

## Error Management Behaviors in EFL Classrooms: Teachers' Responses to Students' Errors

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IJEAP- 1808-1261

### Abstract

Teachers employ various strategies to deal with the errors that occur in the classroom. The present study aimed to investigate various types of EFL teachers' error management behaviors and the reasons for employing them. For this purpose, 15 male and female EFL instructors were selected based on availability sampling. Real-time observations were made based on a 21-item checklist in 45 sessions which were all recorded to be transcribed. The participating teachers were interviewed immediately after the sessions to find out why they had employed specific kinds of error management behavior. Intra and inter rater reliability of the qualitative content analyses were ensured through Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ). The results of qualitative and quantitative content analyses revealed that positive error management was more frequent compared to negative error management behaviors; in addition, the types of error management behavior patterns were dependent on teacher's perception toward errors. Based on the results of the interview, providing comforting atmosphere, arousing motivation, and encouraging students' self-confidence were the major reasons for the teachers' employment of adaptive and positive error management behaviors. However, when students were naughty, inattentive, and careless, the teachers were inclined to use maladaptive behaviors. Lack of enough time to get the correct answer from the students, and avoiding the distraction of students were also the main intentions behind the teachers' selection of 'correction by teacher' category.

**Keywords:** Error, Learners, Error Management Behaviors, EFL

### 1. Introduction

Successful teaching and learning do not come about in poorly managed classrooms but rather in a well-managed atmosphere that generates a stress-free environment wherein students feel increased sense of belonging to classroom (Jones & Jones, 2012; Korpershoek, Harms, de Boer, van Kuijk, & Doolaard, 2014; Van de Grift, Van der Wal, & Torenbeek, 2011). Effective classroom management leads to a positive classroom environment that facilitates effective teaching and learning through creating prolific teacher-student relationships (Anderson & Kincaid, 2005). However, it is often described as a multifaceted issue since it is interwoven with various external and internal factors in practice. Martin, Yin, and Baldwin (1998) believed that "classroom management is a broad umbrella term which describes the teacher's efforts to oversee classroom activities, such as learning, social interaction, and students' behavior" (p. 98).

Brophy (2006) also defined classroom management as the actions taken by teachers "to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to successful instruction (arranging the physical

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environment, establishing rules and procedures, maintaining students' attention to lessons and engagement in activities)" (p. 17). Teachers, therefore, play a significant role in creating a supportive environment for the academic and social emotional learning of students. As Fowler and Sarapli (2010) stated, teachers should be able to select appropriate interventions to help students with behavior problems. If the students are not ruled, disciplined, or managed, chaos becomes the norm. Consequently, no efficacious teaching and learning can be cultivated in such an atmosphere.

The proposed definitions concentrate on the responsibility of teachers more than other factors which are influential in learners' achievement and the degree of their involvement. Teachers' maladaptive behaviors in managing students' behaviors might lead to undesirable motivational patterns, negative emotions, debilitating anxiety, and fear of failure (Degen-Hientz, 2008; Goetz, Pekrun, Hall, & Haag, 2006). Teachers should be responsive to students' errors and should create positive error climate to provide a situation in which both students and teacher feel free and positive to be involved in the class activities. Although classroom management plays an essential role in the process of teaching and learning (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012), it has been often overlooked in most teachers' preparation courses. Most teachers follow their own approach of classroom management through trial and error in the years of their teaching experience (Coetzee, Niekerk, & Wydeman, 2008). The results, however, have not always been satisfactory. A review of pertinent studies on the classroom management shows that scant attention has been paid to the contribution of effective classroom error management (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Brown, 2007, Tulis, 2013). The goal of this study is to shed light on the patterns of teachers' responses to the students' errors through direct classroom observation and interview with teachers. In particular, the study aimed at identifying teachers' adaptive and maladaptive error management behavior in regular everyday classrooms and the reasons for following those types of adaptive or maladaptive behaviors.

