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Oral corrective feedback techniques: An investigation of EFL teachers' beliefs and practices in Sultanate of Oman in post-basic schools

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Abstract

The focus of this study is to explore EFL teachers' beliefs and perceptions when they use oral corrective feedback (OCF) techniques in post-basic schools in Oman. The study addressed some aspects of OCF, such as its importance, types, the ideal time for its provision, and its effectiveness in improving learners' uptake. Data collected for this study included a questionnaire with 42 teachers from 7 regions in Oman and semi-structured interviews with five experienced teachers in Salalah post-basic school. Findings showed that teachers highly valued the efficacy of OCF and expressed positive attitudes towards using it in their classrooms. Interestingly, their beliefs favored more implicit feedback types such as elicitation and repetition which are not highly valued in observational studies about OCF in different contexts. Furthermore, recasts and explicit corrections, which are two explicit OCF highly valued techniques that are used extensively in many observational studies, were one of the least preferred according to teachers' beliefs in Oman. An explanation for teachers in Oman's preference for implicit OCF might be attributed to their wide range of teaching experiences which led them to manipulate their OCF techniques to suit their student's different proficiency levels.

The findings of the study were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively to find congruence and incongruences between teachers' beliefs in Oman concerning OCF and teachers' beliefs in other contexts. In addition, they are interpreted according to contextual factors and teachers' experiences. Regarding teachers' beliefs about the timing of OCF provision, teachers were divided between immediate and delayed feedback however, they inclined more toward delayed feedback due to the disruption

of immediate feedback on the flow of their student's oral production. The findings of this study provide evidence that teachers' preference for implicit is beneficial for their learner's interlanguage development and support improving their uptake. These findings could also be a valuable reference for teachers in Oman to reflect on their beliefs and practices to evaluate how they use OCF techniques in their classrooms. They also could be helpful to novice teachers in Oman who have little knowledge about OCF techniques and seek to vary their techniques with their learners' different proficiency levels. Thus, instead of depending on one or two OCF techniques, those teachers could choose between the wide range of OCF used in this study to find the most suitable ones which could support their learners in different teaching contexts with varied learning proficiency.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Rationale

Oral corrective feedback (OCF) is an essential pedagogical field for both teachers and researchers “in second language acquisition (SLA) Ellis (2017)”. Corrective Feedback (CF) “plays a pivotal role in the kind of scaffolding that teachers need to provide to individual learners to promote continuing Second Language (L2) growth” (Lyster, Saito, & Sato, 2013, p. 1). Due to its necessity and importance in promoting learners’ L2, many studies have investigated its impact from different perspectives to understand better what teachers do, and how and when they correct their learners’ errors. For example, some researchers were concerned about CF effectiveness Li,2010; Lyster & Satio,2010; Nassaji,2017, CF frequency Sheen (2004), CF types and distribution Brown,2016; Lyster & Ranta,1997 and teachers’ and learners’ preferences for CF Akiyama,2017; Karchive & Ammar 2014; Lee 2013; Li , 017. What emerged from these studies is a growing concern about the cognitive intent of OCF types and overlooking the role of teachers’ beliefs and perceptions of OCF that could reflect teachers’ actual practices in classrooms. Basturkmen (2012) hinted that teachers’ beliefs regarding CF are not isolated and need to be understood by other contextual constraints which mediate the relationship between teachers’ stated beliefs and practices. Basturkmen urges that their stated beliefs could predict methods only if they are fully aware of the planned aspect of teaching (e.g., task design, grammar teaching). However, correspondence is less likely to occur for unpredictable and incidental teaching elements such as OCF provision. This indication is vivid evidence of the difficulty of comparing teachers’ stated beliefs and their actual practices concerning CF, as what teachers claim their beliefs to be is not necessarily congruent to their practices in the classrooms. Also, Li (2017, p. 143) states that beliefs about CF are ‘an independent construct distinct from beliefs about other aspects of language learning.’ Therefore, there is a necessity to investigate the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding this aspect of language teaching and learning.

1.2 The purpose and significance of the study

This study explores two sample groups of teachers' beliefs and perceptions regarding OCF. It compares them with findings from literature studies concerned with teachers' beliefs about OCF. All the selected teachers work as full-time teachers in governmental post-Basic schools in the ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman. The Educational system in Oman divides schools into two categories: Basic and Post-Basic schools. In the former, schools are subdivided into two cycles: cycle 1 teaches school children aged between 6 to 9 from grades 1 to 4, and cycle 2 teaches students aged 10 to 15 from grades 5 to 9. The latter also teaches students aged 16 to 18 from grades 10 to 12, which correlates with high schools in the United Kingdom. Teachers who teach in Post Basic schools are the target of my study.

The first sample comprises forty-two post-Basic teachers. I collected data about their beliefs and perceptions about OCF via an online questionnaire survey using a Likert scale. It comprises four sections with a total of 17 questions. This widespread online questionnaire collected teachers' opinions from many different geographical regions in the Sultanate of Oman. Teachers from 7 out of 11 geographical areas of Oman took part in this survey. They range in experiences, from 2 to more than 30 years, and cultural backgrounds. Some are Omanis, and others are from different nationalities, such as Egyptians, Tunisians, Jordanians, and Indians who teach in those schools. This diversity of teachers could add more exciting findings to my study. In addition, the second sample of teachers is a small-scale sample of 5 teachers, who represents Salalah Post-Basic school, interviewed to collect in-depth insights about OCF. Data from those five teachers is collected via semi-structured interviews and analyzed through content analysis. Specifically, the study seeks to gather information about teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the effectiveness of using OCF, types and linguistic foci of OCF, their perceptions about students' uptake after using OCF, and teachers' preferences regarding OCF timing.

This study seeks to contribute to the relatively sparse literature in Oman about teachers' beliefs and perceptions regarding OCF and provide some information to stakeholders in the ministry of Education in Oman about this issue. It seeks to compare their beliefs and attitudes on a large and a small scale to the beliefs of teachers in studies from the

literature about OCF. By the large scale, I mean their beliefs across the whole country of Oman, whose data is collected through the online questionnaire to gather the opinions of forty-two teachers. The essence of creating this questionnaire is my intention to find answers to the survey questions in a systematic and disciplined manner; consequently, there was no wonder in using a questionnaire that has become one of the most popular research instruments applied in social science. Doryne (2007) clarifies that the popularity of questionnaires stems from the fact that they are "easy to construct, extremely versatile and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processible" (p.102).

Furthermore, a sample of five teachers is interviewed in my school, Salalah post-basic school, about their beliefs and perceptions of OCF using semi-structured interviews. This kind of data concerning beliefs and perceptions will be compared with other studies in the literature to determine if there is any kind of correspondence or mismatch with other studies. To the best of my knowledge, no study on beliefs about CF has compared the attitudes of two groups of teachers concerning oral corrective feedback. The findings of this study might stir curiosity in teachers who want to learn more about the different options at their disposal for providing OCF and who want to assess their CF practice. The study also hopes to inform teacher trainers about the need for further training in this crucial aspect of foreign language teaching.

1.3. Organization of the study

This thesis consists of 6 chapters. Chapter 2, following this section, will review the literature about teachers' beliefs and practices concerning OCF. Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology employed for the data collection and analysis. That, ter 4 will present the results of the study. Chapter 5 will discuss the five results related to the recent literature on oral CF. Finally, Chapter 6 will conclude the study's findings and discuss the limitations, the potential implications, and further research direction about OCF.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

OCF has been regarded as a topic of debate among researchers and practitioners over the past two decades. Some strongly claim its inefficiency in developing long-term learning (Truscott 1996;1989, Truscott &Hsu 2008), whereas others advocate its essential role in improving learners' language acquisition (e.g., Bruton 2010, Lyster et al. 1999; Russel &Spada 2006). As a researcher and a teacher simultaneously, I find myself confused about which party to support and which to oppose. However, I will trace different sides to see what teachers' beliefs in Oman correlate more with. Although, I am inclined more toward its importance in improving learners' chances to promote their L2 development.

This chapter comprises two parts. The first part will tackle the theoretical background of OCF. Then, it will trace the literature to speculate on different types of OCF techniques and their effectiveness. Part two will focus on the literature about teachers' beliefs and perceptions and their relationship with teachers' practices for OCF. After that, I will discuss teachers' beliefs about the timing of OCF and the effectiveness of using OCF techniques on learners' uptake development. At the end of this chapter, research questions will be presented.

2.1. Theoretical perspectives about OCF

In this current study, the term Corrective Feedback (CF) refers to teacher responses to learners' errors in foreign and second language (L2) S. Li (2013). The idea of CF emerged from different theoretical theories, among which the interactionist tradition of SLA has made a prominent contribution (e.g., Gass (2013); Long & Robinson (1998); Pica (1994). Cognitive-interactionist theorists urge that both positive evidence and negative evidence (what is not acceptable, mainly through corrective feedback) in the form of CF can trigger noticing of non-target output (see Gass (2013); Long (1996). This view is rooted in Schmidt's noticing hypothesis (1990, 2001), which pointed to the necessity of drawing learners' attention to the formal properties of language to help them notice L2 forms if they are to learn them successfully. Schmidt (2010) states that noticing means "the conscious registration of attended specific instances of language" (p.725). He emphasizes that people only learn target language items to which they pay attention. Thus, he concludes that second language acquisition, at least for adult learners, involves

some level of conscious attention to form. Moreover, skill acquisition theory suggests that CF has a fundamental role in the context of practice that drives learners to become more automatic users of L2 (e.g., Ranta & Lyster (2007)).

