



ORAL CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN EFL: RESEARCH TRENDS AND THEMATIC EVOLUTION (2016-2025)

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Abstract

Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF) is an important part of EFL teaching because it helps learners notice and respond to problems in their spoken language. Although many studies have examined OCF strategies, learner responses, and teacher perspectives, a broader mapping of publication trends and thematic development is still needed. This study used bibliometric analysis to examine Scopus-indexed articles and conference papers on OCF in EFL classrooms published between 2016 and 2025. A total of 411 publications were analyzed using Bibliometrix, Biblioshiny, and VOSviewer. The analysis examined publication trends, productive authors, affiliations, countries, publication sources, and research themes. The findings show an increase in OCF research during the study period, with contributions from diverse geographical and institutional contexts. The thematic analysis identifies major areas related to corrective feedback and error correction, affective factors, teacher and learner beliefs, feedback strategies, learner uptake, oral language development, and emerging technology-related directions, including artificial intelligence. The thematic evolution also shows that recent research has broadened its focus while maintaining established topics such as recasts, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, and uptake. These findings provide a systematic view of the development and thematic structure of OCF research in EFL contexts.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, EFL, oral corrective feedback, research trends, thematic evolution

INTRODUCTION

Teaching speaking in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom can be challenging for both teachers and students. One of the main challenges is helping students speak confidently and correctly at the same time. Many students feel shy or nervous about speaking because lessons often focus more on grammar than real communication. As a result, they hesitate to speak in class. (Huang et al., 2022; Veenstra & Weaver, 2022). Students also struggle with limited vocabulary and low confidence. They worry about making mistakes and being judged by others. Feelings of anxiety, fear of negative comments, and lack of self-confidence often stop them from using and speaking English in class (Kasap & Power, 2019; Que et al., 2024).

Students who have few opportunities to use English in real situations tend to stay silent and lose motivation to join speaking activities. Outside the classroom, many EFL students also have little exposure to authentic English interaction, which makes their confidence even weaker (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021). Without enough real communication practice, students may feel unsure of themselves and their speaking skills develop more slowly. Therefore, teachers need to use approaches that invite students to take part actively, share ideas, and communicate in meaningful ways. These kinds of activities help students become more confident and improve their speaking ability (Al-Tonsi, 2023).

One of the teaching practices that plays a pivotal role in facilitating speaking development is oral corrective feedback (OCF). In EFL classrooms, where most language learning happens through interaction, the way teachers respond to students' speaking errors becomes an important learning tool. Through OCF, students become aware of the difference between what they say and how English should be used, which helps them improve their language (Ellis, 2009; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Recent studies also show that when feedback is given during meaningful communication, it helps students notice their mistakes, respond to corrections, and speak more accurately (Amalia et al., 2019a; Kim & Whitehead, 2025; Li, 2023; Sato & Loewen, 2018).

Oral corrective feedback can take different forms, such as reformulations, prompts, clarification requests, and metalinguistic cues that encourage students to adjust and improve their own speech. When implemented effectively, OCF helps students become more aware of their language use, control their learning better, and be more confident when speaking. Moreover, by integrating OCF into meaningful and communicative activities, teachers can support language learning by promoting uptake, repair, and confidence in speaking (Amalia et al., 2019b; Kord & Borhani, 2022).

On the other hand, if OCF feels too direct, judgmental, or comes at the wrong time, it can make students anxious and less willing to talk. Many studies show that overly explicit or face-threatening feedback may discourage students from taking risks and participating actively in speaking tasks (Shadiev et al., 2024). Such feedback can also damage the classroom emotional climate and limit opportunities for meaningful interaction. Over time, this may slow students' oral development and weaken their confidence in using English.

Empirical studies show that different types of OCF have different effects on students' uptake and repair (Amalia et al., 2019b). Although recasts are the strategy teachers use most often, they usually lead to less student self-correction than feedback types like elicitation and metalinguistic prompts, which push students to fix their own mistakes (Khairati et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025). This indicates that feedback works best not just because it is given, but because of how it is delivered and how actively students are involved in the correction process. In real classrooms, OCF is also shaped by teachers' beliefs, students' proficiency levels, task types, and the emotional atmosphere of the class. All of these factors affect how well feedback supports learning (Rahimi & Zhang, 2022; Saito, 2021).

Over the last decade, research on OCF has grown rapidly and become more varied. Studies now explore feedback types, student and teacher perceptions, classroom discourse, and contextual influences on feedback effectiveness (Ha & Murray, 2023; Kang & Han, 2023; Sato & Ballinger, 2012). However, most studies rely on narrative, systematic, or meta-analysis approaches with relatively small datasets (Nassaji, 2020). As a result, they provide only partial views of publication trends and the overall structure of the field. To address this limitation, bibliometric analysis offers an objective method for mapping research productivity, citation relationships, and thematic development over time. Bibliometric

analysis can address this gap by systematically examining the growth, intellectual structure, and thematic development of a research field through publication and citation data.

