



Investigation of EFL Teachers' practices and perceptions of written corrective feedback in their writing classrooms: A Case Study at the Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia

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دراسة ممارسات وتصورات أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في تقديم التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية في فصول الكتابة الخاصة بهم: دراسة حالة بكلية الآداب، جامعة الزاوية
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الملخص:

تتناول هذه الدراسة الممارسات والتصورات المتعلقة بالتصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية لدى أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على هذه الممارسات في سياق تدريس الكتابة. كما تستكشف الدراسة تصورات هؤلاء المعلمين حول مدى فعالية هذا النوع من التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية. وقد أجريت هذه الدراسة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب، جامعة الزاوية. ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف، اعتمدت الدراسة على أداتين لجمع البيانات: استبيان وُرِّع على خمسة وثلاثين معلماً لاستكشاف تصوراتهم حول مختلف أنواع التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية في فصول الكتابة، وتحليل الواجبات كتابية مصححة جُمعت من أربعة عشر طالباً للوقوف على الممارسات الفعلية لمعلميهم. وقد أظهرت النتائج أن المعلمين يدركون قيمة التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية في فصول الكتابة في تعزيز مهارات الكتابة من جوانب عدة، منها القواعد النحوية والمفردات وقواعد الترتيب والإملاء. غير أنهم يواجهون تحديات تتعلق بضيق الوقت وكثرة عبء العمل، الأمر الذي يؤثر سلباً على قدرتهم على تقديم التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية فعالة. وأشار تحليل الوثائق إلى أن المعلمين يستخدمون في الغالب مزيجاً من التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية المباشرة وغير المباشرة، مع غلبة استخدام التصحيحات النحوية غير المباشرة. علاوة على ذلك، كشفت الدراسة عن وجود تباين ملحوظ بين تصورات المعلمين حول التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية في فصول الكتابة وممارساتهم الفعلية.

الكلمات الدالة: التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية في فصول الكتابة، أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، تدريس الكتابة، تصورات المعلمين، التصحيحات القواعدية والنحوية المباشرة وغير المباشرة.

Abstract:

This study investigates the practices and perceptions of written corrective feedback (WCF) among teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), with specific emphasis on the context of teaching writing. It further explores these teachers' perceptions regarding the efficacy of such feedback. The research was conducted in the English Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia. To achieve these aims, the study employed two data

collection instruments: a questionnaire distributed to thirty-five teachers to examine their perceptions of various types of written corrective feedback, and an analysis of corrected writing assignments collected from fourteen students to investigate teachers' actual feedback practices. The findings revealed that teachers recognize the value of written corrective feedback in enhancing writing skills across several dimensions, including grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. However, they face challenges related to time constraints and workload, which negatively affect their ability to provide effective feedback. The document analysis indicated that teachers predominantly use a combination of direct and indirect corrective feedback, with indirect feedback being more frequent, and that feedback often focused on identifying errors rather than using coded feedback. Moreover, the study revealed a significant mismatch between teachers' perceptions of written corrective feedback and their actual practices. In light of these findings, several recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness of written corrective feedback in EFL contexts.

Keywords: Written Corrective Feedback, EFL Teachers, Writing Instruction, Teachers' Perceptions, Direct and Indirect Feedback.

1. Introduction

Writing is a complex skill that students must master in order to effectively express their ideas, thoughts, and messages to readers. Within the context of foreign language learning, writing involves numerous interrelated aspects that must be addressed to enhance textual quality, which in turn depends largely on students' overall writing proficiency (Muthoharoh & Anite, 2018). In practice, students frequently struggle with a range of issues, including spelling, grammar, vocabulary use, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and the use of nonstandard expressions (Chowdhury, 2015). To address these difficulties, teachers draw on a variety of instructional techniques, one of the most common being the provision of written feedback.

Feedback is widely considered essential in writing classrooms for developing second language (L2) writing skills, as it contributes not only to learning but also to student motivation (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). The way feedback is delivered, however, is shaped by the beliefs teachers hold about it and by how these beliefs are translated into actual

classroom practice (Kim & Vattoy, 2020). Feedback is broadly defined as information provided by an agent, such as a teacher, peer, or one's own experience, regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). However, this study focuses specifically on teacher-provided written corrective feedback in L2 writing classroom. Feedback can be divided into written commentary, which addresses organization and grammatical issues and helps motivate students'; despite being time-consuming for teachers (Goldstein, 2005), and written corrective feedback (WCF), which more narrowly targets grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors. It is latter type that constitutes the primary focus of the present study.

