

Oral Corrective Feedback in the Algerian Tertiary EFL Speaking Classes:
Students' Beliefs and Preferences

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Abstract:

A goodly number of studies have, in some measure, unravelled the mysteries of corrective feedback practices. Notwithstanding the recent unprecedented interest in oral corrective feedback evinced by the scholarly circles, this seemingly simple yet complex phenomenon remains under-researched. This paper however attempts to investigate students' beliefs about corrective feedback in their speaking classes in terms of its efficacy, timing, and types. To that end, a questionnaire was administered to 60 second year EFL students at the University of Jijel to collect the data and then analyze it by means of descriptive statistics. The findings showed that the students were positive about corrective feedback and preferred delayed to immediate feedback. Recasts aside, in crude terms, the students seemed more inclined towards explicit feedback types, namely explicit correction, meta-linguistic feedback, and paralinguistic signals. The teachers are therefore recommended to provide delayed, more explicit types of feedback in order to help their students minimize their errors and promote their oral proficiency.

Keywords: corrective feedback, explicit feedback, feedback types, speaking classes, students' beliefs.



I. Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that errors are an inevitable part of learning a second or foreign language. While errors were dubbed 'undesirable behaviours' within the realm of behaviourism, the first learning theory ever advanced, present-day educationists and practitioners are highly cognizant of the importance of errors during the learning process. They are of the view that errors, be they oral or written, reveal a great deal about how the learning journey of language learners is undertaken, and represent a telltale sign of how much progression they have achieved. All too often, learners regardless of their age and level produce erroneous, ill-formed sentences and utterances that consist of, *inter alia*, pronunciation errors,

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spelling errors, grammatical errors, and syntactical errors. Errors, therefore, are part and parcel of any language education classroom, and language teachers are required, of necessity, to set a high premium on how to effectively respond to these errors should they aspire their language classrooms to come to fruition. The frequency (amount), type, and timing of teachers' response should, in large part, be contingent upon the pedagogical task at hand and the levels, types, and preferences of language learners. In essence, teachers' response to their learners' errors is called 'corrective feedback' (CF hereafter).

Corrective feedback can be positive or negative, explicit or implicit, and oral or written. According to Ellis (2009), positive feedback refers to the response given by a teacher or an addressee to praise the learners' or the speakers' good performance and correct use of the target language. Positive feedback, an important motivational factor as it is, will increase the likelihood of that good performance to happen again. Negative feedback, on the other hand, is the way the teachers respond to the errors committed by their learners when performing in the target language in order to make them acutely aware of the sort of errors they make. As for explicit and implicit polarity, according to Li and Vuono (2019), explicit feedback denotes that the teachers point out the error in a clear, noticeable way and then provide the correct answer. Implicit feedback, however, is a teacher's rather covert response to the language learners' errors without pointing out the errors and without providing the correct answer. These types of feedback come under the umbrella of the written/oral feedback dichotomy. In the main, written corrective feedback, as the name implies, refers to the comments, remarks, and even symbols that are used by the teachers as a response to the learners' erroneous sentences in their written productions. Conversely, oral corrective feedback (OCF henceforth), our chief concern is this paper, refers to the teachers' verbal response to their learners' erroneous utterances with the intention of correcting them (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

Notwithstanding the recent unprecedented burgeoning of EFL/ESL studies concerning the types and techniques of oral corrective feedback- by investigating both the pedagogues' and the learners' perceptions, practices and preferences (Schulz, 2001; Brown, 2009; Lee 2013; Roothoof & Breeze, 2016)- this area of research is still under-explored worldwide. Likewise, a fleeting glance at our Algerian tertiary EFL context would reveal, to the best of our knowledge, a severe paucity of extensive research about how teachers and students perceive and attend to oral corrective feedback in their language education classrooms. Quire recently though, oral corrective feedback has been proven extremely instrumental in honing language learners speaking skills (Li, 2010; Lyster & saito, 2010; Lyster, Saito & Sato, 2013), hence the need to grant it due attention and consideration if we want our language classrooms to fare much better. Given the previously mentioned studies

