

# Exploring Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception and Practice of Corrective Feedback in Light of Emotional Intelligence<sup>1</sup>

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Received: 2019-04-19 | Revised: 2019-05-25 | Accepted: 2019-08-27

## Abstract

Although there has been a plethora of research endeavors investigating emotional intelligence (EI) and corrective feedback (CF) in language learning, the role of the EI in the CF is yet to be settled. This mixed-methods study was hence an attempt to bridge this gap by exploring the role of EI in the perception and practice of CF by EFL teachers. For this purpose, 12 teachers participated in this study. EI was measured via Bar-On EQ-i; CF perception was elicited through a semi-structured interview; and CF practice in the classroom was examined through an observation

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<sup>1</sup> DOI: [10.22051/lghor.2019.25599.1111](https://doi.org/10.22051/lghor.2019.25599.1111)

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checklist. The results of the qualitative and quantitative data analyses indicated that both high- and low-EI teachers preferred teacher-correction compared to self-correction or peer-correction; however, the type of CF varied according to their EI. Whereas high-EI teachers favored elicitation, repetition, self-correction, recast, clarification request, and peer-correction, low-EI teachers appreciated explicit correction, recast, metalinguistic feedback, and denial CF types. Furthermore, high-EI teachers' perceptions corresponded to their practice in implementing all CF types, while only the metalinguistic feedback was in harmony between perception and practice in low-EI teachers. The findings are discussed in light of the importance of EI in implementing CF.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, corrective feedback, perception, practice, English as a foreign language

## Introduction

There has been a considerable amount of research endeavors pinpointing the substantial role that teachers play in influencing the learners' educational outcomes (Groth & Meletiou-Mavrotheris, 2018). Accordingly, it is presumed that teachers' role is not restricted to a sole delivery of the content matter; rather, it entails teaching learners the ways of learning and various learning methods, attempting to foster their confidence, motivation, and self-esteem and establish an encouraging and favorable learning environment (Williams & Burden, 2000). Exploring the affective traits of teachers is, consequently, deemed to be a rewarding realm of inquiry which can essentially throw light on the factors that bring about fruitful teaching. As Wubbels and Levy (1991) asserted, teachers' affective characteristics and learners' academic achievement are strongly correlated. Several studies (e.g., Boyatzis, 2006) have found a positive relationship among numerous affective characteristics, more specifically, emotional intelligence (EI), academic achievement, and affective commitment (Costa & Faria, 2015).

Accordingly, teachers' instructional effectiveness is highly dependent upon different individual characteristics (Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2014), one of which is EI. EI can potentially impact teachers' choice of teaching activities and the ways they respond to learners' behavior in the classroom. Although a large number of studies have illuminated the role of EI in learners' linguistic and social behavior (e.g., Bacon & Corr, 2017; Sánchez-Ruiz, Pérez-González, & Petrides, 2010), there is a lacuna of such research focusing on teachers' behavior, particularly in the L2 context. The scarcity of the research endeavors into the possible role of teachers' EI in their choice of corrective feedback (CF) calls for studies to investigate this issue. Thus, the present research attempted to bridge the gap by probing the role of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' EI in their choice of CF types.

## Review of the Literature

### Corrective Feedback

CF alludes to teacher and peer reactions to learners' erroneous language productions in the target language (Li, 2013). The considerably high degree of attention, devoted to oral CF, can be ascribed to its pedagogical and theoretical importance. Second language (L2) researchers have been attentive to whether, when, and how to address learners' errors, integrating CF in classroom teaching; scholars such as Krashen (1981) and Gass (1997) have distinct opinions about whether the negative evidence provided by oral CF, regarding the problematic areas in learners' language, is crucial for L2 enhancement, or whether receiving positive evidence regarding the accurate productions is adequate by itself. Empirical research attempts to date have exhibited that focus on form can foster language learning, although this efficacy might be bound by a number of contextual factors and individual learner differences (Khezrlou, Ellis & Sadeghi, 2017; Li, 2010; Lyster & Saito 2010; Zhang, 2017).

Second language teachers have at their disposal different strategies to correct a learner's errors (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Lyster and Ranta (1997) identified from their immersion class transcripts six types of CF, namely explicit correction (explicit provision of the correct form), recast (error-free reformulation of the erroneous utterance), clarification request (indication of misunderstanding or ill-formedness), metalinguistic feedback (comments on ill- or well-formedness), elicitation (eliciting the correct form) and repetition (isolated repetition of the error). Lyster (2004) re-categorized the last four interactional moves as prompts as they are all more likely to push learners to self-correct by withholding the correct form.