Therefore, the present study adopts a bibliometric approach to examine research on OCF in EFL classrooms published between 2016 and 2025. Publications are systematically retrieved from an international database and analyzed using performance indicators and science-mapping techniques. Specifically, the study examines publication trends, productive authors, affiliations, countries, and sources, as well as research themes and their development over time. Based on these aims, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1. How has research on oral corrective feedback in EFL classrooms developed from 2016 to 2025 in terms of publication output?

RQ2. Who are the major contributors to OCF research in EFL classrooms in terms of authors, affiliations, countries, and publication sources?

RQ3. What are the dominant research themes and thematic clusters in OCF research in EFL classrooms?

RQ4. How have the research themes of oral corrective feedback in EFL classrooms evolved?

By addressing these questions, the study provides a systematic overview of the development, contributors, and thematic structure of OCF research. The findings may help researchers identify established areas of study, emerging topics, and potential directions for future research in EFL oral corrective feedback.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design using bibliometric analysis to examine research trends on oral corrective feedback (OCF) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms from 2016 to 2025. The study followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guideline proposed by Page et al. (2021). The PRISMA framework was used to provide a transparent and systematic account of the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of publications. The bibliometric approach was selected to examine publication trends, research contributors, publication sources, research themes, and the development of OCF research over the study period.

Search Strategy

The search was conducted in the Scopus database in January 2026. Scopus was selected because it provides extensive bibliographic coverage of research in applied linguistics, language education, and related fields. The search focused on publications related to oral corrective feedback and EFL classroom contexts. Articles and conference papers published between 2016 and 2025 were considered for inclusion, and only publications written in English were included in the final dataset. The search was conducted using the "TITLE-ABS-KEY" fields to identify publications containing terms related to oral corrective feedback and EFL contexts. The following search string was used:

(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Error Correction" OR "Corrective Feedback" OR "Oral Corrective Feedback" OR "Spoken Corrective Feedback" OR "Verbal Corrective Feedback" OR "Oral Error Correction" OR "Spoken Error Correction" OR "Oral Feedback on Learner Output" OR "Teacher Verbal Feedback" OR "Teacher Mediated Oral Feedback" OR "Oral Form-Focused Feedback" OR "Interactional

Corrective Feedback" OR "Oral Negative Feedback" OR "Oral Form-Focused Instruction" OR "Verbal Error Treatment") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (EFL OR "EFL Classroom" OR "English as a Foreign Language Classroom"))

The initial search identified 905 records. During data preparation, duplicate records were checked based on bibliographic metadata. One duplicate record was identified and removed before screening, leaving 904 records for the screening stage.

Because some corrective feedback terminology can also occur in research on written language, the retrieved records were subsequently screened for their relevance to oral corrective feedback. Publications were considered relevant when their research focused on corrective feedback in spoken language, oral interaction, speaking, pronunciation, or classroom-based oral language production. Studies focusing exclusively on written corrective feedback, essay writing, or writing performance without an oral feedback component were excluded from the OCF dataset. During the screening stage, records published outside the 2016-2025 period, written in a language other than English, or not classified as journal articles or conference papers were also excluded. The search and screening procedures were documented to ensure that the final dataset was aligned with the research focus and could be traced from the initial Scopus retrieval to the publications included in the bibliometric analysis.

Study Selection

The study selection followed the PRISMA 2020 framework (Page et al., 2021). The initial Scopus search identified 905 records. After one duplicate record was removed, 904 records remained for screening. During the screening, 272 records were excluded based on the predefined publication-year, language, and document-type criteria, leaving 632 records for eligibility assessment. All 632 records were then manually screened based on their titles, abstracts, keywords, and research focus to ensure their relevance to Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF). Studies were retained when they examined corrective feedback involving spoken language, oral interaction, speaking, pronunciation, or learner oral production in EFL contexts. Studies focusing exclusively on Written Corrective Feedback (WCF), writing, or written language production without an oral component were excluded. As a result, 221 records were excluded, and 411 publications were included in the final dataset.

