



# Perspectives on the Role of Oral Corrective Feedback in Developing English Language Acquisition

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**Abstract:** This study aims at exploring the preparatory year instructors' opinions on the contributions of oral corrective feedback (OCF) to the development of learners' acquisition of English. The study investigates instructors' background about OCF, technical and pedagogical aspects of OCF, types of OCF adopted by instructors in EFL classrooms and what attitudes they have towards OCF. Two types of research tools were used: a questionnaire, and interviews. The findings prove that OCF is a vital element of classroom feedback as it enables students to develop their EL acquisition by motivating them to take control of their EL progress. However, most instructors have no idea about the types of OCF. They use it inside their classrooms but they are unaware of the definitions of the concepts. The study recommends that some preparation work needs to be done before harnessing the power of student-to-student feedback and developing teachers' planning opportunities for on-going individual dialogue between teachers and students.

**Keywords:** Oral corrective feedback, Types of OCF, Provision of OCF, English Language acquisition.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

An essential part of assessing learning is giving feedback to students, both to assess their current achievement and to indicate what their next steps should be. Feedback is also ranked number one intervention strategy in terms of its influence on learning by both Professor John Hattie and the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF): in other words, their research shows that improving the quality of feedback given to students has the biggest impact on learning of any classroom intervention. Feedback which is one of the most important duties of a teacher (Gower 2005) is often looked at as an important component of the formative assessment process which provides teachers as well as students with significant signs of their ability to fulfill objective of learning within classroom. Ellis (2006) referred to three important benefits for using feedback inside a class; 1) a chance to increase their linguistic knowledge in regard to vocabulary and grammar; 2) an opportunity to identify their amount of experience as well as their level of knowledge; and 3) an effective way to get information required to learn new materials. Chaudron (1977) was among the first scholars to provide a specific definition of feedback when he referred to it as a teacher's reaction towards learners' utterance so as to improve it. Further to this viewpoint, similar definitions

were given to this item at different times. Schachter (1991) for example, adopted the same vision when he considered corrective feedback as teachers' utterances that attempt to identify learners' errors. Others looked at feedback as a process in which specific pieces of information are provided to help learners absorb correctly what is being taught to them. Lightbown and Spada (1999) also defined corrective feedback as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect. This includes various responses that the learners receive" (p. 171). Ellis (1999) looked at feedback as "information given to learners which they can use to revise their interlanguage" (p.702). On the other hand, Lyster & Ranta (1997) considered corrective feedback as strategies used by instructors to correct errors made by students in their spoken language and they classified them into implicit as well as explicit feedback. In 2001, Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen selected to use the term 'Treatment' to refer to corrective feedback and divided it into two categories: a) direct treatment which represents explicit feedback, and b) indirect treatment which involves implicit feedback. Another more detailed definition was provided by Ellis, Loewen and Erlam (2006) who stated that:

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) pro-vision of the correct target language form, or (c) meta-linguistic information about the nature of the error, or any combination of these (p. 340).

Ellis (2006) defined corrective feedback as “responses to learner utterances containing an error” (p. 28). All definitions offered reflect the vital role played by the teacher or the instructor in improving students’ utterances through the use of oral corrective feedback. However, the use of oral corrective feedback varies from one teacher to another depending on their experience, knowledge, and style. Therefore, it can be said that oral corrective feedback includes more than teacher’s correction of students’ oral errors, it involves learners’ response to this correction and the setting in which the process of oral corrective feedback is provided. Ellis (1999) confirmed that one single teacher might use a blend of different types of feedback, or only use one type of feedback regardless of the type of error made by the students (p.585). Van Lier (1988) referred to the role played by the setting in the process of corrective feedback when he stated that the classroom atmosphere had an impact upon both on the type of correction used by the teacher and the response by the student (p. 211). In foreign language teaching, giving corrective feedback is closely reflected in form-focused instruction that affirms the effectiveness as well as usefulness of using corrective feedback as a pedagogic solution to develop foreign language acquisition if it was undergone under certain circumstances. Clearly, the provision of corrective feedback is considered one of the most important techniques in which a dual focus on form and meaning can be accomplished and it can be highly conducive inside FL classrooms to the acquisition of the target language.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are different types of feedback suggested by different scholars in the field of teaching. Feedback can be in the form of written remarks, spoken utterance or body language. It can be verbal or non-verbal, formal or informal, one-shot or on-going. Others tend to classify it into two types; positive feedback represented in rewards provided by teachers to students’ right response; and negative feedback reflected in the teacher’s correction of students’ errors so as to help them avoid doing them later on. Lightbown & Spada (1999:107) stated that there are four main types of corrective including; 1) Clarification requests which include phrases such as ‘Pardon me...’ or a repetition of the error as ‘What do you mean by...?’; 2) Recasts which include repetition of a student’s utterance, using the correct forms; 3) Elicitation which includes using questions by the teacher to elicit correct forms; 4) Metalinguistic feedback which includes providing information about the well-form of a student’s utterance

(p.107). Based on findings of a study of corrective feedback and learner uptake in four immersion classrooms at the primary level, Lyster & Ranta (1997) could determine six different types of corrective feedback; explicit correction, recast, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and error repetition. These types were subsequently classified into two broad CF categories: reformulations and prompts (Lyster 2007). Reformulations are represented in two main types of feedback; recast, which is looked at as an implicit type of correction, and explicit correction. They both supply learners with correction that help them make target reformulations of their non-target output. On the other hand, prompts refer to different signals other than reformulations that could help learners repair their own errors through what is known as self-repair such as clarification requests and repetition, which are considered as implicit types of feedback, metalinguistic clues and elicitation which are considered as explicit types of feedback. To illustrate, reformulations include recast as an implicit type of corrective feedback in which the teacher does not use phrases such as “You mean...” or “you should say...” (Lyster and Ranta, 1997). Instead, he/she implicitly reformulates the students’ response or provides the correction without indicating that the students’ response was incorrect. (Tedick, 1998). The other type of formulation includes an explicit form of corrective feedback in which the teacher provides directly the explicit correction to the students’ response.