In the study of Panova and Lyster (2002), which examined the range and types of feedback used by teachers and their effects on learners' uptake, implicit feedback types, such as recast, were the most preferred models by the learners. According to their research, less proficient learners preferred recasts as a CF model because, in this model, they are less involved in negotiating forms. Therefore, recast was the most used feedback type despite being the least successful one. Rassaei (2013) observed that both explicit CF and recast are effective in L2 knowledge development, but explicit correction is more noticed and perceived. His findings suggested a pedagogical implication that "since noticing plays a crucial role in L2 development, recast would be more effective if it becomes more explicit and noticeable" (p. 482).

### Teachers' Perceptions

In comparison with the amount of research on the effectiveness of CF, relatively few studies have looked into the teachers' and students' perceptions of error correction. The available studies have reported that learners wish more exposure to correction compared to their teachers who seem to consider it unnecessary (e.g. García Mayo & Labandibar, 2017; Jean & Simard, 2011). This mis-

match between teachers' and students' orientations might bear significant repercussions on teaching practice, as learners whose predictions are not satisfied in the language course might be reluctant to take part in classroom activities (Tsao, Tseng, & Wang, 2017), or may even choose to give up studying (McCargar, 1993). Studies have experimentally looked into this significant issue. For example, the study carried out by Tomczyk (2013) claimed that both teachers and students have positive perspectives toward CF and think that errors have to be corrected. Teachers in her study believed that students need to be informed about their ill-formed utterances which helps them prevent forming erroneous sentences. It needs to be pointed out that, for providing the most effective feedback, when and how to give it should also be taken into account. Learners' attitudes and feelings toward receiving feedback on their output are crucial issues too (Rassaei, 2015).

The issue of students' and teachers' divergences regarding CF is additionally confounded by the finding that teachers' perspectives about this issue are not constantly in correspondence with their classroom practices (e.g. Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004). Attempts made to compare teachers' stances regarding CF with respect to their pedagogical choices have brought about contradictory findings. On the other hand, a study carried out by Muncie (2002), which comprised five adult ESL teachers in Australia, and an investigation by Vicente-Rasoamalala (2009), examining three immersion teachers in Senegal, revealed that the teachers' perceptions about CF shed light on their teaching activities well. In contrast, the study by Basturkmen et al. (2004), involving three ESL teachers in New Zealand who performed the same communicative task with their learners concluded that the provision of CF was essential if the learners' error made the language production incomprehensible. Nonetheless, the classroom data clarified that they actually tended to provide CF even when the meaning was comprehensible and obvious.

The findings of the study by Hernández Méndez and Cruz (2012) reflected the teachers' positive perception of oral CF in general. Since the teachers considered CF as optional because they thought of themselves as very concerned with the learners' feelings, they preferred unfocused oral CF and implicit strategies. The results also indicated that the CF provided by the teacher was considered more favorable compared to peer correction, with the self-correction CF being found less desirable. In another study, Coggins (2008) examined teachers' perceptions of error types and revealed that teachers' choice of CF depended greatly on the context and type of error. Furthermore, the teachers stated that the personality of the learners and teacher's awareness thereof could be substantial issues in providing feedback. Yoshida (2008) looked into the CF preferences of seven learners of Japanese in stimulated recall sessions and indicated that the majority of learners favored time for self-correction. Moreover, the two teachers in the study stated that although prompts are effective, they were more inclined towards the use of recasts, assuming that they would result in a supportive environment and would be appropriate in terms of time management. In addition, Schulz (2001) studied teachers' and students' perceptions of CF which indicated that whereas the learners preferred explicit

CF, teachers generally preferred implicit types. In a recent study by Fallah and Nazari (2019), it was found that although teachers perceived CF as a more affective, personalized matter, experienced teachers viewed it as a developmental learning support. Importantly, both groups of teachers illuminated a range of challenges in utilizing CF, particularly those pertaining to learner self-correction.

Finally, a study of ESL teachers' attitudes and CF activities in Canada, carried out by Junqueira and Kim (2013), confirmed the results of Basturkmen et al.'s (2004) study, illustrating that the teachers they observed and interviewed tended to present feedback to more than half of their learners' erroneous productions even though the authors believed that the teachers did not have strict dispositions about correcting learners' errors. Furthermore, none of the teachers seemed to be conscious of the fact that they were, in fact, exposing their learners to CF.

