ENGLISH-MAJORED STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS' ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN EFL SPEAKING LESSONS IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: Over the past two decades, corrective feedback (CF), in both oral and written forms, has been widely acknowledged as one of the key topics of discussion in second or foreign language pedagogy and research. However, English-majored university students' perceptions of teachers' oral CF have been relatively underexplored. This study investigated second-year English-majored students' views on teacher-provided oral CF in English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) speaking lessons at a university in Central Vietnam. The research collected questionnaire data from 200 respondents. The findings revealed that students valued CF, especially when it targeted errors that hindered communication or occurred repeatedly. Moreover, CF was preferred after students' speaking turns, and CF strategies such as metalinguistic clues, didactic recasts, and explicit correction were favored. These insights provide practical guidance for teachers in delivering timely, targeted, and effective CF in English speaking classes.

Key words: Corrective feedback (CF); teachers' oral CF; English majors; perceptions; EFL speaking

NHẬN THỨC CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGỮ VỀ PHẢN HỒI SỬA LỖI BẰNG LỜI NÓI CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN TRONG CÁC GIỜ HỌC NÓI TIẾNG ANH Ở VIỆT NAM

Tóm tắt: Trong hơn hai thập kỷ qua, phản hồi sửa lỗi (CF) ở cả dạng nói và dạng viết đã trở thành một chủ đề nổi bật trong giảng dạy và nghiên cứu ngôn ngữ. Tuy vậy, cách sinh viên đại học chuyên tiếng Anh nhìn nhận về phản hồi sửa lỗi bằng lời nói của giáo viên vẫn chưa được tìm hiểu nhiều. Nghiên cứu này khảo sát quan điểm của sinh viên năm hai chuyên ngữ tiếng Anh đối với phản hồi sửa lỗi của giáo viên trong các giờ học nói tiếng Anh tại một trường đại học ở miền Trung Việt Nam. Nghiên cứu thu thập dữ liệu bảng hỏi từ 200 sinh viên. Kết quả cho thấy sinh viên đánh giá cao phản hồi sửa lỗi của giáo viên, đặc biệt khi tập trung vào những lỗi cản trở quá trình giao tiếp hoặc lỗi lặp lại thường xuyên. Sinh viên mong muốn nhận được những phản hồi sửa lỗi từ giáo viên sau khi họ hoàn thành lượt nói của mình. Các chiến lược sửa lỗi như gợi ý siêu ngôn ngữ, tái diễn mang tính giảng giải và sửa lỗi trực tiếp được đánh giá cao. Những phát hiện này mang lại các gợi ý thực tiễn cho giáo viên trong việc cung cấp phản hồi sửa lỗi kịp thời, đúng trọng tâm và hiệu quả trong các lớp học nói tiếng Anh.

Từ khóa: Phản hồi sửa lỗi; phản hồi sửa lỗi bằng lời nói của giáo viên; sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh; nhận thức; kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ

1. Introduction

Corrective feedback (CF) has been considered a useful tool to enhance English learners' language competence (Yu, 2024). Lyster and Saito (2010) believed that the use of CF in class raises learners' awareness of their possible errors and the significant role of self-correction in the development of both language accuracy and fluency. In line with this, Nassaji (2015) emphasized that CF is a supportive instrument for teachers to help learners internalize correct forms and strengthen accurate structures through resolving errors related to various language areas such as grammar, pronunciation, and lexical usage. More importantly, the adoption of CF could bring about improvements in learners' motivation, achievement, and performance (Mahmoud, 2018). Therefore, knowledge regarding CF and its application in specific teaching contexts is essential for language instructors to enhance pedagogical practices (Zhang et al., 2025). Concerning the scope of this research, only oral CF was examined; therefore, CF here refers to the oral form of CF.

It is found that feedback effectiveness is closely linked to learners' perceptions (Zhang et al., 2022). Learners may react positively or negatively depending on how feedback is delivered, its frequency, and whether they perceive it as helpful or discouraging (Sheen, 2011). Indeed, student perceptions have been considered essential in determining the impact of feedback on learning (Havnes et al., 2012; Jonsson, 2013). It is thus important to explore students' perceptions of feedback, including how students receive, interpret, and apply feedback to inform instruction (Brandmo & Gamlem, 2025).

Prior studies have examined three aspects of learners' perceptions regarding oral CF, namely targets, timing, and strategies (e.g., Ha & Nguyen, 2021; Mahara & Hartono, 2024; Ölmezer-Öztürk & Öztürk, 2016; Roothooft & Breeze, 2016; Tran et al., 2024). With respect to these three constructs, while CF targets refer to decisions on which errors should be rectified (Ha & Nguyen, 2021), CF strategies cover different feedback strategies used by teachers to correct learners' errors, such as recasts, explicit correction, and clarification requests (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Finally, CF timing pertains to the ideal timing that teachers choose to correct learners' erroneous utterances (Ha et al., 2021b). Nevertheless, these studies have shown inconsistent results regarding students' preferences for CF targets, timing, and CF strategies, shedding light on the need for further in-depth investigation to understand these differences in various contexts. Additionally, in recent years, several studies have been conducted exploring students' perceptions of teacher CF in speaking lessons, primarily involving high school students, university students, or adult learners (e.g., Ha et al., 2021b; Kaewkascholkul & Jaturapitakkul, 2023; Lee, 2013). Nevertheless, within the context of higher education institutions, little is known about how Vietnamese English-majored students view teachers' oral CF. Since this group of learners might have distinctive viewpoints regarding CF, it is essential to investigate their perceptions of teacher CF to address this gap in the literature, which could yield valuable insights for educators to better comprehend the role of CF in enhancing students' speaking.

