



Correcting Spoken Errors in English Language Teaching: Preferences of Turkish EFL Learners at Different Proficiency Levels

Zübeyde Sinem Genç¹

Abstract

Understanding the process of correcting spoken errors in language classrooms is quite important because there is always the risk of disturbing the flow of communication and the risk of decreasing motivation and willingness of students to communicate in the target language. The proficiency level of language learners is an important factor on their anxiety and self-confidence in oral communication. For this reason, insights about the preferences of students at different proficiency levels will help implementing more successful corrective feedback sessions in teaching any foreign language. This study investigated the preferences of Turkish learners of English about the correction of spoken errors. Data collected from students at two different proficiency levels revealed that both groups of students preferred receiving corrective feedback for spoken errors. However, significant differences were observed between low and high-level students regarding the types of spoken errors, the time, ways and source of corrective feedback. The results obtained were discussed in terms of the contributions to the findings in the field of teaching English as a foreign language.

Keywords

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Introduction

The role of explicit grammar instruction, which involves error correction as well, has received considerable attention from both researchers and language teachers. It has been claimed that error correction, i.e. corrective feedback, was not always necessary and sometimes unhelpful for some errors (Truscott, 1999). However, a considerable number of researchers have indicated that second language (L2) learning relies on both implicit and explicit learning as opposed to first language learning, which is believed to heavily rely on implicit learning (DeKeyser, 2003; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006; R. Ellis, 2004; N. Ellis, 2005).

Error correction is an important part of explicit learning process because it is a source of explicit input for L2 learners (Salazar Campillo, 2003). For that reason, curriculum planners, teachers and researchers are all interested in knowing how implicit and explicit learning might best fit into the process of L2 learning (Hulstijn, 2005). For example, Ammar and Spada (2006: 544) point to the importance of error correction in communicative classrooms and state "One of the reasons for this increased interest in corrective feedback is related to the observation that although L2 learners in communicative classrooms attain relatively high levels of comprehension ability and, to some extent, fluency in oral production, they continue to experience difficulties with accuracy". However, for errors in speaking, it has been stated that correction of spoken errors does not improve learners'

¹ Uludağ University, Faculty of Education, Turkey, zsgenc@yahoo.com

ability to speak more accurately, and that foreign language teachers should abandon correction of these errors (Truscott, 1999).

A number of researchers pointed out that the match between learners' and teachers' preferences/beliefs plays an important role in motivation and success during the process of learning a language (Birdsong & Kassen 1988; Daloğlu & Isık Tas, 2007; Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Mantle-Bromley, 1995). The vast majority of the studies that examined learners' preferences about correction focused on written errors (Brandl, 1995; Chandler, 2003; Enginarlar, 1993; Gascoigne, 2004; Schulz, 1996, 2001). However, a very small body of research investigated learners' preferences/perceptions about correction of spoken errors (Bang, 1999; Katayama, 2007; Oladejo, 1993).

Error correction becomes more crucial in oral communication when we consider its effects on learners' anxiety and self-confidence (Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999; Philips, 1991; Woodrow, 2006). For this reason, it is quite important to examine learners' perspectives about error correction in speaking if we want to avoid the risk of having them withdraw from communicating and of their being unmotivated when their self-confidence and expectations are violated. Indeed, Birdsong and Kassen (1988: 1) emphasize it in these words: "While error judgments among instructors and native speakers have received ample attention, a significant group of error evaluators has been systematically overlooked: students".

The proficiency level in a foreign language is known to play a great role on the level of anxiety and self-confidence in oral communication performance. Learners at lower levels are expected to be more hesitant and anxious during oral communication. Any attempt at corrective feedback for their errors may decrease their motivation and willingness to communicate in the target language (MacIntyre, 2007). Therefore, investigating what learners at different levels prefer for the errors in spoken communication will help us understand and implement more successful feedback sessions in foreign language instruction. However, none of the studies conducted previously examined the beliefs/preferences of learners at different proficiency levels about correcting spoken errors.

The purpose of this study is to explore the preferences of Turkish learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) about the correction of spoken errors and to find out whether there are significant differences between high and low-level EFL learners' preferences. The focus of the investigation is on the preferences of learners at different proficiency levels about corrective feedback for the errors they make while they speak in their foreign language, i.e. English. Thus, the research questions investigated are:

1. What are the preferences of learners at high proficiency level about the correction of spoken errors?
2. What are the preferences of learners at low proficiency level about the correction of spoken errors?
3. What are the differences between high and low-level learners in terms of their preferences toward the correction of spoken errors?