In the context of Iran, there have been some research attempts to explore the EFL teachers' cognition and pedagogical knowledge base with regard to providing CF. Conducting a longitudinal case-study on an English, Shafiee, Nejadghanbar, and Parsaiyan (2018) revealed four underlying cognition on oral CF. These consisted of theoretical and pedagogical knowledge, informed online decision-making, critical reflection, and expressing beliefs and philosophies. The analysis further revealed that the reflective inquiry led to partial modifications in the teacher's competence in terms of making online and informed decisions. Shafiee et al. (2018) attribute the teacher's involvement in theorizing, online strategic decision-making, enhanced critical reflectivity and dialogical attitudes, and elevated confidence to the "theoretical and pedagogical knowledge, which are assumed to be due to his integration of reflection and action" (p. 27). Similarly, Atai and Shafiee (2017) looked into the pedagogical knowledge base that explicated the Iranian EFL teachers' provision of oral CF in grammar teaching and possible fluctuations as a result of teachers' academic backgrounds. The results of the study, based on the stimulated recall technique on three EFL teachers in a private language institute, illuminated three main themes of professional knowledge, procedural knowledge, and personal knowledge. In addition, whereas the three teachers had a more or less similar pattern of thoughts, their academic background was an influential factor regarding their conscious awareness and knowledge. Lastly, Baleghizadeh and Rezaei (2010) designed a case study to examine a pre-service Iranian EFL teacher's cognition in the provision of CF. It was found that this novice teacher's previous learning experiences formed his cognition about error correction, which could be altered as a result of a teacher training program to enhance the knowledge of the teacher role in the classroom, knowledge of professional discourse, continuity in lessons, challenges of teaching, and the evaluation of his own teaching.

## Emotional Intelligence

Bar-On (1997) defines EI as “an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures” (p. 14). He describes EI as a number of non-cognitive skills, competencies, and abilities that have an impact on an individual to appropriately deal with contextual demands and pressures. He specifies five main scales and 15 subscales, which lead to the emotional energy and self-motivation essential for managing the everyday contextual pressures and difficulties (Bar-On, 1997).

The introduction and popularization of the Bar-On EQ inventory have led to a burgeoning number of studies globally. In Iran, Pishghadam (2009) investigated the effect of EI on the overall academic achievement and individual skills. The findings of this study suggested that the different subcategories of the EI were found to be influential upon the oral interaction ability of the participants. Aliakbari and Abol-Nejadian (2015) reported a significant relationship between 60 English for Academic Purposes learners’ EI and learning style preferences. Of the top most used styles, sensing, feeling, judging, and extroverted came to surface. Lastly, Banaruee, Khoshsima and Khatin-Zadeh (2017) pinpointed the finding that learners with a higher EI could benefit more from community language teaching used to teach speaking. The authors attributed this finding to the alignment between the principles of holistic and humanistic learning and the role of emotional factors in learning.

As the research literature indicates, extensive research has been carried out on EI (e.g., Bacon & Corr, 2017; Sánchez-Ruiz et al., 2010) and CF (e.g., Lyster & Saito, 2010; Rassaei, 2013; Zhang, 2017), but only a few limited studies, to the researchers’ knowledge, have been conducted on the relationship between these two. For instance, Zandvakili, Vaezi, Mohammadkhani, and Fard Kashani (2013) reported that those EFL learners with high EI take more advantage from both recast and elicitation types of feedback, whereas the learners with low EI levels learned the grammatical structures when they were exposed to recasts in comparison to the elicitation type of feedback. Thus, this study approved the appropriateness of recasts in building up new grammatical knowledge for learners with low EI levels. The study by Hashemian, Mirzaei, and Mostaghasi (2016) investigated the feedback preferences of learners with interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence types. Results revealed that the participants with high interpersonal intelligence were more inclined towards repetition, paralinguistic signs, clarification requests, and translation; on the other hand, conversational and didactic recasts as well as elicitation, explicit, and metalinguistic CF were more useful for intrapersonal participants. With respect to the fact that EI and CF are of potential significance in second language learning classrooms and since they contribute to teaching effectiveness (Rassaei, 2013), it seems that some research attempts need to be made to explore the ways in which teachers’ EI can impact their choice and use of CF in the classroom. In summary, the present study pursues the purpose of investigating the importance of EFL teachers’ EI and their CF behavior. It is expected that teachers’ self-awareness

of their feelings and management of their emotions could in fact determine what they realize as the best and most effective approaches to the correction of their learners' erroneous linguistic productions. Furthermore, whether teachers' perceptions of the effective correction techniques do in fact correspond with their actual practice in the classroom needs more attention which was examined in this study.