The two perspectives mentioned above stressed the importance of interaction as a driving power in language learning which Socio-cultural theorists support. They claim that CF promotes self-regulation through the process of Zone Proximal Development (ZPD) (e.g., Nassaji & Swain (2000); Sato & Ballinger (2012)). This perspective views learning as a social process through which learning occurs and suggests that interaction is an integral component of this learning process as it occurs “in rather than as a result of interaction” Ellis (2009, p.12). On the other hand, the interaction hypothesis Long (1996) views the role of interaction as facilitative in helping learners control their comprehensible input, output, noticing, intake, and negative evidence. While a range of theoretical perspectives “converge to support the use of CF in L2 classrooms, other different (yet not incompatible) theoretical accounts have been invoked to explain the potential effects of some CF types more than others” Lyster et al. (2013, p. 11).

Some second language acquisition (SLA) theorists, such as (Truscott,1999) regards providing negative evidence in the form of CF as detrimental to interlanguage development, and providing solely positive feedback is sufficient (Krashen,1981); proponents of this view state that the process and mechanism of acquiring a second language(L2) resembles first language (L1) acquisition as it occurs unconsciously and implicitly. This means that overt attention to linguistic form is not needed. In contrast, others emphasize the importance of negative and positive evidence in the second language (L2) development as it improves efficacy in scaffolding learners to notice linguistics form (Gass,1997; Long,1996,2007).

According to my experience in the EFL teaching context, I think that providing solely positive feedback in language learning and ignoring providing negative ones (Truscott,1999& Krashen,1981) calls for is ineffective in the provision of OCF. When OCF provides learners with negative evidence, it alerts them to notice what is not possible in the target language. It indicates what is unacceptable or erroneous. This triggers learners to notice the gap between the target language and their developing interlanguage

knowledge (Gass,2013; Long,1990, cited in Kratchava & Nassaji, 2021, p. 190). Therefore, negative evidence is beneficial in OCF, and concentrating on positive evidence solely proves its inefficiency in promoting learners' interlanguage development.

On the other hand, many studies in second language acquisition have agreed that constant use of OCF can improve the noticing, acquisition, and retention of language forms [Iwashita \(2003\)](#); [Leeman \(2003\)](#); [Mackey \(1999\)](#); [Mackey & Philip \(1998\)](#); [Oliver & Mackey \(2003\)](#); [Philip \(2003\)](#). Thus, what emerged from the above is that some types of OCF can lead to self-repair of learners' errors and teachers' responses are the primary means of scaffolding. In the next part, I will present some definitions to define the meaning of OCF.

2.2. What is OCF?

OCF's consistent use in classrooms spurred the interest of many researchers to synthesize a definition of this omnipresent phenomenon. [Chaudron \(1977, p.31\)](#) provided an earlier attempt and defined OCF as "any teacher's reaction which transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance". [Ellis, Loewen & Erlam \(2006\)](#) also define it and elaborate more on teachers' responses: "Corrective feedback takes the form of responses to learner utterances that contain an error. The responses can consist of (a) an indication that an error was committed, (b) provision of the correct target language form, or (c) meta-linguistic information about the nature of the error or any combination of these." (p. 340). Reflecting on the two definitions, The latter is practical as it represents two types of providing CF which are explicit such as meta-linguistic information, and implicit CF techniques like the provision of the target language form. These help teachers to manipulate between different techniques of providing OCF whereas the former definition hints at any reaction of providing OCF without specifically mentioning any methods or techniques used to provide OCF.

According to [Ellis \(2006: 28\)](#), CF is defined as "responses to learners' utterances containing an error" or "perceived as containing errors." This definition provides a clear indication that OCF stresses intensive and extensive errors. It aims to correct learners' utterances using the oral mode, either implicitly or explicitly, to clarify that something wrong occurred within their oral output.

In classroom interaction, teachers tend to use different techniques to draw learners' attention to their errors to boost learners' self-repair or uptake. Thus, what emerged is that teachers' OCF scaffold learners, leading to their self-repair and improving their uptake. However, it is noteworthy that peer-peer interaction could contribute to this scaffold based on the sociocultural theory and its motive in enhancing learners' self-regulation. Moreover, OCF depends on many types which have various classifications ranging from implicit and explicit. In the next section, I will illustrate more about these types of oral CF and give examples of some of them.

2.3. Types of OCF

"CF plays a pivotal role in the kind of scaffolding that teachers need to provide to individual learners to promote continuing L2 growth" [Lyster R., Saito K., Sato M. \(2013\)](#). Accordingly, teachers tend to use different types of OCF to scaffold their learners to modify their non-target output. In this vein, I will draw on [Lyster & Ranta's \(1997\)](#) seminal work in classifying different types of oral corrective feedback, which will be elaborated on subsequently by other researchers. After observing four communicative French immersion classes, Lyster & Ranta (1997) identified six different types of CF, which they later categorized under two broad categories: reformulations and prompts [Lyster & Ranta \(2007\)](#). First, reformulations include recasts, which means correct reformulation of the error, and explicit correction, which indicates the error and provision of the proper form. What is common is that they seek to "supply learners with target reformulations of their non-target output" [Lyster, Satio & Sato \(2013,p.3\)](#). As Ellis (2006) suggests, the principal function of reformulation is to "provide input in the form of accurate models that learners can mentally compare with their errors" (p.120).

Second, prompts include a cluster of signals or clues other than reformulations providing the primary function to trigger the learners to self-repair. Prompts comprise four techniques: elicitation (indication of the error and asking the learner to self-correct), metalinguistic clues (i.e., pointing out the error and providing explanations on the error), clarification requests, and repetition [Sheen \(2011\)](#). In this respect, prompts overwhelmingly coordinate with instructional discourse as they resemble some extent the "clueing procedure" introduced by McHoul (1990) in his study of feedback in subject-

matter classrooms, who identified the process of Clueing as a “withholding phenomenon different from that encountered in conversation” (p.355) whereby teachers show students where their talk needs correction not how the sentence should be articulated. McHoul added that teachers’ function is to provide correct responses as a last resort when clueing fails in eliciting self-repair. (McHoul,1990 cited in Lyster & Satio (2013). Examples of OCF from a classroom observation I conducted to provide some authentic examples to my fellow teachers in a teacher development workshop at my school, Salalah Post Basic school, Five teachers out of ten teachers who attended this workshop will be later interviewed and their beliefs and perceptions concerning OCF will be collected.

Recasts

1. T (teacher): What did you do yesterday?
2. S (student): I *visit* my friend Ali yesterday.
3. T: oh, you *visited* your friend Ali yesterday.

Explicit correction

In reading instructions for a reading task, a student mispronounced the word “sentences”

1. S (student): Read these sentences (wrong pronunciation for ‘sentences’).
2. T (teacher): no, this is not the proper pronunciation, in English, we say “sentences”.

Elicitation

S: I *sink* social media has many benefits (wrong pronunciation of θ for ‘think’).

T: I, what, I? (using rising intonation)

S: think.

Metalinguistic feedback

S: How many money do you have?

T: Do we say ‘How many money?’ or ‘How much money?’? Because ‘money’ is uncountable noun, we do not say ‘How many money?’ we say ‘How much money?’.

Drawing on this categorization, [Sheen & Ellis \(2011:594\)](#) introduced a refined taxonomy of oral corrective feedback strategies, which make a clear-cut distinction between reformulations and prompts and the distinction between implicit and explicit CF. [Yao \(2000\)](#) added body language as a new type of oral CF technique used in classrooms.

Table 2.3 CF Types (Adapted from Méndez & Cruz 2012, p. 65)

(Based on Sheen,2011 and Yao,2000)

Correct form is provided	Correct form is elicited
Recasts	Repetition
Explicit correction	Elicitation
Explicit correction with meta-linguistic explanation	Meta-linguistic cues Body language Clarification requests

2.4. Implicit and explicit classification

There is another classification of OCF in the literature that has been synthesized from Lyster and Ranta’s (1997) seminal work and other researchers. [Ellis 2010](#) classifies CF types into explicit vs. implicit and input-providing vs. output-pushing. Explicit OCF is “the corrective force of feedback is made salient to learners so that they notice the erroneous nature of their production” (Sarandi,2016, p.236); whereas in implicit OCF “the correction is conducted unobtrusively and the existence of error is not overtly signaled to learners” (Sarandi,2016, p. 236).

