

# A Study on Trainee Teachers' Stated Beliefs and Their Pedagogical Practices of Oral Corrective Feedback in the Chinese as a Second Language Classroom

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**Abstract:** The aim of the present study is to explore how native Chinese trainee teachers reflect on their usages of oral corrective feedback in class and what their actual teaching practices are in Chinese as a second language (CSL) classroom. To this end, a mixed-methods approach was adopted in this study, including the questionnaire to explore teachers' perceptions as well as classroom observation to understand teachers' pedagogical practices during class. Fifteen trainee teachers from the same teacher training program in a university in China were identified and recruited to help complete the current research. The present study indicates that in the CSL context, teachers play an essential role in the language classroom and serve as the main resource of classroom feedback. When comparing trainee teachers' stated beliefs to their teaching practices, some similarities could be identified between them, however, clear divergence was also noticeable in the present study. Compared to the previous studies on oral corrective feedback in ESL and EFL contexts, most of the findings in the current study could correspond to those outcomes. The implication emphasizes the importance of offering more support to trainee teachers to help them deal with the complex classroom context such as through teacher training programs. Further investigations on students' perceptions of oral corrective feedback in class would also contribute to the understanding of oral corrective feedback in the CSL context.

**Keywords:** Oral corrective feedback; Chinese as a second language; Trainee teacher

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## 1. Literature review

### 1.1. Oral corrective feedback in second language acquisition

Corrective feedback (CF) has received considerable attention in recent decades with the pedagogical shift towards "focus on form" in the second-language (L2) educational classroom. According to Ellis <sup>[1]</sup>, CF refers to "responses to learner utterances containing an error." Similarly, Yoshida <sup>[2]</sup> defined CF as a form of feedback

that provides indications or correct forms in response to learners' erroneous or inappropriate utterances, in order to elicit their reformulation of such errors. Ellis *et al.* <sup>[3]</sup> also stated that CF in the classroom could be recognized in the form of responses to learners' erroneous language output.

Based on the previous studies, corrective feedback could be further divided into two groups: oral CF and written CF <sup>[4]</sup>. Oral CF, with which the present research is concerned, refers to those instances when CF is delivered through spoken language <sup>[5]</sup>. The present study focuses particularly on the CF provided using spoken language, i.e. oral corrective feedback. The oral corrective feedback in the present study is defined as the spoken feedback initiated by teachers in response to students' oral language errors or inappropriate expressions generated in class.

## 1.2. Teachers' stated beliefs and practices of oral CF

As discussed by Lyster and Saito <sup>[6]</sup>, the amount of research on oral corrective feedback has grown dramatically in the past 20 years. Nevertheless, most of the studies remain focusing on all kinds of CF practices: for example, the categories of CF <sup>[7,8]</sup>, the effectiveness of different types and ways of CF <sup>[6,7,9]</sup>, students' uptakes of CF and teachers' preferences for CF <sup>[10]</sup>, etc. The research into cognitive aspects, or to be more specific, the notions and beliefs about CF as well as how such cognitions are applied in teaching practices, remain relatively unexamined <sup>[11-13]</sup>.

However, with the cognitive shift to teachers as independent thinkers, it is argued that teachers' personal beliefs about classroom pedagogical practices might be a crucial issue to shed light on. As indicated by Borg <sup>[14]</sup>, teachers actively make decisions about the teaching process based on their personal thoughts and beliefs. Therefore, it would be valuable to uncover teachers' perceptions of oral CF, since it might play an essential role in affecting the oral CF practices in class <sup>[15]</sup>, and might further impact the language teaching efficiency.

Instigated by the need to understand how teachers employ oral CF in class, a number of researches have been carried out into their beliefs about it and the reasons behind their corrective practices <sup>[2,16,17]</sup>. Nevertheless, many of these investigations focus on the mismatch between teachers' and students' perceptions on oral CF, or teachers' concerns and researchers' orientations.

Apart from this, even less number of studies have been conducted to bridge teachers' stated beliefs and practices together, the previous investigations also reveal conflicting results. For example, there are several studies indicating that teachers' stated beliefs could correspond to their teaching practices to some extent <sup>[12,18]</sup>.

In contrast, study by Basturkmen *et al.* <sup>[19]</sup> showed that there are noticeable discrepancies between teachers' perceptions and practices in terms of oral CF. Similar outcomes are also identified in the research of Roothoof <sup>[20]</sup>. Yoshida's research <sup>[2]</sup> suggested that teachers tended to use a different CF type from what they believed to be more beneficial for learners' progress.

