

LANGUAGES

Students' Perceptions of Oral Corrective Feedback in Secondary School English Speaking Classes

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Abstract

This study investigates students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback (OCF) in English speaking classes at the secondary school level. The study examines students' perceptions of OCF, their preferred feedback types, and the effects of feedback on speaking confidence. A quantitative descriptive design was used. Data were collected through a questionnaire with five-point Likert scale items from 25 Grade 7 and Grade 9 students in Tay Ninh province, Vietnam. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings show that students generally have positive perceptions of oral corrective feedback. Most students believe that OCF helps improve speaking accuracy and awareness of errors. Students preferred supportive feedback types such as recasts, metalinguistic feedback, and elicitation. In addition, delayed feedback was more preferred than immediate correction because it made students feel more comfortable during speaking activities. The results also indicate that oral corrective feedback has both positive and negative effects on speaking confidence. While feedback increased students' motivation and participation, some learners felt anxious when corrected publicly. Overall, the study suggests that teachers should provide feedback in a supportive and appropriate way to improve students' speaking development and confidence.

Keywords: oral corrective feedback; speaking skills; students' perceptions; secondary school.

Introduction

English is an important global language used in education, business, and communication. Among the four language skills, speaking is considered essential because it helps learners communicate effectively in real-life situations. Therefore, improving speaking ability has become an important goal in English language teaching. In speaking classes, teachers often use oral corrective feedback (OCF) to help students recognize and correct their language errors. Although OCF can improve speaking accuracy and language awareness, students may respond to it differently. Some students find feedback helpful, while others may feel anxious or embarrassed when corrected in front of classmates. These reactions may affect students' confidence and participation in speaking activities. Therefore, this study investigates students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback and its effects on speaking confidence in secondary school English classes. This study aims to address the following questions:

1) What are students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback in English speaking classes?

- 2) Which types of oral corrective feedback do students prefer?
- 3) How does oral corrective feedback affect students' speaking confidence?

Literature Review

Corrective Feedback

Feedback is an important part of language learning because it helps learners improve their performance. Hattie and Timperley [1] describe feedback as "one of the most powerful influences on learning". One important type of feedback is corrective feedback, which focuses on learners' language errors. According to Nassaji and Kartchava, "corrective feedback refers to any signal that a learner's utterance may be erroneous in some way" [2]. In speaking classes, this feedback is often given orally and is known as oral corrective feedback (OCF). Common types of OCF include explicit correction, recast, elicitation, clarification request, repetition, and metalinguistic feedback [2].

Previous Studies about Corrective Feedback in English Speaking

Previous studies have shown that oral corrective feedback helps learners improve speaking accuracy and communicative ability. Mulyani et al. [3] stated that students need corrective feedback to become aware of their errors and avoid repeating them. Similarly, Du et al. [4] found that OCF helps learners improve communicative competence. Research has also reported positive student perceptions toward OCF. Paul and Al-Mamun [5] found that students believed feedback improved their speaking ability and awareness of mistakes. In addition, Sotlikova [6] noted that feedback can increase learners' motivation and engagement.

Although many studies have examined oral corrective feedback, several gaps still remain. Most previous studies focused on the effectiveness of feedback in improving language accuracy, while fewer studies investigated students' perceptions of different feedback types and their effects on speaking confidence. In addition, limited research has focused on Vietnamese secondary school students. Therefore, this study investigates students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback, their preferred feedback types, and the effects of feedback on speaking confidence in the Vietnamese context.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Corrective Feedback Theory, the Noticing Hypothesis, and Affective Factors in Language Learning. Corrective Feedback Theory explains that feedback helps learners recognize and correct their errors [2]. The Noticing Hypothesis states that learners must notice their errors in order to improve language performance [7]. In addition, Krashen [8] emphasized that confidence and anxiety influence second language learning. Overall, these theories suggest that oral corrective feedback affects students' speaking development, awareness, and confidence.

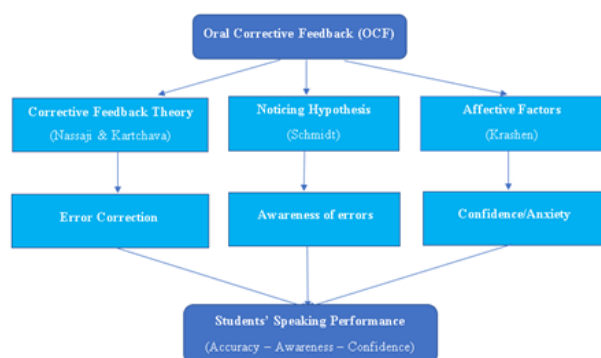


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF) on Speaking Performance.