In particular, the present study aimed at providing answers to the following research questions:

1. What are high- and low-EI teachers' perceptions of CF?
2. What CF types do teachers with high- and low-EI use/practice in the classroom?
3. How do high- and low-EI teachers adhere to their perceptions in their practices?

## Method

### Design of the Study

The debate concerning the implementation of a mixed-methods approach, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data in research, has become prevalent in recent years. Cresswell (2009) views mixed-methods research as one that benefits from the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative data, with the positive points of one method compensating for the inadequacies of the other. This study benefited from a mixed-methods design to meet the multi-level analysis of teachers' perception and practice. Also, considering the four functions of mixed-methods research proposed by Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (as cited in Dornyei, 2007), this study benefitted from the development and initiation functions. The former function was met through the qualitative method of CF interview with teachers informing the quantitative method of observation sequentially. Accordingly, the researchers used different methods of interview and observation to inquire about a conflict between the teachers' perceptions and practice. Based on Dornyei's (2007) classification of the mixed-methods types, this study used *QUAL*→*QUAN* (→ for sequence, capital letters for increased weight) to inform the quantitative method of observation for teachers' practice through the qualitative method of interview. Therefore, this study, having specified high- and low-EI teachers through the EI test, managed to determine the teachers' perceptions qualitatively through interview and their practice quantitatively through observation. Then, the data were analyzed interpretively to find the adherence of the teachers' practice to their perceptions.

### Participants

The present study was a classroom research conducted in Iran Language Institute (ILI). The participants included 12 EFL teachers from a total number of 20 classes. Teachers aged between 26 and 40 years old ( $M = 33.00$ ) with different first languages, including Turkish, Kurdish, and Persian. As part of the sampling

procedure, teachers were divided into high- ( $N = 6$ ) and low- ( $N = 6$ ) EI groups based on the Bar-On EI test. In the results section, IDs were used for the distinction of the teachers from each EI category. Accordingly, an ID H represents a teacher from the high-EI group and an ID-L stands for a teacher from the low-EI group. All the teachers were informed of the purpose of this study, and they orally consented to take part in this research. The sampling procedure in this study was convenience sampling based on the first author's access to the classrooms.

## Instruments

**EQ-i test.** In order to measure the participants' EI, the Bar-On EQ-i test developed by Bar-On (1997) was administered. The Bar-On EQ-i test, named as the emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i), is a self-report instrument evaluating the emotionally and socially intelligent behavior leading to an estimate of emotional-social intelligence (Bar-On, 1997). The test consisted of 90 brief statements which attempted to capture five wide areas of skills (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood) and 15 subcomponents. It used a five-point Likert response format ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. In this study, the reliability of the EQ was found to be .91 via Cronbach's alpha index. It needs to be noted that the Persian version of the instrument was employed in the present study.

**Interview.** In order to elicit the teachers' CF preferences, indicating their perception, a semi-structured interview based on the teachers' Preference Elicitation Questionnaire (T's P.E.Q.) was adapted from Al-Faki and Siddiek (2013). The oral consent from all the participants was gained, and they were ensured that their responses would remain anonymous. The interviews with the teachers were all video-recorded, which were then subjected to interpretive content analysis. The interview transcripts included 12670 words on the whole for all of the interviewed teachers.

**Observation checklist.** In order to specify what oral CF types high- and low-EI teachers used in the classroom, and to find the relationship with their perceptions, an observation checklist adopted from Al-Faki and Siddiek (2013) was used. In this checklist, in addition to categories of *feedback type*, *definition*, and *teacher response*, there was the category of *the number of times used by the teacher* and the category of *the frequency of modified output* by learners.

**Textbook.** The official textbook of the ILI institute, namely English Time Series: Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2, and Intermediate 3 (2004), served as the coursebook. The book is organized mainly around dialog, listening, reading, and structure, with the latter two components forming the focus of the present research. Summary-telling of the target texts was observed in order to note the CF types that the teachers used when correcting the learners' errors. Summary-telling was chosen as the elicitation method in this study due to a number of issues. This task required interpretation on the part of learners, and as a one-way task, it may provide more opportunities regarding CF and the learners'



modified output (Iwashita, 1999, Shehadeh, as cited in Shehadeh, 2005). Besides, learner participants were familiar with summary-telling as a regularly used activity in their regular classes, the case being backed by Robinson's (as cited in Shehadeh, 2005) criterion of task condition to be participants' familiarity and tasks' requiring a one-way or two-way information flow.

