



## **A Study Of Types Of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies Used By Efl Teachers At Secondary Schools In Duhok City / Kurdistan Region Of Iraq**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to investigate types of oral corrective feedback strategies used by EFL teachers at secondary schools in Duhok city/Kurdistan region of Iraq. It also explores teachers' attitudes towards the use of oral corrective feedback inside classrooms based on the three variables of gender, years of teaching experience, and the type of school (public or private). For these purposes, a classroom observation checklist was designed based on Panova and Lyster's (2002) model of study in order to confirm the types of oral corrective feedback strategies used by the teachers, to highlight learners' errors, and to examine the learners' response to these strategies. Besides, a closed-ended questionnaire was distributed to the teachers to explore their attitudes about the effective use of oral corrective feedback. Fifty EFL teachers from twenty-five public and private secondary schools in Duhok were asked permission to attend their classes and observe the ways they correct their learners' errors. The data obtained from classroom observations and teachers' responses to the questionnaire were identified, analysed quantitatively. The findings revealed that EFL teachers used different types of oral corrective feedback to learners' errors. However, the most preferred correction strategy type used by them for correcting learners' pronunciation errors was 'recast', and for grammatical errors was 'metalinguistic explanation'. As for lexical errors, the strategy used most was 'translation'. In terms of 'learners' uptake', most of the corrective feedback provided resulted in 'Repair'. Moreover, the study found out that EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of oral corrective feedback. There were also no significant differences in their responses based on the three variables of gender, years of teaching experience and the type of school.

**KEY WORD:** Oral corrective feedback Strategies, EFL teachers, EFL learners, and learners' errors

### **1. Introduction**

Debate about the value of providing corrective feedback in the process of teaching and learning a language has been prominent in recent years due to its crucial role in helping teachers to correct learners' erroneous utterances and to observe their progress in learning a language, and also in providing learners' with appropriate use of language in order to improve their performance. More specifically, Lyster & Ranta's (1997) research has focussed on the various types of oral corrective feedback (henceforth OCF) and how they affect the teaching and learning process. It is inevitable for learners to commit errors (e.g. grammatical, pronunciation, lexical and other errors) during the learning process and the teachers' job is to provide learners with implicit or explicit feedback in order to correct errors, and to improve learners' language skills

in several ways (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Mackey, Oliver, & Leeman, 2003; Sheen, 2004). Moreover, learners can learn from their own errors, so correcting these errors are an important part in the learning process.

Teachers of English as a foreign language may face a challenge in correcting errors and providing feedback during the language teaching. They agree with the importance of provision of OCF, but they may disagree on how to provide OCF, which type of OCF should be provided, and when should it be provided. It is indispensable for EFL teachers to have enough knowledge about the usage of corrective feedback strategies, the effectiveness of each type, and its contribution in learners' comprehension because without providing an effective feedback and following clear strategies on how learner' errors can be corrected,

the language teaching and learning process can be a hard task for both EFL teachers and learners.

In the classrooms of Duhok schools, as elsewhere, it is a common practice that teachers ask questions and learners provide answers. Therefore, learners sometimes commit errors during oral production activities and teachers usually use different types of OCF to correct those errors. For this reason, it is very important to determine these types. The main aim of this study is to investigate the types of oral corrective feedback strategies used by EFL teachers at secondary schools in Duhok. A second aim is to explore teachers' perception about the use of oral corrective feedback strategies inside classrooms. The research tries to explore the different types of oral corrective feedback a teacher provides for learners' erroneous utterances inside classrooms and teachers' different perceptions of aspects related to error correction based on their gender, years of experience and the type of school (public or private).

The study seeks to provide answers to the following questions:

- What types of OCF strategies do EFL teachers use in their classrooms?
- What types of learners' errors do EFL teachers correct in their classrooms?
- What types of OCF strategies are more effective with learners?
- To what extent does each personal (non-linguistic) variable (gender, years of teaching experience, and the type of school) affect the provision of OCF strategies?
- What are EFL teachers' perceptions about error correction and the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms?

### **1.1 Feedback and Oral Corrective Feedback**

Feedback is a term that has many definitions that can

relate to several issues, and it can be used for various purposes. In the current study, however, feedback referred to "information that students are given about their performance with the intention of guiding them in acquiring desired attitudes and skills" (Westberg and Hilliard 2001, p.13).