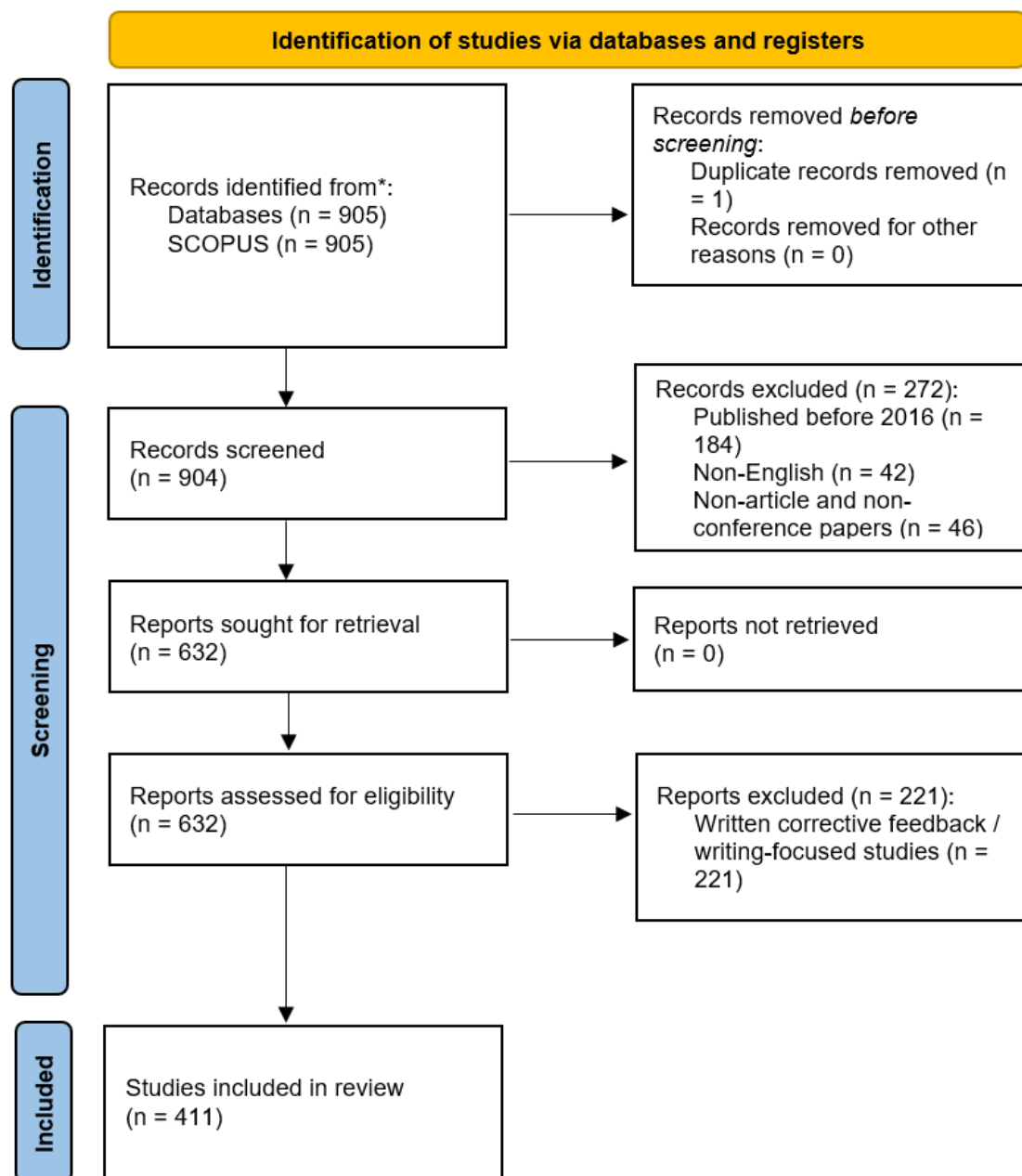


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart of document identification on OCF in EFL

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were established based on the research objectives and the scope of the bibliometric analysis. The criteria considered the database, publication period, language, document type, and relevance to OCF research in EFL classroom contexts.

First, only publications indexed in the Scopus database were considered. Second, the publication period was restricted to 2016–2025 to define the temporal scope of the study. Third, only publications written in English were included. Fourth, the study included research articles and conference papers because these document types were specified in the search strategy. Fifth, the publications needed to address oral corrective feedback, error correction, or closely related forms of feedback in EFL classroom contexts.

Publications were excluded if they fell outside the 2016–2025 period, were written in languages other than English, did not meet the specified document-type criteria, or were not sufficiently related to OCF in EFL classroom contexts.

Identification

The identification stage involved searching the Scopus database using the predefined search strategy. The search was conducted in January 2026 and initially identified 905 records. The search focused on publications related to oral corrective feedback and EFL classroom contexts within the defined study period. The retrieved records were exported in CSV format from Scopus and prepared for further screening and analysis. One duplicate record was identified and removed before screening, leaving 904 records. The search and selection process was documented to support transparency and reproducibility.

Screening

During the screening stage, the 904 records remaining after deduplication were examined according to predefined publication-period, language, and document type criteria. A total of 272 records were excluded, including 184 records published before 2016, 42 non-English records, and 46 records that were neither journal articles nor conference papers. Following this screening stage, 632 reports remained for retrieval and further eligibility assessment. The screening decisions were documented according to the predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to maintain consistency throughout the selection process.

Eligibility Assessment

The remaining 632 records were manually assessed to distinguish OCF studies from broader corrective feedback research. The terms “corrective feedback” or “error correction” alone were not considered sufficient for inclusion; the study had to contain a substantive focus on oral or spoken language. Following this assessment, 221 writing-focused or WCF studies were excluded, resulting in a final dataset of 411 publications.

Inclusion

The final dataset consisted of 411 publications that met the predefined inclusion criteria. These publications were used for the bibliometric analysis of research on Oral Corrective Feedback in EFL classrooms from 2016 to 2025.

Data Analysis

The final dataset was analyzed using the Bibliometrix package in R, its web-based interface Biblioshiny, and VOSviewer version 1.6.20. Bibliometrix and Biblioshiny were used to examine publication trends, productive authors, affiliations, countries, publication sources, and thematic development. These analyses provided a descriptive profile of the development and distribution of OCF research during the study period.

