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**Investigate ESL Learners' Attitudes towards Error Correction in
Speaking Skills**

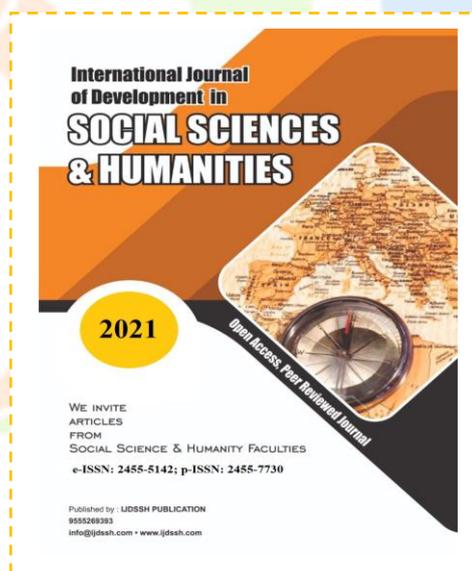
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ABSTRACT

ESL learners need to master oral language because it is one of the most important skills for social and academic success, so they committed errors, and language teachers' responsibility is to correct these errors in class. The study tries to investigate the ESL learners' attitudes towards error correction in speaking skills. To fulfill the aim of the study; the researcher used two instruments to evaluate the errors correction. A questionnaire was designed with 15 items and distributed to 40 participants to investigated students' attitudes toward error corrections in-class speaking followed by classroom observation to record the error and errors correction made by the teacher. The statistical analyses showed that the students have positive attitudes toward students' correction of errors. Finally, it is recommended that English teachers should apply suitable methods and techniques to grant oral error corrective feedback to the students for it can help them in improving their English speaking skills.

Keywords: ES: Error correction; Speaking skills

INTRODUCTION

The significance of students' errors and error correction has a great interest in the field of teaching and learning ESL for recent years. It is always a challenging and argumentative issue.

Language learning is the ability to communicate in a second and foreign language. It is not a simple process, it consists of a set of sounds and symbols that differ from one region to another. It is difficult to learn any foreign language easily without effective support.

Most English language learners are obligated to produce errors both in written and spoken language. When students committed spoken or written errors, it is a sign that learning has occurred. It's known that when errors occur, learning is taking place (Khazaal, 2019, p.329)

Error correction is the way of telling the learner about the real language and Standard English, so if he pronounced or speak something out of the language rules then it needs to be corrected. When errors have occurred, it's necessary to be corrected according to the two categories of error correction: direct or immediate correction and delayed correction. Lochman (2002).

Though committing errors by the students is a normal phenomenon in the speaking classrooms, still it is considered as a difficult task if it is neglected by the teacher. Mumford and Darn (2020)

THE PROBLEM

English speaking is a productive skill and considered as the most important skill compared to the others. It gives some difficulties that lead the students to errors.

Students committed errors as a result of the lack of misconception and when a learner doesn't have enough knowledge of the language, resulted from the output of the learner's stage in the learning and teaching process. This could occur when they have never been exposed to the language and students do not speak or participate in English speaking- classrooms, so they committed errors because they have no prior knowledge to refer to.

Errors are a difficult task, because not only are you providing a correction, you are also providing the knowledge necessary to fill the student's gap in understanding. Moreover, poor correction and deep correction techniques can be demotivating for the learners. Mumford and Darn (2020)

Error correction is assign that used to correct the errors when the utterance is transferred from the sender to the receiver. It is a result of students investigating with unprecedented vocabulary or language ground. To correct errors, the learner has to know the proper position of the error. (Harmer, 2001: 99)

Error correction refers to the learners who use the target language incorrect way. It's recognized as an integral part of learning a target language. (Brown, 2000)

It occurred when a learner doesn't have enough knowledge of the language. Because the learners have never been exposed to the language and they have no prior knowledge so they committed errors. (Ellis, 2003, p.15)

THE SIGNIFICANCE

Speaking in a second language is considered the most demanding of the four skills. Bailey and Savage in Lazaraton (2001)

Language errors for non-native speakers are a natural for students to commit errors during oral production.. When students make spoken or written mistakes, it is a sign that learning is happening, and these errors and mistakes might make them look bad. (Fauziati, 2003; Harsono, 2003)

Speaking is the most desired skill to learn. Being able to speak a foreign language helps the learner to move their knowledge and to make a real connection with.it breaks any gaps in using vocabulary, so a large number of the world's language learners study English to develop their proficiency in speaking". Richards and Renandya (2002, p. 201)

The process of mastering a foreign language involves making lots of errors; especially in speaking, whether the errors were simple or complex, it puts them on the spot. So errors and error correction are the essential strategy of any foreign language lesson.