In the literature, explicit and implicit OCF is understood in relative terms. It is difficult to classify one CF type as explicit or implicit unless you compare it with another (Lyster & Saito, 2010; Sarandi, 2016). Sarandi (2016) suggests that the indistinct boundaries between implicit and explicit feedback and their position on the implicit and explicit continuum are attributed to several factors, including linguistic features, contextual factors, and learners' prior knowledge. Furthermore, Sarandi 2016 suggests that the complexity of making a clear-cut distinction between explicitness and implicitness stems from a lack of agreement between researchers to precisely specify what constitutes explicitness and implicitness. For instance, S. Li 2010 identified elicitation as an implicit strategy, while Ellis 2006 considered it explicit. Interestingly, Sheen 2006 made a clear-cut contribution to resolving this debate by distinguishing explicitness from salience and argues that explicitness relates to the linguistic realization of CF while salience is related to learners' perceptions which is a psychological phenomenon. Ortega (2014, p. 75) defines explicitness as 'perceptual salience,' which comes in exceptional intonation, and 'linguistic marking' is in meta language modification during the correction.

Sarandi 2016 scrutinizes the idea of the explicitness of CF from a learner's perspective by investigating both linguistic and non-linguistic factors such as contextual and individual variables. Sarandi finds that a specific CF strategy could be labeled implicit or explicit, relying on linguistic and non-linguistic features. For example, short recasts are more noticeable than long recasts. Sheen, 2006, and recasts with a single substitution are more salient than recasts with several changes Egi, 2007. Sarandi 2016 also added that recasts focused on a single error (intensive) are more explicit than recasts focused on several errors (extensive) because the constant correction of the same language feature brings it to the focal attention of learners. Finally, Oliver and Mackey 2003 pinpoint that recasts is more salient and noticeable in contexts where the learners' focus was mainly on form rather than being involved in meaningful communication. Accordingly, Sheen and Ellis 2011 suggested a modification to Lyster & Ranta's 1997 recast and sub-classified it into two distinctive types to serve two linguistic targets: linguistic foci on form and communicative purpose. These are didactic recast and conversational recast. The former is a partial or a whole reformulation that targets the structure of learners' utterances. In contrast, the latter is concerned with providing feedback on the communicative content

of learners' reports. In the following, I will give examples of these two types of recasts cited in [Mendez, H.E., & Cruz, R.M. \(2012, p. 65\)](#)

Partial didactic recast

Student: I have 20 years old.

Teacher: I am

Conversational recast

Student: I can lend your pen?

Teacher: What?

Student: Can I lend your pen?

Teacher: You mean, can I borrow your pen?

Accordingly, what emerged from these two examples above is that OCF involves two main distinctions: negotiation of meaning and takes the form of conversational recasts and negotiation of form in partial didactic recasts. I can infer that OCF's target is to make errors salient and noticeable to learners to enhance their language acquisition and interlanguage development.

Drawing on this taxonomy of CF types and the grouping of CF types into two broad terms, 'reformations and prompts' by Ranta and Lyster (2007), CF types in the continuum of explicitness vs. implicitness can be summarised in table 2.4 based on [Sheen & Ellis \(2011\)](#) and [Lyster, Saito, & Sato \(2012\)](#).

TABLE 2.4. A comprehensive classification of CF types (Adapted from Ellis,2011, cited in Nassaji and Krachava,2017, p. 233).

	Implicit	Explicit
Input providing	1. Conversational recasts	2. Didactic recasts 3. Explicit correction
Output providing	4. Repetitions 5. Clarification request	6. Metalinguistics comment 7. Elicitation 8. paralinguistic signals

2.5. Effectiveness of OCF

Some SLA theorists claim that OCF is ineffective in learning a language and weakens learners' language acquisition as it stresses the negative evidence of a language (e.g., Krashen,1982, p. 74). Negative evidence means any feedback which indicates that there is an error in the learners' output. However, many researchers have confirmed its positive influence on L2 acquisition. They clarify that it consolidates oral skills through contextualized practice facilitated by noticing target exemplars in the input (Lyster et al.,2013, p.5). Many studies have attempted to measure the effectiveness of different types of CF on second language acquisition. Studies implementing a pre-test and post-test design revealed that all feedback types were effective regardless if they are positive or negative Li, 2010; Lyster and Saito, 2010; Nassaji, 2017, and this efficacy depends on several variables or mediating factors such as individual learner differences, the manner of delivery, and the conditions in which feedback is provided Nassaji and Kartchava, 2020. The issues emerging from these studies are what errors to correct, who should correct errors, when to correct errors, and how to correct errors.

According to observational studies by [Llinares and Lyster \(2014\)](#); [Lyster and Mori \(2006\)](#); [Lyster and Ranta 1997](#); [Panova and Lyster \(2002\)](#); [Sheen \(2004; 2006\)](#) cited in [Sepehrinia, S., & Mehdizadeh, M., 2016.](#)), recast is a dominant type of OCF in EFL context whereas other OCF types such as elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, explicit correction, clarification request, and repetition receive little attention and are less favored by teachers. Therefore, the most appealing question is what makes recast predominant and frequently used? From a social perspective, the recast inherits the advantage of not exposing learners to challenge each other or cause embarrassment, especially to low-proficient learners. From a pedagogical perspective, prompts create more opportunities for learners' involvement in oral interaction, especially high-proficient learners, and trigger them to find errors, indicating evidence for developing learners' uptake. Interestingly, these studies reveal that despite higher frequencies of recasts in the classroom setting, they produce the lowest uptake rate in learners. In contrast, other explicit types of oral CF, such as repetition, metalinguistic feedback, and especially elicitation, led to a higher level of uptake due to learners' involvement in correcting the errors [Lyster & Ranta \(2013\)](#).

Lyster (1998) claimed that although recast is used extensively, there are some inherent pitfalls as learners may or may not notice the intent of the CF. This might be due to its nature of it as learners overlook the main target. To find a solution to this pitfall, some researchers, [Loewen and Philp \(2006\)](#); [Nassaji \(2007, 2009\)](#); [Sheen \(2004, 2006\)](#), have suggested that teachers make recasts salient by making intonational changes and adding stress to scaffold learners to notice the target error. My own, experience backs up this suggestion for 'didactic recasts' (Mendez & Cruz, 2012, p. 65). A participant in a school workshop I conducted on OCF reported that when his learners did not recognize the corrective force of his recasts, he used intonational changes to make the corrections more salient. In conclusion, CF is believed by most researchers to be generally effective, and explicit feedback appears to be more effective than implicit feedback as it increases learners' opportunities to acquire language rather than implicit CF, which the learners do not quickly notice in the process of correction.

2.6. Teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF techniques

The term 'teachers' beliefs' refers to the content of teachers' statements about their ideas, thoughts, and knowledge. These are expressed as evaluations of what should be done pedagogically, what should be the case, and what is preferable [Basturkmen et al. \(2004\)](#). The relationship between beliefs and practices is 'mutually informing and mediated by the sociocultural contexts that teachers are part of' [Borg \(2017, p. 87\)](#). Teachers' beliefs are essential as they serve as indicators of teachers' behaviors in the teaching context, and understanding their beliefs yield insights into their teaching practices [Kagan, \(1992\)](#); [Borg \(2003, 2015, 2017\)](#). [Ellis \(2008\)](#) suggested that teachers need to "make their own beliefs about language learning explicit, to find out about their student's beliefs, to help their students become aware of and to evaluate their own beliefs and to address any discord between their own and their students' belief systems" [\(p.24\)](#).

Early researches on CF show the discrepancy between teachers' and students' views regarding the provision of CF [Jean & Simard\(2011\)](#); [Schulz \(1996, 2001\)](#). While students overwhelmingly accept the idea of being corrected, teachers are against it. In [Schulz's \(2001\)](#) study that surveyed ESL/EFL teachers' and learners' attitudes towards grammar teaching/learning and correcting oral and written errors, she found a substantial mismatch between the two groups. Teachers might be reluctant to provide CF because they want to avoid making learners anxious while learners think that CF is "anxiety-yielding," as [Lyster et al. 2013](#). Moreover, teachers may sense that CF provision during a student's communication attempt might disrupt the communicative flow [Brown \(2009\)](#); [Roothoof \(2014\)](#); [Sepehrinia & Mehdizadeh \(2016\)](#). Consequently, teachers avoid using CF frequently. Finally, what emerged here is that teachers' reluctance to provide OCF frequently is due to awareness of students' emotional well-being and the possibility of disruption of OCF [Kartchava et al., 2020](#); [Li, 2017](#); [Roothoof and Breeze, 2016](#).

Many studies have reported congruence between teachers' beliefs and practices concerning CF. In [Kartchava et al. \(2020\)](#) study investigating 99 pre-service ESL teachers' beliefs concerning their preferred type of CF, teachers claimed that recast is the most frequently used technique. This aspect was consistent with what [Kartchava et al.](#) noticed

after conducting a questionnaire with 99 teachers and classroom observations for a sample of ten of them. Another explanation Krachava hinted at was pre-service teachers' limited teaching experience, and knowledge about how, when, and what amount of CF provision. Due to their lack of experience, they opted to use recasts frequently. An aspect that could not be adopted by experienced teachers who manipulated their CF techniques according to learners and classroom inconstant variables.

Similarly, [Kamiya \(2016\)](#) investigated the beliefs and practices of four American ESL teachers in an intensive English program for international university students and concluded that the teachers' beliefs regarding CF were congruent with their practices. All four of these teachers avoided explicit correction because they suspected that this feedback might undermine their learner's self-esteem and create affective classroom problems. These teachers demonstrated their preference for using recasts to provide correct forms for students to reduce learners' tension or embarrassment in the classroom. They were observed to use recasts as their predominant CF strategy. What emerges from these two studies above is teachers' use of recast was non-intrusive yet face-saving and target-providing solutions [Lee\(2013\)](#); [Yoshida\(2010\)](#).