Method

Subjects

The subjects for this study were ninety randomly selected Turkish EFL learners attending intensive English courses at a private institution. Forty-two subjects were at low proficiency level and forty-eight of them were high-level students. The subjects had been placed at these proficiency levels by the institution through a language exam administered previously. The researcher randomly selected the subjects by taking only their proficiency levels into consideration.

Data Collection Tool

Data for the study was collected through a questionnaire (Fukuda, 2003) which was administered to ninety subjects. The questionnaire included five major sections. In the first section, there were two items which gathered data on learners' general preference for the correction of spoken errors and for the frequency of correction. The second section consisted of four items that aimed to obtain data on the time of error correction learners preferred. The third section obtained data on learners' preferences for different types of spoken errors they want to be corrected and there were five items for this purpose. The fourth section collected data on learners' preferences for different ways of correction. There were nine items in this section of the questionnaire in order to investigate learners' preferences for different ways of correcting errors. The last section of the questionnaire focused on the person that learners preferred for the correction of spoken errors. There were four items in order to find out by whom they prefer their spoken errors to be corrected. The questionnaire had 5-point scales in the Likert format. The questionnaire was chosen to examine the preferences of learners in this study because it was specifically designed to collect data on EFL learners' preferences on spoken error correction. The questionnaire was translated into learners' first language preserving all the items and details the same as in the original design.

Analysis of Data

Data collected were analyzed using the SPSS 15 statistical program. Shapiro Wilk test was performed on the data to determine whether the data displayed normal, i.e. parametric, distribution or not. Since the data was non-parametric, Mann-Whitney U was used to compare the two groups of learners. $p < 0.05$ was considered to be the level for significant differences.

Results

The findings about the high and low level learners' preferences toward correcting spoken errors are summarized in the following tables. Items are numbered as they appeared in the questionnaire.

Table 1. Preferences for the Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
1	High	81.2	12.5	6.3
	Low	83.3	11.9	4.8

Table 1 reports the results for the learners' overall preference toward the correction of spoken errors. In the questionnaire, Item 1 asked whether learners want their spoken errors to be corrected. As Table 1 illustrates, the responses show that 81.2% of learners at high proficiency level want to receive corrective feedback for the errors they have during oral communication. Similarly, 83.3% of low level learners want to receive correction of spoken errors. Table 1 shows that there is no discrepancy in the preferences of high and low-level students because the majority of the students in both groups want their spoken errors to be corrected.

Table 2. Preferences for the Frequency of Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
2	High	64.6	29.1	6.3
	Low	85.7	14.3	0.0

Table 2 presents findings on learners' preferences for the frequency of correction. Item 2 asked about learners' preferences about the frequency of correction. The 64.6% of high-level students indicated that they "always & usually" want their spoken errors to be corrected, while a considerable number of high-level students, that is, 29.2%, want their errors to be corrected "sometimes". As for low-level students, 85.7% of them "always & usually" want correction for their spoken errors. This is a high percentage compared to the students who wanted their spoken errors to be corrected "sometimes" (14.3%). Low-level learners did not prefer occasional or no correction at all while 6.3% of high-level students prefer this option.

Table 3. Preferences for the Time of Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
3	High	27.5	12.5	60.0
	Low	30.9	9.6	59.5
4	High	84.1	9.1	6.8
	Low	88.1	2.4	9.5
5	High	60.0	15.0	25.0
	Low	38.1	26.2	35.7
6	High	28.9	21.1	50.0
	Low	4.7	16.7	78.6

Table 3 shows the results on the learners' preferences for the time of error correction. Items in the questionnaire asked when learners want their teachers to correct their spoken errors. Regarding the timing of the correction, there were four options: immediate correction (item 3), after speech (item 4), after activity (item 5), and after lesson (item 6).

