Arab World English Journal
INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL ISSN: 2229-9327

Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL Number 8. July 2022 Pp.56-69
DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/call8.4

Saudi Female EFL Teachers' Cognition and Practices Regarding Online Corrective Feedback in Speaking Class

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Received:02/13/2022 Accepted:06/24/2022 Published: 07/26/2022

Abstract
The study of teachers' cognition and classroom practices about online corrective feedback in English language teaching is a recent trend in research. However, there is a paucity of studies on teachers' practices and cognition of online corrective feedback in speaking class. Therefore, this study attempts to bridge this research gap by investigating Saudi female English language teachers' cognition and practices related to corrective feedback in an online speaking setting. The main question of this study is What are Saudi female EFL teachers' practices and tacit beliefs about online corrective feedback? The participants of the study were five Saudi female teachers. This study applied a qualitative case study approach dealing with in-depth data collection instruments, including online class observations followed by face-to-face semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews, which interacted with each other through a practical argument process. The results revealed how the teachers' online corrective feedback beliefs shaped their practices. The observational data revealed that all five teachers corrected most of their students' errors using various online corrective feedback strategies. The observational data revealed that most teachers used output-prompting strategies more commonly than input-providing strategies, reflecting teachers' interest in prompting self-correction discovery and reducing the students' need for assistance. This study thus provides a deeper insight into the complexity of teachers' cognitions and practices regarding online corrective feedback. Implications of the findings of this study in teacher education are highlighted, and recommendations for further research are suggested.

Keywords: Corrective feedback, online corrective feedback, speaking, tacit belief teacher cognition

Cite as: Aloud, R. E. (2022). Saudi Female EFL Teachers' Cognition and Practices Regarding Online Corrective Feedback in Speaking Class. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL (8)*56-69. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/call8.

Introduction

Many educational researchers view the study of teacher cognition as a paradigm shift in research on teaching. Earlier educational researchers aimed to determine a casual or a correlative relationship between specific teaching behaviors and learning outcomes. In the last two decades, teacher educators began to realize that teacher behavior in class is not mainly determined by prescribed principles and theories developed for teachers by pedagogical experts, commonly referred to as *Received Theory* in the literature. Rather, the chief determinant of teachers' behavior in class is their *Theory of Action*, commonly defined as a set of tacit beliefs about what constitutes effective language teaching and learning.

In recent years, the study of teacher cognition has also emerged in the field of teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (EFL). Several studies have investigated teacher cognition regarding their teaching practices of planned instructions of teaching such as teaching grammar and reading instruction; while others have investigated unplanned instructions such as Corrective Feedback (CF). In fact, most of the studies in teacher cognition regarding CF have mainly focused on teachers' stated beliefs (conscious/explicit beliefs) which reflect teachers' perceptions of ideal practices, that may not be reflected in their actual classroom practices (Ellis, 2012). However, very few studies explore tacit beliefs (unconscious/ implicit beliefs) of teachers about their CF practices to help teachers grow professionally. Moreover, most importantly, in line with the development of today's world in technology, teacher feedback has also moved beyond the traditional to an online setting. To the best of the author's knowledge, no study has focused exclusively on foreign language teachers' cognition (i.e., tacit/implicit beliefs) and practices relating to online CF and in particular in a speaking setting. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to explore teachers' tacit beliefs and practices regarding online corrective feedback in speaking class. More specifically, the study is a preliminary attempt to answer the following questions:

1. How do Saudi female EFL teachers practice online corrective feedback?
2. What are Saudi female EFL teachers' tacit beliefs about online corrective feedback?
3. What is the relationship between Saudi female EFL teachers' tacit beliefs about online corrective feedback and their classroom practices?

Literature Review

To answer the above research main questions, an attempt is made to undertake a critical review of the literature in two major areas—teacher cognition in language teaching in general and online oral corrective feedback in particular—as well as of studies related to the present study.

Teacher Cognition

The development of teacher cognition teems with labels and definitions that reflect the complex nature of teacher mental constructs. Borg (2006) cited over 30 terms and definitions used to refer to teacher cognition. Borg (2006) attributed such complexity to "the fact that identical terms have been defined in different ways and different terms have been used to describe similar concepts" (p. 35).