In a case study conducted by [Junqueira and Kim \(2013\)](#) to investigate a novice and an experienced ESL learners' beliefs and practices concerning the most frequent linguistic targets of CF, they found a partial congruence between stated beliefs and practice as one inexperienced teacher stated her preference to provide CF for pronunciation errors. In practice, her observed CF was 73% for pronunciation errors. In [Yoshida's 2010](#) exploration of Japanese as a foreign language teacher's attitudes to corrective feedback, she noticed that teachers tend to use recasts and avoid using elicitation and other types of feedback mainly because they have two main concerns: time pressure and embarrassment caused to adult students confronting the problem of inability to self-correct their errors.

[Sepehrinia, S & Mehdizadeh, M 2016](#) study of 37 Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF revealed some interesting findings. Seven teachers were observed in classrooms, and findings revealed that teachers made 231 corrections tackling 58 % of all erroneous utterances, leaving 167 incorrect utterances (42%) uncorrected. Turning to corrective feedback techniques frequently used, recast was the predominant (67%), followed by explicit correction (21%), elicitation (8.7%), and metalinguistic feedback

(4.3%). These results align with the findings of previous studies ([Lyster & Moori 2006](#); [Lyster & Ranta 1997](#); [Sheen, 2004, 2006](#); [Panova & Lyster 2002](#)), which have shown that recast is the most dominant corrective feedback that is used frequently by teachers.

In [Ha, X; Murray, J 2020](#) recent study of Vietnamese primary EFL teacher's beliefs and practices of OCF. Reformulation constitutes the lion's share of (51.4 %) of feedback. Interestingly, it was divided between didactic recast (49.1%), an unprecedentedly high percentage never found in any study before, comparable to (2.3%) for conversational recast. This might be attributed to learners' age as feedback was given to primary school learners. It also reflects teachers' intent to focus on linguistic forms rather than the conversational meaning of learners' utterances. Other CF types represent minute percentages: clarification requests (9.6%), elicitation (13%), repetitions (2.3%), metalinguistic feedback (7.3%) ,and explicit correction (16.4%).

In [Brown D.'s 2016](#) meta-analysis study of the type and linguistic foci of oral corrective feedback in the L2 classroom, he sought to aggregate the CF types from teachers' different studies and their target linguistic foci. The findings revealed that reformulation in recasts accounts for 57% of all CF, while prompts comprise 30%, and grammar errors received the greatest proportion of CF (43%). Therefore, it is apparent that teachers' beliefs in the studies mentioned above align with the idea of the dominant use of recast in oral corrective feedback provided to their learners, which raises several questions about learners' uptake after being exposed to CF. I will discuss OCF timing and teachers' beliefs and perceptions about learners' uptake in the next part.

2.7. OCF timing

Another strand of research, related to the effectiveness of oral CF, that causes controversy between teachers and learners is the ideal timing for providing OCF to learners' erroneous utterances. Oral CF can be either immediate or delayed. Immediate correction is provided immediately as soon as an error occurs. In contrast, delayed oral CF is postponed to the end of the speech flow until the educational activity has been completed. ([Li et al., 2016](#)). [Li S. \(2017\)](#) identified six studies concerned with collecting data on teachers' beliefs about oral CF timing ([Bell, 2005](#); [Brown, 2009](#); [Davis, 2003](#); [Kartchava, 2006](#); [Rahimi & Zhang, 2015](#); [Roothoof, 2014](#)). According to three surveys

concerned with teachers' beliefs about OCF timing, 40% of teachers agreed on using immediate oral CF correction. [Davis's \(2003\)](#) study with 97 EFL learners and 18 teachers in Macau found that 6 out of 18 teachers prefer to correct errors immediately, representing one-third of teachers. The purpose of this is to support students in avoiding forming unacceptable learning habits.

In contrast, in [Brown's \(2009\)](#) survey study for students' and teachers' attitudes toward immediate correction, an item stated that teachers should not perform the immediate correction. This item got a surprisingly high mean score from teachers (3.13 out of 4), significantly distinct from students' mean score rating of (2.12 out of 4). However, this discrepancy in the mean score between teachers and learners in Brown's study reveals teachers' hesitancy and uncertainty toward immediate correction of learners' errors. This finding is supported by a recent qualitative study in Vietnamese primary schools by [Ha & Murray \(2021\)](#) reveals that teachers were hesitant and skeptical about the efficiency of immediate feedback.

Thus, all these studies were concerned more with teachers' views on immediate CF and did not speculate on teachers' opinions about delayed CF, which many teachers use to avoid the flow of speech and comprehensibility blockage. As a result, there is an omnipresent need to conduct more studies to compare the best mode for our students in Oman and contribute to the scarcity of literature about the ideal time for providing oral CF.

2.8. Teachers' perception of learners' uptake

Teachers use various techniques to provide OCF to their learners. This variation is significant and has an impact on learners' uptake. [Lyster & Ranta \(1997\)](#) define uptake as "a student utterance that immediately follows the teacher's feedback to draw attention to some aspect of the student's initial utterance" (p. 49). In other words, uptake is the learner's response to the CF received, and it is only the learner's choice whether to repair or not repair their utterance. [Lyster and Ranta \(1997\)](#) call these actions: repair and need repair. In the former, the learner corrects after receiving CF; in the latter, the learner may acknowledge the correction (but without any modification) or just continue talking [Méndez & Cruz 2012](#).

In short, the studies reviewed above have illustrated some insight regarding the beliefs of teachers and students about different aspects of OCF. However, research investigating teachers' and students' beliefs concerning feedback types and timing is limited. While teachers' and students' feedback beliefs are influenced by the teaching and learning context, this research focuses on Post Basic EFL settings which is equivalent to a secondary EFL context that includes a sizeable L2 learner population that is underexplored. There is, therefore, a need for more research to gain more nuanced insights into teachers' beliefs concerning various aspects of OCF in a more varied range of contexts. And the current study is a timely one. It seeks to address the following three research questions:

1. What are the beliefs of Post-Basic EFL teachers in Oman about using oral corrective feedback in response to learners' spoken errors?
2. What types of oral corrective feedback techniques do Post Basic EFL teachers in Oman frequently use during their classroom interactions?
3. What are Post-Basic EFL teachers in Oman's perceptions about
 - a. the effectiveness of OCF and
 - b. the timing of OCF?

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology deployed to achieve the goal of this study. It will start with the justification of the methodological approach for the study, namely the quantitative research methods with teachers' questionnaires and qualitative research ones with teacher interviews as two data collection tools. Next, it will describe the setting and the participants of the study. Then, it will discuss data collection methods and procedures. The chapter ends with an outline of data analysis methods.

3.1. Methodological approach

This study deployed a mixed-methods research design to investigate teachers' beliefs and perceptions concerning OCF in Omani Post Basic schools. These schools teach students from grades 10 to 12 with students aged between 15 to 18. It is equivalent to high or secondary schools in the United Kingdom. Data collection tools employed qualitative and quantitative research methods and deployed two primary sources: teachers' online questionnaires and follow-up semi-structured interviews with five teachers.

The two data collection methods were chosen for different reasons. On the one hand, an online survey questionnaire's main aim is to collect teachers' general beliefs and perceptions of OCF in a broader context across the whole country. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews sought to concentrate on an in-depth understanding of teachers' stated beliefs about OCF. Accordingly, quantitative research using numerical data obtained with the aid of SPSS v. 18 (Statistical Package for the Social Science) was used to give us a general understanding of teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF in Oman. Furthermore, a qualitative research approach was utilized "to get to the bottom of what is going on in all aspects of social behavior" (Holliday, 2010, p. 99). It also enables researchers to understand what is happening in a setting (Creswell, 2014; Croker, 2009). It can include some counting and comparing the frequency of events if the counting is not intended to produce the generalization but is supplementary and "builds on other findings and adds to them, enabling researchers to develop new

insights into their phenomena of interest" (Hannah & Lautsch, 2011, p. 16). Thus, using two different research methods can integrate each other and enable us to understand OCF better. They are not about two different worlds. Regardless of the two different procedures in collecting each data, they are concerned to analyze social behavior in the form of a specific intent which is the beliefs and perceptions of teachers about OCF. Finally, as Richards (2005) concludes, 'qualitative and quantitative data do not inhabit different worlds. They are different ways of recording observations of the same world' (p.36).

3.2. Context

The setting of this study includes post-Basic schools in different regions in Oman. These kinds of schools teach teenage students aged from 16- to 18 years old. These schools also have three grades, 10,11,12. Teachers and students in these schools speak Arabic as their first language. Students learn English as a foreign language. It is a compulsory subject that is assessed through day-to-day classroom observation using continuous assessment tools and a final high-stakes exam at the end of each semester. Regarding the interviews, they were conducted with teachers in Salalah post-Basic school, a school in the Dhofar governorate in the south of Oman.