This study thus fills these gaps by exploring second-year English-majored students' perceptions of their teachers' CF in EFL speaking lessons at a university located in Central Vietnam. Specifically, it investigated these students' perceptions of the CF targets and timing and identified teachers' oral CF strategies that they found useful and supportive in enhancing their

speaking competence. With these aims, the study addresses the following question: *How do second-year English-majored students perceive teachers' oral CF in terms of its targets, strategies, and timing in EFL speaking lessons?*

2. Literature review

2.1 Corrective Feedback

Oral CF has been the center of discussion in numerous studies, such as Lyster and Ranta (1997), Ha et al. (2021a), Muslem et al. (2021), and Tran et al. (2024). Lyster and Ranta (1997) conceptualized CF as any reaction to a learner's utterance that provides information about its correctness or incorrectness. Their definition has been accepted in research focusing on oral communication (e.g., Lyster et al., 2013; Sheen, 2011).

The use of oral CF in the classroom is grounded in both cognitive interactionist and sociocultural theories. Specifically, from the cognitive interactionist perspective, oral CF facilitates language learning by directing learners' attention to the gaps between their output and target forms. This is consistent with the Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990) that noticing problems and new features is beneficial for learners' language gains. In addition, Long (1991) claimed that negative feedback in interaction supports linguistic development. From a sociocultural perspective, oral CF functions as scaffolded assistance, helping learners progress within their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). Overall, these theoretical foundations emphasize that oral CF is not merely a classroom technique but a principled mechanism that encourages language learners' development through a combination of attention, interaction, and guided support.

2.2 Targets of Corrective Feedback

What error types should be corrected is of critical pedagogical concern. As synthesized by Ha and Nguyen (2021), learners' CF preferences in EFL classrooms are inconsistent. Early research conducted by Oladejo (1993) revealed that Chinese-as-a-Second-Language (CSL) learners in Singapore, both at high school and tertiary education levels, favored comprehensive feedback, regardless of error severity. Similarly, in Katayama's (2007, as cited in Ha & Nguyen, 2021) study, Japanese undergraduates wanted every error to be addressed. Ha and Nguyen (2021) also found that students welcomed the correction of all errors, including minor ones, as they believed accuracy would help them score better in exams. Nonetheless, certain learner groups prioritized CF targeting errors that compromise communication or that occur frequently. While Lee (2013) found that ESL advanced learners highly prioritized the correction of frequent errors as they may wish to prevent error fossilization (Weekly et al., 2022), Vietnamese EFL learners in Ha and Nguyen's (2021) study favored CF on errors undermining communicative effectiveness. Notably, Zhang and Rahimi (2014) and Saeb (2017) reported a strong learner preference for CF addressing recurrent, communication-related errors. Zhang and Rahimi's (2014) study claimed that correcting such errors is essential for improvement. Some research has further found that excessive correction might reduce students' motivation and participation in speaking classes (e.g., Mahara & Hartono, 2024; Nhac, 2022). Taken together, the mixed results suggest that learners'

preferences for CF targets may vary according to their cultural and educational contexts, as well as their individual goals for accuracy versus fluency.

2.3 Different corrective feedback strategies

According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), CF consists of six strategies: Explicit correction, recasts, elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests and repetition. This classification of CF has been widely used in many studies (e.g., Lee, 2013; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022; Ölmezer-öztürk & Öztürk, 2016; Panova & Lyster, 2002). Nevertheless, the above CF strategies were categorized into reformulations and prompts (Ranta & Lyster, 2007). The former entails recasts and explicit correction, as both of them supply learners with target reformulations of their erroneous output. Meanwhile, the latter category does not involve reformulation, but includes a variety of techniques that prompt learners to self-correct (i.e., elicitation, metalinguistic clues, clarification requests, and repetition).

Sheen and Ellis (2011) proposed their CF categorization, covering attempts made both offline and online to alert learners to their errors (see Table 1). Lyster et al. (2013) also developed their CF classification with the addition of different single feedback strategies on a continuum from implicit to explicit. They organized CF strategies into two main categories: The first one is prompts, which encourages learners to self-correct by drawing their attention to errors. Prompts consist of five strategies: classification requests, repetition, paralinguistic signal, elicitation, and metalinguistic clue. The second category is reformulations, which provide learners with the correct form by reformulating their incorrect utterances. Reformulations cover four strategies: conversational recast, didactic recast, explicit correction, and explicit correction with metalinguistic explanation. Finally, Celce-Murcia and Snow (2014) suggested their feedback typology in the classroom setting shown in Table 2.

Table 1

The taxonomy of oral CF by Sheen and Ellis (2011, p. 594)

Strategy	Implicit	Explicit
Input-providing	- **Conversational recasts**: The correction involves reformulating what the student said to solve a communication issue. This kind of recast is usually like a confirmation check, with a question mark following the new phrase (e.g., "Oh, so you were sick, were you?").	- **Didactic recasts**: The correction comes in the form of rephrasing what the student said, even though there was no problem with communication. - **Explicit correction only**: The correction is a direct indication of an error, accompanied by the provision of the correct form. - **Explicit correction with metalinguistic explanation**: A metalinguistic comment not only indicates an error but also presents the correct form.

