# The relationship between university EFL teachers' oral feedback beliefs and practices and the impact of individual differences

**Abstract**

This study investigated Turkish EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about the aspects of oral corrective feedback (OCF). It explored the impact of individual differences, namely educational background, special training, and teaching experience, on the relationship between the beliefs and practices. Data on teachers' practices were collected via 153 hours of classroom observations from 51 Turkish EFL teachers at two different universities, and teachers' beliefs were gathered by a task about OCF. The results showed that teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent on the aspects of perceived effectiveness, grammatical errors, implicit and explicit feedback. However, their beliefs and practices were inconsistent regarding lexical, phonological errors, and timing of OCF. The results also revealed that of the three individual differences, teaching experience most impacted the consistency between beliefs and practices, thus showing the greater role of teaching experience over special training and educational background on the consistency between beliefs and practices about OCF.

**Keywords**: Oral corrective feedback (OCF), teachers' beliefs and practices, individual differences, experienced and less experienced teachers.

# 1 Introduction

The importance of corrective feedback (CF) as a pedagogical tool, as well as a research construct, is well documented in language teaching research (Nassaji and Kartchava, 2017). CF is defined as the feedback that learners receive on the language errors they make while producing the target language form or meaning (Sheen and Ellis, 2011). CF's critical role has been acknowledged in the literature (Lyster, Saito and Sato, 2013). Contrary to a pessimistic view that errors should be avoided or prevented (see Corder, 1975 for early discussions about this), teachers consider language errors as valuable opportunities for improving learner accuracy (Ferlazzo and Sypnieski, 2018; Hernández Mendez and Reyes Cruz, 2012; Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2005). Indeed, many researchers view errors as a tool or instrument to investigate the role of negative evidence in L2 development (Nassaji, 2016) and thus examine issues such as what types of CF teachers provide, what errors should receive

CF, whether CF is noticed, and where CF is incorporated in learners' immediate and later production (see a review of studies published in the journal *System* by Li and Vuono, 2019).

Recently, some studies also examined the beliefs of learners (e.g., Canals et al., 2020; Lee, 2013; Loewen et al., 2009; Zhu and Wang, 2019), while others investigated the beliefs of teachers (e.g., Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010; Hernández Mendez and Reyes Cruz, 2012; Mahalingappa, Polat and Wang, 2021; Rahimi and Zhang, 2015). Moreover, like the current study, some studies investigated the relationship between teachers' stated beliefs and classroom practices (e.g., Bao, 2019; Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010; Kartchava, 2006; Olmezer-Ozturk 2019, see Table 1 for details).

As Li and Vuono (2019) note in their review of 25 years of CF research published in the journal *System*, although there has been an active stream of research on the learner and/or teacher beliefs of error correction, especially within the last decade, teachers' and learners' beliefs are still not adequately researched given the different characteristics, such as individual differences, of the participants. Individual differences refer to teachers' traits such as their cognition, identity, and resilience (Mercer and Kostoulas, 2018) and can be broadly defined as "dimensions of enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degrees" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 5).

Recently several studies comparing teachers' beliefs about *oral* corrective feedback (OCF) to their practices have shown that there are inconsistencies between what teachers believe and how they deal with errors in the classroom (e.g., Basturkmen et al., 2004; Junqueira and Kim, 2013; Roothooft, 2014). However, few studies have looked at individual differences between teachers and how they might help explain such inconsistencies (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010; Junqueira and Kim, 2013; Long, 2017). Building on these previous studies conducted either with Spanish teachers (Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010) or English teachers in English speaking countries (Junqueira and Kim, 2013), the current study is among a small number of studies investigating the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and practices. More importantly, this study aims to fill an important gap in the literature by examining the impact of the three individual differences, namely educational background, special training and teaching experience, on the relationship between teachers' CF beliefs and practices.

# 2 Review of literature

## 2.1 Teachers' beliefs and practices about OCF

Li (2017) defines beliefs about CF as "attitudes, views, opinions and stances learners and teachers hold about the utility of CF in L2 learning and teaching and how it should be implemented in the classroom" (p. 143). Previous studies explored whether and how teachers correct their students' errors, gathering data related to teachers' beliefs and practices of OCF through interviews, a questionnaire or a task, and observations of in-class practices (Li, 2017). The relationship between beliefs and practices is both complex and interactive (Basturkmen, 2012). On one hand, beliefs drive actions and practices of the teachers; on the other hand, reflecting on the practices can cause changes in, or additions to, beliefs (Breen, et al., 2001; Sato and Kleinsasser, 2004). Understanding the (in)consistencies between beliefs and practices related to CF can inform us about the situational constraints that might be in effect (Basturkmen, 2012) or can help us gain better insights about teachers' professional development processes (Kamiya, 2016).

These previous studies (outlined in Table 1) showed both consistency and inconsistency between the stated beliefs and practices of the teachers regarding aspects like the effectiveness (should errors be corrected?), focus (which errors should be corrected? grammatical, lexical or phonological), provider (who should provide error correction? teacher, peers or self-correction), timing (when should errors be corrected? immediately or delayed), and type (how should errors be corrected? implicitly or explicitly [1]) (Hendrickson, 1978).