VOSviewer was used to construct and visualize bibliometric networks, including co-authorship networks at the author and country levels and keyword co-occurrence networks. The software was also used to identify thematic clusters and visualize relationships among frequently occurring keywords in OCF research. For keyword co-occurrence analysis, author keywords were used, with a minimum occurrence threshold of five. Association-strength normalization was applied to calculate the strength of relationships among keywords, while the clustering algorithm grouped closely related terms. Before generating the keyword co-occurrence network, author keywords were checked for spelling variations, capitalization differences, abbreviations, and synonymous expressions. Equivalent terms

were standardized using a thesaurus file in VOSviewer, while conceptually distinct terms were retained to preserve meaningful distinctions among research topics. The network, overlay, and density visualizations were then used to examine keyword relationships, the temporal distribution of research topics, and areas of concentrated keyword activity, respectively.

The bibliometric findings were interpreted descriptively. Publication counts were used to identify productive authors, affiliations, countries, and sources, while keyword-based analyses were used to identify major research themes and their temporal development. The interpretations of thematic patterns were distinguished from the bibliometric findings themselves to avoid treating network relationships as evidence of causal development or replacement of earlier research interests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

This section presents the main findings of the bibliometric analysis on Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF) in EFL classrooms from 2016 to 2025. It outlines publication trends, leading authors, affiliations, countries, and publication sources. It also shows the main research themes and how they have changed over time.

Following screening and eligibility procedures, 411 publications were included in the final dataset. The dataset was analyzed with a focus on oral corrective feedback in EFL contexts, including spoken interaction, speaking development, pronunciation, learner uptake, feedback strategies, and teacher and learner perspectives.

Research Development and Contributors

The analysis began by examining the development of OCF research from 2016 to 2025. Figure 2 presents the annual publication output from 2016 to 2025. Between 2016 and 2018, the number of publications was relatively low, ranging from 16 to 25 publications per year. The number increased again to 46 publications in 2019, then decreased to 37 in 2020. It increased again to 46 in 2021 and 52 in 2022. In 2023, the number of publications decreased slightly to 41, followed by a clear increase to 64 publications in 2024. In 2025, the number decreased slightly to 60 but remained high compared with the early years. Therefore, the number of publications increased over the study period, showing growing research activity on oral corrective feedback (OCF) from 2016 to 2025.

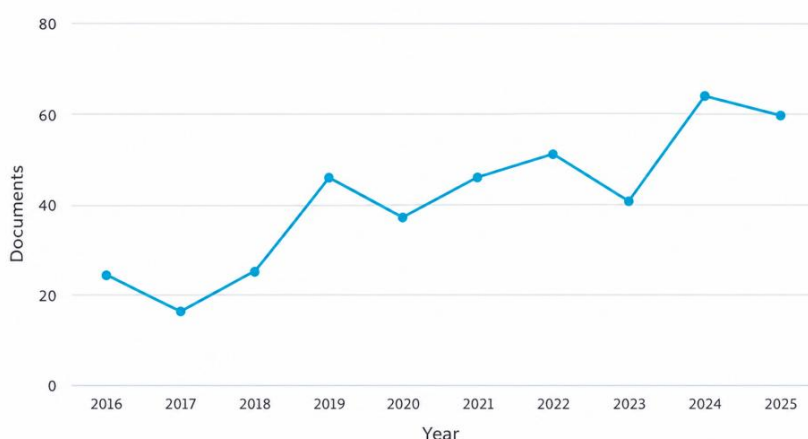


Figure 2. Annual Publication Trend on OCF Research in EFL Classrooms (2016–2025)

Research Contributors and Publication Sources

Most Productive Authors

Figure 3 shows the most productive authors based on the number of publications in the dataset. Rassaei, E. had the highest publication count, with 13 publications, followed by Li, S. with 11 and Nassaji, H. with 10. Ha, X.V. contributed 9 publications, while García-Mayo, M.P. contributed 8. Rahimi, M. and Xu, J. each had 7 publications. Luquin, M., Manjet, M.K.M., and Wang, X. each contributed 5 publications.