## Procedure

To meet the purpose of this study, the sample was selected through the convenience sampling method. Initially, the teachers were categorized based on their EI levels using the Bar-on EQ-i questionnaire. Those participants who scored above the mean score of 328 were categorized as high-EI individuals and those below it as low-EI individuals. The completion of the questionnaire took approximately 40 minutes. This was then followed by the specification of the teachers' CF perceptions determined by the interview analysis. The teachers were initially provided with the explanations and examples of CF types based on Ts' P.E.Q., and were subsequently asked about their preferences and reasons. The interview lasted for 45 minutes to 1 hour for each individual. The study lasted for 10 sessions of one hour and 45 minutes in Iran Language Institute (Urmia Branch) during which learners were asked to tell summaries of the nominated texts and were then provided with the CF types, which were solely based upon the teacher's decision. Since all the reading passages in the students' books are around the grammatical point of that lesson, these passages were read by the learners who were then asked to reconstruct the passage and tell the summary. It needs to be noted that summary-telling as the regular familiar class activity in this institute was used to focus on the learners' grammar use, the process in which the teachers provided oral CF types in reaction to the learners' errors. The teachers' feedback was not preplanned; rather, they corrected the errors spontaneously and their correction practice was captured through the use of the observation checklist by the researcher. The types of CF that teachers used in their classes included: 'recast' (indirect reformulation of the erroneous sentence), 'explicit correction' (directly pointing to the error), 'repetition' (repeating the error with a rise in intonation to attract attention), 'elicitation' (asking questions), 'metalinguistic' (supplying information about the error), 'clarification' (signaling the inaccuracy), 'denial' (asking the learner to repeat the sentence without the error), 'peer correction' (correction by the classmates), 'self-correction' (correction by the learner), and 'ignorance' (doing nothing).

## Data Analysis

The data obtained from the Bar-On EI test were analyzed quantitatively through the use of descriptive statistics as well as a Chi-square test as the inferential statistics to determine the participants' EI. With respect to the interview and observation instruments, the data were coded and analyzed using the con-

stant comparative method (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This method combines inductive category coding with a concurrent evaluation of all units of meaning (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). On the condition that a new unit of meaning is obtained for interpretation, it is judged against the other units of meaning and is subsequently classified and coded with similar units of meaning. And, in the case of no similar units of meaning, a new category is established. In the categorizing and coding process, the researchers attempt to identify an array of categories that offer a reasonable and sensible reconstruction of the data which were collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

## Results

### Research Question 1

For the first research question concerning the teachers' perceptions for the CF types, a number of semi-structured interviews were carried out. The results of the interpretive analysis of the interviews revealed interesting findings. Although the interviewed teachers provided different responses to the interview questions based on their teaching experiences, they were totally in agreement with the provision of feedback. In other words, both ID H and ID L teachers provided similar accounts of CF types with respect to their reasons for their appropriateness. For instance, most of the teachers appreciated the undeniable role of CF in their classes; however, they had different perspectives towards it. Although the majority of teachers preferred the use of more indirect methods of correction, a few of them opted for explicit correction strategies

In the eye of the teachers, the choice of CF type varied due to a major factor: the nature of the error. One teacher acknowledged that:

*"Depending on the learners' errors, minor or major [respectively], on-the-spot or delayed correction is preferred. While a clue will do for minor errors, major errors demand more explanation which takes time, and only delayed-correction meets this purpose". (ID H2)*

In addition to the nature of errors, teachers agreed about the importance of the activity that students are engaged in, as stated by one of the participants:

*"Because this type [explicit correction] interrupts students' summary-telling, I do not prefer it as much as I prefer it for workbook exercises". (ID H4)*

Another teacher (ID L1) added that:

*"Summary-telling is related to developing fluency, and I do not interrupt the learners to correct each error except the ones hindering the comprehensibility of the message". (ID L1)*

A teacher (ID H3) supported the effectiveness of recasts for the continuation of the communicative activity by asserting that:

*"It depends on the focus of the task. For example, if your focus is on form, the explicit type of feedback will be useful. But in the case of communicative activi-*

*ties or tasks, such as storytelling, simple reformulation (recast) will be more successful". (ID H3)*

In fact, as one of the participants mentioned, the choice of CF types is highly dependent on a number of individual learner factors such as the level of proficiency:

*"I use explicit correction for obvious errors to draw not only that learner's attention but also that of the whole class, and I use this type when I know that the other indirect ones do not work on that specific linguistically low-level student. For more proficient students, I use the indirect ones". (ID L2)*