In fact, the main confusion and complexity in defining teacher cognition are mainly based on the distinction between teacher knowledge and belief (Borg, 2006; Pajares, 1992). Some researchers have clarified in their definitions of teacher belief that these two concepts are different. According to Pajares (1992), the most common distinction used in definitions is that "belief is based on evaluation and judgment; knowledge is based on objective fact" (p. 313). However, some researchers considered knowledge as a personal construct; thus, a teacher's belief and knowledge are "inextricably intertwined" in the teacher's mind (Verloop, Van Driel, & Meijer, 2001, P.), which makes it impossible to distinguish between them (Borg, 2003; Woods & Çakır, 2011).

Another further distinction that confuses confusion in defining teacher cognition which is important in understanding teacher behavior in class, is the distinction between two types of teacher beliefs—that is, stated (conscious/explicit beliefs) and tacit (unconscious/ implicit beliefs). Argyris and Schon (1974) stated that an individual *Theory of Action* consists of an *Espoused Theory* and a *Theory-in-Use*. The espoused theory comprises a set of stated beliefs, which are defined as "statements teachers made about their ideas, thoughts, and knowledge that are expressed as evaluations of 'what should be done, 'should be the case', and 'is preferable" (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004, p. 244). This type of belief is usually informed by teachers' technical knowledge about teaching (i.e., *Received Theory*) (Phipps & Borg, 2009). Theory in use, on the other hand—which is the focus of this study—comprises a set of tacit beliefs underlying a teacher's actual classroom practices. It is generated from the teacher's experiences as a learner and a teacher as well as his/her reflections on these experiences (Borg, 2006). It cannot be articulated and can only become explicit through reflection, which may end up changing a teacher's beliefs. This type of belief is usually informed by teachers' *personal practical knowledge* (i.e., *Theory-in-Action*). As a result, Borg (2006) defined teacher cognition as "an often tacit, personally-held, practical system of mental constructs held by teachers and which are dynamic—i.e., defined and redefined on the basis of educational and professional experiences throughout teachers' lives" (p. 35).

As a tacit element of teachers' professional practice, teacher cognition is not readily understood. However, some generally accepted assumptions supported by literature can provide some insights into the nature of this construct and its relationship to what teachers do. One main assumption is that teacher cognition is a situated cognition that is formed and developed through their experiences in a range of real-life teaching and learning situations (Putnam & Borko, 2000). The second assumption is that the origin of teachers' tacit beliefs lies in their experiences as learners. According to Borg (2004), a teacher teaches similarly to his or her own prior teachers when in an apprentice-like situation, as a result of spending thousands of hours as schoolchildren observing and evaluating their teachers' actions. The third assumption is that teachers' tacit beliefs act as a filter that shapes their interpretation of new information. By the time prospective teachers enter college, their established cognition filters the formal professional knowledge to which they will be exposed in their educational courses (El-Okda, 2005). The fourth assumption is that teachers' tacit beliefs have a long-term influence on their classroom practices. Teachers' tacit beliefs constitute the chief determinant of their behavior in class (Borg, 2009). Woods and Çakır (2011) insisted that teachers' practice is "the actual instantiation" of tacit beliefs at a particular moment and at a particular place (p. 386).

Corrective Feedback

Feedback is an essential element of instruction in second or foreign language teaching (Ellis, 2009). In the general literature on language classroom teaching, the term feedback is defined as "information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task usually with the objective to improve his/her performance" (Ur, 1996, p. 242). Feedback can be either positive or negative. Positive feedback "affirms that a learner's response to an activity is correct" (Ellis, 2009, p. 3). It may include verbal response, such as praise, or nonverbal response, such as nodding of the head. According to Nunan (1991), positive feedback serves two main functions: "to let students know they have performed correctly" and "to increase motivation through praises" (p. 195). Negative feedback, on the other hand, indicates that learners' use of the target language is inaccurate or incorrect (Ellis, 2009). Different terminologies have been used interchangeably in the literature to refer to errors and their corrections, such as negative feedback, corrective feedback, error correction, and error treatment. However, the term corrective feedback, which is used in this study, is the most popular term in second and foreign language teaching (Schachter, 1991).