## **2. Literature Review**

As stated above, classroom management is about creating appealing and pleasing environments for students' learning. It is, therefore, the manifestation of the teachers' effort in creating such an environment, ranging from activities to improve teacher-student relationships to rules that regulate students' behavior. Classrooms with mutual respect and tolerance atmosphere provoke a stress-free atmosphere and offer better opportunities for learning that consequently lead to an increased sense of belonging to the classroom (Adelman & Taylor, 2005; Hamre & Pianta, 2007). Evertson and Weinstein (2006) classified five types of actions recommended to attain a high quality of classroom management. The first action refers to developing a supportive relationship with and among learners. Managing the instruction in a way to optimize learners' access to learning is the second required action. The third one refers to encouraging the learners' engagement in academic tasks through establishing rules and classroom procedures. The next one is that teachers should also stimulate the development of students' self-regulation and social skills. Finally, they believed that teachers should be knowledgeable enough to use appropriate methods to help students with behavior problems. The propounded actions by Evertson and Weinstein (2006) indicate that efficacious classroom management improves student behavior in an optimal way.

Likewise, Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf (2009) proposed five intervention strategies for classroom management based on the disruptions a teacher encounters in the class. The first one is extinction in which the teacher ignores the minor distraction such as being carless or inattentive. The second strategy is nonverbal intervention strategy such as establishing eye contact, aggressive facial expression and gesture, or verbal intervention such as slowing down the voice, pronouncing things more distinctly, and pausing briefly. The third type is verbal reprimands to convey the ultimate level of teacher's tolerance on that specific misbehavior. The fourth one is time-out or a kind of soft punishment such as excluding students from class activities. The last strategy is overt severe punishment as a kind of classroom management. Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003) also stated that reactive strategies such as giving warnings or punishments are sometimes needed to reduce disruptive or other undesired student behavior when preventive strategies do not work.

There are various factors that affect teachers' classroom management among which teaching experience has paramount effects. Korthagen (2004) indicated that teaching experience touches the classroom management in a way that the novice teachers trace less controlling approach in comparison with the more experienced ones. Other studies (e.g. Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Rahimi & Hosseini, 2012; Zhou & Li, 2015) showed that teachers' gender also influences the classroom management approaches and that female teachers seem to take a less controlling approach in managing their classroom than their male counterparts. The subject matter of the course (Ünal & Ünal, 2012), the context of teaching (Carter & Van Norman, 2010), and the cultural background (Zhou & Li, 2015) are also among the other influential aspects.

In an EFL context, the use of English as both the medium and the content of teaching makes the challenges unique (Fowler & Sarapli, 2010) and consequently the importance of classroom error management becomes more pronounced (Linse & Nunan, 2005). Rahimi and Hosseini (2012) examined Iranian EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies from their students' perspective. One thousand four hundred and ninety seven EFL learners were asked to fill in the attitude questionnaire about the teachers' classroom management disciplines. The results revealed that Iranian EFL teachers employ recognition/rewarding strategies more often to control their classes, while 'showing anger' and 'using punishment' were the least common classroom discipline strategies. Besides, female teachers exploited punishment, bitter discussion, and aggravation more in comparison to their male counterparts. Dong (2001) also found the same results confirming that the female teachers used more punishment and aggression in comparison to their male counterparts due to the greater stress levels they experienced. Khasinah (2017) described students' disruptive behaviors in language classroom that affected language teaching and learning processes and reviewed several studies offering various kinds of classroom management strategies such as ignoring, acting immediately, stopping for few seconds, reseating, changing the activities, and talking individually with the students after the class to control the errors (Albert, 2003; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012; Yildiz, 2017).

In another study, Martin and Shoho (2000) studied the relationship between teachers' age and their perceptions of classroom management style. Data were gathered from 388 participants via a checklist and a questionnaire. A significant correlation between the two variables was confirmed and it was revealed that as teachers' age increased, their beliefs and attitudes toward various aspects of classroom management became more inclined to controlling. Although classroom management is a major concern for teachers, there is a paucity of research on the approaches employed by EFL teachers to manage their classroom to maximize the learning effects. Furthermore, most of the studies have focused on high schools in Iran and few researches have dealt with EFL classroom problems at private language centers (Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2015).