In regard to prompts which include four types of corrective feedback; two of them are implicit and the others are explicit. Their classification depends upon the way in which the corrective feedback is provided. Elicitation, for example, represents the teacher’s attempt to elicit the correct form by asking students to reformulate the utterance (Tedick, 1998). It is considered explicit because using this type of corrective feedback directs the learner to the right form by using one of the reformulation signals represented in asking a question (Lyster et al.,2013). Meta--linguistic clue is also a type of explicit corrective feedback because the teacher asks about or provides comments on what the learner says (Tedick, 1998). On the other hand, Clarification requests as well as repetition are considered implicit forms of corrective feedback because of the signals used to help learners reformulate their response and produce correct uptake or response. Clarification requests, for example, avoids using noticeable or explicit form of questions like meta-linguistic feedback or elicitation. The teacher instead uses phrases such as “I do not understand” or “Excuse me” which indicate how the teacher’s response was incorrect and needs to be reformulated. Such phrases said by the teacher are considered implicit types of corrective feedback since they do not provide correct forms. They only could help the learner detect their



mistake and realize that his response needs to be reformulated. Similarly, repetitions are considered as implicit forms of corrective feedback since the teacher does not provide the correct form. He/she repeats the student's same response with a certain intonation in order to indicate an error (Lyster et al., 2013). Hattie and Timperley (2007) proposed a four-level model of feedback that includes: feedback about the task, feedback about the processing of the task, feedback about self-regulation, and feedback about the student as a person

Given the link between corrective feedback and language acquisition, a large number of studies have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of corrective feedback in developing learners' language skills. Two studies were conducted by Tomasello and Herron (1988, 1989) to examine the effect of correcting learners' mistakes on developing the process of learning rules as well as exceptions of these rules. It was concluded that students learn better when immediate feedback was provided. In the same vein of research Lightbown & Spada (1990) investigated the effect of using form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on improving students' accuracy in using the TL. The findings suggested that learners' language skills could be improved by adopting meaning-based instruction and using corrective feedback. Oliver (1995) discussed the role played by implicit types of feedback such as clarification, repetition, and recasts in second language acquisition. Lyster and Ranta (1997) discussed the types of feedback through observing four teachers who were unaware of the researchers' purpose. Their observation outlined seven types of feedback; recasts, elicitation, explicit correction, clarification requests, repetition, metalinguistic feedback, and multiple feedback which involves using more than one type of feedback. The findings revealed that recast was the most widely used form of feedback. However, it did not lead to any student-generated forms of repair. Based upon the same database, Lyster (2001) further examined the effect of using corrective feedback types such as explicit correction, negotiation of form (i.e., elicitation, metalinguistic clues, clarification requests, or repetition of error), and recasts on creating immediate learner repair. The findings showed the significant connection between error type and feedback type, and highlighted the effect of the error type on selecting the type of feedback. Two experimental study were later carried out by Long, Inagaki, and Ortega (1998) to investigate the effect of using negative feedback (recasts) on second language Japanese and Spanish. Carrol (2001) made a comparison between implicit and explicit feedback effect upon learners' performance. The findings revealed that explicit feedback had more effective impact on improving students' performance than implicit feedback types.

Although most of these studies are mainly teacher-oriented, there has been recent approach in the field of research focusing on learners' perceptions, readiness, and responses to feedback. For example, Mackey, Gass, and McDonough (2000) investigated learners' perceptions of feedback, interactional feedback nature, and the linguistic target of the feedback. Different types of feedback were identified such as negotiations and recasts which were not perceived by students as a type of corrective feedback. However, the linguistic target of feedback was well-perceived. Han (2001) conducted a study investigating the effect of corrective feedback on the absence or presence of fine-tuned corrective feedback which referred to the relationship between the giver's intent and the receiver's interpretation as well as the connection between the information content included the correction given and the receiver's readiness to process it. The findings confirmed the significant effect of the fine-tuned feedback on learning.

Different research studies were made to investigate the effect of corrective feedback on developing language acquisition as vocabulary (Mollakhan, Rasouli, and Karbalaee, 2013), grammar (Zohrabi and Ehsani, 2014; Russel and Spada, n.d), English wh-question forms (Rassaei and Moinzadeh, 2011), accuracy (Chu, 2011), and writing (Akbarzadeh, Saeidi, and Chehreh, 2014). On the other hand, some studies were conducted to investigate the most effective type of feedback in improving students' performance inside the classroom. Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam (2006) investigated the effect of using recasts as well as metalinguistic feedback on students' performance and found that students who received metalinguistic feedback outperformed those who received recasts. In the same vein, Lyster (2004) compared the effects of recasts with prompts and found out that prompts were more effective than recasts. Ellis (2009) conducted a study that examined the effects of recasts and metalinguistic feedback on the acquisition of implicit and explicit knowledge of regular past tense-ed. The findings revealed that metalinguistic feedback was more effective than other types in improving students' acquisition of such pieces of knowledge.

The studies discussed earlier reflected the significant role played by corrective feedback to assist teachers judge carefully whether students were able to understand what was being taught or not. It can be used as an efficient device aiming to enhance language learning. Although advantages of using corrective feedback inside ESL classroom have been highlighted in many studies, little attention has been paid to investigate its effectiveness inside an EFL classroom. Therefore, the current study has been carried out to examine deeply the instructors' perspectives on the use of oral corrective feedback to develop learners' acquisition of EFL.



To identify views on the effective role of corrective feedback in the process of foreign language learning, different perspectives on the role of formal instruction in foreign language pedagogy should be tackled. This can be well-understood by looking into theories that provided explanation of the process of foreign language learning such as behaviorism, nativism, interaction theories, and skill-learning approaches. Studies on the effect of feedback on developing learning go back to the rise of the psychological movement known as behaviorism. It discussed two main types of feedback; positive feedback represented in the use of reinforcement and negative feedback reflected in punishment. The second type represents what is known as error correction that aims to eradicate the bad form of habits and lessen their damaging effects on learning. According to this theory, correction should be given immediately and the time lapse between students' incorrect response and instructors' correction should be as short as possible so that bad habits would not be formed. However, the active participant of the student is neglected since he/she is dealt with as an animal in a circus who gives the correct response when he is provided with the appropriate stimulus accompanied with the suitable reinforcement.