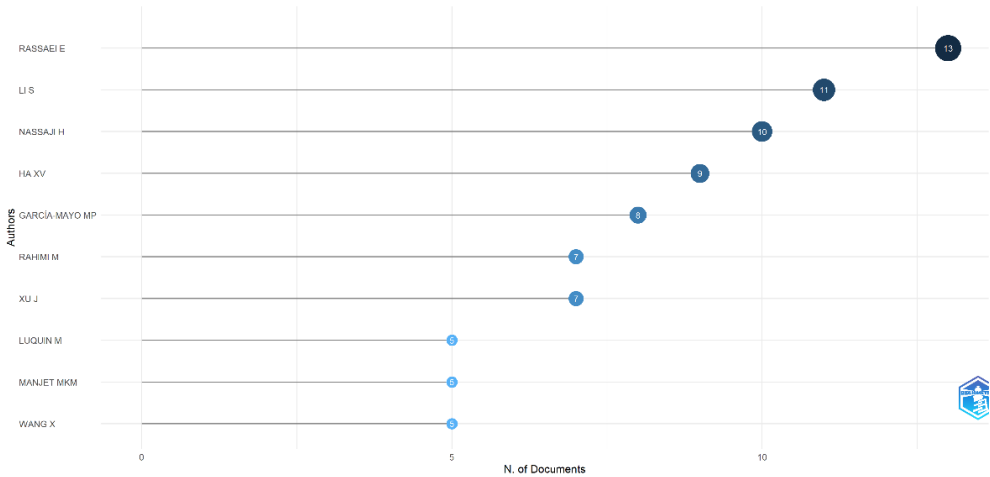


Figure 3. Most Productive Authors on OCF Research in EFL Classrooms

Most Productive Affiliations

Figure 4 shows the affiliations with the highest number of publications in the dataset. Islamic Azad University recorded the highest output, with 34 publications. The University of Auckland and the University of Macau each contributed 10 publications, followed by Florida State University and the University of Victoria with 9 documents each. Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University contributed 8 publications, while Beijing Normal University, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Universidad del País Vasco, and Universidad Pública de Navarra each contributed 7 publications. The affiliation distribution indicates that OCF is represented by affiliations from several regions, particularly Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and North America.

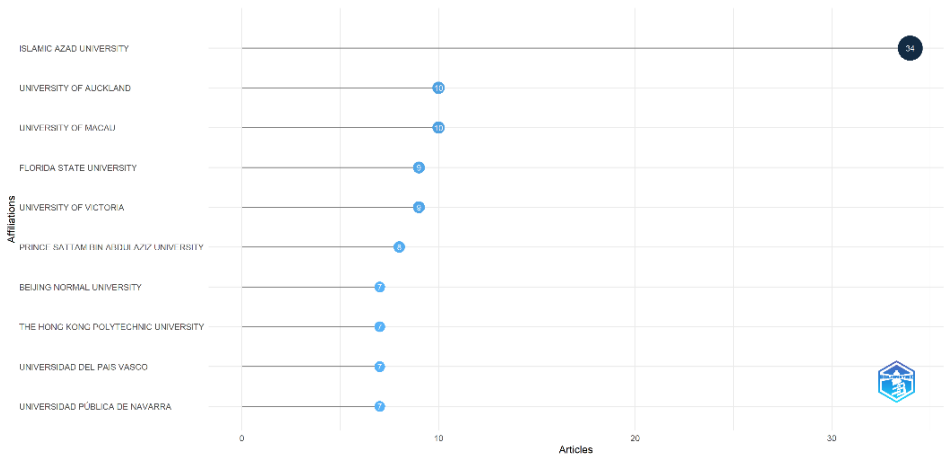


Figure 4. Most Productive Affiliations on OCF Research in EFL Classrooms

Most Productive Countries

Figure 5 presents the countries with the highest publication output. Iran and China recorded the largest numbers of publications, with Iran slightly higher than China. The United States ranked next, followed by Saudi Arabia and Malaysia. Turkey and Indonesia also contributed a substantial number of publications, while Thailand, Australia, and Spain appeared among the other countries represented in the dataset. The distribution shows the geographical diversity of OCF, with substantial contributions from Asia and the Middle East as well as North America, Europe, and Australia.

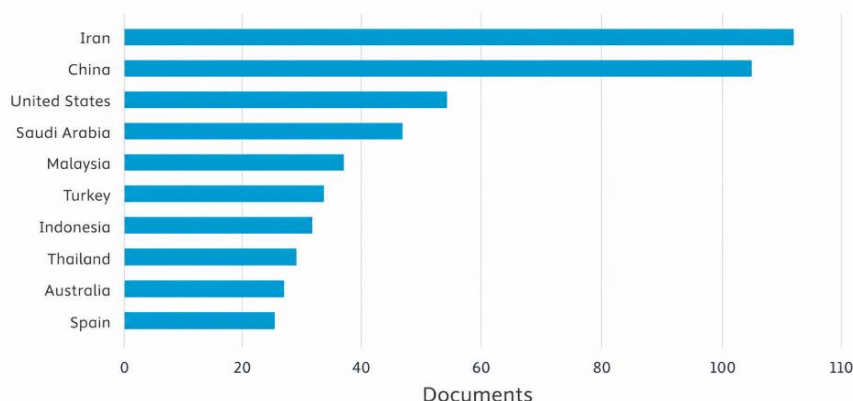


Figure 5. Most Productive Countries on OCF in EFL Classrooms

Most Productive Sources

Figure 6 presents the publication sources with the highest number of documents on OCF in EFL classrooms. *System* recorded the highest number of publications, with 27 documents, followed by *Language Teaching Research* with 20. *Computer Assisted Language Learning* and the *World Journal of English Language* each contributed 15 publications. Other frequently represented sources include *Cogent Education* (12), *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* (11), *Language Awareness* (11), *SAGE Open* (11), *Assessing Writing* (10), and *IRAL* (10). The distribution shows that OCF research has been published across journals covering applied linguistics, language teaching, second language learning, writing, and technology-assisted language learning.