## 1.3. Types of oral CF

Lyster and Ranta <sup>[7]</sup> observed the incidental CF offered in four French immersion classes (communication-based context) at the primary level in Canada and identified six basic types of CF that occur during the language teaching process, which were then widely adopted as the coding system for a large number of studies from a wide range of contexts <sup>[20]</sup>.

### 1.3.1. Explicit correction

Explicit correction refers to "the explicit provision of the correct form" <sup>[7]</sup> in response to learners' faulty linguistic expression. For example, "Not ...", "You should say...", "Oh, you mean...".

### Example 1

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: bu dui, bu shi kan, ni ying gai shuo kan le dian ying. (No, not watch, you should say watched.)*

### 1.3.2. Recast

Recast refers to teachers' "reformulation of all or part of learners' language to remove the error" <sup>[7]</sup>, which means the recasting could involve either the whole sentence or just a word. A translation that occurs in response to students' use of other languages (in the present research, English) would also be considered as recast, since it serves similar functions to recasting.

### Example 2

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: o, ni zuo tian kan le dian ying, hen hao a. (Oh, you watched a movie last night, so nice.)*

### 1.3.3. Clarification request

As a type of CF, clarification request refers to the need to ask for clarification from a learner. The aim of these requests is to indicate that the utterance generated by a learner is either in a problematic form or misunderstood by the teacher: for example, "Sorry?", "Pardon?", "What do you mean...?" or "Can you say it again?"

### Example 3

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: o, ni ke yi zai shuo yi bian ma? (Oh, sorry?)*

### 1.3.4. Metalinguistic feedback

According to Lyster and Ranta <sup>[7]</sup>, this type of feedback contains "either comments, information, or questions" in response to a learner's problematic use of language. The comment signals the existence of errors in a learner's language in a relatively general way. The linguistic information and questions refer to the feedback that includes the metalanguage information addressing the nature of the erroneous utterances.

### Example 4

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: ni yao yong guo qu shi. (You need a past tense for it.)*

### 1.3.5. Elicitation

Elicitation refers to feedback that aims to elicit the reformulated forms directly from the learners: for example, teachers could provoke students' self-completion of their expressions by deliberately pausing before the problematic part and waiting for the students to fill in the blank. Furthermore, elicitation could be given via the form of questions: for instance, "How to say...in Chinese?"

### Example 5

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: ni...? (You...?) (waiting for the student)*

### 1.3.6. Repetition

The repetition feedback refers to teachers' repetition of the learners' faulty language. Normally this type of feedback would be accompanied by a rising intonation at the end of the sentence to highlight that there is an error in it.

### Example 6

*Student: wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night.)*

*Teacher: wo zuo wan kan dian ying ma? (I watch a movie last night?) (rising intonation)*

## 1.4. Trainee teachers in the Chinese as a second language context

Trainee teachers' perceptions and teaching practices about classroom CF remain an unexplored field. However, it could be argued that their perceptions and practices are worth investigating to some extent, for the following two reasons.

Firstly, compared with experienced teachers, trainee teachers are probably encumbered with more difficulties when offering oral CF. According to Loughran <sup>[21]</sup>, novice teachers tend not to have a clear perception of oral CF which they might use during the class, and it is a relative challenge for them to integrate their knowledge and awareness into practice. Secondly, the present study also helps to understand what the trainee teachers are experiencing during their training program, which might contribute to the development of teacher education programs in the future.

Additionally, the present research was conducted in a relatively new context, namely, that of Chinese as a second language (CSL) in a classroom learning context. Researches show that different contexts could trigger diverse characteristics of oral CF. More specifically, Sheen <sup>[22]</sup>, in his synthesized research, articulated that the learning context could be a crucial moderator with regard to the provision of CF. In light of this, it is valuable to carry out similar research in a new context (in the present research, Chinese as a second language).

This present study aims to investigate the following questions:

- (1) What are trainee teachers' stated beliefs about their usage of oral corrective feedback in a CSL classroom based on their personal teaching experiences?
- (2) What are trainee teachers' actual pedagogical practices about oral CF in a CSL classroom?
- (3) To what extent do trainee teachers' stated beliefs match their teaching practices?