By the advent of the nativist theory, the perspective on automatic corrective feedback adopted by behaviorism was drastically modified. The new theory supported the innate acquisition of language and suggested the Language Acquisition Device that represents the universal aspects of languages involved in the brain system and it considers the process of language acquisition as a human-specific biological endowment. This theory assumes that each child is born with universalities that help them identify the way in which language works. It postulates that language development needs more exposure to the target language in addition to more opportunities for its spontaneous rather than error correction. According to nativists, the effect of using corrective feedback on language learning process seems unnoticeable since it merely affects performance rather than their underlying competence (Schwarz 1993). This new trend in reflecting upon language acquisition led by Krashen (1982) to develop his Monitor Model outlined the importance of creating conditions for acquisition as the main focus of language teaching. In regard to error correction, Krashen (1985) adopted the same view of nativists that ignore the effect of using corrective feedback to develop language acquisition. She claimed that it should be as minimal as possible in class as any knowledge consciously learned through explicit instruction cannot have a significant impact on L2 acquisition.

To take the matter further, two main kinds of research were applied to pinpoint the connection between

correction and language acquisition. These types followed either the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1993) which states that the development of language proficiency is promoted by face to face interaction and communication, or the Output Hypothesis (Swain 1985) which suggests that extended exposure to a target language input is not enough to make students' productive language similar to that of native speakers. According to Long (1983), corrective feedback could be a source of both direct and indirect information that help the learner identify the grammaticality of the utterances. Further, Long (1996) affirmed that interaction plays an important role in providing language learners with good opportunities to speak in L2 with the help of effective feedback given by the teacher as a technique to facilitate second language acquisition (p. 413). Swain (1985) argued that corrective feedback is vital to second language acquisition because it enhances noticing, triggers output modifications, and contributes to the achievement of self-regulation. The theoretical background based upon these trends or approaches resulted in creating outstanding contribution of researchers to the field of corrective feedback in the process of teaching.

In regard to the skill theory approach and how it considered about oral correction, it was quite clear that it emphasized the need of the learner to constant and effective feedback so that language could be acquired successfully. Oral corrective feedback has been considered as a device or means by which teachers can enhance their students' learning. The main assumption adopted further on by researchers was based upon the effect of corrective feedback to facilitate learning in general and language acquisition in particular. Oral corrective feedback ensures communication as well as interaction between students and teachers on one hand and among students on the other hand. Both approaches called for arising students' as well as teachers' awareness of the importance of using corrective feedback as a strategy by which interaction can occur naturally inside the classroom. Brookhart (2017) stated that feedback can be very powerful if it is done well since it can be used as a double-barreled approach, addressing both cognitive and motivational factors at the same time. She confirmed that good feedback could provide learners with necessary pieces of information required to absorb their status in regard to their level of learning (the cognitive factor) as well as their control over that learning (the motivational factor).

The impact of corrective feedback on students' performance is still a controversial issue since some scholars reject it totally and look at it as useless or valueless means to enhance learning whereas others consider it as an effective tool that can be used inside the



classroom to improve and better their understanding and level of English language. Chaudron (1986), for example, referred to the low effect of feedback on students' uptake. Therefore, the current study has been conducted to investigate instructors' perspectives towards the use and effect of oral corrective feedback inside English language classrooms. In this regard, review of literature was offered and discussion of tools will be presented so that data analysis can be made to reach precise and valuable conclusion. This study is expected to answer the following main question:

What are the native-speaker instructors' perspectives on the effectiveness of using oral corrective feedback to develop English language acquisition?

To answer this main question, there was a need to find an answer to the following questions;

- 1) How knowledgeable are English language instructors about different types of oral corrective feedback?
- 2) How often do English language instructors use different types of Oral corrective feedback?
- 3) Which type of OCF is considered to be the best and most effective OCF approach to use?
- 4) How should OCF be provided to students?
- 5) What is the best timing for feedback provision?
- 6) Which areas of language OCF is most often used?
- 7) What is the pedagogical value of OCF?

This study is expected to contribute to the field of corrective feedback research in general and oral corrective feedback in particular in an EFL setting. It may fill the gap between theory and practice in regard to the effectiveness of using oral corrective feedback to develop language acquisition. The findings obtained may participate in providing valuable information about the most effective type of oral corrective feedback to be used in an EFL setting. They might also show the best timing for feedback provision, the areas of language in which oral corrective feedback is most often used, and the pedagogical value of oral corrective feedback.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Method

This study is a mixed method research as it includes the mixing of qualitative as well as quantitative data. It is a methodology used for conducting this study that involved collecting and analyzing quantitative data represented in the tool of the questionnaire and qualitative data represented in making interviews. The two tools were employed to collect data to answer the questions raised by the study through adopting sequential explanatory method which focused on collecting and

analyzing the qualitative data to use them later in explaining and interpreting the findings of the qualitative ones. The context of this study is Saudi Arabia. It focuses on EFL university instructors and their perspectives on the role of oral corrective feedback in developing English language acquisition. To obtain necessary data, two main research tools were used; a questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview.

#### 3.2 Participants

Participants were 31 native speakers' EFL university instructors from different academic institutions including Preparatory Year Deanship at Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Al-Faisal International Academy in Riyadh, Prince Sattam University at Kharj in Riyadh, King Saud University, and Arab Open University (the main Campus in Riyadh) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

#### 3.3 Instruments

##### 3.3.1 Questionnaire

This questionnaire aimed at exploring the preparatory year instructors' opinions about the contributions of oral corrective feedback (OCF) to the development of learners' acquisition of English. It was divided into four parts: personal information, instructors' background about OCF, technical and pedagogical aspects of OCF, and a free space for any comments a participant believed they were not included in the questionnaire. It involved Likert scale which ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Part one included general information about the participant's name, age, qualification, place of work, and years of experience in higher education teaching. Part two included six items of general information about the participants' knowledge and use of oral corrective feedback. Part three included twenty-nine items about technical and pedagogical aspects. This part was divided into five sections; types of oral corrective feedback; provision of oral corrective feedback; timing of feedback provision; oral corrective feedback areas; and pedagogical value of oral corrective feedback. Part four was devoted for providing any comments the participants would prefer to exclude or include in the questionnaire. It was designed and developed by the first researcher and distributed and discussed by the second researcher to ensure a sense of objectivity in conducting this study.