Items 3-6 elicited responses on the preferred time of corrective feedback. Table 3 shows that 84.1% of high-level students agreed to be corrected after they finish speaking. This is a high percentage compared to other choices. For example, 60% of students agreed to be corrected after communicative activities, and 28.9% preferred their errors to be corrected after that day's lesson. They do not want to be corrected in the middle of speaking because only 27.5% wanted their errors to be corrected as soon as errors are made even if it cuts into speaking and 60% of them did not prefer this choice. Low-level students preferred to be corrected after they spoke the most (88.1%). There was an equal distribution of responses for the correction after the activity. 38.1% agreed while 35.7% disagreed with this choice. 26.2% of the students were neutral. Students did not prefer to be corrected in the middle of their sentences because 59.5% of them disagreed with this. The least-preferred time of correction for them was after that day's lesson. 78.6% disagreed while only 4.7% agreed with this choice.

Table 4. Preferences for the Frequency of Correction for Different Types of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
7	High	95.8	4.2	0.0
	Low	95.2	4.8	0.0
8	High	20.8	43.8	35.4
	Low	52.4	26.2	21.4
9	High	79.1	18.8	2.1
	Low	88.1	2.4	9.5
10	High	10.4	22.9	66.7
	Low	35.7	21.4	42.9
11	High	35.5	33.2	31.3
	Low	50.0	31.0	19.0

Table 4 presents findings on the preferences about the frequency of correction for different types of spoken errors. The third section obtained data on learners' preferences for the types of spoken errors they want to be corrected. Learners indicated how frequently they want different types of errors to be corrected. The different types of spoken errors investigated in the study were: serious errors (item 7), less serious errors (item 8), frequent errors (item 9), infrequent errors (item 10) and individual errors (item 11).

As Table 4 reports, Items 7-11 presented learners' preferences on the types of errors to be corrected. 95.8% of the students wanted serious spoken errors that impede listener's understanding to be "always/usually" corrected. Item 8 elicited responses on less serious spoken errors that do not affect listener's understanding. 43.8% of the students preferred to be "sometimes" corrected when they made such errors. 35.4% wanted to be "occasionally/never" corrected for such errors. In item 9, 79.1% of high level students reported that they "always/usually" wanted frequent errors to be corrected. For infrequent errors in item 10, 66.7% of the students preferred to be "occasionally/never" corrected while 22.9% wanted infrequent errors to be "sometimes" corrected. When the responses in item 11 were analyzed, there was an equal distribution in the preferences for individual errors made by only one student. 35.5% preferred individual errors to be "always/usually" corrected. 33.2% wanted this type of error to be "sometimes" corrected. 31.3% of the students preferred individual errors to be "occasionally/never" corrected.

Table 4 shows that the seriousness and frequency of the error seemed to be two important factors for low-level students. 95.2% of the students wanted serious spoken errors that impede listener's understanding to be "always/usually" corrected. Frequent errors were desired to be corrected by 88.1%. The next two important error types included less serious errors that do not affect listener's understanding, and the individual errors made by only one student. Half of the students (52.4% and 50% respectively) wanted these error types to be 'always/usually' corrected. The least important error type for low-level students was infrequent errors because 42.9% of the students preferred them to be 'never/occasionally' corrected.

Table 5. Preferences for Different Ways of Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
12	High	87.5	2.1	10.4
	Low	57.2	19.0	23.8
13	High	93.8	4.1	2.1
	Low	71.5	21.4	7.1
14	High	64.6	22.9	12.5
	Low	42.9	31.0	26.1
15	High	33.3	25.0	41.7
	Low	95.2	4.8	0.0
16	High	75.0	10.4	14.6
	Low	56.1	39.0	4.9
17	High	68.7	18.8	12.5
	Low	69.0	21.4	9.6
18	High	6.2	14.6	79.2
	Low	0.0	0.0	100.0
19	High	50.0	29.2	20.8
	Low	64.3	19.0	16.7
20	High	54.1	16.7	29.2
	Low	59.5	28.6	11.9

Table 5 provides the results for different ways of correction preferred by the learners. The fourth section in the questionnaire asked how the learners want their teacher to correct their spoken errors and collected data on their opinion for different ways of correction. These ways included clarification request (item 12), repetition (item 13), implicit treatment (item 14), explicit treatment (item 15), confirmation check (item 16), elicitation (item 17), no correction (item 18), metalinguistic feedback (item 19) and recast (item 20).

