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Lecturers' Strategies in Responding to Students' Spoken Errors in Higher Education EFL Classrooms

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Abstrak: *Correcting spoken errors plays an important role in helping university students develop their English-speaking skills, especially for first-year non-English major students. This qualitative study explored the strategies used by an EFL lecturer in responding to students' spoken errors during English classes at STIA Amuntai. Data were collected through five classroom observations, video recordings, field notes, and semi-structured interviews with both the observed lecturer and first-year Public Administration students. The collected spoken errors and response strategies were analysed using the language teaching framework by Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016). The findings showed that students made three main types of spoken errors: phonological, grammatical, and lexical errors. In response, the observed lecturer used a variety of corrective strategies from different teaching methods such as self-correction prompts (Direct Method), clarification requests (Communicative Language Teaching), explicit corrections (Grammar-Translation Method), non-verbal gestures (The Silent Way), and recasts (Community Language Learning). The choice of strategy was heavily influenced by the error type and the students' feelings, particularly language anxiety. This study shows that combining flexible error correction strategies helps maintain accuracy while building students' speaking confidence.*

Keywords*: Lecturer Strategies, Oral Error Correction, Spoken Errors, EFL Classrooms, Larsen-Freeman And Anderson Framework, Higher Education.*

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking English is often difficult for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesian universities. First-year students are expected to participate actively and speak during class activities. However, making mistakes is a natural part of learning a new language. How a lecturer responds to these mistakes can affect students' language learning process and their confidence to speak in front of others.

In higher education, especially at non-English major institutions like STIA Amuntai, many first-year Public Administration students feel nervous when speaking English. If a lecturer corrects their errors too critically, students can feel embarrassed and stop speaking altogether. On the other hand, if a lecturer ignores errors completely, students may keep repeating the same

mistakes. Therefore, lecturers need to choose supportive and effective ways to correct spoken errors during class interactions.

In language teaching theory, teachers respond to student errors in different ways depending on the methodology. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016) explain various techniques across major language teaching methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Silent Way, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Each method offers a unique perspective on when and how errors should be corrected.

While many studies have looked at teacher feedback in schools, it is still valuable to observe how EFL lecturers in higher education apply these teaching methods in real classroom situations. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the strategies used by an EFL lecturer in responding to first-year students' spoken errors at STIA Amuntai using the framework of Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016). Specifically, this study identifies the types of spoken errors made by students, analyses the lecturer's error response strategies, and examines how these strategies create a positive learning environment.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design. It aimed to describe and interpret classroom events in a real educational setting (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher observed another English lecturer teaching first-year students to understand how oral error correction strategies were applied in practice.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Administrasi (STIA) Amuntai, located at Jl. Bihman Vila No. 123, Sungai Karias Village, Central Amuntai District, North Hulu Sungai Regency.

The participants of this study were:

- The Observed Lecturer: An experienced EFL lecturer who taught the introductory English course.
- First-Year Students: One class of first-year Public Administration students taking the introductory English course in the 2026/2027 academic year.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using three main methods (data triangulation):

a. Classroom Observation and Video Recording, the researcher observed five classroom sessions, took field notes, and recorded audio-video of teacher-student interactions. An observation checklist based on Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016) was used to categorize error types and lecturer responses.
b. Interviews, semi-structured interviews were conducted after class with both the observed lecturer (to understand the reasons behind chosen strategies) and selected students (to gather their feedback and comfort levels).
c. Document Analysis, class transcripts, course syllabi (RPS), and teaching materials were reviewed to support the observation data.

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Data Analysis

Data were analysed using the Interactive Model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014):

- Data Reduction: Video recordings and interviews were transcribed verbatim. Spoken errors and teacher responses were coded based on error categories and Larsen-Freeman and Anderson's (2016) methods.
- Data Display: Data were organized into structured summary tables and clear narrative descriptions.
- Conclusion Drawing: Final conclusions were drawn by comparing observation notes, transcripts, and interview responses.

Trustworthiness of Data

To ensure data validity, the researcher used data triangulation (combining observations, interviews, and documents), verbatim transcripts of recorded classes, and member checking with the interviewee participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

a. Types of Students Spoken Errors

First-year students made three main types of oral errors during speaking tasks:

1. Phonological Errors: Mispronouncing English words or placing stress on the wrong syllable due to mother tongue influence.
2. Grammatical Errors: Inaccuracies in verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, or word order.
3. Lexical Errors: Using incorrect words or vocabulary in a sentence.

b. Summary of Classroom Observations

Table 1 shows five key observation examples representing the interaction between student errors and the lecturer's response strategies. Table 1. *Summary of 5 Classroom Observations on Student Spoken Errors and Lecturer Strategies*

No	Observation Activity	Error Category	Student Spoken Utterance	Lecturer Oral Response	Method (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2016)	Specific Strategy / Technique
1	Observation 1 (Reading task)	Phonological	"The officer die together in the hall" *(altogether)*	"Pardon me? Could you read that word again slowly?"	The Direct method	Prompting self-correction
2	Observation 2 (Group Discussion)	Grammatical	"The administrator go to the office yesterday"	"Go or went? Happened yesterday."	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	Clarification request / Metalinguistic prompt
3	Observation 3 (Presentation	Lexical	"We must make our assignment tonight"	"We do not say 'make' an assignment, but 'do' or 'complete' an assignment."	Grammar Translation Method (GTM)	Explicit correction
4	Observation 4 (Vocabulary Drill)	Phonological	"I want to present my /pablik.../" *(public)*	*(Lecturer stays silent and points finger upward*	The Silent Way	Non-verbal gesture / Silent signal