In Li and Vuono's (2019) review of previous studies published in the last 25 years in the journal *System*, it is stated that "teachers showed more inconsistency than consistency" (p. 99), and this inconsistency is a topic that requires further investigation. Moreover, Nassaji (2016) argues that individual differences (such as teaching experience) may have an impact on the effectiveness of feedback provided by teachers. Lyster and Mori (2006) also claim that teachers' beliefs and classroom

**Table 1: Previous studies on CF beliefs and practices.**

| | Study | Setting | Number of Participants | Major Findings |
|---|---|---|---|---|

[1] Implicit correction is "conducted in an unobtrusive manner and the existence of error is not overtly signaled to learners, whereas in explicit feedback the corrective force of feedback is made salient to learners so that they notice the erroneous nature of their production" (Sarandi, 2016, p. 236).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Dong (2012) | Chinese as a foreign language | 2 | Both teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent regarding implicit feedback. |
| 2 | Junqueira and Kim (2013) | ESL | 2 | Both teachers argued that CF was ineffective but still provided implicit CF. |
| 3 | Basturkmen et al. (2004) | ESL | 3 | All three teachers suggested CF should focus on meaning-oriented mistakes, but in-class practices showed that CF was used for linguistic mistakes. |
| 4 | Kamiya (2016) | ESL | 4 | Most teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent related to different aspects of CF. |
| 5 | Bao (2019) | Chinese as a foreign language | 8 | Teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent regarding CF's frequency, the least-used feedback strategy, and the emphasis on teacher-led feedback. However, the beliefs and practices were inconsistent in terms of timing and types of CF. |
| 6 | Long (2017) | Spanish as a foreign language | 8 | Special training for teachers on phonetics did not predict the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices. |
| 7 | Kartchava (2006) | ESL | 10 | Most teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent in terms of implicit feedback. |
| 8 | Olmezer-Ozturk (2019) | EFL teachers from Turkey | 10 | Most teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent concerning the amount of feedback provided, but there were inconsistencies regarding the types of feedback and timing. |
| 9 | Gurzynski-Weiss (2010) | Spanish as a foreign language | 60 | Teachers' beliefs and practices were mostly inconsistent. Among the three individual variables, only teaching experience was a predictor of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices. |
| 10 | Roothooft (2014) | EFL teachers from Spain | 10 | Most teachers' beliefs and practices about the amount of feedback provided and types of CF were inconsistent. |
| 11 | Ha and Murray (2020) | EFL teachers from Vietnam | 6 | Teachers' beliefs and in-class practices were mostly inconsistent in terms of the types and focus of CF. |

practices are shaped by their previous professional training and cultural background. These examples are especially significant, drawing on the need for focusing on specific variables of individual differences in OCF research.

### 2.2 The Role of Individual Differences in OCF

Key individual differences are marked differently in the literature, of which three individual differences, namely teaching experience, previous training, and native/non-native teacher status, are most relevant to the current study. When Gurzynski-Weiss (2010) examined the impact of teaching experience on the relationship between Spanish language teachers' beliefs and their in-class practices on OCF ($n$ = 60), she found that what the teachers stated and what they did in the classroom was mostly inconsistent. The regression analysis revealed that only teaching experience was a predictor of the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices. Also, when Junqueira and Kim (2013) examined the difference between a novice and an experienced ESL teacher, they found that both teachers gave a similar amount of CF, while the experienced teacher produced more types of CF and more teacher-learner interactions. Likewise, Rahimi and Zhang (2015) found that experienced teachers were more flexible in their cognition about CF's type and timing, while novice teachers were more rigid. These studies revealed that teaching experience might be a determining individual variable that impacted the relationship between beliefs and practices about OCF.

Another individual difference, special training, has also been investigated in the literature. When Long (2017) examined the effect of special training (i.e., training in phonetics/phonology) on the relationship between Spanish teachers' beliefs and practices, she found no significant relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices after the training. In Gurzynski-Weiss's (2010) investigation of the role of training on CF, there was only one significant relationship out of seven aspects between beliefs and practices of the teachers; previous training did not have a major impact on the consistency between beliefs and practices. Similarly, Junqueira and Kim (2013) examined the impact of special training on CF and found that training did not influence the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices.

Gurzynski-Weiss's (2010) also examined the impact of educational background (i.e., having an SLA degree or not) on the consistency between beliefs

and practices of her participants and found that it did not have a major impact on this relationship. Alternatively, Atai and Shafiee (2017) investigated the effects of level of education (i.e., teachers with a BA degree vs an MA degree) on the beliefs of EFL teachers regarding the provision of OCF in grammar instruction. They found significant differences in the reported thought units of their teachers, concluding that educational background increased teachers' awareness level of CF.

Put simply, the studies that we have reviewed so far highlight the significance of teaching experience as a factor on the relationship between the beliefs and practices of the teachers on OCF. These previous studies found different results regarding the impact of special training and educational background (e.g., Atai and Shafiee, 2017; Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010; Long, 2017). Moreover, socio-cultural and contextual factors can also play a role in the formation of beliefs related to OCF (Ha and Murray, 2020; Mahalingappa et al., 2021). Although there has been a growing number of studies that examined the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding OCF, considering the findings of the recent reviews (Li, 2017; Li & Vuono, 2019), we point out the gaps in the literature as follows:

- The studies are primarily qualitative, with small numbers of participants.
- Only Gurzynski-Weiss (2010), Junqueira and Kim (2013) and Long (2017) examined individual differences such as teaching experience, special training, and status of the teacher. These studies were conducted with Spanish or ESL teachers.
- In previous studies, the impact of individual differences on the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and practices have not been examined.

Considering these gaps, the current study makes an important contribution to the knowledge regarding the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about OCF. The following research questions, therefore, guided this study:

1- What are the beliefs and practices of EFL teachers regarding OCF?

