



Teacher Feedback Practices in L2 Classrooms Today: Evaluating What Works and Why

Akua Amaniampong¹ & Ernest Opoku Agyemang² & Edward Owusu³

^{1,2} Graduate Student, Department of Languages Education, University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, Kumasi, Ghana

³ Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, Sunyani Technical University, Sunyani, Ghana; and Department of Languages Education, University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, Kumasi, Ghana

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6373-9211>

Correspondence: Edward Owusu, Ghana

Email: edwardowusu@minister.com

DOI: 10.53103/cjlls.v6i4.284

Abstract

This study investigated the pedagogical strategies employed by educators to deliver constructive feedback in English as a second language (ESL) classrooms, with a specific focus on selected senior high schools in Ghana. A mixed-methods research design was adopted, integrating quantitative data from learner and teacher questionnaires with qualitative insights derived from semi-structured interviews. Analytical procedures involved descriptive statistics for numerical data and thematic analysis for narrative content, enabling a comprehensive synthesis of measurable patterns and experiential accounts. The results indicate that direct corrective feedback and oral explanatory comments constitute the predominant instructional approaches among teachers. Nevertheless, the implementation of these strategies is substantially constrained by practical obstacles, including oversized class populations, limited instructional time, and excessive professional workloads. Although learners generally perceived feedback as beneficial to their linguistic accuracy and conceptual understanding, a subset reported affective challenges—namely, anxiety and discomfort—that diminished their receptivity and active engagement with the feedback provided. Furthermore, the study reveals that prevailing feedback practices remain predominantly teacher-directed, offering minimal scaffolding for learner autonomy or substantive dialogic interaction around the feedback received. In essence, while feedback represents an indispensable component of second language instruction, its pedagogical value is contingent upon both the modality of its delivery and the nature of learners' psychological and cognitive responses. Consequently, the study advocates a paradigm shift toward more learner-centred, interactional feedback models. Recommendations include enhanced professional development programmes for teachers and the institutional integration of dialogic feedback frameworks to foster more responsive, reciprocal, and effective learning environments.

Keywords: Constructive Feedback, Second Language (L2) Classrooms, Teacher-Centred Vs. Learner-Centred Strategies, Dialogic Feedback, Ghanaian Senior High Schools, Affective Engagement

Introduction

Feedback is a fundamental component of effective pedagogy, serving as a mechanism through which learners receive evaluative information about their performance to improve learning outcomes (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Within educational discourse, feedback is broadly understood as the informational loop between a learner's current competence and the desired instructional goal. Hattie and Timperley (2007) contend that effective feedback reduces the discrepancy between what a learner already knows and what they are expected to achieve, thereby accelerating cognitive and skill-based development.

In the specific context of second language (L2) classrooms, feedback assumes heightened significance due to the inherently productive nature of language acquisition. Learners are routinely required to produce spoken and written output, a process that naturally generates errors as part of experimental language use. Within this domain, corrective feedback has emerged as a pivotal mechanism for fostering linguistic accuracy.

Ellis (2009) defines corrective feedback as any response made to a learner's erroneous utterance, while Chaudron (1977), an early contributor to the field, characterised it more expansively as any teacher intervention that transforms or seeks to enhance learner performance. More recently, Owusu (2017) offers a context-sensitive definition, describing corrective feedback as the pedagogical responses teachers provide to learners' oral and written errors with the dual purpose of identifying discrepancies and addressing linguistic inaccuracies. Through effective corrective feedback, learners become conscious of the divergence between their interlanguage forms and target language norms. This metacognitive awareness, in turn, enables learners to recognise persistent errors and systematically refine their linguistic proficiency. However, as Owusu (2020) cautions, the objective of corrective feedback extends beyond mere error correction; it also encompasses the encouragement of linguistically appropriate behaviour, thereby shaping learners' future language choices.

Notwithstanding the acknowledged benefits of corrective feedback, a substantial body of scholarship warns that its administration carries inherent risks. Poorly delivered correction—particularly when perceived as harsh, public, or humiliating—may erode learner motivation and discourage classroom participation. Conversely, the complete absence of corrective feedback risks arresting linguistic development and perpetuating fossilised errors. Thus, teachers face a delicate pedagogical balancing act: they must correct errors to facilitate progress while simultaneously preserving learners' affective engagement with the language learning process. In many second language classroom environments, particularly those with large enrolments or diverse proficiency levels, teachers encounter

significant practical difficulties when attempting error correction (Kataoka et al., 2023). Inappropriate correction strategies have been shown to diminish learner willingness to engage in communicative activities, thereby defeating the very purpose of interactive language pedagogy. This tension renders corrective feedback a problematic yet unavoidable domain requiring careful empirical scrutiny. Indeed, several influential language theorists, including Chomsky (1959) and Krashen (1985), have argued against explicit error correction, warning that such practices may exert detrimental effects on naturalistic language acquisition. These scholars advocate instead for positive interventions, including models of comprehensible input and positive reinforcement, arguing that excessive correction undermines learner confidence. Similarly, Allwright (2006) proposes that instructional effort might be more productively directed towards pushing learner output and developing interlanguage skills rather than focusing excessively on error elimination. From this perspective, fluency and communicative adequacy take precedence over grammatical precision.