Output-prompting	- **Repetition**: An incorrect utterance made by the student is repeated without any intonational highlighting of errors. - **Clarification requests**: The speaker shows a lack of understanding by directing attention to an erroneous utterance made by the student	- **Metalinguistic clue**: The correction is a short metalinguistic statement intended to prompt learners to self-correct their erroneous utterance. - **Elicitation**: A prompting question is used by the teacher to verbally elicit the correct form from the learner. - **Paralinguistic signal**: An effort is made to non-verbally get the learner to use the correct form.

Table 2

Typology of teacher feedback by Celce-Murcia and Snow (2014, p. 353)

Feedback strategies	Teacher Behavior/Response
Overt correction	The teacher corrects the error explicitly.
Recast	The teacher says the word or phrase again, but correctly.
Questioning	The teacher questions the answer by asking, e.g., "Is that correct?"
Denial	The teacher says, "That's wrong."
Pinpointing	The teacher uses a pause and rising intonation to signal the need for an alternate form.
Oral cueing	The teacher gives different grammatical options and invites students to select the correct one.
Written cue	The teacher uses a written cue, or points to reminders around the room, such as signs and sticky notes, which show common errors like missing -s, -ing, and be copula.
Grammatical terms	The teacher uses a grammatical term, a part of speech, for example, to signal where students made an error.
Paralinguistics	The teacher indicates the error via facial expressions, and gestures.
Appeal to peers	The teacher asks other students to identify and fix the error.

Within the scope of the present research, the abovementioned CF typologies were collated and then combined selectively to present a more comprehensive coverage of teacher CF in classroom settings. Hence, there were 13 CF strategies examined in this study: Conversational recast, didactic recast, explicit correction, metalinguistic clue, elicitation, repetition, paralinguistic signal, clarification request, questioning, denial, oral cueing, written cue, and appeal to peers. The other CF strategies were not taken into examination for two reasons. First, to ensure the reliability of the analysis and facilitate meaningful comparison with existing oral CF literature, the current research prioritized oral CF strategies that are more widely established and discussed in previous studies. Moreover, informed by the researcher's teaching experience in Vietnamese EFL speaking classrooms, the selected strategies reflect commonly observed instructional practices rather than an exhaustive list of all possible oral CF strategies.

Specifically, conversational recasts, according to Sheen and Ellis (2011), refer to a confirmation check, with a question mark following the new phrase (e.g., "oh, so you were sick, were you?"). Meanwhile, didactic recasts involve rephrasing what students say, even though no communication-related issues occur. Explicit correction pertains to both direct error indication and provision of correct forms (Sheen & Ellis, 2011). While questioning involves teachers using

questions to elicit learners' self-correction without explicitly supplying the correct answer (Celce-Murcia & Snow, 2014), metalinguistic clues support self-correction by explicitly directing learners' attention to relevant linguistic rules without providing the correct form (Sheen & Ellis, 2011). Elicitation points to the provision of hints by teachers to help learners produce the correct form. Repetitions refer to teachers' repeating students' incorrect utterances with signals, such as raised intonation, to highlight the error. Paralinguistic signals involve teachers' use of facial expressions and gestures that alert learners to an error and prompt the correct form. Clarification requests refer to teachers showing a lack of understanding to direct students' attention to an erroneous utterance (Sheen & Ellis, 2011). According to Celce-Murcia and Snow (2014), while oral cues involve teachers giving grammatical options for students to select the correct one, denial refers to teachers explicitly rejecting a learner's response by stating that it is incorrect, without providing the correct form or further explanation. Written cues involve teachers pointing to reminders (e.g., signs and sticky notes) placed around the classroom to remind students of common errors. Finally, appeals to peers refer to teachers actively initiating and managing correction by inviting other students to identify and repair a learner's error.

Previously, studies have made efforts to identify students' favored CF strategies in speaking lessons. These studies have repeatedly valued the explicitness and clarity of CF. A study conducted by Li (2010) concluded that explicit feedback, especially for learners of relatively low proficiency levels, was particularly effective as it offered direct correction or clear explanation, making the feedback easy for learners to comprehend. Li's finding resonated with subsequent studies among different groups of learners. For instance, Roothooft and Breeze's (2016) findings confirmed that both explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback were positively evaluated, while Ölmezer-Öztürk and Öztürk (2016) discovered that learners showed a strong preference for explicit correction, as this CF strategy was beneficial for awareness and long-term retention, even though some participants found metalinguistic clues anxiety-provoking. Similarly, Tran et al. (2024) reported that Vietnamese English-majored students valued metalinguistic clues most highly, since this CF strategy not only provided correct forms but also explanations of underlying rules. In contrast, peer correction was generally viewed with skepticism. For example, the learners in Baz et al.'s (2016) study considered teacher-provided feedback more useful than peer-delivered feedback, and this pattern was echoed in Ha and Nguyen (2021), where participants expressed discomfort with peer correction, mentioning inaccuracy and anxiety when it came to peer judgment. These reactions could be explained by Schulz's (2001) observation that learners' prior educational backgrounds often shape expectations about teachers being the primary source of CF.