### 3. Research Questions

This study aimed at capturing a more vivid snapshot of EFL teachers' adaptive and maladaptive classroom management behaviors in EFL context. As such, the study tried to find out the answers to the following research questions:

- Q1. What are the types of EFL teachers' error management behaviors in response to the speaking errors committed by EFL learners?
- Q2. Are there any significant differences among the error management behaviors employed by EFL teachers?
- Q3. What are the factors that affect the type of teachers' error management behaviors in response to the speaking errors of EFL learners?

### 4. Methodology

This study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods. As Mackey and Gass (2005) mentioned, "it is increasingly common for researchers to represent and discuss both quantitative and qualitative data in the same report, or to use methods associated with both types of research in a process

sometimes known as split methods or multiple methods” (p. 164). The data were collected qualitatively through observation and interview and were subjected to some statistical procedures including frequency, percentage, and Chi-square.

#### *4.1. Participants*

The participants of this study were 15 EFL teachers (6 males and 9 females) with B.A. degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). Five institutes were selected randomly across the city and the teachers were selected based on availability sampling from those selected institutes. The participating teachers’ age ranged from 23 to 35. Since students’ multiple language proficiency is among the extraneous variables that might affect teacher’s type of classroom management (Rahimi & Hosseini, 2015), students’ proficiency level was controlled and only intermediate classes were selected randomly. The proficiency level of these students was ensured through the administration of Oxford Placement Test (OPT). From each teacher’s classes, three successive sessions were observed and recorded. Overall, the data were gathered from forty-five sessions.

#### *4.2. Instruments*

##### *Oxford Placement Test*

Oxford Placement Test version 1.1 (2001) published by Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate consists of 60 items which test the learners’ general knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing. In order to avoid the effect of language proficiency of the classes, as an extraneous variable, on teachers’ management behaviors, students were selected from the same level of proficiency (intermediate). This test was used to make sure about the students’ homogeneity in terms of their proficiency level. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of the test was calculated to be .911.

##### *Observation Checklist*

The instrument utilized in the current study was an observation checklist which was designed based on Hiebert et al. (2003), Santagata (2005), and Tulis (2013). In order to ensure the reliability of the observation checklist, it was piloted and its reliability coefficient was found to be .90 which indicates a strong internal consistency among the items. The content of the modified checklist was also validated through a panel of four experienced EFL experts. The checklist consists of three parts. The first part deals with the demographic features of EFL teachers. The second part consists of 21 items classified under three categories including negative error management behavior, positive error management behavior and teacher correction.

##### *Interview*

Qualitative interviews can be utilized as the main strategy for data elicitation, or in conjunction with other instruments such as observation (Creswell, 2005). To this end, the participating EFL teachers also took part in a semi-structured interview to find out the factors that affect the selection of the specific type of the error management behaviors in their classes. A set of items were developed and modified based on the comments of experts to make sure that the items were appropriate as interview guide and to ensure their relevance and feasibility. The experts were four experienced university professors holding Ph.D. in TEFL with a range of nine to ten years of teaching experience.

#### *4.3. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures*

In order to find the possible drawbacks and check the reliability of the checklist, a pilot study was conducted on the proposed checklist. The checklist was piloted with seven teachers each of whom had classes with at least 10 students. The reliability coefficient of the observation checklist piloted was .90, which indicates a strong internal consistency among the items.

After the checklist was finalized, fifteen EFL instructors were observed in terms of their error management behaviors in the classroom. Observation in real time was done in 45 sessions during a semester. In other words, the whole three selected sessions of each individual teacher were observed.

Based on the validated checklist, the teachers' immediate responses to the students' errors were documented and recorded. Every event that was treated as an error by the teacher followed by his/her specific reactions was regarded as an error management sequence. In other words, emphasis was placed on the strategies teachers used to handle what they considered as errors. Students' errors were mainly identified by the teachers' verbal comment (e.g., 'No, that is not correct.', 'Wrong!') and/or indirectly by non-verbal behavior (e.g., shaking the head). All codings were based on event sampling; the timeline only served as an orienting guideline for the observer during the lesson. After the observation of each session was thoroughly completed, the interview was conducted with that teacher to explore the relevant factors and variables that affect his/her selection of the error treatment behavior from his/her perspective.