The concept of CF has received much attention in second language acquisition (SLA) and language pedagogy research (Ellis, 2009); however, there has always been disagreement about whether to correct errors, when to correct errors, which errors to correct, how to correct errors, and who should correct errors (Hendrickson, 1978). Teacher cognition about CF is expected to contribute to a more complete interpretation and understanding of CF. Traditionally, CF has played a significant role in language teaching. Behaviorists view errors as an indication of the inadequacy of practice and believe that the teacher should immediately and explicitly correct errors before bad habits can develop. However, in the 1970s and the 1980s, the nativists' perspective cast doubt on the behaviorist perspective. They advocated a complete emphasis on meaningful communication and a rejection of conscious grammar teaching and explicit CF. One of the most influential proponents of this view was Krashen (1985), who argued that language, particularly linguistic forms, can only be acquired consciously and implicitly from comprehensible input. However, despite the generally successful implementation of Krashen's input hypothesis, students generally failed to acquire certain linguistic forms despite being exposed to plenty of comprehensible input (Swain, 2005). To respond to this situation, a strong reconsideration of CF's role in facilitating language acquisition has emerged among the proponents of both cognitive learning theories. Swain (1985) clarified that comprehensible input is essential but not sufficient for language learning; therefore, learners need to engage in tasks that require them to produce comprehensible output. To this end, she insisted that oral CF strategies aimed at prompting accurate output (e.g., through elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, clarification requests, and repetition) can prompt learners' interlanguage. Schmidt (1990) argued that noticing or conscious awareness is essential for learners to develop their target language. As a result, Long (1996) updated his interaction hypothesis by emphasizing the role of CF, and explained, "environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated by selective attention and the learner's developing L2 processing capacity, and that these resources are brought together most usefully, although not exclusively, during negotiation for meaning" (p. 417).

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the different types of CF strategies. In an often-cited descriptive study, Lyster and Ranta (1997) identified the following six CF types based on teacher-student interaction in French immersion classrooms.

1. *Explicit correction*: The teacher explicitly provides the student with the correct form.
2. *Recast*: "The teacher's reformulation of all or part of a student's utterance, minus the error" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 46).
3. *Clarification request*: The teacher indicates that "a repetition or a reformulation is required" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47). A clarification request includes phrases such as "pardon," "sorry,"

or "I do not understand."

4. *Metalinguistic clues*: The teacher comments on, provides information about, or questions the well-formedness of the student's utterance without providing the correct form (Lyster & Ranta, 1997, p. 47).
5. *Elicitation*: The teacher elicits the correct form by asking questions, directly asks students to reformulate their utterances, or elicits completion of students' utterances by "pausing" to allow students to "fill in the blank."
6. *Repetition*: The teacher's repetition in isolation of the student's ill-formed utterance.

Ellis (2009) added another kind of CF–*paralinguistic signal*, which refers to the use of body language to provide feedback. Sheen (2011) suggested one more category of *explicit correction with a metalinguistic explanation* in which he combined two strategies. These CF strategies differ along with a range of dimensions, such as the degree of explicitness or implicitness and the requirement for input provision and output production (Pawlak, 2013). Ellis (2009), for example, classified CF strategies into two broad categories—input-providing and output-prompting—with strategies in each category further divided into implicit or explicit (see Table one).

Table 1. *Taxonomy of CF Strategies*

Strategy	Implicit	Explicit
Input-providing	Recast	Explicit correction
Output-prompting	Repetition Clarification request	Metalinguistic explanation Elicitation Paralinguistic signal

Note 1. Ellis (2009, p. 8).

Online Corrective Feedback

Warschauer and Ware (2006) describe online feedback as "a means by which human feedback can be provided by technology" (p. 109). Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) technologies have provided some online platforms for providing feedback such as Blackboard, Google Classroom, Teams, Padlet, and more. Online feedback can be provided through these platforms either in a text-based form or audio using a video or recorder.

Providing online feedback has some benefits, such as (1) overcoming time and place constraints, (2) increasing the provision of constructive feedback (Liou & Peng, 2009; Pham & Usaha, 2016,) (3) developing the learner's linguistic accuracy and fluency (Tseng & Yeh, 2020) and (4) facilitating feedback personalization and reducing students' anxiety about receiving immediate feedback in a face-to-face setting (Martin, Alvarez, & Espasa, 2022).