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Methods

In order to answer the research questions, mixed methods were adopted in this research, which included a questionnaire that contained both open-ended and close-ended questions (Likert scale and multiple-choice questions). The questionnaire adopted in this research replicated previous research conducted by Farahani and Salajegheh <sup>[23]</sup>. The questionnaire also referenced items from the proposed surveys in the studies of Roothoof <sup>[13]</sup>, Roothoof and Breeze <sup>[24]</sup>. The questionnaire mainly focused on six sessions, including trainee teachers' perceptions of the importance and practicality of oral CF, the proper frequency of offering oral CF, the preference of oral CF strategies, the timing of oral CF, the subject to offer oral CF, and which language level would oral CF address.

Meanwhile, the non-participant class observation was also conducted on five of the trainee teachers who also participated in the questionnaire, in order to investigate how oral CF practices were naturally generated during class <sup>[25]</sup>. This research method replicated a previous study carried out by Roothoof <sup>[20]</sup> which addressed similar questions.

### 2.2. Participants

The 15 participants in this study were recruited from a two-year authorized postgraduate teacher training



program in Tianjin, China, with assistance from the college. These students normally have an average period of 3–9 months of teaching experience. 13 were female and only two were male. Of these, seven of the participants were teachers of basic levels, the remaining eight participants were from the intermediate level.

## 2.3. Context

Five of the observed classes were listening and speaking lessons, in which relatively sufficient numbers of spoken errors and feedback were observed during the teaching process. The students were all adults from various cultural backgrounds, including the UK, USA, Australia, Dutch, Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia. Once enrolled in the language courses of the college, these students were assigned to classes according to their language proficiency level, determined by a language placement examination held by the college. The same pedagogical activities and focused linguistic items were shared within same-level classes.

## 2.4. Data analysis

In terms of the questionnaire, the data analysis process in the research conducted by Farahani and Salajegheh<sup>[23]</sup> acted as an important reference. The closed-end questions were coded and then analyzed using SPSS, and descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were calculated to understand the student teachers' perceptions. The result on the Likert scale was coded from 1 to 5: 1 meaning "strongly disagree" to 5 meaning "strongly agree," with 3 representing neutral. There was one set of questions (six items) that investigated the effectiveness of each type of oral CF. This set of questions was coded from 1 to 4, on a 4-degree Likert scale: 1 indicating "not effective" and 4 being "very effective."

From the five observation tapes, the three having the most sufficient amount of data were selected and further coded and analyzed. The chosen classes consisted of one from the basic level and two from the intermediate level.

Oral CF was categorized into six types: recast, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, repetition, and clarification request<sup>[7]</sup>. Brown<sup>[10]</sup> argued that this taxonomy is widely adopted including the following researches on CF when coding: Lochman<sup>[26]</sup>, Sheen<sup>[22]</sup>, Junqueira and Kim<sup>[11]</sup>, Ammar and Spada<sup>[27]</sup>, Nassaji<sup>[28]</sup>, Vicente-Rasoamalala<sup>[29]</sup>, Panova and Lyster<sup>[8]</sup>. The linguistic level in the present study was divided into four types: phonological, lexical, grammatical, and pragmatics, which were adopted from previous research conducted by Mackey *et al.* and Nishita, cited by Yoshida<sup>[30]</sup>.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Trainee teachers' stated beliefs on oral CF in the CSL classroom

#### 3.1.1. The perceived importance and practicality of oral CF in class

To begin with, trainee teachers generally showed a positive attitude ( $M = 4.067$ ) towards the usage of oral CF in language teaching classes, and there was little difference between individuals. Then, the participants offered the reasons behind their support for, or concerns about, oral CF.

First of all, it was argued by the trainee teachers that providing CF in class has four advantages in terms of language learning. Eleven teachers mentioned that proper oral CF could help students correct erroneous items and provide students with accurate language. Furthermore, teachers argued that oral CF is timely when dealing with students' errors, leaving a deeper impression on the learners. Another three teachers indicated that by providing oral CF, teachers could further strengthen students' awareness of monitoring their language output. Finally, two teachers also mentioned that their motivation for providing oral CF came from students'

expectations to some extent.

Nevertheless, three of the participants were also concerned about two limitations of oral CF in fostering language learning in a classroom context. One concern was that due to the limited time for providing oral CF, the feedback items could be relatively less organized and systematic. The other is that if the linguistic errors were only addressed using spoken language, students tended to have difficulty remembering and internalizing the feedback.