Regarding the structure, a teacher (ID L6) stated that

*"I do not prefer that much emphasis on corrective feedback, and I think it is sometimes unnecessary because students use simple structures rather than complex structures that they are supposed to produce based on the reading (avoidance strategy)". (ID L6)*

There was also another noteworthy theme extracted from the interview analysis: the source of correction. Both ID L and ID H teachers were asked about their attitudes towards self-correction and peer-correction. The results pinpointed the majority of both ID H and ID L teachers' reluctance to rely on the students or their peers in the provision of correction, and they admitted the role of their workplace stipulations. One teacher (ID H5) said:

*"I think peer-correction is a good strategy and some studious students correct the others, but this is not the one approved in the ILI methodology. Therefore, I prefer to follow the methodology through writing the erroneous utterance on the board and eliciting the correct form from the learners". (ID H5)*

Another teacher (ID L5) considered self- and peer-correction as difficult practices due to the requirement to ensure a learner-centered environment for its provision:

*"Peer-correction is appropriate for students who are comfortable with one another affectively, and it is not favored by me in the first few sessions and not with good and dominant students. Having some background about the learners plays an important role. Peer correction causes anxiety and so a friendly atmosphere is necessary for peer-correction". (ID L5)*

The results of the interpretive analysis pinpoint the similarities and differences between ID H and ID L teachers. Both types of teachers appreciated the constructive role of teacher correction in place of other sources of correction such as peer correction or self-correction. They also acknowledged the beneficial nature of CF in the classroom to make learners notice the gap between their current knowledge and the target knowledge. However, there were some divergences as well. For example, ID H teachers were found to be more inclined towards indirect correction while ID L teachers supported the use of direct CF.

In summary, all the teachers in the present study had a positive view of the provision of error correction. However, its type varied according to their teaching approach, their workplace guidelines, and their learners. It is inferred that teachers valued each CF type considering the context most appropriate for it.

While all teachers believed that explicit feedback is more effective for 'global' errors and for those learners with high levels of proficiency. There were notable distinctions between ID H and ID L teachers such that the latter preferred more indirect methods for low-level learners involved in a communicative activity compared to the former group.

## Research Question 2

In order to investigate the second research question concerning the ID L and ID H teachers' practice (i.e., the use of CF types in the classroom), after descriptive statistics, a chi-square test was conducted. The results of descriptive statistics (see Appendix) revealed that the ID H teachers mostly used elicitation (18.5%), repetition of error (16.9%), self-correction (15.4%), recast (14.6%), clarification request (11.5%), and peer-correction (9.2%) compared to other less frequently used CF types. For ID L teachers, explicit correction (22.9%), recast (20.2%), metalinguistic feedback (17.4%), and denial (15.6%) CF types gained the highest frequency compared to the other types. The results of the chi-square test are depicted in Table 2.

**Table 2.**  
*Chi-square Test Results for High- and Low-EI Teachers' Use of CF Types*

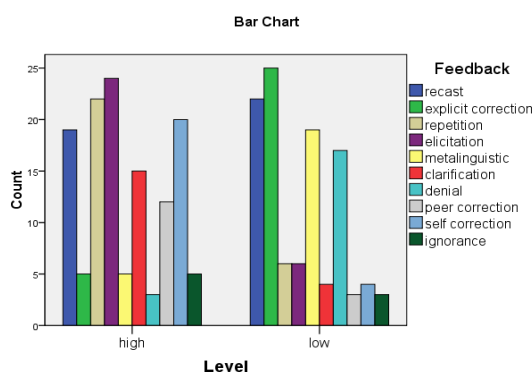
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	73.117 <sup>a</sup>	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	78.451	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.170	1	.007
N of Valid Cases	239		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.65.

According to Table 2, the results illustrated a statistically significant association between teachers' level of EI and their CF use,  $\chi(9) = 73.11$ ,  $p = .000$ ; that is, the CF types as explained in descriptive statistics show variation according to teachers' level of EI. Moreover, the results of the strength of association are reported in Table 3. A moderate and significant strength of association was found between EI and teachers' use of CF types ( $\phi = .55$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Figure 1 clearly shows the frequency of CF types used differently by high- and low-EI teachers.

