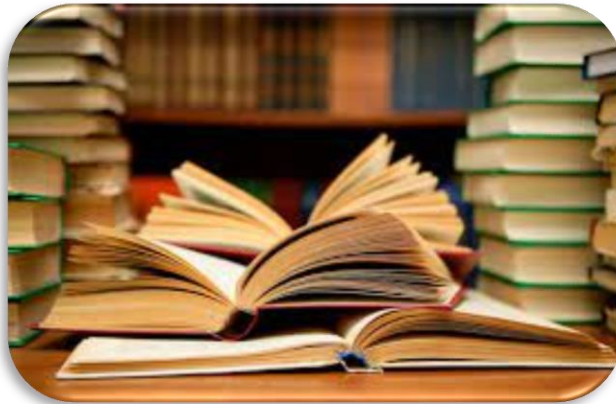## Research Paper

Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Attitude and Preferences for Oral Error Correction

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ABSTRACT

EFL teachers are suggested to investigate learners' beliefs and preferences for oral error correction, an integral part of language teaching, to either adopt them or raise learners' awareness in case their perceptions and preferences oppose the findings regarding effective learning. Although Iranian EFL learners' attitude and preferences for different aspects of oral error treatment have been relatively addressed, some mixed results were obtained. Using a quantitative descriptive design, the current study sought to extend this line of research by investigating the attitudes and preferences of 756 Iranian EFL learners regarding the existence of oral errors, oral error correction timing, provider, categories, and techniques. The findings revealed that EFL learners had positive attitude towards oral error correction. In details, a large number of learners had a preference for oral error correction most of the time. Moreover immediate teacher correction was favored by most subjects. Moreover, nearly half of the participants favored self-correction while most expressed dislike for peer error treatment. The findings concerning error treatment types and techniques, showed that EFL learners favored different types and techniques of oral error treatment among which a subtype of metalinguistic clues where teacher provides information or hints to correction and a subtype of clarification request in which teacher asks why the learner used the word or the structure were the most and least favorite ones respectively. The findings might help stakeholders gain a better understanding of learners' attitudes and preferences for oral error treatment.

Keywords: Error Correction, Oral Corrective Feedback, EFL Learners' Preference, Teacher Correction, Immediate Feedback

بررسی و مشخص سازی نگرش و ترجیحات زبان‌آموزان در زمینه تصحیح خطاهای شفاهی

بررسی و مشخص سازی نگرش و ترجیحات زبان‌آموزان در زمینه تصحیح خطاهای شفاهی آنها که بخشی جدایی‌ناپذیر از آموزش زبان است نقش به سزایی در کاهش فاصله بین تفکرات و عملکرد زبان آموزان و مدرسین دارد. در نتیجه مدرسین زبان قادر به تطابق روش تصحیح خطا خود با ترجیات زبان آموزان خواهند داشت و یا در صورت مغایرت تفکرات زبان آموزان با نتایج مطالعات در زمینه یادگیری موثر قادر به بالا بردن و تغییر آگاهی زبان آموزان خواهند بود. اگرچه نگرش و ترجیحات زبان آموزان ایرانی در جنبه های مختلف تصحیح خطاهای شفاهی به طور نسبی مورد توجه قرار گرفته است، مطالعات مختلف نتایج متفاوتی نشان می دهند. پژوهش حاضر با استفاده از یک طرح توصیفی کمی، متمرکز بر بررسی نگرش‌ها و ترجیحات ۷۵۶ زبان‌آموز ایرانی در زمینه وجود خطاهای شفاهی، زمان‌بندی تصحیح خطای شفاهی، فرد تصحیح کننده و تکنیک‌ها و تکنیک‌ها تصحیح خطا است. یافته های این مطالعه نشان داد که زبان آموزان نگرش مثبتی نسبت به تصحیح خطاهای شفاهی و تصحیح اکثر خطاهای خود داشتند. علاوه بر این، تصحیح فوری خطا توسط مدرس مورد علاقه اکثر آزمودنی ها بود. تقریباً نیمی از شرکت‌کنندگان به تصحیح خطا توسط خود علاقه داشتند در حالی که اکثر زبان آموزان رقبتی نسبت به تصحیح خطا توسط همکلاسی ها نشان ندادند. یافته‌های مربوط به انواع و تکنیک‌های تصحیح خطا، علاقه زبان آموزان به نوع تصحیح خطا "سرنخ های فرازبانی" که مدرس با استفاده از سرنخ ها باعث تشویق زبان آموز به تصحیح می شود بیشترین طرفدار و نوع "درخواست توضیح" که در آن مدرس دلیل و چرایی تولید خطا را می پرسد کمترین تعداد علاقه مند را به خود اختصاص دادند. یافته های این مطالعه باعث افزایش آگاهی ذینفعان آموزش زبان انگلیسی در زمینه نگرش و ترجیهات زبان آموزان ایرانی در خصوص تصحیح خطاهای شفایی خواهد شد.

کلمات کلیدی: تصحیح خطا، بازخورد اصلاحی شفایی، ترجیحات زبان آموزان، تصحیح خطا توسط مدرس، بازخورد فوری

INTRODUCTION

Humans are destined to commit errors. Similarly learning is generally a process involving the occurrence of errors. Brown (2007) explains that learning is a process in which progress is achieved by profiting from error through obtaining feedback. The context of foreign language learning is no exception and involves mistakes and errors. Davies and Pearse (2013) note that learning a foreign language is a gradual process in which errors are to be expected at all stages, and it is crucial for both teachers and students to understand that mistakes are an inevitable part of the learning process. According to Bartram and Walton (1991), students who refrain from communicating or speaking in order to avoid making a mistake are, in fact, committing an error.

According to Doff (1993) and Edge (1989), not only Language teachers should not be afraid of the learners' errors but also should value them since they are indicative of an individual's learning and provide a wealth of useful information. Therefore, errors should not be viewed as a negative trait that should not be punished. A large number of educators and researchers find learners' errors significant and evidence of learning process (e.g., Doff, 1993; Corder, 1993; Smith, 1994; Harmer, 2000; Davis & Pearse, 2002; Scrivener, 2011; Jean & Simard, 2011; James, 2013; Borg, 2015 and Ha et al., 2021).

Teaching EFL learners might be a complex task since numerous measures such as learners' styles, perceptions, attitude and preferences need to be considered for an effective learning process. One of the issues which might interfere learning and result in lack of proper success in language learning is discrepancies between learners and teachers preferences concerning oral error correction. A number of researchers (e.g., Oladejo, 1993; Ancker, 2000; Lee, 2005; Diab, 2005; Noora, 2008; Wang, 2010; Roothooft & Breeze, 2016; Li, 2017; Kartchava et al., 2020 and Ha et al., 2021) have discovered a number of inconsistencies between EFL teachers' and learners' preferences for oral error correction and think that this gap may be a factor in language learners' failure to succeed.

To address the disparity between teachers' and learners' expectations concerning oral error treatment and bridge the gap, English teachers' and learners' attitude and preferences for this issue need to be investigated and discovered. In order for learning to be effective, Wang (2010) suggests teachers to discover learners' perceptions and attitudes towards learning. Ferris (2003) stresses if learners' styles and teachers' teaching styles are matched, students' learning, attitude, behavior, and motivation are improved. Leki (1991) also makes the point that teachers will be better able to modify appropriate tactics and procedures to fit the preferences of the students if they are aware of the students' learning styles.