Nevertheless, a contrasting line of inquiry, exemplified by Ghazali et al. (2020), maintains that constructive feedback—when delivered appropriately—positively influences language learning trajectories. Despite this evidence, some teachers continue to avoid corrective feedback altogether, motivated by a well-intentioned but potentially counterproductive fear of demotivating learners. Ellis (2009) characterises this ambivalence by noting that corrective feedback inherently constitutes a form of negative evidence, which, while informative, may be perceived by learners as an evaluative threat.

The foregoing dilemma underscores a pressing need for systematic inquiry into teacher strategies that enable constructive feedback delivery without compromising learner confidence or classroom climate. Understanding how teachers can provide corrective feedback in a manner that is both pedagogically effective and psychologically supportive represents a critical concern for contemporary second language education research. Against this background, the present study pursues the following objectives:

1. To examine learners' perceptions of feedback in second language learning contexts.
2. To explore the impact of feedback on learners' linguistic development.
3. To identify effective strategies teachers can employ to provide constructive feedback in language classrooms.

Theoretical Frameworks

This study is grounded in two theoretical frameworks: the Noticing Hypothesis propounded by Schmidt (1990) and the Output Hypothesis by Swain (1985).

Noticing Hypothesis

The Noticing Hypothesis, introduced by Richard Schmidt in 1990, proposes that for linguistic input to be converted into intake that is genuinely usable for acquisition, it must first be consciously registered by the learner. In other words, Schmidt (1990) contends that conscious awareness of formal language features is a prerequisite for learning to occur. Within the context of second language pedagogy, this theoretical framework offers a particularly useful lens through which to examine the function of constructive feedback. Specifically, feedback serves to direct learners' conscious attention to discrepancies between their own production and the norms of the target language, thereby facilitating the noticing process.

Schmidt (1990) delineates two variant formulations of the hypothesis: the strong version and the weak version. The strong hypothesis asserts that conscious awareness constitutes a necessary condition for learning to take place. According to this view, the success of any learning endeavour hinges on the learner's capacity to notice the linguistic elements to be acquired. For instance, a learner aiming to master Standard English must first recognise the grammatical structures present in their own spoken output, as this awareness subsequently guides them toward the target forms. In contrast, the weak hypothesis, as articulated by Truscott (1998), posits that while noticing certainly facilitates learning, it is not an indispensable precondition. Under this interpretation, acquisition may still proceed implicitly, even in the absence of conscious awareness.

Notwithstanding its influence, Schmidt's framework has attracted criticism from several quarters. Krashen (1982), for example, challenges what he perceives as an overemphasis on conscious processes, arguing instead that substantial language learning can occur implicitly, without deliberate attention to form. Nevertheless, the Noticing Hypothesis retains considerable relevance for contemporary second language instruction. In particular, well-designed constructive feedback strategies have the potential to promote noticing without undermining learners' confidence or motivation, thus addressing both the cognitive and affective dimensions of language development.

Output Hypothesis

Another theory that underpins this study is the Output Hypothesis by Swain (1985). Swain's (1985:471) Output Hypothesis states that 'the act of producing language (speaking or writing) constitutes, under certain circumstances, part of the process of second language learning'. She argues that learners must produce language (output) to learn effectively. Just listening and reading are not enough to learn a language. However, Swain (1985) argues that speaking and writing will enable the learner to identify the gap in the knowledge and refine their linguistic competence. Therefore, she posits that learners must be pushed to

produce output to develop linguistic accuracy.

In the context of this study, Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis supports the use of constructive feedback strategies that encourage learners to produce modified utterances (output). However, if such feedback is used in a discouraging manner, learners may become unwilling to participate, and this will limit the benefits of output.

While Swain (1985) emphasizes the role of output in language learning, Schmidt (1990) focuses on the role of conscious noticing in language acquisition. This suggests that noticing and output must be viewed as components of a broader language learning process; therefore, their relevance to the study.