Brookhart (2008, p. 48) has made a distinction between feedback strategies that can be varied into several ways. Teachers have to focus on "timing of feedback," in other words, when and how often feedback is given. For feedback to be effective, learners should receive feedback as soon as possible. Moreover, teachers have to take into account "the amount of feedback," which means how many points teachers want to focus on and how much they should talk about each point. Learners should get enough amount of feedback for each activity. Some learners may need more feedback, whereas others may feel bewildered if they get too much of feedback. Also, individual feedback is more effective than class feedback. Furthermore, the "mode of feedback," i.e., whether it is verbal, written or non-verbal, affects the use of strategies. For instance, verbal feedback is very useful especially when a learner needs instant feedback, but written feedback might work better when correcting a test. The mode of feedback does not only depend on the task, but also on learners' age and the objectives of the lessons. Ultimately, teachers should always remember the effect of feedback strategies on the learners, and consider the usefulness of each strategy before deciding which to use.

Feedback is a general term, while corrective feedback is a type of feedback that focuses on correcting learners' errors. The concept of corrective feedback is proposed by Lightbown and Spada (1999) as "any indication to the learners that their use of the target language is incorrect" (p.171). By corrective feedback, we mean the feedback provided by teachers to simply correct learners'

erroneous language.

In general, there are two types of corrective feedback; oral and written corrective feedback. Oral corrective feedback is defined as "the teachers' responses to learners' erroneous utterances" (Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013, p. 1). It focuses on learners' oral production (speech). Written corrective feedback, by contrast, is defined as "teacher's input to a writer's composition in the form of information to be used for revision" (Keh, 1990, p. 294). In teaching English, teachers need to take into consideration the type of OCF they use to correct learners' errors in the classrooms in order to motivate learners to learn English and to avoid using the same errors.

Errors can be corrected in different ways. Based on the findings of Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study, six types of oral CF were identified: "explicit correction, recast, clarification request, meta-linguistic feedback, elicitation and repetition" (pp. 46-49). They created a model which illustrated the possible learners' responses that can follow teacher's feedback. In other words, they introduced types of corrective feedback that encourage learners to correct their grammatical and lexical errors within a meaningful communicative context. Later on, Panova and Lyster (2002) introduced a new term to other six types of OCF in their study which is "translation" (p.582). The following strategies were coded according to OCF types adopted by (Lyster and Ranta, 1997; Panova and Lyster, 2002).

## 1.2 Errors and Mistakes

In order to discuss learners' errors that occurred during their foreign language learning process, it is important to distinguish between errors and mistakes. Although these two terms may appear to be synonyms, there is a significant difference between them. An error implies lack of competence in a particular linguistic area, and a learner will need an assistant in order to correct that

error, while a mistake is the misuse of the correct form of a language but it can be corrected by learners and it is considered to be a slip of the tongue (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). According to Ellis (1997), when learners

Types of OCF	Definition	Example
Recast	"Involves the teacher's reformulation of all or part of a learner's utterance, minus the error." (p.46)	S. "She <i>enjoy</i> learning English?" T. "Yes, she enjoys learning English."
Translation	"A teacher translation of a correct form of the learners' answer in L1." (p.582)	T. "How many days are in a week?" S. " <i>Haft</i> ." In Kurdish language T. "Seven days"
Clarification Request	"A feedback type in which the teacher asks a question indicating to the learners that there is a problem with the language production." (p.47)	S. "Can I <i>made</i> a card for my little brother on the computer?" T. "Pardon?"
Metalinguistic Explanation	"A teacher making comments or indicating to the learners that there is an error in the language production." (p.47)	S. "We should <i>listening</i> to our teacher." T. "Which form of verb do we use after a modal verb?"
Elicitation	"A feedback type when teachers ask for completion of their learners own sentence by pausing and allowing learners to correct themselves." (p.48)	S. "Yesterday, I <i>go</i> to the cinema." T. "Yesterday, I.....?"
Explicit Correction	"Any feedback technique that involves a teacher simply providing a learner with the correct answer." (p.46)	S. "The cat ran <i>fastly</i> ." T. "Oh, you should say ran fast." "The cat ran fast."
Repetition	"A teacher repeating learners' wrong utterance highlighting it with intonation." (p.48)	S. "I will <i>talked</i> to you." T. "I will TALKED to you." S. "I'll talk to you."

constantly use the incorrect form, it is an error. However, when they sometimes use the correct form and another time the incorrect form, it is then a mistake. An error is viewed as resulting from learner's lack of proper knowledge, which means that learners are not aware of their error because there is a gap in their knowledge, whereas a mistake is viewed as being failure to use a

right form correctly due to stress, tiredness or under pressure to communicate. The author also considered errors as “systematic” while mistakes as “unsystematic” (p.19). This means that errors are likely to occur more than once and the learners are not aware of them because of learners’ knowledge gap.

