



## ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

### Male EFL Teachers' Perspectives on Error Correction in Language Education

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Error analysis research has highlighted language learners' varied preferences regarding oral error correction in classroom settings. However, limited attention has been given to investigating gender differences in EFL teachers' attitudes towards error correction. This study explores male EFL teachers' perspectives on error correction in both male and female classes, encompassing aspects such as necessity, frequency, timing, type, method, and delivery agent. Participants included 60 male teachers with varying levels of experience in teaching English in Iran. Utilizing a questionnaire developed by Fukuda (2006), a paired sample t-test is used to compare attitudes between male teachers in segregated male and female classes. While no significant differences were found in the perceived necessity and frequency of error correction, variations emerged in timing, type, method, and delivery agent preferences. The findings offer valuable insights for teacher educators, policymakers, and English language instructors, aiding in the enhancement of error correction strategies in EFL classrooms.

**Keywords:** EFL, Error, Error Correction, Gender.

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## Introduction

English teaching is important due to the development of globalization and English is needed widely around the world. (Wang & Fang, 2020). Having elementary school teachers who have theoretical knowledge may lead to more productive literacy programs and may improve classroom practices (Fuchs et al., 2019).

Dee (2006) claimed that gender interactions between students and teachers have significant effects on a diverse set of educational outcomes such as test scores, teacher perceptions of student performance, and student engagement with academic subjects. The researcher continued that the sizes of the effects are large relative to subject-specific gender gaps and gender dynamics between teachers and students have a substantial influence on gender differences in several important educational outcomes.

This study addresses exploring male EFL teachers' perspectives on error correction in both male and female classes. Specifically, it investigates the necessity, frequency, timing, type, method, and delivery agent of error correction as perceived by male teachers. By comparing attitudes between male teachers in segregated educational settings, this research aims to elucidate potential differences and implications for classroom practice.

Gender differences exist objectively, and girls have obvious advantages over boys in terms of learning a second language, biologically speaking, women are better at hearing and expression, and their verbal expression ability and auditory perception are stronger than boys' (Qian, 2015). He continued that we should understand the discrepancies between male and female students and should consider it in our teaching method to help them learn effectively. While gender itself may not be a criterion for defining good language teaching, student preferences often favor male teachers due to the positive personality traits associated with them. However, statistical data suggests that both genders can be equally effective language teachers, with some studies even indicating that female teachers may excel more than male teachers (Taqi et al., 2015).

Through an analysis of male teachers' performance and preferences in error correction, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the field of language pedagogy, informing teacher training programs, policy development, and instructional practices in EFL classrooms.

### Research questions:

1. How do male EFL teachers perceive the necessity and frequency of error correction in both male and female classrooms?
2. What differences exist in the timing, types, methods, and delivery agents of error correction preferred by male EFL teachers in segregated educational settings?
3. To what extent do gender dynamics influence male EFL teachers' approaches to error correction in language education?
4. What implications do the findings have for teacher education programs, policy development, and instructional practices in EFL classrooms?

## Review of Literature

### *Errors*

According to Damaso et al. (2020), errors may stem from two primary causes: response speed and evidence quality, leading to distinct post-error adjustments such as post-error slowing or speeding. Ameliorate the readability of your paragraphs by rewriting them with the important free paragraph rewriter. review a being passage in your paragraph and make it sound more mortal-like. (Boroomand & Rostami Abusaeedi, 2013). Acosta (2007) identified several criteria for error correction, including comprehensibility, frequency, pedagogical focus, and individual student concerns. Taipale (2012) highlighted the prevalence of teacher-led error correction, with limited opportunities for students to self-correct, and emphasized the efficacy of feedback types that elicit correct forms from students. Nassaji and Kartchava (2020) in their study showed that recast is the most frequent, 52.4 percent feedback type, and explicit correction is also found to be common in classroom practice. There is an advantage to direct feedback over indirect feedback as it is more effective (Al-Rubai'ey & Nassaji, 2013). Female students committed fewer errors in L2 writing as compared to male students. Thus, females can be said to be better language learners than males (Thirumalai et al., 2011). Men use a more straightforward form of imperatives than women do. They also pointed out that sex is a biological phenomenon that is identified according to sexuality as one being male or female. On the other hand, gender is the social construction of the characteristics of men and women and these are the societies that divide the genders as being masculine and feminine.