3.3. Participants

Forty-two teachers from the post-basic schools answered this online- questionnaire submitted after obtaining approval from the Ministry of Education in Oman with a serial number (2821267138).

The questionnaire was sent to teachers in eleven different regions in Oman. Unfortunately, responses came only from seven regions and four regions did not respond utterly (See Table 3.3.1). Table 3.3.1 shows regions and teachers' numbers and percentages. Most teachers who participated in this questionnaire were from the Muscat region, the capital of Oman, located in the North of Oman, and constitute 35.7% of total responses. Teachers' responses from Dhofar governorate, the south of Oman, where I work came second with 33 % of responses. Teachers' responses from two Omani regions, namely Al Batinah North and Dakhalia, were equal to 7%. Teachers' responses from Musandam, in the far North Of Oman, represent 9.5%. Concerning the teacher's gender,

Female teachers outnumbered male teachers, with 76% to 23.8% respectively. Table 3.3.1 shows responses to the questionnaire regarding Omani regions, teachers' numbers, and percentages

Table 3.3.1. Teachers' participation from different Omani regions in the online questionnaire

Omani regions	Number of teachers	Participant teachers (percentage)
Muscat	15	35.7%
Dhofar	14	33.3%
Dakhalia	3	7.1%
Musandam	4	9.5%
Sharqia North	2	4.8%
Al Batinah North	3	7.1%
Al Dhahra	1	2.4%

Teachers' genders and ages are collected. Concerning the teacher gender, Female teachers outnumbered male teachers, with 76% to 23.8% respectively. Teachers' ages range from 25 to 59. Teachers' experiences were also included to find out if they have any indication of teachers' knowledge in providing different techniques for OCF. Teachers' experiences might be related to the effectiveness of providing oral CF. Thus, it was acknowledged in this study. This study also collected information about teachers' genders who contributed to completing this questionnaire. Female teachers in these schools

predominate answering this questionnaire with a total percentage of 76.2% more than male teachers, who represent 23.8%.

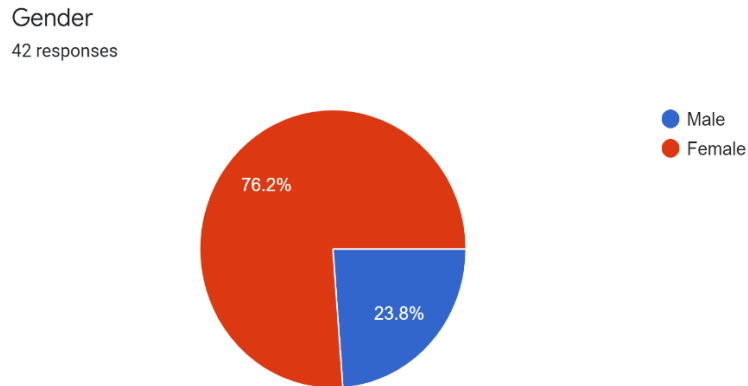


Figure 1 Teachers' gender (Adapted from the google form questionnaire)

Teachers' age and nationality in this questionnaire will be shown in the pie charts below as they could serve as variables that provide diverse data for this study. Interestingly, teachers who teach in Omani post-basic schools are all not Omani and classified into two categories Omani and non-Omani. Those non-Omani teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and uphold different experiences and ideas from their native countries. This mixture of nationality and age could provide diverse responses to teachers' beliefs concerning OCF. As shown below the pie chart in figure (3) illustrates the group age of teachers participating in the questionnaire. The age group between 30 to 40 represents 52.4% which is the highest proportion of teachers followed by 33.3% for teachers aged between 40 to 50. Teachers between 20 to 30 represent 9.5%. The lowest proportion is rendered to teachers between 50 to 60 at 4.8 %. Furthermore, Figure (4) illustrates teachers' nationality which is divided into two categories: Omani teachers who exceed the number of non-Omani representing 78.6% and 21.4% respectively.

Age

42 responses

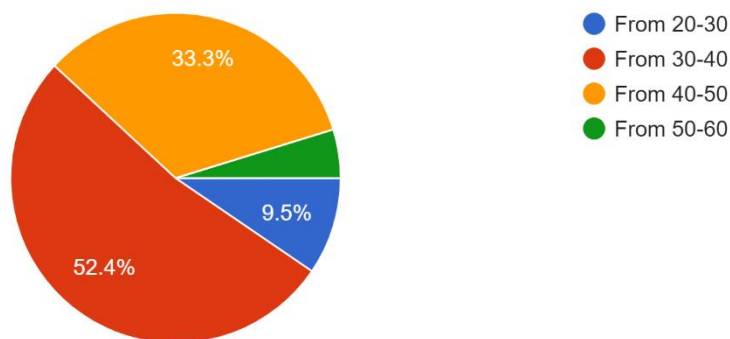


Figure 2 Teachers' ages (Adapted from the google form questionnaire)

Nationality

42 responses

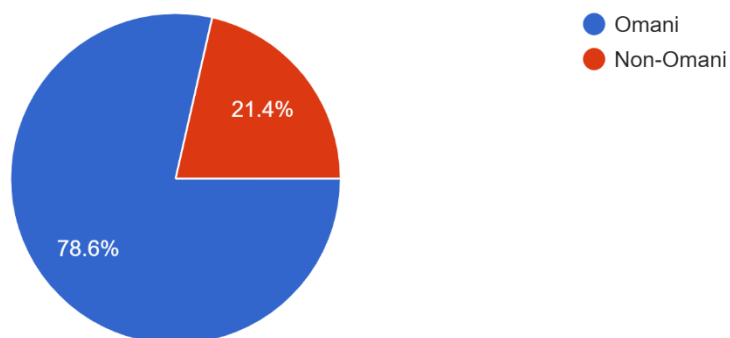


Figure 3 Teachers' nationalities (Adapted from the google form questionnaire)

Regarding the semi-structured interview, it was conducted with five teachers to delve in-depth to understand their beliefs about OCF. All of them were male, aged from 46 to 59 and they teach students in grades 10,11, and 12. A summary of teachers' participants' biographies is presented in table 3.3.2 below. In connection with teachers' education and backgrounds, they were all graduates of Education colleges and held bachelor's degrees

in English teaching and Education. Three of them were Tunisians and two were Egyptians. All of them have received several professional development programs during their course of service in Oman. These are varied in terms of form, objective, and duration.

Table 3.3.2 *A summary of teachers' biographical details*

Name (pseudonyms)	Age (Year)	Grades Taught	Nationality	Teaching Experience
Tahir	59	12	Tunisian	34
Hany	51	11-12	Egyptian	25
Kamal	46	11-12	Tunisian	23
Salah	54	11-12	Egyptian	29
Habib	51	10-12	Tunisian	27

As shown in Table 3.3.2 above, all teachers are experienced, and due to this experience, they are all equipped with enough professional development programs during their course of service in these post-Basic schools in Oman.

3.4. Data collection methods and procedures

This descriptive study is a mixed method that collects data using two approaches: Quantitative and qualitative. Two methods will be used to facilitate the collection of data, an online questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews with a sample of five teachers at Salalah Post-Basic School in Oman. The questionnaire questions are made up of 17 items adapted from a study about teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF at Al Taif university in Saudi Arabia conducted by Alkhamash, R., & Gulnaz, F. (2019). It is designed with closed-ended questions and provided a five-point Likert scale to measure three

fundamental subscales: teachers' beliefs about using OCF; types of OCF used by EFL teachers in Oman; and their perceptions about the effectiveness of OCF used in terms of student's uptake and the timing of providing OCF. This questionnaire was administrated only to EFL teachers in Oman who teach in post-basic governmental schools.

Furthermore, a sample of five EFL teachers will be interviewed using semi-structured interviews to reflect on the impact of using OCF in their teaching contexts. These interviews "attempt to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world before scientific explanations" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 1). A qualitative analysis of the study variables was conducted and interpreted by the researcher using content analysis. Therefore, the combination of the questionnaire and interviews will allow us to have a better understanding of teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF in Oman.

3.5. Ethics procedures

Before data were collected, the Criminology and Education Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leicester approved ethics procedures. The approval was granted on 30th July 2021, and the 'Ethics Reference' was 31591-amfmgmf1-ss/ed: education (See [Appendix 1](#)). The data collection procedures followed the ethics procedures.

3.6. Data collection and procedures

3.6.1 The questionnaire

This questionnaire adapted its items from a study about teachers' beliefs and perceptions about OCF at A Taif university in Saudi Arabia by Alkhamash, R., & Gulnaz, F. (2019). The Saudi study setting was different from the setting of this study in Oman. The Saudi study questionnaire tackled Al Taif University of girls whose only female teachers teach, so it only targeted those female teachers who belonged to this university. Regarding my study, the questionnaire was adapted and conducted to suit English EFL teachers in Oman and their teaching context. Some of its items were modified depending on the extensive synthesis of the research on teachers' beliefs concerning OCF (e.g., [Ellis, R., 2017](#), [Kim, Y.,](#)

& Mostafa, T.,2021; Li, S.,2017; Sepehrinia, S., & Mehdizadeh, M., 2016). Since I try to find answers to questions of my questionnaire in a systematic

After that, content validation was carried out separately with four non-native EFL teachers before being piloted with five other EFL teachers. The validation was obtained through group discussions, and they expressed their concerns and feedback on the wording and content of the questionnaire items. After that, it was piloted with five teachers from two different schools filling in the survey questions to find out if any questions needed to be modified. Those teachers were congruent to those who completed the questionnaire in terms of age, teaching experience, learning conditions, and language proficiency levels. The pilot study results enabled the researcher to exclude some faulty items to improve scale reliability. Accordingly, items (1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) from the original questionnaire were modified after being piloted to suit the nature of the study and its context. Finally, Satisfactory reliability was obtained ($\alpha = .83$).