2- What is the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and in-class practices in terms of[2] effectiveness, focus (grammatical, lexical, and phonological errors), type (implicit and explicit feedback) and timing (immediate and delayed) of OCF?
3- How do EFL teachers' individual differences, namely educational background, special training and teaching experience, impact the relationship between their beliefs and practices about OCF?

# 3 Methodology

## 3.1 Setting

The study was conducted at the Intensive English Schools of two private universities in Turkey, where English is taught as a foreign language. They both offered English medium instruction courses and had large Intensive English Schools with around 60-80 instructors. In the English courses, the four language skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are taught in separate classes. To best investigate OCF practices, only speaking classes were video recorded for the present study because student and teacher interactions were thought to be best extracted in speaking courses.

## 3.2 Participants

After ethical permissions were granted by the universities, 51 EFL teachers agreed to participate in the study. Although 60 were invited for the study using convenience sampling (because the availability and willingness of the participants were important for the rigorous data collection process, see *citation redacted for blind review*), six of those teachers did not agree to a video recording of their classroom teaching, while another three did not agree with the publication of the data and therefore did not sign the consent form. The following key features of the participants were used for analysis:

[2] In our study, four of Hendrickson's (1978) five aspects are drawn on to highlight issues of the relationship between beliefs and practices. The aspect of the *provider* was not used in this study because of the lack of adequate classroom data, especially for peer feedback sessions. The classes mostly had whole group teacher-fronted interaction with very few, or almost no instances of pair and group work activities. This situation limited the instances of any opportunity for peer feedback. For this reason, the provider of the feedback in all error sequences was assumed to be the teacher, which forced us to overlook the provider aspect of the error correction in our analysis.

### *3.2.1 Teaching experience*

The participants' English language teaching experiences ranged from 1 year to 25 years ($M$ = 11.8). Considering the understanding that teachers' experiences impact their beliefs and practices the most for the first seven years of their teaching (Berliner, 2001; Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010), we have identified seven years as the threshold for teachers to be identified as experienced. Thus, the teachers who had teaching experience fewer than seven years were identified as less experienced ($n$ = 27) while those with seven or more years as experienced EFL teachers ($n$ = 24). [3]

### *3.2.2 Special Training*

Special training in this study is identified as the self-report of any prior training teachers received for providing CF. Therefore, the participants were asked to state the courses they took about OCF (in their undergraduate, graduate or certificate programs). The participants were grouped in the +special training category ($n$ = 28) if they stated that they had taken a training course in which they learned about OCF. If they stated they had not received any training regarding the provision of OCF, then they were put into the – special training category ($n$ = 23).

### *3.2.3 Educational Background*

In Turkish higher education, English teachers are not required to have a background in ELT. Teachers with an ELT background generally graduated from the ELT departments of Education faculties. These teachers receive formal training to be EFL teachers and take a wide range of theoretical and pedagogical courses about teaching English as a foreign language. Teachers with non-ELT backgrounds receive their undergraduate degrees from the departments of (English) linguistics, English language and literature, translation and interpretation and American culture. These teachers do not go through a structured pre-service teacher education program, and they are mostly engaged in studying the courses unique to their major, not specifically

[3] Years of teaching experience vary in the literature. The cut-off year between the inexperienced and experienced status has been set as two (McNeill, 2005), three (Mok, 1994), five (Johnson; 2003; Tsui, 2003) or seven (Cundale, 2001; Gurzynski-Weiss, 2010).

taking courses in teaching English as a foreign language. Due to these general differences in their backgrounds, our teachers were coded as ELT ($n$ = 23) and non-ELT ($n$ = 28).

### 3.3 Data collection

The study involved two stages, each with its own form of data collection. While teachers' practices were collected via detached observations in stage one, teachers' beliefs were gathered by a specific belief task in stage two (as detailed below).

#### 3.3.1 Stage one: Detached observation for classroom practices

In the first stage, to explore the teachers' in-class practices when providing OCF, observational data were collected by videorecording speaking lessons. These 'detached' observations (i.e., the researchers were not present in the classroom) allowed us to avoid the observer's paradox, which might cause teachers and students to behave in a certain way in the presence of an observer (redacted for blind review). Only speaking classes were video recorded because more interaction can be observed between the student and the teacher in these lessons. Also, the speaking lessons were recorded intentionally three times for each teacher to avoid any possible failsafe activities that the teachers might do; this also allowed for elicitation of the most frequent practices. In total, 153 classroom hours were video recorded. The recordings of these teachers' real practices in the classroom when providing OCF were transcribed verbatim, and OCF episodes were identified; each episode was later coded according to various aspects of OCF (see descriptives in Table 3), in line with the research questions and focus of the study.

#### 3.3.2 Stage two: Task for teachers' beliefs

For the second stage of data collection, a task[4] with ten questions about hypothetical OCF scenarios was prepared based on the literature (e.g., Olmezer-Ozturk, 2019; Roothooft, 2014). The task was piloted with ten other teachers with

[4] We refer to this data collection instrument as a task rather than a questionnaire (as it is referred to in Olzemer-Ozturk, 2019 and Roothooft, 2014) because we adapted it to fit our study using both Likert-scale and open-ended questions, thus making the instrument's reliability unable to be estimated.

similar characteristics. For the pilot task, the teachers did not report any issues related to the items, so the researchers did not make any changes in the task. This 'belief task' aimed to match the beliefs of the teachers with their practices collected through the observations. To reduce bias, the task was given during the second stage of data collection after the video recordings were made, not beforehand. Through this task, the teachers explained their own beliefs surrounding feedback and chose appropriate responses according to different OCF scenarios (see Appendix for details).