The data were transcribed first and then were analyzed through qualitative content analysis. The quantitative content analyses were carried out through the use of descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency & percentage). Chi-Square test also was run to find out the statistical significance of the differences across categories. The interviews were analyzed qualitatively and the results of the qualitative content analyses were reported through frequency and percentage as well.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Reliability of the Coding Procedure

Intra-rater and inter-rater reliability estimates were computed to ensure the reliability of the rating. To determine intra-rater reliability, 20% of the randomly selected observations were coded twice by one of the researchers after a two-week time interval and the Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) reliability was found to be 87.4%, indicating high intra-coder reliability. Table 1 presents Cohen's Kappa intra-rater reliability report:

Table 1: Cohen's Kappa Intra-rater Reliability: Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.874	.019	38.913	.000
N of Valid Cases		352			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Cohen's kappa ( $\kappa$ ) was also run to determine if there was agreement between two raters' judgment on the 20% of the randomly selected recorded observations. Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) reliability was found to be 80.3%, indicating high inter-coder reliability.

Table 2: Cohen's Kappa Inter-rater Reliability: Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.803	.063	12.535	.000
N of Valid Cases		50			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

To provide the answer of the first research question, the frequency and percentage for the three categories of the checklist, namely, negative error management, correction by teacher, and positive error management were computed. Frequency and percentage for these three categories are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Statistics for the Three Categories of the Checklist

	N	Frequency	Percentage
Negative error management	15	45	4.29%
Correction by the teacher	15	318	30.37%
Positive error management	15	449	65.32 %

Based on the data obtained, the frequency of occurrences for the last category, i.e., positive error management ( $f = 449$ ;  $p = 65\%$ ), was higher than the other two categories, namely, negative error management ( $f = 45$ ;  $p = 4\%$ ) and correction by the teacher ( $f = 318$ ;  $p = 30\%$ ). The results revealed that ‘positive error management’ was observed more frequently as compared to ‘negative error management’ or ‘correction by the teacher’.

The first section of the checklist dealt with the teachers’ use of negative error management. This category was related to maladaptive strategies such as ignoring errors, criticizing students, negative emotional reaction, redirecting the question indifferently to another student, humiliating/laughing, negative nonverbal reaction, and disruptive behavior. The statistics for the seven items of the first category are given in the following table.

Table 4: Statistics for the First Category of the Checklist (Negative Error Management)

	N	Frequency	Percentage
The teacher indifferently ignores the errors and switches to another topic without any comments.	15	5	11.11%
The teacher gets angry and makes negative criticism of the student’s mistake.	15	4	8.89%
The teacher states expressions of annoyance, disappointment or hopelessness	15	13	28.89%
The teacher picks another student to correct the error made by the first student without giving enough time to the student to try.	15	10	22.22%
The teacher laughs, makes jokes of the student’s answer, and humiliates the student.	15	5	11.11%
The teacher shakes his head, grimaces, pouts, frowns, smirks, sneers, contorts and twists.	15	4	8.89%
The teacher embarrasses students when they have difficulty doing the work or answering the questions.	15	4	8.89%

The first item of the first section evaluated the teachers’ negative error management behavior with respect to ‘ignoring the errors and switching to another topic without any comments.’ The frequency of this item came to ( $f = 5$ ;  $p = 11.11\%$ ). The second item assessed the teachers’ performance with respect to ‘making negative criticism of the student’s mistake’. The number of times this factor was observed in classes amounted to ( $f = 4$ ;  $p = 8.89\%$ ). The third item of this category was about the teachers’ reactions towards errors made by the students regarding their ‘use of expressions of