Errors play a vital role during the learning process of a language. It happens in native or non-native speakers of a certain language, the students who know more knowledge or rule of English will decrease making an error.

Errors correction plays a useful role in foreign language teaching and learning, whether the errors were simple or complex. Error correction improves second language learners. Hendrickson (1978)

It is a natural and useful technique to avoid incorrectness or fossilization in their target language acquisition experience. The errors correction is needed even when learners acquired their mother tongue to improve their language.

Correcting errors is a worthy method when helping learners improving their ESL skills.

The error should be corrected as soon as they are happened to avoid being a bad habit for learners. Lightbown and Spada (1990, p.16): Moerk, (1994)

AIM OF THE STUDY

The research aims to investigate the ESL learners' attitude towards error correction in developing speaking skills.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The researcher addressed the following question to examine the EFL learner's attitude toward error correction in class speaking.

1- What is ESL learners' attitude toward speaking error correction?

THE HYPOTHESIS

It is hypothesized that:

1. Error correction doesn't influence ESL learners in speaking classrooms.
2. Error correction has an appositive impact on ESL learners in speaking classrooms.

LIMITS OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to the students of the first year at the University of Al-Nahrain, college of political sciences for the academic year 2018-2019.
2. It is limited to investigate EFL learner's error correction in speaking skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELATED STUDIES

Error

Learning the English process is a difficult task for learners who learn English as a second or foreign language. Learners committed errors. Transfer of these errors occurred at the very beginning of the process of learning the English language. Error is a part of the systematic study of the learners.

They are the result of a lack of competence, and they are initialized into the language system. (Ellis, 2009)

Errors are defined as "the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning". Corder's (1974: 260).

It is part of learning; by making error learner knows how to fix it and they will learn something. They are considered to be evidence of the learner's developing competence in the foreign language. Dulay et al, (1982)

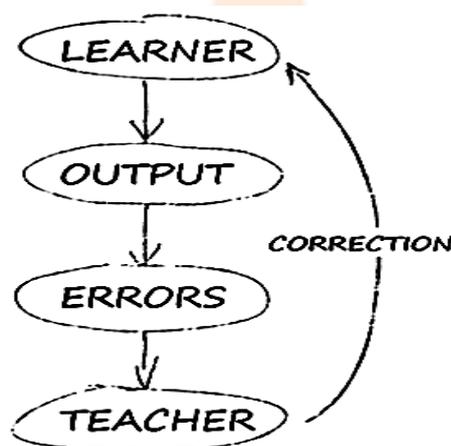


Figure 1 Errors Correction Process (Rod Ellis, 1994)

What Does Error Correction Mean?

Error correction is known as a special treatment toward error to make it right and promote proficiency. In English language teaching, error correction is an overwhelming problem for teachers

and students. Teachers should try to find out what students want to learn and how to think and feel. Wang (2010, p.140)

Error correction concentrates on if is necessary to correct errors by teachers in speaking class activity and what is the suitable techniques they should use in correcting errors. It occurred when a learner doesn't have enough prior knowledge, and they never had been exposed to the language for that reason they committed errors.

Making errors are natural and expected part of the process of learning and teaching a foreign language. If learners' errors are never corrected, they can become fossilized in their speech and writing, so correction is a way of reminding students of the forms of Standard English. Edge ,(1989, p.20).

Error correction is a sign of feedback offered to the students in language learning it plays a great part in language pedagogy, it has been proposed as a process that supports successful collaboration (Shaw, 1932; Sniezek & Henry, 1989).

Correcting errors is a way of giving information, or feedback to support students 'learning and to repair the language they just used. (Edge, 1989, p. 17)

Classification of Errors

Errors can be classified into the following:

1. A lexical error: It is a sequence of characters that does not fit any spoken pattern, it deals with: vocabulary
2. A phonological error: It refers to pronouncing a word with one sound instead of another, it deals with pronunciation.
3. A syntactic error; It is the organization of words and sentences in a language, it deals with grammar
4. An interpretive error: It refers to an inaccurate explication, misunderstanding of a speaker's intention or meaning
5. A pragmatic error: It refers to errors that result from misconstruction and failure to apply the rules of conversation. Richards, Jack C. (2009).