Feedback in Second Language Acquisition: Definition and Pedagogical Relevance

Feedback is widely acknowledged as a fundamental component of effective pedagogy, particularly within second language (L2) learning contexts, where learners are expected to engage actively in producing accurate linguistic output. Owusu (2017, p. 32) defines corrective feedback (CF) as a 'teacher's response to students' written or verbal structures that seeks to critique the structures.' Thus, Owusu (2017) explicitly limits feedback to responses directed at 'students' written or verbal structures' rather than at their general academic performance, effort, or behaviour. The term "structures" refers to the specific grammatical, syntactic, or organisational features of language output. This includes, for example, sentence construction, tense usage, word order, punctuation in writing, or pronunciation and morphological accuracy in speech. By foregrounding "structures," Owusu (2017) signals a language-centred orientation, making this definition particularly suitable for second language acquisition (SLA) contexts, where the formal properties of learner output are a primary pedagogical concern.

Again, Owusu (2017) characterises the teacher's response as one that 'seeks to critique the structures.' The use of the word "critique" is noteworthy. In academic phraseology, critique does not merely mean identifying errors or shortfalls; it implies a thoughtful, analytical assessment that identifies both strengths and weaknesses. However, within the context of corrective feedback in language teaching, Owusu (2017) likely intends "critique" to mean a careful examination of learner errors, including an identification of what is incorrect or non-standard in the learner's output and possibly an explanation of why it deviates from target language norms. This contrasts with definitions that emphasise guidance, scaffolding, or positive reinforcement.

Hattie and Timperley (2007) conceptualise feedback as information intended to reduce the discrepancy between a learner's current level of knowledge and the desired learning outcome. They further propose that effective feedback must address three core

questions: ‘What is the goal?’, ‘What progress has been made toward that goal?’, and ‘What actions should follow?’ This framework is significant because it positions feedback not merely as an evaluative instrument but as a developmental mechanism that actively guides the learning process. Consequently, feedback in a generic sense may be defined as information that educators provide to learners regarding their performance, with the explicit aim of facilitating improvement.

Some empirical studies have reinforced the importance of feedback for language learning, while also qualifying its effectiveness (Ferris, 1999; Ellis, 2009; Ferris, 2011; Owusu, 2019; Owusu, 2020; Owusu, K.A. et al., 2022; Wisniewski et al., 2020; Owusu et al., 2025). For example, Wisniewski et al. (2020) conducted a large-scale study and concluded that feedback generally exerts a positive influence on learners' linguistic development. However, they caution that not all feedback yields beneficial outcomes. According to their findings, poorly delivered feedback can produce minimal or even detrimental effects. This observation is particularly pertinent to the present inquiry, as it suggests that the critical question is not whether feedback should be provided, but rather ‘how’ it should be delivered. In essence, the effectiveness of feedback depends substantially upon its quality, clarity, and relevance to learners' individual needs.

Within the field of second language acquisition (SLA), feedback is frequently examined in its corrective form, which specifically targets learners' linguistic errors. Lyster et al. (2013) offer a comprehensive review of oral corrective feedback in language classroom settings, identifying several key strategies, including recasts, elicitation, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, and explicit correction. Their analysis indicates that certain feedback types prompt learners to self-correct, thereby facilitating production of target-like language forms.

Nevertheless, while they provide valuable insights into the relative effectiveness of different feedback categories, their emphasis on immediate learner uptake has attracted criticism. Some scholars (for example, Krashen, 1982; and Truscott, 1996) contend that instantaneous correction does not necessarily translate into durable, long-term acquisition. This critique implies that feedback should not be evaluated solely based on learners' immediate responses; rather, its long-term impact on linguistic development must also be considered. From this vantage point, feedback ought to be understood as an element within a broader learning trajectory, not as an isolated instructional technique.

A further significant development in feedback research is the construct of feedback literacy, introduced by Carless and Boud (2018). These authors argue that feedback can only be effective when learners possess the capacity to understand, interpret, and act upon it. This perspective signals a shift away from a teacher-centred model of feedback toward a learner-centred approach that prioritises active engagement. According to Carless and Boud (2018), learners must develop the ability to make sense of feedback and subsequently apply it to future academic tasks.