The final questionnaire version comprised five sections. An informed consent sheet for participant teachers and questionnaire questions are included (See [Appendix 2](#)). First, section 1 included demographic questions about teachers' gender, age, nationality, teaching experience, classes taught, and the Omani region in which they work. Second, section 2 included questions (1-4) that attempted to collect teachers' beliefs and perceptions about the importance of using OCF in their classrooms and to what extent they prefer using immediate OCF, an aspect which would be more elaborated on in the interview questions concerning their beliefs about the ideal timing of OCF. Third, Section 3 included questions (5-9) focused on teachers' beliefs about OCF types and techniques. Fourth, section 4 comprised questions (10-14) that tried to collect more information about teachers' preference for which type of OCF, namely: reformulation or prompts. Finally, section 5 included questions (15-17) and sought to collect teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of using OCF concerning learners' self-repair and student uptake. The Cronbach's alpha value for the main study was ($\alpha = .84$), illustrating good internal consistency for the instruments (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2009).

3.6.2 Interviews

In the qualitative research method, interviewing is an effective technique to explore teachers' thinking, beliefs, and perceptions of what goes on in the language-learning classroom (McKay, 2006). It has an essential function with the interviewees as it "attempts to understand the world from the subjects' points of view, unfold the meaning of their experiences, to understand their lived world before scientific explanations" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 1).

This study deployed semi-structured interviews, a frequently used qualitative research in applied linguistics (Dörnyei, 2007). Semi-structured interviewing is more valuable than unstructured and structured interviewing because, on the one hand, it provides the interviewer with a list of prepared questions, and it allows flexibility for him to follow up on the interviewee's answers (Dörnyei, 2007; Heigham & Croker, 2009). Consequently, he gains the richest data from the interviewee by using this data-driven interviewing method with carefully designed questions beforehand at the same time. Several studies (e.g., Kamiya, 2016; Sepehrinia & Mehdizadeh, 2016) about teachers' beliefs about OCF used Semi-structured interviewing. Therefore, this study could help teachers feel that they participate in a natural conversation but with a purpose, which allows the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of teachers' beliefs about OCF.

In this study, all teachers were interviewed individually. The interviews were in the English club room in Salalah post-Basic school. This place was quiet, suitable for teachers to express their thoughts freely, and it is easy to obtain excellent-quality audio recordings. There were five interviews with five different teachers respectively. The interviews were in English as all participant teachers are experienced teachers with high proficiency in the English language, though their first language is Arabic.

A list of 12 questions had been designed thoroughly to elicit teachers' responses about their beliefs and thoughts about OCF (See Appendix 3). Regarding the construction of these questions, four of them were adapted from Sepehrinia & Mehdizadeh, 2016 study and three from Xa & Murray's (2021) study about teacher beliefs about OCF in Vietnam, and the rest of them are synthesized from different literature studies. The question's constructions and wording were edited to suit the nature of my study. These questions

were piloted with one teacher who was not among the main five participant teachers. The result of this piloting interview led to some changes to question 5 which was related to different OCF techniques used to correct learners' errors. The teacher did not provide a clear answer to the question which was asked about frequent OCF techniques used in his classroom. This might be attributed to his lack of knowledge in naming these OCF techniques. Although he used them regularly and that was apparent from his answers, he failed to name them. As a result of this, this question was modified in the form of a scenario with a grammatical error and six different techniques from which teachers could choose the most and least preferred techniques of OCF. This attempt at modification was crucial to acknowledging participant teachers with types of OCF.

The first two questions of the semi-structured interview sought to collect teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of OCF and whether their intervention using these techniques to correct their learner's errors could have a negative or positive impact. Next, questions 3 and 4 attempted to gather information about the frequency of OCF and OCF linguistic error foci that attract teachers' attention to be corrected. After that, Question 5 is a scenario of a grammatical error with 6 different OCF techniques that teachers choose between them which ones they prefer the most and mark it with "1" and gradually to the least preferred and mark it with '6'. Question 6 required teachers' detailed comments on their choice of the OCF technique they have chosen from question 5. Question 7 was concerned with the timing teachers prefer in providing OCF. It sought to identify teachers' preferences between delayed and immediate OCF. After that, question 8 was concerned with the variable of students' proficiency to understand if teachers vary their OCF techniques according to different students' proficiency or if their use of these techniques is static in all teaching situations. Next, questions 9 and 10 were concerned with the factors teachers put as a priority in whether to use OCF or not. Finally, questions 11 and 12 sought to visualize learners' impressions from teachers' perspectives after using OCF techniques and whether they cause any improvement in their student's uptake, and if the amount of OCF would be decreased or increased soon.

3.7. Data Analysis

3.7.1. Analysis of the questionnaire

Regarding the Analysis of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics were used to investigate the teachers' beliefs about the importance, types, and timing of OCF with the support of SPSS v. 18 (Statistical Package for the Social Science) software. First, reliability statistics for the Cronbach's Alpha Based on standardized items were obtained and represented ($\alpha = .84$), which shows a good, acceptable internal consistency between the 17 items of the Likert Scale questions (Dornyei & Taguchi, 2009). In addition, SPSS provides numerical statistics for each item, Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD), which shows teachers' preferences and beliefs about each item.

The Likert scale employed five-point values for each item of the 17. Doryne 2007 clarifies that Teachers' responses are converted to numbers or values using "coding procedures" and that the coding frame of the Likert Scale is straightforward as each pre-determined response option is assigned a number. For example, 'strongly disagree' = 1, 'disagree' = 2, 'neutral' = 3, 'agree' = 4, 'and strongly agree' = 5 (p. 199). The results of the mean could be understood as the following: If the mean is from 1 to 1.8, it means strongly disagree. From 1.81 to 2.60, it means to disagree. From 2.61 to 3.40, it means neutral; from 3.41 to 4.20, it means agree; from 4.21 to 5, it means strongly agree.

3.7.2. Analysis of the interview

The data from teacher interviews were analyzed through content analysis. Interviews were transcribed verbatim in English and were then read thoroughly many times and analyzed manually by the researcher. A sample of an interview with one teacher was presented in Appendix 5. Comments with similar meanings were grouped into themes. The main themes found in the data comprised the importance of oral CF, and preferences of oral CF types. The reasons for their choices, evaluations of linguistic targets for their CF, evaluations of factors influencing their beliefs and practices about CF, beliefs on OCF timing, and beliefs on the possible influence of oral CF on students' uptake.

Teachers' responses for OCF were coded into categories to classify them accordingly. These were coded into six main types: recasts, explicit correction, elicitation, repetition,

clarification requests, and meta-linguistic feedback based on the taxonomy of Lyster and Ranta (1997). OCF types were categorized based on the taxonomy of Lyster and Ranta (1997). The reason for choosing this coding scheme is that it has been widely accepted and used in the literature (e.g., Ölmezer-Öztürk, 2016; Roothoof, 2014; Sheen, 2004), which would allow me to relate my findings with those which followed this coding scheme. As regards feedback timing, teachers' responses were classified into two types: immediate feedback and delayed feedback (Ellis, 2009).

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. It starts with a presentation of the beliefs of the forty-two teacher participants about oral CF generated from the questionnaire's four sections. First, I will discuss their beliefs about the importance of using OCF and their preference for OCF linguistic targets, types of OCF, and the effectiveness of OCF on learners' uptake. Then, a description of teachers' beliefs about OCF using data collected from the interviews will be introduced.

4.1. Results from the questionnaire

4.1.1. Teachers' beliefs about the importance of OCF

The first section of the online questionnaire's intent was to elicit EFL teachers' beliefs about the importance of OCF. It includes four items from numbers one to four (See Table 4.1.1). First, Teachers in this survey assigned the highest mean value of 4.09 to the second item, i.e., it is important that teachers correct learners' spoken errors. It shows that most teachers agree on the importance of using and providing OCF. Similarly, the second highest mean value was recorded at 3.84 for the first item, i.e., 'Do you think a teacher should correct learners' spoken errors?'. Next, Item 3 received the third mean value, 3.04, stating that correcting learners' "errors" negatively discourage the learners from speaking. Finally, the lowest mean 2.40 value is to question 4, i.e., 'what errors are you concerned about correcting using OCF techniques?' This reflects teachers' hesitancy about which types of linguistic foci teachers focus on. In addition, the standard deviation (SD) for the least preferred item, 1.16, is as higher than the SD for the most preferred items, 1.087, which indicates that the respondents showed more significant variation in their perceptions about these least preferred items. Table 4.1.1. shows teachers' beliefs about the importance of using OCF.