Other feedback strategies, such as paralinguistic signals, yielded mixed findings. Maghfiroh et al. (2024) observed that although paralinguistic signals accounted for about 12% of Indonesian tutors' CF, no students strongly preferred them. Additionally, Saeb (2017) cautioned that such signals were likely to cause misinterpretation and potential learning failure. By contrast, Kartchava (2019) emphasized the usefulness of nonverbal cues, such as gestures, facial expressions, deictic movements, in drawing attention to errors. Recently, Maruf et al. (2025) highlighted the role of paralinguistic signals in enhancing learners' noticing, engagement, and comprehension. Finally, studies on negative evidence shed light on its limited effectiveness in class. Carroll and Swain (1993) found explicit rejection of learner output could trigger error

noticing; however, it did not necessarily lead to successful repair. Panova and Lyster (2002) also reported that rejection without scaffolding or modeling led to fewer learner corrections.

2.4 Timing of Corrective Feedback

According to Hossain et al. (2024), teachers should understand the optimal timing of feedback to create a supportive and responsive learning environment. CF timing concerns the point at which learners receive correction. CF could be either immediate or delayed (Li et al., 2025). The former is provided immediately after an error occurs, whereas the latter is delayed until the completion of the pedagogical activity serving as the correction context (Li et al., 2016). As previously discovered, learners' attitudes toward CF timing are mixed. Ölmezer-Öztürk and Öztürk (2016) revealed a general tendency among learners to prefer post-utterance CF to avoid disruption of speech flow and protect face. This reflects Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which predicts that intrusive, mid-performance correction may heighten learners' anxiety. By contrast, other research in exam-oriented contexts revealed learner preferences for immediate CF, which allows them to notice and correct errors before forgetting; meanwhile, delayed CF might come with risks of memory loss and missed opportunities to repeat the corrected form (Ha et al., 2021b). Recently, Tran et al. (2024) also found that Vietnamese students favored immediate CF. Overall, although CF timing as a critical pedagogical consideration has been recognized in the existing literature, previous findings have remained inconsistent across various contexts.

In sum, prior investigations into learners' perceptions of teacher CF have shown inconsistent and context-dependent results across the three dimensions (i.e., CF strategies, targets, and timing). Learners often favor explicit and clear strategies (e.g., explicit correction and metalinguistic clues), whereas strategies, such as paralinguistic signals and appeals to peers, have generated mixed attitudes. Likewise, learners' preferences for CF targets and timing vary across cultural and educational settings and reflect different accuracy–fluency priorities, leading to non-universal patterns. These inconsistencies highlight an existing need for a more integrated, context-sensitive examination. Hence, the present study was conducted to examine learners' preferences for CF strategies, targets, and timing in the context of higher education in Vietnam.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

A total of 200 students were selected using the convenience sampling technique. According to Fowler (2013), in survey-based educational research, it is recommended that a minimum sample size could possibly range from 100 to 200 respondents. The sample in this present study comprised mainly female students (83%) aged 18–22. All of them attended compulsory on-campus Speaking 4 classes during data collection. The Speaking 4 course aimed to help students at B1 level of English-speaking proficiency, targeting both accuracy and fluency in speaking as well as non-verbal communication. Additionally, 55.5% of the participants also attended off-campus speaking courses, primarily IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Speaking and Communicative English. In terms of self-assessed English proficiency, 126 participants positioned themselves within the A1–B1 range, 69 at B2, and only 5 at C1.

3.2 Data collection

This study collected quantitative data through a closed-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised four sections labelled A, B, C, and D. Section A contained seven self-designed questions used to collect participants' personal information. Section B focused on the identification of the types of errors that the participants would like to receive CF for. In essence, this part was a cluster of five statements intentionally adapted from a section of Ha and Nguyen's (2021) questionnaire, measuring the same construct. These statements represent five CF targets, including the correction of every error, common errors in class that do not block communication. (e.g., "yesterday I go to school." instead of "yesterday I went to school."), communication-blocking errors (e.g., "I'm boring." instead of "I'm bored."), frequent errors (e.g., repeatedly saying "he go to school." instead of "he goes to school."), and the correction of lesson-related errors. Section C served as a means to unveil students' preferred CF strategies. This section consisted of 13 statements, eight of which were adapted from Ha et al. (2021b), and the other five statements were self-designed based on the categorization of classroom feedback in Celce-Murcia and Snow (2014). Section D was constructed with regard to the ideal timing for teachers to correct students' errors. This section consisted of three statements, also adapted from a section of the questionnaire by Ha et al. (2021b).

The questionnaire was designed in Vietnamese to mitigate potential language barriers and yield more accurate data. It was then digitalized using Google Forms and underwent piloting with 10 volunteer second-year English majors. The official questionnaire was administered to 200 students via the Facebook-based community widely followed by students at the selected higher education institution, with a two-week window for completion and collection. Prior to participation, the students were informed in detail about the purpose of the study and the questionnaire procedure. The participants were not identified in any form.

3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis phase in this present study adopted the quantitative approach. Specifically, the quantitative dataset was analyzed using the software IBM SPSS Statistics version 26.0. A reliability test was performed using this software to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire's main constructs, and the results (Table 3) indicated reliable internal consistency with Cronbach alpha values ranging from 0.631 to 0.948. Although the value of section D was 0.631, it is acceptable. This is because the section has only three items, and Cronbach's alpha partly depends on the number of items and reflects the average interrelatedness among items rather than a fixed quality threshold (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Taber, 2017). The software was also utilized to calculate relevant values of the mean, standard deviation, and percentages of the main clusters in the questionnaire. The interpretation of mean values of individual items was guided by Pimentel's (2010) interval framework. In particular, the mean values of 1.00–1.80 indicate "Strongly disagree", 1.81–2.60 "Disagree", 2.61–3.40 "Neutral/Uncertain", 3.41–4.20 "Agree", and 4.21–5.00 "Strongly agree".