Error Correction Types

- 1. Self-correction:** the teacher may help the student recognize his mistake/error and may also help him correct it.
- 2. Peer-correction:** It is a technique used in the classroom where learners correct each other. A student may be aided by his peer in identifying and correcting his mistake/error.
- 3. Class correction:** The entire class may pay attention to the utterances of students, identify the mistakes in them, and correct them accordingly.
- 4. Teacher-Correction:** When spotting a mistake made by a student, a teacher may intervene to correct it. (Edge, 1989)

Techniques for Oral Error Correction

1. Recast: is a technique used to correct learners' errors, saying the correct expression without commenting on it or explaining it.
2. Repetition – repeating the error, usually with arising intonation or emphatic stress.
3. Clarification request. It indicates that the utterance was not understood what the learner said.
4. Explicit correction. It refers to what has to be corrected,
5. Elicitation: It is an attempt to get the students to elicit the correct form and specific answer of utterance.
6. Metalinguistic feedback: it refers to the use of technical linguistic explanation as comments, information, questions, or facial expression to show that the learner has made an error. (Ellis, 2009, p. 9; Lyster and Ranta (1997)

Related Studies

Lasheiky(2017). In his study, he tried to find out the ESL learners' attitude towards errors corrections in oral speaking. He believes that students attitude differs from one to another according to their as the level of proficiency, previous background, and their gender. He concludes that students prefer to correct their errors by the teacher in the class.

Albadawi (2018), the researcher used in his study the oral correction techniques used by the teacher in the class when the students committed errors in speaking activities. The finding of his study revealed that ESL learners were affected positively or negatively by the teacher's error corrections.

METHODOLOGY

The Design of the Research

The researcher adopted a descriptive quantitative design to investigate the effectiveness of ESL learners' attitudes towards speaking error correction strategies

The Population of the Research

The research population was the teacher and the students. It consists of 160 first- year students, who studying English as a second language at Al-Nahrain University at the college of political sciences. All of them were native speakers of Arabic.

The Sample

The sample of this research consists of 40 first- year students who study English as a second language from the department of International Economic Relations during the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019. Their ages are between 18 and 21 years old.

The Instruments

Two instruments were used in this research:

a. A questionnaire:

This study using a questionnaire only for students as a method to collect the data gained from the students' responses towards the correction errors process in a speaking activity.

This questionnaire is adapted from Gan (2013). The questionnaire inquired about their opinions on their experiences of learning English, particularly in speaking.

It consists of three different statements with 15 questions. The first part is about the teacher's correction feedback with 5 questions items and the second part is about timing correcting errors with four items, and the final part is about student's attitude towards errors correction in speaking skills.

The questionnaire was employed in the nature of 'rating scales' of five-point-Likert Scale from strong agree to strong disagree) .The students rated each statement by choosing the appropriate choice.(See Appendix A)

b. Observation

The researcher used direct observation while English language teachers teaching speaking skills in the classroom to observe the student's error correction, and collecting the information about speaking

errors in the classroom through recording all the events by using tape-recorder, to allow the teacher to observe error correction clearly and directly as it appears in real situations.

Teachers strongly recommended correcting errors in speaking one by one after each student finishes his /her speaking immediately or even while he speaks, but this way depends on some features which might affect the way of correcting speech errors to the students.

The Procedure

The researcher selected first year college students who studying English as a second language. He gave a short idea about correcting errors and about the questionnaire.

The teacher should identify the mistake done by the students, and then he /she explain and decide what type of mistake, that trying to correct the mistake directly in front of the class by re -read or pronounced the sentence correctly.

The teacher should speak slowly so that the ESL student can understand the speech clearly, by using certain words that are easier for them to understand, the teacher should submit aid to the students by presenting recurrence and review until the students have understanding and are able to rule their speaking, by giving favorable attitude toward them, and enhance them for speaking to encourage more speaking.

One teacher's lessons were observed. The observation was used to collect information about speaking error correction in the classroom, for eight lessons during two months. The content of the classes observed included speaking and discussions about topics in the textbook. The researcher chooses a text from their text book New Headway Beginner Student's Book in Chapter 5 page 34. The text about (COLIN BRODIE FROM DUNDEE)

Questions made by the teacher

1. Where do you come from? I **come** from Scotland from Dundee

The student pronounced the verb come as came, so the teacher corrects the answer directly.