In order to ensure the confidence of the findings obtained by using the tool of the questionnaire, both validity and reliability were tested. As for validity, the initial version of the questionnaire was distributed to three qualified experts in the field of study to test content, construct and face validity. They were kindly asked to determine whether the four sections were able to adequately cover the main domains of the study. They



were also asked to examine the general appearance of the questionnaire and decide on if it was carefully or poorly constructed since reliable responses could be reached when the questionnaire seems more professional-looking. In regard to reliability, inter-rater or inter-observer reliability as well as rationale equivalence reliability were ensured. Inter-rater reliability was ensured as the same subject was evaluated using the same version of the questionnaire by the two researchers and relatively similar scores were obtained in the two cases. Similarly, the rationale equivalence reliability was reflected in the internal consistency of the questionnaire as all items included were related to each other. Due to testing validity and reliability, some items of the questionnaire were added, modified or deleted so that the questionnaire could meet the standards set by the two researchers.

### 3.3.2 *Semi-structured interview*

Semi-structured five interviews were made specifically to collect data in the qualitative phase. The T-participants were allowed to share their experiences so that the researchers could explore the T-participants' perspectives on the effect of using OCF to develop language skills. It is necessary to stress that these five interviews were made by the first researcher and transcribed by the other to ensure objectivity. It is also important to state that ethic guidelines were followed as the interviewees were informed about the purpose of the interview and what was going to be done. However, they had full option in regard to referring to their names, qualification or location of work. They were also informed that the interviews would be recorded on the mobile so as to check their responses later in the process of data analysis and conclusion. All these points were highlighted before starting the interviews so that the interviewees could get ready and be well prepared to give relevant answers that could be valuable to this study. Such tool was used to investigate motives and ideas that cannot be obtained by the questionnaire. In addition, the interview was used to ensure validity and reliability of the information obtained through the questionnaire. It is worthy mentioned here that the environment in which the interviews were made was mostly the same in regard to type of questions, time given to respondents, freedom to give responses, and way of recording information. Interviewees, on the other hand, provided the researchers with rich insights into instructors' perspectives on the role of OCF in developing language acquisition. It was taken into account that all questions should be straightforward and well understandable so that any type of confusion would be avoided and appropriate pieces of information could be attained. Most research relevant points were taken into consideration when designing the questions of the interview. It can be clearly said that interview questions were constructed in relation to the research questions. Additionally, a semi structured

interview played a vital role in helping the researchers get an adequate chance to get enough comprehension of the true reasons behind the participants' answers and attitudes.

Five language instructors, with ages from thirty-six to fifty, were interviewed. Their teaching experience ranged from fourteen to eighteen years. The interviews were recorded and analyzed considering variables such as types of oral corrective feedback, provision of oral corrective feedback, timing of feedback provision, oral corrective feedback areas, and pedagogical value of oral corrective feedback. The T-participants were interviewed in separate sessions and each session lasted approximately from thirty to forty-five minutes. The interviews were conducted on a weekly basis over a period of five weeks and all the interview sessions were tape-recorded on the first researchers' mobile so that data analysis could be made later on.

To ensure engagement and interest, each interview session started with some questions about the background information followed up by questions including their opinion and perspectives on issues related to the use of CF to develop students' language acquisition. To ensure and maintain a highly positive interviewing climate, the researcher listened attentively and gave the participants full opportunity to express their opinions freely without interruption or disturbance. The details of the questions used in both interview sessions are presented in the appendix.

## 4. FINDINGS RELATED TO THE INTERVIEWS

Following are the findings obtained through making interviews with five instructors; all of them work at the Preparatory Year Program at the College of Languages and Translation at Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. Based upon the interviews made, there was a strong tendency to agree on the need to oral corrective feedback. For example, Mr. Atef, one of the interviewees who defined oral corrective feedback as a significant tool that could be used to solve problems in an EFL class, assured that oral corrective feedback is something natural that plays an important role in changing attitudes towards FL acquisition. He also stated that practice is the key to success so that the teacher must be the last one to correct errors. Regarding the rate of frequency in the use of different types of feedback which is considered the core of the second question, Mr. Atef stated that metalinguistic feedback is the most effective whereas interruption considers to be the least effective since he rejected completely the idea of interrupting students even if they commit mistakes.



Mr. Terry, on the other hand, focused on modeling the pronunciation. When he was asked to define oral corrective feedback, he stated that it represents assistance given by a teacher to students in terms of correct pronunciation and grammatical points. Furthermore, he stated that corrective feedback is a necessity and elicitation is most effective in the order of the seven types of oral corrective feedback, and clarification comes as the second type in this order. Mr. Terry preferred to correct the mistakes after the students finish the task whether it is a reading or speaking one. In the same vein, he stated that feedback should be given when it is needed since it depends on the nature of errors and the level of students. Mr. Terry stated that oral corrective feedback should be regular and continuing in order to be effective. He commented saying that pair work is important and all classes should start with pair work, and then the teacher's role in correcting errors and giving feedback came. Mr. Terry preferred giving feedback by himself, particularly, the mistakes in pronunciation as he doubts the accuracy of pronunciation given by recorded or technological appliances for being unnatural although they are recorded by native speakers but he thought they are not natural as real life talk.

According to Mr. Joseph, oral corrective feedback was represented in the instructor's ability to correct students in terms of special areas that they make at the moment and the main focus on these areas is the pronunciation. Mr. Joseph stated that he sometimes made correct answers about 80% percent of the time. Examining the order of the types of oral corrective in regard to efficacy, he stated that recasting is the most important type of feedback, then metalinguistic. Mr. Joseph did not prefer using repetition as a strategy of correction. When he was asked about the value of oral corrective feedback, he commented saying 'corrective feedback is indispensable.

Another interview was conducted with Mr. John who stated that his main focus was on certain areas related strongly to intonation, pronunciation, vocabulary or content. When Mr. John was asked about his method in teaching speaking, he stated that the use of certain approaches like videos, lectures, group work and debating should be emphasized. Mr. John showed great interest in developing speaking fluency rather than accuracy during his teaching. Similar to Atef's responses, he didn't prefer to use interruption either. He defined OCF as a spoken correction or spoken encouragement directed to students' speaking skills. Regarding the order of the types of feedback, he decided that elicitation is the most important type, then clarification came as a second type with regard to the importance. Mr. John rejected totally the use of repetition as a strategy. Controversially, he confirmed that students must correct the mistakes by

themselves instead of providing them with the answers. However, he stated that feedback should be provided all time. Speaking about the way of giving feedback which is considered the main focus of the fourth question, Mr. John preferred to give feedback individually or in the whole class, but he affirmed that this depends on the nature of educational situation. He emphasized on correcting errors in an individual way and immediately. He stated that the students should self-correct themselves. Mr. John stated that effective feedback is essential and crucial in language acquisition, and he preferred to use oral corrective feedback than written with Arab students and with younger ones, as well.