Table 3

The Cronbach's α values of the three main constructs of the questionnaire

Section	Construct	Cronbach's α value
B	Students' preferred targets of teacher CF	0.799
C	Students' preferred strategies of teacher CF	0.948
D	Students' preferred CF timing	0.631
	Overall Cronbach's α value	**0.950**

4. Findings

This part displays the findings from the data collected. The students' responses were rated on a five-point scale in three sections (B, C, and D) of the questionnaire, where 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4 means Agree, and 5 means Strongly Agree.

4.1 Students' preferred CF targets in EFL speaking lessons

Section B of the questionnaire examined the students' preferred targets of teacher CF. The results (Table 4) show that the students were positive about receiving teachers' oral CF, irrespective of error types. Particularly, errors that impede communication were most preferred $(M = 4.38, SD = 0.811)$. Frequent errors $(M = 4.26, SD = 0.851)$ were also believed to be worth receiving corrections, with over three-quarters of the total participants showing their agreement toward this CF target. The correction of every error was perceived positively $(M = 3.58, SD = 1.049)$. Pertaining to this CF target, while 109 (54.5%) participants showed their positivity towards this CF target, the remaining (17.5%) admitted their negativity to some extent. It is notable that more than a quarter of the total respondents remained neutral, making up 28%.

Table 4

Participants' preferences for CF targets (N = 200)

Item	CF target	1 n (%)	2 n (%)	3 n (%)	4 n (%)	5 n (%)	M	SD
B1	Correct every error	3 (1.5)	32 (16)	56 (28)	65 (32.5)	44 (22)	3.58	1.049
B2	Correct common errors in class that do not block communication	8 (4)	14 (7)	46 (23)	58 (29)	74 (37)	3.88	1.110
B3	Correct communication-blocking errors	1 (0.5)	5 (2.5)	21 (10.5)	64 (32)	109 (54.5)	4.38	0.811
B4	Correct frequent errors	2 (1)	5 (2.5)	26 (13)	74/(37)	93 (46.5)	4.26	0.851
B5	Correct lesson-related errors	2 (1)	29 (14.5)	38 (19)	73 (36.5)	58 (29)	3.78	1.052

4.2 Students' preferred strategies of teacher CF in EFL speaking lessons

Table 5 displays the results of section C utilized to discover learners' CF preferences. This part of the questionnaire consisted of 13 items representing 13 CF strategies in speaking lessons.

Table 5

Participants' preferences for CF strategies (N = 200)

Item	CF Strategy	1 n (%)	2 n (%)	3 n (%)	4 n (%)	5 n (%)	M	SD
C1	Elicitation	2 (1)	14 (7)	55 (27.5)	77 (38.5)	52 (26)	3.82	0.935
C2	Repetition	1 (0.5)	34 (17)	51 (25.5)	82 (41)	32 (16)	3.55	0.971
C3	Metalinguistic clue	1 (0.5)	3 (1.5)	22 (11)	66 (33)	108 (54)	4.39	0.781
C4	Clarification request	3 (1.5)	17 (8.5)	51 (25.5)	90 (45)	39 (19.5)	3.73	0.924
C5	Paralinguistic signal	5 (2.5)	40 (20)	85 (42.5)	39 (19.5)	31 (15.5)	3.26	1.027
C6	Didactic recast	1 (0.5)	7 (3.5)	33 (16.5)	54 (27)	105 (52.5)	4.28	0.896
C7	Conversational recast	1 (0.5)	7 (3.5)	48 (24)	82 (41)	62 (31)	3.99	0.859
C8	Explicit correction	3 (1.5)	7 (3.5)	35 (17.5)	52 (26)	103 (51.5)	4.22	0.959
C9	Questioning	3 (1.5)	33 (16.5)	36 (18)	97 (48.5)	31 (15.5)	3.60	0.987
C10	Denial	6 (3)	44 (22)	82 (41)	41 (20.5)	27 (13.5)	3.20	1.026
C11	Oral cueing	2 (1)	8 (4)	54 (27)	77 (38.5)	59 (29.5)	3.92	0.901
C12	Written cue	1 (0.5)	36 (18)	60 (30)	68 (34)	35 (17.5)	3.50	0.997
C13	Appeal to peers	9 (4.5)	44 (22)	52 (26)	68 (34)	27 (13.5)	3.30	1.094

As shown in Table 5, the students favored most of the CF strategies. Noticeably, around three quarters of the participants showed their agreement toward metalinguistic clues, didactic recasts, and explicit correction. Metalinguistic clues were most favored (M = 4.39, SD=0.781), suggesting learners' desire for form-driven guidance from their teachers. This strategy was followed by didactic recasts (M = 4.28, SD= 0.896). It is important to mention the learners' preference for explicit correction (M=4.22, SD=0.959), ranked third.

Notably, the figures for appeals to peers, paralinguistic signals, and denial indicated uncertainty. Although the mean scores for these strategies (3.30, 3.26, and 3.20 respectively) fall into the neutral range, the distribution of responses reveals considerable variation. For appeals to peers, 47.5% of the students expressed their agreement (agree or strongly agree), while 26% remained neutral and 26.5% disagreed to some extent. Similarly, paralinguistic signals received mixed responses, with 42.5% of the participants having neutral ideas, 35% agreeing and 22.5% disagreeing. Denial followed a comparable pattern, with 41% of the participants selecting neutral, 34% agreeing, and 25% disagreeing.