2-Do you live in Dundee? No, I don't I **live** and work in London

The students pronounced life instead of live.

3. Do you live with friends? Yes I do I **live** with two friend

The student here pronounced the word live correctly.

4. Where do you work? I **worked in Italian** restaurant

The teacher corrects the sentence to the students. The answer should be "I work in an Italian restaurant".

The questionnaire was given to the learners in the classroom that were observed with some explanation. Students were instructed how to answer the questionnaire's items.

In the first part of the questionnaire, students have to put down their personal information. The second part deals with the learner's attitude toward speaking errors correction errors in the classroom. The learners were given 30 minutes to answer the questionnaire items. The selected answer of the questionnaire was coded to 5-point scales choices, (strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly disagree). The questionnaire papers were collected, and the data were analyzed statistically.

The Pilot Study

The pilot study was done to determine if the questionnaires were suitable, reliable.

It was conducted by selecting 15 students chosen randomly from the same population. The result of the pilot study showed that most of the students agreed that errors should be corrected.

The students preferred their errors to be corrected at the end of class, whereas teachers preferred to give feedback on learners' errors immediately.

Reliability and Validity

For the validity of this study, the researcher checked the questionnaire by asking two academic college instructors to evaluate check the suitability of the questionnaire's items. They approved that the items were suitable and valid.

To estimate the reliability of the questionnaires, the scale reliability was used to measure the reliability of both student and teacher questionnaires. The results showed that the reliability of the instrument was estimated at 0.70, using the 'Cronbach's alpha.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data analysis

The analysis of the data is made according to the objective of the study. The data were gathered through questionnaires, observation and were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The results of the first statement concerning the Teacher Correction Feedback

1-The result of item 1 showed that (14.3%) strongly agreed and 35.7% agreed, which means that the students believe that oral corrective feedback will help them to avoid any speaking errors in their speaking.

2- The result of item 2 showed that 30.4% strongly agreed and 45.9% agreed ,while 8.7% dis agree ,that means that the believe that teachers' oral correcting errors can improve their speaking skills.

3- The result of item 3 showed that 14.9% strongly agreed and 22.0% agree that teachers should correct all errors that learners make in speaking English.

4- The result of item 4 showed that 23.7% strongly agreed and 50.0% agree that the teachers' oral correction can improve s speaking skills, and 15.9% disagree.

5- The result of item 5 showed that 19.4% strongly agreed and 32.9% agree and15.7%, are dis agree for correcting errors individually.

The results of the second statement concerning Timing correction errors

6- The result of item6 showed that 25.1% strongly agreed and 42.9% agree and prefer their errors to be corrected by the teacher as soon as errors are made.

7- The result of item6 showed that 8.0% strongly agreed and 35.3% agree that their errors should be corrected at the end of the class.

8- The result of item6 showed that 15.0% strongly agreed and 33.5% agree to correct their errors after the speaking activity ends.

9- The result of item 9 showed that 20.6% strongly agreed and 39.0% agree to correct their errors immediately by the teacher.

The results of the third statement concerning Students attitude towards correction

10-The result of item 10 showed that 21.2% strongly agreed and 47.4% agree to correct the mistakes in speaking by themselves instead of their classmate.

11-The result of item 11 showed that 17.7% strongly agreed and25.0% agree that errors correction increase their self-confidence

12-The result of item 12 showed that 12.7% strongly agreed and 23.0% agree that students are not worried about making errors when speaking English in class.

13- The result of item 13 showed that 16.6% strongly agreed and 25.0% agree that teachers always correct students' errors during speaking activities.

14- The result of item 14 showed that 15.7% strongly agreed and 50.0% agree, while 12.9% disagree that most of my errors occurred in pronouncing confused words.

15- The result of item 15 showed that 4.6% strongly agreed and 14.7% agree that students don't annoy when teachers correct their speaking errors.

Discussions

The result of the questionnaire and a classroom observation indicates that students have a positive attitude toward speaking error correction. Most of the students have the desired to correct all of their speaking errors by their teachers, they feel more comfortable with the teacher's correction because they thought that would help them to learn the language more effectively.

This study is compatible with Lasheiky (2017), who investigates the ESL learners' attitude towards errors corrections in oral speaking, and he found that students prefer to correct their errors by the teacher in the class.

This study is similar to Albadawi (2018), he use e oral correction techniques the in class when the students committed errors in speaking activities. He found that ESL learners have been influenced positively by the teacher's error corrections.