Statement of the Problem

Although some studies have been conducted to find EFL students' perceptions and preferences for oral error treatment in the context of Iran (e.g. Pishghadam et al. 2011; Mohseni & Edalat, 2012; Hashemian & Mostaghasi, 2015; Behroozi & Karimnia, 2017; Kazemi & Araghi, 2017; Khatib & Vaezi, 2017; Zarei et al., 2018; Mousavi & Gorjian, 2018; Boyerhassani et al., 2020; Chalak & Mazrouei, 2021; Khaki & Heidari Tabrizi, 2021; Nateghian & Mohammadnia, 2022; Sepehrinia & Torf, 2022), some mixed results and limitations such as small sample size and focusing on one aspect of error treatment are observable. Therefore, the current investigation, employing a large number of participants (N = 756), addressed EFL learners' attitude and preferences for aspects of oral error correction such as oral timing, techniques, provider etc. The findings enriches the current state of knowledge regarding oral error treatment.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant since it addresses the attitudes and preferences of a large sample of Iranian intermediate EFL learners (N = 756) for oral error treatment. Therefore, it is worth highlighting that the sample is more representative and results are more likely to be generalized. Moreover, almost all aspects of oral error correction, namely perceptions and attitudes towards oral error correction, preferences for

error correction providers, timing, main types of oral errorsand correction techniques are investigated. The results contribute to the existing knowledge regarding oral error correction. In addition, the findings raise language teachers' awareness concerning how Iranian intermediate EFL learners view oral error correction. As a result, they can either incorporate learners' attitudes, perception and preferences into their teaching practice, or if the learners' attitudes and preferences contradict the existing knowledge concerning effective oral error treatment, they can raise their learners' awareness of the issue and encourage modifications. A number of stakeholders who are directly or indirectly involved in language teaching and learning process might benefit from the current study's results. Language teaching policy makers, institute managers, teacher trainers as well as EFL teachers are among those who might find the results insightful.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Numerous researchers and language teachers (e.g. Mackey & Goo, 2007; Li, 2010; Lyster et al., 2013; Nassaji, 2016, 2017; Nassaji & Kartchava, 2020) have investigated and established the effectiveness of correcting language learners' errors and nearly all believe that addressing these errors is essential, beneficial and significantly contributes to learners' language learning development and success. However, before applying error correction, language teachers need to be aware of learners' personal, social and psychological variables which might interfere with error correction (Clemente, 2001). In details, According to Akay and Akbarov (2011) the points related to error correction which need to be considered are (1) the goal of the lesson which might be fluency, accuracy, controlled practice, freer practice etc. (2) learners' learning styles and personality features, (3) how much, when and how to correct the errors, (4) treat or not treat the errors, and (5) learners' age and level. Henrickson (1978) proposes five central questions concerning learners' errors namely "(1) Should errors be corrected? (2) If so, when should errors is corrected? (3)Which learner errors should be corrected? (4) How should learner errors be corrected?, and (5) Who should correct learner errors?" (pp. 390-391). The current investigation generally attempts to investigate Iranian intermediate EFL learners' attitudes and preferences for abovementioned five questions.

To Correct Or Not To Correct?

Some EFL teachers and researchers have considered error correction in black and white. According to some, the effectiveness of error correction can range from being ineffectual and even potentially damaging (Truscott, 1999) to being helpful (Russell & Spada, 2006). Bartram & Walton (1991) categorize teachers into heavy correctors and non-correctors. Doff (1993) classified teachers into (1) over-correctors, (2) under- correctors, and (3) moderate-correctors. Similarly, according to Noora (2006) and Riazi and Riasti (2008) teachers are categorized into three groups of (1) all error correctors, (2) judicious correctors, and (3) no error correctors.

Chastain (1998) believes that to correct or not to correct the errors depends on three main points. Some errors result from learners' lack of awareness of the rules which need to be corrected through awareness raising. Some errors are done due to learners' focus on fluency and not accuracy. Correction is not productive in this case unless learners' attitude is addressed and changed. Those errors which result from learners' cognitive processes load which are known as mistakes and are not due to learners' lack of knowledge do not need to be corrected and demand more freer communicative practice to be resolved.

Valdman (1975) classified errors into (1) global and deep errors which block communication and are incomprehensible, and (2) local and surface errors which don't block communication.

As mentioned by Bartran and Walton (1994) the nature of teaching tasks must be taken into consideration while correcting errors. In details, they believe that during communicative tasks which

focus on fluency more than accuracy, errors which might block communication need to be addressed while during controlled practice stage of the lesson, errors might be addressed more strictly. In general, numerous researchers (Chastain, 1975; Vigil & Oller, 1976; Celce- Murcia, 1985; Hairston, 1986; Hammerly, 1991; Ur, 1996; Truscott, 1999; Ramírez Von Wörde, 2003; Acosta, 2007) support judicious, selective and careful error correction while taking numerous factors such as learners' styles, anxiety, self-esteem, affective filter etc. into consideration.

When to Correct?

In terms of error correction timing, EFL teachers should take the nature of the task being performed into consideration (Bartran & Walton, 1994; Moss, 2000). Generally, during communicative tasks which focus more on fluency than accuracy, errors need to be addressed later while during controlled practice which involves drilling, errors might be addressed immediately. Moreover apart from the nature of the task, issues such as learners' motivation, styles and kind of error correction need to be considered. Error correction timing can be classified into (1) on the spot or immediate, (2) after the learner stop speaking, (3) after the task, (4) in the end of each stage of teaching, (4) in the end of the class, and (5) next session (s).

According to Allwright and Bailey (1991), immediate error correction may significantly impact learners' motivation to talk negatively, whereas long-delayed feedback is worthless. Similarly, the funding's of Acosta's (2007) reveal that learners did not favor immediate correction during freer practice and showed a preference for delayed error correction. The learners explained that since during communicative practice they focus on the communication flow, the corrected errors reoccur. In contrast, Ha et al. (2021) found that while teachers were concerned about learners' emotions and the potential impact immediate error correction might have on learners' flow of speech, learners preferred it when they received feedback right away. Tertiary EFL learners in the context of china in Zhu and Wang's (2019) research study did not show a positive attitude towards delayed error treatment. Similarly, Iranian university English as a foreign language learners preferred immediate to delayed error treatment in Zhang and Rahimi's (2014) investigation. Additionally, it was discovered that the teachers in Ha and Murray's (2021) study had doubts regarding the efficiency of immediate correction. Overall, a thorough review of the literature in this realm suggests that learners are more supportive of immediate oral error correction than are teachers, but additional research is required to draw more definitive conclusions about how learners and teachers view the timing of error correction.

Who Should Correct?

In terms of error correction provider, Edge (1989) proposed three options including (1) self- correction, (2) teacher correction, and (3) peer correction. Therefore, opposite the traditional only teacher correction attitude, self and peer correction should be encouraged among students and the peers. While the advocates of teacher correction (e.g. Allwright, 1975; Corder, 1993; Ramírez Acosta, 2007; Zacharias, 2007; Yushida, 2008) consider teachers responsible for error correction, a number of educators (e.g. Holley & King, 1974; Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Yushida, 2008) recommend self-correction which might demand teachers' wait time and cue provision. Peer correction has been advocated by some researchers (e.g., Burt & Kiparsky, 1972; Raven, 1973; Wingfield, 1975; Cohen, 1975; Valdman, 1975; Witbeck, 1976; Corder, 1993; Katayama, 2007), whereas the findings of researches carried out by some researchers (e.g., Porter, 1986; Oladejo, 1993; Ramírez Acosta, 2007; Sook Park, 2010; Sorayaie Azar & Molavi, 2013) reveal different views and conclude that neither teachers nor learners are interested in peer error correction. According to Edge (1989) teacher-correction need to be implemented only when self and peer correction fail.

How to Correct?

Teachers need to employ appropriate strategies in order to point out errors or facilitate correction (Scrivener, 2011). Previous studies (e.g. Schachter, 1981; Fanselow, 1987, 2012; Bartran & Walton, 1994; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Lyster, 1998) introduced various error correction techniques. The models developed by Lyster and Ranta (1997) proposing seven different types of correction namely (1) explicit correction, (2) recast, (3) clarification request, (4) metalinguistic clues, (5) elicitation, (6) repetition, (7) multiple feedback as well as Fanselow's (1987, 2012) introducing sixteen different error treatment techniques are more comprehensive and, therefore, used in this investigation.