### **1.3 Error Correction**

Correction is defined as “the replacement of error or mistake by what is correct” (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977, p. 363). Error correction is considered as one of the major fields in language pedagogy and also in the field of teachers’ role in language learning. Errors have been a common feature of the learning process. Learners are always encouraged to speak inside foreign language classrooms as much as possible. Thus errors are inevitable, mostly in the early stages and learners who have not mastered a language will tend to make errors. Hendrickson (1978) proposed five fundamental questions about the correction of errors.

#### **1.3.1 Should Learners’ Errors be Corrected?**

In general, methodologists and educators answer this question positively since learners are not aware of their errors and need help to recognize their errors and correct them in return (Hendrickson, 1978).

#### **1.3.2 When should Learners’ Errors be Corrected?**

It is noteworthy that corrective feedback is provided either immediately after an error is committed or is delayed to the end of conversation. Therefore the choice of providing immediate or delayed feedback is completely left to teachers. (Ellis, 2009).

Concerning the fact that EFL teachers are after the development of either fluency or accuracy, Méndez and Cruz (2012) pointed out that teachers who focus on fluency (meaning) in their EFL classes usually provide delayed CF because immediate CF would interrupt the flow of communication and learners’ thoughts and might cause learners to be focused more on the

correction of their utterances than on the fluency. On the contrary, teachers who focus on accuracy provide both immediate and delayed CF. Based on Bartram and Walton’s (1991) study; immediate CF might affect learners’ psychology and lead them to forget what they want to talk about during oral activities.

#### **1.3.3 Which Learners’ Errors should be Corrected?**

Burt (1975) suggested that teachers should pay attention to “global errors” instead of “local errors.” Global errors are “errors that affect overall sentence arrangement” (p. 56). Global errors contribute to hinder the communication, in that the message is not intelligible. They are systematic so teachers should correct them: such as wrong word order, missing or wrongly placed sentence connectors, and syntactic overgeneralizations. Conversely, local errors are “errors that affect single elements in a sentence” (p.7). Local errors do not contribute to hinder the communication, in that the message is intelligible. For example: errors in morphology or grammatical functions. Accordingly, methodologists generally advise teachers to focus on a few error types rather than try to correct all the errors learners commit (Harmer, 2001 and Ur, 1991).

Correction needs to be subtle and teachers have to decide carefully what errors need to be corrected and what do not. Harmer (2004) has differentiated between fluency work and accuracy work (i.e. oral work of learners). According to Harmer, during fluency work the teacher should only correct errors that impede the communication because when learners learn a foreign language, they want to get experience and become more confident in speaking. However, when it comes to accuracy work, feedback can be more precise and the focus is usually on a current specific issue. For instance, if learners are practicing the past tense of a verb and they use the wrong form of a verb, or if they are not sure how to say something, then it is necessary for learners to be

corrected. In brief, the learners' language need to be understood thus their global errors should be corrected but when it comes to fluency then local errors should also be corrected.

#### **1.3.4 How should Learners' Errors be Corrected?**

There are two ways of correcting errors: directly (explicitly) and indirectly (implicitly). According to Ellis (2009), the direct way indicates the provision of the correct form to the learners' errors by the teacher, and it is preferable for low-level learners who cannot correct their errors. However, Lalande (1982) stated that the indirect way refers to teachers' indication that an error exists but without provision of the correct form, therefore; teachers can provide learners with the chance to find it.

#### **1.3.5 Who should Correct Learners' Errors?**

It is usually the teachers who provide oral corrective feedback. However, Hendrickson (1978) stated that the teacher "should not dominate the correction procedures" (p. 395). Some educators believe either to provide time for self-correct or encourage other learners to correct their classmates' errors (i.e. peer-correction), which depends on learners' language proficiency and the time available (Hedge, 2000).

#### **1.4 Learners' Uptake**

Lyster and Ranta (1997, p.49) introduced the term "Learner Uptake" as an alternative for the term "Repair" that was earlier referred to an activity which involves correction in a formal discourse of native speakers (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977). The term "Learner Uptake" has been examined by researchers in second and foreign language learning. According to Allwright (1984), uptake can be defined as the contents that learners claim to have learned in class, which is what they are able to report at the end of a particular lesson, whereas Lyster and Ranta (1997) defined learner uptake as "a learner utterance that immediately follows the

teacher's feedback with the intention of drawing attention to some aspect of the learner's initial utterance" (p. 49). They held a different view of learner uptake which refers to learners' response to teacher's corrective feedback on the error they made. The authors identified two types of uptake: (a) the uptake when learners repair their error and (b) the uptake that results in utterances that still need to be repaired. When the utterances are "Repaired" it means that the error was reformulated and successfully corrected but when the utterances "Need - repair" it means that the learners unsuccessfully corrected their error and may need further feedback from the teachers (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, p.49). In general, Lyster and Ranta (1997) distinguished four different types of initiated repairs: "repetition," "incorporation," "self-repair," and "peer-repair" (p. 50). When the utterances "Need - repair," it means that learners unsuccessfully corrected their errors and may need more feedback from the teacher. This part is divided into six types of utterances: "acknowledgement," "same error," "different error," "off target," "hesitation," and "partial repair" (Lyster and Ranta, 1997, pp. 50-51).