annoyance, disappointment or hopelessness'. The frequency with which this factor was observed in classes came to ( $f=13$ ;  $p = 28.89\%$ ). The fourth item of this category was specified to investigate another maladaptive strategy that was teachers' use of 'another student to correct the error made by the first student without giving enough time to the student to try'. The rate of occurrences for this item came to ( $f = 10$ ;  $p = 22.22\%$ ). The fifth item of the first section of the observation checklist dealt with teachers' use of 'humiliating/laughing' in which 'the teacher laughs, makes jokes of the student's answer, and humiliates the student.' The prevalence of this item was ( $f = 5$ ;  $p = 11.11\%$ ). The sixth item dealt with 'negative nonverbal reaction' in which 'the teacher shakes his head, grimaces, pouts, frowns, smirks, sneers, contorts and twists.' The rate of occurrences for this item came to ( $f = 4$ ;  $p = 8.89\%$ ). The last item of this category assessed the teachers' possible 'disruptive behavior' in which the teachers were observed to see if 'they embarrass students when they have difficulty doing the work or answering the questions.' The rate of occurrences for this item came to ( $f = 4$ ;  $p = 8.89\%$ ).

In order to see whether the subcategories are significantly different or not, Chi-square goodness-of-fit test was run after confirming statistically that the data meets four assumptions of Chi-square goodness-of-fit test. Table 5 presents the result of the Chi-square goodness-of-fit test.

Table 5: Chi-Square Test (Test Statistics for Negative Error Management)

Negative Error Management	
Chi-Square	12.089 <sup>a</sup>
Df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.060

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 6.4.

As table 5 indicates, the Chi-square test statistic is not statistically significant:  $\chi^2 = 12.089$ ,  $p > .05$ . Therefore, there are not statistically significant differences in the seven subcategories of negative error management behaviors.

The frequency and percentage analysis of the data collected by the checklist was also done for the second category of the checklist (see Table 6).

Table 6: Statistics for the Second Category of the Checklist (Correction by the Teacher)

	N	Frequency	Percentage
The teacher states the correct answer; the error is directly addressed by the teacher.	15	318	30.37%

The second category in fact is to avoid students' distraction. English classes are interactive in nature and necessitate students' participation, speaking, and interaction with each other in the classroom. As Yi (2006) stated, "students usually have more opportunities in an EFL class than classes of other subjects to speak, to talk, to read loud or even to argue with each other" (p. 132). These activities boost noise, distraction, and disorder in case they are not well managed or organized. In fact, if the class is managed inappropriately by the teacher, there would be the risk of chaos and disruptive behavior (Rahimi & Hosseini, 2015). As Butler (2011) put forth, too much noise in the classroom interferes with the students' concentration and the cognitive processing of information which accordingly minimizes learning outcome and motivation. Therefore, the second category is among the teachers' error management behavior without being classified as either positive or negative. That is why it stands

independently as a category. The frequency of this category was found to be 318 with the percentage of 30.37 %.

The third category included items related to teachers' adaptive behaviors. The frequency and percentage analysis of the data collected by the checklist for the third category of the checklist that included four subscales is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Statistics for the Third Category of the Checklist (Positive Error Management)

	N	Frequency	Percentage
1. Waiting: In case the student is inattentive or daydreaming, the teacher gives student enough time to come back to herself. The teacher waits at least 5 s without reformulating the question or giving a hint while keeping eye contacts.	15	204	45.40%
2. Correction by the student: The teacher repeats the question leniently and give a hint to the student when there is no response due to daydreaming or negligence.	15	136	30.28%
3. Discussion with whole class: In case a student is chatting with others or is working with other staffs, the teacher starts a discussion with the whole class, asking the whole class for the asked question like: 'Anyone else?' 'What does someone else have?' 'Do you all agree?' 'Does anyone have a different answer?'	15	34	7.57%
4. Impeding negative reactions from class: In case a student's answer is wrong, the teacher impedes negative reactions from class (The teacher stops negative reactions from classmates (e.g. laughing) and turbulences.	15	22	4.89%
5. The teacher praises the student's thought or approach, highlights positively the student's active contribution, emphasizes the learning potential of the mistake	15	53	11.80%

As shown in table 7, 'waiting', that refers to giving student enough time to think about the given answer and replace it with the correct one while keeping eye contacts, was the most frequently observed positive error management behavior ( $f = 204$ ,  $p = 45.40\%$ ). 'Correction by the student' that denotes 'repeating the question and giving a hint by the teacher when there is no response or wrong responses are given' was the second most frequently observed positive error management behavior ( $f = 136$ ,  $p = 30.28\%$ ). This was followed by 'emphasizing the learning potential' through which the teacher praises the student's thought or approach, highlights the student's active contribution positively, and emphasizes the learning potential of the mistake' ( $f = 53$ ,  $p = 11.80\%$ ). Impeding negative reactions from class with the frequency of 22 ( $f = 4.89\%$ ) was the least frequently observed adaptive behavior.