### 3.4 Coding of OCF aspects

The beliefs and practices of the teachers were coded according to four of Hendrickson's (1978) five aspects of error correction: effectiveness, focus, time, and type. The teachers' beliefs on the effectiveness of OCF were identified based on their self-reports in the belief task (see Appendix). Their beliefs (e.g., what they chose as a response on a scale between 0-100%, which had 10-point intervals) were later compared to what they practised (e.g., number of instances of a specific aspect of OCF to all instances of that specific aspect (provision of both implicit and explicit OCF). To give another example, when coding the teachers' practices in terms of the type of errors (i.e., lexical, grammatical and phonological), all instances of these errors and the instances that were treated by the teachers were counted to get an overall ratio (number of treated errors/ number of all errors).

In terms of the focus aspect, teachers' beliefs and practices were categorized as lexical, grammatical, and phonological errors (Lyster and Mori, 2006). In the coding of the timing, two aspects were used: immediate and delayed, following some studies in the field (Arroyo and Yilmaz, 2018; Quinn and Nakata, 2017). These categories were also used in the hypothetical error correction samples in the belief task (see Appendix). When coding the types of OCF, Ellis' (2008) comprehensive categorization of implicit and explicit feedback was adopted. In our study, explicit feedback included overt corrections, metalinguistic information and elicitations, while implicit feedback included such types as recasts, confirmation checks, clarification requests, elaborations, and negotiations for meaning. Further attention was given to the coding of recasts. They were coded as implicit if they were a part of a single corrective move or explicit if a dual corrective move was used in the same OCF move (Erlam and Loewen, 2010).

### 3.5 Data Analysis

To respond to the first research question of the study, descriptive mean scores of the percentages were calculated for teachers' beliefs and practices. For the second research question, a correlation analysis was conducted to examine the potential relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices because both variables were continuous (*citation redacted for blind review*). For the third research question, separate correlation analyses were made for each individual difference. (see details in Table 2).

**Table 2:** *Research questions and corresponding data collection methods*

| Research question | Data collection method | Type of analysis | Purpose |
|---|---|---|---|
| RQ1: What are the beliefs and practices of EFL teachers regarding OCF? | a) detached observations ($n$ = 153)<br>b) Belief task ($n$ = 51) | Descriptive statistics (mean scores and percentages) | identifying teachers' beliefs and practices |
| RQ2: What is the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and in-class practices in terms of effectiveness, focus, type, and timing of OCF? | | Correlation analysis | investigating the relationship between OCF beliefs and practices |
| RQ3: How do EFL teachers' individual differences, namely educational background, special training and teaching experience, affect the relationship between their beliefs and practices about OCF? | | Correlation analysis for each individual difference | a) investigating the relationship between each individual difference and OCF beliefs and practices |

#### 3.5.1 Interrater reliability

While coding OCF episodes, the findings of previous studies (e.g., Ellis, 2008; Olmezer-Ozturk, 2019; Roothooft, 2014) were considered. The first author coded all the variables, and then two experienced EFL teachers (both held doctorate degrees in ELT with previous expertise in classroom discourse and CF) were asked to code the same data. To ensure the reliability of the coding process, a training manual was prepared that included the definitions and examples of each type of CF, and two external reviewers were asked to recode the OCF episodes. In terms of the inter-rater reliability (*citation redacted for blind review*), the results of the Cohen's kappa analysis revealed almost perfect agreement (Landis and Koch, 1977; Warrens, 2015) both between the researcher and the first external reviewer ($k$ = .896), and the researcher and the second external reviewer ($k$ = .931).

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Research Question 1: identification of beliefs and practices

The first research question aimed to reveal the university EFL teachers' beliefs and their practices regarding OCF. Detached observations of 153 hours of speaking lessons and the teachers' responses to the belief task showed that there is both consistency and inconsistency between what the teachers believed and what they practised in the classroom. When closely examined, while we found the consistency between the teachers' beliefs and practices, for instance, in the aspect of pronunciation errors with the lowest mean difference, the highest mean difference between teachers' OCF beliefs and practices were observed in the aspects of immediate and delayed feedback (see Table 3 for the spread of in/consistency of all the OCF aspects).

**Table 3: Overall descriptive statistics of teachers' beliefs and practices for each OCF aspect.**

| Aspects of OCF | Beliefs | | Practices | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimum-Maximum | Mean of the percentages (SD) | Minimum-Maximum | Mean of the percentages (SD) |
| Perceived Effectiveness/Use | 20-90 | 59.71 (19.78) | 34-88 | 63.67 (16.06) |
| Grammar | 10-90 | 49.22 (24.80) | 10-87 | 53.51 (23.24) |
| Lexical | 10-100 | 51.18 (32.35) | 24-96 | 59.90 (18.86) |
| Pronunciation | 10-100 | 56.08 (28.57) | 18-89 | 57.24 (18.72) |
| Immediate | 10-100 | 50.98 (27.22) | 14-96 | 65.76 (23.68) |
| Delayed | 0-90 | 49.02 (27.22) | 4-85 | 34.14 (23.35) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Implicit | 10-90 | 59.61 (22.88) | 24-96 | 66.10 (16.95) |
| Explicit | 10-90 | 40.39 (22.88) | 4-76 | 33.90 (16.95) |

### 4.2 Research Question 2: an examination of the belief and practice relationship

The second research question examined the relationship between EFL teachers' OCF beliefs and their practices. The OCF aspects of effectiveness, focus (grammatical, lexical, and phonological errors), type (implicit and explicit feedback) and timing (immediate and delayed) were used for analysis. As the data were not normally distributed ($p$ <.000), a Spearman Rho correlation analysis was used to explore the relationship.