### *Treating Oral Errors*

Gender plays a significant role in feedback provision, with female teachers often employing more polite and collaborative language compared to their male counterparts (Ratnadi et al., 2014). Rahimi and Dastjerdi (2012) suggested that delayed error correction, implemented after students have completed their speech, can significantly enhance speaking ability, particularly among intermediate-level EFL learners, improving both fluency and accuracy.

Rasaei (2010) claimed that learners in mixed-gender dyads benefit more from feedback than in matched-gender dyads. The causes of this mismatch in male and female responses to feedback are in sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic mechanisms involved in learning. It seems that feedback from the opposite gender is more considered and processed than from that the same gender.

A variety of factors such as the environment of instruction, learners' factors like age and experimental readiness, and also learners' error types can affect the schoolteacher's choice of corrective feedback types (Ajideh & Fareed Aghdam, 2012). Pishghadam and Norooz Kermanshahi (2012) concluded that language teachers are expected to monitor their learners' mistakes, trying to provide them with the appropriate feedback, and teacher trainers are recommended to make prospective teachers acquainted with feedback analysis. Acosta (2007) pointed out that when correction is required, it is also important to pay attention to the level they have. For instance, beginners should only be corrected on errors hindering

communication, intermediate students should be corrected when errors are frequent, and advanced students should be corrected on errors that stigmatize them.

#### *Error Correction and Foreign Language Acquisition*

The role of teachers as mentors and exemplars is irreplaceable and teachers are not only content experts and knowledge transmitters but also ethical-spiritual guides who exercise discretion and wisdom (Tan, 2020). The learning process has three different stages, namely the period of silence, the period of early production and experimentation, and the period of continued development and communicative competence at each stage, three major types of engagement, behavioral, affective, and cognitive, were observed (Zhang, 2022).

Instructors should encourage students to take risks during the foreign language class, and this is only done by telling students that making mistakes is a natural process of testing linguistic hypotheses (Acosta, 2007). Acosta (2007) emphasized the importance of gentle and respectful correction during oral activities, particularly when corrections are made in front of classmates. Common correction techniques in EFL classes include negative feedback, utterance repair, pinpointing, request for clarification, literal interpretation, reactive teaching, reformulation, and delayed correction.

In different language learning contexts, the focus varies between meaning and communication (immersion and ESL contexts) and forms through explicit grammar instruction (EFL settings) (Taipale, 2012). Tomková (2013) highlighted the positive aspect of errors in foreign language acquisition, viewing them as evidence of the learner internalizing new language construction rules rather than as negative deviations.

#### *Gender*

Research has shown that there are no significant cognitive differences between dyslexic females and males in the processes of reading, indicating that developmental dyslexia is not influenced by gender disparities (Jiménez et al., 2011). Chen (2012) believes that gender differences might become a positive thing for them to learn from one another and improve their motivation for learning English.

Wood (2009) mentioned that neither boys nor girls are motivated any more or less by female or male teachers; they found no differences in this regard between the abilities of female and male teachers. Jones (2003) found that female teachers responded that male teachers would be better at motivating boys than female teachers. However, her research also demonstrates that the longer the interview lasted with female teachers, the more they would discuss limitations in male teachers' ability to motivate male students. Gender studies are very important because they are related to the individual's development and teachers should provide students with a good learning environment by teaching gender values. Students have to be able to analyze the information they receive and need to know how gender constructions affect their lives (Castillo, 2012).

## METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

Sixty male English teachers from various cities in Iran, including Tehran, Karaj, Shiraz, Rasht, and Esfahan, participated in this study. These teachers had diverse levels of experience, ranging from one to more than 10 years, and were selected through random sampling. Participants were approached in different settings, including classrooms, offices, and via email, where they were provided with the questionnaire by the researcher. Additionally, approximately 20 teachers participated in interviews conducted by the researcher.

#### a. Validity and Reliability of the instruments

The value of Cronbach's alpha in all indexes is more than 0/7, and it shows the high reliability of the results. The results of the study are valid and reflect what we believe they reflect and that they are meaningful in the sense that they have significance not only to the population that was tested but, for most experimental research.