#### **1.5 Previous Studies**

There have been many studies regarding the significant use of corrective feedback and its types in the field of learning and teaching EFL during the past two or three decades. Research work began to investigate different strategies of corrective feedback. For instance, Lyster and Ranta (1997), and Panova and Lyster (2002) conducted studies on corrective feedback and learners' uptake. They observed four French elementary classrooms in Montreal, Canada. The findings revealed that the most frequently used corrective feedback type was recast but it led to a limited amount of repair of the learners' errors. These studies concluded that the low proficiency level of the learners may have been the main

reason why the teachers used recast and translation so frequently. Moreover, in another recent study carried out by Alzebaree, Ahmed, and Hasan (2018), who investigated the relationship between the beliefs and the actual classroom practices of the Kurdish teachers of English as a foreign language regarding oral corrective feedback. A questionnaire was designed to collect data from eight EFL Kurdish teachers of different academic qualifications from three different high schools in the city of Akre, Kurdistan Region of Iraq during the first term of the academic year 2017-2018. Besides, a 5-hour audio-recorded classroom observation was carried out with the same sample by the researchers to elicit the required data regarding the teachers' oral corrective feedback practices. The findings revealed that almost all teachers' beliefs were similar to their actual practices on "who should provide OCF". The teachers unanimously agreed that the teacher should provide feedback rather than the student. As for the "the timing to provide OCF", they preferred immediate feedback more than delayed feedback. Finally, there was a slight disagreement concerning "the types of corrective feedback" since the teachers used metalinguistic feedback more than other types and there was inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices concerning "the types of errors to correct". However, the context of the present study is different from other previous studies about CF strategies. To the best knowledge of the researcher, no study has ever been conducted in Iraq, especially in Kurdistan region of Iraq to identify types of OCF strategies used by EFL teachers and learners' uptake at the school level based on three personal variables of teacher's gender, years of experience, and the type of school (public or private). The current study is, therefore, an attempt to address this gap in Duhok.

## **2. Method**

The study was carried out at 25 different morning

secondary schools (public (20) and private (5)) in Duhok City/ Kurdistan region of Iraq during the first term of the academic year 2018-2019. 50 teachers (25 males and 25 females) were participated in this study. They have a B.A degree in English, and they have been teaching it at different levels, but they differ in their years of teaching experience in EFL. They have been divided into two groups in terms of years of teaching experience; novice teachers and experienced teachers. The number of experienced teachers who participated in this study was 38, whereas the number of novice teachers was only 12 due to the fact that the socio-economic and political situation in the past 4 - 5 years in Kurdistan deprived graduates from becoming new teachers of English. In addition, the number of participant teachers who teach in public schools was 40, while the number of participant teachers in private schools was only 10 because there are just 8 secondary private schools in Duhok, and only 5 schools have agreed to participate in this investigation. In order to collect the necessary data to conduct this investigation, two types of tools were used: observation checklist and questionnaire for EFL teachers. The Observation checklist was used to identify the types of OCF strategies that are actually used by EFL teachers in the classrooms and to determine learners' errors types. A closed-ended questionnaire was also implemented to investigate teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the role of OCF during the learning and teaching process.

## **3. Data Analysis and Results**

### **3.1 Analysis of the Observation Checklist**

The data in the classroom observations were gathered to investigate the use of OCF strategies by EFL teachers in secondary schools in Duhok city. Four specific research questions were designed to address the research aim which focuses on an investigation of the actual practices of EFL teachers in relation to oral error corrections, by

directly observing them in classes.

### 3.1.1 What Types of OCF Strategies do EFL Teachers Use in Their Classrooms?

The occurrence of the seven types of OCF strategies in all the 50 lessons observed is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 shows the different types of OCF strategies used by EFL teachers inside classrooms. The analysis of the classroom observations data reveals that all the seven types of OCF strategies were used by the teachers in their correction of the learners' erroneous utterances. However, the frequency of each type of OCF strategies