Research has also explored the relationship between feedback and learner motivation. Gan (2020) found that learners' motivational dispositions significantly influence how they perceive and respond to feedback. Specifically, learners who regard feedback as useful are more inclined to engage with it and to apply it toward performance improvement. Similarly, Zhan et al. (2022) demonstrate that learners' perceptions of feedback value play a critical role in shaping their level of classroom engagement. These findings highlight the affective dimension of feedback, suggesting that it is not exclusively a cognitive process but also an emotional one. Feedback perceived as discouraging or demotivating may reduce learner motivation, whereas supportive feedback can enhance engagement and participation. This observation aligns closely with the focus of the present study, which emphasises the need for feedback strategies that correct errors without simultaneously discouraging learners.

Further supporting this perspective, research on the emotional aspects of language learning underscores the importance of cultivating supportive classroom environments. Gregersen (2023) argues that language anxiety can significantly undermine learners' willingness to communicate. Constructive feedback, when delivered in a supportive manner, can help mitigate anxiety and encourage learners to participate more actively in classroom interaction.

The present literature indicates that feedback is a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions. Whereas earlier research concentrated primarily on the relative effectiveness of different feedback types, more recent studies emphasise the importance of learner engagement, feedback literacy, and affective factors. This evolution in the scholarship reflects a broader understanding of feedback as a dynamic and interactive process, rather than a one-way transmission of information from teacher to learner.

Although feedback has been extensively investigated within both educational research and second language acquisition (Sato et al., 2013; Wisniewski et al., 2020; Lyster et al., 2013), several noteworthy gaps remain unexplored. The majority of extant literature has focused on the significance of feedback as an instructional tool. For instance, feedback serves as a mechanism that bridges the disparity between learners' current knowledge and the expectations placed upon them (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). Similarly, a study by Wisniewski et al. (2020) underscores the generally positive effect of feedback upon learner learning outcomes. Nevertheless, such studies tend to prioritise the outcomes of feedback over the processes by which feedback is delivered by teachers and experienced by learners within language classrooms.

More recently, scholarly attention has turned towards the role of learner engagement and perception in feedback processes. Carless and Boud (2018) introduce the concept of feedback literacy, emphasising learners' capacity to interpret and utilise feedback effectively. In a similar vein, Gan (2020) and Zhan et al. (2022) underscore the

importance of learners' perceptions of feedback in shaping their engagement within language classrooms. Although these studies constitute a significant advance towards a learner-centred perspective, they are predominantly concerned with higher education contexts and with written feedback. Comparatively, little attention has been directed to constructive oral feedback within classroom interaction, particularly in secondary school settings, though Owusu, K. A. et al. (2022) have studied corrective feedback and its impact on performance in the work environment.

A further significant limitation of the existing literature concerns its lack of contextual diversity. Much feedback research has been conducted within Western or Asian educational settings, with relatively limited focus upon African contexts, including Ghanaian language classrooms. Given the distinctive sociocultural and educational dynamics that characterise these contexts, research is needed that explores how feedback practices operate within them.

Methods

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-method research design. It integrates both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The researchers' use of this research allows for a more comprehensive understanding of feedback practices. This includes combining numerical data and in-depth insights from participants (Creswell and Creswell, 2018) to best understand research problems (Creswell, 2003) and enhance the validity and reliability of the study. The quantitative component uses questionnaires to gather data on learners' perceptions of teachers' constructive feedback strategies, and the qualitative component employs semi-structured interviews with teachers to explore their experiences and practices.

Population, Participants, Sampling Procedure, Sample Size

The target population for this study consisted of Form Three General Arts students from two educational institutions in the Ashanti Region of Ghana: KNUST Senior High School and St. George Senior High Technical School. The total population of eligible students was 250, of whom 130 were enrolled at KNUST Senior High School and 120 at St. George Senior High Technical School.

From this population, a simple random sampling technique was employed to select 25 students from each of the two schools, yielding a student sample of 50. In addition, two English language teachers from each school were purposively selected, based on possessing specific characteristics pertinent to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). Consequently, the total sample size for the study comprised 54 participants: 50 students

and four (4) language teachers.

Results and Discussion

Quantitative Analysis of Questionnaire Data

To facilitate the interpretability of the questionnaire data, responses captured on a Likert scale were aggregated into three analytically meaningful categories. Specifically, the responses were grouped as *never/rarely* = *low occurrence*, *sometimes* = *moderate occurrence*, and *often/always* = *high occurrence*. This categorisation enabled the identification of salient patterns and trends aligned with the research objectives.

Research Question One

What are the perceptions of learners on feedback in language learning?