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alongside my humble experience as a university teacher, it did not escape my notice that a significant number of students at the University of Jijel (mainly undergraduates) produce erroneous, ill-formed utterances when performing in English. This may well denote, among other things, the glaring inadequacies of corrective feedback practices in our speaking classes. Therefore, this paper endeavours to uncover EFL university students' beliefs and preferences as regards the oral corrective feedback provided by their teachers in their speaking classes (oral expression sessions). The findings would hopefully help teachers :(1) become fully conversant with the students' perspectives and preferences regarding OCF, and by extension (2) learn what type of OCF to provide and when. More pertinently, this paper seeks to answer the following three fundamental questions:

1. What are the beliefs of second year EFL students at Jijel University about the importance and role of oral corrective feedback in speaking classes?
2. What are the preferences of second year EFL students at Jijel University for the timing of oral corrective feedback?
3. What are the preferences of second year EFL students at Jijel University regarding the types of oral corrective feedback?

II. Literature Review

II. 1. Oral Corrective Feedback Defined

Owing to their limited exposure to the target language, it is perfectly understandable that language learners commit all sorts of errors when communicating in this target language (whether orally or in writing). Language teachers' response to their learners' erroneous utterances is therefore of high utilitarian value for the success of any language classroom. This response is usually called 'oral corrective feedback', which offers negative evidence (information) about what is ungrammatical and unacceptable in the use of the target language (TL) so that learners can repair it. Simply put, oral corrective feedback is described as "complex phenomenon with several functions" (Chaudron, 1988, p. 152), and it is succinctly defined as the act of "indicating to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect" (Lightbown & Spada, 1999, p. 1). Another brief yet comprehensive definition is the one provided by Li and Vuono (2019) who posited that CF refers to "comments on the appropriateness or correctness of learners' production or comprehension of a second language." (p. 94). Oral corrective feedback, which is a response to learners' erroneous language production, can be provided not only by teachers but also by peers (Li, 2013). Most importantly, through oral corrective feedback, teachers can (1) point out the error committed by the learners, (2) provide the correct target language form, and (3) provide meta-linguistic information about the nature of the error (Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006).

In brief, oral corrective feedback helps language learners become aware of the errors they make with the aim of correcting them.

Chaudron (1977) contended that there are three types of errors: linguistic errors, content errors, and classrooms interaction and discourse errors. Linguistic errors refer to morphological, phonological, and syntactic errors; content errors are errors made by learners concerning the information and the knowledge they provide in the classroom; classroom interaction and discourse errors are committed by learners when using incomplete sentences. Oral corrective feedback however addresses, in large part, the first type of errors: linguistic errors. The latter, according to Lyster and Ranta (1997), encompass the following types of errors: the use of L1 (mother tongue) errors, gender errors, lexical errors, grammatical errors, multiple errors, and phonological errors. Given the frequency of linguistic errors, Ferreira, Moore & Mellish (2007) categorized learners' errors into grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary errors. They stated that corrective feedback strategies fall into two categories: Giving Answer Strategies (GAS) and Prompting Answer Strategies (PAS). Giving Answer Strategies involve overtly giving the correct target form or pointing out the location of the error. Conversely, Prompt Answer Strategies allow teachers to indirectly push learners to take notice of the errors they commit with a view to help them repair these errors. In toto, oral corrective feedback is the teachers' verbal response to their learners' errors when performing in the target language, and which focuses on pronunciation, vocabulary and language patterns, communication skills, ideas and organization (Annie, 2011).