Methodology

Participants and Research Settings

The participants in this study were 25 students from Grade 7 and Grade 9 at a secondary school in Tay Ninh province, Vietnam. They were chosen because they were studying English as a foreign language and were familiar with oral corrective feedback in speaking lessons. An online questionnaire was used to collect the data through Google Forms. This online format made it easier for students to participate and helped ensure privacy during the survey process.

Research Design

This study applied a quantitative descriptive approach to explore students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback in English speaking classes. A questionnaire with five-point Likert scale items was used to gather numerical data and identify common response patterns among students.

Instruments

A structured questionnaire was used as the main data collection instrument. It consisted of two parts. The first part collected general information about the participants, including gender, grade, and years of learning English. The second part focused on students' views of oral corrective feedback, preferred feedback strategies, feedback timing, emotional reactions, and speaking confidence. All items were designed using a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). To make the questionnaire easier to understand, both English and Vietnamese versions were provided.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms and completed within five days. With the assistance of a teacher at the selected school, the survey link was shared with 25 students. Before answering the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the research and assured that their responses would be kept confidential. After all responses were collected, the data were organized and prepared for analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical principles were carefully followed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and all students were informed that they could stop participating at any time if they wished. To protect participants' privacy, no personal information was collected. In addition, all responses were kept confidential and used only for academic research purposes.

Results and Discussion

Results

General Perceptions of Oral Corrective Feedback

This section addresses Research Question 1 by presenting students' general perceptions of oral corrective feedback (OCF) in speaking classes.

Table 1: Students' responses to general perceptions of oral corrective feedback.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think oral corrective feedback is important in speaking lessons.	1	0	5	3	16
Oral corrective feedback helps me improve my speaking ability.	1	0	2	6	16
I can recognize my mistakes better when the teacher gives feedback.	2	1	4	4	14
Oral corrective feedback helps me speak more accurately.	1	0	2	5	17
I understand my errors more clearly after receiving feedback.	1	0	3	6	15

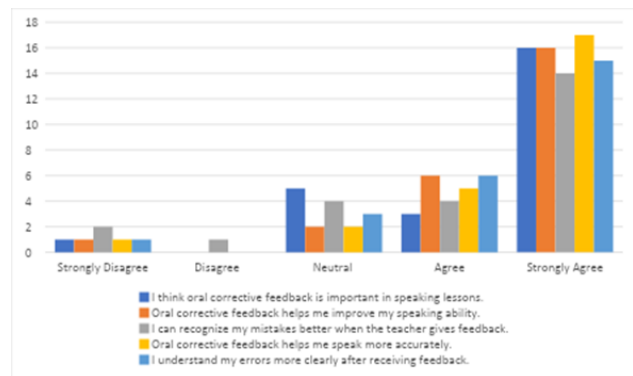


Figure 2: Students' responses to General Perceptions of Oral Corrective Feedback.

Data shows that students generally have positive perceptions of oral corrective feedback (Table 1, Figure 2). For the statement "I think oral corrective feedback is important in speaking lessons," 16 students strongly agreed and 3 agreed. Similarly, 16 students strongly agreed that OCF helps improve their speaking ability, while 17 students strongly agreed that feedback helps them speak more accurately. In addition, 14 students strongly agreed that feedback helps them recognize their mistakes better, and 15 strongly agreed that they understand their errors more clearly after receiving feedback. Only a few students selected negative responses. Overall, the findings indicate that students consider oral corrective feedback an effective tool for improving speaking performance.

Types of Oral Corrective Feedback

This section addresses Research Question 2 by presenting students' preferences for different types of oral corrective feedback.

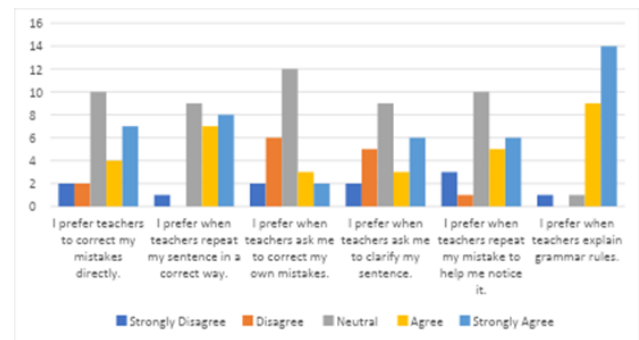


Figure 3: Students' Preferences for Types of Oral Corrective Feedback.