The results revealed both consistency and inconsistency in the relationship between beliefs and practices. There were significant correlations in terms of perceived effectiveness ($r$ = .349, $p$ < .05), grammatical errors ($r$ = .550, $p$ < .01), implicit and explicit feedback ($r$ = .346, $p$ < .05 for both). No significant correlations were observed in terms of beliefs and practices about phonological and lexical errors, and immediate and delayed feedback (see Table 4 for details).

**Table 4: Relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices**

| | **Practices** | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Beliefs** | Effectiveness/ Use | Implicit | Explicit | Lexical | Grammar | Phonological | Immediate | Delayed |
| Effectiveness /use | .349* | | | | | | | |
| Implicit | | .346* | | | | | | |
| Explicit | | | .346* | | | | | |
| Lexical | | | | .176 | | | | |
| Grammar | | | | | .550** | | | |
| Phonological | | | | | | .275 | | |
| Immediate | | | | | | | .301 | |
| Delayed | | | | | | | | .301 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 4.3 Research Question 3: an investigation of the impact of individual differences

The third research question of the study aimed to reveal any relationships between the teachers' individual differences—educational background (i.e., ELT vs non-ELT), special training, and teaching experience—and their beliefs and practices about OCF. Therefore, we conducted a Spearman Rho correlation analysis to confirm this relationship.

### *4.3.1 The impact of educational background*

Descriptive statistics showed that teachers' educational backgrounds influenced their OCF beliefs and practices differently. For both ELT and non-ELT background teachers, there was both consistency and inconsistency between what they believed and practised regarding eight OCF aspects (see Table 5 for more details).

**Table 5: Descriptive statistics of teachers' beliefs and practices for each OCF aspect according to their educational background**

| Aspects of OCF | ELT (n = 23) | | Non-ELT (n = 28) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) |
| Perceived Effectiveness/Use | 59.13 (15.64) | 63.30 (16.49) | 63.21 (14.83) | 62.36 (15.78) |
| Grammar | 50.43 (27.21) | 60.22 (17.58) | 48.21 (24.80) | 58.93 (18.37) |
| Lexical | 56.09 (34.34) | 56.43 (14.75) | 47.14 (32.35) | 65.64 (16.91) |
| Pronunciation | 55.65 (27.27) | 60.83 (17.03) | 56.43 (28.57) | 57.89 (18.20) |
| Immediate | 53.48 (27.73) | 74.12 (15.55) | 48.93 (27.22) | 73.18 (17.89) |
| Delayed | 46.52 (27.73) | 25.88 (15.55) | 51.07 (27.22) | 26.82 (17.89) |
| Implicit | 60.87 (23.33) | 62.39 (13.35) | 58.57 (22.88) | 62.43 (14.51) |
| Explicit | 39.13 (23.33) | 37.61 (13.35) | 41.43 (22.88) | 37.57 (14.51) |

At first glance, both the beliefs and practices of ELT and non-ELT teachers appear to be quite similar (see Table 5). Indeed, the correlation analyses revealed that there was no significant relationship either for ELT or non-ELT background teachers for most of the aspects. The only significant correlations were observed for the teachers with a non-ELT background concerning grammatical errors ($r = .717$, $p < .01$) and phonological errors ($r = .627$, $p < .01$). For all other aspects, there was no significant relationship either for both groups of teachers (see Table 6 for details).

**Table 6: Relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in terms of educational background.**

| | Practices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Effectiveness/ Use | | Implicit | | Explicit | | Lexical | | Grammatical | | Phonological | | Immediate | | Delayed | |
| Beliefs | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT | ELT | Non-ELT |
| Effectiveness/ Use | .174 | .392 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implicit | | | .347 | .356 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Explicit | | | | | .347 | .356 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lexical | | | | | | | .116 | .313 | | | | | | | | |
| Grammar | | | | | | | | | .393 | .717** | | | | | | |
| Phonological | | | | | | | | | | | .068 | .627** | | | | |
| Immediate | | | | | | | | | | | | | .085 | .123 | | |
| Delayed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .372 | .295 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### *4.3.2 The impact of special training*

Regarding the individual difference of special training, descriptive statistics showed consistency in terms of teachers' OCF beliefs and practices in the classroom. The mean scores are presented in Table 7 to show that the teachers demonstrated quite similar beliefs and practices according to whether they received special training related to OCF.

**Table 7: Descriptive statistics of teachers' beliefs and practices for each OCF aspect according to their special training**

| Aspects of OCF | + OCF (n = 28) | | - OCF (n = 23) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) |
| Perceived Effectiveness/Use | 60.33 (13.51) | 61.87 (16.30) | 62.86 (14.83) | 64.10 (16.11) |
| Grammar | 50.00 (23.78) | 63.23 (17.65) | 48.10 (24.80) | 54.19 (17.71) |
| Lexical | 49.00 (32.09) | 62.57 (15.67) | 54.29 (32.35) | 59.95 (17.45) |
| Pronunciation | 57.33 (28.39) | 59.07 (17.61) | 54.29 (28.57) | 59.43 (21.08) |
| Immediate | 50.33 (27.35) | 72.87 (18.34) | 51.90 (27.22) | 75.62 (19.11) |
| Delayed | 49.67 (27.35) | 27.13 (18.34) | 48.10 (27.22) | 24.38 (19.11) |
| Implicit | 59.67 (22.96) | 61.47 (15.45) | 59.52 (22.88) | 63.90 (16.25) |
| Explicit | 40.33 (22.96) | 38.57 (15.45) | 40.48 (22.88) | 36.10 (16.25) |

And indeed, according to the correlation analysis, only three significant correlations were found, while one of them was weak.The analysis showed that there were significant correlations concerning grammar errors for both groups with different degrees ($r$ = .414, p < .05 for +special training group and $r$ = .537, $p$ < .001 for - special training group), while the relationship between beliefs and practices about lexical errors for the +special training group revealed a weak correlation score ($r$ = . 182, $p$ < .05). For all other aspects of both groups, no significant relationship appeared (see Table 8).