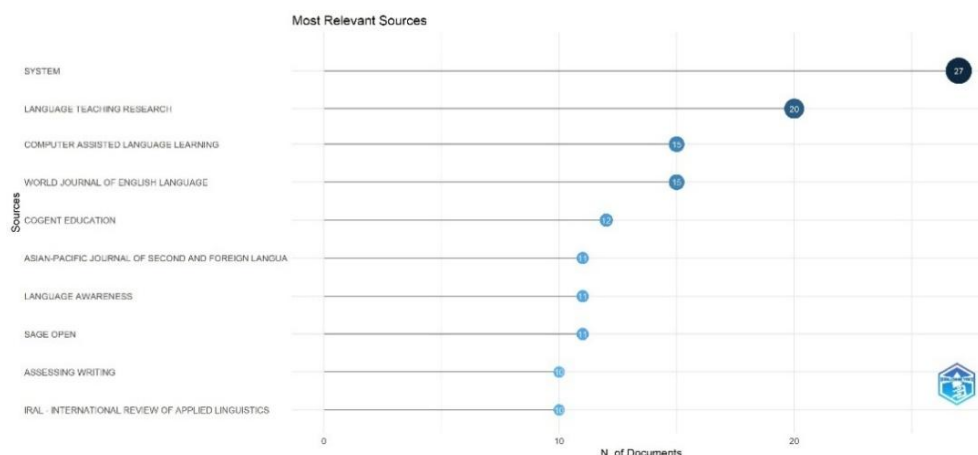


Figure 6. Most Productive Sources on OCF in EFL Classrooms

3 (blue)	11	artificial intelligence, female, formative feedback, human, humans, language, male, motivation, student, student engagement teaching	AI-Mediated Feedback, Motivation, and Student Engagement
4 (yellow)	10	direct corrective feedback, direct feedback, efl students, explicit knowledge, implicit knowledge, indirect corrective feedback, indirect feedback, metalinguistic explanation, metalinguistic feedback, revision	Direct, Indirect, and Metalinguistic Feedback
5 (purple)	10	clarification request, efl learners, explicit correction, grammatical accuracy, models, noticing, recast, task repetition, uptake, willingness to communicate	Interactional Oral Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake
6 (light blue)	8	computational linguistics, English as a second language, error correction, errors correction, grammatical error correction, grammatical errors, learning systems	Computational and System-Based Approaches to Error Correction
7 (orange)	8	accuracy, corrective feedback, fluency, grammar, language teaching, pronunciation, recasts, speaking	Oral Corrective Feedback, Accuracy, Fluency, and Pronunciation
8 (brown)	6	English as a foreign language, English as a foreign language (efl), error analysis, formative assessment, higher education, perceptions	EFL Error Analysis, Formative Assessment, and Learner Perceptions

The keyword clusters show that OCF research covers affective, pedagogical, interactional, technological, and language-development perspectives. The larger cluster focuses on affective factors, beliefs, and perceptions, while other clusters address feedback strategies, learner uptake, technology and AI, accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, and computational approaches.

Density Visualization

The density visualization illustrates the concentration of research themes within the field of OCF in EFL studies. As illustrated in Figure 8, brighter yellow areas indicate topics that are studied most frequently and are strongly connected, while green and blue areas show less explored themes.

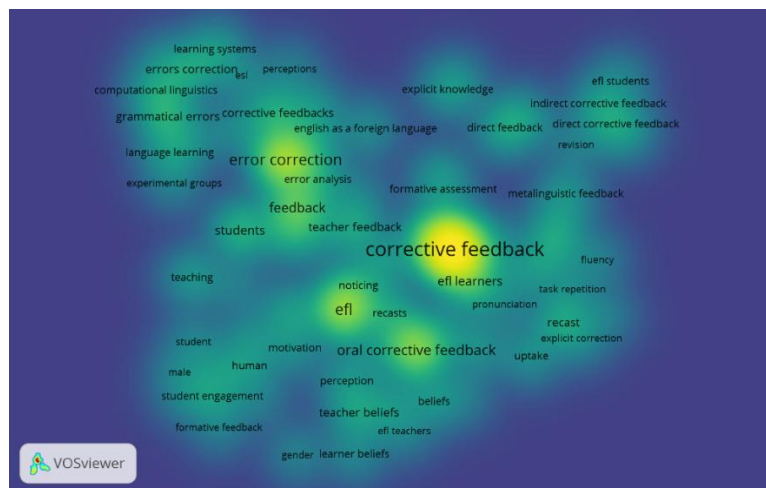


Figure 8. Density Visualization

The brightest and most concentrated area is “corrective feedback,” indicating that it is the main focus of research in this field. Closely related topics, such as error correction, teacher feedback, and oral corrective feedback, also show strong research interest. Other frequently studied topics include direct feedback, metalinguistic feedback, explicit correction, pronunciation, and fluency, particularly in EFL classroom and language learning contexts. Less concentrated areas include topics such as students' engagement, student perceptions, learner beliefs, self-correction, and technology-based feedback. These topics appear less frequently on the map but indicate growing interest in understanding learners' roles and experiences in the feedback process.

