feel when they are corrected and when learner errors should be corrected (i.e., constantly or selectively). The participants were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5.

The third section addressed research question 3 and asked about students' preferences for classroom error correction of different aspects of the language, such as grammar, phonology, and vocabulary. Instead of the term phonology, the words "pronunciation, and intonation," were used in the questionnaire. Participants rated each item on a 5-point scale, with 1 representing never and 5 representing always with respect to frequency of correction. The last section addressed research question 4 and asked learners to rate eight different methods of error correction frequently used by EFL teachers. The rating for students' opinions about each method was measured on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 representing bad to 5 representing excellent.

4. RESULTS

Most of the participants were young adults ranging from 18 to 25 years old; 55% were female, 44,5% male and 0.6% identified as non-binary. They were taking level 1 and 2 of the EFL program at the private universities. Therefore, their level of proficiency in the language is considered A1/A2 (CEFR).

As the overall attitude of the participants to corrective feedback, results show that an overwhelming majority of 95% (Figure 1) considered that receiving feedback from professors is important or very important matching the perception that feedback contributes to the improvement of their proficiency (Figure 2).

Figure 1.

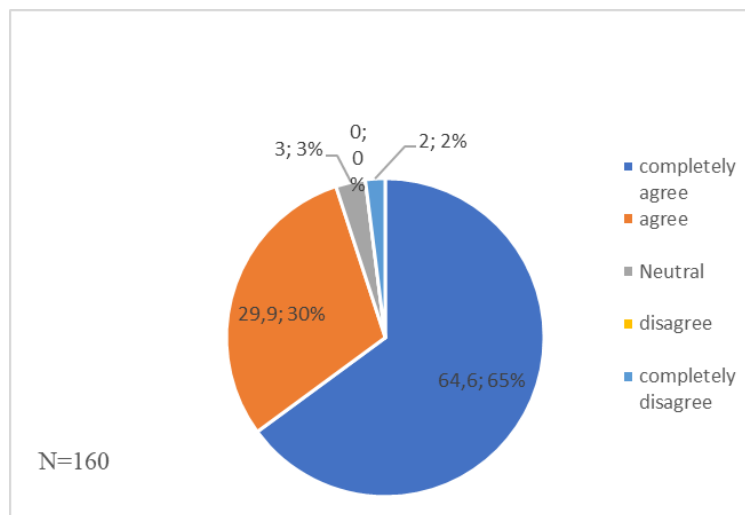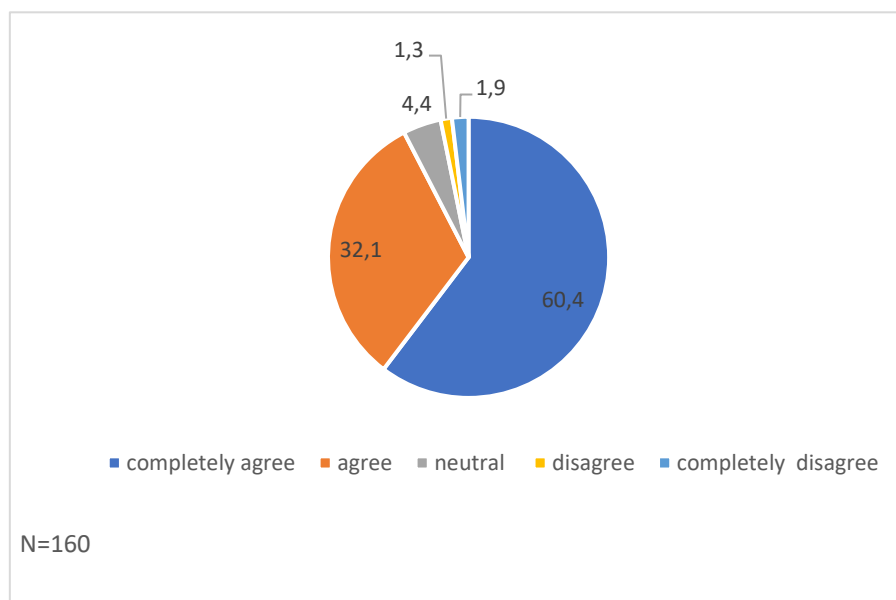*Students' opinion about the importance of oral corrective feedback in the classroom*
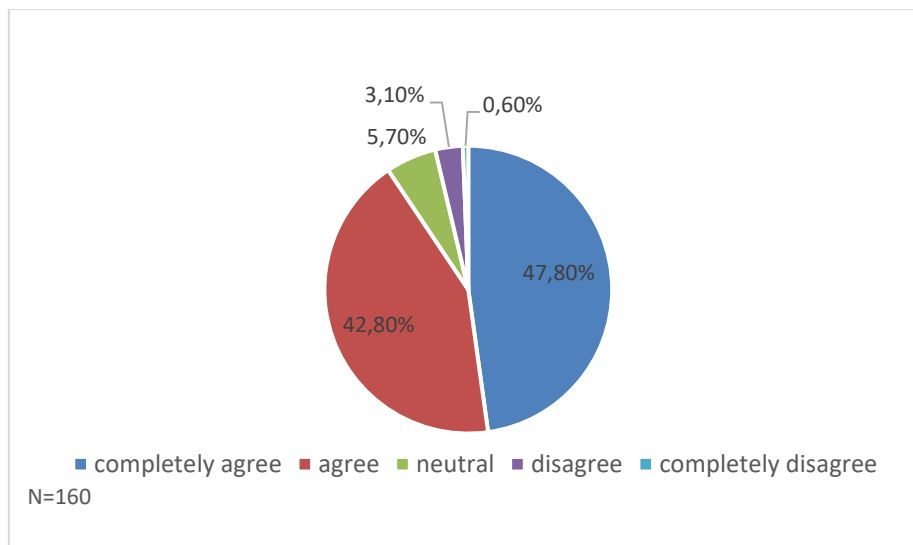
Figure 2