Finally, the last interview was made with Mr. Khan, the supervisor of instructors at this college. When he was asked about the way of managing a speaking task in the class, he replied saying that arousing the interest in class is very important. When teaching in an EFL class, he gave the priority to the topics that Saudi students like. Examples of these topics are football and sport clubs. In a similar vein, he provided them with a great deal of practice. He assured that instructors need to be more careful when providing feedback to students as some of them are somehow shy and might lose interest or confidence in learning English. He preferred to provide OCF on a group base as he thinks that it needs more and more practice.

In the light of what have been mentioned in the previous interviews, it can be said that all the interviewees agreed that oral corrective feedback is indispensable in regard to language acquisition. Although there was a sort of harmony in their views with regard to the importance of oral corrective feedback, there was a little difference in the order of the types of oral corrective feedback. For example, one of them stated that elicitation is the first whereas another said that recasting is the first type and so on. The researchers state that this is a positive point in the research as there is a variety among learners and the nature of the topics which have been taught required differentiated instruction on one hand. On the other hand, and according to Breeze & Roothoft (2016), there is a sort of disagreement concerning the most effective type of feedback. All interviewees agreed that interruption came as the last type among the types of oral corrective feedback. This means that all of them gave heavy emphasis to fluency than accuracy. Thus, it can be said that there was tolerance in errors as they were treated as natural indicators for comprehension, particularly, if the task directed to fluency. It can be concluded that EFL instructors in Saudi Universities should be encouraged to use all different types of feedback according to the tasks they are involved in with their students.

#### 4 DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE'S RESPONSES

This section will discuss the data collected qualitatively after distributing the questionnaire to thirty-one EFL instructors from different campuses in Saudi Universities.

##### 4.1 Answer to the first and second research question

Regarding the first and second research question, "How knowledgeable are English language instructors about different types of oral corrective feedback?" and "How often do English language instructors use different types of Oral corrective feedback?" the second section of the questionnaire was designed to tackle instructors'

general information about OCF. Table one shows the differences related to these important points. This section tried to clarify the extent of the participants' knowledge regarding different types of oral corrective feedback. From the table below, a high percentage of participants (100%) agreed that the difference between oral and written feedback is clear. Moreover, 90.6 % of participants assured that they had had good knowledge about OCF, and therefore 93.5% stated that they already used them inside the class. On the other hand, only 80.6% had a good idea about the types of OCF and 77.4% used implicit types of OCF.

TABLE 1. SECTION TWO: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT OCF

Item	Yes	Ratio	No	Ratio
I possess good knowledge about OCF.	29	90.6%	3	9.4 %
I know the difference between oral and written corrective feedback.	31	100 %	0	0.00 %
I have a good idea about the types of OCF.	25	80.6%	6	19.4 %
I use different types of OCF inside the class.	29	93.5%	2	6.5 %
I use implicit types of OCF.	24	77.4%	7	22.6 %
I use explicit types of OCF.	25	92.6%	2	7.40 %

The previously stated data are shown in the following figure.

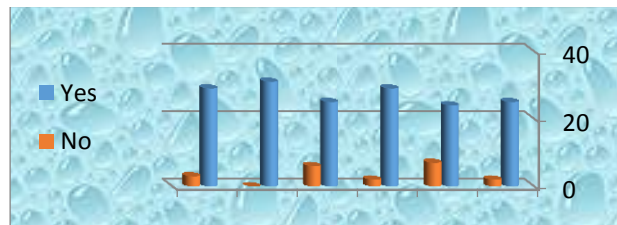


Figure 1. General Information about OCF

As shown in figure one, it is noted that the percentage of positive reply surpassing the negative one in all the bars connected with information of oral corrective feedback and this, in turn, gave a satisfactory answer about the first and second questions.

##### 4.2 Answer to the third research question

Regarding the answer to the third research question, "Which type of OCF is considered to be the best and most effective OCF approach to use?" the results of the table below showed that the participants preferred the elicitation type more than the other types. Thus, a large number of participants gave the priority to elicitation type with 23 agree. Both table and figure two clarified the number of times of the use of different types of oral corrective feedback by English language instructors, and this in turn introduced an answer to the second question of the study.



TABLE 2. PART ONE: TYPES OF ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

Item	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
“Clarification requests” is the best OCF approach to use.	23	67.6 %	6	17.7 %	5	14.7%
“Recasting” is the most effective OCF approach to use.	17	51.5 %	12	36.4 %	4	11.1 %
The best OCF technique to use is “repetition”.	19	63.3 %	10	33.3 %	1	3.4 %
When giving OCF, “elicitation” is the best approach to use.	22	78.6 %	6	21.4 %	0	0.00 %
“Metalinguistic OCF” is considered to be the best OCF approach to use.	19	59.4 %	10	31.3 %	3	9.3 %
When giving OCF, “body language” is the best approach to use.	13	54.2 %	5	20.8 %	6	25 %
When giving OCF, “interruption” is the best approach to use.	11	39.3 %	7	25 %	10	35.7 %

The following figure shows the previously stated data:

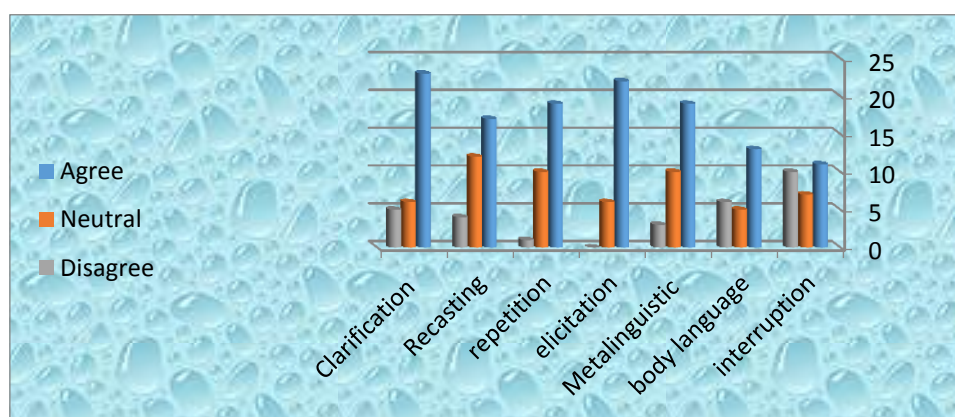


Figure 2. Types of Oral Corrective Feedback

Through looking at the figure above, the results showed that the participants gave the priority to clarification as the best type of oral corrective feedback, then, elicitation came in the second rank. The figure also clarified that the participants used interruption as the last resort. In a similar vein, this concurred with the interviewees’ views when they were asked about interruption, and all of them agreed that it should be the last resort. Thus, the percentages in the table gave an answer to the third question that focused on the best type of oral corrective feedback.