Items 12-20 asked students how they would want their spoken errors to be corrected. Nine different ways of treating errors were presented. The results in Table 5 present that the most-preferred ways of error correction for high-level students were "repetition" and "clarification request". 93.8% of the students thought repetition was very effective and 87.5% found clarification effective. The next three more favorable ways included "confirmation check" (75%), "elicitation" (68.7%) and "implicit treatment" (64.6%). Interestingly, high-level students had less favorable thoughts about explicit treatment because it was the least-preferred type of correction (33.3%). The two most unfavorable types of correction were "no correction" and "explicit treatment". 79.2% of the students found "no correction" ineffective. Explicit correction of spoken errors was not favorable for them either. This is clear when we look at the responses for item 15. 41.7% of the students reported that they found explicit treatment ineffective and 25% of them were neutral.

As reported in Table 5, low-level students preferred "explicit treatment" and repetition " more than other types of error treatment. 95.2% found explicit treatment very effective and 71.5% thought repetition was an effective way to correct spoken errors. The next two favorable ways included "elicitation" (69%) and "metalinguistic feedback" (64.3%). "Recast", "clarification request" and "confirmation check" received almost equal amounts of preference (59.5%, 57.2% and 56.1% respectively). "No correction" was not a favorable option because 100% of them thought it was an ineffective way to deal with errors, which indicates that low-level students definitely prefer spoken errors to be treated somehow.

Table 6. Preferences for the Source of Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	Proficiency Level	Strongly agree & Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree & Strongly Disagree %
21	High	66.0	19.1	14.9
	Low	80.9	16.7	2.4
22	High	95.7	4.3	0.0
	Low	68.3	22.0	9.7
23	High	29.8	38.3	31.9
	Low	23.8	26.2	50.0
24	High	78.7	17.0	4.3
	Low	73.8	19.0	7.2

Table 6 presents findings about the preferred source for the correction of spoken errors. The last section of the questionnaire focused on the person that learners preferred for the correction of spoken errors. The learners were asked by whom they prefer their errors to be corrected. The options were: by Turkish-speaking teachers (item 21), by native English-speaking teachers (item 22), by classmates (item 23) or by themselves (item 24). As Table 6 shows, high-level students preferred native English speaking teachers to correct their spoken errors the most (95.7%). Their second preference was self-correction. 78.7% of them want to correct their spoken errors themselves. Their next choice was Turkish speaking teachers (66.0%). The least favorable source of correction was classmates. Only 29.8% want their spoken errors to be corrected by peers.

Table 6 shows that the most-preferred source of correction for low-level students was Turkish speaking teachers since 80.9% agreed with this option. The next favorable source was self-correction. 73.8% of them wanted to correct their own errors. Correction by native English speaking teachers was preferred by 68.3% of the students. The least-preferred source of correction for low-level students was classmates because 50.0% disagreed with this option and 26.2% were neutral. Only 23.8% wanted their classmates to correct their spoken errors.

The study also aims to examine the differences in the subjects' preferences toward correcting spoken errors. The results presented in Table 7 show that there are items where significant differences were observed between high and low-level students' preferences.

Table 7. Differences between High and Low-level Students' Preferences for the Correction of Spoken Errors

Item	High Level (n= 48)			Low level (n= 42)			p
	Mean	Median	SEM	Mean	Median	SEM	
1	3.04	3.00	.129	3.09	3.00	.135	>0.05
2	2.75	3.00	.117	3.28	3.00	.109	<0.01*
3	1.52	1.00	.199	1.57	1.00	.243	>0.05
4	3.27	4.00	.146	3.23	3.50	.162	>0.05
5	2.42	3.00	.195	2.00	2.00	.192	>0.05
6	1.55	1.50	.198	.803	1.00	.149	<0.01*
7	3.70	4.00	.078	3.71	4.00	.085	>0.05
8	1.89	2.00	.119	2.35	3.00	.135	<0.01*
9	3.10	3.00	.112	3.23	3.00	.139	>0.05
10	1.41	1.00	.125	1.92	2.00	.171	<0.05*
11	2.06	2.00	.144	2.45	2.50	.180	>0.05
12	2.97	3.00	.128	2.26	3.00	.163	<0.01*
13	3.33	3.00	.095	3.04	3.00	.148	>0.05
14	2.70	3.00	.133	2.19	2.00	.167	<0.05*
15	1.95	2.00	.154	3.59	4.00	.090	<0.01*
16	2.81	3.00	.144	2.70	3.00	.131	>0.05
17	2.75	3.00	.150	2.76	3.00	.155	>0.05
18	.916	1.00	.125	.142	0.00	.054	<0.01*
19	2.35	2.50	.164	2.54	3.00	.187	>0.05
20	2.22	3.00	.169	2.50	3.00	.141	>0.05
21	2.68	3.00	.164	3.26	3.50	.140	<0.01*
22	3.44	3.00	.084	3.00	3.00	.171	>0.05
23	1.93	2.00	.156	1.64	1.50	.179	>0.05
24	3.21	3.00	.128	2.97	3.00	.161	>0.05