Figure 3 shows that students preferred supportive and less direct feedback strategies. Most students selected "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" for recasts and metalinguistic feedback, indicating that they preferred feedback that provides correct language models and grammar explanations. In addition, elicitation also received positive responses, suggesting that students were willing to correct their own mistakes when guided by the teacher. In contrast, explicit correction received lower levels of strong agreement, although it was still generally accepted by students. Overall, the findings indicate that students prefer feedback strategies that are supportive and less interruptive during speaking activities.

Timing of Feedback

In relation to Research Question 3, this section examines students' preferences for the timing of oral corrective feedback.

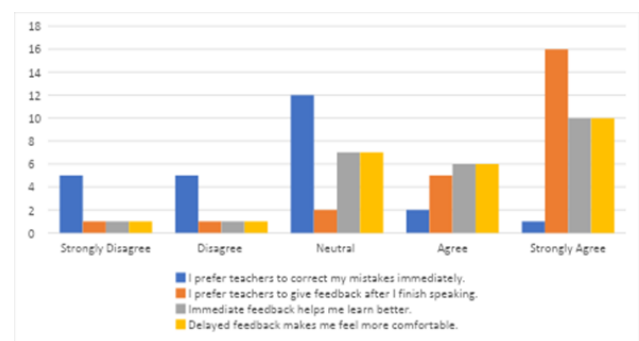


Figure 4: Students' preferences for the timing of oral corrective feedback.

Figure 4 shows that students generally preferred delayed feedback rather than immediate correction. For the statement "I prefer teachers to give feedback after I finish speaking," 16 students strongly agreed and 5 agreed. In contrast, the statement "I prefer teachers to correct my mistakes immediately" received mostly neutral responses (12 students). However, many students still believed that immediate feedback could

support learning, with 10 students strongly agreeing and 6 agreeing that immediate feedback helps them learn better. Similarly, 10 students strongly agreed and 6 agreed that delayed feedback makes them feel more comfortable. Overall, the findings indicate that students recognize the benefits of both immediate and delayed feedback, but they prefer delayed feedback because it provides greater comfort during speaking activities.

Emotional Responses

In relation to Research Question 3, this section examines students' emotional responses to oral corrective feedback.

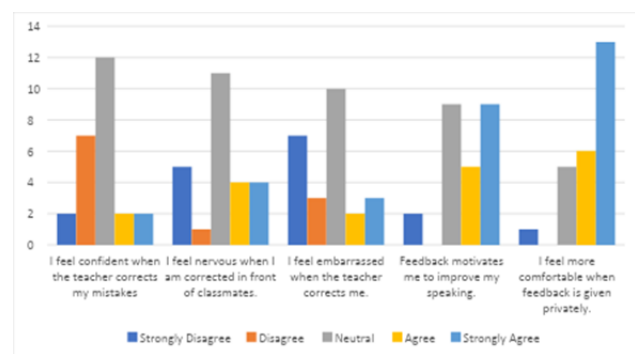


Figure 5: Students' emotional responses to oral corrective feedback in speaking classes.

Figure 5 shows that students experienced both positive and negative emotions toward oral corrective feedback. For the statement "I feel confident when the teacher corrects my mistakes," most students selected "Neutral" (12 students), while 7 students disagreed. Some students also reported anxiety and embarrassment when being corrected publicly. For example, 8 students agreed or strongly agreed that they felt nervous when corrected in front of classmates. Similarly, several students agreed that they felt embarrassed when corrected by the teacher. On the positive side, feedback was found to motivate students to improve their speaking. For the statement "Feedback motivates me to improve my speaking," 9 students strongly agreed and 5 agreed. In addition, students preferred private feedback, with 13 students strongly agreeing and 6 agreeing that they felt more comfortable when feedback was given privately. Overall, the findings suggest that oral corrective feedback can influence students emotionally, and supportive or private feedback helps students feel more comfortable.

Speaking Confidence

In relation to Research Question 3, this section examines how oral corrective feedback affects students' speaking confidence.