Table 4.1.1 Teachers' beliefs about the importance of using OCF

No.	Statement/question	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1.	Do you think a teacher should correct "learners' spoken errors" using OCF techniques	42	1	5	3.84	1.362
2.	I feel it is important to use techniques to correct "learners' spoken errors"	42	1	5	4.09	1.087
3.	I think that correcting EFL learners' errors can consequently discourage them from speaking	42	1	5	3.07	1.944
4.	What errors are you concerned to correct using OCF techniques? Grammar Lexis Pronunciation Sentence forms	42	1	5	2.40	1.16

4.1.2. Teachers' beliefs about the target of OCF techniques

This section of the questionnaire comprises items five to nine and seeks to gather information about teachers' beliefs about the use of OCF techniques in their classrooms (See Table 4.1.2.). First, Item 7 represented the highest mean value with 4.40. this is a clear indication that teachers strongly agree with using diverse OCF techniques with different learners' proficiency. Next, items 5 and 6 illustrate also the high mean value of teachers' agreement on using different OCF techniques. Teachers' agreement here,

however, is not related to learners' proficiency, it is concerned with using varied OCF techniques to serve two linguistic foci: grammar and pronunciation. Their agreement also was on the effectiveness of using them while correcting learners' errors. After that, item 8 which mentioned OCF timing specifically immediate OCF to tackle learners' errors received a mean value of 3.58 which means that teachers agreed on using this technique in correcting errors. Finally, teachers' responses for item 9 are the lowest as providing explicit hints to learners about their errors received the mean value of 3.53.

Table 4.1.2. *teachers' beliefs about the target of OCF Techniques*

No.	Statement/question	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
5.	I use different OCF techniques to correct my students' pronunciation and grammar errors	42	1	5	4.33	.644
6.	All OCF techniques used by me as a teacher are useful for my learners' language acquisition	42	1	5	4.28	.766
7.	I vary OCF techniques with my EFL learners according to their levels	42	1	5	4.40	.583
8.	I correct my EFL learner's errors immediately	42	1	5	3.58	1.200
9.	I indicate to the learners' that the message has not been understood and sometimes tell them that their utterances include errors	42	1	5	3.53	1.032

4.1.3. Teachers' beliefs about the types of OCF

Section three of the questionnaire comprises five items from 10 to 14 (See Table 4.1.3). It sought to collect teachers' beliefs about OCF types. They assigned a high mean value from above 4.00 to three items (11,13 and 14) and less than 4.00 to two items (10,12). The highest preference was for item 13, i.e., the participants use the technique of eliciting as a prompt with learners to get them to correct their errors. It represented a mean value of 4.35, which strongly supports the idea that the elicitation technique gives learners practice in correcting their errors. These findings are in line with the results of Lyster & Ranta (1997). They argue that using OCF of prompts such as elicitation triggers learners to effectively correct their errors by drawing on what they already know.

An indication of teachers' high preference for elicitation using intonational moves makes OCF more salient and practical in L2 development. The second highest mean value of 4.23 was for item 14, i.e., the teacher repeats learners' errors by changing intonation to draw learners' attention to the error and sometimes echo their errors in a question. The third highest preference, 4.19, was for item 11, i.e., teachers implicitly reformulate learners' oral errors and sometimes correct them without directly mentioning that their utterance was incorrect. According to Lyster & Ranta's (1997) seminal work for OCF classification, this type of reformulation is recast. Interestingly, it is a predominant OCF in observational studies, but here in this questionnaire, it comes in ranked after the two implicit techniques mentioned above. This aligns with studies of Lyster (1998) and Panova & Lyster (2002), both of which agree that recast is an implicit type of OCF technique that is unnoticed by low-proficient learners as they might overlook the linguistic or communicative intent of it. Thus, they conclude that it is not favorable for improving L2 interlanguage development.

In addition, there are two items (10,12) with a mean value lower than 4.00. The respondents assigned the fourth-highest preference to item 10, i.e., participants explicitly indicated the learners' errors by providing them with the correct forms, with a mean value of 3.86. Item 12, indicating that participants posed questions to learners about their oral errors without providing them with the correct form, received the lowest mean value of 3.58. This section shows that participants are interested in effective OCF techniques that enable learners to understand their errors and draw on their linguistic resources for self-repair.

Table 4.1.3 Teachers' beliefs about types of OCF

No.	Statement/question	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
10.	I explicitly indicate to the learners that their utterance is incorrect by providing them with the correct form	42	1	5	3.86	.990
11.	I implicitly reformulate learners' errors and correct without directly pointing out that their utterance was incorrect	42	1	5	4.19	.880
12.	I pose questions to my EFL learners. For example, "Do we say it like this?" and sometimes provide comments or information related to the formation of the learners' utterances without providing them with the correct form	42	1	5	3.58	1.159
13.	I use the technique of eliciting as a prompt with my learners to get them to correct their errors. Student: Can you give me some informations about Oman?	42	1	5	4.35	.720

	Teacher: Can you give me some..... About Oman? Student: information					
14.	I repeat learners' errors by changing intonation to draw learners' attention to the error and sometimes echo their errors in a question. Teacher: bark → ? Student: oh sorry, I meant park.	42	1	5	4.23	.751

4.1.4. Teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of using OCF on learners' uptake

This section sought to elicit participant teachers' responses about the effectiveness of using OCF on learners' uptake. It comprises three items from 15 to 17 (See Table 4.4.1). All the items of this category got a mean value of higher than 4.00 which indicates that they highly appreciate the effectiveness of OCF in modifying their learners' errors and improving their learners' uptake. First, item 17 assigned the highest mean value of 4.42 which reflects teachers' perceptions that teachers' role is essential in the provision of OCF and led to improving learners' uptake. In this respect, this finding aligns with Schunk & Zimmerman (1997) who claim that language learning and self-efficacy are easily achievable if the teacher corrects learners' errors. Next, item 16 is higher than item 15 with 4.12 to 4.07 respectively showing that implementing OCF frequently developed learners' self-repair abilities and sustained them to self-repair their errors which is a sign of effective learners' uptake.

Table 4.1.4 Teachers' Perceptions about the effectiveness of OCF on learners' uptake.

No.	Statement/question	N.	Min	Max	Mean	SD
15.	I have seen changes in my EFL learners' spoken ability after implementing OCF techniques in my teaching practice	42	1	5	4.07	.632
16.	I have observed development in my students' speaking skills; namely, some of my students can self-repair their oral errors	42	1	5	4.12	.662
17.	I have seen that self-repair if done under the supervision of the teacher, can improve learners' spoken ability	42	1	5	4.42	.499

4.2 Results from the semi-structured interviews

4.2.1 Teachers' beliefs about the benefits of OCF

The five teachers in this study emphasized different aspects when commenting on the benefits of oral CF, but they generally had positive evaluations. Four teachers emphasized that using OCF in their classrooms is effective and required in classroom interaction as it supports learners to understand what their errors are and remind them not to repeat them. An exception was Habib who thought that OCF is effective and ineffective

simultaneously. He noticed that OCF intervention is required if errors are “grave” noticeable and constitute a problem for continuing communication.

Well actually in my opinion it is both effective and ineffective you might ask me how that is. Well, it is effective in the sense that sometimes you shouldn't let go of some grave mistakes ok regarding grammar and pronunciation, etc. so you have to intervene. But it can be negative if you make an excessive intervention. You know and this, of course, affect you know students' fluency and even they will lose confidence by the end ok. So you should be somewhere in between. (Habib, 1:24)

He added excessive OCF provision has negative effects on learners' confidence therefore teachers need to be aware of when exactly to interfere. Similarly, Tahir and Kamal stressed that using OCF needs to be restricted to serious errors but “minor errors” should not be tackled as it could waste the time of the period.

All five teachers confirmed that OCF has a positive effect on improving learning opportunities after being used in their classrooms. However, they explained differently how this aspect positively affects them. For example, Kamal clarified that OCF has a positive effect on two sides: language acquisition and enhancing peer-peer interaction. He prefers his learners to correct each other as learners would accept being corrected by their peers in a “friendly context” not by a teacher. This observation attracts my attention to the provider of OCF. He explained that OCF provision is useful as it could support low-proficient learners who have high anxiety feelings to be more comfortable and reduce any kind of embarrassment with them.

OCF has a positive effect, it will improve language acquisition in a good way. So, it will provide the students with the opportunity to interact with each other's by correcting each other's mistakes, they will interact. (Kamal,2:02)

Regarding the amount of OCF provided to learners, teachers were asked to show their preference for either intensive OCF, which focuses on specific errors, or Extensive OCF, which focuses on all student errors. All of them agreed to use intensive OCF because

they prefer to focus on specific errors. Tahir for example explains his preference due to the time limit.

focus on specific errors; as I told you before if you are going to focus on every mistake, it means you are going to lose the whole period in correcting the student's errors. (Tahir,4:45)

Furthermore, all of them agreed that their learner's grammar errors trigger them to react quickly and correct them. Hani aligned with all of them about the importance of correcting grammar errors but he claimed that pronunciation and lexical errors are more important. An idea that Habib opposed assuming that grammar is the "backbone" of any language and pronunciation could be developed in later stages in language acquisition when students are exposed to more listening tasks from which they would be able to automatically correct their pronunciation.