### 4.3 Answer to the fourth research question

Concerning the fourth research question, “How should OCF be provided to students?” it was evident from the results provided in the table below that a high percentage of the participants agree that oral corrective feedback should be delivered directly to the whole class (70.4%) and this showed the answer of the fourth question which related to the way of giving oral corrective feedback.

TABLE 3. PROVISION OF ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
OCF should be delivered directly to the whole class.	19	70.4%	6	22.2%	2	7.4%
OCF should be provided indirectly in a full class activity.	11	40.7%	11	40.7%	5	18.6%

The following figure shows the data included in the previous table.

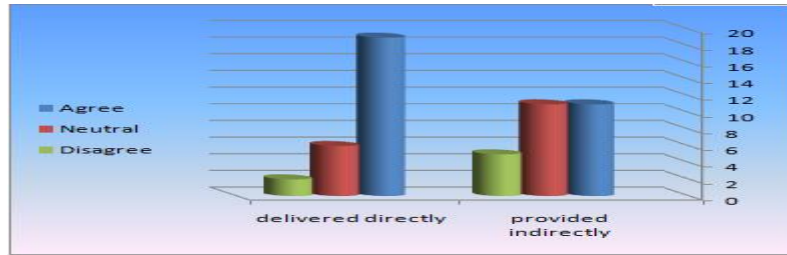


Figure 3. The provision of oral corrective feedback

As the figure above shows, it can be deduced that there is a strong desire among the participants in delivering oral corrective feedback in a direct way since 40.7% of participants rejected giving it indirectly. This may reflect that the participants had a deep distrust in providing indirect OCF as they doubt the validity of such types. This was also reflected in the interviewees' responses.

Concerning the provision of oral corrective feedback on a group or individual basis, the following table showed that there was no great difference between both of them in regard to the participants' respondents as 59.4 % of them preferred giving it on a group basis whereas 54.8 % of them opted for providing it on an individual basis.

TABLE 4. PROVISION OF ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK (GROUP VS. INDIVIDUAL BASIS)

Item	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
OCF is best given on a group basis.	19	59.4%	9	28.1%	4	12.5 %
OCF is most effective when given on an individual basis.	17	54.8%	10	32.3%	4	12.9 %

The following figure shows the same data

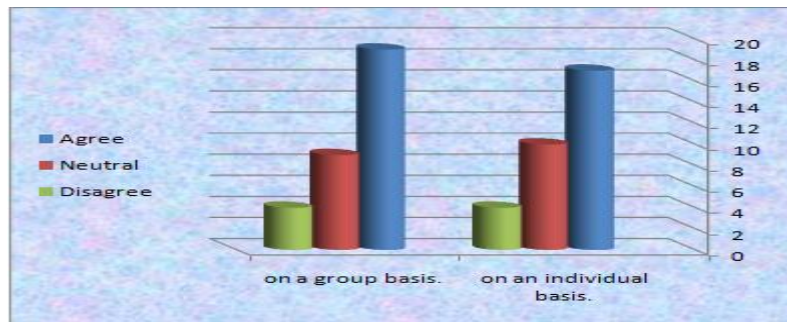


Figure 4. Provision of oral corrective feedback (group vs. individual basis)

The results of figure four are consistent with the comments made by the interviewees. This reflected the importance of both individual and group basis when providing OCF to students.

Specifically, the following table tackles the most effective type of OCF from the instructors' point of view. It was quite clear that explicit OCF types seemed somehow more effective than implicit ones since only 50% of participants rated explicit oral corrective feedback types as more effective than implicit ones. To some extent, this went with their previously stated responses in section one in regard to the use of implicit

and explicit types of OCF. It also reflected the consistency and validity of the results obtained.

TABLE 5. EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT OCF TYPES

Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
11	4	7	22
50%	18.20%	31.8%	100%

When looking at figure (5), it is noted that most of the participants gave the priority to the explicit types of oral corrective feedback more than the implicit ones.

In this respect, this reminds us with Carrol’s study (2001) that revealed that explicit feedback had more effective impact on improving performance than implicit feedback types.



Figure 5. Explicit and implicit OCF types

As for the significance of OCF as well as written feedback, the following table clarified that a large number of participants (about 84.35%) preferred regular oral corrective feedback to written feedback.

TABLE 6. REGULAR OCF AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK.

Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
<b>27</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>
84.35%	12.50%	3.15%	100%

The results in figure (6) indicated that the majority of the participants agree that regular oral corrective was more recommended to be used than written one.

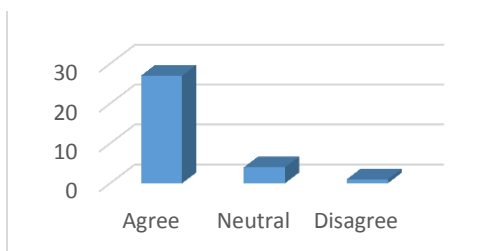


Figure 6, Regular OCF to Written Feedback

In regard to the advantage of OCF for being interactive or not, the following table showed that a high percentage of participants assured that it is highly interactive.

TABLE 7. AN ADVANTAGE OF OCF.

Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>
94.6%	5.40%	0.00%	100%

The results of the above figure concurred with the results obtained in the interviews. They reflected great belief in using OCF to develop interactive communication among students.

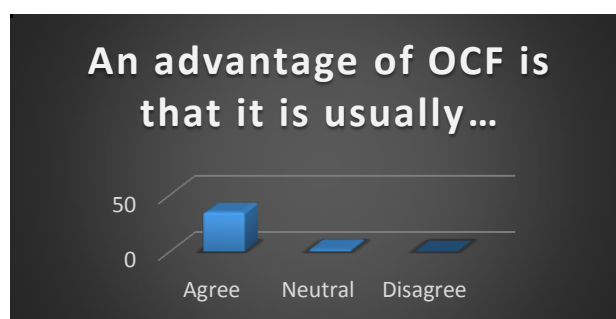


Figure 7. An advantage of OCF

#### 4.4 Answer to the fifth research question

In regard to the answer to the fifth research question, “What is the best timing for feedback provision?” the following table included some significant data collected after distributing the questionnaire.