In explicit correction, which is referred to as the least ambiguous strategy, teacher provides the learners with the correct form explicitly (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). While giving the right form, the teacher makes it abundantly clear that the student's previous statement was in error (e.g., "Oh, you mean," "You should say"). Recasting is the process in which teacher rephrases all or part of a student's faulty sentence while removing the mistake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Some researchers (e.g. Lyster & Panova, 2002; Lyster, 2004; Sakai, 2004; Ellis & Sheen, 2006; Yoshida, 2008) argue that while this technique is frequently used by teachers, it involves ambiguity and implicitness. The finding of a study by Ramírez Acosta (2007) shows that 95.2% of the learners favored recast because it does not cut their track of thought, does not cause stress, and it is not humiliating.

As Lyster & Ranta (1997) explain, through clarification request as a correction technique learners will learn that either their words were misunderstood by the teacher or that their utterance was poorly formed and needed to be repeated or reformulated. Common phrases used in this technique might include " Pardon me", "What do you mean by X?", or a repetition of the error. According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), metalinguistic feedback includes remarks, details, or questions about how well-formed the learners' utterances are without explicitly mentioning the right form. Metalinguistic comments which point out errors might include: "Can you find your error?", "No, not X,", "No.", "It's plural."

Elicitation refers to at least three techniques teachers use to directly elicit the correct form from the student. First, teachers elicit completion of their own utterance by strategically pausing to allow students to "fill in the blank". Such "elicit completion" moves may be preceded by some metalinguistic comment such as "No, not that. It's a..." or by a repetition of the error. Second, teachers employs questions to elicit correct forms (e.g., "How do we say X in English?"). Third, teachers occasionally ask learners to reformulate the utterance (e.g. Say that again). Some researchers (e.g. Bartran & Walton, 1994; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Tedick & Gortari, 1998) believe that elicitation is a very effective technique since it encourages self-correction, motivation, independence and cooperation and leads to a great amount of uptake.

Repetition, also known as echoing, is when a teacher repeats a student's faulty speech while also modifying their intonation to emphasize the mistake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). In echoing, teacher repeats learners´ erroneous sentence and puts a questioning intonation at the end to indicate there is a problem. While Harmer (2008) considers this method the best, Bartran and Walton (1994) argue that repetition and echoing are not effective because it sounds humiliating. Multiple feedback, according to Lyster and Ranta (1997), combines multiple types of feedback into a single teacher corrective turn. Using body language and facial expression as a kind of nonverbal elicitation correction is a favorable kind of error correction which is timesaving and amusing (Schachter, 1981; Bartran & Walton, 1994; Yao, 2000). Another type of elicitation error correction is writing erroneous utterances on the board followed by asking students for the correction. This technique has been advocated as a great error correction technique (Edge, 1989; Scrivener, 2011). Doing so, learners can identify their errors more quickly since they can see the wrong sentence in addition to hearing it. The teacher must first encourage learners to spot and explain their errors before teacher correction in order to give self-correction priority.

A number of investigations on learners' perceptions towards error treatment techniques have been conducted in various contexts and some have shown mixed results. For instance, Lee's (2013) research study revealed that advanced ESLstudents in the US favored explicit corrections while metalinguistic corrections was ranking the least favorite correction technique. This result conflicts with earlier research that indicated that most secondary and tertiary ESL learners in Singapore preferred metalinguistic feedback (Oladejo, 1993). Furthermore, the Iranian EFL learners in Zhang and Rahimi's (2014) study, preferred explicit and metalinguistic correction the most. Similarly, an investigation by Ha et al. (2021) indicate that explicit and metalinguistic correction were seen favorably by both teachers and students, who also placed a high value on the effectiveness of correction.

Roothooft and Breeze (2016) conducted a study in the Spanish EFL context and found that while teachers were hesitant to use explicit and metalinguistic feedback, learners were more open to receiving these two correction types. Teachers were also worried about potential negative responses from learners, although students seemed not to share this concern. The Chinese tertiary EFL learners in Zhu and Wang's (2019) study indicated that they preferred cues (such as repetition and metalinguistic correction) over explicit corrections. The above-mentioned studies collectively imply that context can play a role in learners' choices for correction types. The present research examines the attitudes, perceptions, and preferences of Iranian intermediate EFL learners for oral error correction employing a large sample of EFL learners. To this end, the following five research questionsare addressed.

RQ1. *What are the perceptions and attitudes of Iranian intermediate EFL learners towards oral errors?*

RQ2. *What are the preferences of Iranian intermediate EFL learners for oral error correction timing?*

RQ3. *What are Iranian intermediate EFL learners' preferences for oral error correction provider?*

RQ4. *What are Iranian intermediate EFL learners' preferences for error correction of main types of oral errors?*

RQ5. *What oral error correction techniques do Iranian intermediate EFL learners prefer?*

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study recruited 756 EFL intermediate adult learners, based on convenience sampling, from 30 different English language institutes in 3 large cities in Iran (Kerman, Shiraz and Tehran). They were all Farsi native speakers who had studied English as a foreign language for more than 3 years on average. The participants included 452 female and 304 male learners. The selected learners were approximately between 20 and 40 years of age (M = 28). Moreover, the Oxford Placement Test (Allen, 2004) was utilized to insure the level and homogeneity of the participants.

Instruments

The main instrument employed in this study (shown in the Appendix) was a questionnaire developed by the researcher based on a comprehensive research synthesis on learners' attitudes and preferences for oral error correction (e.g. Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Katayama, 2007; Fukuda, 2004; and Ha et al., 2021). The original questionnaire was in English which later was translatedand retranslated into Persian to avoid errors in responses and reveal more valid data. The English and Persian questionnaires were reviewed to assess their reliability and validity. Subsequently, some modifications were made to the final questionnaire which had 45 statements divided into 5 parts of (1) Attitudes towards oral errors, (2) Preferences for oral error correction timing, (3) Preferences for oral error correction provider, (4) Preferences for correction of seven main types of oral errors, and (5) Preferences for oral error correctiontechniques. On a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree

and always to never, the participants were requested to designate their degree of agreement or disagreement. Moreover, to assure the levels and homogeneity of the subjects, the Oxford Placement Test (Allen, 2004) was employed.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

In the beginning, a questionnaire to assess EFL learners' preferences and attitudes towards oral error correction was developed by the researcher based on Lyster and Ranta's model (1997); ideas were also used from similar studies on learners' perceptions and preferences for oral error correction (see Fukuda, 2004; Katayama, 2007; Ha et al., 2021). The original English questionnaire was translated and retranslated into Persian to avoid errors in responses and reveal more valid data. The questionnaires' reliability through Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.79. Concerning the validity of the questionnaire, it was evaluated by a team of ELT specialists.

Following the selection of 30 language institutes and 850 intermediate language learners, the OPT (Allen, 2004) was administered to assess the participants' level of proficiency and ensure the homogeneity of the learners, resulting in the exclusion of 94 participants. The questionnaire was administered to 756 EFL intermediate adult learners from 30 English language institutes in Kerman, Tehran and Shiraz. The learners were given 45 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Four and a half months were spent collecting the raw data via the questionnaire. Finally, the data were tabulated and categorized in preparation for further statistical analysis. Regarding the analysis of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics, frequency and percentage, as well as inferential statistics, cross tabulation and Chi-Square Tests, wereused to investigate EFL learners' perceptions, preferences, and attitudes towards the significance, types, techniques, provider, and timing of oral error correction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1. What Are Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Perception And Attitudes Toward Oral Errors?