#### b. Instruments

The primary instrument utilized in this study was a questionnaire adapted from the work of Fukuda (2006). Comprising a total of 44 questions, the questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale to gauge respondents' attitudes and perceptions. The scale ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," "always" to "never," and "very effective" to "very ineffective." The questionnaire was divided into three sections.

The first two sections, each containing 22 questions, focused on male and female teachers' perspectives on error correction within their respective classes. These sections explored various aspects, including the perceived necessity and frequency of error correction, preferred timing for correction, types of errors deemed crucial to correct, preferred types of corrective feedback, and the preferred agents for delivering error correction.

The third section of the questionnaire gathered demographic information from the participants. It consisted of three items, including the participants' gender, length of experience in teaching English, and length of experience teaching oral skill classes.

In addition to the questionnaire, face-to-face interviews were conducted as another data collection method. The questionnaire format was also used during the interviews to ensure consistency and accuracy of responses while minimizing time consumption.

### *Procedure*

The questionnaire was administered to the teachers by the researcher through multiple channels, including in-person sessions in their classrooms and offices within the institutes, as well as electronically via email and Google Forms. Before completing the questionnaire, the teachers were briefed that their participation was voluntary and that the survey would be conducted anonymously to ensure confidentiality.

Upon completion of the questionnaire forms, the researcher personally collected the hard-copy responses from the teachers. Simultaneously, the researcher monitored

the Google Forms and email platforms to retrieve the electronically submitted responses.

For the interview component, the researcher provided the necessary explanations for the questionnaire items, which encompassed a total of 44 questions. These questions utilized a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," "always" to "never," and "very effective" to "very ineffective," organized into three sections.

The first section comprised twenty-two questions, delving into male teachers' perspectives on various aspects of error correction within male classes, including the perceived necessity and frequency of error correction, preferences for timing, types of errors requiring correction, preferred types of corrective feedback, and preferred agents for delivering error correction.

Similarly, the second section consisted of the same twenty-two questions but focused on male teachers' perspectives on error correction within female classes.

#### **Data Analysis**

The design of this study adopted a quasi-experimental approach, utilizing both questionnaire and interview methods for data collection. The data analysis involved conducting a paired sample t-test to compare responses between two distinct groups.

To address the research question regarding potential differences between male teachers' attitudes toward error correction in male and female classes, male participants completed both questionnaires and interviews. The check particulars were distributed into six crucial areas the perceived necessity of error correction, the frequency of error correction, the timing of error correction, types of crimes taking correction, styles of corrective feedback, and preferred agents for delivering corrective feedback. Subsequently, a paired sample t-test was conducted to assess whether statistically significant differences existed between male teachers' attitudes and practices in male classes versus female classes.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Results Overview**

Sixty male teachers participated in the study by completing questionnaires and interviews regarding their attitudes toward error correction in male and female classes. The analysis primarily focused on comparing their error correction practices between genders using a paired-sample test (see Table 2 for results).

#### **Error Correction Attitudes**

##### **Necessity and Frequency of Error Correction (Questions 1-2)**

Participants were asked about their beliefs on whether students' spoken errors should be corrected and the frequency of their corrective feedback. Responses to these questions were rated on a 5-point scale, with options ranging from "Always" to "Never." The statistical analysis showed that the p-value for the necessity of error correction and the frequency of error correction was higher than 0.05, indicating no significant differences between male teachers' practices in male versus female classes.

This finding suggests that male teachers hold consistent beliefs regarding the importance of correcting spoken errors, regardless of the student's gender. This uniformity in attitude implies a foundational approach to language teaching where

the correction of spoken errors is considered equally important in both male and female classes.

*Timing of Error Correction (Questions 3-6)*

Questions in this section explored the appropriate timing for error correction: immediately after errors, after the student finishes speaking, after activities, and at the end of class. Mean scores indicated that male teachers tend to correct female students' errors more promptly compared to male students.