**Table 3.**  
*Strength of Association for High- and Low-EI Teachers' Use of CF Types*

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.553	.000
	Cramer's V	.553	.000
N of Valid Cases		239	



**Figure 1.** High- and Low-EI Teachers' Use of CF Types.

### Research Question 3

The third research question aimed at investigating the extent to which ID H and ID L teachers' perceptions corresponded to their practice. In order to provide an answer to this question, teachers' interview results were analyzed interpretively. In other words, the results obtained from the first two research questions on teachers' perception of CF types and their practice of CF types were compared.

The results of interpretive analyses revealed that ID H teachers' perceptions corresponded to their practice more particularly in the use of elicitation, repetition of error, and self-correction. For ID L teachers, it was found that their perceptions corresponded to their practice to a lesser degree, just in the use of metalinguistic feedback type. These findings help justify the findings of the previous research questions. The results of the interview analyses for the low-EI teachers' perceptions of CF types showed that almost half of the teachers (40%) did not welcome the use of self-correction and peer-correction in their classes mainly because of the workplace guidelines. The results of the interpretive analysis, therefore, confirm that high-EI teachers placed more value upon self-correction and other gentler types of error correction such as elicitation and repetition.

For example, a high-EI teacher (ID H4) stated that:

*"I use repetition of errors more than the others. In my opinion, no specific corrective feedback type leads to correction because most of the time the learners do not notice what the problem is. But, at least with this one, I can indirectly draw the learners' attention to the problematic part."*

Another high-EI (ID H5) teacher stated that:

*"As the methodology requires us, I put the sentence on the board and ask the students to find the error, and if they are not able to find or correct the error, I do not provide the right answer at first and I refer to the specific part of the sentence. I think this strategy works best."*

Another teacher with a rather low EI (ID L3) pointed out that:

*"The more explicit your corrective feedback is, the better students can learn. There are two advantages in giving corrective feedback: First, they will know that the language they produce is incorrect, and second, the effort that they put into finding the correct form is worthwhile".*

## Discussion

The present study was an endeavor to look into the provision of different CF types in light of teachers' EI. The results for the first research question, about high- and low-EI teachers' perceptions, showed that both groups exercised the same general orientations towards CF such that they both preferred teacher-correction over self- or peer-correction; however, they had divergent views regarding the types of CF. Although they both referred to the superiority of explicit feedback for 'global' errors and for advanced-level learners, they embraced more indirect methods such as recasts as appropriate for low-level learners engaged in a communicative activity due to their higher efficacy. This finding is generally in line with the results of the studies which report that recasts are facilitative of second language acquisition in both laboratory settings (Han, 2002; Mackey & Oliver, 2002; Mackey & Philp, 1998) and in classroom settings where they appear to be more effective than other types of feedback (Ellis, 2007; Ellis, Loewen & Erlam, 2006). The finding also supports the previous research findings referring to the positive effect of teacher feedback compared to CF from other sources. According to Lee (2008), teacher correction is quicker, more compelling, and precise. Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) recommended that the impacts of teacher correction rely on a few issues, for example learners' capability, their instructional needs and desires, curricular and institutional requirements, task structure, focus of teacher correction, and learner training. The literature on learners' preferences for correction by and large demonstrates that ESL learners welcome teacher correction compared to self-correction or peer-correction (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Lastly, the educational context of Iran needs to be considered which is expected to have influenced the teachers' attitudes towards the sources of correction. The teaching method in most contexts, be it private or public, is still strongly dependent on teacher-fronted practices. Furthermore, previous studies have also noted that teachers' own learning experience can highly determine their cognitions and practices (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015). Particularly, teachers are directed to choose the most familiar teaching methods especially when they do not have enough knowledge to use other techniques in their classroom.

This finding, however, is in contrast with the findings of other research studies. Li and Lin (2007), for example, explored the impact of teachers' indirect correction and revision on the learning of conditionals in a Chinese EFL university classroom and found that being exposed to teacher correction without revision did not enhance the accuracy in such a context. Teacher correction may hamper learner independence and they may feel humiliated when corrected by the teacher. Consequently, some scholars propose different sorts of CF

including self-correction and peer-correction. Therefore, there are obvious theoretical and practical reasons for motivating self-correction, yet this would not be generally conceivable, as Hedge (2000) recognizes. The solution to this problem can be the maintenance of a balance between teacher correction and self-correction. Doughty and Varela (1998), for example, proposed a strategy for this problem by encouraging an initial self-correction on the part of the learner and then, if this fails, reformulating the erroneous output.