Thematic Evolution

Overlay Visualization

The overlay visualization shows the temporal development of OCF research from 2016 to 2025 (Figure 9). Earlier topics are generally shown in darker colors, while more recent topics appear in yellow. “Corrective feedback” appears as a central keyword, with related terms such as “error correction,” “feedback,” “oral corrective feedback,” and different feedback strategies, including direct, indirect, metalinguistic feedback, explicit feedback, and recasts. Earlier research was more closely associated with error correction, grammatical errors, and feedback types, while more recent topics include learner perceptions, students' engagement, teacher beliefs, EFL teachers, pronunciation, and fluency. The temporal distribution therefore indicates a broader range of research interests in OCF over the study period, while established topics such as corrective feedback and error correction remained present throughout the period.

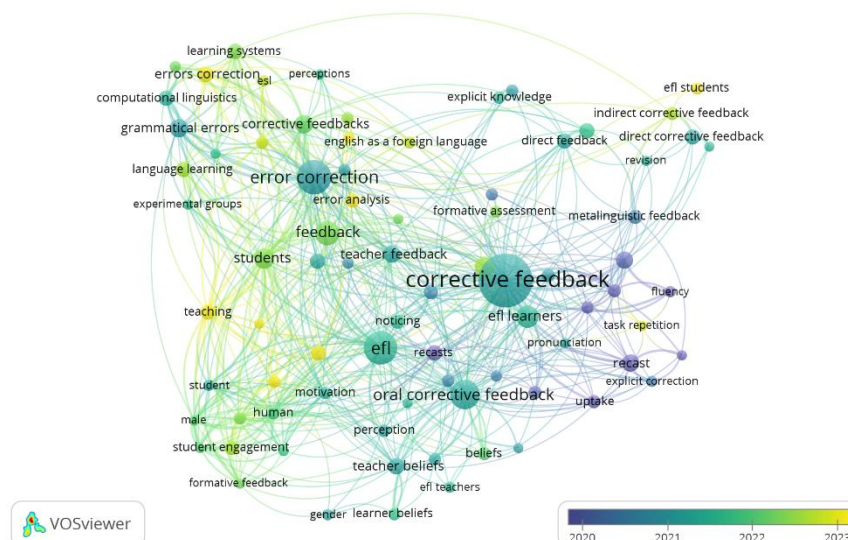


Figure 9. Overlay Visualization

Discussion

Research Development and Contributions

The increasing publication output suggests that OCF has become a sustained area of interest in EFL and second language research. This pattern is consistent with previous research that identifies corrective feedback as an important area in second language acquisition and classroom interaction (Kang & Han, 2023; Nassaji, 2020; Sato & Ballinger, 2012). Recent studies further indicate continued interest in OCF, particularly in teacher practices, learner

responses, teacher beliefs, and technology-supported feedback (Ha et al., 2024; Uludağ, 2024; Zhang et al., 2025).

The geographical and institutional distribution indicates that OCF research has developed across diverse educational contexts. Contributions from Asia, the Middle East, North America, Europe, and Australia show that OCF has been examined across different EFL settings. This geographical diversity is relevant because feedback practices may be influenced by differences in learners, teachers, classroom interaction, and educational systems. At the same time, the concentration of publications in several affiliations suggests that some research centers have played a more visible role in developing the field.

The publication sources further show that OCF is connected with several areas of language education, including second language acquisition, language pedagogy, classroom interaction, and technology-assisted language learning. The presence of OCF research in journals such as *System*, *Language Teaching Research*, and *Computer Assisted Language Learning* reflects this broader disciplinary connection. Taken together, these patterns suggest that OCF research has expanded beyond a narrow focus on error correction to include learner responses, teacher beliefs, classroom interaction, and emerging technological contexts.

Dominant Research Themes

The keyword analysis indicates that OCF research continues to focus strongly on corrective feedback, error correction, and different feedback strategies. This continuity is consistent with established research on feedback types, learner uptake, and interactional feedback (Ellis, 2009; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Furthermore, the thematic structure shows that OCF research has expanded to include affective, interactional, technological, and language-development perspectives.

One important theme is affective factors, beliefs, and perceptions. Keywords related to anxiety, self-efficacy, learner beliefs, teacher beliefs, and perception indicate growing attention to how teachers and learners experience OCF. Feedback is therefore not only a pedagogical action but also a process that can be shaped by how teachers and learners understand and respond to it. Previous research has similarly emphasized the role of learner and teacher perceptions in OCF (Kang & Han, 2023; Sato & Loewen, 2022). Recent research also suggests that teachers' beliefs about OCF do not always correspond directly to their classroom practices (Uludağ, 2024). Ye and Hu (2024) found differences between teachers' and students' beliefs about OCF, including their views of feedback, uptake, and preferred feedback types. They also found that students' proficiency was related to differences in their views of feedback.