The first research question addresses Iranian intermediate EFL learners' perceptions and attitudes towards their oral errors. To this end, as shown in Table 1, EFL learners rated 11 statements according to the five-point Likert scale by selecting the appropriate number: 1—Strongly Agree, 2—Agree, 3—Not Sure, 4—Disagree, 5—Strongly Disagree. Regarding thedata report, for the sake of brevity, both positive responses including "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" and negative responses i.e. "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" were added up and responses in "Not Sure" section were not considered. The data are not distorted in this way. On the contrary, it enables concise reporting of the findings. As can be seen in Table 1, 88% of the learner participants believe that making errors in learning English is natural and shows learners' learning development. Moreover, 64% of the learners believe errors in language learning are investable while 25.5% think they need to be avoided and minimized. The 10th statement deals with EFL learners' attitude whether teachers can criticize learners for making mistakes in class. As can be seen 76.5% of participants show a negative attitude towards this statement while slightly less than one-fifth, 19%, of respondents think they can be criticized for making mistakes. Synthesizing and considering statements 1, 7, and 10 which all address EFL learners' perceptions about the nature of error existence in EFL learning, it can be concluded that not only language learners perceive errors as an inevitable part of learning but also they consider errors as a constructive phenomenon which might facilitate language learning if treated judiciously. Therefore they cannot be criticized when they make errors. Therefore, one of the findings in this study is EFL learners' favorable attitude towards their oral errors. These findings are in line with the previous research studies investigating the effectiveness of oral error correction which consider error correction beneficial and necessary for L2 learners' language

development (e.g. Mackey & Goo, 2007; Li, 2010; Lyster et al., 2013; Zhang & Rahimi, 2014; Nassaji, 2016, 2017; Li, 2017; Ha et al., 2021; Kim & Mostafa, 2021).

Participants' responses to the second statement show that, 70% of respondents think that treating their errors in language learning positively affects their language learning development. Therefore, they consider error treatment as an important duty of teachers. The findings concerning the 5th statement, which support the previous statement, show that nearly 82% of respondents find error treatment an important duty of teachers and believe that if this role is neglected by teachers, they are clacking off. In contrast a small number of participants, 16.5%, disagree with the statement. The fourth statement attempts to see if learners believe once their errors are treated, they never reoccur. Leaving out the learners with neutral responses, the results show a disagreement and agreement rate of 74.5% and 17% learners respectively. This means that EFL learners do not perceive on-time error treatment enough to eradicate their mistake. Thus, a more systematic error treatment needs to be utilized by teachers.

Learners' responses concerning if teachers must treat all learners' errors reveal that while 67.5% of learners agree with the statement, nearly one-third, 28%, prefer selective error treatment by teachers. The reason for such a selection can be traced back into the cultural issues of Iran as well as Iranians' tendency to be perfectionists. Finally the last statement addresses learners' opinion concerning the effectiveness of error treatment in general which reveals that 82% of learners think treating most of their oral errors is not a waste of time and affects their language learning positively. All in all, considering the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 11th statements which deal with the efficiency of oral error treatment in the eye of learners, it is concluded that participants prefer most of their oral errors to be corrected for an optimal learning to happen and believe that error treatment as an important duty of a teacher is an essential part of language learning. The results are consistent with those of Ha and Nguyen (2021), who found that learners preferred to be corrected most of the time. According to Harmer (2008), error correction is a necessary component of both teaching and learning. Similarly, Katayama (2007) examined Korean and Japanese EFL students' preferences for corrections of oral errors and discovered that it is impossible to avoid error correction when teaching and studying EFL. Her study's findings, which are in line with those of the present study, show that EFL students from many cultural backgrounds, including Japanese and Korean, had a good attitude towards error correction.

With regard to the 6th statement "I react differently when my errors are treated", nearly 56% of learners agree with the statement while approximately one-fifth, 20%, disagree. According to Chen, Nassaji, and Liu (2016) learners' unique variations, such as their perceptions, impact the efficiency of feedback. In a study, Akirolu (2020) notes that some students experience intimidation while receiving correction. The existence of students who have negative feelings about error correction demonstrates the need to inform students of the effectiveness of corrective feedback in order to aid in their language skill development.

As the results reveal, a large number of participant in this study, 77.5%, express their concern about making mistakes while 14.5% disagree with the statement. Similar to the 8th statement which is more general, the 9th statement investigates if language learners worry to volunteer in class activities since they might make errors. As displayed in Table 1, nearly four-fifth of the participants, 79.5%, feel worried to volunteer due to the fact that they might make mistakes. On the other hand, less than one-fifth of the leaners, 17%, show their disagreement. Therefore, taking learners' psychological status in relation to error treatment into account, it is evident that nearly half of the participants in this study believe to show different reactions to error correction. Furthermore, most of the participants feel worried about making mistakes and volunteer in class since they might make error. The main justification for these findings is that in Iranian context and culture, individuals are often expected to be perfect and avoid mistakes and judged easily and, therefore, lose their face when making mistakes (Moloodi et al., 2001; Zafarani et al., 2022). The findings are in line with a study by Choi (2016), who discovered that pedagogical and

personal factors influence how students respond to English-speaking courses. According to akirolu (2020), when teachers decide to disregard some errors rather than correct all of them, students frequently feel better at ease speaking the target language. Hence, judicious and selective error treatment is significant.

Table 1

EFL Learners' Perception and Attitude toward Oral Errors

N	Statement	Total		SA		A		N		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Making errors in learning English is natural and shows learning development.	756	100	242	32	423	56	89	12	2	0.5	0	0
2	My learning improves if my errors are treated.	756	100	134	17.5	396	52.5	158	21	61	8	7	10
3	Teachers must treat all my errors.	756	100	271	36	240	31.5	32	4	129	17	84	11
4	Once my errors are treated, they never reoccur.	756	100	51	6.5	81	10.5	61	8	381	50.5	182	24
5	Teachers are slacking off if they do not correct my errors.	756	100	318	42	303	40	13	1.5	74	10	48	6.5
6	I react differently when my errors are treated.	756	100	202	26.5	224	29.5	180	24	109	14.5	41	5.5
7	I need to avoid errors in my language learning process.	756	100	182	24	301	40	81	10.5	150	20	42	5.5
8	I am worried about making errors in my language class.	756	100	219	29	367	48.5	61	8	80	10.5	29	4
9	I often worry to volunteer since I may make an error in my English class.	756	100	312	41.5	286	38	29	4	61	8	68	9
10	My teacher can criticize me when I make an error.	756	100	79	10.5	63	8.5	39	5	361	48	214	28.5
11	Treating most of my errors is a waste of time.	756	100	61	8	29	4	47	6	281	37	338	45

Note. SA = Strongly Agree. A = Agree. N = Neutral. D = Disagree. SD = Strongly Disagree

RQ2. What Are Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Preferences For The Timing Of Oral Error Treatment?

The second section of the questionnaire, comprising seven statements addressing the second research question, investigates Iranian intermediate EFL learners' preferences for oral errortreatment timing. Regarding the second research question, the participants were requested to express their degree of agreement with different timing of oral error treatment. As can be seenin Table 2 and Figure 1, 59% of EFL learners favored on the spot or immediate oral error correction while nearly one-third did not prefer it. The reason for EFL learners' preference for on the spot error treatment might be explained by their learning experience at school in Iranian context, where most English teachers follow GTM and ALM and believe it is their responsibility to correct students' errors as soon as possible. Therefore, learning context and learners previous experiences affect their attitude and preference for oral error correction (Loewen et al., 2009; Ha et al., 2021).

Concerning the second statement "Errors need to be treated when I finish speaking" this timing was preferred by 34.5% of learners while 56% of students did not favor it. Whether EFL learners' error should

be corrected in the end of activity was not favored by 67% and therefore they do not like to get feedback in this stage of the class. On the other hand only one-fifth of participants, 21%, prefer in the end of activity error correction timing. Dealing with learners' oral errors in the end of class time is preferred by some language teachers and learners. Similar findings are observed concerning oral error treatment in the end of the class, 70% disagreement vs. 20.5% agreement. The results concerning oral treatment of learners' error next session reveals that only 8% of learners showed their preference for this timing while a large number of participants, 82%, were not in favor of next session timing of oral error treatment. When learners asked if they prefer their error to be corrected next session only if the error reoccur, the majority of the subjects, 72%, are against this timing while approximately one-fifth, 18%, show a preference for this timing.