**Table 1**

Frequency distribution of types of OCF strategies used by EFL teachers

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies (OCF)	Frequency	%
Recast	149	45.8
Explicit Correction	39	12.0
Clarification Request	31	9.5
Elicitation	31	9.5
Metalinguistic Explanation	23	7.1
Translation	19	5.8
Repetition	12	3.7
Others	21	6.5
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>100</b>

was not equally balanced in their lessons. Recast was, by far, the most frequently used type with a total of 149 times whereas repetition was the least frequently used type with an occurrence of 12 times. Moreover, some teachers observed in Duhok schools used their own way to correct their learners' errors that was somewhat a combination of both recast and repetition. They provided learners with two options one of which was by repeating learners' wrong utterances and the other was by providing the correct form. Thus the learners will recognize that their teacher is indicating that there is something wrong with their oral language and try to choose the correct form. This new strategy comprises

6.5% of the total number of types of OCF strategies. To sum up, the answer to the first research question is that feedback types other than the recast strategy with about 46% are rarely or much less used by EFL teachers to correct their learners' errors inside the classrooms.

### 3.1.2 What Types of Learners' Errors do EFL Teachers Correct in Their Classrooms?

Table 2 shows the use of types of OCF strategies to correct the three types of learners' errors.

Table 2 shows the types of each error committed by the learners and corrected by teachers using different types of OCF strategies. Out of 187 pronunciation corrected errors, 123 were corrected by using recast strategy, and 16 out of 69 grammatical corrected errors were corrected by using metalinguistic explanation. As for lexical errors, the majority were corrected by using translation strategy.

**Table 2**

Frequency distribution of types of OCF strategies that were used to correct each type of learners' errors

Types of Learners' Errors	Pronunciation Errors		Grammatical Errors		Lexical Errors		Total Number
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Corrected Errors	187	86.1	69	79.3	69	100	325
Uncorrected Errors	30	13.8	18	20.6	0	0	48
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>373</b>

### 3.1.3 What Type of OCF Strategies is More Effective with Learners?

Table 3 displays the types of OCF that are more effective with learners.

**Table 3**

Frequency distribution of the effective types of OCF strategies on learners' uptake in classroom observations

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies (OCF)	Learners' Uptake Repair		Needs Repair		No Uptake		Total Number
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	
Recast	120	80.5	20	13.4	9	6.0	149
Explicit correction	15	38.5	24	61.5	0	0	39

Clarification request	31	100	0	0	0	0	31
Elicitation	31	100	0	0	0	0	31
Metalinguistic explanation	23	100	0	0	0	0	23
Translation	6	31.6	13	68.4	0	0	19
Repetition	12	100	0	0	0	0	12
Others	21	100	0	0	0	0	21
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>259</b>		<b>57</b>		<b>9</b>		<b>325</b>

Table 3 illustrates the relationship between OCF types and learners' uptake. As it was mentioned earlier, 325 times of OCF strategies were identified in classroom observations, which were placed into three categories according to learners' uptake after providing teachers' OCF. In general, types of OCF lead to learners' uptake. This indicates that all learners repair their utterances when they were exposed to clarification request, elicitation, metalinguistic, repetition or others. Thus, it can be argued that these types are the most successful techniques for eliciting uptake. However, although most of the learners repaired their utterances when they were exposed to recast (80.5%), explicit correction (38.5%) or translation (31.6%), some of them tried to repair their utterances but failed to do so since the results with recast (13.4%) and explicit correction (61.5%) demonstrated that learners' utterances needed repair. Conversely, recast was the only type of OCF which sometimes did not only lead to learners' uptake; no response was received from the learners since there was evidence of 'No uptake' (6%).

### 3.1.5 To what extent does each of the three variables affect the provision of OCF strategies?

#### 3.1.5.1 Gender Differences

Table 4 summarizes the use of OCF strategies according to gender differences.

**Table 4**

Frequency distribution of using types of OCF according to gender differences

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies	Males (n=25)		Females (n=25)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%

(OCF)				
Recast	82	51.6	67	40.4
Explicit correction	21	13.2	18	10.8
Clarification request	14	8.8	17	10.2
Elicitation	12	7.5	19	11.4
Metalinguistic explanation	11	6.9	12	7.2
Translation	8	5.0	11	6.6
Repetition	7	4.4	5	3.0
Others	4	2.5	17	10.2
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 shows the comparison between male and female teachers in terms of their using for types of OCF strategies to correct their learners' errors inside classrooms. It reveals that 166 errors out of 325 errors corrections have been corrected by female teachers while 159 errors have been corrected by male teachers. Although, this difference is not very much remarkable but it can be stated that female teachers are more likely to correct learners' errors than male teachers. This case may belong to female teachers' background in that they stay more focused on things than males. Table 4 reveals that both genders used these different strategies to correct learners' errors, however, the way they used such strategies showed a difference between males to females. It is clear that male teaches used recast, explicit correction and repetition more than their female counterparts who used other types of OCF more.