Table 1: Learners' Views on the Usefulness of Received Feedback

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
I understand the feedback my teachers give	10 (20%)	12 (24%)	28 (56%)
Feedback helps me improve my English	5 (10%)	7 (14%)	38 (76%)
My teacher explains feedback clearly	13 (26%)	8 (16%)	29 (68%)
I know how to correct mistakes after feedback	11(22%)	19(38%)	20 (40%)
Feedback helps me to avoid repeating mistakes	7 (14%)	10 (20%)	33 (66%)

As summarised in Table 1, the majority of learners report both an understanding of the feedback provided by their teachers and a positive appraisal of its utility. The most emphatic endorsement concerns the contribution of feedback to English language improvement: seventy-six per cent (76%) of respondents agreed with this statement. Furthermore, a substantial proportion—sixty-six per cent (66%)—concur that feedback assists them in avoiding the repetition of prior errors. Although a noteworthy minority acknowledge uncertainty regarding how to rectify their mistakes following feedback (with only 40% agreeing that they possess this knowledge), the overwhelming majority recognise the beneficial impact of feedback on their linguistic development.

These findings strongly suggest that learners regard feedback as a critical resource for facilitating learning improvement. The results further corroborate existing arguments in the literature that learners tend to value feedback primarily when it is both comprehensible and actionable. Nevertheless, the observation that nearly one-fifth of

respondents do not consistently understand how to correct mistakes following feedback, coupled with the finding that 38% remain neutral on this item, indicates that clarity and practical applicability are not uniformly achieved. Consequently, while the data affirm the overall utility of feedback in language learning, they also expose an instructive pedagogical weakness: a non-trivial proportion of learners encounter difficulty in translating received feedback into successful revision.

Table 2: Learner Engagement with Feedback

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
I pay attention to feedback	6 (12%)	8 (16%)	36 (72%)
I try to correct my mistakes after feedback	5 (10%)	10 (20%)	35 (70%)
I ask questions when I do not understand feedback	20 (40%)	9 (18%)	21 (42%)
I ignore feedback sometimes	28 (56%)	7 (14%)	15 (30%)

As demonstrated in Table 2, thirty-six respondents—equivalent to seventy-two per cent (72%)—acknowledged that they attend to teacher feedback. In contrast, six respondents (12%) reported that they do not attend to teacher feedback, while eight (16%) expressed a neutral position on this matter. Regarding corrective action following feedback, the majority of respondents, numbering thirty-five (70%), stated that they make an effort to rectify their errors. However, ten respondents (20%) adopted a neutral stance, and a further five (10%) admitted that they do not attempt self-correction after receiving feedback.

Table 2 reveals a near parity between learners who refrain from posing questions when comprehension fails and those who actively seek clarification, with twenty (40%) and twenty-one (42%) respectively, while nine (18%) remained neutral. The same table further indicates that the majority of respondents, totalling thirty-three (66%), utilise the feedback they receive to enhance both their written and spoken production. Notably, approximately one-third of the respondents—fifteen individuals, or thirty per cent (30%)—reported that they occasionally disregard feedback.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that while learners are broadly receptive to feedback, their engagement remains, in certain respects, somewhat passive. They listen to feedback and undertake correctional efforts, yet they do not consistently adopt an active stance in seeking clarification when understanding is incomplete.

Research Question Two

What is the impact of feedback on learners' language development?

Table 3: Emotional Impact of Feedback on Learners

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
I feel confident when my teacher corrects me	11 (22%)	12 (24%)	27 (54%)
Feedback encourages me to try again	5 (10%)	13 (26%)	11 (22%)
I feel embarrassed when my teacher corrects me	22 (44%)	11 (22%)	27 (54%)
I am afraid of making mistakes in class	18 (36%)	8 (16%)	24 (48%)
My teacher corrects me in a friendly way	7 (14%)	7 (14%)	36 (72%)

Table 3 presents the emotional impact of feedback on learners. The data indicate that the majority of respondents—twenty-seven individuals, representing fifty-four per cent (54%)—reported feeling confident when corrected by their teachers. Conversely, eleven respondents (22%) experienced discomfort following teacher feedback. Learners from both participating institutions (KNUST Senior High School and St. George Catholic Senior High Technical School) concurred that feedback served as an encouragement. The majority, comprising eleven respondents (22%), stated that feedback motivates them to attempt the task again. Nevertheless, nearly half of the respondents—twenty-two individuals, or forty-four per cent (44%)—admitted to feeling embarrassed when corrected by teachers. Furthermore, a notable proportion, eighteen respondents (36%), reported experiencing fear of committing errors in the classroom setting. Of the total sample, the overwhelming majority, thirty-six respondents (72%), reported that teachers cordially provide corrections, a reassuring finding.