**Table 8: Comparisons of beliefs and practices of teachers with and without special training.**

| | Practices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Effectiveness/ Use | | Implicit | | Explicit | | Lexical | | Grammar | | Phonological | | Immediate | | Delayed | |
| Beliefs | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - | ST + | ST - |
| Effectiveness/ Use | .201 | .328 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implicit | | | .094 | .127 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Explicit | | | | | .094 | .0127 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lexical | | | | | | | .182* | .219 | | | | | | | | |
| Grammar | | | | | | | | | .414** | .537** | | | | | | |
| Phonological | | | | | | | | | | | .341 | .189 | | | | |
| Immediate | | | | | | | | | | | | | .243 | .312 | | |
| Delayed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .243 | .321 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### *4.3.3 The impact of teaching experience*

The descriptive statistics of the teaching experience as the third individual difference are reported in Table 9. Contrary to the other two individual differences, teaching experience had more influence on the teachers' perceived OCF beliefs and practices. When closely examined, the mean scores of the experienced teachers were more consistent in the eight OCF aspects according to what they believed and what they practised in the classroom.

**Table 9: Descriptive statistics of teachers' beliefs and practices for each OCF aspect according to their teaching experience.**

| Aspects of OCF | Less experienced (n = 27) | Experienced (n = 24) |
|---|---|---|

| | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Beliefs (SD) | Mean of Percentages for Practices (SD) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Perceived Effectiveness/Use | 60.71(12.45) | 63.82(16.18) | 62.17(21.64) | 61.52(22.94) |
| Grammar | 48.57(25.19) | 59.54(20.24) | 50.00(24.86) | 59.48(19.96) |
| Lexical | 46.43(31.99) | 62.61(17.80) | 56.96(32.53) | 60.13(19.34) |
| Pronunciation | 59.64(28.73) | 59.57(17.72) | 51.74(28.38) | 58.78(25.03) |
| Immediate | 50.00(27.88) | 75.68(17.38) | 52.17(26.96) | 71.96(16.34) |
| Delayed | 50.00(27.88) | 24.32(17.38) | 47.83(26.96) | 28.04(16.34) |
| Implicit | 58.57(23.36) | 62.07(14.93) | 60.87(22.74) | 62.83(18.57) |
| Explicit | 41.43(23.26) | 37.93(14.93) | 39.13(16.64) | 37.17(18.57) |

The correlation analysis also revealed that experienced teachers maintained more similar beliefs and practices in providing OCF. Significant correlations were found about perceived effectiveness ($r$ = .539, $p$ < .01), implicit and explicit CF ($r$ = .461, $p$ < .05 for both), grammatical errors ($r$ = .756, $p$ < .01), lexical errors ($r$ = .635, $p$ < .01), and phonological errors ($r$ = .667, $p$ < .01). There were no significant correlations for experienced teachers in terms of their beliefs and practices concerning immediate and delayed CF and for less experienced teachers in all aspects (see Table 10 for details).

**Table 10: Comparisons of experienced and less experienced teachers' beliefs and practices.**

| | Practices | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Effectiveness/ Use | | Implicit | | Explicit | | Lexical | | Grammar | | Phonological | | Immediate | | Delayed | |
| Beliefs | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - | Exp. + | Exp. - |
| Effectiveness/ Use | .539** | .138 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Implicit | | | .461* | .283 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Explicit | | | | | .461* | .283 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lexical | | | | | | | .635** | -.465 | | | | | | | | |
| Grammar | | | | | | | | | .756** | .124 | | | | | | |
| Phonological | | | | | | | | | | | .667** | .067 | | | | |
| Immediate | | | | | | | | | | | | | .368 | .488 | | |
| Delayed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | .345 | .488 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## 5. Discussion

The first research question was designed to investigate Turkish EFL teachers' beliefs and practices related to OCF, and it was found that the beliefs and practices of the teachers were consistent concerning OCF aspects of perceived effectiveness, provision of feedback on grammatical errors and provision of implicit and explicit feedback. Most teachers believed that OCF was important and effective, as they rated its importance as around 52% on average, with 100% being extremely important. The findings from the classroom observations show that teachers indeed provided OCF on more than 54% of all their students' errors. They also stated that they would provide OCF about half of the time on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation errors, with pronunciation receiving a somewhat higher rating than the other two error types. The classroom observations confirmed that most of the teachers provided OCF related to their students' grammatical, phonological, and lexical errors both implicitly (66 per cent) and immediately (65 per cent). Although the teachers in Junqueira and Kim's (2013) study thought CF to be ineffective, they still reported that they provided CF implicitly; similarly, Dong's (2012) study, EFL teachers both believed and opted for providing implicit feedback in the classroom.