Students' opinion about corrective feedback contributing to the improvement of their proficiency.

N=160

In regard to the frequency of correction (Figure 3), 91% of the participants considered that teachers should always correct oral production. This seems to confirm the idea that learners are expecting some corrective feedback and they perceive it as part of the learning process.
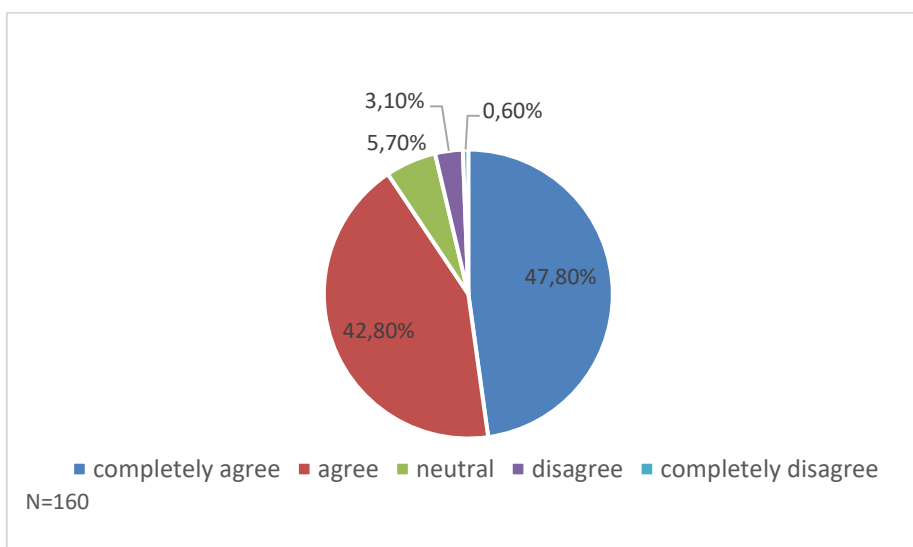
Figure 3