### **3.1.2. The frequency of oral CF**

Most of the participants argued that they would only provide feedback to half of the errors emerging in class (50%). They gave four main reasons for their statement. Firstly, teachers suggested that time constraints were a crucial factor to consider. Furthermore, they also mentioned that when taking the communication-based class aim into consideration, teachers were advised to give priority to the communicative function of the class activity. Apart from these concerns, six teachers also mentioned that it was better to understand the features of problematic items before giving feedback: for example, if it was only a mistake or an error, or if it was a common problem or an individual's confusion, or if it was significant enough to interfere with the understanding of the meaning or not. Finally, 10 of the trainee teachers also commented on learners' affective issues. It was argued that learners would be less motivated and confident if they were corrected too often.

### **3.1.3. The timing and subject to offer oral CF**

This study investigates the preferred timing of oral CF among trainee teachers. The data reveals that the most preferred timing for oral CF was right after students finished speaking ( $M = 4.067$ ,  $SD = 0.799$ ). Based on the questionnaire, it could be argued that the trainee teachers were more likely to offer timely oral CF right after the occurrence of language errors.

In terms of the need to give the oral CF, the trainee teachers especially supported the teachers in giving oral CF, and all of the 13 participants embraced a positive view on this statement ( $M = 4$ ,  $SD = 0$ ), which signals that they fully supported the essential value of the teachers in the language teaching classroom.

### **3.1.4. The effectiveness of different kinds of oral CF**

The trainee teachers embraced fairly neutral perspectives towards the proposed methods above, without showing explicit preferences or objections. According to the trainee teachers, the most effective type was elicitation ( $M = 2.733$ ,  $SD = 0.704$ ); followed by repetition ( $M = 2.667$ ,  $SD = 0.976$ ); recast ( $M = 2.6$ ,  $SD = 0.737$ ); explicit correction ( $M = 2.333$ ,  $SD = 0.816$ ); clarification request ( $M = 2.133$ ,  $SD = 0.743$ ); and metalinguistic feedback ( $M = 2.133$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ) (from most effective to least effective). Furthermore, apart from the proposed ways of oral CF, four of the participants also stated that they would use another three methods to give CF in class, namely, peer correction, body language, and the combination of oral and written CF.

### **3.1.5. Linguistic level that teachers believed was addressed with oral CF**

According to the trainee teachers, phonological errors were the most frequently addressed errors during their lessons, which was around 69% of the existing errors. The second most addressed type was grammatical items (59.4%), followed by lexical errors (51.1%), and the least targeted type was pragmatic ones (46.7%).

## 3.2. Actual pedagogical practices of oral corrective feedback in the CSL classroom

### 3.2.1. The frequency and types of oral CF in CSL context

Table 1 shows that although there were slight differences between individuals, the rate of corrected errors was relatively high at 78.6% on average. Among all the CFs, recast turns out to be the most frequently used type within the context of language teaching classrooms (45.4%). This was followed by elicitation (18.8%), explicit correction (10.3%), others (8.5%), repetition (6.7%), metalinguistic feedback (6.7%), and finally the clarification request (3.6%).

**Table 1.** The actual frequency and types of oral CF in class

	Wan	Li	Yu	Total
Number of errors	61	70	79	210
Number of feedback moves	50	52	63	165
% of errors corrected	82.0%	74.3%	79.7%	78.6%
Recast	20	19	36	75 (45.4%)
Clarification request	0	4	2	6 (3.6%)
Metalinguistic feedback	6	2	3	11 (6.7%)
Elicitation	14	11	6	31 (18.8%)
Repetition	3	6	2	11 (6.7%)
Explicit correction	3	7	7	17 (10.3%)
Others	4	3	7	14 (8.5%)

Meanwhile, three other ways of offering feedback were also identified in teaching practice, which are peer correction, re-asking the question, and physical hints. These three ways are concluded and presented in the table above as the category of “others” together. The peer correction in the present study refers to the way that teachers directly asked the peers for refined answers, and this functions as a way to indicate the emergence of errors:

#### Excerpt 1

*Teacher: Ni zuo wan zuo le shen me? (What did you do last night?)*

*Student A: Wo zuo wan kan dian ying. (I watch a movie last night. \*)*

*Teacher: (asking student B) Dui ma? (Is it correct?)*

Alternatively, re-asking the same question, or the same question might be paraphrased by the teacher to elicit an accurate response from students:

#### Excerpt 2

*Teacher: Ni zuo wan zuo le shen me? (What did you do last night?)*

*Student A: Wo kan dian ying. (I watch a movie. \*)*

*Teacher: Ni zuo **le** shen me? (What DID you do?)*

Or

*Teacher: Ni zuo wan zuo le shen me? (What did you do last night?)*

*Student A: Wo kan dian ying. (I watch a movie. \*)*

*Teacher: Wo xie le zuo ye, ni gan le shen me? (I did my homework, how about you?)*

The final type is giving physical hints, for example; a pause or smile while giving no comments, gestures, head shake, or pointing at the proper linguistic items written on the blackboard.