Aiming to investigate the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices in terms of perceived effectiveness, focus, type, and timing, our second research question found both consistency and inconsistency in the relationship between beliefs and practices. Unlike the recent review of previous studies in the journal *System* (Li and Vuono, 2019) in which teachers showed more inconsistency than consistency between their OCF beliefs and practices, in our study, our participants had very similar ratios of consistency (4 out of 8 comparisons) and inconsistency (4 out of 8 comparisons) (refer to Table 3 for details). A significant relationship was found between teachers' beliefs and practices, especially on the aspects of perceived effectiveness of OCF, as well as giving oral feedback on grammatical errors both implicitly and explicitly. Similarly, Olmezer-Ozturk (2019) found that most teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent concerning the amount of feedback provided, while Kartchava (2006) indicated that most teachers' beliefs and practices were consistent in terms of implicit feedback.

However, inconsistencies were observed between the teachers' perceived beliefs and practices on the aspects of lexical errors, phonological errors and timing of OCF—a point we could confirm more strongly than the results of the previous studies with smaller numbers of participants. For instance, unlike the earlier research that found inconsistencies in terms of timing and types of OCF (Bao, 2019; Olmezer-Ozturk, 2019) and type and focus (Ha and Murray, 2020), we found inconsistency on the timing of providing OCF and in one focus aspect (grammar errors), not on the type and other focus aspects (lexical and phonological errors).

The third research question of this study was designed to investigate the relationship between three individual differences of the EFL teachers and their beliefs and practices. In her critical review of research regarding the correspondence between teachers' beliefs and their practices in the field of language teaching, Basturkmen (2012) argued that teachers' individual differences or contextual factors might play a mediating role, thus possibly leading to inconsistency between beliefs and practices. In this study, we have confirmed Basturkmen's argument, directly substantiating the role of EFL teachers' individual differences on the relationship between what the teachers said they believed and what they did in the classroom. Of the three individual differences however, we found teachers' experience helped establish this relationship or consistency between their beliefs and practices on the aspects of OCF more than the other two variables (special training and educational background).

According to our result, experienced EFL teachers both thought and performed in similar ways in terms of the perceived effectiveness of OCF, provision of implicit and explicit feedback, and treatment of grammatical, lexical, and phonological errors, indicating that being an experienced teacher significantly increases the consistency of the teachers' beliefs and practices when providing OCF.

Although Junqueira and Kim (2013) found that teaching experience had minimal relevance to teachers' beliefs and practices, the findings of the current study suggest contradictory results demonstrating that experienced teachers had more similar beliefs and practices when providing OCF. In other words, the more experienced teachers in this study had more established beliefs about OCF, which were also reflected in their practices. Also, although teachers' practices were not examined, in Rahimi and Zhang's (2015) study, non-native English-speaking teachers'

cognitions about CF were explored, and not surprisingly, it found experienced teachers to be more flexible when providing CF.

That teaching experience was found to be such a significant individual difference is an especially important finding. Our analysis revealed significant correlations between beliefs and practices for experienced teachers regarding the effectiveness and actual use of OCF, provision of implicit and explicit CF and provision of feedback to grammatical, phonological and lexical errors. Although it was conducted with Spanish teachers as a foreign language, Gurzynski-Weiss's (2010) study revealed similarly that among the three individual variables, only teaching experience was a predictor of the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices. While examining the consistency between the general beliefs and practices of high school foreign language teachers, Mitchell (2005) found that beliefs of the more experienced teachers were more consistently reflected in their classroom practices compared to less experienced teachers. Our findings provide support for the idea that experienced teachers might be more informed and articulate about their practices. This is in line with the suggestions of Breen et al. (2001) that language teachers' principles might become more vivid as they gain experience in their professional careers compared to the principles acquired more recently by the less experienced teachers in their training or education. Similarly, the teachers in our study had more parallel beliefs and practices as they gained more experience in teaching.

However, our study did not find a similar effect on the other two individual differences in the relationship between the EFL teachers' beliefs and practices. We found that the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices was not consistent when they were compared according to special training or educational background. Having special training or not did not reveal any relationship between the beliefs and practices of the teachers in our study except for the treatment of lexical errors for the benefit of the group who received special training while both groups reported and showed similar beliefs and practices regarding grammatical errors. This aligns with Long's (2017) study that focused on the effect of specific training on the relationship between teachers' OCF beliefs and practices and found that there was no significant relationship between training about research (i.e., special training) and provision of feedback. As stated earlier, Lyster and Mori (2006) argued that there might be a relationship between teachers' professional training and cultural background and their

beliefs and classroom practices. However, our study's findings did not provide any support to this view as special training, or teachers' educational background only had a limited effect on the relationship between the beliefs and practices regarding OCF. The lack of support favouring special training might have stemmed from the difficulties of transferring the theory into classroom practise, as some scholars previously argued that teachers' in-class practices were not rooted in their previous training (Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999).

The teachers' educational backgrounds similarly did not influence the relationship between teachers' OCF beliefs and practices. Although teachers from an ELT background were expected to show more consistency between their beliefs and practices since they received formal EFL teacher training in the context where the study was conducted, the relationship between their beliefs and practices was not significant as similarly found by Gurzynski-Weiss (2010). On the contrary, having a non-ELT background indicated a significant relationship between beliefs and practices only in the treatment of grammatical and phonological errors. However, our findings contradict those of Atai & Shafiee (2017) who revealed that educational background had a significant impact regarding the provision of OCF in grammar instruction. As teachers' educational background, to our knowledge, has not been widely investigated in other studies, this individual difference should further be explored in different EFL contexts.