The second research question set to make a clear distinction between high- and low-EI teachers' actual use of CF types (i.e., practice) in the classroom. The findings revealed that whereas high-EI teachers were more inclined towards elicitation, repetition, self-correction, recast, clarification request, and peer-correction, low-EI teachers welcomed explicit correction, recast, metalinguistic feedback, and denial CF types. Although there has been no research to examine this aspect of CF so far, it seems that, logically, teachers who have a high EI and are therefore more autonomous wish their learners to be independent too by avoiding the spoon-feeding effect caused by the explicit correction methods (Komuhangi, 2015). Furthermore, psychologically, high EI necessitates thinking and problem-solving and thus these teachers preferred not to interrupt the students' learning and only wanted to manage and facilitate their progress. This was made possible through indirect feedback.

The third research question investigated the extent that the high- and low-EI teachers' perception corresponded to their practice. The results illuminated that high-EI teachers' perceptions corresponded to their practice in terms of elicitation, repetition, and self-correction, whereas low-EI teachers' perception corresponded to their practice only in terms of metalinguistic feedback type. This, in fact, corroborates the findings of previous research question mirroring the tendency of high-EI teachers in promoting their learners to become independent learners by not providing them the accurate forms of the language directly (Komuhangi, 2015). Rather, they tend to engage learners in discovery learning by raising their attention to form indirectly. However, since this line of inquiry is still in its infancy, further research is definitely required to reach firm conclusions.

## Conclusion

The results of the present study on the whole pinpointed the relatedness of CF to teachers' levels of EI. It is significant for teacher trainers, teachers, and curriculum developers to attend to EI in the classroom by showing sensitivity to individuals' needs. To elaborate, understanding teachers' emotional states may enable methodologies to provide a motivating context for teachers to avoid stress and cope with the difficulties in the classroom more effectively. This can be achieved in different ways including the encouragement of teacher- and learner-friendly classrooms by emphasizing the practice of humanistic approaches to teaching, preventing a score-based classroom context, and implementing meaningful and authentic tasks which balance attention to both mean-

ing and form. Furthermore, as the interview results showed that teachers base their CF on learners' individual characteristics such as the level of proficiency, it suggested that teachers take care of the needs, level of proficiency, age, and learning styles of their learners when providing correction, although indirect correction seems more appreciated.

Although previous research does not provide a conclusive finding in this respect, it is definite in one sense, i.e. the effect of CF is mediated by various other variables such as the research context, research setting, task type, treatment length, and individual learner differences (Khezrlou, 2019; Sheen, 2011). The results of the present study are limited in terms of generalizability due to the elicitation method (i.e., summary telling) and the restricted number of participants. Therefore, further research is needed in varying instructional contexts with other elicitation instruments such as narratives, discussions, and role-plays with a larger number of learners to help complete the missing parts of the feedback puzzle.

Further research, for example, can be conducted to compensate for the limitations of the present study. This study was limited in terms of its duration; however, it is obvious that to move the instructed second language acquisition field forward, there needs to be more longitudinal research. This is particularly significant if the purpose is to evaluate the role of implicit focus on form on learners' L2 development, which requires long-term observation. In addition, studies with larger samples are warranted to examine the teachers' attitudes towards CF types and their practice in the classroom.

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## Appendix

### Descriptive Statistics for High- and Low-EI Teachers' Practice (Use of CF Types in the Classroom)

	Total			low			high			Feedback
	% of Total	% with-Feedback in Level	Count	% of Total	% with-Feedback in Level	Count	% of Total	% with-Feedback in Level	Count	
	17.2%	100.0%	41	9.2%	53.7%	22	7.9%	46.3%	19	recast
	12.6%	100.0%	30	10.5%	83.3%	25	2.1%	16.7%	5	explicit correction
	11.7%	100.0%	28	2.5%	21.4%	6	9.2%	78.6%	22	repetition
	12.6%	100.0%	30	2.5%	20.0%	6	10.0%	80.0%	24	elicitation
	10.0%	100.0%	24	7.9%	79.2%	19	2.1%	20.8%	5	metalinguistic
	7.9%	100.0%	19	1.7%	21.1%	4	6.3%	78.9%	15	clarification
	8.4%	100.0%	20	7.1%	85.0%	17	1.3%	15.0%	3	denial
	6.3%	100.0%	15	1.3%	20.0%	3	5.0%	80.0%	12	peer correction
	10.0%	100.0%	24	1.7%	16.7%	4	8.4%	83.3%	20	self-correction
	3.3%	100.0%	8	1.3%	37.5%	3	2.1%	62.5%	5	ignorance
	100.0%	100.0%	239	45.6%	45.6%	109	54.4%	54.4%	130	Total