Corrective Feedback and Teacher Cognition

Empirical research on CF has grown rapidly over the last few decades. One of the recent subsets of inquiry in CF research is concerned with teachers' beliefs behind their CF behavior (Mori, 2011). Most studies relating to this inquiry have been qualitative in nature with their focus on investigating teachers' stated beliefs about CF and their relation to classroom practices (Alkhammash & Gulnaz, 2019; Althobaiti, 2012). Only a few studies like those of Atai and Shafiee (2017), Mori (2011), and Shafiee, Nejadghanbar, and Parsaiyan (2018) have examined teachers' tacit beliefs about oral CF.

Mori (2011) qualitatively analyzed how the tacit beliefs of two English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in-service teachers shaped their CF practices in a Japanese context and how these types of beliefs are affected by social, cultural, personal, and experiential factors. Another study was conducted by Atai and Shafiee (2017) to investigate the pedagogical knowledge base underlying the oral CF provided by three Iranian EFL teachers in grammar instruction. The authors inferred 19 categories that were classified into three major themes: "professional knowledge" (i.e., knowledge of form-focused instruction), "procedural knowledge" (i.e., knowledge of reactive focus-on-form in grammar lessons), and "personal knowledge" (i.e., knowledge of classroom management regarding oral CF). Shafiee, Nejadghanbar, and Parsaiyan (2018) investigated teachers' cognitions underlying the provision of oral CF, as well as the transformative role of reflective inquiry for a male in-service EFL teacher as an ongoing development vehicle. The teacher showed an increased awareness of his informed online decisions and critical reflections and evaluations of the status, including facing administration constraints, criticizing teacher recruitment standards, and evaluating his and his colleagues' error treatments. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of these studies consider teachers' cognition and practices regarding CF in a speaking class. Speaking is one of the major skills in language learning. Through corrective feedback, the students will be apple to practice speaking effectively without hesitation of making mistakes during their communication with others.

Furthermore, with the developments of e-learning platforms especially during the crisis of the Covid-19 pandemic, some studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' s perceptions of e-learning in general. A few studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' perceptions of giving online feedback in writing classes (Ab Hamid & Romly,2021). However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of those studies consider teachers' cognition and practices regarding the online speaking class. This study attempts to enrich the body of literature by exploring Saudi Female EFL tacit beliefs and practices about online corrective feedback and the relationship between them.

Methods

Research Design

The present study adopted a multiple case study design which is a common qualitative research design. This type of design had been chosen because it could generate a rich and detailed description of each case, which contributed to an in-depth understanding of a highly complex phenomenon, namely teachers' tacit beliefs in relation to their classroom practices.

Participants

The participants were five Saudi female EFL pre-service teachers. The preservice teachers were fourth-grade students in Languages and Translation College at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University who were experiencing practicum at schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Convenience sampling and purposeful sampling were chosen for participant recruitment. The participants of the study were volunteers who consented to participate by signing an informed consent letter. Through purposeful sampling, the cases who have completed their practicum process were selected purposefully. Moreover, due to the cultural restrictions, this study investigated the cognitions and practices of Saudi female EFL teachers exclusively, and thus no Saudi male EFL teachers were involved in it.

Data Collection Instruments

This study adopted a qualitative approach to explore teachers' tacit beliefs and practices. The duration of the study was one full semester (i.e., four months and three weeks). Since eliciting teachers' tacit beliefs was challenging, in-depth data collection instruments that involved multiple sources of information were used. These included online classroom observations, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and stimulated recall interviews. These different methods of data collection interacted with each other through the use of the "practical argument" process. The practical argument is a formal elaboration of practical reasoning that "lays out a series of reasons that can be viewed as premises and connects them to a concluding action" (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 1993, p. 103). According to El-Okda (2005), these elicited premises will assist teachers to verbalize, modify, or change the tacit beliefs that constitute their theories of action.

Observation

Online classroom observations had been conducted by the researcher through the web/mobile application *MyU* (https://myu.co/). The observation scheme used by the researcher in this study comprised predetermined observation categories (i.e., CF strategies and error types based on Ellis's [2009] CF classification (see Table one) and field notes.

Semi-structured Interviews

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews, preceded by online class observations, were conducted at school with teachers every week throughout the semester. The semi-structured interviews followed a guide that included a set of open-ended questions and probes, which covered specific domains such as preferred CF strategies, relevance of these strategies to error types, and opinions regarding the effectiveness of each strategy.