The last statement elicits learners' responses concerning if they prefer the errors to be overlooked and never corrected. As shown in Table 2, almost all subjects, 93%, feel that their oral errors need to be addresses and treated. Generally considering Figure 1 which provides a descriptive and comparative view of learners' preferences for various timing of oral error correction, it is clearly concluded that immediate or on the spot error correction is preferred more than other provided delayed timings. As mentioned earlier this might be explained by students' experience at school in Iranian context, where most English teachers supported grammar translation and audio-lingual teaching methods and believe it is their duty to correct the errors urgently.

Iranian students' preferences for "on the spot error treatment" are consistent with Davis' (2003) findings, who found that 86% of students believed errors should be correctedroughly as soon as possible in order to prevent learners from developing bad habits. Similarly Chinese tertiary EFL students in Zhu and Wang's (2019) research reported adislike for delayed feedback. Iranian university EFL students in Zhang and Rahimi's (2014) study preferred immediate over delayed feedback. Additionally, this result is in line with earlier research by Brown (2016), which found that in the majority of cases, students preferred to be corrected as soon as they made a mistake. Additionally, the findings are consistent with those of Sorayaie Azar and Molavi (2013), who discovered that most students preferred teachers to correct all of their errors since they did not view error treatment as a time waster. Findings concerning feedback timing, contrast with the studies by Farahani and Salajegheh (2015a, 2015b), and Mendez and Reyes (2012) which discovered that students preferred to receive feedback at the conclusion of the activity because they wanted to maintain their composure in conversation.

Table2
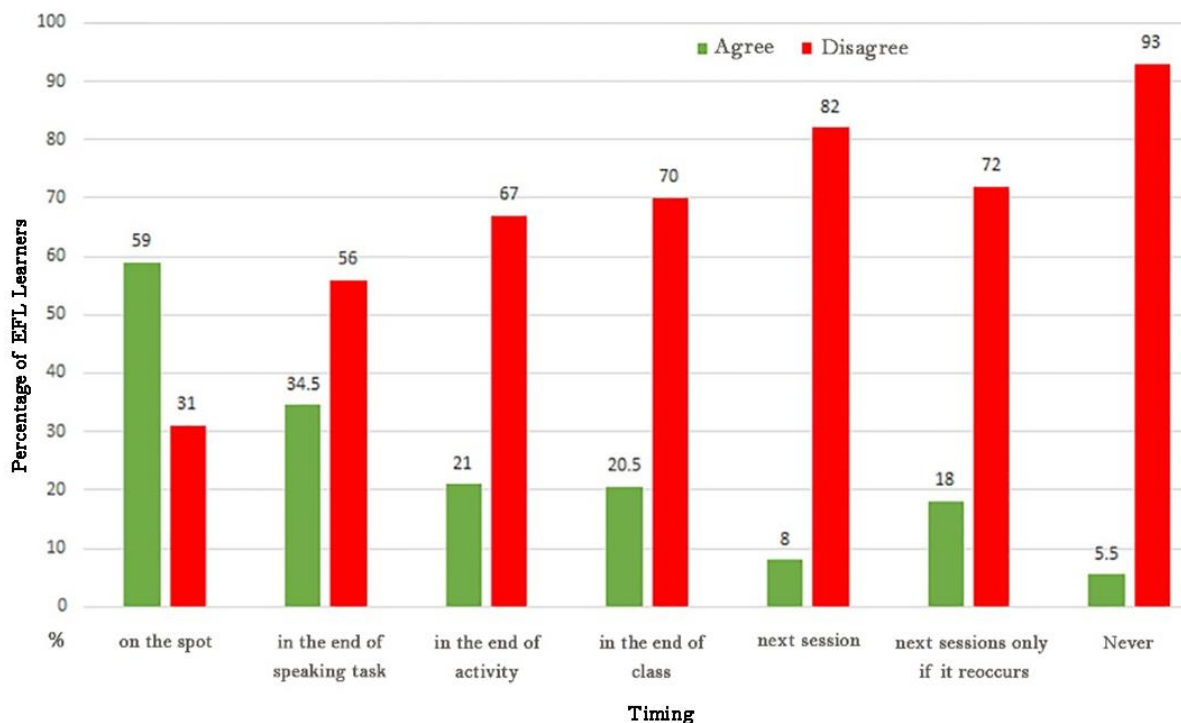*EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Timing*

N	Statement	Total		SA		A		N		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
12	Errors need to be treated on the spot.	756	100	201	26.5	245	32.5	75	10	154	20.5	81	10.5
13	Errors need to be treated when I finish speaking.	756	100	121	16	139	18.5	71	9.5	296	39	129	17
14	Errors need to be treated in the end of the activity.	756	100	81	10.5	79	10.5	89	11.5	258	34	249	33
15	Errors need to be treated in the end of the class.	756	100	79	10.5	75	10	81	10.5	262	35	259	35
16	Errors need to be treated next session.	756	100	18	2.5	42	5.5	81	10.5	317	42	298	40
17	Errors need to be treated next sessions only if they reoccur.	756	100	71	9.5	63	8.5	78	10.5	318	42	226	30
18	Teachers should not treat my errors.	756	100	19	2.5	21	3	12	1.5	286	38	418	55

Figure 1
EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Timing

RQ3. What Are Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Preferences For The Oral Error Treatment Provider?

The third section of the questionnaire corresponding to the third research question deals with EFL learners' preferences for oral error treatment provider. Generally speaking, three channels of error correction could be delivered through (1) teacher, (2) classmates, and (3) the student himself/herself. As can be observed in Table 3 and Figure 2, a high percentage of EFL learners (100%) prefer teacher correction. By contrast, when asked if they have a preference for peer correction, the majority of learners (86.5%) state that are not in favor of peer correction and express a strong dislike for peer error correction, only 13% prefer to be corrected by their classmates. Finally, with regard to self-correction, slightly over half of the students, 50.5%, favored self-correction while 48.5% of participants did not show a preference for self-correction. Comparing all three types of error treatment providers, it is concluded that teacher correction is the most favorable oral error treatment provider type while the second and third places are allocated to self- correction and peer correction. Therefore, all learners in this study show their strong preference for teacher correction.

The learners' strongly favorable attitudes toward receiving teacher error correction in the present study is consistent with the results of numerous studies among ESL and EFL learners (e.g. Cathcart & Olsen, 1976; Chenoweth et al., 1983; McCargar, 1993; Oladejo, 1993; Bang, 1999; Schulz, 2001; Katayama, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). The EFL students' overwhelmingly positive attitude towards teacher correction might be a consequence of their previous instruction (Katayama, 2007). According to Ha and Murray (2020) and Ha and Nguyen (2021), this can be explained by the perception that teachers are knowledge providers and students are knowledge recipients. Teachers are therefore expected to provide

students with the correct responses. This finding is consistent with the findings of numerous studies, such as Radecki and Swales' (1988), which revealed that the majority of students wished to be corrected by the teacher, as learners believe it is primarily the teacher's responsibility toidentify and correct error

In addition, they discovered that students viewed error detection as an important responsibility of instructors. The fact that almost 13% of EFL learners prefer peer correction may be attributable to false concerns of public criticism.

The findings contrast those of Katayama (2007), which indicated that 50.6% of learners favored peer correction. This finding goes in accordance with Oladejo's (1993), whofound that a minority of learners would not mind having their errors corrected by peers, whereas the vast majority of students were opposed to peer-correction. The findings regarding learners' interest in peer correction are consistent with those of Sorayaie Azar and Molavi (2013), who found that nearly 30% of the learners liked peer correction in group activities, suggesting that Iranian learners have no interest in peer-correction. This study's findings regarding self-correction, which indicate that half of the participants favored self-correction, are consistent with those of Couper (2019), who reported that some students believed that self-correction was essential to promote autonomy in learning.