II. 2. Merits and Demerits of Oral Corrective Feedback

The effectiveness and provision of oral corrective feedback in language education classroom remains yet a moot point if only because researchers in this field are divided into two diametrically opposed camps: the antagonists and the protagonists. The antagonists (e.g. Krashen, 1982; Truscott, 2007), those who took a dim view of oral corrective feedback, a handful though, claimed that excessive oral corrective feedback is detrimental and ineffective largely because this would shatter the learner's confidence and put them off performing in the target language. Li and Vuono (2019) argued that opponents of CF believe that corrective feedback is harmful to the development of L2 because it "only caters to explicit knowledge that is not drawn on in real world oral and written tasks." (p. 95), while "the focus of oral and written tasks should be on meaning-making rather than linguistic accuracy." (p. 95). Along the same line, in a quasi-experimental study examining the effects of error correction, Dekeyser (1993) concluded that corrective feedback had no overall effect on student proficiency in L2. Similarly, Martinez (2006) stressed the importance of corrective feedback timing and maintained that error corrections

should not interrupt students' speaking performance, or else they will be hugely demotivated and their language development will be hampered.

The protagonists, however, those in favour of the provision of oral corrective feedback, numerous as they are, believe that CF is of fundamental importance in language classrooms. Lyster et al. (2013) argued that CF "plays a pivotal role in the kind of scaffolding that teachers need to provide to individual learners to promote continuing L2 growth." (p. 1). Scores of experimental studies have shown that oral corrective feedback serves to facilitate language learning but is often affected by contextual factors and individual learner differences (Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito, 2010). From the cognitive perspective, the importance of CF lies in drawing learners' attention to form; this attention "facilitates learners' noticing of the differences between their incorrect utterance and the target form... or the insufficiency of their output" (Kartchava, Gatlinton, Ammar & Trofimovich, 2020. P. 224). The interactionist model advanced by Long (1996) suggested that students' attention to form (selective attention) and their developing L2 processing capacity are fundamental to meaning negotiation. Within this model of acquisition, corrective feedback is deemed facilitative of the development of the target language. According to Ferreira et al. (2007), the learners can use the information provided in the CF to modify their behaviour; this allows them to confirm, disconfirm, and modify the hypothetical, transitional rules of their developing grammars. Concisely, according to Gibbs and Simpson (2004), corrective feedback serves to correct errors, promote the development of generic and metacognitive skills, and generate more learning.

In their seminal work, Lyster and Ranta (1997) concluded that, after twenty years, we were yet hardly any closer to answering Hendrickson's (1978) five famous questions at the heart of corrective feedback practices and effectiveness. The first and most pertinent question reads: 'should learners' errors be corrected?' However, on account of the recent upsurge in experimental studies investigating the effects of CF on language L2/FL development, Li and Vuono (2019) concluded that the answer to that question was positive. They stated that evidence coming from the meta-analysis of CF research demonstrated that corrective feedback "has significant effects on L2 learning, with the magnitude of the effects ranging from medium to large." (p. 97). Indeed, the list of CF merits discussed above is far from exhaustive, but will perhaps help our teachers lavish more attention on the adequate provision of oral corrective feedback to their learners in their speaking classes.

II. 3. Taxonomy of Oral Corrective Feedback

Of all the taxonomies ever advanced, the taxonomy of Lyster and Ranta (1997) is arguably the most famous one. In their comprehensive longitudinal observational study, Lyster and Ranta (1997) analyzed teacher-student interaction in 27 lessons of communicative French immersion classes and eventually identified six

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different types of corrective feedback, namely recasts, elicitation, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, explicit feedback, and repetition of errors. These types can be categorized in two ways: implicit vs. explicit and input providing vs. output prompting. In the implicit vs. explicit dichotomy, the former concerns "whether the learner's attention is overtly drawn to the error" and the latter on "whether self-repair is encouraged", whereas in terms of the provide-prompt distinction, "recasts and explicit correction are input-providing, while the other four CF types are output-prompting." (Li & Vuono, 2019, p. 96). Other scholars have added other types of oral corrective feedback bringing the total to eight types (feedback strategies): translation (Panova & Lyster, 2002) and paralinguistic signs (Ellis, 2007). By way of illustration, the incorrect use of the past tense in the following utterance 'I visit my best friend yesterday' can be corrected by the teachers as follows:

- 1) Using **explicit feedback** in which the teacher gives, in a clear and noticeable way, the correct form of the utterance. For example, teacher says, 'not visit', 'visited'.
- 2) Using **recasts**: this means that the teacher reformulates the learners' utterance wholly or partially. Teacher: 'I *visited* my best friend yesterday'.
- 3) Making a **clarification request** in which the teacher uses phrases like 'pardon me', 'I am sorry', or 'could you repeat' in order to indicate that the learner's utterance is erroneous. The learner is then requested to reformulate or repeat his utterance.
- 4) **Eliciting** the correct form from the learner: In this technique, the teacher can ask the learner a question to elicit the correct answer from him/her. Teacher: 'what is the past form of the verb *visit*?'
- 5) Using **metacognitive feedback** in which the teacher comments on the nature of error without providing the correct answer. Teacher: 'you need to use the past tense'
- 6) Using **repetition feedback**: the teacher just repeats the learners' ill-formed utterance or the error itself. Teacher: 'visit?'
- 7) **Translating**: when responding to a learners' use of his/her L1 when communicating in the target language. The teacher in this case will have to provide the equivalent (correct version) of the learners' L1 utterance. Learner: 'I زرت my best friend yesterday'; teacher: 'yes, you visited your best friend yesterday'.
- 8) Using **paralinguistic cues** like gestures and facial expression to respond to the learners' incorrect utterance. The teacher may, for instance, point his/her thumb at the back suggesting that it is the past simple that should be used.

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On balance, apart from the age-old heated debate amongst specialists as to what corrective feedback strategies should come under which CF distinction (explicit vs. implicit and input-providing vs. output-prompting), Ellis (2009) offers the taxonomy of CF techniques below. However, *translation*, which is considered as an implicit, input-providing strategy, is the only CF strategy that does not feature in the table.

Table 1: Taxonomy of Corrective Feedback Strategies (Ellis, 2009, p. 9)

	Implicit	Explicit
Input-providing	Recast	Explicit correction
	Repetition	Metalinguistic
Output-prompting	Clarification request	explanation
		Elicitation
		Paralinguistic signal

It is worthwhile to note that the questionnaire statements that are used to elicit students' preferences regarding the types of oral corrective feedback in this study shine light on the aforementioned eight types of CF. These statements draw heavily upon the previous studies that sought to uncover learners' CF perceptions and preferences (Brown, 2009; Lee, 2013; Roothoof & Breeze, 2016). What comes next is a brief synopsis of these studies.

II. 4. Research on Students' Perceptions to Oral Corrective Feedback

According to Roothoof and Breeze (2016), the studies that investigated teachers' and students attitudes to corrective feedback are relatively fewer than the amount of research on the effectiveness of corrective feedback. Beliefs about corrective feedback, Li (2017) tells us, refer to "the attitudes, views, opinions, or stances learners and teachers hold about the utility of CF in second language (L2) learning and teaching and how it should be implemented in the classroom." (p. 143). Those studies have quite often demonstrated a mismatch between teachers' and students' perceptions of CF, with the students being more positive. Legions of studies have proliferated over the past few decades investigating the learners' beliefs about CF alongside their preferences for the types and timing of corrective feedback. In a study at a public university in the US, Lee (2013) investigated teachers' and sixty ESL learners' perceptions to corrective feedback. Aside from the mismatch between teachers' and learners' perceptions, the learners preferred explicit feedback and frowned upon the idea of being corrected for all their errors. In a quite similar

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study conducted by Roothoof and Breeze (2016) to investigate teachers' and learners' perceptions to OCF in the Spanish EFL context, the students were more positive than their teachers about the utility and effectiveness of OCF and seemed to favour explicit types of feedback, such as metalinguistic feedback and explicit feedback.