Stimulated Recall Interviews

The stimulated recall interviews were associated with the semi-structured interviews, one day after the online observation of the teachers' feedback to overcome any obstacle that could result from the short-term memory of participants. For the stimulated recall, a simple interview guide based on the research questions was used and the stimulus was the transcripts of each teacher's preceded online CF sessions.

Each interview session usually lasted for approximately 45 minutes, during which data for each participant were collected until saturation was reached when additional data no longer

contributed further information. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. A word processor was used to transcribe the digital recordings.

Research Procedures

The duration of the study was one full semester (i.e., four months and three weeks). Each teacher conducted an online speaking class once a week through the web/mobile application *MyU* (https://myu.co/). They uploaded the assigned speaking task of each unit following the school curriculum and assigned textbook. The students logged into their accounts using the access code generated by their teacher to submit their oral individual responses. The teacher in turn provided feedback to each student.

Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in this study comprised two phases: (1) analysis of teachers' OCF to explore their teaching practices, and (2) analysis of stimulated recall and semi-structured interview responses. The researcher first analyzed the online observational discourse of each teacher to identify OCF episodes as units of analysis and to code the OCF strategies according to Ellis's (2009) framework (see table one). As the feedback was provided either as text or audio, the paralinguistic signal was excluded from the analysis. However, Sheen's (2011) explicit correction with a metalinguistic explanation was included.

The researcher next performed inductive data analysis for the two types of interviews following the open, axial, and selective coding processes of the grounded theory. Excerpts of the transcribed data were highlighted and coded. The nodes feature in NVivo 10 was used to produce a list of open codes. Similar or compatible nodes (i.e., codes) were grouped together to identify a highly abstract level of connection between the codes to represent the main themes of the study.

To verify the dependability and reliability of the codes, the researcher applied inter-coder reliability. For observation coding, a second coder observed one online class for each teacher using a copy of the researcher's observation scheme and all definitions of the codes with examples. The researcher and the second coder convened and calculated a 75% agreement on the codes. For the interview coding, a list of the nodes (codes) and their descriptions were exported from the Nvivo analysis software and emailed to a colleague of the researcher along with the interview transcripts. There was an 80% agreement on the codes before reconciliation and 98% after reconciliation.

Results

Role of Online Corrective Feedback in Classroom

The findings of the study revealed that all five teachers held positive beliefs about the role of CF in online EFL classes. Though two of the teachers were not satisfied with their English teachers' corrective feedback when they were students at school, they believed that it is a must in the EFL classroom. However, the practices of these two teachers differed from the others in which they tried to provide positive feedback (i.e., praises) more than negative feedback (i.e., CF).
Moreover, all the teachers reported that online CF decreases students' anxiety about receiving oral CF. The teachers believed that students fear receiving oral CF in front of their teachers and peers in traditional classes. One of the teachers argued, based on her previous experience as an EFL student, that oral CF in speaking traditional classrooms raises the anxiety of students as they often

focus on producing perfect language with perfect grammar. Three teachers reported that online CF gave them the chance to provide feedback to each student privately. This allowed them to understand students' differences and needs regarding their speaking skills.

All the teachers pointed out that the quantity of CF provided is one of the most valuable benefits of the online teaching setting. Two teachers reported that the online setting allowed them to provide approximately two times as much feedback as that in the traditional classroom. One of the teachers said, "I have much time to provide more precise and compatible feedback." Another commented that online CF allowed her to provide clearer and more detailed information that was not possible in a traditional class. The teachers argued that in traditional classrooms, they do not have time to give feedback to each student. One of the teachers said, "I am teaching 30 students in one class, so how can I deal with this number of students while providing feedback." She added, "*MyU* App saved my time and effort and gave me the chance to figure out my students' real level of proficiency."