These findings reveal an interesting tension. On one hand, the majority of learners report that teacher feedback encourages them to persevere and is delivered in a congenial fashion. On the other hand, a sizeable proportion simultaneously report feelings of embarrassment and fear of error. This suggests that the classroom feedback experience is not uniform across learners. While feedback may be experienced as supportive by many students, it remains emotionally challenging for a non-trivial subset of others.

Research Question Three

What strategies can teachers use to provide constructive feedback in language classrooms?

Table 4: Types of Feedback Learners Report Receiving

Item	Never/Rarely	Sometimes	Often/Always
The teacher corrects mistakes directly	9 (18%)	12 (24%)	26 (58%)
The teacher explains why an answer is wrong	7 (14%)	14 (28%)	29 (58%)
The teacher asks learners to self-correct	11 (22%)	15 (30%)	24 (48%)
The teacher gives hints instead of direct answers	14 (28%)	10 (20%)	26 (52%)
The teacher uses examples to explain corrections	8 (16%)	20 (40%)	22 (44%)
The teacher gives written feedback	6 (12%)	11 (22%)	33 (66%)

Table 4 reveals that nine per cent (9%) of learners reported that teachers never or rarely correct mistakes directly. A further twenty-four per cent (24%) indicated that teachers sometimes provide direct correction, while the majority—fifty-eight per cent (58%)—reported that teachers often or always deliver feedback in a direct manner. The table further suggests that written feedback constitutes the most prevalent strategy, a finding affirmed by sixty-six per cent (66%) of respondents. Additionally, fifty-eight per cent (58%) of learners reported that teachers explain the rationale underlying an error. However, twenty-eight per cent (28%) and fourteen per cent (14%) of respondents indicated that such explanations are communicated to them only sometimes or rarely, respectively, when errors occur.

This pattern suggests that teachers rely more heavily on explicit and explanatory strategies than on indirect prompting. Such a finding resonates with existing literature, which demonstrates that teachers often prefer feedback methods characterised by clarity and efficiency within classroom settings, particularly under conditions of time constraint and large class sizes (Lee, 2017). At the same time, the comparatively lower frequency of hints and opportunities for self-correction may indicate that learners are not consistently being encouraged toward autonomous error repair—a concern frequently highlighted in

feedback research.

Taken argumentatively, these results suggest that teachers are not avoiding feedback; rather, they are actively engaged in correcting learners. Nevertheless, the dominant pattern appears to favour teacher-led correction over learner-led reflection. This observation aligns with the argument advanced in the literature that classroom feedback practices often remain teacher-centred (Ellis, 2009).

Table 5: Constructive Feedback Practices

Item	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The teacher corrects mistakes without embarrassing learners	10 (20%)	9 (18%)	31 (62%)
The teacher praises correct responses before correcting mistakes	7 (14%)	10 (20%)	33 (66%)
The teacher gives feedback privately when necessary	6 (12%)	9 (18%)	35 (70%)
The teacher encourages learners to try again after mistakes	5 (10%)	7 (14%)	38 (76%)
The teacher creates a comfortable learning environment	4 (8%)	5 (10%)	41 (82%)

As presented in Table 5, the highest-rated characteristic of constructive feedback is the establishment of a comfortable learning environment, endorsed by eighty-two per cent (82%) of respondents. This is followed by encouragement to attempt the task again following errors, which received endorsement from seventy-six per cent (76%). The majority of respondents (70%) reported that teachers should deliver feedback privately when circumstances warrant such discretion, while sixty-six per cent (66%) indicated that teachers should offer praise for correct responses before addressing errors. Additionally, sixty-two per cent (62%) of respondents reported that feedback should be provided in a manner that avoids causing embarrassment.

These findings suggest that learners most highly value feedback that is both encouraging and conducive to the preservation of personal dignity. This pattern aligns strongly with the existing literature on supportive and emotionally sustainable feedback practices. Furthermore, it implies that students do not merely seek correction per se; rather, they desire correction delivered in a manner that treats them with respect.

Qualitative Analysis of Data

Theme One: Common Feedback Strategies

All four teachers reported employing direct correction, explanatory commentary, and written annotations on both exercises and compositions. Three teachers additionally mentioned inviting learners to attempt a response again prior to the provision of correction. Two teachers reported the occasional use of peer correction.

Excerpts of teachers' responses include:

"When learners make grammatical mistakes, I usually explain the reason because I want them to know what exactly went wrong."

"Sometimes I allow them to think again before I correct them, especially during oral English."

This pattern suggests that teachers combine explicit correction with a limited repertoire of prompting strategies. Such a finding resonates with the questionnaire data obtained from learners, which places a premium on clarity in feedback delivery.