### 3.2.2. Timing of offering the oral CF

As demonstrated in **Table 2**, the practices of three trainee teachers showed great similarity. Based on the statistics, it could be observed that over half of the feedback (60%) was provided right after the learners finished speaking, but with the same teaching task continuing at the same time, which, according to Brown <sup>[10]</sup> could be identified as online CF. Meanwhile, among teachers who also provided offline CF to the learners, 34% of the feedback was provided after the whole teaching task was finished. Moreover, a relatively low amount (3.6%) of oral CF emerged at the end of the class or in the middle of students' language flow (2.4%).

**Table 2.** The timing of offering the oral CF

Teacher	No. of feedback moves	Interrupt students' output	Student finishes speaking	Task completed	At the end of the class
Wan	50	1	36	13	0
Li	52	3	29	16	4
Yu	63	0	34	27	2
Total	165	4 (2.4%)	99 (60%)	56 (34%)	6 (3.6%)

### 3.2.3. Linguistic level addressed by the oral CF

Since the number of errors appearing in different classes is less likely to be stable, in the present study, the percentages were calculated in order to obtain a better understanding of the frequency of oral CF at each level of language (**Table 3**).

**Table 3.** Types of linguistic aspects that the oral CF address

Teacher	Phonology	Lexical	Grammatical	Pragmatic
Wan	17 errors 12 feedback (70.6% corrected)	11 errors 10 feedback (90.9% corrected)	30 errors 27 feedback (90% corrected)	3 errors 1 feedback (33.3% corrected)
Li	15 errors 9 feedback (60% corrected)	16 errors 12 feedback (75% corrected)	36 errors 31 feedback (86.1% corrected)	3 errors 0 feedback (0% corrected)
Yu	22 errors 20 feedback (90.9% corrected)	25 errors 20 feedback (80% corrected)	27 errors 21 feedback (77.8% corrected)	5 errors 2 feedback (40% corrected)
Total	54 errors 41 feedback (75.9% corrected)	52 errors 42 feedback (80.8% corrected)	93 errors 79 feedback (84.9% corrected)	11 errors 3 feedback (27.3% corrected)

According to the data generated from classroom observation, grammatical errors seemed to be addressed most frequently among the four types of errors, reaching 84.9%. Following the grammatical errors were the lexical and phonological errors that were corrected less regularly, at 80.8% and 75.9% respectively. Meanwhile, the pragmatic errors seemed to be targeted less frequently than the other three types, at only 27.3%. The similarity among them was that these teachers all gave the least attention to the pragmatic items.

### 3.3. The extent to which trainee teachers' stated beliefs match their teaching practices

Based on previous research, the comparison was made from four perspectives: namely, the frequency of offering

oral CF, the types of CF, the timing of offering oral CF as well as the linguistic levels that oral CF targets.

Based on **Table 4**, it was observed that there were discrepancies between Wan's stated beliefs and her actual practices. First of all, the amount of actual feedback moves is higher than estimated. With regards to the preferred CF categories during the teaching process, the estimated adopted sequence of CF types in the language classroom could generally correspond to the actual practices. However, there remain several differences. The main one is the contrast position of the recast. Finally, two other ways of giving feedback, apart from the proposed classification, were identified during observations: peer correction and giving physical hints, which include body language. For example, smiling and shaking the head, as well as pointing at the proper linguistic items written on the blackboard.

With respect to the timing of CF, the estimated perceptions match the teaching practices to a large extent. In addition to this, it was also noteworthy that two distinctive characteristics were found when observing the oral CF she offered to her students. First of all, when giving explicit feedback (recast and explicit correction) in response to students' problematic linguistic forms, the feedback was sometimes accompanied by encouragement or positive comments to the learners.

However, this method of giving oral CF could be more likely to cause confusion or misunderstanding among the learners. For instance, the positive comments offered with recast could distract learners' attention from the reformed items and mislead them, which may hamper students' uptake of the CF. The other feature is that when offering feedback on phonological errors, even if it was produced by an individual learner, Wan would still provide the feedback to the whole class; or she would ask every student to repeat the pronunciation one by one to make sure that the students tended to share an equal opportunity to learn pronunciation.