The findings provide the fact that error correction plays a very important role in the processes of language teaching and learning, making an error is a part of the learning process, so all students can get knowledge from others' errors. Errors correction has a positive effect on ESL learners.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Error correction plays a vital role in the process of teaching and learning the English language, especially in speaking.

The study reached to the fact that the teacher's role in the classroom very essential to help and encourage learners to develop their performance in speaking by giving them the chance to correct their errors immediately when the errors occurred.

It is more effective for students to correct their errors, and to depend on themselves to overcome the problems they encounter in the class, so they can be more confident and less teacher independent.

However, it can be concluded that teachers should train their students to become active participants through using different methods and techniques in the teaching and learning process. In order to do this, students and the teacher should have a common shorthand for correcting mistakes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended the following:-

For teacher

- 1- English teachers should be aware of their role in the classroom.
- 2- Teachers should use different strategies and techniques to motivate the ESL learners to improve their performance in speaking.
- 3- Teachers should provide a comfortable environment for the students through motivate them how to be independent learners through guiding them on how to correct their errors by themselves.

For Student

- 1- Students should avoid the influence of their mother tongue language during participating in classroom activities.
- 2- Students should be aware of the relation between listening and speaking, so, how they complete each other to improve their speaking skills.
- 3- Students need to have a lot of practice to improve their speaking activity.

Suggestions

The researcher conducted many suggestions as:-

- 1-A similar study could be conducted to explore the effect of errors correction in academic writing skills.
- 2- Further researches could be conducted in investigating EFL in reading performance

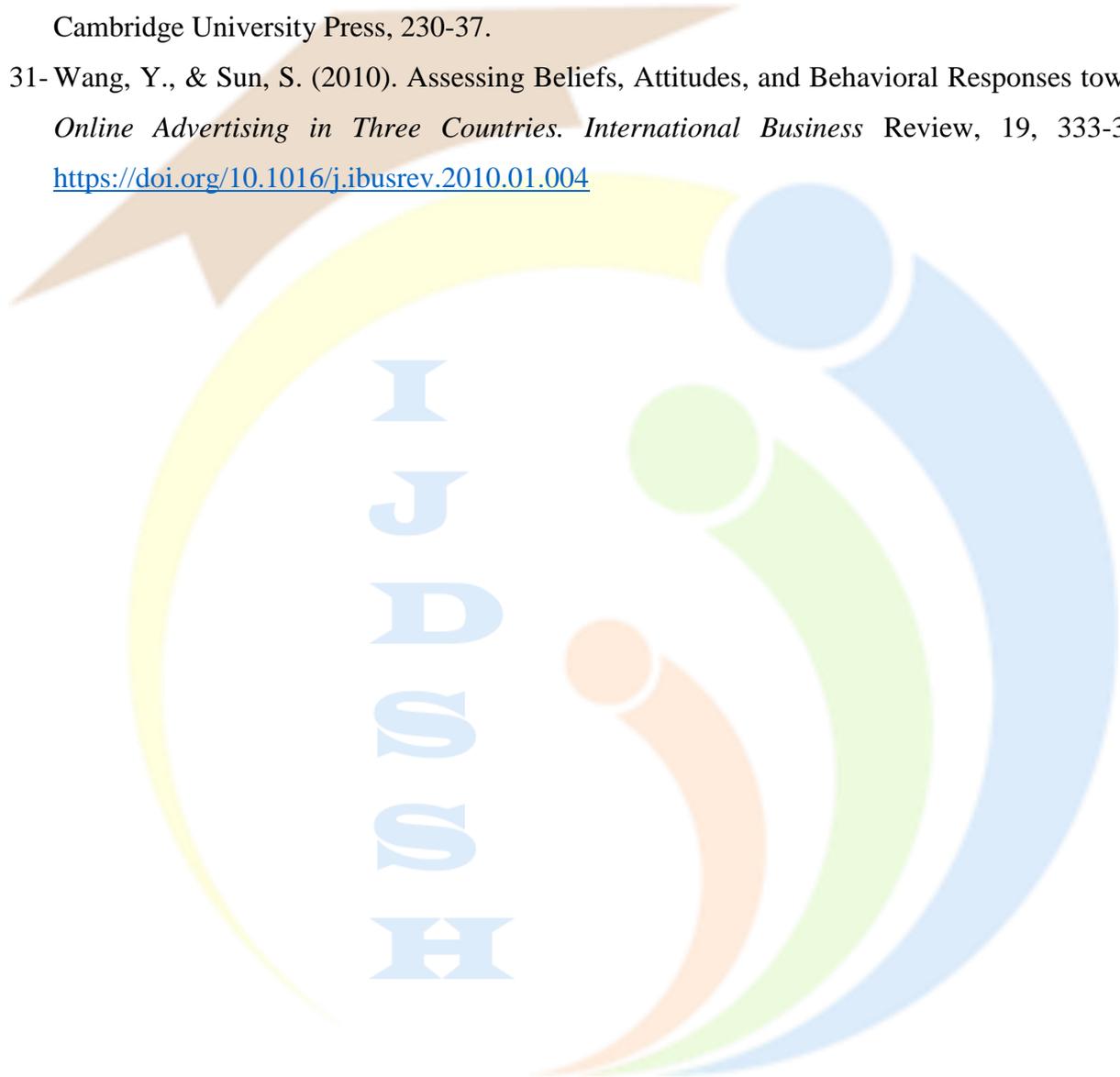
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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The ESL Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