Theme Two: Why Teachers Choose These Strategies

Teachers stated that their preference for direct and explanatory feedback is motivated by two primary considerations: the learners' need for clarity and the constraints imposed by limited classroom time.

"If I only give hints, some of the learners may not understand, especially the weaker ones."

"The class size is sometimes huge for me, so direct correction saves me time."

This theme is significant as it demonstrates that feedback selection is shaped not solely by pedagogical considerations but also by the practical realities of classroom management. This finding resonates with the existing literature, which suggests that teacher feedback practices are influenced by contextual constraints, including workload and class size (Ferris, 2011; Lee, 2017).

Theme Three: Challenges in Providing Constructive Feedback

All four teachers acknowledged the difficulty inherent in balancing correction with encouragement. The most frequently cited challenges included fear of discouraging learners, limited time availability, and the variability of learner reactions.

Some of the responses include:

"Some learners like correction, but others become quiet after being corrected."

"I want to help them improve, but I also do not want them to lose confidence."

This theme strongly foregrounds the affective tension at the heart of the present

study: teachers recognise that correction has the potential both to assist and to harm learners. The challenge, therefore, is not whether to correct, but rather how to do so in a constructive manner.

Theme Four: Effects of Feedback on Learners

The teachers generally held the view that feedback enhances performance, particularly when learners comprehend it. Nevertheless, they observed that a subset of learners became anxious or withdrawn following correction.

“Some students feel shy when they are corrected”

Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Several discernible patterns emerge when the two data sets are considered in tandem. First, both learners and teachers report that feedback is routinely employed, thereby confirming that feedback constitutes an established practice within the classroom setting. Second, both sources of data indicate that learners generally perceive feedback as useful and motivating. Furthermore, the findings reveal the presence of emotional tension associated with feedback. While some learners report feeling encouraged and confident after receiving feedback, others report feelings of embarrassment and demotivation. This finding is significant insofar as it demonstrates that feedback ought not to be regarded solely as a cognitive phenomenon but rather also as an affective event. Moreover, although learners appear to hold favourable attitudes toward feedback, a substantial number do not actively seek clarification when understanding is incomplete.

The finding that feedback is widely employed and generally perceived as beneficial resonates with Hattie and Timperley's (2007) conceptualisation of feedback as a significant influence on learning outcomes. Nevertheless, a subset of learners reported difficulty in either understanding or applying the feedback they received. This observation aligns with research on feedback literacy, which contends that learners frequently lack the requisite skills to interpret and utilise feedback effectively (Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019).

The evidence indicating that teachers rely extensively on direct feedback and explanatory strategies is similarly consistent with studies demonstrating that many classroom feedback practices remain teacher-centred, even in contexts where teachers profess to value learner participation (Ellis, 2009; Lyster et al., 2013; Liu & Feng, 2023).

One of the most noteworthy findings of the present study is that feedback engenders both positive and negative emotional effects. Although many learners reported that feedback motivates them, others reported feelings of embarrassment and fear of committing errors. This finding robustly supports recent literature that emphasises the affective dimension of feedback (Winstone & Carless, 2020). It further challenges earlier

approaches that concentrated predominantly on cognitive outcomes.

The findings indicate that, while learners generally attend to feedback and attempt self-correction following errors, a smaller proportion actively engage by posing questions or seeking clarification. This pattern resonates with research arguing that learner engagement is critical to the effectiveness of feedback, yet is frequently neglected in practice (Winstone & Carless, 2020; Gan, 2020).

Learners identified the most constructive feedback strategies as encouragement following mistakes, praise preceding correction, and the cultivation of a conducive classroom environment. These preferences support literature emphasising supportive and dialogic feedback practices (Winstone & Carless, 2020; Gan, 2020).

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study draws the following conclusions. First, feedback is widely practised in language classrooms, particularly through direct correction and explanatory strategies. Second, while feedback is generally perceived as useful, its effectiveness varies considerably depending upon the clarity of delivery and the extent to which learners comprehend it. Third, feedback possesses a dual capacity: it can both motivate and discourage learners, depending on its manner of delivery and the emotional context in which it is provided. Fourth, although learner engagement with feedback is evident, students frequently do not involve themselves actively in the feedback process. Fifth, constructive feedback exerts not only a cognitive impact but also a significant emotional influence on learners.

In summary, the study concludes that effective feedback in language classrooms necessitates a balance between correction and support. The research has demonstrated that, while feedback constitutes a pivotal component of language teaching, its effectiveness depends not solely on the content of what teachers say but also on the manner in which it is delivered. Constructive feedback requires a careful equilibrium between accuracy, clarity, and emotional support. When delivered effectively, feedback has the capacity to enhance learning, build learner confidence, and promote active engagement within the language classroom.