In order to find out whether the subcategories are significantly different from each other, Chi-square goodness-of-fit test was run. Table 8 presents the result of the Chi-square goodness-of-fit test:

Table 8: Chi-Square Test (Test Statistics for Positive Error Management)

Positive Error Management	
Chi-Square	269.942 <sup>a</sup>
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000



a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 89.8.

As table 8 reveals, the Chi-square test statistic is statistically significant:  $\chi^2 = 269.942$ ,  $p < .05$ . As a result, it can be concluded that there are statistically significant differences in the five subcategories of positive error management behaviors.

To provide an answer to the third research question, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 teachers and rich data about the factors that affect the teachers' selection of the types of error management behaviors were provided. The transcribed interviews were subjected to qualitative content analyses. The extracted factors that affect teachers' maladaptive behavior are listed below with the relevant frequency and percentage for each of the items:

Speaking with one another during teaching (n = 14; 93.3%)

Playing with cell phones and personal stuffs (for texting, playing games, surfing webpage, etc.) (n = 13; 86.6%)

Being inattentive and careless (daydreaming, idleness, etc.) (n = 11; 73.33%)

Talking out of turn (n = 9; 60.0%)

Being Unpunctual (n = 8; 53.3%)

Answering before the question finishes (n = 6; 40.0%)

Passive engagement in class (n = 5; 33.3%)

Arguing with teachers and challenging her on certain concepts (n = 4; 26.6%)

Ignoring the teacher's directions (n = 4; 26.6%)

Reading other materials, and doing other things (listening to music) (n = 3; 20.0%)

Losing temper on slight penalty given by the teacher (n = 3; 20.0%)

Habitual failure in submitting assignments (n = 2; 13.3%)

The results showed that the most common disruptive problem behavior was speaking with one another during teaching (n = 14; 93.3%) followed by playing with cell phones and personal stuffs (for texting, playing games, surfing webpage, etc.) (n = 13; 86.6%) and the least common one was habitual failure in submitting assignments (n = 2; 13.3%). The results are supported by Sun and Shek (2012) who confirmed that the students' misbehaviors such as "disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teaching activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teacher, defiance, and hostility, ranging from infrequent to frequent, mild to severe, are thorny issue in everyday classroom" (p. 1). Likewise, Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf (2009) stated that, dealing with students' disruptive misbehaviors such as talking loudly, calling out, off-task behaviors, daydreaming and fooling around consumed a considerable amount of time that in turn touched the quality of the student's learning experience.

The results are also in line with those of Sun (2016) who revealed that teachers perceived students' problematic misbehaviors as those involving breaking rules, violating the explicit norms, ignoring implicit expectations, being inappropriate in the classroom settings and disturbing teaching and learning that largely required intervention from teachers. Similar to these findings, Ho and Leung (2002) found that talking out of turn, daydreaming, inattentiveness, talking back, arguing, reading other materials, and doing other things were among the students' disruptive behaviors. Infantino and Little (2005) also reported similar types of students' behaviors such as talking out of turn, speaking back,

unpunctuality, making irritating noise, disobedience, and idleness/slowness as the most wearisome and frustrating behaviors.

Based on the results, the teachers considered these behaviors intolerable because they interrupted teaching, disturbed students' learning. They stated that students' misbehaviors impeded not only the smoothness and effectiveness of teaching but also retarded the process of learning. As Arbuckle and Little (2004) declared, the students' misbehaviors "cause distress for teachers, interrupt the learning process and lead teachers to make continual comments to the student and impede the teaching-learning process" (p. 43). These findings implicitly indicated that teachers were concerned about the classroom learning and students' development.