* p<0.05

Table 7 shows the differences between high and low-level students' preferences for the correction of spoken errors. There was a significant difference between high and low-level learners in item 2, which about the frequency of error correction. For this item, students' preferences significantly differed from each other (p<0.01). Mean scores of the groups indicated that low-level students want to be corrected more frequently.

Items 3-6 in Table 7 present preferences about the time of correction. Students display significant difference in Item 6, which asked learners whether they want to receive correction after lesson. Low-level students object to this option much more strongly and prefer more immediate correction. High-level students seem to be more comfortable with the correction done at later stages. There was no significant difference in Items 3, 4 and 5.

Items 7-11 elicit responses on the type of errors students prefer to be corrected. Both groups of students want to receive correction for serious and frequent errors in oral communication. However, there are significant differences between low and high-level students' preferences regarding the error types indicated in items 8 and 10. In other words, most of the low-level learners prefer less serious spoken errors to be 'always/usually' corrected whereas high-level learners want occasional or no correction for this type of errors. Another difference is related to infrequent errors. Again, low-level learners want infrequent errors to be 'always/usually' corrected more than the high-level learners.

As Table 7 reports, Items 12-20 focus on “how to correct”; i.e. different ways of error correction. We observe significant differences between high and low-level students regarding the items 12 (clarification request), 14 (implicit treatment), 15 (explicit treatment), and 18 (no correction). It was observed that students significantly differed from each other in their preferences for these ways of correction. A large majority of high-level students believed that clarification request is an effective way to correct spoken errors. However, half of the low-level students found it effective whereas the other half were either neutral or thought it was an ineffective way. Implicit treatment as a way to correct errors was more favorable for high-level students because more than half of these learners found it effective whereas low-level students thought it was less effective. Most low-level students did not prefer “implicit treatment” since they were neutral about this way or found it ineffective. Another significant difference was observed regarding “explicit treatment” of spoken errors. The majority of low-level students thought that it was an effective way of correcting errors whereas most high-level students found it ineffective or were neutral. Students significantly differed in their preferences for “no correction”. All low-level students thought it was an ineffective way. While a large number of high-level students found it ineffective or were neutral about this way. Very few numbers of low-level learners preferred “no correction”.

Items 21-24 in the questionnaire examined learners’ preferences on “who should correct their spoken errors”. In Table 7, we observe a significant difference in Item 21, i.e. correction by Turkish-speaking teachers. While more than half of high-level students agreed with this item, a larger majority of low-level students preferred Turkish speaking teachers to correct their spoken errors. There was no significant difference for the other items.

Discussion

Truscott (1999) insistently emphasized that correction of errors in oral communication should be abandoned because of affective and cognitive problems it might cause. According to him, correction may produce embarrassment, anger, inferiority and confusion. However, the data in this study revealed that foreign language learners had a strong preference for corrective feedback for spoken errors, which supports the response given by Lyster, Lightbown and Spada (1999). Item 1, dealing with students’ willingness to receive corrective feedback, did not present a significant difference between learners, and the mean scores for this item (3.04 and 3.09 for two groups) showed that learners at both levels of proficiency agreed to be corrected. This finding on Turkish EFL learners is consistent with the results of studies on other learners (Bang, 1999; Brandl, 1995; Chenoweth, Day & Luppescu, 1983; DeKeyser, 1993; Katayama, 2007; Oladejo, 1993; Schultz, 2001; Wipf, 1993). It appears that language learners, regardless of their first language background or proficiency level, prefer their written and spoken errors to be corrected. This positive attitude of students toward error correction seems to reinforce the discussions on the balance we need to build between form and communication and the attempts to integrate form-focused instruction with communicative interaction in language classrooms (Han, 2001; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2000).