Practical Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study advances the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should adopt balanced feedback strategies that integrate correction with encouragement.
2. Teachers should actively foster learner involvement, including through self-correction and peer feedback.

3. Feedback should be delivered in a manner that mitigates anxiety and reduces the potential for embarrassment.

4. Teachers should provide clear and explicit explanations to facilitate learner comprehension.

5. Classroom environments should be structured to cultivate a safe and supportive learning atmosphere.

6. Learners should be encouraged to engage actively with the feedback they receive.

7. Learners should be encouraged to pose questions whenever feedback is ambiguous or insufficiently clear.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Future research should examine the longitudinal effects of feedback strategies on student performance outcomes.

2. Further studies might also investigate the role of technology-mediated feedback within language classroom contexts.

Declaration of AI-Assisted Editing

AI tools were used solely to improve grammar, clarity, and readability of this manuscript. All scientific content and interpretations are the original work of the author.

References

- Allwright, D. (2006). Six promising directions in applied linguistics. In P. Gieve & I. K. Miller (Eds.), *Understanding the language classroom* (pp. 11–17). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carless, D., & Boud, D. (2018). The development of student feedback literacy: Enabling uptake of feedback. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(8), 1315–1325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2018.1463354>
- Chaudron, C. (1977). A descriptive model of disclosure in the corrective treatment of learners' errors. *Language Learning*, 27, 29–46.
- Chomsky, N. (1985). *The logical structure of linguistic theory*. New York: Springer
- Ellis, R. (2009). Corrective feedback and teacher development. *L2 Journal*, 1, 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.5070/L2.V1I1.9054>
- Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
- Ferris, D. R. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response

- to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 8(1), 1-11.
- Ferris, D. R. (2011). *Treatment of error in second language student writing* (2nd ed.). University of Michigan Press.
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Gan, Z. (2020). How learning motivation influences feedback experience and preference in EFL students. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 496.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00496>
- Gregersen, T. (2023). Thwarting the negative impact of language anxiety. *Language Teaching*, 56(4), 556–570.
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112.
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching*, 39(2), 83–101. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003399>
- Kataoka, Y., Thamrin, A. H., Van Meter, R., Murai, J., & Kataoka, K. (2023). Investigating the effect of computer-mediated feedback via an LMS integration in a large-scale Japanese speaking class. *Education and Information Technologies*, 28(2), 1957-1986.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Lee, I. (2017). *Classroom writing assessment and feedback in L2 school contexts*. Springer.
- Lyster, R., Saito, K., & Sato, M. (2013). Oral corrective feedback in second language classrooms. *Language Teaching*, 46(1), 1–40.
- Mao, Z., & Crosthwaite, P. (2019). Investigating corrective feedback in second language acquisition: A systematic review. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 10(3), 377–403.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2017-0015>
- Owusu, E. (2017). The impact of corrective feedback on the writing of business communication students in selected tertiary institutions in Ghana [PhD Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra].
- Owusu, E. (2019). Corrective feedback and its effects on memoranda and letters of students of Sunyani Technical University, Ghana. *The International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies*, 7(4), 206-219.
- Owusu, E. (2020a). The effects of direct and indirect written corrective feedback on business communication texts of technical university students in Ghana. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, 4(2), 45–60.
- Owusu, K. A., Owusu, E., Senyah, M. M., Appiah, A. F. (2022). The influence of oral corrective feedback on employees' performance in Ghana. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 9(I), 600-609

- Owusu, E., Abunya, L. N., Agyekum, K., Adu, N.A.F.V., Triumph, C.U., & Agor, J.T. (2025). Examining written corrective feedback techniques in second language learning contexts. *African Journal of Applied Research*, 11(5), 596-616
- Schmidt, R. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11, 129-158.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competences: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. *Input in second language acquisition*, 15, 165-179.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2010). *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, 46(2), 327-369.
- Truscott, J. (1998). Noticing in second language acquisition: A critical review. *Second Language Research*, 14(2), 103–135.
- Winstone, N. E., & Carless, D. (2020). *Designing effective feedback processes in higher education: A learning-focused approach*. Routledge.
- Wisniewski, B., Zierer, K., & Hattie, J. (2020). The power of feedback revisited: A meta-analysis of Educational Feedback Research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 3087. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.03087
- Zhan, Y., Lee, J. C. K., & Wan, Z. H. (2022). Student perceptions of teacher feedback. *Language Testing in Asia*, 12, 62.