**Table 4.** Comparison between Wan's stated beliefs and observed teaching practices

	Stated	Observed
The amount of oral CF	50%	82.0%
The type of oral CF used	metalinguistic feedback > elicitation > explicit correction > repetition > recast > clarification request Other ways: peer correction	recast > elicitation > metalinguistic feedback > explicit correction = repetition Other ways: peer correction body language
The timing of oral CF	Agree: student finishes speaking = task is completed Neutral: interrupt students' output Disagree: the end of the class	Student finishes speaking > task is completed > interrupt students' output
The linguistics levels that oral CF address	Phonological 90% Lexical 90% Grammatical 90% Pragmatic 50%	Phonological 70.6% Lexical 90.9% Grammatical 90% Pragmatic 33.3%

**Table 5** demonstrates Li's estimated perceptions and actual practices on CF during her teaching process. It was found that her beliefs and practices showed more discrepancies than Wan's. First of all, the observed amount of feedback moves (74.3%) is larger than the stated one (50%).

In terms of the preferred categories of oral CF used in the classroom, it seems that Li's perceptions of the effectiveness of each type could be reflected by her teaching practices, although some clear differences could be observed. However, there remains another kind of feedback category (peer correction) that Li fails to identify by herself. Apart from these, the beliefs and practices with respect to the timing of giving oral CF were found to be consistent to a large extent. The comparison of the targeted linguistic items shows an obvious mismatch

between her perceptions and practices. There are two things to notice here: one is that the phenomenon of offering phonological feedback to the whole class was also observed in Li's class; secondly, the actual pragmatic feedback is far less than estimated, at 0%. This means that no feedback is given to fix the pragmatic items, which could be an interesting phenomenon to look at, given that the main aim of the class is to foster learners' ability to generate realistic conversations in a classroom context.

**Table 5.** Comparison between Li's stated beliefs and observed teaching practices

	Stated	Observed
The amount of oral CF	50%	74.3%
The type of oral CF used	recast > clarification request > repetition > elicitation > explicit correction > metalinguistic feedback Other ways: no	recast > elicitation > explicit correction > repetition > clarification request > metalinguistic feedback Other ways: peer correction physical hints
The timing of oral CF	Agree: student finishes speaking = task is completed = the end of the class Neutral: interrupt students' output	student finishes speaking > task is completed > at the end of the class > interrupt students' output
The linguistics levels that oral CF address	Phonological 100% Lexical 60% Grammatical 60% Pragmatic 50%	Phonological 60% Lexical 75% Grammatical 86.1% Pragmatic 0%

As with the previous two participants, Yu's actual number of CF moves is also higher than she stated, at 79.7% compared to the estimate of 50% (Table 6). Nevertheless, she gave another reason for her choice. The priority in the class is to complete all the teaching tasks and cover the focused linguistic rules. In light of this, she will ignore some errors, allow peers to correct each other or just leave the questions to the students themselves.

In terms of the feedback preferences, it seems that the practices are relatively consistent with the stated ones. Although three other types of oral CF, other than the proposed six ones, were observed in her class: peer correction, body language, and re-asking the question, these were not reported in Yu's stated practices. As regards the timing of feedback, the data indicate that teaching practices are in line with the proposed perceptions. On the other hand, with linguistics levels, her practice differed from her estimated preference.

**Table 6.** Comparison between Yu's stated beliefs and teaching practices

	Stated	Observed
The amount of oral CF	50%	79.7%
The type of oral CF used	recast > elicitation > explicit correction > metalinguistic feedback > clarification request > repetition Other ways: no	recast > explicit correction > elicitation > metalinguistic feedback > repetition = clarification request Other ways: peer correction physical hints re-asking
The timing of oral CF	Agree: student finishes speaking > task is completed Disagree: the end of the class > interrupt students' output	student finishes speaking > task is completed > the end of class
The linguistics levels that oral CF address	Phonological 100% Lexical 50% Grammatical 75% Pragmatic 40%	Phonological 90.9% Lexical 80% Grammatical 77.8% Pragmatic 33.3%



## 4. Discussion

The present study explores Chinese trainee teachers' stated beliefs and the actual usage of oral CF in a CSL classroom teaching context. Compared with the previous studies, the results of this investigation demonstrate both similarity and discrepancy.