WCF remains a contested area, particularly regarding its timing and methodology (Ellis, 2009), yet it is considered one of the most important tasks writing teachers perform (Ferris, 2006). Key distinctions in the literature include direct versus indirect feedback, and focused versus unfocused feedback. Direct WCF involves correcting the error explicitly, while indirect WCF simply marks its location without providing the correction (Lee, 2003; Ellis, 2008; Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Focused feedback targets specific error types, whereas unfocused feedback addresses a broader range of errors (Lee, 2013; Rajab, 2018).

The effectiveness of WCF remains debated: while several studies affirm its motivational and developmental value (Chandler, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006), others question its usefulness or even see it as potentially harmful to writing development (Truscott, 2023). This debate remains unresolved despite comprehensive reviews of the empirical evidence (Bitchener & Storch, 2016). Despite extensive research on WCF's effectiveness, teachers' perceptions of corrective feedback, particularly within the Libyan EFL context, remain underexplored. This study addresses that gap by examining teachers' perceptions of WCF alongside their actual feedback practices in writing classrooms.

2. Statement of the Problem

Feedback constitutes a fundamental component of writing instruction, as both teachers and students widely believe that it helps learners avoid repeating errors and fosters the development of their writing skills. Preliminary observations within the research's own

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academic experience revealed considerable inconsistency in the corrective feedback strategies employed by different teachers. While some teachers adopted a comprehensive approach, correcting every error in students' writing, others addressed only selected errors, reflecting a more selective or focused approach. Similarly, some teachers provided direct correction by explicitly indicating the correct forms, whereas others merely underlined errors without offering any correction. In certain instances, feedback was minimal, limited to a grade with no accompanying commentary at all. The inconsistency is also supported by anecdotal evidence from colleagues and is reflected in students' complaints about unfair marking, yet it has not been empirically investigated in the Libyan context.

This apparent inconsistency raises important questions regarding the theoretical or empirical basis, if any, that informs teachers' approaches to correction. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding written corrective feedback in writing classrooms specifically, it seeks to determine the extent to which teachers' feedback strategies are informed by established theory or empirical research.

3. Research Objectives

- 1) To explore EFL teachers' perceptions of written corrective feedback (WCF).
- 2) To identify how EFL teachers actually use written corrective feedback in their writing classrooms.

To achieve these objectives, the study addresses the following questions:

4. Research Questions

- 1) What perceptions do EFL writing teachers hold regarding written corrective feedback?
- 2) How do teachers provide written corrective feedback on their students' written texts?

Significance of the Study: The significance of this study lies in its attempt to identify both the practices and the underlying perceptions associated with written corrective feedback among EFL teachers in writing classrooms. Given the relatively limited body of research addressing WCF within this specific context, particularly in Libya, the present study is expected to contribute to filling this gap in the literature and to offer insights that

could assist EFL teachers in refining their feedback strategies. The findings may also inform teacher training programs and curriculum development in Libyan Universities regarding effective WCF practices.

5. Methodology:

This study adopted a quantitative approach to explore EFL teachers' practices and perceptions of written corrective feedback in their writing classrooms. The justification of choosing mixed approach is weak. According to Muijs (2004, p. 11), quantitative methods are concerned with explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data, analyzed through mathematically based procedures. Such an approach enables the collection of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to describe the trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by examining a representative sample of that population (Creswell, 2014, p. 155). A quantitative approach was deemed appropriate to allow for the generalization of findings regarding teachers' common practices and perceptions across the EFL writing faculty at the University of Zawia. Data were collected through a close-ended questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale to measure EFL teachers' perceptions of WCF in their writing classrooms, and a document analysis of corrected writing assignments. The Likert scale was chosen for its effectiveness in capturing nuanced responses, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of teachers' views. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the resulting data.

5.1 Sample:

1. Thirty-five EFL teachers at the University of Zawia who teach writing courses in English (questionnaire).
2. Fourteen of these teachers, whose corrective feedback on two student essays was analyzed (document analysis).

A convenience sampling technique was used to select participants for the questionnaire, while a random sampling technique was employed in selecting the documents analyzed, in line with the study's objectives, since such sampling approaches are considered capable of providing the best information to achieve the study's objectives (Kumar, 2011, p. 189). From the 35 questionnaire respondents, 14 teachers voluntarily provided samples of

connected student essays for document analysis. These 14 teachers were then selected at random from the pool of volunteers.

5.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaire are widely recognized as an efficient tool for gathering substantial data from large samples (Mukherjee, 2020; Kumar, 2019), making them well-suited for capturing EFL teachers' perceptions of written corrective feedback (WCF) (Bartels, 1995). Accordingly, this study employed a close-ended questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale to investigate teachers' perceptions of WCF types and the methods they consider most effective in enhancing student writing.