Students' opinion on the frequency of error correction

As seen in Figure 4, 87% reported their desire to have all the mistakes corrected which is later confirmed in the following questions about which type of errors should be corrected (Figure 6).
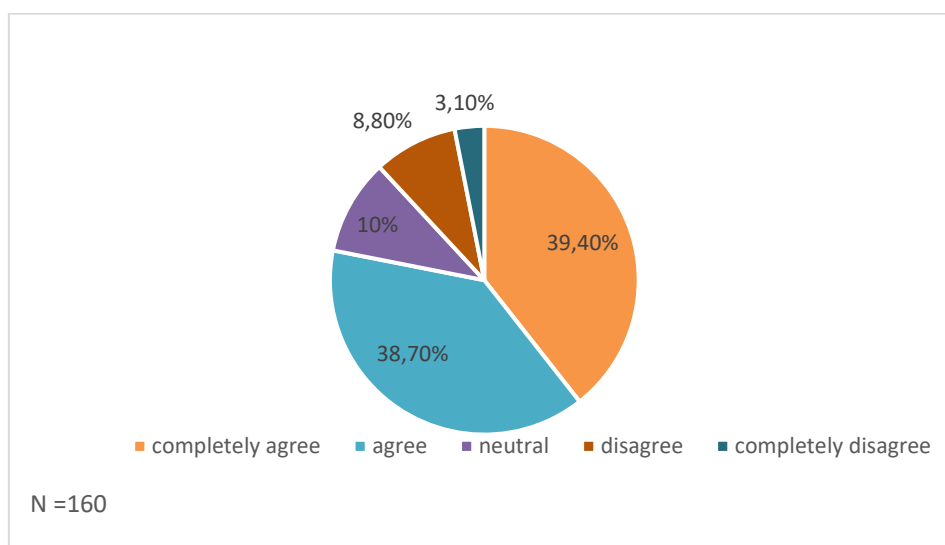
Figure 4.

*Students' opinion on the amount of correction*

In terms of the moment of correction, 78% of the participants agreed that the correction should be immediate, 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 10% were neutral.

Figure 5

Students' opinion on the immediateness of correction

As to what aspect requires more attention, grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation, the results were very similar, as can be observed in Figure 6 with a slight increase in pronunciation.

Figure 6

Students' opinion on which errors require more attention
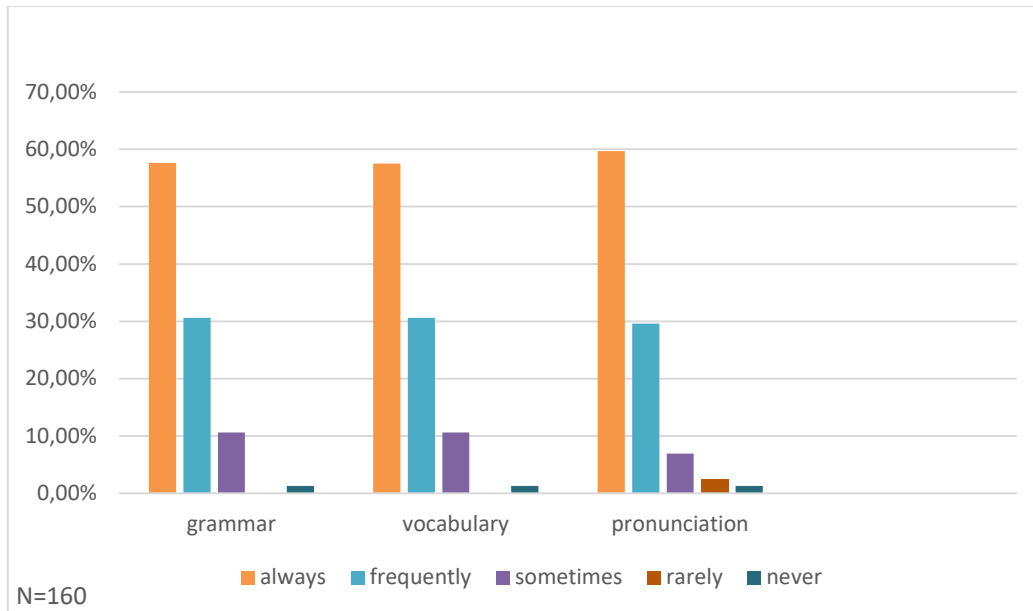
The participants of this study were asked to categorize seven types of error correction used by professors rating them from bad to excellent. As shown in Figure 7, the three most preferred were explicit correction (54.1% excellent), recast (49.4% excellent) and clarification (44.7% excellent) followed by elicitation (42.1% excellent). Metalinguistic feedback and non-verbal cues were considered bad methods of giving oral feedback, while no correction was the least preferred by the learners.