4.2.2. Teachers' preferences of oral CF types

The five teachers were asked about their CF type preferences by commenting and ranking the six CF types in a simulated OCF scenario. The teachers showed their varied preferences (see Table 4.2.2 for details).

Surprisingly, elicitation was highly evaluated and chosen as the favorite type by two teachers: Habib and Kamal. After that, it was the second preferred by the others. Also, Tahir preferred repetition as his first OCF choice. He commented the following

"In this way, I can also trigger the other student's awareness. That, their friend has made a mistake and if they have any idea or they can correct him, they can do that." (Tahir, 9:30)

Both Habib and Kamal explained that by elicitation their learners are given a chance to think about erroneous and this motivates learners and triggers them to find the error with the aid of intonation.

Because I think elicitation is more motivating to students, it is less frustrating, and less embarrassing you know it's better than you are saying what's wrong you shouldn't say that ok, this will create you know some kind of frustration and embarrassment on behalf of the student in front of his class I mean colleagues. So, well then I give a chance for the student for self-correction okay, in this case, (Habib,8:50)

Regarding the third preferred OCF type, two teachers (Hani and Habib) opted for repetition whereas Tahir preferred explicit correction and Salalah reverted to clarification request. Unlike all teachers, Hani chose clarification requests as his first preferable OCF type. He explained that it attracts more of his learners' attention.

It's "E" which says sorry can you repeat that I choose this to attract the attention of the student that he had made a mistake and he can correct himself once again (Hani,6:42)

Interestingly, recasts that predominated OCF in observational studies came at the least preferred by two teachers (Hani and Salah) in the sixth rank, similarly, it came fifth with the other two (Habib and Kamal) and the fourth in rank with Tahir. This is an indication of teachers' perceptions of its low effectiveness. They had a similar explanation that recasts were not salient and not useful. As a result, they were not preferred as they would not trigger learners to think about their errors. Salah commented, "This technique is obscure because students may not notice how the error is corrected. Therefore, this technique is ineffective" (10:30).

The data presented above is a clear indication that the five teachers preferred implicit types of OCF such as elicitation, repetition, and clarification requests rather than explicit OCF ones. Two interpretations could explain this. One explanation might be attributed to the wide range of teachers' experiences Kratchava (2020) clarified that experienced teachers manipulate their usage of OCF techniques with their learners due to their experience; whereas novice teachers are cautious and inclined more to recasts to avoid any embarrassment with their learners due to their lack of knowledge and experience.

Another explanation could be attributed to the group age of learners that those teachers work with. They teach post-basic schools students ranging between 16 and 18. Those have an acceptable repertoire of language that could trigger teachers to manipulate their techniques using implicit OCF rather than explicit ones.

Table 4.2.2 Teachers' preferences regarding the effective OCF types

Error treatment	Type of error	Tahir	Hani	Habib	Salah	Kamal
a) "didn't go"	recast	4	6	5	6	5
b) 'not don't go, say didn't go	Explicit correction	3	4	6	5	6
c) In the past, which helping verb can we use in English?	Meta-linguistic feedback	5	5	4	1	3
d) 'don't go? (with a rising intonation	Repetition	1	3	3	4	4
e) Sorry? can you repeat that?	Clarification request	6	1	2	3	2
f) 'Ito school yesterday? (You omit the erroneous part and repeat the sentence with rising intonation	Elicitation	2	2	1	2	1

4.2.3. Teachers' beliefs about the timing of oral CF

Concerning the timing of OCF, three teachers opted for delayed OCF (Habib, Hani, Salah). Teachers commented that immediate feedback could have negative effects on learners' performance. Salah explained delayed feedback is better

To give the students chance to speak and express themselves freely and then draw their attention to the mistakes later (Salah,9:20)

On the other hand, two teachers (Tahir and Kamal) expressed their preference for immediate OCF as Tahir noted below.

for me, I go for immediate feedback because when we talk about delayed feedback, the teacher, or the student himself, if he has, for example, a long conversation, he wouldn't stop until he finishes. Ok, then if you go for immediate feedback, that means that the students will learn from their mistakes when they made them. (Tahir,12:48)

4.2.4. Teachers' beliefs about learners' proficiency and uptake

Teachers were asked about their beliefs about factors that could contribute to making them use different OCF techniques, and they all agreed that they could vary their techniques according to their learner's proficiency. They classified their learners into low-achievers and high-proficient learners and they opted to give different types of OCF. For example, Habib preferred repetition with proficient learners and recasts with low-achievers. Another point that is related to the effectiveness of implementing OCF is its impact on the learners' uptake. All teachers agreed that learners' abilities to self-repair have increased, and this means that their learners are aware of their errors and self-repair. Finally, Kamal commented a good sign for improving learners' uptake is that "in another context a learner doesn't repeat that mistake that means that he benefited from that correction ok." (Kamal,15:40)

Chapter 5. Discussion

This chapter discusses the results of the study considering the literature about teachers' beliefs about OCF. First, it discusses these five EFL teachers' beliefs about OCF and the beliefs of the forty-two teachers in the questionnaire. Then it compares the findings from this study with those studies mentioned in the literature review to find any similarities or contrasting ideas between the beliefs of EFL teachers in Oman and those in the literature review studies. Finally, I will discuss some potential causes for this kind of similarity or discrepancy.

5.1. What are EFL teachers in Oman's beliefs about OCF and contributing factors?

In this study, the five teachers advocated the importance and effectiveness of using OCF and their beliefs were similar to those on the questionnaire who assigned the highest mean value (4.09) for the item concerning the importance of using OCF. This finding is in line with ([Li, 2010](#); [Lyster and Saito, 2010](#); [Nassaji, 2017](#)) who claimed the efficacy of OCF in L2 interlanguage development. Also, it is congruent with Lyster et al. (2013) claims about OCF's impact on L2 acquisition and its ability to consolidate learners' oral skills when they noticed the target errors.

This finding is incongruent with Schulz's (2001) study that surveyed ESL/EFL teachers' and learners' attitudes towards grammar teaching/learning and correcting oral errors, she found Teachers might be reluctant to provide CF because they want to avoid making learners anxious.

Two explanations could interpret teachers in Oman's preference for OCF. First, as S. Li (2017) speculates that teachers in studies focusing on oral CF tend to be more positive about correcting learners' errors. Second, all the teachers who participated in this study were experienced especially the five teachers in the interviews whose experience ranged between 23 to 34 years of experience.

5.1.2. CF types

The OCF-stimulated scenario which sought to find teachers' OCF-type preferences yielded surprising findings (see Table 4.2.2 for details). Teachers highly evaluated elicitation and repetition teachers' which are implicit OCF types according to Lyster & Ranta's (1997) classification and which they rated very low in their study. They explain that those types of OCF trigger repair from the error maker or other students. This finding contradicts Roothoof and Breeze's (2016) study with Spanish EFL teachers of secondary schools where repetition is negatively rated. Another explanation might be teachers in this study are interested in developing learners' self-repair and prompts create more opportunities for learners' involvement in oral interaction, especially high-proficient learners, and trigger them to find errors, indicating evidence for developing learners' uptake

The most interesting finding is that teachers in Oman negatively rated recasts which are dominant in most studies concerned with OCF. This finding might be attributed to the experience of teachers who can manipulate their usage of OCF techniques as Kratchava (2020) stated when she analyzed novice teachers and experienced beliefs in providing OCF. Furthermore, the forty-two teachers in the questionnaire positively rated implicit OCF types such as elicitation, repetition, and meta-linguistic techniques and gave them high mean values.

5.1.3. OCF Timing

In the interviews, 3 teachers preferred delayed OCF as they were aware not to block the flow of learners' communication. Two of them supported immediate OCF. This disparity is also in many studies as in [Brown's \(2009\)](#) survey study for students' and teachers' attitudes toward immediate correction, an item stated that teachers should not perform the immediate correction. This item got a surprisingly high mean score from teachers (3.13) out of 4 which revealed teachers' hesitancy.

CHAPTER 6.

CONCLUSION

6.1. Conclusion

This study provided several insights into a sample of five EFL teachers' beliefs about OCF. While these teachers' beliefs and practices were congruent in some respects, more incongruence was found in some aspects. The congruence and incongruence were interpreted about the contextual parameters of the study. Interestingly, teachers were interested in using implicit OCF to suit the different levels of their learners as focusing on one type of OCF can never fulfill the needs of all the learners equally well, because "one size doesn't fit all" (Ammar & Spada 2006, p. 566). Teaching experience played a role in teachers' preferences. In addition, teachers varied techniques intent was to seek chances for learners to achieve self-repair and develop learners' perceptions about OCF to ensure its effectiveness and create better uptake for their learners.

6.2 Limitations

This study has some limitations that should be considered. The sample of teachers in the questionnaire is acceptable but it did not cover the whole country as I wished. Only 7 regions participated in the survey. Another limitation is class observation. As if there were class observations of those teachers interviewed we could get a better understanding and compare their beliefs with their actual practices in the classrooms.

6.3 Further research

This study opened me to new horizons to think about what language skills could be developed by using OCF. I wish to further investigate this field in the future.

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