5.3 Document Analysis

Data on teachers' written corrective feedback (WCF) practices were obtained through document analysis. Two essays were randomly selected from a large pool of student assignments to ensure a representative sample of classroom writing. These essays were then corrected by the 14 participating teachers, whose feedback was analyzed to understand their WCF practices and actual implementation in the classroom, thereby addressing the study's second aim.

6. Literature Review

The efficacy of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) remains contested in L2 writing research, and this review examines its key terms- direct vs. indirect and comprehensive vs. selective- which are defined below to frame the subsequent discussion.

Definition of key terms

1. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF): Teachers' written responses to errors in student writing, as distinct from oral feedback, typically targeting grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors with the aim of improving accuracy (Ducken, 2014; Bitchener & Storch, 2016), (Ur, 1996; Al Shahrani, 2013).
2. Direct WCF: Feedback in which the teacher explicitly supplies the correct form in place of the error (Bitchener, 2005).

3. Indirect WCF: Feedback that signals the presence of an error, without supplying the correction, prompting students to self-correct (Ferris & Roberts, 2001).
4. Comprehensive vs. Selective WCF: Comprehensive feedback addresses most or all errors in a text, while selective feedback targets specific error types only (Lee, 2013).

6.1 Definition of Written Corrective Feedback

Feedback has been defined in various ways, from a general process of self-correction and adjustment (Webster's New World Dictionary, 2001) to the more precise notion of closing the gap between actual and desired performance (Ramaprasad, 1983). Simpler definitions describe it as any dialogue or procedure that informs learners whether their response is correct (Askew & Lodge, 2000; Kepner, 1991). Corrective feedback (CF) refers specifically to responses addressing errors in learners' language production (Ellis, 2009; Baleghizadeh & Rezaei, 2010). Written corrective feedback (WCF) refers to teachers' written responses to errors in student writing, as distinct from oral feedback (Ducken, 2014; Bitchener & Storch, 2016), typically targeting grammatical, lexical, and mechanical errors with the aim of improving accuracy (Ur, 1996; Al Shahrani, 2013), and is widely regarded as a key factor supporting second language acquisition (Ellis, 2009).

7.2 Types of Written Corrective Feedback

Comprehensive (unfocused) feedback addresses most or all errors in a text, while selective (focused) feedback targets specific error types only (Lee, 2013; Ellis, 2009). Findings on their relative effectiveness are mixed: some studies favor focused feedback for improving accuracy (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Shintani et al., 2014), while others find comprehensive feedback more beneficial depending on learner proficiency and task type (Sheen, 2007; Van Beuningen et al., 2012). In addition to differing in scope, WCF also varies in the manner errors are treated, distinguished primarily as direct or indirect feedback.

Direct feedback involves explicitly correcting an error by supplying the correct form (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Ferris, 2003, 2006). It has been found generally effective in improving accuracy and encouraging learner uptake (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Indirect feedback signals an error's presence, through underlining, circling, or coding,

without providing the correction, prompting students to self-correct (Ferris, 2011). It has been associated with greater learner engagement and uptake (Ellis, 2009; Lyster & Ranta, 1997), though its effectiveness depends on proficiency and task factors (Sheen, 2004).

Indirect feedback may be further divided into coded feedback, which marks both the location and type of error using symbols, and uncoded feedback, which marks only the location (Rummel & Bitchener, 2015). Coded feedback can save time and promote metalinguistic awareness (Ferris, 2002; Bitchener & Ferris, 2012), though findings on its effectiveness relative to uncoded feedback remain mixed (Chandler, 2003; Lee, 2013). Metalinguistic feedback, meanwhile, provides comments or codes about an error's nature without supplying the correction (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). It may be effective in the short term, though direct feedback tends to show stronger long-term results, and combining both is sometimes recommended (Bitchener, 2021). Given these mixed findings, it remains crucial to explore which types of WCF are actually preferred and employed by EFL teachers in the Libyan context.

7.3 Types of Errors

Ferris (2011) distinguishes several error categories relevant to WCF: grammatical errors (e.g., tense, agreement), vocabulary errors (e.g., word choice, collocation), mechanical errors (e.g., spelling, punctuation), global errors (affecting overall coherence and meaning), frequent errors (persisting despite feedback), and errors in structures previously taught in class. Each category calls for a somewhat different feedback strategy, ranging from rule explanation and practice for local errors to broader guidance on organization and argument development for global errors (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Among these categories, the distinction between global and local errors is particularly significant for WCF. Global errors compromise the overall meaning, organization, and coherence of a text, encompassing issues such as unclear thesis statements, weak argument development, and insufficient cohesion between ideas. Local errors, in contrast, are more surface-level, involving grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (Ferris, 2011). While local errors rarely obstruct overall comprehension, global errors directly impede the reader's ability to grasp the writer's intended meaning, making them particularly critical to address in WCF (Ferris, 2011; Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Given this distinction, global errors are generally considered to warrant more substantial feedback

addressing structure and logic, whereas local errors are more amenable to direct correction or rule-based explanation (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Notably, however, the local-global distinction does not necessarily reflect the actual difficulty or frequency of an error for a given learner population. Certain local errors, such as those involving article usage, have been found to occur with particular frequency among Arab EFL learners, despite being grammatically minor in nature (Alhaisoni, 2012). This suggests that error frequency, not merely error type, should inform teachers' feedback priorities, particularly in Arabic-speaking EFL contexts such as Libya.