To answer the questionnaire, please, Put (✓) to the degree of agreement to the statement you think most appropriate.

.Student Name:-----

Date :-----

Age-----

Time: 30 minutes

| No | Questions | Agree Strongly | Agree | Un decided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|------------------------------|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Teacher Correction Feed back | | 14.3% | 35.7% | 7.1% | 25.0% | 3.6% |
| 1 | Oral corrective feedback will help student to avoid any speaking errors in their speaking | (20) | (50) | (30) | (35) | (5) |
| 2 | I believe that teachers' oral correcting errors can improve my speaking skills. | 30.4% | 45.9% | 20.4% | 8.7% | 1.6% |
| | | (30) | (60) | (30) | (15) | (5) |
| 3 | Teachers have to correct all the errors done by the learners in speaking activity | 14.9% | 22.0% | 40.1% | 15.9% | 4.1% |
| | | (25) | (35) | (45) | (25) | 10 |
| 4 | I believe that teachers' oral correction can improve my speaking skills | 23.7% | 50.0% | 17.9% | 15.9% | 3.6% |
| | | (15) | (70) | (25) | (25) | (5) |
| 5 | I want teacher to correct my errors individually | 19.4% | 32.9% | 21.4% | 15.7% | 3.6% |
| | | (30) | (60) | (30) | (15) | (5) |
| Timing Correction errors | | 25.1% | 42.9% | 17.9% | 13.3% | 3.6% |
| 6 | I would like to correct my errors as soon as errors are made by my teacher | (30) | (60) | (25) | (5) | (5) |
| 7 | I would rather have my errors to be corrected at the end of the class. | 8.0% | 35.3% | 28.6% | (40) | (45) |
| | | (0) | (55) | (40) | 32.1% | 0.0% |
| 8 | I would rather like my teachers to correct my | 15.0% | 33.5% | 21.4% | 11.0% | 8.3% |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | errors after the end of speaking activity | (0) | (55) | (30) | (35) | (20) |
| 9 | I like my oral errors to be corrected immediately | 20.6% (5) | 39.0% (35) | 10.7% (10) | 10.7% (15) | 21.4% (30) |
| Students attitude towards correction | | | | | | |
| 10 | I prefer to correct the mistakes in speaking by myself instead of my classmate. | 21.2% (30) | 47.4% (65) | 10.9% (15) | 22.0% (35) | 3.6% (5) |
| 11 | I believe that errors correction increase my self-confidence | 17.7% (25) | 25.0% (35) | 32.1% (45) | 17.9% (25) | 7.1% 10 |
| 12 | I am not worried about making errors when I speak English. | 12.7% (15) | 23.0% (35) | 10.7% (15) | 40.9% (60) | 2.0% (0) |
| 13 | I prefer my teacher to always correct my errors during speaking activities. | 16.6% (5) | 25.0% (35) | 21.4% (30) | 20.7% (50) | 13.3% (20) |
| 14 | Most of my errors occurred in pronouncing confused words. | 15.7% (15) | 50.0% (70) | 17.9% (25) | 12.9% (25) | 3.6% (5) |
| 15 | When my teacher corrects my speaking errors, I don't get annoyed. | 4.6% (5) | 14.7% (15) | 25.0% (35) | 37.3% (55) | 22.4% (30) |
| Thank you for your cooperation | | | | | | |