Contrary to the findings of Brown (2009), which demonstrated that ESL students in the US preferred delayed feedback to immediate feedback, research on the part of Zhang and Rahimi (2014) in the Iranian tertiary EFL context and also Zhu and Wang (2019) in the Chinese tertiary EFL context revealed that students were more positive towards immediate feedback. In another detailed study in four public secondary schools in Vietnam, Van Ha, Nguyen & Hung, (2021) investigated both teachers' and learners' beliefs regarding the effectiveness, types, and timing of OFC. Apart from the mismatch therein between the teachers' and the students' perspectives, the students underscored the central importance of oral corrective feedback in promoting learners' proficiency in English. Concerning the type of OCF, the findings were similar to the already stated studies, in that the students favoured explicit feedback types, most notably metalinguistic feedback and explicit corrections while the other types such as clarification request and paralinguistic signals (teachers' body language and gestures) received the lowest levels of approval. With regard to the timing of OCF, the students preferred immediate to delayed feedback. Overall, the bulk of studies bearing on the students' perceptions to CF has amply demonstrated that most students, regardless of their age, proficiency level, and background, favoured immediate, more explicit types of corrective feedback.

III. Research Methodology

III. 1. Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive research strategy. This research design will allow us to investigate the students' beliefs about the effectiveness, types, and timing of corrective feedback provided by their teachers in their oral expression sessions. With that end in view, a questionnaire comprising 16 statements was administered to 60 second year EFL students at Jijel University to collect the necessary data. The analysis of the data will, in all probability, help us unravel the mysteries of corrective feedback practices in our university's EFL speaking classes.

III. 2. Population and Sampling

The population of this study was second year EFL students at the University of Jijel. The rationale behind the selection of this population is twofold: First, second year students are still facing fluency issues and accuracy problems when performing in English. Second, having two oral expression sessions a week opens up more

opportunities for students to practice the language and receive feedback from their teachers. Essentially, our sample was recruited via a non-probability sampling strategy, i.e., convenience (opportunity) sampling. Convenience sampling, according to Dornyei (2007), denotes that members of the target population “are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer.” (pp. 98-99). Therefore, our participants were selected based on their availability, willingness, and ease of accessibility. This convenient sample consists of 60 second year EFL undergraduate students at the university of Jijel (9 boys and 51 girls). They have just completed two years of actual study (no longer sophomores at present) and have just enrolled in their third and last year to get their BA in English.

III. 3. Research Instrument

In order to collect the data, a questionnaire containing 16 statements was designed to yield valuable information on EFL undergraduate students' corrective feedback beliefs at the University of Jijel at the end of 2024/2025 academic year. It is worthwhile to note that this questionnaire draws heavily upon the previous observational studies that cast light on corrective feedback techniques (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Panova & Lyster, 2002), and also upon surveys investigating teachers' and learners' beliefs as regards the role, types, and timing of corrective feedback (Schulz, 2001; Brown, 2009; Lee, 2013; Roothoof & Breeze, 2016). The questionnaire includes 16 statements, which were grouped under three sections: corrective feedback importance, corrective feedback types, and corrective feedback timing. CF importance (effectiveness) and CF timing contain four statements each, while the section about CF types contains eight statements. To enable a clear, quantifiable measure of the responses, the students were then required to rate the 16 items of the questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale (Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly disagree).

III. 4. Data Analysis

For the analysis of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics were used to uncover the students' beliefs and preferences regarding the importance, timing, and types of corrective feedback. This was done with the support of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which calculated the *Means* and the *Standard Deviation* for every statement. The means will allow us to identify the different patterns in students' views, while Standard Deviation serves to measure the variability of students' responses. This section will address the three fundamental questions of our study, which were stated right at the outset.

III. 5. Findings

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This study seeks to elicit students' views regarding the efficacy, types, and timing of oral corrective feedback. Overall, the answers to the research questions, whether explicit or understated, will be found in the analysis and discussion below.