For the second category, the 'correction by teacher,' factors such as lack of enough time to get the correct answer from the students (n = 14; 93.3%) was the main intention behind their selection. Being sure the students do not know the correct answer (n = 13; 86.6%) as well as avoiding the distraction of students (n = 12; 80.0%) were among the other prominent factors. For 'positive error management', factors like providing comforting atmosphere (n = 11; 73.33%), arousing motivation (n = 10; 66.6%), encouraging and increasing student's self-confidence (n = 9; 60.0%) were among the major reasons for their selection of the specific type of classroom error management.

## 6. Discussion

The reviewed studies aimed to discover EFL teachers' patterns of error management behaviors that may play paramount roles in students' learning and everyday experiences in the classroom. The results of the study are in line with those of Elias and Schwab (2006), Steuer and Dresel (2011), Tulis and Ainley (2011) and Xuerong (2012) who disclosed a broad range of adaptive as well as maladaptive reactions such as keeping order, introducing rules procedures, disciplinary interventions, criticizing a student for his/her incorrect answer, responding to students' answers in a non-evaluative manner, interrupting the student immediately, positive reinforcement, positive acknowledgment of incorrect solution, praising the student by repeating or quoting students' answer, repeating with change and self-repairing. The results also lend support to the findings of Tulis (2013) who addressed the general occurrence of error management behavior in everyday classes and focused on the frequency of teachers' adaptive and maladaptive error management behaviors.

The results provided evidence for a broad range of adaptive versus maladaptive responses. In general, the teachers' responses to students' errors were more often inclined to the adaptive ones rather than those of maladaptive types. This is also acknowledged in the findings of other observation-based studies centering on the mistake-handling accomplishments (e.g., Chitiyo, May, & Chitiyo, 2012; Santagata, 2005). As teachers take a significant role in proposing encouragement and modifying the students' errors, the teachers should convey genuine gladness and offer words of praise when students succeed in accomplishing a task or learning a language item because "people are more likely to continue a conversation when other people agree than when disagree" (Rivers, 2000, p. 226). If the teachers put too much attention on the committed errors and neglect the necessary encouragement, the students might lose sight of motivation and the value of positive reinforcement.

Students' misbehavior distracts the process of learning and teaching and consequently destroys the effectiveness of even the most cautiously planned classes. An adequate degree of classroom discipline is required to create an atmosphere conducive to students' learning. Evertson and Weinstein (2006) delineate the two main purposes of classroom management by stating that "it not only seeks to establish and sustain an orderly environment so students can engage in meaningful academic learning, it also aims to enhance student social and moral growth" (p. 4). Devender and Sokolosky (2012), and Heimbeck, Frese, Sonnentag, and Keith (2003) also declared that teachers who had established clear standards and positive classroom atmosphere tended to be more successful in encouraging students in incorporating in the learning tasks because the students know that even if they make any mistakes in the classroom, they would not be ridiculed by teacher or anyone else.

## 7. Conclusion

Due to the paramount effect of students' disruptive behavior in the process of teaching and consequently learning, extensive research has been conducted to find out the sources of such behaviors to help teachers manage their classes through adopting appropriate discipline strategies effectively. The present study made an attempt to shed light on what kind of error management behaviors the Iranian EFL teachers use to respond to their students' errors and what factors make them use specific types of behaviors. Though it was just a small-scale exploration and the findings may reveal partial views of classroom research, it gives insight to the study of the Iranian foreign language classroom, and promotes the awareness of teachers toward using types of error management behaviors in their context.

The significance of error management behavior and classroom discipline has been well esteemed both from a social practice outlook and an effective teaching perspective. Socially, the teachers' discipline strategies have been considered to be a strong potency to encourage students' sense of responsibility in the classroom (Lewis, Romi, Qui, & Katz, 2005) and to "produce more responsible citizens at a grand vision" (Rahimi & Hosseini, 2012, p. 58).

What was found from this research may provide some practical guidance to the language teachers, especially young teachers, and help them know more about efficient classroom management behaviors to improve their teaching efficiency. The result can make the long way of trial and error short and help them select the most appropriate behavior in time. Further studies are needed to shed light on other aspects of the issue such as investigating students' emotions and their ability to regulate negative emotions, teachers' attitude toward the errors committed by students and the effect of teachers' error attitudes and respective error management behavior on their students.

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