TABLE 8. TIMING OF FEEDBACK PROVISION

Item	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
OCF should be provided once students have finished.	16	55.2%	10	34.5%	3	10.3%
OCF should be given once the exercise is finished.	10	32.3 %	19	61.3 %	2	6.4 %
OCF should be delivered once a student makes a mistake.	16	57.2%	6	21.4%	6	21.4%
OCF should be given indirectly later on to a single student.	10	33.3 %	13	43.3 %	7	23.4 %

Looking through the results included in the above table, it was noted that a high percentage of the participants (about 57.2) agreed that OCF should be delivered once a student made a mistake. This referred to the importance of correcting mistakes after their occurrence. This clarified the answer about the fifth question which connected with the best timing for feedback provision.

The following figure assured the same results and indicated that that the majority of the participants preferred to give oral corrective feedback once a student makes a mistake.

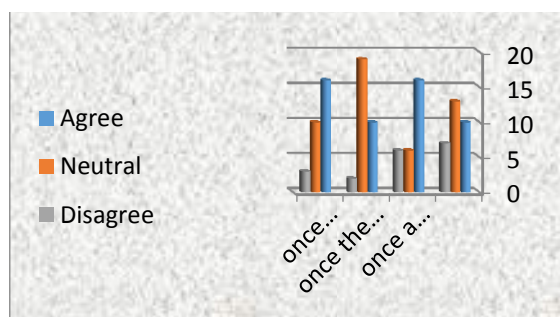


Figure 8. Timing of Feedback Provision

This reflected the significance of OCF when given directly after making a mistake.

#### 4.5 Answer to the sixth research question

As for the answer to the sixth research question, "Which areas of language OCF is most often used?" the following table showed that grammar was the best area to provide OCF.

TABLE 9. ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK AREAS

Item	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
OCF helps teachers in controlling students' utterances.	23	74.2%	5	16.1 %	3	9.7%
OCF is mostly provided in response to students' errors in content.	22	73.4 %	4	13.3 %	4	13.3 %
OCF is most often used when students make errors in pronunciation.	23	67.6 %	8	23.6 %	3	8.8 %
OCF is most often used when the students make errors in grammar.	26	86.6 %	2	6.7 %	2	6.7 %
OCF is most often used when the students make errors in vocabulary.	19	63.3 %	8	26.7 %	3	10 %

The results shown indicated that a rate of 86.6% of the participants agreed that OCF is most often used when students made errors in grammar. The area of pronunciation came third whereas correcting errors in content came second. This indicated that accuracy comes prior to fluency in regard to OCF. On the other hand, vocabulary was the last area to use OCF.

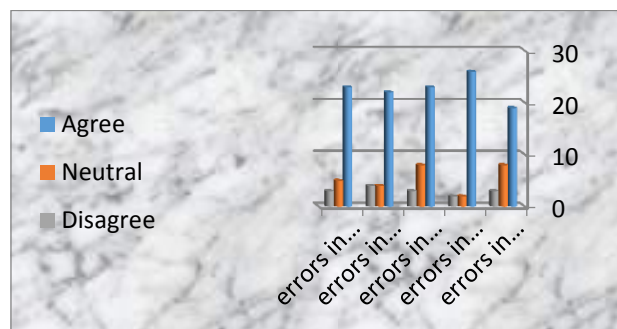


Figure 9. Oral Corrective Feedback Areas

As for the participants' response to the items included in the above figure, it was evident that the results are consistent with the above table concerning the areas of oral corrective feedback. Thus, table and figure (9) introduced a satisfactory answer to the sixth question that related to the areas of language oral corrective feedback is most often used.

#### 4.6 Answer to the seventh question

Regarding the answer to the seventh research question, "What is the pedagogical value of OCF?" the data involved in the following table showed that OCF could be used to improve the achievement of students in EL skills.



TABLE 10. PEDAGOGICAL VALUE OF ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

Item	Agree	Ratio	Neutral	Ratio	Disagree	Ratio
OCF improves the achievement of students in EL skills.	28	90.3%	3	9.7%	0	0.00%
OCF helps students reach the greatest levels of progress.	24	77.4%	6	19.3%	1	3.3 %
OCF leads to regression rather than progression in students' achievements.	4	12.5%	13	40.6%	15	46.9%
OCF helps students improve their linguistic performance.	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	0	0.00%
OCF could help improve EL learning strategies.	27	87.1%	4	12.9%	0	0.00%
OCF fosters confidence in students required for language production.	15	48.4%	12	38.7%	4	12.9%
OCF should be an essential part of any ELL process.	20	64.5%	11	35.5%	0	0.00%

The previously stated results showed that a large number of the respondents agreed that OCF could play a crucial role in improving the achievement of students in EL skills (90.3%), EL learning strategies (87.1%), and linguistic performance (86.2%). In addition, 77.4% stated that OCF could help students reach the greatest levels of progress whereas 64.5% of participants assured that OCF should be an essential part of any ELL process. On the other hand, only 48.4 % confirmed that OCF could foster confidence required for language production. Comparing the ratio of agreeing and disagreeing which reached up to 0.00% in many items proved that OCF had a highly pedagogical value in regard to EL acquisition. The results in the figure below indicated a strong tendency that OCF had a high percentage of effectiveness concerning the improvement of different aspects of learning.

using oral corrective feedback in teaching English as a foreign language.