III. 5. a. Importance of Corrective Feedback

Table 2. Jijel University students' beliefs about the importance and role of corrective feedback

Statements	N	Mean	SD
S1. Oral Expression teachers' corrective feedback (how oral expression teachers respond to their students' spoken errors) is important for students' English learning.	60	4,42	,696
S2. If I make an error, I want my teacher to correct it.	60	4,37	,663
S3. If I make an error when I am presenting something or speaking in English to the whole class, I want my teacher to correct it.	60	3,52	1,000
S4. If I make an error when I am talking in a group-work activity, I want my teacher to correct it.	60	3,57	,831

Table 2 above displays the students' beliefs as regards the efficacy/importance of oral corrective feedback in their speaking classes. On balance, the participants seemed positive about the effectiveness of OCF given the first two items (S1 and S2) which received the highest mean scores of all the four items (S1, mean=4,42) and (S2, mean=4,37). The first item, which received the highest mean score, suggests that students acknowledged the importance of oral corrective feedback for their language growth. Accordingly, in item 2, which received the second highest mean score, the students demonstrated their desire for being corrected whenever they commit an error, which again bears testimony to the importance they attach to OFC. The two statements that received the lowest, almost identical mean scores are statement 3 (mean=3,52) and statement 4 (mean=3,57). As shown in the table, the lowest mean score belongs to S3, which clearly indicates that the students do not like to be corrected by their teachers in the course of presenting or performing in the target language. In brief, the results clearly demonstrate the importance that students attach to oral corrective feedback in their speaking classes.

III. 5. b. Timing of Corrective Feedback

Table3. Jijel University students' preferences for CF timing

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Statements	N	Mean	SD
5. When I make an error, I want my teacher to correct it immediately.	60	3,35	1,071
6. If I make an error, my teacher should only correct me after I have finished presenting or speaking.	60	4,25	,836
7. If I make an error, my teacher should only correct it at the end of the activity I am involved in.	60	3,82	1,000
8. When I make an error, my teacher should note it down and then correct it in front of the class at the end of the oral expression session.	60	3,67	,968

Through four items, Table 3 demonstrates the students' preferences regarding the time they deem best to receive corrective feedback from their teachers. The highest mean scores belong to item 6 (mean=4,25) and item 7 respectively (mean=3,82), which indicate that students favour receiving feedback only when they finish speaking or at the end of the speaking activity they are involved in. The items that received the highest levels of approval therefore indicate that the students prefer delayed feedback. By the same token, item 5, which received the lowest mean score (mean=3,35), implies the students' disfavour of immediate feedback. Although it received a relatively lower mean (mean=3,67) – still much higher than the mean score for item 5 addressing immediate feedback (mean=3,35)– item 8 further confirmed the students' overwhelming inclination towards delayed feedback. However, giving it a relatively lower level of approval perhaps suggests that the students may not feel comfortable being corrected in front of the class.

III. 5. c. Types of Corrective Feedback

Table 4. Jijel University students' preferences for CF types

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Statements	N	Mean	SD
S9. If I make an error (for example: I visit my friend yesterday), I want my teacher to explicitly correct my erroneous utterance and give the correct form (e.g., "No, not 'visit, you should say 'visited'").	60	3,90	,933
S10. If I make an error, I want the teacher to reformulate my utterance wholly or partially in a correct form. For example, teacher: what is your friend doing? Student: my friend is play video games. Teacher: "yes, your friend is playing video games."	60	4,20	,798
S11. If I make a mistake, I want my teacher to give feedback phrases like "Pardon me!" or "could you repeat please?" to indicate that my utterance is ill-formed so that I correct it.	60	3,73	,899
S12. If I make an error (for example: I visit my friend yesterday), I want my teacher to point out my error without providing me with the correct answer (e.g., the teacher says: use the past tense).	60	3,77	1,079
S13. If I make an error, I want my teacher to ask me questions in order to elicit the correct answer from me. (For example, the student: I buy a phone last week. The teacher: how do we say 'buy' in the past tense?)	60	3,73	1,039
S14. If I make an error (for example: I visit my friend yesterday), I want my teacher to repeat my incorrect utterance and raise his/her voice to highlight the error in the utterance. (e.g., the teacher says: "I visit my friend yesterday?")	60	2,82	1,142
S15. If I occasionally use my mother tongue (Arabic) because I have difficulty to produce the target language (English), I want my teacher to translate my L1 utterance into English.	60	3,73	1,133
S16. If I make an error, I want my teacher to use his/her body language, facial expressions, and gesture cues to signal that that my utterance is ill-formed so that I correct it.	60	3,80	1,005