On the other hand, there was considerable lack of agreement between the two groups of learners on the frequency of corrective feedback (Item 2). The significant difference (<0.01) and the mean scores indicate that high-level learners did not prefer to be corrected as frequently as the low-level learners did, which means that low-level learners prefer more frequent correction for their spoken errors.

In terms of the time of correction, there is a significant difference in Item 6. Low-level students did not prefer to receive corrective feedback after that day's lesson. This finding may indicate that low-level students believe immediate correction of their errors would be more effective. Similarly, the strong positive belief about the effectiveness of immediate correction is observed in Schultz's (2001) study, who states that students "would like to be corrected in class" (p.254). Significant differences were observed in terms of the type of errors to be corrected in Item 8 (<0.01) and Item10 (<0.05). Low-level learners believed even less serious and infrequent errors needed correction.

The significant differences regarding the ways of providing corrective feedback for spoken errors point to the perceived effectiveness of more explicit correction for low-level learners. On the other hand, implicit ways or even no correction seems to be preferable for high-level learners. The low-level learners' beliefs about the effectiveness of more explicit error correction correlate with the results of Ammar and Spada (2006: 543), who found that "low-proficiency learners benefited significantly more from prompts than recasts". They have shown that both prompts and recasts had positive effects on the interlanguage of high level students whereas prompts, which are more explicit, were effective for low-level learners. Ammar and Spada conclude "The effectiveness of any corrective feedback technique needs to be evaluated in relation to learners' proficiency levels" (p.566). The learners at different proficiency levels in this study had different preferences regarding the ways of correction.

In terms of the source of corrective feedback, low-level L2 learners preferred L1-speaking teachers more significantly than high-level learners. The results indicate that high-level learners want their spoken errors to be corrected by L2-speaking teachers. This may suggest that learners at higher proficiency levels do not trust L1-speaking teachers for providing effective feedback. On the other hand, low-level learners may feel closer to L1-speaking teachers and think it is safer for them. Self-correction of spoken errors was preferred more than peer correction by both groups. Students believed that correction of their own errors would be effective. Peer correction was the least favorable option for all students. This finding correlates with the results of Schulz (2001), who provided evidence that the majority of the students she investigated preferred teacher correction to peer correction. We observe similarities between the present study and the results of Fukuda (2003), who investigated high school students' and teachers' opinions about error correction treatment. Similar to the learners in this study, most students in Fukuda's study, especially high-level and well-motivated, strongly prefer error treatment. Most of the students in both studies wanted immediate treatment. Treating errors at the end of the class was the least favorable timing among them. High-level students preferred more indirect ways for treatment such as elicitation or repetition. They expected their teachers, especially native speakers, to correct their spoken errors.

Conclusion

Birdsong and Kassen (1988: 1) state “if students and instructors agreed in principle on the seriousness of a given error pattern, remediation might become a more cooperative enterprise”. Schulz (2001: 256) mentions that “language learning could be hindered if students have specific beliefs regarding the role of grammar and corrective feedback and if their expectations are not met... if teacher behaviors do not mesh with student expectations, learner motivation and a teacher’s credibility may be diminished”. The same point has been emphasized in the studies which revealed the importance of student beliefs and attitudes in language learning (Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995). For this reason, the insights we had in this study about the preferences of students at different proficiency levels for correction of spoken errors may help teachers to construct and implement more effective instruction. Although it is not advisable to generalize the results of this study only, it provides some hints about the main decisions teachers have to take in terms of when and how to correct spoken errors.

Foreign language teachers may be concerned about disrupting the flow of communication and avoid providing corrective feedback for spoken errors. For similar reasons, some teachers may think recasts would be a good option for spoken errors because they are less threatening for the communicative flow. However, the results of this study show that students are willing to receive error correction in speaking. They believe correction of their spoken errors is necessary. This finding can be considered to support the discussions on the integration of focus on form with communication in foreign language classrooms (Han, 2001; Long & Robinson, 1998; Nassaji, 2000; Russell & Spada, 2006). This may suggest the need to keep a balance between form and meaning in language classrooms. This also strongly emphasizes the importance of error correction in preventing fossilization of spoken errors which do not receive attention and feedback.

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