Frequency of Online Corrective Feedback Strategies

It was found that the teachers corrected students' errors using a range of OCF strategies. The observational data revealed that most teachers used output-prompting strategies more commonly than input-providing strategies. This reflected their interest in prompting self-correction discovery and reduction of the students' need for assistance. Table two indicates that metalinguistic clues and elicitation were the most frequently used online CF strategies. Teachers believed that these two strategies provided students with the opportunity to retrieve their previous knowledge and correct errors according to what they already knew. Two of the five teachers believed that these two strategies allowed the students to use their higher-order thinking skills, while another added that these strategies helped students become less dependent upon their teachers. Furthermore, the teachers never used repetition to correct errors in online speaking classes. Some of them argued that they used this strategy in their traditional classes but avoided using it in this study because they were afraid that the students would not understand it.

Moreover, the teachers believed input-providing strategies to be more effective than output-prompting strategies in dealing with time limitations and the low level of proficiency of students that hindered the provision of oral CF. In particular, explicit correction with metalinguistic explanations was the most frequently used strategy. Teachers believed that this strategy not only indicated the student's errors but also provided them with explanations to help avoid making such errors. In addition, the teachers argued that the non-concurrent (i.e., asynchronous) mode of online communication gave them the chance to take their time to compose this type of feedback strategy.

Table 2. *Teachers' frequency of CF strategies*

OCF strategies	N	F
Input-Providing Strategies		
Recast	25	8%
Explicit correction	64	21%
Explicit correction with metalinguistic explanation	65	21%
Output-Prompting Strategies		
Metalinguistic clue	107	35%

Elicitation	131	42%
Repetition	0	0
Clarification request	18	5%

Frequency of Online Corrective Feedback Strategies about Types of Errors in Speaking

The observational data revealed that the selection of CF strategies was highly associated with the type of error related to speaking skills (i.e., lexical, phonological, grammatical, and fluency-related errors) For all five teachers, the data revealed that input-providing strategies were the most frequently used for correcting phonological and intonation errors (see tables three and four). The explicit correction was used to address phonological errors as it provided students with the correct form in a clearer, direct way. Some of the teachers articulated that students should hear correct pronunciation from a teacher rather than their peers because this pronunciation is more authentic. As for lexical and grammatical errors, output-prompting CF strategies, particularly elicitation and metalinguistic clues were the most frequently used strategies for correction (see table three). The teachers believed that output-prompting strategies would help students actively engage in the process of correction, which could ultimately help them to develop vocabulary and master grammar. Both elicitation and metalinguistic clues strategies were also highly associated with correcting fluency-related errors, with teachers believing that students just needed clues to guide them in their ideas to convey the meaning correctly.

Table 3. *Teachers' frequency of OCF strategies in relation to error types*

OCF Strategies	Error Types									
	Intonation		Pronunciation		Grammar		Lexical		Fluency	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Input-Providing Strategies										
Recast	0	0%	5	2%	8	3%	12	4%	0	0%
Explicit correction	3	1%	54	17%	3	1%	4	1%	0	0%
Explicit correction with metalinguistic Explanation	1	0.3%	23	7%	26	8%	15	5%	0	0%
Output-Prompting Strategies										
Metalinguistic clue	1	0.3%	0	0%	40	13%	60	19%	6	2%
Elicitation	1	0.3%	25	8%	39	12%	56	18%	8	3%
Repetition	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Clarification request	0	0%	7	2%	2	0.6%	6	2%	3	1%

Furthermore, it was found that the teachers used audio when correcting phonological and intonation errors, and text when correcting grammatical, lexical, or fluency-related errors. One of the most interesting observations regarding metalinguistic comments was that half of the teachers related their comments to real-life to attract the students' attention. For example, two teachers used the name of the famous national football team, "Al-Hilal," to help their students guess the correct meaning of the words "national" and "fan" (see table four). Another teacher, who taught at a

Tahfeez school at the time of the study, used quotes from the Holy Quran or Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) while correcting students' errors to increase their motivation (see table four).

Discussion

In this study, the data confirmed that teachers' OCF practices were strongly driven by their tacit beliefs. As result, the teachers' OCF beliefs were congruent with their practices within this study. The observational data revealed that the five teachers corrected most of the students' errors. This reflected the strong effect produced by their positive tacit beliefs toward implementing OCF in EFL-speaking classrooms. All of the teachers believed that OCF was essential for improving their students' English. The data indicated that output-prompting strategies were more commonly used than input-providing ones. This practice highlighted the teachers' belief that output-prompting strategies were more effective than input-providing strategies due to their encouragement of self-correction. The last consistent aspect was reflected in the teachers' belief about the association between the choice of OCF strategy and the type of linguistic error.