Figure 6 shows that oral corrective feedback generally has a positive effect on students' confidence and participation. For example, 12 students strongly agreed and 7 agreed that feedback helps them become more

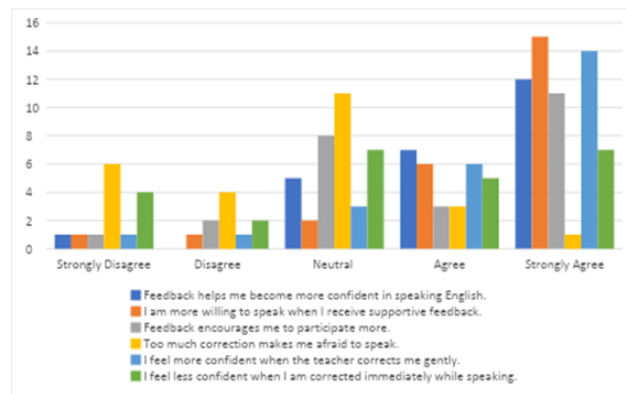


Figure 6: Students' Speaking Confidence and the Effects of Oral Corrective Feedback.

confident in speaking English. In addition, 15 students strongly agreed that supportive feedback makes them more willing to speak. Feedback also encouraged classroom participation, with 11 students strongly agreeing and 3 agreeing that feedback motivates them to participate more in speaking activities. Furthermore, 14 students strongly agreed and 6 agreed that gentle correction helps them feel more confident. However, some students reported lower confidence when corrected immediately during speaking activities. The statement "Too much correction makes me afraid to speak" also received several neutral and negative responses. Overall, the findings suggest that oral corrective feedback can improve students' speaking confidence when it is delivered in a supportive and appropriate manner.

Discussion

This section discusses the findings in relation to the research questions, theoretical framework, and previous studies.

First, the results show that students generally have positive perceptions of oral corrective feedback (OCF). Most participants agreed that feedback helps them improve speaking accuracy and recognize their mistakes. This finding is consistent with Mulyani et al. [3] and Paul and Al-Mamun [5], who reported that students view corrective feedback as beneficial for language learning. These findings also support the role of corrective feedback in improving language accuracy.

Second, regarding feedback types, students preferred supportive and less direct strategies such as recasts and metalinguistic feedback rather than explicit correction. This finding is similar to Du et al. [4], who suggested that OCF helps learners improve communicative competence. The result also relates to the Noticing Hypothesis [7], which explains that learners improve when they notice their language errors.

Third, the findings reveal that OCF has both positive and negative effects on students' speaking

confidence. Many students reported that feedback increased their motivation and willingness to participate in speaking activities. However, some students also experienced anxiety and embarrassment, especially when corrected publicly or immediately. This finding supports Krashen's [8] view that emotional factors such as anxiety may affect language learning.

Overall, the findings suggest that oral corrective feedback is beneficial for students' speaking development when it is delivered in a supportive and appropriate manner.

Conclusion

This study investigated students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback (OCF) in English speaking classes. The findings showed that students generally have positive perceptions of OCF and believe that it helps improve speaking accuracy and awareness of errors. The study also found that students prefer supportive and less direct feedback types, especially recasts and metalinguistic feedback. In addition, delayed feedback was preferred because it made students feel more comfortable during speaking activities. Furthermore, OCF was found to have both positive and negative effects on speaking confidence. While feedback increased motivation and participation, some students felt anxious or embarrassed when corrected publicly or immediately. Overall, the study highlights that oral corrective feedback is important in supporting speaking development, but its effectiveness depends on the type, timing, and manner of delivery.

Based on the findings, several recommendations are proposed. First, teachers should provide feedback in a supportive and encouraging way to reduce students' anxiety. Second, teachers should use different feedback types, especially recasts and metalinguistic feedback, which students prefer. Third, delayed feedback should be used more often to avoid interrupting students while speaking. Finally, teachers should pay attention to students' emotional responses and avoid embarrassing students during corrections.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size was small, involving only 25 students from one secondary school in Tay Ninh province, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study relied only on questionnaire data, so students' real feelings and experiences may not have been fully reflected. Finally, the study focused only on students' perceptions and did not examine actual speaking improvement. Future studies should include larger and more diverse groups of participants from different schools and regions. In addition, future research could combine questionnaires with interviews or classroom observations to gain deeper insights into students' experiences. Researchers may also investigate the actual effects of different feedback types on students' speaking performance and examine teachers' perspectives on oral corrective feedback.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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