Table 4 represents the students' preferences concerning the type of oral corrective feedback they want to receive from their teachers in their speaking classes. The two items that received the highest mean scores were item 10

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(mean=4,20) and item 9 (mean= 3,90) respectively, suggesting that the students would rather receive input-providing type of feedback from their teachers, otherwise known as reformulations. Oddly enough, item 10 that received the highest level of approval implies that students give preference to implicit feedback (using recasts) over explicit feedback. The following three highest mean values were assigned to item 9 (mean= 3,90) representing explicit correction, item 16 (mean= 3,80) representing paralinguistic signals, and item 12 (mean= 3,77) representing metalinguistic feedback; each of which is a type of explicit feedback.

Clarification request (item 11, mean=3,73), elicitation feedback (item 13, mean=3,73), and translation (item 11, mean=3,73) received relatively lower yet identical levels of approval. This further confirms that the students do not prefer implicit types of feedback (clarification requests and translation are both perceived as implicit feedback strategies). Likewise, the lowest mean value recorded was that of repetition (item 14, mean=2,82) which is also considered as a type of implicit feedback. By and large, it would not be imprudent to arrive at the conclusion that the students are very much inclined towards explicit feedback. The lowest mean values amount to a disfavour on the part of the students' with implicit corrective feedback techniques.

IV. Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study have revealed that second year EFL students at the University of Jijel acknowledge the importance of OCF and seem to be favourably inclined towards explicit, delayed feedback. As for the effectiveness of OCF, our findings seem to be perfectly in accord with the findings of previous observational and survey studies (Ellis, 1999; Li, 2010; Lyster & saito, 2010) which stressed the pivotal role OFC plays in language classrooms. This implies that unpredictable corrective feedback that interrupts the oral performance of students is extremely undesirable and is likely to dent their confidence and eventually put them off. The implication elicited from students' responses to statements (3 and 4) concurs with the findings of a host of scholars who concluded that too much careless feedback can be potentially detrimental to students' oral proficiency. Martinez (2006) contended that interrupting students in the middle of their performance could lower their motivation and hinder their language development. Likewise, Elsaghayer (2014) argued that the provision of careless feedback without taking account of students' anxiety might well have an adverse impact on their language growth.

Contrary to the findings of some studies (Zhang & Rahimi, 2014; Zhu & Wang, 2019) in which the participants articulated their strong desire for immediate feedback, the findings of our study is still consistent with the findings of other studies, not least that of Brown (2009), which revealed that ESL students in the USA preferred delayed feedback to immediate feedback. Students preference for delayed

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feedback perhaps implies that immediate feedback on the part of their teachers may well disrupt the flow of their speech and, by implication, discourage them from performing in the target language. The teachers are therefore required to provide their corrective feedback after the students finish their oral performance.

Concerning the types of OCF, the students were more positive about explicit types of feedback. This again seems to be in line with the findings of various studies in different ESL/EFL contexts, which concluded that students appeared more in favour of explicit types of feedback (Roothoof & Breeze, 2016; Van Ha et al., 2021). However, the highest mean score belonged to recasts, which are primarily considered as an implicit, input providing type of feedback. This striking finding seems to square with the findings of Lyster and Ranta (1997) which stated that using recasts is one of the teachers' corrective feedback preferences. That said, using recasts can also be considered as explicit feedback depending on their contexts and characteristics, such as linguistic targets, length, and number of changes made to the original utterance (Lyster et al., 2013). It is suggested that teachers opt for more explicit corrective feedback techniques in their speaking classes.