Figure 7

Learners' preference on types of error correction

N=160   ■ Excellent ■ Very good ■ Good ■ More or less good ■ bad
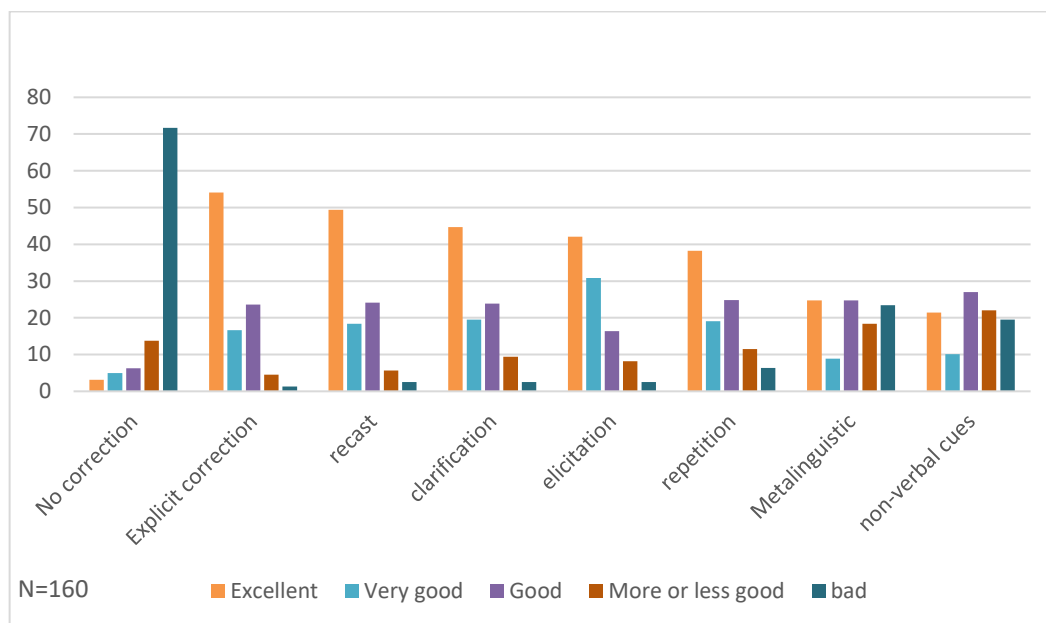
5. DISCUSSION

There is a general positive perception towards oral corrective feedback given by the teachers. Students seem to expect their teachers to provide explicit indications when an error is committed, as they consider this important for the development of their oral proficiency in the foreign language. This aligns to the conclusions in Ha & Nguyen (2021) in Vietnam, Gutierrez et al. (2020) in Chile, Abarca (2008) in Costa Rica and Lyster et al (2013). Alamri and Fawzi (2016) in Iran reported that:

> students have a positive attitude toward oral error correction since the majority of students thinks [sic] it is expected and effective. This result is supported the study by Azar and Molavi (2013), in which they point out that many students expect their errors to be corrected and they feel disappointed or resentful if they are ignored (Alamri & Fawzi, 2016, p.63)

Learners, contrary to what might be expected, are eager to have all of their mistakes addressed. This confirms the disposition of students towards constant feedback. Tomczyk (2013) was surprised to find that "students expect and even want to have their errors corrected (44%) of the students admitted to be satisfied when the teacher corrects their ill-formed utterances" (p. 929).