Table 3

EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Provider

N	Statement	Total		SA		A		N		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
19	I prefer to be corrected by my teacher.	756	100	362	48	394	52	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	I prefer to be corrected by my classmates.	756	100	41	5.5	59	8	0	0	275	36.5	381	50
21	I prefer to be corrected by myself.	756	100	161	21.5	219	29	8	1	199	26	169	22.5

Note. SA = Strongly Agree. A = Agree. N = Neutral. D = Disagree. SD = Strongly Disagree

Figure 2

EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Provider
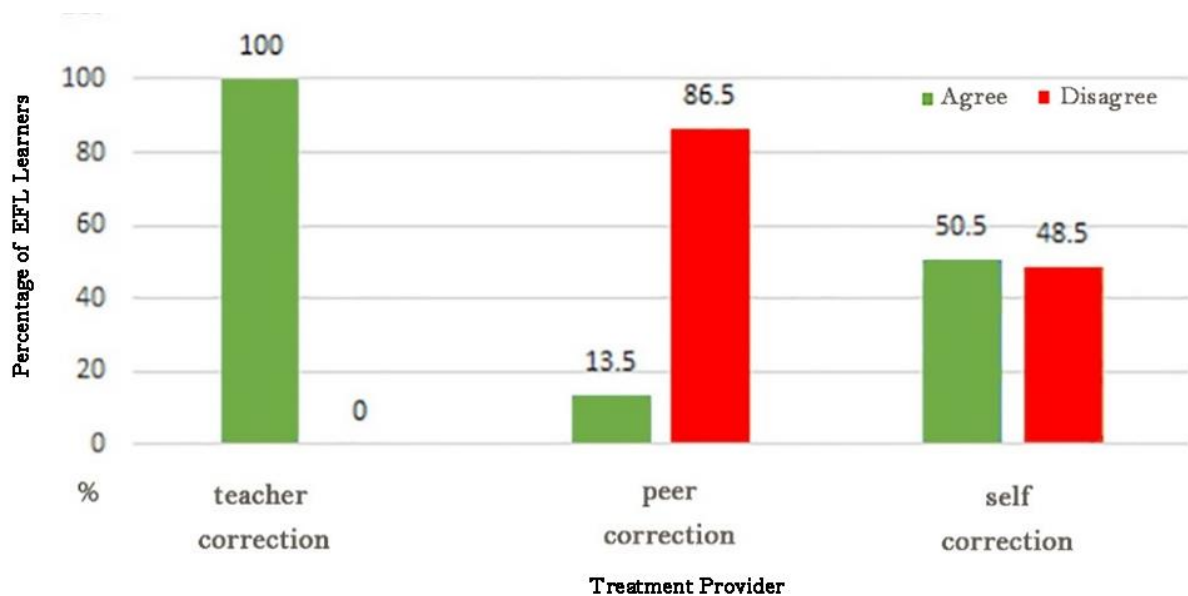
4.4. RQ4. What Are Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Preferences For The Oral Treatment Of 7 Main Errors?

The forth section of questionnaire, addressing the fourth research question, deals with EFL learners' EFL learners' preferences for error treatment of 7 main types of oral errors namely, (1) major errors which impede communication, (2) minor errors which do not block interaction, (3) high occurring errors , (4) low occurring errors, (5) phonology errors, (6) lexis errors and (7) grammar errors. As shown in Table 4 and Figure 3, more than 99% of EFL learners prefer their lexis, grammar and phonology errors to be treated. Regarding lexis and grammar errors, the learners' interest in correcting these types of errors could be attributed to their education in Iranian schools which emphasize grammar and vocabulary. Similarly, over 96% of respondents strongly believe that both major errors which block communication and minor error witch do not block communication need be corrected. With regard to high and low occurring errors 98.5% and 67% of EFL learners show preference for treatment. Therefore, the findings suggest that nearly all learners prefer all types of 7 errors to be addressed and treated except for low occurring errors with a percentage of 67.

Table 4

EFL Learners' Preferences for Error Treatment of 7 Main Types of Oral Errors

N	Statement	Total		SA		A		N		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
22	Major errors which block communication need to be corrected.	756	100	358	47.5	392	52	6	1	0	0	0	0
23	Minor errors which do not block communication need to be corrected.	756	100	371	49	361	47.5	7	1	17	2	0	0
24	High occurring errors need to be corrected.	756	100	694	91	58	7.5	4	0.5	0	0	0	0
25	Low occurring errors need to be corrected.	756	100	312	41	196	26	61	8	182	25	5	1
26	Phonology errors are important to be corrected.	756	100	569	75	187	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	Lexis errors are important to be corrected.	756	100	376	50	380	50	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	Grammar errors are important to be corrected.	756	100	618	81	134	18	2	0.5	2	0.5	0	0

Note. SA = Strongly Agree. A = Agree. N = Neutral. D = Disagree. SD = Strongly Disagree

Figure 3

EFL Learners' Preferences for Error Treatment of 7 Main Types of Oral Errors
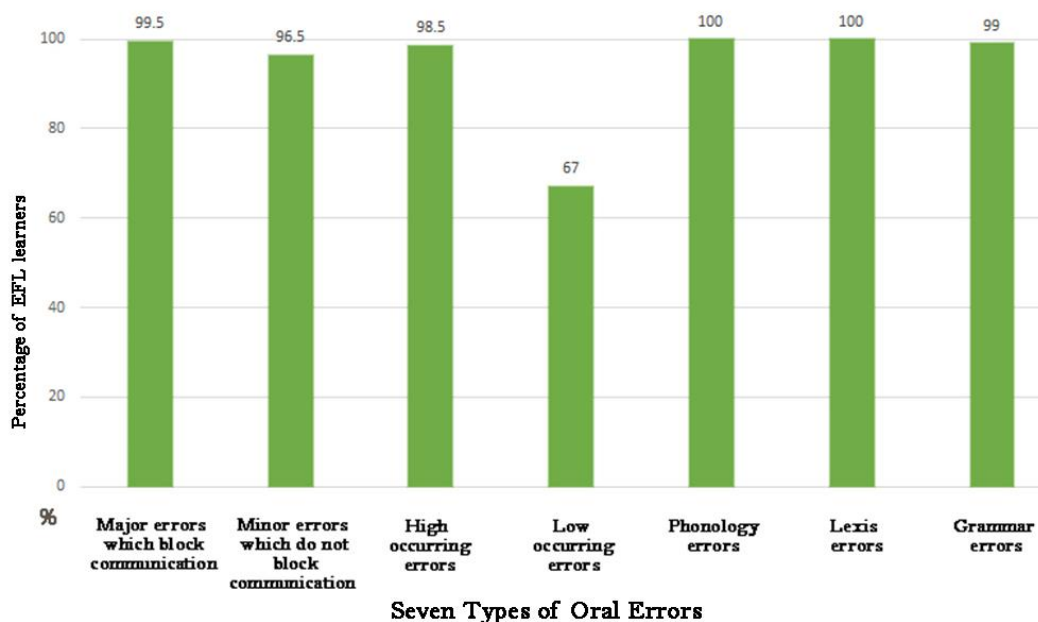
RQ5. What Are Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Preferences For The Oral Error Treatment Techniques?

The last section of the questionnaire corresponding the fifth research question investigates Iranian intermediate EFL learners' preferences for the oral error correction techniques. To this end, Lyster and Ranta's (1997) model proposing six different general types of corrective feedback as well as Fanselow's model (1987, 2012) consisting sixteen different error treatment techniques were used. The first two statements represent explicit oral error correction. Concerning the statement "Teacher explicitly indicates the error and comments on that." 54% of participants favor this correction technique while it was not favorable for 43%. The second explicit error correction technique is the one in which teacher explicitly indicates the problematic part and provides the correct version. While nearly one-fifth of learners did not prefer it, this correction technique was favored by 78.5% of participants. Comparing these two kinds of explicit error correction reveals that learners prefer the one in which teacher provides the correct form rather than the one in which learners need to think and come up with the correct form. This might be explained by learners' preference for teacher correction rather than peer or self- oral error correction. These results partially go in line those of Ha (2017) and Ha and Nguyen (2021) which indicate that the explanations of language rules to enhance learners' explicitunderstanding of grammar and vocabulary were highly valued by students because they helped improve the exam results. Moreover, the findings somehow go in line with those of some researchers (e.g. Katayama, 2007; Baz et al., 2016; Saeb, 2017; Tasdemir & Arslan, 2018) who show that students noted that for efficient learning, they need to know when they have made a mistake and how to correct it, along with an explanation from the teacher.