Implicit types of feedback (repetition, clarification requests, and translation) received the lowest level of approval. This is quite understandable given that most observational and experimental studies have shown that implicit types of feedback, albeit highly frequent, produce the lowest rate of uptake in learners, while more explicit feedback strategies produce the highest rates of learner uptake (Sepehrinia & Mehdizadeh, 2016). Unless requested by the some students, it might be necessary that teachers give primacy to more explicit feedback types. In sum, by being fully conversant with the students' preferences as regards the timing and types of feedback, the teachers are most likely to promote oral feedback practices in their speaking classes and help the students hone their communicative skills.

V. Limitations of the Study

Aside from the potential contributions, this study is doubtless not without limitations. A single, one-shot questionnaire could by no means account for the complex and multifaceted phenomenon of corrective feedback. Therefore, future research in this area may need to conduct semi-structured interviews with language students and interviews with language teachers over long periods in order to gain a more comprehensive picture of oral corrective feedback practices in our language classes. Also, to increase generalizability, a larger number of subjects could be recruited through other sampling strategies such as random sampling.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

There is now unanimous consensus amongst educationists and practitioners of every stripe on the fact that language learners' errors are absolutely unavoidable. While ignoring errors would ultimately lead to their fossilization and would, by

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extension, take a heavy toll on learners' oral proficiency, an adequate response by the pedagogues to these errors -by means of corrective feedback- would help their language learners further refine their speaking skills. Although still in its infancy, over the past few decades, research has accumulated on the role of CF in language classrooms and its effect on language development, suggesting that CF plays a vital role in promoting learners' language growth. By dint of numerous observational studies analyzing CF strategies and survey studies on teachers' and students' CF beliefs, though incompatible at times, we have come to lay bare the various CF practices and techniques employed by teachers in language classrooms. These surveys have also helped us uncover the learners' beliefs and their preferences with regard to the type and timing of CF. The findings of these studies are therefore nothing short of a treasure house for teachers who aspire to bring their language classrooms to fruition.

In this paper, we attempted to investigate university EFL students' CF beliefs and preferences regarding CF types and timing in their speaking classes. The results yielded from the research instrument used (questionnaire) have revealed that the vast majority of students acknowledged the importance of correcting students' errors. Error correction should therefore be made common practice in our speaking classes. As for the timing of corrective feedback, most of the participants came down in favour of delayed feedback. This perhaps implies that the provision of immediate feedback could shatter the students' confidence and engagement during their oral performance. Concerning the type of corrective feedback, the students leaned more towards explicit types of feedback, as indicated by most previous research in different ESL/EFL contexts worldwide. Apart from using recasts, which are at times considered as an explicit feedback technique, in this study, however, the students preferred explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback and paralinguistic signals and expressed their disfavour with implicit out-put prompting feedback, such as repetition.

Given the findings of the study, there is a number of recommendations suggested to enhance OCF practices in our university speaking classes:

- The teachers are required to level up the amount of OFC and acquaint themselves with their students' CF beliefs and preferences. This will no doubt help them opt for the most favoured corrective feedback techniques and timing during their speaking classes.
- The teachers are called upon to avoid immediate and implicit types of feedback for this may undermine their confidence during oral performance and put them off communicating in English.
- Because students have differing beliefs and views about oral corrective feedback, teachers are then highly recommended to personalize the provision

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of their oral feedback in order to meet the diverse needs and expectations of their students.

- The students should openly discuss their preferences and perceptions of oral corrective feedback with their teachers so as to avoid any mismatches that would affect OCF practices in speaking classes.
- Curriculum designers are recommended to help teachers create an oral feedback-friendly environment and allocate a specific time at the end of each speaking class to provide feedback to their students.

VII. References

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