4.3 Students' preferred CF timing in EFL speaking lessons

Table 6 presents the findings of section D of the questionnaire used to unveil the participants' preferred CF timing. As indicated in Table 6, the participants favored both

immediate and post-utterance CF. However, they believed CF should be ideally provided after they have finished their speaking (M = 4.43, SD = 0.741). This suggests a strong preference for uninterrupted speech in speaking classes. For immediate correction, its mean value (3.91) indicates a general agreement among the participants. Conversely, the decision to record errors for correction at the end of the lesson was least favored, with the values of M and SD being 3.45 and 1.065, respectively.

Table 6

Participants' preferences for CF timing (N= 200)

Item	CF timing	1 n (%)	2 n (%)	3 n (%)	4 n (%)	5 n (%)	M	SD
D1	Correct immediately	7 (3.5)	17 (8.5)	52 (26)	35 (17.5)	89 (44.5)	3.91	1.166
D2	After speaking turns	2 (1)	2 (1)	12 (6)	75 (37.5)	109 (54.5)	4.43	0.741
D3	Record errors for end-of-lesson correction	5 (2.5)	38 (19)	54 (27)	68 (34)	35 (17.5)	3.45	1.065

5. Discussion

The present study was set out to examine second-year English-majored students' perceptions of teachers' CF in terms of CF targets, strategies, and timing, in EFL speaking lessons at a higher education institution located in Central Vietnam.

With regard to CF targets, the student participants placed the highest priority on errors that hinder communication and on errors that occur frequently. These results are in line with prior research (Ha & Nguyen, 2021; Zhang & Rahimi, 2014), which found CF that addresses communication breakdowns and high-frequency errors to be favored. One plausible explanation for this result could be that accuracy and fluency are emphasized in the target speaking courses. This heightened students' awareness of teacher CF that covers both aspects. Moreover, as learners are often afraid of error fossilization (Weekly et al., 2022), the preference for correcting communication-impeding and recurring errors here seems understandable.

In addition, the correction of all errors was welcomed by more than half of the participants in this present study. This is also in line with the findings in Ha and Nguyen's (2021) study, whose participants favored the correction of all errors, even minor ones, as they claimed that building fluency is important, but they preferred to work on their level of language accuracy for the purpose of gaining better scores in subsequent exams. Nevertheless, Mahara and Hartono (2024) discovered that excessive CF could reduce students' motivation and participation in speaking. This contrast might suggest that exhaustive correction is far from ideal. One possible justification for this incongruence could be the fact that accuracy is among the key assessment criteria of the Speaking 4 course. Therefore, it seems sensible that the participants in the present study also wanted all their errors to be rectified for the purpose of gaining better scores in their end-of-course exams.

With respect to teacher CF strategies, the participants in this present study preferred metalinguistic clues and explicit correction. These findings corroborate those of earlier studies revealing students' appreciation for explicit and informative feedback strategies (e.g., Roothooft & Breeze, 2016; Tran et al., 2024). Specifically, Tran et al. (2024) found that Vietnamese English majors valued metalinguistic clues most highly, as this CF strategy provided not only correct forms but also linguistic explanations. Explicit correction was, in their study, the second most favored CF strategy, as it is "essential for students' learning experiences" (Tran et al., 2024, p.167). Similarly, explicit correction and metalinguistic feedback were rated positively by the majority of the students in Roothooft and Breeze's (2016) study. This similarity could be explained by Li's (2010) claim that explicit feedback, with clear explanations or direct error correction, is considered more efficacious for low proficiency learners in developing their language ability. Since most participants (126 out of 200) in this current research were still developing their language proficiency at A1–B1 levels, CF with clear explanations and direct correction was likely easier for them to understand.

The present study's participants expressed uncertainty toward certain CF strategies including appeal to peers, paralinguistic signals, and denial. These findings are not in unanimity with previous studies. For instance, correction through peers was viewed negatively in Baz et al.'s (2016) study, where 72% of learners rejected it in favor of teacher feedback, and this kind of feedback also received the lowest approval in Ha and Nguyen's (2021) survey. Similarly, paralinguistic signals, though comprising about 12% of CF strategies, were rarely preferred in Maghfiroh et al.'s (2024) study, and participants in Saeb's (2017) research reported difficulties interpreting such cues. With regard to denial, its low acceptance in the present study reflects Carroll and Swain's (1993) claim that explicit rejection would not always generate learner repair, as well as Panova and Lyster's (2002) finding that it resulted in limited learner uptake. One possible reason for the uncertainty among the students in this current research toward appeals to peers, paralinguistic signals, and denial, could lie in their educational and proficiency background. In Vietnam, according to Vu (2025), Grammar–Translation remains the most dominant method in English teaching in public schools. Therefore, the second-year students in this study might have been extensively exposed to explicit, grammar-translation–oriented instruction, which contributed to their preference for feedback with clear explanations and direct corrections. This effect is consistent with Schulz's (2001) claim that prior educational experiences shape feedback expectations. Moreover, the developing English proficiency (A1–B1) of most participants in this present study possibly made CF strategies without explanation or scaffolding less appealing to them.