The second type of oral error treatment in this study is recast in which teacher reformulates or repeats student's erroneous utterance correctly. As shown in Table 5, more than 90% of participants preferred recast while few learners did not favor it (91% vs. 9%). When learners place a greater emphasis on language form than on communication, recasting is believed to be more evident and noticeable. (Hanh & Tho, 2018; Alkhammash & Gulnaz, 2019; Milla & Mayo, 2021). Statements 32, 33, and 34 are various ways of clarification request type of oral error treatment. Students' responses to the statement 32 "Teacher asks for repetition as if he did not hear or get the point." show that this technique is favored by 83.5% of learner while 15% did not feel comfortable with this way of clarification request error treatment. With regard to a technique in which teacher asks a clarification question to help learners spot and treat the error, just over half of the respondents, 53.5%, show a preference while 33.5% think this technique is not right for them. The last way for a teacher in clarification request type of error treatment is when teacher asks why the learner used the erroneous word or structure. This technique was liked by only 11.5% of learners while 79% did not favor it. Comparing three ways of clarification request type of error treatment shows that learners generally prefer the way in which teacher asks for repetition to offer learner a chance to self-correct and produce an error free utterance. However, the least favored way of clarification request is the one in which teacher wants learner to analyze and explain the reason the error was made.

The fourth type of error treatment in this study is metalinguistic clues with 5 statements explaining ways this type of treatment can be carried out. Among all 5 way of metalinguistic clues error treatment, the one in which teacher provides cues to correction or indicates the type of error was the most favored technique with 95.5% preference rate while the one wherein teacher assigns errors as homework where the students have to correct them was the least favorite one with 30% of learners who preferred it and 67% who did not like it. All three other statements namely "Teacher indicates the sentence is wrong without mentioning the error." (62% agree vs. 31% disagree), "Using disapproval gestures teacher indicates there is an error." (68% agree vs. 28% disagree), and "Teacher writes the error(s) on the board and encourages treatment." (62.5% agree and 35.5% disagree) were somewhat similarly preferred by more than two-third of participants and not favored by almost one- third of learners. The findings suggest

that most of the EFL learners appreciated the effectiveness of metalinguistic feedback type and its techniques which is in line with past studies in Iranian (Zhang & Rahimi, 2014) and Chinese EFL contexts (Zhu & Wang, 2019). However, it is inconsistent with that of Lee's (2013) with advanced English as a second language learners in American context.

Elicitation as the fifth type of oral error treatment comprised 5 techniques which correspond to five statement in the questionnaire from 40 to 44. Nearly 80.5% vs. 19% of learners prefer it when teacher simply asks for repetition to give the learner a second chance to produce an error-free sentence. The techniques in which teacher repeats the sentences up to the error and pauses for self-correction, received 88% of learners' preference while 9.5% did not favor it. Concerning the technique in which teacher asks some questions to make the learner analyze what the error is, it was found that 67% of respondents like this technique while 31% did not find it useful. The findings in regard with elicitation error treatment technique in which teacher gives the learner options to choose the correct form shows that it was found effective by nearly 92.5% of learners. Finally as can be seen in Figure 4, almost 59% of participants prefer the technique in which teacher provides some correct examples so the learner can self- correct. Among the five above-mentioned elicitation error correction techniques the one in which teacher gives the learner options to choose the correct form among is the most favoredone. Repeating the sentences up to the error and pausing for self- correction was the second and simply asking for repetition to give the learner a second chance to produce an error-free sentence, the third most favored and useful techniques. The last type of error treatment technique type is called "Repetition" in which teacher repeats the erroneous sentence stressing the error or using rising intonation. As shown in table 5, this techniques was found to be useful by 48.5% while 46% believe this is not an effective error treatment technique. Table 6 illustrates 17 oral error treatment techniques used in this study in order of their efficiency, the most to the least useful ones, based on EFL learners' opinions.

Table 5
*EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Techniques*

Type	N	Technique	Total		VU		U		N		NU		NUA	
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
explicit correction	29	Teacher explicitly indicates the error and comments on that.	756	100	161	21	250	33	19	2.5	165	22	161	21
	30	Teacher explicitly indicates the error and gives the correct form.	756	100	278	37	315	41.5	6	1	85	11	72	9.5
recast	31	Teacher reformulates or repeats student's erroneous utterance correctly.	756	100	207	27.5	481	63.5	0	0	59	8	9	1
clarification request	32	Teacher asks for repetition as if he did not hear or get the point.	756	100	264	35	366	48.5	13	1.5	74	10	39	5
	33	Teacher asks a clarification question.	756	100	186	24.5	218	29	82	11	136	18	134	17.5
	34	Teacher asks why the learner used the word or structure.	756	100	25	3	64	8.5	73	10	301	40	293	39
metalinguistic clues	35	Teacher indicates the sentence is wrong without mentioning the error.	756	100	172	23	294	39	54	7	179	23.5	57	7.5
	36	Teacher provides information to correction. Teacher indicates the type of error.	756	100	353	46.5	369	49	9	1	14	2	11	1.5

			Total	%	VU		U		N		NU		NUA	
	37	Using disapproval gestures teacher indicates there is an error.	756	100	266	35	251	33	28	4	124	16.5	87	11.5
	38	Teacher writes the error(s) on the board and encourages treatment.	756	100	103	13.5	371	49	17	2	218	29	47	6.5
	39	Teacher treats errors as homework where the students have to correct them.	756	100	84	11	145	19	21	3	305	40.5	201	26.5
elicitation	40	Teacher simply asks for repetition to give the learner a second chance.	756	100	296	39	313	41.5	4	0.5	61	8	82	11
	41	Teacher repeats the sentences up to the error and pause for learner's correction.	756	100	338	44.5	328	43.5	19	2.5	58	8	13	1.5
	42	Teacher asks some questions to make the learner analyze what the error is.	756	100	208	27.5	298	39.5	15	2	137	18	98	13
	43	Teacher gives the learner options to choose the correct form.	756	100	349	46	351	46.5	21	3	20	2.5	15	2
	44	Teacher provides some correct examples so the learner can self-correct.	756	100	192	25.5	255	33.5	112	15	135	18	62	8
repetition and echoing	45	Teacher repeats the erroneous sentence stressing the error or using rising intonation.	756	100	172	23	193	25.5	43	5.5	184	24.5	164	21.5

Note. VU = Very Useful. U = Useful. N = Neutral. NU = Not Useful. NUA = Not Useful At All