## 6. Conclusion

Our study's results revealed a consistency in the relationship between the EFL teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the perceived effectiveness of OCF, grammatical errors and implicit and explicit CF and inconsistency regarding lexical and phonological errors and timing of OCF. Our results also demonstrated that teaching experience is the only predictor, among the individual differences examined in this study, that had a statistically significant impact on the teachers' beliefs and practices of OCF. Based on these findings, we offer the following suggestions for the teaching/learning context:

- For those teachers who received high-quality teacher education, their beliefs and practices are likely to be more consistent as they gain experience providing OCF, such as perceived effectiveness, focus, and type. Particularly in contexts where such well-trained experienced teachers have appropriate feedback literacy, language teacher education programs should be designed so novice teachers can learn from collaborating with these teachers. Future studies should therefore be conducted on the effectiveness of such teacher education programs.
- Pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development programs should be in continuous and mutual interaction, and they can be strengthened through such interaction in order to develop feedback literacy between the two groups.
- Situations in which teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices are not consistent should still be welcomed in language teacher education and professional development considering the possibility that some inconsistencies may also lead to positive changes in beliefs.

While we stand by these findings and implications, we acknowledge several limitations. The first limitation concerns the research design, specifically collecting the teachers' beliefs by asking for self-reported responses to some specific questions and giving hypothetical scenarios. We understand that this instrument might not always reveal teachers' actual beliefs as their beliefs are based on what they think they would practise in the scenarios (see Borg, 2003). We also recognize that certain question options in the task might be difficult to discern, such as choosing 60 or 70% for frequency of error correction, which was used by Olmezer-Ozturk (2019) and Roothoft (2014). Future research, if using the same scales, should allow for teachers to explain their responses. For example, further studies can consider this issue when collecting teachers' beliefs via stimulated recall interviews or think-aloud protocols. Also, the instrument we used, which we refer to as a task rather than a questionnaire, was not a complete Likert scale since it included both closed- and open-ended items, thus making it difficult to measure the reliability of the instrument (see Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010). This lack of reliability measurement should be considered carefully when interpreting the results of this study.

Another limitation of the study concerns the absence of Hendrickson's (1978) provider aspect, which was not examined because of lack of classroom data, and the coding of the teachers' individual differences, especially teaching experience. As discussed in the methodology section, different researchers classify being experienced and in- (or less) experienced in different ways, and the way it is handled in this study is open for criticism, as different results can be obtained if this construct is coded in different ways.

Moreover, another issue which should be considered is that although this study showed that experienced teachers were more aware of their OCF practices as they acted more in accordance with their beliefs, we do not make any claims about how effective these practices are, or that more experienced teachers are better at providing OCF. EFL teachers should, therefore, keep in mind the notion that having similar or different beliefs and practices may not necessarily be good or bad, especially for less experienced teachers, without considering the context and aim of the courses. As Kamiya (2016) rightfully asserts, when there is a mismatch between the beliefs and practices, this might be a sign of a professional development process and "regarded as an opportunity rather than a fault or shortcoming" (p. 218).

Despite these limitations, the current study has significant findings to consider regarding the impact of EFL teachers' individual differences, especially concerning teaching experience, on the relationship between their OCF beliefs and practices.

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## Appendix

## Task on OCF (abridged version for publication)

1- Rate the effectiveness of giving CF on your students' language mistakes in a percentile scale [100=extremely important and effective in your students' language development]:

2- How often do you correct your students' mistakes in classroom oral communication? [Scale 0-100%, 10 point intervals]

3- How often would you provide CF on your students' grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary mistakes?

- Grammar [Scale 0-100%, 10 point intervals]
- Pronunciation [Scale 0-100%, 10 point intervals]
- Vocabulary [Scale 0-100%, 10 point intervals]

4- There are (at least) three sources in providing OCF to learners' mistakes in a classroom setting. The learners can correct their mistakes on their own (self-correction), their peers can correct these mistakes (peer correction) or teachers can treat them (teacher correction). On a weighted scale of 100, how would you distribute the three sources of feedback provider? Here, you are asked to give percentages for each source and your total percentage should be 100.

| Learners Themselves | Their Peers | Teachers | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 100% |

5- Teachers can give OCF to their students' mistakes immediately after the mistake (immediate feedback) or sometime later (delayed feedback). On a weighted scale of 100, how would you distribute the timing of feedback?

| Immediate Feedback | Delayed Feedback | Total |
|---|---|---|
| | | 100% |

6- Please choose the feedback that you think most effective in the following examples (Note: Actual task included ten examples)

Teacher: What did you do at home last night?
Student: I goed home late so I couldn't do much.

A) Teacher: No, not goed, went.
B) Teacher: You went home late? Why? What did you do?
C) Teacher: I am sorry?
D) Teacher: You need to use the past form of the verb
E) Teacher: You… (pausing)? (rising intonation)
F) Teacher: I GOED home late. (stressing the mistake, with rising intonation)

Teacher: Where did you stay in London?
Student: I stayed in a hotəl [hotel]

A) Teacher: No, not hotəl, hotel (correct pronunciation).
B) Teacher: You stayed in a hotel (correct pronunciation)
C) Teacher: I am sorry? Can you say that again?
D) Teacher: I stayed in a HOTəL (stressing the mistake).
E) Teacher: I stayed in a… (pausing)? (rising intonation).
F) Teacher: We pronounce the hotel with /e/ sound not schwa sound..

Student: I didn't remember him to come to the party. I should have called him in advance.

A) Teacher: Remember and remind have different meanings. Remind is making someone remember. Be careful.
B) Teacher: No, not remember, it should be remind.

C) Teacher: You didn’t remind him to come to the party.

D) Teacher: I didn't… (pausing)? (rising intonation).

E) Teacher: Can you repeat again?

F) Teacher: I didn’t REMEMBER him to do come to the party. (stressing the mistake).