- Question 3: Female classes (3.13), Male classes (2.48)
- Question 4: Female classes (3.32), Male classes (3.82)
- Question 5: Female classes (3.36), Male classes (3.50)
- Question 6: Female classes (3.66), Male classes (2.81)

According to the data, a significant number of teachers disagreed with correcting female students' errors immediately (46.7%), compared to a smaller percentage in male classes (6.7%). This indicates a more cautious approach towards error correction in female classes, possibly to avoid discouraging female students. Conversely, teachers showed a preference for correcting errors "after the student finishes speaking" more in female classes (41.7%) than in male classes (31.7%). This approach might be employed to ensure female students have the opportunity to complete their thoughts, reflecting a more patient correction strategy.

Furthermore, for the timing of "after the activities," teachers' responses were more neutral in male classes (45.0%) compared to a higher agreement in female classes (40.0%). This neutral stance in male classes might suggest a flexible approach depending on the classroom dynamics. When it comes to correcting errors "at the end of class," the highest disagreement was found in female classes (33.3%), while in male classes, a significant number of teachers agreed (48.3%). This divergence could indicate that teachers believe male students can benefit from a more cumulative correction at the end of a lesson, whereas immediate feedback is seen as more beneficial for female students.

*Types of Errors to Correct (Questions 7-11)*

Participants rated the importance of correcting various types of errors, such as serious spoken errors, less serious errors, frequent errors, infrequent errors, and individual errors. Teachers were asked to rate each type of error on a 5-point scale from "Always" to "Never."

- Serious spoken errors: Male classes had the highest percentages for "usually" and "always" (31.7%), whereas female classes had the highest percentage for "always" (46.7%). This indicates that male teachers prioritize the correction of serious errors more consistently in both male and female classes, but slightly more so in female classes.
- Less serious errors: The highest percentage for male classes was "sometimes" (61.7%), and for female classes, it was "sometimes" (45.0%). This suggests that less serious errors are less frequently addressed, with male teachers perhaps adopting a more relaxed approach to such errors.
- Frequent errors: The highest percentage in male classes was "sometimes" (42.4%), while in female classes, it was also "sometimes" (33.3%). This shows that frequent errors are noted but not always corrected immediately.



- Infrequent errors: For female classes, "sometimes" (33.3%) was the highest, whereas for male classes, it was "occasionally" (40.7%). This indicates that infrequent errors are not a primary focus for correction.
- Individual errors: Female classes had the highest percentage for "sometimes" (32.2%), while male classes had "occasionally" (38.3%). This suggests that individual errors are addressed occasionally but not as a primary focus.

These findings reflect a nuanced approach to error correction, where the seriousness and frequency of errors influence teachers' decisions on whether to correct them. Serious errors are more consistently corrected, highlighting their importance in ensuring effective communication.

*Method of Corrective Feedback (Questions 12-19)*

Participants rated the effectiveness of various corrective feedback methods, including clarification requests, repetition, implicit feedback, explicit feedback, elicitation, metalinguistic feedback, recasts, and no corrective feedback. Ratings were given on a 5-point scale from "Very ineffective" to "Very effective".

- Implicit feedback was rated as the most effective method in male classes (54.2% found it effective). This suggests a preference for less direct correction, allowing students to self-correct and learn from their errors subtly.
- Elicitation was rated as the most effective method in female classes (56.7% found it effective). Elicitation involves prompting students to self-correct, which might be seen as more supportive and encouraging, especially for female students.

These preferences indicate that male teachers adapt their feedback methods based on the perceived effectiveness and possibly the responsiveness of their students. Implicit feedback's popularity in male classes may reflect a strategy to foster independence and self-correction among male students, while elicitation's effectiveness in female classes may aim to engage students more actively in their learning process.

*Delivering Agents of Error Correction (Questions 20-22)*

Participants were asked who should correct students' errors, with options including classmates, teachers, and students themselves. Responses were rated on a scale from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree".

- Teacher correction was favored in both male (62.1%) and female (58.3%) classes. This strong preference indicates a belief in the authority and expertise of the teacher in providing accurate and effective corrections.
- Peer correction and self-correction were considered very ineffective in both male and female classes, with the lowest percentages of agreement (3.4% for both).

The preference for teacher correction suggests that male teachers believe their role is crucial in guiding students and providing accurate feedback. The low rating for peer and self-correction could imply concerns about the accuracy and reliability of corrections made by peers or by students themselves.