### 4.1. Trainee teachers' stated beliefs on classroom oral CF

First of all, the participants acknowledged the importance of the usage of oral CF, and they stated that they had considered the practicality of offering it in the Chinese as a second language teaching context. Therefore, according to their own report, it could be argued that they have a relatively clear understanding of CF practices in their lessons. However, this finding is not in line with previous research, which suggests that novice teachers tend not to have such a clear conception of oral CF <sup>[16]</sup>. The reason for this might be that the targeted group in the present study is relatively small and not representative enough. Moreover, the participants were all recruited from the same teacher training program. Therefore, it is possible that they have been exposed to related content and knowledge about oral CF within that training process.

Furthermore, with respect to the amount of oral CF in class, the trainee teachers argued that they would only correct around half of the errors occurring during the class. This number echoes the feedback amount in similar studies <sup>[7]</sup>. The reasons they propose to support their choice are twofold: the positive influences of oral CF to validate the employment of it in class; for example, the provision of accurate language input to facilitate language learning <sup>[6,31]</sup> to meet students' expectations <sup>[32]</sup>. However, there are also potential constraints during the class: for instance, the time constraint, the pressure from the institution, the focus of classroom activity, and students' affective issues. These limitations are also mentioned and discussed in previous research <sup>[30,32,33]</sup>.

When considering the effectiveness of different types of CF, they argue that elicitation and repetition are the most effective types, which is in line with the previous study carried out by Sepehrinia and Mehdizadeh <sup>[32]</sup>. Finally, the participants also recognized the essential value of phonology in the second language learning context. The status of pronunciation is especially highly rated in the Chinese as a second language learning context <sup>[34]</sup>.

### 4.2. Trainee teachers' pedagogical practices in class

Regarding the classroom teaching practices of the trainee teachers, the actual amount of oral CF provided is around 78% of the errors that occur in class. This number is relatively higher than previous research, which is normally within the range of 30–70% <sup>[20]</sup>. An even lower rate of error correction was observed in the EFL classroom in a Chinese middle school, which was around 6 feedback per hour <sup>[35]</sup>, whereas in the present research was 37 moves per hour. The amount of oral CF is especially high in this context since novice teachers or trainee teachers are inclined to give less feedback than experienced teachers. It is shown that inexperienced teachers are more likely to stick to their original teaching plans instead of noticing the potential learning opportunities for their students and expanding the teaching content. This result could be attributed to the nature of class activities. During the teaching task, the learners were asked to answer questions using the given grammar, which tends to focus more on the language forms.

Among the feedback categories, recast is the most often adopted type of CF, and this finding is consistent with similar studies, such as Panova and Lyster <sup>[8]</sup>, Sheen <sup>[9]</sup>, Roothoof <sup>[13]</sup>, and Kamiya <sup>[12]</sup>. Recast is preferred by the teachers because this type of CF is less likely to challenge and embarrass the students, especially when the students are adults <sup>[2]</sup>. This concern is especially obvious within the inexperienced teacher groups.

Furthermore, recast could also help with saving more time during the class. However, the effectiveness of recast is rather questionable, since it is relatively implicit <sup>[7,8,36]</sup>. This problem could be especially obvious in Wan's class since she treated students' errors with compliments and recast feedback, which could be confusing for the learners.

Additionally, apart from the adopted classification, three other ways of giving feedback are also observed in class. However, these methods have also been identified in previous research <sup>[20,37,38]</sup>, which suggests that the present results are consistent with the existing outcomes. Meanwhile, the wide usage of recast and explicit correction in the present study also indicates that teachers are expected to be the main sources of knowledge. A similar assumption has been discussed in a similar study carried out in an Iranian context <sup>[32]</sup>. This tendency could also be noticed in the participants' perceptions. Hence, it could be argued that teacher-centered classroom teaching is more accepted and employed in the CSL context, which further emphasizes the importance of understanding the teachers' perceptions.

In terms of the linguistic aspects that oral CF addresses, on average, grammatical errors are the ones that are mostly addressed in the present study. This finding echoes the previous research to some extent since it identified that phonological and grammatical errors are the ones most frequently targeted <sup>[39]</sup>. Although these lessons aim to develop students' language ability in a daily communicative context, the pragmatic items in the observed classes, as well as in the stated conceptions, are the elements least focused on. The reason behind this might be the relatively low language proficiency of the learners since offering a large amount of pragmatic feedback might cause learners to be confused. Scholars have verified that the rates of noticing pragmatic errors and absorbing pragmatic feedback are significantly related to their language proficiency. The higher the language proficiency level, the easier for learners to understand and internalize the pragmatic feedback offered to them.