Concerning CF timing, although post-utterance CF achieved the strongest endorsement, immediate CF was also generally supported. The former is consistent with Ölmezer-Öztürk and Öztürk's (2016) finding that learners highly preferred receiving delayed feedback as this CF timing would prevent interruption while speaking. The latter resonates with the finding of Ha et al. (2021b). The Vietnamese secondary-school students in their study generally preferred immediate CF over delayed CF, as they believed that immediate CF would allow them to notice errors before forgetting what they said, whereas delayed CF would risk memory loss and missed opportunities to repeat the reformulated form. One possible justification for this interesting

finding lies in the present sample's different English proficiency levels, with most participants (126) positioned themselves within the A1–B1 range, 69 at B2, and only 5 at C1. In other words, while more proficient students (B1-C1) preferred CF after speaking turns, less proficient (A1-A2) favored immediate CF. This is plausible, as higher-proficiency learners can independently monitor errors and sustain communication (Albarqi & Tavakoli, 2023), whereas lower-proficiency learners rely more on immediate CF. However, as the information on the participants' proficiency levels in the present research was merely self-reported, this explanation should be interpreted cautiously, and future studies could incorporate objective proficiency measures (e.g., placement tests). Overall, despite the fact that both immediate and post-utterance CF received high ratings in the present study, this pattern might not be contradictory. This more likely indicates a general preference among learners for timely CF, with a clear inclination toward correction that minimizes disruption of fluency.

6. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

The present study has yielded a number of valuable insights. Firstly, the results revealed that student participants in this current study generally held positive perceptions toward the CF they received in their EFL speaking lessons. Specifically, the majority of them agreed that CF plays an essential role in improving their communicative competence, particularly when the CF targets errors that impede communication or ones that are frequently made. In contrast, correcting every single error was less appreciated. Concerning CF timing, the students expressed a strong preference for CF after their speaking turns. Additionally, immediate correction is, though welcomed by many, far from the most expected. Recording students' errors for end-of-lesson correction received the lowest support. Finally, the current study showed that the students strongly favored CF strategies that provide clarity and explicit guidance, especially metalinguistic clues, didactic recasts, and explicit correction. Meanwhile, CF strategies including appeals to peers, paralinguistic signals, and denial were less attractive and caused uncertainty.

From these findings, a number of pedagogical implications could be drawn for the teaching of English majors. First, it is important for teachers to adopt a selective approach to giving CF, focusing on errors that prevent communication or ones that are repeated frequently, since the correction of errors that impede communication obtained the highest level of agreement and the correction of frequent errors was also welcomed. Secondly, teachers should carefully consider the CF timing. The findings indicated that most students preferred receiving teacher CF after they complete their speaking, while immediate CF should be used only when an error hinders communication or needs timely clarification. Finally, the preferences for explicit CF strategies, such as metalinguistic clues, explicit correction, and didactic recasts, suggest students' need for clarity and meticulous explanation when it comes to receiving CF. Overall, it is essential for teachers to balance learners' proficiency, needs, and preferences. As such, decisions about CF strategies should be made judiciously.

7. Limitations and future directions

Despite the valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged, which in turn pave the way for the corresponding recommendations for future research. Firstly, the current study employed quantitative questionnaire data, which might not fully capture the intricate nature of students' perceptions of teacher CF. Therefore, future research should employ additional instruments (e.g., follow-up interviews, classroom observations) to collect qualitative data, contributing to a better understanding of the quantitative data. Additionally, this study focused on self-reported perceptions rather than observed classroom student behavior. Therefore, this dataset might not completely capture the dynamics of CF delivery and reception in the EFL speaking class. Future studies could involve diverse samples of students across different regions of Vietnam, or even cross-cultural comparisons to obtain richer insights into their perceptions of teacher CF in speaking lessons. Thirdly, the present study captured students' perceptions of CF at a single point in time, and as such, it was not possible to examine how learners' views might evolve or how CF influences learners' long-term speaking proficiency. In this regard, longitudinal research could be helpful in exploring how perceptions of CF evolve over time and how they influence long-term speaking proficiency of learners. Finally, the present study exclusively focused on the perspective of learners, without the integration of teachers' viewpoints. The combination of both students' and teachers' standpoints could be explored in future research to obtain a more balanced understanding of CF in EFL speaking classrooms.

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Appendix

The questionnaire

PHẦN A. THÔNG TIN NGƯỜI THAM GIA

A1. Tuổi: …………………………………………

A2. Giới tính:

☐ Nam   ☐ Nữ   ☐ Khác (Vui lòng ghi rõ: …………………………)

A3. Thời gian bạn đã học Tiếng Anh:…… năm   …… tháng

A4. Bạn đã từng tham gia lớp học kỹ năng NÓI Tiếng Anh chưa?

☐ Có   ☐ Chưa

Nếu **có**, vui lòng cho biết:

- Lớp học **Nói trong trường**: …………………………………………
- Lớp học **Nói ngoài trường**: …………………………………………

A5. Bạn tự đánh giá trình độ tiếng Anh tổng quát của mình như thế nào?
(Dựa trên bảng mô tả ở ảnh đính kèm, hãy chọn lựa chọn tương ứng)

1. Cơ bản (Level A1)
2. Sơ trung cấp (Level A2)
3. Trung cấp (Level B1)
4. Trên trung cấp (Level B2)
5. Cao cấp (Level C1)

A6. Bạn tự đánh giá trình độ kỹ năng NÓI tiếng Anh của mình như thế nào?
(Dựa trên bảng mô tả cấp độ ở trang sau, hãy chọn lựa chọn tương ứng)

1. Cơ bản (Level A1)
2. Sơ trung cấp (Level A2)
3. Trung cấp (Level B1)
4. Trên trung cấp (Level B2)
5. Cao cấp (Level C1)

A7. Mức độ tự tin của bạn khi nói tiếng Anh:
(Hãy chọn lựa chọn tương ứng)

1. Rất không tự tin
2. Không tự tin
3. Không biết
4. Tự tin
5. Rất tự tin

PHẦN B. SINH VIÊN THÍCH ĐƯỢC GIẢNG VIÊN SỬA NHỮNG LỖI NÀO?