### 5. GENERAL COMMENTS

Commenting on the findings of the study which stressed on the participants' knowledge of oral corrective feedback, it can be stated that although there are different kinds of oral corrective feedback, the instructors did not use all types of oral corrective feedback. The results indicated that most instructors used different types of oral corrective feedback despite some of them did not know the denominations of these types. Furthermore, most of the instructors used explicit types of oral corrective feedback and this, in turn concurred with Carrol's study (2001). Again and according to the results of the questionnaires, most instructors put certain types of oral corrective feedback in the priority or in other words, they consider them as the most important types. Examples of these types are metalinguistic, elicitation, clarification and repetition, respectively. In a similar vein, all the instructors' responses in the questionnaires put 'interruption' as the last type of oral corrective feedback with regard to its pedagogical significance. This is due to their assumption that interruption discourages students and makes them frustrated. Regarding the instructors' observations in their questionnaires, a large numbers of the instructors at Al Faisal international Academy in Riyadh concurred with each other on the following quotation. This quotation summarizes the pedagogical value of feedback and the nature of providing it:

'OCF is a great strategy to use in most EL classrooms. Unfortunately, one thing teachers have to be careful of is student motivation and confidence. Teachers need to assess their students to determine what form of OCF is best for each individual student and class. Destroying a student's confidence can have a very detrimental effect on their motivation to learn the language. Some students are afraid of being corrected in front of the class or being interrupted and if the teacher decides to do this it could cause the student to be less willing to participate. One thing that should be considered is allowing students to make some mistakes, and correct them afterwards, as this can help students in being willing to experiment with the

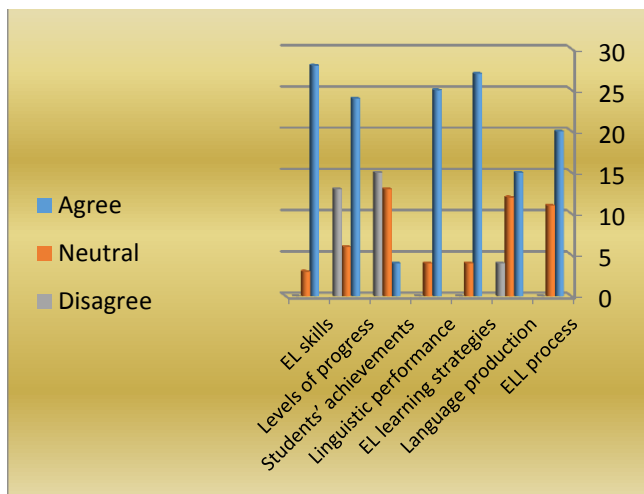


Figure 10. Pedagogical Value of Oral Corrective Feedback

Table and figure (10) gave an answer in a statistical way to the pedagogical value to oral corrective feedback. All percentages in the table proved the crucial role of oral corrective feedback in language acquisition.

Analyzing the instructors' responses towards the items included in the questionnaire and in the light of the statistical treatment, it was quite evident that a large number of responses referred to the pressing need for



language. Only through making mistakes can students learn to know what is correct when they do make mistakes.'

In discussing data related to the way of providing oral corrective feedback, it was noted that most of the instructors agreed that oral corrective feedback should be interactive. Moreover, large number of participants in the questionnaire declared that oral corrective feedback is best given on a group basis. Many participants stated that students preferred oral corrective feedback to written feedback. In this respect, one of the interviewee said that oral corrective feedback is better than written corrective feedback.

Concerning the points connected with the best time in providing feedback, it was noted that most of the participants agreed that oral corrective feedback should be delivered once a student made a mistake as delaying giving it might result in absence of interest. It was also noted that oral corrective feedback is used with different areas such utterances, content, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. However, most of the participants in the questionnaire and interviews gave a heavy concentration to certain areas, in particular, rather than the other areas. Examples of these areas are grammar and utterances. Findings also reflected the pedagogical value of oral corrective feedback and how it could be used to improve the achievement of students' EL skills. There were also many responses that proved the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback in improving FL learning strategies. At the same time, large group of participants agreed that through oral corrective feedback students could reach the greatest levels of progress.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Despite the participants in the questionnaires and interviews have several years of teaching experiences and teach the same courses, they have different opinions on what kind of feedback is suitable for their teaching. Most instructors agreed that oral feedback is a tool to encourage students and avoid embarrassment. There is a sort of agreement among them that oral corrective feedback is a necessity in EFL classes.

Commenting on the participants who participated in the interviews, all of them agreed that they had practiced most of the types of oral corrective feedback in their classes, but without knowing the technical terms. However, there were many differences regarding the best effective type of feedback. For example, some participants gave the priority to elicitation whereas others focused on recasts or metalinguistic. In this respect, the researchers stated that this is a natural point of view. This is due to the existence of disagreement in the literature of oral corrective feedback regarding the most effective type of feedback.

One of the most significant points in this study was that all participants stated that the oral corrective feedback

should be given after finishing the whole task. Thus, it was noted that when they were asked about the order of the seven types of oral corrective types in the interviews, all of them put 'interruption' as the last type among the types of oral corrective feedback to be used inside EFL class. This was interpreted by the researchers that there was a trend towards fluency in this study. This proved the agreement between the quantitative part of the study and the qualitative one. Not only this, but also this concurred with methodologists such as Harmer (2006 as cited in Breeze & Roothoft, 2016) who advised teachers not to interrupt students when they focus on oral tasks. In other words, the aim was to focus on meaningful learning and the flow of language. Mr. Terry who was one of the participants in the interviews mentioned a good point when he said 'To make oral corrective feedback more effective, it should be regular.' This means that instructors need to be more careful when giving feedback.

When looking at the way of providing feedback, all instructors in the interviews gave the priority to group work or pair work in performing tasks and they agreed that the teacher must be the last resort. In this respect, this indicated that their classes are learner-centered. Not only this but also this concurred with recent theories in learning that support social interaction among the students.

In the light of the results of the questionnaires and interviews most of the instructors emphasized on tolerance in learning. They described oral corrective feedback as a natural process in teaching and learning. Moreover, they applied a good principle in learning reflected as natural indicators for understanding. All instructors believed in the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback in enhancing learning, and this in turn, improved language acquisition. Yet one of the main shortcomings included in this study lied in the researchers' inability to observe participants' performance inside their classrooms so that the two researchers could identify exactly and touch effectively how consistent the responses of the participants go with their performance inside classes. This is due to two main factors; time, and administration procedures. Another limitation that the two researchers could not control and might have influenced the findings and results reached was reflected in the sample size of the study. It was planned and expected that 120 participants would share in this study; however, the number reached down to 31 due to many factors among them negligence of the some of the sample selected and their frequent insistence on sending no response to the questionnaire distributed to them.

In conclusion, those participants were concerned with students' feelings and emotions. From the interviews which had been conducted, those participants have a great deal of respect for the individual differences such as personality, attitudes, motivation and beliefs, this in turn, affects positively on their practice with regard to corrective feedback and its perspectives in language acquisition.



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