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				for stress)		
5	Observation 5 (Q&A Session)	Grammatical	"He don't understand the new policy"	"He doesn't understand the policy? Good. Please continue."	Community Language Learning (CLL)	Recast (Gentle rephrasing)

c.Detailed Description of Observations

1. Observation 1: During a reading activity, a student mispronounced "altogether" as "die together" (phonological error). Instead of giving the answer, the lecturer asked, *"Pardon me? Could you read that word again slowly?"* This technique comes from The Direct Method, encouraging the student to notice the mistake and self-correct.
2. Observation 2: In a group discussion, a student used the present tense ("go") for a past action ("yesterday"). The lecturer responded: *"Go or went? Happened yesterday."* This reflects a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) clarification request, guiding the student toward the right tense while keeping the discussion active.
3. Observation 3: During a presentation, a student made a vocabulary error by saying *"make our assignment"*. The lecturer used explicit correction from the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) by directly explaining that "make" was incorrect and providing the proper collocations ("do" or "complete").
4. Observation 4: When a student put the stress on the wrong syllable in the word "public", the lecturer remained silent and used a finger gesture pointing upward. This technique matches The Silent Way, where non-verbal cues encourage student self-monitoring.
5. Observation 5: In a Q&A session, a student said *"He don't understand"*. The lecturer gently rephrased the sentence (*"He doesn't understand the policy? Good."*) without stopping the student's explanation. This is known as a recast in Community Language Learning (CLL), which corrects errors in a supportive way.

Discussion

The findings show that the observed lecturer did not use only one teaching method. Instead, the lecturer combined different response strategies based on the error type and classroom context. For pronunciation errors, the lecturer used self-correction prompts (Direct Method) or non-verbal gestures (The Silent Way). For grammar and vocabulary errors, the lecturer applied clarification requests (CLT), explicit corrections (GTM), or gentle recasts (CLL). This flexible combination helped maintain language accuracy without breaking the flow of communication.

The interview results show that students' strategy choices depend heavily on their psychology. First-year Public Administration students at STIA Amuntai often experience anxiety when speaking a foreign language. Frequent interruptions can make them feel self-conscious and reluctant to speak, so using gentle recasts or asking *"Pardon?"*, the lecturer created a comfortable environment where errors were treated as a normal part of learning. In interviews, students confirmed that they felt motivated and safe when given a chance to fix their own mistakes gently.

These findings support existing theories in foreign language learning. They align with Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016), who emphasize balancing structural correctness with student confidence. Furthermore, the success of indirect strategies like recasts and clarification requests in helping students notice their errors without stopping the conversation agrees with

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findings by Lyster et al. (2013) and Ellis (2009). Overall, in higher education settings for non-English major students, using thoughtful and flexible error correction strategies helps learners improve their spoken English while building their communication confidence.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the types of students spoken errors and the corrective strategies used by an EFL lecturer in introductory English classes at STIA Amuntai, using the framework of Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2016). The findings reveal that first-year Public Administration students made three primary types of spoken errors: phonological, grammatical, and lexical errors. In response, the observed lecturer did not rely on a single, rigid teaching methodology. Instead, the lecturer applied a flexible range of response strategies tailored to specific error types and instructional contexts. These included self-correction prompts from the Direct Method, clarification requests from Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), explicit corrections from the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM), non-verbal gestures from The Silent Way, and gentle recasts from Community Language Learning (CLL).

Importantly, the lecturer's choice of strategy was heavily influenced by students' affective factors, particularly foreign language anxiety. Indirect and supportive response strategies such as recasts and non-verbal cues helped maintain interactional flow and protected students' self-esteem, while explicit corrections were reserved for clear vocabulary and structural misunderstandings. Ultimately, a flexible, context-sensitive approach to oral error correction creates a positive learning environment where non-English major university students can improve their language accuracy without losing their speaking confidence.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the conclusions of this study, several practical suggestions are offered for educators and future researchers:

1. For EFL Lecturers in Higher Education
    a. Adopt Flexible Feedback Strategies, lecturers teaching non-English major students should avoid using a one-size-fits-all correction approach. They are encouraged to combine implicit techniques (e.g., recasts and non-verbal gestures) during fluency tasks to reduce student anxiety, and explicit feedback during accuracy-focused activities.
    b. Promote Student Self-Correction, instructors should give students time and subtle prompts (such as clarification requests) to notice and fix their own errors before stepping in with the correct answer, as this strengthens student autonomy.
    c. Consider Student Affective Factors, Lecturers need to remain sensitive to students' emotional states, especially first-year university learners who may feel vulnerable when speaking a foreign language in front of peers.
2. For Future Researchers
    a. Expand Scope and Context, future studies could investigate error correction strategies across different academic majors, proficiency levels, or longer observation periods to see how feedback choices evolve over an entire semester.

b. Incorporate Student Performance Metrics, subsequent research could measure the direct impact of specific corrective strategies on students' long-term speaking accuracy and fluency retention using pre- and post-tests.

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