Hướng dẫn: Hãy đánh dấu (☑) vào ô tương ứng với mức độ đồng ý của bạn đối với mỗi phát biểu dưới đây:

1 – Hoàn toàn không đồng ý | 2 – Không đồng ý | 3 – Không có ý kiến | 4 – Đồng ý | 5 – Hoàn toàn đồng ý

PHÁT BIỂU	1	2	3	4	5
B1. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình sửa tất cả lỗi mà tôi mắc phải trong bài nói của mình.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B2. Tôi thích giảng viên sửa lỗi không cản trở giao tiếp nhưng phổ biến trong lớp học. Ví dụ: "yesterday I go to school." thay vì "yesterday I went to school."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B3. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình tập trung sửa những lỗi sai làm cản trở giao tiếp. Ví dụ: "I'm boring" (tôi là người nhàm chán) thay vì "I'm bored" (tôi đang cảm thấy chán)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B4. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình ưu tiên sửa những lỗi sai mà tôi thường xuyên mắc phải. Ví dụ: lặp đi lặp lại lỗi "he go to school" thay vì "he goes to school."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B5. Tôi thích giảng viên sửa lỗi liên quan đến nội dung bài học.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PHẦN C. SINH VIÊN THÍCH ĐƯỢC GIẢNG VIÊN SỬA LỖI NHƯ THẾ NÀO?

Hướng dẫn:

Hãy đánh dấu (☑) vào ô tương ứng với mức độ đồng ý của bạn đối với mỗi phát biểu dưới đây:

1 – Hoàn toàn không đồng ý | 2 – Không đồng ý | 3 – Không có ý kiến | 4 – Đồng ý | 5 – Hoàn toàn đồng ý

PHÁT BIỂU	1	2	3	4	5
C1. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên nhắc lại câu nói của tôi và dừng lại trước chỗ sai để tôi có thể tự sửa, ví dụ: "I…" **(Elicitation).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C2. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên lặp lại câu sai của tôi với ngữ điệu thay đổi để tôi có thể nhận ra lỗi và tự sửa, ví dụ: "I go?" **(Repetition).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C3. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên giải thích quy tắc ngữ pháp hoặc đưa ra nhận xét để tôi có thể tự sửa lỗi, ví dụ: "you need to use the simple past tense" **(Metalinguistic clue).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C4. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên yêu cầu tôi lặp lại câu nói, ví dụ như "What? / What did you say? / Can you say it again?" **(Clarification request).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C5. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên dùng ngôn ngữ cơ thể hoặc cử chỉ để chỉ ra rằng tôi đã sai, để tôi có thể tự sửa **(Paralinguistic signal).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C6. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên nói lại câu đúng bằng cách lặp lại toàn bộ câu và sửa phần sai, ví dụ: học sinh: I go to the train station yesterday – giảng viên: "Ah, you went to the train station yesterday"" **(Didactic recast).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C7. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên sửa phần sai và hỏi thêm một câu ngắn để tôi có thể nhận ra lỗi, ví dụ: "you went to the train station yesterday. Did you?" **(Conversational recast)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C8. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên chỉ ra lỗi của tôi và cung cấp cách nói đúng, ví dụ: "No, not 'go', you should say 'went'" **(Explicit correction).**	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C9. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên hỏi tôi một câu như "is that correct?" để tôi có thể tự nhận ra và sửa lỗi **(Questioning)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C10. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên nói rõ "that's wrong" để tôi biết tôi cần phải sửa lỗi **(Denial)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C11. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên đưa ra một vài lựa chọn khác nhau để tôi tự suy nghĩ và chọn ra lựa chọn đúng. **(Oral cueing)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C12. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên chỉ vào các bảng nhắc nhở hoặc các gợi ý được viết sẵn trong lớp học (ví dụ: các dấu hiệu lỗi thường gặp như thiếu -s, -ing, hoặc động từ to be) để tôi có thể nhận ra và sửa lỗi **(Written cue)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C13. Nếu tôi mắc lỗi, tôi thích giảng viên nhờ các bạn trong lớp giúp tôi tìm và sửa lỗi đó **(Appeal to peers)**.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PHẦN D. SINH VIÊN THÍCH ĐƯỢC GIẢNG VIÊN SỬA LỖI KHI NÀO?

Hướng dẫn:

Hãy đánh dấu (☑) vào ô tương ứng với mức độ đồng ý của bạn đối với mỗi phát biểu dưới đây:

1 – Hoàn toàn không đồng ý | 2 – Không đồng ý | 3 – Không có ý kiến | 4 – Đồng ý | 5 – Hoàn toàn đồng ý

PHÁT BIỂU	1	2	3	4	5
D1. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình sẽ sửa lỗi ngay khi tôi mắc phải.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D2. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình sẽ đợi và sửa lỗi sau khi tôi nói xong.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D3. Tôi thích giảng viên của mình sẽ ghi lại hoặc nhớ các lỗi sai của tôi, rồi sửa trước cả lớp vào cuối buổi học.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