#### 3.1.5.2 Teaching Experience

Table 5 outlines the use of OCF types according to the teaching experience.

**Table 5**

Frequency distribution of using types of OCF strategies according to teaching experience

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies (OCF)	Teachers' Teaching Experience			
	Novice Teachers. 1-5 Years (n=12)		Experienced Teachers. More than 5 Years (n=38)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%



Recast	36	39.1	113	48.5
Explicit correction	21	22.8	18	7.7
Clarification request	3	3.3	28	12.0
Elicitation	9	9.8	22	9.4
Metalinguistic explanation	5	5.4	18	7.7
Translation	6	6.5	13	5.6
Repetition	5	5.4	7	3
Others	7	7.6	14	6
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 shows the comparison among EFL teachers with regard to teaching experience. It is clear that both groups corrected their learners' errors. However, experienced teachers were more concerned to correct their learners' errors than novice teachers. It reveals that the strategy of recast was the most frequently used by novice and experienced teachers, which comprises 39.1%, and 48.5%, respectively. Concerning the second most frequent type that novice teachers used was explicit correction at 22.2% followed by elicitation with 9.8%. However experienced teachers used clarification request at 12.0% as the second most frequent type, followed by elicitation at 9.4%. Moreover, other types were used less frequently by novice teachers and as follows: others (7.6%), translation (6.5%), metalinguistic explanation and repetition (5.4%, for each), and finally clarification request with a least frequent type (3.3%). On the other hand, experienced teachers used other types of OCF as follows: explicit correction and metalinguistic explanation (7.7%, for each), others (6%), translation (5.6%), and lastly repetition (3%).

### 3.1.5.3 Public and Private Schools

Table 6 previews the use of OCF strategies by EFL teachers in both types of schools.

**Table 6**

Frequency distribution of using types of OCF strategies in public and private schools

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback Strategies (OCF)	Public Schools (n=20)		Private Schools (n=5)	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Recast	133	47.5	16	35.6

Explicit correction	30	10.7	9	20.0
Clarification request	23	8.2	8	17.8
Elicitation	27	9.6	4	8.9
Metalinguistic explanation	20	7.1	3	6.7
Translation	19	6.8	0	0
Repetition	8	2.9	4	8.9
Others	20	7.1	1	2.2
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 6 shows the comparison between public and private schools in terms of using different types of OCF inside classrooms. It is clear that in both types of schools, most teachers have the tendency towards using recast and explicit correction more than other strategies in correcting their learners' errors. However, the difference between these schools is that teachers in public schools used elicitation more than clarification request while teachers in private schools used clarification request more than elicitation. Comparatively, there was a significant difference in using metalinguistic explanation and 'others' strategies in public schools where teachers usually provided these types of OCF to correct learners' errors compared to that in private schools where they were hardly ever used by teachers. By far, translation strategy was not used by teachers in private schools whereas those in public schools often used it to correct learners' errors since learners provided answers in their first language.

### 3.2 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

In addressing the second research aim of the study: to explore teachers' perception about the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms, a questionnaire was distributed to 50 EFL secondary school teachers. The teachers whose classes were observed are the same teachers who filled in the questionnaire. As the classroom observation showed their actual use of types of OCF strategies, the questionnaire reflected teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the use of OCF. The questionnaire consists of 20 close ended items. Each item

is analyzed according to three personal variables of: a) teachers' gender, b) teaching experience, and c) type of school.

#### **4. Discussion**

The data that was collected from the classroom observation checklist provided evidence that it was similar to other previous studies that have been done in the area of teaching English as a foreign language such as that by Jabbari and Fazilatfar (2012); (Lyster and Panova (1997); Panova and Lyster (2002); Zhao (2009) since the findings of their studies have revealed that the strategy of recast was the most frequent type that teachers used in the classrooms. The reason for this evidence is that recast as a type of OCF strategy is equally used by novice and experienced teachers in both public and private schools to implicitly correct learners' errors. Moreover the majority of EFL teachers tend to use recast to avoid interrupting learners' oral communication and to manage the time restrictions of the lesson, thus they do not have enough time for providing other types of feedback every time a learner commits an error.

The second favored strategy type was explicit correction since some teachers prefer to indicate clearly their learners' errors. Additionally, other types of OCF strategy such as clarification request, elicitation, and metalinguistic explanation were not frequently used by teachers. This could be due to the fact that some teachers consider them as time consuming and may embarrass the learners especially when learners do not know the right answer. Noteworthy is that EFL teachers used all the seven types of OCF strategies; besides, they formed their own strategy to correct their learners' errors which is due to their teaching experience. This new strategy was at least not found in other previous studies.