Another major theme concerns feedback strategies and learner uptake. Direct and indirect feedback, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, and recasts remain important areas of research, while keywords such as clarification request, noticing, uptake, and willingness to communicate highlight increasing attention to learner responses. This suggests that OCF is increasingly viewed as an interactional process rather than simply as a teacher behavior. The role of feedback therefore depends not only on what teachers provide but also on how learners notice, interpret, and respond to the feedback (Ellis, 2009; Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

The connection between OCF and accuracy, fluency, pronunciation, and speaking further indicates that researchers are examining feedback in relation to broader aspects of oral language development. This extends the focus beyond grammatical error correction and reflects an interest in how corrective feedback operates within actual speaking performance.

Such a perspective also connects OCF research with broader concerns in second language development and classroom communication.

Technology and AI-related feedback also appear as emerging directions in the broader feedback research landscape. Keywords such as automated feedback, e-learning, and artificial intelligence indicate growing research attention to technology-supported feedback. However, these findings should not be interpreted as evidence that AI has become a central theme of OCF research, because some technology-related studies may concern feedback more broadly rather than oral corrective feedback specifically. Therefore, AI is better understood as an emerging direction that may have potential relevance to OCF, particularly in technology-supported speaking and oral language learning contexts.

Overall, the thematic structure indicates that OCF research is becoming more multidimensional. Traditional concerns with feedback strategies remain important, but they are increasingly examined alongside learner responses, affective factors, oral language development, and emerging technologies.

Thematic Evolution

The overlay visualization suggests that OCF research has expanded from traditional concerns with error correction and feedback types toward broader topics such as learner perceptions, teacher beliefs, engagement, pronunciation, fluency, and technology. This pattern suggests an expansion of the research agenda rather than a complete shift away from established OCF topics.

Recent studies have increasingly examined how feedback is shaped by teacher beliefs, learner characteristics, classroom interaction, and technology-mediated environments (Ha et al., 2024; Uludağ, 2024; Ye & Hu, 2024; Zhang et al., 2025). The appearance of AI-related keywords in the more recent literature indicates an emerging interest in technology-supported feedback. However, this pattern should be interpreted cautiously because AI-related studies may address feedback more broadly rather than OCF specifically. Thus, AI represents an emerging direction related to feedback research rather than a clearly established central theme of OCF.

Established topics such as recasts, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, uptake, and repair remain visible. This suggests that recent OCF research is broadening its scope while maintaining connections with the theoretical and empirical foundations of earlier research.

Implication and Future Research

The findings suggest that future OCF research should examine teachers, learners, classroom interaction, and technology in relation to one another. The thematic patterns indicate that feedback practices are connected not only to feedback types but also to learner perceptions, teacher beliefs, interactional processes, and contextual conditions. Research that combines classroom observation, interaction data, learner perceptions, and teacher perspectives may therefore provide a more comprehensive understanding of how OCF operates in practice.

Future studies could also investigate the longer-term relationship between OCF and oral language development, particularly speaking accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation. Longitudinal designs may help clarify how learners respond to feedback over time rather than only within individual classroom episodes. Comparative studies across different EFL contexts could also provide further insight into how classroom and educational conditions shape OCF practices.

The emergence of AI-related feedback provides another direction for future research. Future studies could examine how AI-supported feedback may be used in oral and speaking contexts, how learners interpret and respond to AI-generated feedback, and how teachers evaluate and adapt AI suggestions. Research could also investigate teacher-AI collaboration while considering teacher agency, feedback quality, learner engagement, and responsible use of AI.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the data were collected only from Scopus, so the study may not have included relevant studies from other databases. Second, the study included only English-language articles and conference papers published between 2016 and 2025. Third, the search depended on the selected keywords, so it may not have retrieved relevant studies using different terms. In addition, although manual screening was conducted to distinguish oral corrective feedback (OCF) studies from written corrective feedback (WCF) studies, some residual misclassification may remain. This possibility reflects the limitations of manual classification based on publication titles, abstracts, keywords, and research focus. Finally, keyword co-occurrence analysis shows relationships between keywords but does not prove causal or developmental relationships. Therefore, the thematic patterns should be understood as patterns in the published literature rather than evidence of the effectiveness of particular feedback strategies. Bibliometric indicators reflect publication and citation patterns rather than the quality of individual studies.

CONCLUSION

This study mapped the development of research on Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF) in EFL classrooms from 2016 to 2025 using bibliometric analysis of Scopus-indexed publications. The findings show that OCF research has developed into a sustained and diverse area of research, with contributions from different countries, affiliations, authors, and publication sources.

The thematic analysis shows that OCF research continues to focus on corrective feedback and error correction while also addressing learner perceptions, teacher beliefs, learner uptake, speaking development, classroom interaction, and technology. Traditional topics such as recasts, explicit correction, metalinguistic feedback, and uptake remain important, while technology and AI represent emerging areas of research.

The findings suggest that future research can further connect feedback strategies with learner responses, teacher practices, classroom interaction, and contextual factors. Longitudinal and empirical studies may also provide a deeper understanding of how OCF develops across different EFL contexts.

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