In terms of the moment of correction most participants agreed that the correction should be immediate. This seems to be consistent with Alamri and Fawzi's (2016) research which pointed out that "the majority of students prefer immediate correction for

all types of errors including fluency and accuracy errors" (p. 63). Similar results were reported by Abarca (2008): "However, it can be concluded from the results that these students feel confident if they are (1) clearly informed about their errors and (2) given the opportunity to correct them immediately" (p. 26).

Learners want correction in the three areas included in this research. Many teachers would be tempted to focus on global errors which hinder communication and be more lenient about local errors. But from the learners' perspective it appears that they consider grammar, lexicon, and phonology as equally important. This is consistent with Oladejo's research (1993); English as a second language (ESL) students at both high school and university levels in Singapore preferred comprehensive, not selective errors to be corrected to enhance their language accuracy. Later Katayama's (2007) study revealed that most of the 249 Japanese undergraduate EFL students wanted all errors to be corrected. Zhang and Rahimi (2014) looked at Iranian undergraduate students' beliefs and found that they valued the errors influencing communication the most, followed by frequent errors (Lee, 2013 p. 2). Ha and Nguyen (2021) reported that "when asked if less important errors should be corrected, 12 of the students said that even though some errors may not influence communication or were not the focus of the lesson, they should be corrected" (p.5).

As for the type of oral corrective feedback preferred, there might be two variables to consider: the level of proficiency and the cultural background. In the context of this investigation explicit correction and recast were the most accepted. Similarly, Alamri and Fawzi (2016) reported "recast and explicit correction were considered helpful by the majority of students. While approximately 60% of students reported that repetition of error and clarification request are helpful techniques. Elicitation and ignoring were the two least preferred techniques" (p. 64). Seçkin Can and Daloglu. (2022) in Turkey found the most used feedback type is recast, followed by a translation and explicit correction.

In lower levels it seems natural that pupils prefer explicit correction, as Inci-Kavakk (2019) has indicated "students in all classes … agreed with the fact that they found the situations in which they were explicitly corrected "effective" (p.125). They appear to value clear explanations about their mistakes, as mentioned in Kaivanpanah et al. (2015) (quoted by Inci-Kavakk 2019, p. 135). Tsuneyasu (2016) found that learners expressed their interests to direct types of corrective feedback.

The lack of interest in metalinguistic corrective feedback could be attributed to the level of the participants who were primarily at the lower levels of proficiency. Therefore, a linguistic explanation would be inefficient for these learners. Gutierrez et al. (2020) reported that the subjects of their study in Chile who were registered in second to fourth year courses, preferred metalinguistic corrective feedback in the first place, followed by recast and explicit correction. Non-verbal cues appear to be less obvious to the learners and therefore they did not consider it as effective as other methods. Teachers who like to

use nonverbal communication could consider combining the use of gestures with other forms of OCF.

6. CONCLUSION

The general attitude of the learners to corrective feedback is positive and they are aware of its relevance for improvement. It seems that they are expecting to receive feedback on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation from their instructors. The participants viewed all types of errors as requiring attention. Corrective feedback plays an important role in the learning process and most of the participants want to be corrected all the time. Although the general tendency for students to embrace OCF is consistent across most contexts, some studies have reported that the strength of the preference varies according to learners' cultural backgrounds, previous and current language learning experiences, or proficiency levels.

Most of the participants of this study indicate their desire to receive clear and immediate feedback. They also consider that deviances in grammar, lexicon and phonology should be attended with equal attention. Regarding their preferences towards a specific approach or corrective feedback, explicit correction is the best evaluated followed by recast and clarification, indicating that learners at this level (beginners) seem to favor a more direct approach to feedback, and are less reactive to more subtle forms of error indication. Understandably, students will react more positively to clear indications of errors which do not leave room for doubt or confusion.

Ultimately, professors need to give serious consideration to the use of oral corrective feedback considering the needs and wants of the learners, not just their professional criteria. Background and level of proficiency might be variables to be included. Future research might explore more advanced students' perspective on the topic as they might have different preferences.

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