EFL teachers concentrate on correcting linguistic errors such as pronunciation, grammatical and lexical errors.

Thus, it is worth mentioning that teachers used different types of OCF to correct each type of learners' errors. For example, the current study demonstrated that more than half of pronunciation errors were corrected by recast (67.3%). This result shows that teachers are careful not to impede learners' utterance and to allow them to continue with their speech. Moreover, explicit correction (10%), elicitation and others (7%, for each), clarification request (4%), metalinguistic explanation and repetition (2%, for each) were also used but less frequently.

In terms of grammatical errors, metalinguistic explanation and recast (27.5% and 23.1%, respectively) were usually used to correct errors. Other types of OCF were used in a decreasing frequency such as explicit correction (15%), clarification request (14%), elicitation (12%), repetition and other (4%, for each).

Regarding the third type of errors, this study revealed that 28% of lexical errors were corrected by translation which is using of learners' mother tongue that is unacceptable to provide the correct answer in the first language. Also, there is evidence that clarification request was used to correct errors at 20%. Other types were not used very frequently as; explicit correction (15%), elicitation (14%), recast (10%) repetition (7%) and others (6%).

The present study also investigated the effect of OCF strategies on learners' uptake or response. The findings revealed that there were clear signs of learners' uptake in the form of 'Repair' or 'Needs-repair'. In general, the results were highly positive since 79.6% of OCF strategies resulted in 'Repair' and only 17.5% resulted in 'Needs-repair.' However, there was a very little evidence (2.7%) that resulted in 'No uptake.'

Interestingly, most of OCF types successfully resulted in 'Repair' such as clarification request, elicitation, metalinguistic explanation, repetition and others as these types lead to self-repair which is a good indication

that learners are able to recognize their errors and try to correct them. On the other hand, explicit correction and translation had little repairs on learners' errors since 61.5% and 68.4%, respectively resulted in 'Needs repair,' whereas 38.4% and 31.5%, respectively resulted in 'Repair.'

It can be argued that although recast was the most commonly used type, it was not the most successful type for improving learners' language since 80.5% resulted in 'Repair' while 13.4% resulted in 'Needs-repair' and 6% resulted in 'No uptake.' The problem with the strategy of recast is that learners sometimes are not aware of their errors, while with other types which require self-repair; they become aware of their errors.

The classroom observations also revealed that most of EFL teachers' interaction with their learners was good enough to help them to recognize their errors. They were sincere and very flexible to use different types of OCF to best meet the correction of their learners' error. It has been further noted that most of the teachers did not have enough knowledge nor had enough training in the types of OCF strategies, but they have developed their own strategies of providing feedback depending on their teaching experience. Accordingly, they usually used their own teaching strategies and techniques of feedback and tried them with their learners to achieve better results.

As regards teachers' perception about the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms, it is clear that they generally hold positive views. The findings from teachers' questionnaire reveal that the majority of EFL teachers think that OCF is important during oral activities. They also believe that OCF helps learners' to improve their language skills. Furthermore, teachers' awareness of OCF strategies helps them to know more about their learners' level. Meanwhile, teachers think that too much correction may decrease learners' motivation to

participate orally yet at the same time ignoring learners' errors will lead to the formation of bad habits.

As for using gestures and facial expressions to indicate learners' errors, it is obvious that most teachers are not in favour of using them and this was quite clear in their actual practice inside classrooms. Still, a few experienced teachers in public schools sometimes used facial expression to indicate learners' errors.

As regards the item of who provides OCF, the majority of teachers think that it is teachers' duty to correct their learners' errors. Their beliefs were in reflected what they practiced inside classrooms since the majority of errors were corrected by teachers themselves. Nevertheless, they encouraged self-correction and peer-correction since they realized that such techniques help the learners to recognize their own errors.

As regards which errors need to be corrected, EFL teachers are in agreement that they should not correct every single error learners commit. They are not also very satisfied with correcting only errors that impede communication (global errors). In contrast, they prefer to correct both fluency and accuracy errors since both of them are important in the learning process. However, it can be argued that in their actual practices, teachers mostly corrected linguistic errors which entails that they focused more on accuracy errors than fluency errors.

As for the manner of providing OCF, not all teachers believe that they should correct errors implicitly rather than explicitly. This was noted clearly in classrooms observations when they used to recast more frequently than other types of OCF strategies. Some teachers used other types of explicit feedback such as explicit correction, elicitation, and metalinguistic explanation.

Classroom observations also revealed that teachers favour correcting learners' errors instantly and directly after a learner commits an error rather than leaving it to the end of the lesson. Teachers believe that in doing so,

learners will recognize their errors and will avoid repeating the same errors, leaving it to the end, they may not have time for correction or learners may forget their errors.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that teachers care for learners' feelings and they agree that they should take learners' uptake into consideration since they are aware of learners' answer after providing feedback. Teachers are also in agreement that they should keep themselves updated with current new strategies to enrich the teaching process.