Figure 4

EFL Learners' Preferences for Oral Error Treatment Techniques
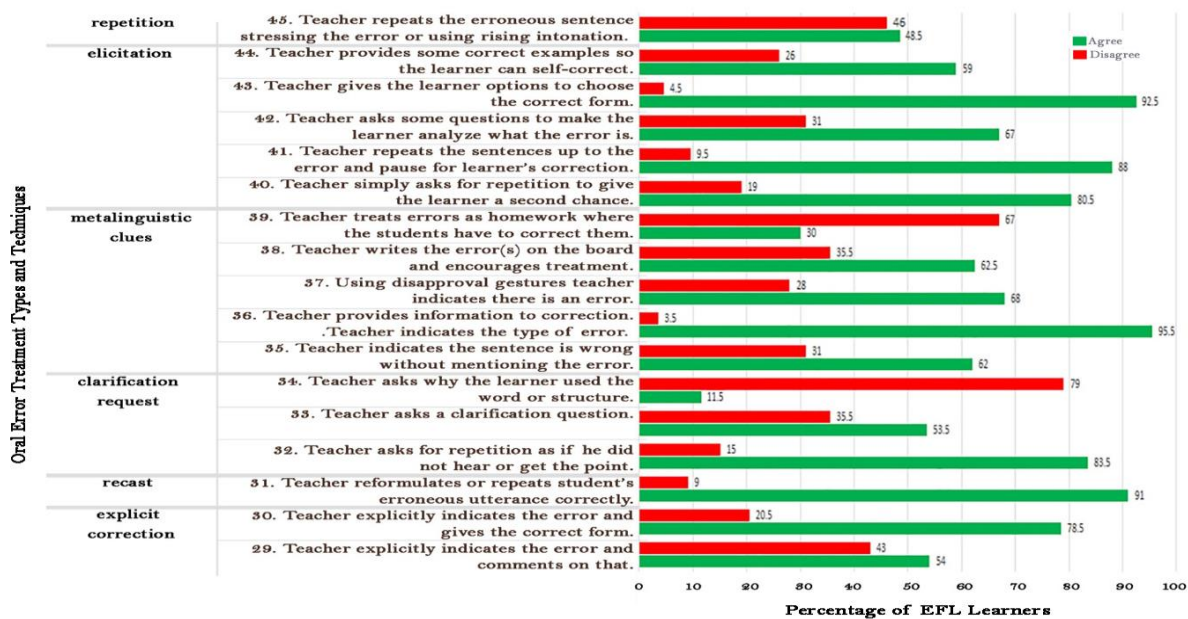
Table 6

Error Correction Techniques Preferences from the Most to the Least Favored One

Type	Technique	Effectiveness %	Order
metalinguistic clues	Teacher provides information to correction. Teacher indicates the type of error.	95.5	1st
elicitation	Teacher gives the learner options to choose the correct form.	92.5	2nd
recast	Teacher reformulates or repeats student's erroneous utterance correctly.	91	3rd
elicitation	Teacher repeats the sentences up to the error and pause for learner's correction.	88	4th
clarification request	Teacher asks for repetition as if he did not hear or get the point.	83.5	5th
elicitation	Teacher simply asks for repetition to give the learner a second chance.	80.5	6th
explicit correction	Teacher explicitly indicates the error and gives the correct form.	78.5	7th
metalinguistic clues	Using disapproval gestures teacher indicates there is an error.	68	8th
elicitation	Teacher asks some questions to make the learner analyze what the error is.	67	9th
metalinguistic clues	Teacher writes the error(s) on the board and encourages treatment.	62.5	10th
metalinguistic clues	Teacher indicates the sentence is wrong without mentioning the error.	62	11th
elicitation	Teacher provides some correct examples so the learner can self-correct.	59	12th
explicit correction	Teacher explicitly indicates the error and comments on that.	54	13th
clarification request	Teacher asks a clarification question.	53.5	14th
repetition and echoing	Teacher repeats the erroneous sentence stressing the error or using rising intonation.	48.5	15th
metalinguistic clues	Teacher treats errors as homework where the students have to correct them.	30	16th
clarification request	Teacher asks why the learner used the word or structure.	11.5	17th

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

According to Nunan (1987), one of the biggest obstacles to learning is the discrepancy between what teachers and students expect to happen in the classroom. To prevent belief mismatches, teachers are recommended to take into account their students' opinions andcreate ways to discuss them freely with them (Ellis, 2008). Concerning error treatment as a crucial aspect of language learning and every language class, some recent studies (e.g. Wang, 2010; Roothooft and Breeze, 2016; Li, 2017; Kartchava et al., 2020 and Ha et al., 2021) have discovered some discrepancies between EFL instructors' and learners' preferences which might result in language learning failure. Evidently, to resolve the contrasting expectations and mismatches between teachers and students and to bridge the gap, firstly, English teachers' and learners' attitude and preferences need to be investigated and discovered. Later, ways need to be found to openly discuss these discrepancies to avoid mismatches in beliefs and practice. Although

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numerous studies concerning EFL and ESL learners' and teachers' attitudes and preferences for oral error treatment have been conducted in various contexts including Iran, the findings often show mixed results. Moreover, to reinforce the studies conducted in Iran concerning EFL learners' perception, attitude and preferences for oral error treatment, this study might be insightful. To this end, this study investigated Iranian intermediate EFL learners' attitude and preferences for oral error treatment. In details, employing a quantitative approach, learners' attitude and preferences for (1) oral errors, (2) timing of oral error treatment, (3) oral error treatment provider, (4) oral treatment of 7 main errors types, and (5) oral error treatment types and techniques were studied.

Concerning the nature of error existence in language learning, almost all EFL learners believe that making errors in learning English is natural, inevitable and shows learners' learning development. Therefore they cannot be criticized for making mistakes. One of the study's most striking conclusions is that EFL learners have a favorable attitude regarding the occurrence of their oral errors and error correction. Moreover, EFL learners do not perceive on-time error treatment enough to eradicate their mistakes and think a more systematic error treatment needs to be utilized by teachers. In addition, majority of EFL learners are in favor of selective and judicious treatment of most the errors rather than all the errors. With regard to EFL learners' preferences for oral error treatment timing, it was concluded that most of the learners favored on the spot or immediate oral error correction while approximately less than one-third or even fewer learners had a preference for other timings namely "in the end of speaking", "in the end of task", "in the end of class", "next session". Therefore, the finding clearly suggest that immediate or on the spot error correction is preferred more than other provided delayed timings. Concerning EFL learners' oral error treatment providers, three sources of (1) teacher, (2) classmates, and (3) the student himself/herself exist. While a majority of EFL learners prefer to have their errors treated by their teachers, the minority of participants state that are in favor of peer correction and express a strong dislike for peer error treatment. Self-correction was favored by nearly half of the learners. Thus, it is concluded that teacher correction is the most favorable oral error treatment provider type while the second and third places are allocated to self-correction and peer correction.

With regard to EFL learners' preferences for error treatment of 7 main types of oral errors namely, (1) major errors that impede communication, (2) minor errors that do not impede communication, (3) high occurring errors, (4) low occurring errors, (5) phonology errors, (6) lexis errors and (7) grammar errors, it was found that a large number of participants prefer their lexis, grammar and phonology errors to be treated. Similarly, the majority of EFL learners show interest for the correction of their major and minor errors as well as high occurring errors. Interestingly, more than half of the learners show preference for treatment of their low-occurring errors. Therefore, it is concluded that nearly all learners prefer all types of 7 errors to be addressed and treated.

Concerning the 6 and 17 oral error treatment types and techniques' preferences respectively, it was found that a subtype of metalinguistic clues in which teacher provides information or hints to correction, an elicitation subtype where teacher gives the learner options to choose the correct form, recast, an elicitation subtype where teacher repeats the sentences up to the error and pauses for learner's correction, a clarification request technique in which teacher asks for repetition as if he did not hear or get the point, an elicitation technique in which teacher simply asks for repetition to give the learner a second chance and an explicit technique where teacher explicitly indicates the error and gives the correct form learners' were shown to be the most favored oral error treatment techniques. Moreover, repetition or echoing as a type of error treatment was favored by nearly half of learners.

The results of the present study would be of benefit to stakeholders offering data that could aid in a better understanding of how EFL students perceive and prefer oral error correction in the classroom. This investigation focused on Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Therefore, similar investigations considering ESL learners, learners with different levels ofEnglish proficiency such as elementary and advanced are

recommended. It is also advised to conduct research on cross-cultural disparities to determine whether learners' perspectives vary in various cultural contexts. Moreover, studies comparing learners' preferences in schools and language institutes might be useful. Furthermore, using a semi-structured interview to elicit participants' reasons and justifications for their responses might deepen and strengthen the findings. Finally, since learners' error correction preferences and perceptions might be affected by their individual differences, learning styles, socioeconomic status, gender, extraversion status, anxiety etc., taking these variables into account might be insightful.

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