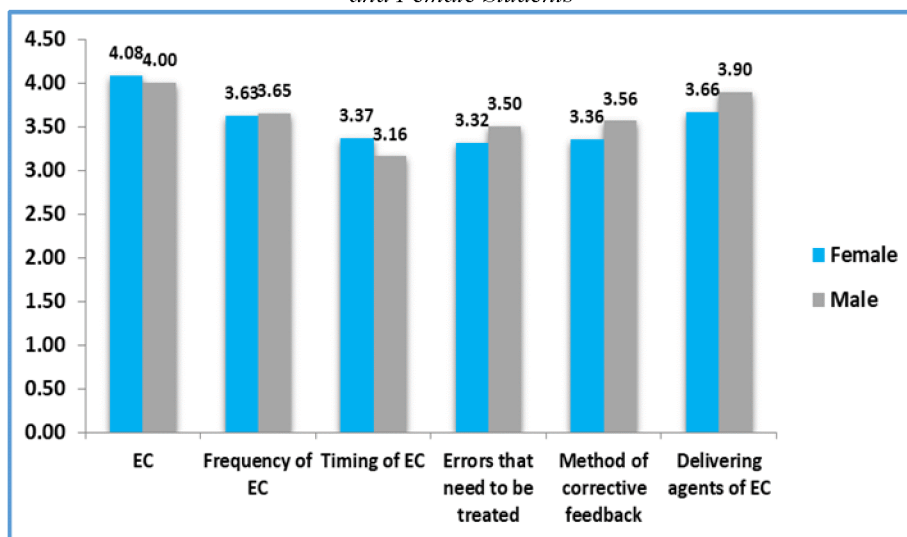
Table 1. Responses on the Errors that Need to be Treated in Male Teachers (%)

	Class	Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
Question7	Female	0.0%	13.3%	10.0%	30.0%	46.7%	3.65	1.246
	Male	3.3%	23.3%	10.0%	31.7%	31.7%	4.10	1.053
Question8	Female	1.7%	23.3%	45.0%	20.0%	10.0%	3.27	.880
	Male	0.0%	13.3%	61.7%	10.0%	15.0%	3.17	.913
Question9	Female	1.7%	3.3%	33.3%	31.7%	30.0%	3.66	.902
	Male	0.0%	6.8%	42.4%	28.8%	22.0%	3.85	.954
Question10	Female	6.7%	31.7%	33.3%	18.3%	10.0%	2.86	1.058
	Male	3.4%	40.7%	33.9%	10.2%	11.9%	2.93	1.087
Question11	Female	5.1%	15.3%	32.2%	25.4%	22.0%	3.13	1.186
	Male	1.7%	38.3%	25.0%	15.0%	20.0%	3.44	1.149

Table 2. Comparing Male Teachers' Error Correction Techniques for Male and Female Students

Error	Groups	N	Mean	SD	T-value	P-value
EC	Male	60	4	0.743	-0.614	0.542
	Female	60	4.07	0.868		
Frequency of EC	Male	60	3.66	1.044	0.286	0.776
	Female	60	3.63	0.963		
Timing of EC	Male	60	3.16	0.595	-2.727	0.008**
	Female	60	3.37	0.577		
Errors that need to be treated	Male	60	3.50	0.729	2.168	0.034*
	Female	60	3.32	0.794		
Method of corrective feedback	Male	60	3.56	0.514	2.826	0.006**
	Female	60	3.36	0.676		
Delivering agents of EC	Male	60	3.90	0.529	3.315	0.002**
	Female	60	3.66	0.662		

Figure 1. Mean of the Male Teachers' Error Correction Techniques for Male and Female Students



## DISCUSSION

The study highlights several key findings regarding male EFL teachers' attitudes towards error correction in male and female classes. While male teachers generally maintain consistent beliefs about the necessity and frequency of error correction across genders, they exhibit nuanced differences in their practices. Specifically, male teachers tend to correct female students' errors more promptly and prefer certain methods of feedback, such as elicitation for female students and implicit feedback for male students. Additionally, teacher correction is overwhelmingly favored over peer or self-correction.