Such findings echo the results of previous studies (Atai and Shafiee, 2017; Mori, 2011; Shafiee, Nejadghanbar, & Parsaiyan, 2018). The study of Mori (2011), for example, clarified how the tacit beliefs of two English as a foreign language (EFL) in-service teachers shaped their CF practices in a Japanese context and how these types of beliefs are affected by social, cultural, personal, and experiential factors. Thus, the finding of this study reemphasized that the tacit beliefs of the teachers exert a more powerful influence on their classroom practices than their stated beliefs, which are more akin to theoretical knowledge than to reality.

Furthermore, the data of this study showed that the teachers believed that CF in online classes is effective for mitigating problems regarding time, student anxiety, motivation, low levels of proficiency, and so on. In line with these findings, Mori (2011) indicated that students' anxiety is one of the main obstacles preventing the application of CF in traditional classes. His study revealed that oral CF in traditional classrooms raised the anxiety of Japanese students as they would often focus on producing perfect language with perfect grammar. Martin, Alvarez, & Espasa (2022), on the other hand, found in their study that online corrective feedback facilitated students' personalization and reduced the anxiety that they usually face while receiving immediate feedback in a face-to-face classroom setting. Similarly, the study by Tseng & Yeh (2020) shows that OCF reduced students' anxiety and helped them to develop greater linguistic accuracy in their English-speaking performance.

Conclusion

As indicated above, the present study is the first of its kind to focus on EFL teachers' tacit beliefs and practices in relation to online corrective feedback strategies in speaking class. The findings confirm that the teachers' tacit beliefs strongly informed their practices, as these tacit beliefs were congruent with their practices in this study. The observational data revealed that all seven teachers corrected most of their students' errors using various OCF strategies. This reflected the strong effect produced by their positive tacit beliefs toward implementing OCF in EFL classrooms. The teachers reported that the online CF motivates the students and decreases their anxiety about receiving oral CF in front of their teachers and peers.

The findings offer the following pedagogical recommendations to teachers, as well as future studies. As technology, in particular, the Internet has revolutionized teaching, it is recommended to replicate the current study in various online settings instead of a traditional one. Moreover, capturing CF in an online setting is a complex issue; hence, simplistic pedagogical prescriptions cannot reflect the reality in which teachers enact OCF. Therefore, teacher educators should emphasize the overwhelming number of factors (e.g., cognitive, affective, and contextual) that compete for influence over teachers' CF practices and illustrate how teachers can achieve balance in their choices. In addition, the findings highlight the importance of *practical argument* as a systematic collaborative dialogue between the teacher and others (e.g., a teacher educator or peers) to expose the underlying reasons for the behaviors of teachers (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 1993). Therefore, I recommend the incorporation of practical arguments in teacher education programs to raise teachers' awareness of their beliefs and practices. Such awareness could contribute to the development of their teaching practices, which is the fundamental goal of an educational training program. Notably, this argument aims to support rather than a judge to ensure effective support for teachers.

About the author

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Appendices

Table 4. *Examples of OCF strategies used to correct student errors*

OCF strategies	Samples	Error Type
Metalinguistic clue	S: The lady buy a shoulder bag two days ago. T: It is the simple past, something that happened in the past.	Grammatical error
Explicit correction	S: They didn't listen /?/ to the radio yesterday. T: We do not say listen. We say listen /ˈlɪs.ən/	Pronunciation error
Elicitation	S: There are two colors: black and green. T: There are two colors: black and . . .	Lexical error
Recast	S: We were all in the museum/?/. T: Museum /mjuːˈziːəm/	Pronunciation error
Explicit Correction with Metalinguistic Explanation	S: It is a notion team. T: No. It is a national team. The name of our national team is Al-Hilal and that of our international team is Saudi Falcons. Is it clear?	Lexical error
Explicit Correction with Metalinguistic Explanation	S: There were three ladies in the garden. T: You read the words in the sentence using the same tone. You should emphasize "three ladies" with a high tone. For example, you can say, "There were **three ladies** in the garden."	Intonation error
Clarification request	S: I preferred to go alone. T: Sorry your idea was not clear. Can you clarify more?	Fluency error