Meanwhile, individual differences could also be observed in the present research, which indicates that the teaching training program might not be the only influence on trainee teachers' practices and beliefs <sup>[40]</sup>. Borg <sup>[41]</sup> suggested previous language learning experiences could exert an influence on pre-service teachers' knowledge and perceptions of language teaching.

### **4.3. The relationship between trainee teachers' stated beliefs and teaching practices in CSL classroom**

When bringing trainee teachers' stated beliefs and teaching practices together, the present research shows that although there are several similarities, an inconsistency is still observed. The similarity between beliefs and practices was identified in terms of the proper timing. The trainee teachers in this investigation are inclined to give the feedback right after students have finished speaking but still within the communicative task (i.e. online oral CF).

The most overt mismatch occurs when discussing the frequency and methods of offering oral CF in class. This outcome echoes previous research which also indicated the differences between theoretical beliefs and pedagogical practices <sup>[2,19]</sup>. The possible reason behind this discrepancy could come from different perspectives. A large number of researchers have proposed possible reasons before, for example, the context constraint includes the time limit, classroom activities, instructional focus, the number of errors arising <sup>[32]</sup>, contextual pressure <sup>[33]</sup>, learners' language proficiency, age, personality <sup>[4]</sup>, classroom size, etc. Alternatively, it could also be attributed to the teachers' thoughts, for instance, in considering the learners' affective issues. Another reason could be that the participant group was trainee teachers. According to previous studies, trainee or novice

teachers tend to have more difficulty in putting their perceptions into practice<sup>[16]</sup>. Apart from this, the oral CF of the current study is a kind of incidental feedback, and this further adds to the difficulty of applying the beliefs to reality<sup>[20]</sup>.

The existence of the new type of CF (i.e. giving physical hints), and the strategy of offering corrective feedback with compliments, as well as the relatively large amount of explicit feedback in class, reflect trainee teachers' concerns about students' affective issues. This characteristic echoes the findings in previous studies, which also suggest that trainee teachers would pay more attention to learners' affective issues during the teaching process. Some of the teachers' choices were based on their assumptions about the students' expectations.

To sum up, it could be noticed that most of the findings could correspond to the previous studies, which indicates that the oral CF in the CSL context has considerable similarities with those in other contexts, for example, ESL and EFL contexts. According to the findings, the particularity of the present study lies in two aspects: the relatively clearer self-decription of the trainee teachers and the higher amount of oral CF practices in the classroom.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study revealed the dynamic relationship between trainee teachers' perceptions and their teaching practices. The discrepancy between trainee teachers' stated beliefs and teaching process is clearly observed in this study, and the possible reasons behind this mismatch could be from dual aspects. Although this study only provides a small group of classroom observations, it still serves as an indication of the present teaching reality in a CSL context, and some interesting points were found during the exploration.

Trainee teachers' beliefs are less likely to be fully reflected in their practices due to the complications and dynamics of the teaching classroom. Therefore, the discrepancy in the current study could be because the busy classroom is, as yet, beyond the trainee teachers' ability to fully understand and control. Considering this, Chinese trainee teachers tend to need more assistance when offering relatively complicated CF. For example, more support in the teacher training program could be beneficial to the development of their teaching ability<sup>[16,42]</sup>. Offering the trainee teachers a more comprehensive understanding of the complex classroom context as well as more opportunities to conduct practice-oriented training tasks would help them to gain a better understanding of the nature of CF, and this could be constantly referred to during the pedagogical activities<sup>[43,44]</sup>, which, presumably would further support the teachers to deliver proper oral CF in the future.

In conclusion, the native Chinese trainee teachers play a crucial role in delivering the oral CF in CSL classroom context, meanwhile, they tend to take into consideration their students' affective needs when offering the oral CF. Chinese trainee teachers are inclined to have a clear conception of the usage of oral CF in class when referring to their self-report. However, these perceptions are not necessarily in line with their actual teaching practices. The reason behind the mismatch might be the constraints in complex classroom contexts, the different features of learners, or the inadequacy of the teacher training program. The current study offers a glimpse of the relationship between trainee teachers' stated beliefs and teaching practices of oral CF in the CSL context. Given the dynamic relationship between one another, further studies would be valuable to shed light on the complex contextual issues in the field of oral CF in CSL or CFL classrooms.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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