These findings suggest that male teachers adapt their error correction strategies based on the gender of their students, possibly to create a more supportive and effective learning environment. The nuanced approaches observed in this study can inform future training and development programs for EFL teachers, emphasizing the importance of tailored correction strategies that consider student needs and classroom dynamics.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences between male teachers' attitudes toward error correction in male and female classes. According to the results of the research, there is not any significant difference between male teachers in male and female classes in the necessity of error correction and frequency of error correction, and this shows that male teachers do not differentiate between these two factors in the male and female classes and act the same in both cases. But some differences in the timing of EC mean point of female classes is higher than male classes, it shows that male teachers give women classes more time to correct their mistakes than men classes. Regarding errors that need to be treated,

methods of corrective feedback, and delivering agents of EC, the mean points of male students are higher than the mean points of female students.

Gender analysis is useful to ensure that every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation of education policies and plans takes into account gender disparities. It creates a chance for users to address gender needs during the life cycle of the intervention. By illuminating differences in gender, it allows users to evaluate how interventions will impact gender roles and responsibilities.

The findings have many implications for research and practice in teacher education and would be useful for institutes' supervisors, teacher evaluators, and administrators. Being aware of the success of English teachers will also be useful for material developers, teachers, and supervisors.

To sum up, a replication of this study in public schools seems to be important, since there are some differences between teachers of private language institutes and those of the public schools in Iran. The findings of this study and studies like this can be useful for researchers and for students to make them meticulous about their teachers' sex according to their learning style. Students are recommended to identify the best ways through which they can have feedback on their errors more fruitfully. It also can facilitate the language learning process.

The limitations of the present study are that the number of participants was small, so it is difficult to make generalizations. Another one is that a teacher reacts to learners' errors both verbally and nonverbally, and the latter may not be easily measured through a survey. Also, the criterion measures of preferences for error correction involved only questionnaires and interviews because it would have been time-consuming to observe with all the teachers.

Considering the research limitations and findings of the current investigation, some suggestions for further research are introduced. In the present study the range of participants was not wide enough for the investigator to get a full idea of all Iranian teachers. This study focused on gender based analysis of teachers' differences in error correction, it can investigate the other areas of English teaching or can investigate students' differences in making error correction.

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## دیدگاه معلمان مرد زبان انگلیسی در مورد تصحیح خطا در آموزش زبان

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پژوهش‌های تحلیل خطا نشان داده‌اند که زبان‌آموزان ترجیحات متفاوتی نسبت به تصحیح خطاهای شفاهی در محیط کلاس دارند. با این حال، توجه محدودی به بررسی تفاوت‌های جنسیتی در نگرش معلمان زبان انگلیسی نسبت به تصحیح خطا شده است. این مطالعه به بررسی دیدگاه معلمان مرد زبان انگلیسی در مورد تصحیح خطا در کلاس‌های دختران و پسران می‌پردازد و ابعادی همچون ضرورت، فراوانی، زمان‌بندی، نوع، روش و عامل تصحیح خطا را در بر می‌گیرد. شرکت‌کنندگان شامل ۶۰ معلم مرد با سطوح مختلف تجربه در تدریس زبان انگلیسی در ایران بودند. با استفاده از پرسشنامه‌ای که توسط فوکودا (۲۰۰۶) طراحی شده است، آزمون t زوجی برای مقایسه نگرش معلمان مرد در کلاس‌های تک‌جنسیتی پسران و دختران به کار گرفته شد. اگرچه تفاوت معناداری در ضرورت و فراوانی تصحیح خطا مشاهده نشد، اما تفاوت‌هایی در ترجیحات مربوط به زمان‌بندی، نوع، روش و عامل تصحیح خطا وجود داشت. یافته‌های این مطالعه بینش‌های ارزشمندی برای مربیان، معلمان، سیاست‌گذاران آموزشی و مدرسان زبان انگلیسی فراهم می‌کند که می‌تواند به بهبود راهبردهای تصحیح خطا در کلاس‌های آموزش زبان انگلیسی منجر شود.

واژه‌های کلیدی: آموزش زبان انگلیسی، خطا، تصحیح خطا، جنسیت.

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