## 5. Conclusions

It can be concluded that

- EFL teachers in Duhok secondary schools used the different types of OCF strategies in their classes. However, some of these types were used more frequently than others. The findings show that the majority of teachers frequently used recast (45.8%) to correct their learners' errors. Other types of OCF were less frequently used such as; explicit correction (12%), clarification request and elicitation (9.5%, for each), metalinguistic explanation (7.1%), translation (5.8%), and repetition (3.7%). These results answer the first research question *"what types of OCF strategies do EFL teachers use in their classrooms?"*
- The study has revealed that EFL teachers use an additional strategy to correct learners' errors which combines the features of both 'recast' and 'repetition' strategies, in that, teachers make a comparison in repeating the same learners' error and providing the correct form as well. This type of strategy which is called 'others' in the current study has usually been used by teachers (6.5%) due to their experience in the teaching process.
- This investigation demonstrated that most pronunciation errors were usually corrected by recast (67.4%). However, other feedback types were

also used to correct this type of errors but less frequently. As regards grammatical errors, metalinguistic explanation (27.5%) and recast (23.2%) strategies were the most frequently used to correct these errors. Lexical errors were usually corrected by translation and clarification request (27.5% and 20.3%, respectively). Other types of OCF were used but less frequently. These results answer the second research question *"What types of learners' errors do EFL teachers correct in their classrooms?"*

- This study also investigated learners' uptake by determining the effective use of each type of OCF with learners. In general, the results are very positive since most types of OCF strategies follow 'Repair' (i.e., lead to learners' uptake). 'Clarification request', 'elicitation', 'metalinguistic explanation', and 'others' strategies are considered the most effective types. However, it was noted that sometimes 'recast', 'explicit correction', and 'translation' strategies resulted in 'Repair' (80.5%, 38.5%, and 31.6%, respectively), while at other times led to 'Needs Repair' (13.4%, 61.5%, and 68.4%, respectively). A very little amount of 'recast' (6%) also led to 'No Uptake'. These results answer the third research questions *"What types of OCF strategies are more effective with learners?"*
- The three variables of teachers' gender, teaching experience and the type of school affected the provision of types of OCF inside classrooms. Female teachers tend to correct learners errors using clarification request, elicitation, translation and "others" (10.2%, 11.4%, 6.6% and 10.2%, respectively) more than male teachers who tend to frequently use recast, explicit correction and repetition (51.6%, 13.2% and 4.4%, respectively) in dealing with learners' errors.

- Novice teachers use recast (39.1%) and explicit correction (22.2%) as the most frequent types to correct learners' errors. On the other hand, experienced teachers mostly use recast (48.5%) and clarification request (12.0%).
- Teachers in both public and private schools most frequently used recast (47.5% and 35.6%, respectively), and explicit correction (10.7% and 20%, respectively). However, teachers in public schools used elicitation (9.6%) more than clarification request (8.2%), while those in private schools use clarification request (17.8%) more than elicitation (8.9%). In terms of the frequent use of metalinguistic explanation, it was used with 7.1% in public schools and 6.7%, in private schools. Moreover, teachers in public schools often used translation (6.8%) to correct errors whereas those in private schools did not use translation. As for "others" strategy, some teachers in public schools formed their own way to correct learners' errors (7.1%), and those in private schools rarely used such a strategy for errors correction (2.2%). These results answer the fourth research question "To what extent does each personal (non-linguistic) variable (gender, years of teaching experience, and the type of school) affect the provision of OCF strategies?" The reasons after the findings of the three variables are unknown, and to the best knowledge of the researcher, these findings are restricted to the present study since no previous studies concerning corrective feedback have investigated such variables.
- There are no statistically significant gender differences in teachers' perceptions about the importance of OCF during oral production and the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms.
- There are statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions based on the type of school

(public or private) about the importance of OCF and the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms as they are more important for teachers in public schools than in private. Moreover, there are statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions concerning the time of providing OCF. Teachers in public schools prefer to correct learners' errors directly after a learner commits an error, while most teachers in private schools usually prefer to correct learners' errors at the end of the lesson.

- There are statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions based on teaching experience about the importance of OCF and the use of OCF strategies. They are more important for experienced teachers than novice teachers. On the other hand, peer-correction strategy seems more significant for novice teachers than for experienced ones. These results answer the fifth research question "What are EFL teachers' perceptions about error correction and the use of OCF strategies inside classrooms?"

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