7.4 Theories Related to Written Corrective Feedback

Sociocultural Theory, drawing on the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978), frames WCF as a form of scaffolding that should be calibrated to each learner's developmental level and gradually withdrawn as competence grows, guiding students from other-regulation to self-regulation (Swain & Nassaji, 2000). The Noticing Hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990) holds that learning requires conscious awareness of language forms; WCF supports this by drawing attention to gaps between learner output and target norms, encouraging metalinguistic reflection (Robinson, 1995). Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser, 2015; Anderson, 1976, 1983, 1993) describes learning as progressing from declarative to procedural to automatic knowledge; WCF supplies explicit declarative knowledge that, through practice, can become more automatic and fluent (DeKeyser, 1998; DeKeyser & Criado, 2012; VanPatten & Benati, 2010). Relatedly, controlled versus automatic processing (McLaughlin, 1978, 1980, 1987, 1990) explains how feedback is initially processed effortfully before becoming embedded in long-term memory through repeated engagement.

7.5 Teacher Practices and Perceptions

Teachers' practices are shaped by their beliefs but frequently diverge from them in the classroom, largely due to contextual pressures such as time constraints, workload, and test-oriented priorities (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Wang, 2011; Borg, 2006). Studies across different contexts consistently report such mismatches, alongside a recognized need for greater professional training to support effective feedback practice (Lee, 2009; Thacker, 2017). Teachers' perceptions, denoting their beliefs, attitudes, and values about

teaching and learning (Pajares, 1992), strongly shape instructional decisions and feedback focus (Borg, 2003; Montgomery & Baker, 2007; Griffiths, 2007; Goldstein, 2019; Gibson, 1979).

Research shows a generally positive but inconsistent link between what teachers believe about feedback and what they actually do (Lee, 2011; Zhang & Rahimi, 2014), with several studies reporting notable gaps between self-reported beliefs and observed practices (Lee, 2009). This inconsistency underscores the need for further research into how perceptions translate into classroom practice, particularly in underexplored EFL contexts. Together, these theories suggest that effective WCF should be developmental, explicit and repeated. Yet, contextual factors often present teachers from implementing these principles.

7.6 Previous Studies on Written Corrective Feedback

Al Kharusi & Al-Mekhlafi, (2019) examined the perceptions and practices of post-basic education teachers and supervisors in Oman using an online questionnaire. Both groups valued WCF, with teachers tending to favor unfocused, indirect, coded feedback, while supervisors leaned toward a one-draft correction approach, with no significant differences between groups.

Rajab (2018) explored WCF perceptions and practices across EFL and ESL contexts using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The study found generally high interest in WCF, though teachers preferred coded feedback while learners preferred unfocused feedback, and recommended establishing dedicated writing centers to support more detailed feedback provision.

Erkkilä (2013) investigated English teachers' perceptions of their own written feedback practices using questionnaires, finding that teachers believed they were providing insufficient feedback due to time constraints, and that their self-perceptions did not always correspond to their actual practices.

Jamoom (2016) used a questionnaire, interviews, and an analysis of teachers' actual written feedback to examine both teachers' beliefs and students' preferences, finding that contextual factors, teaching experience, and student proficiency jointly shaped feedback practices.

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Rajab, Khan, & Elyas (2016) combined survey and interview data in the Saudi context, finding no significant gender-based differences in how time constraints shaped feedback strategy, while interviews pointed to workload as a key concern warranting further research.

Collectively, studies in Arab context (Al Kharusi & Al-Mekhlafi, 2019, Rajab, 2018, Jamoom, 2016) indicate that while teachers value WCF, their practices are often shaped by contextual constraints such as time and work load, rather than by theory alone.

Overall, this body of research points to a complex and often inconsistent relationship between teachers' perceptions and practices regarding WCF, with a notable scarcity of studies focusing specifically on university-level EFL teachers, a gap the present study seeks to address.

7. Data Analysis Procedures

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize responses and determine the overall level of agreement for each item. Questionnaire data from the questionnaire were analyzed by using SPSSV.26. Descriptive statistics were run to answer RQ1 and RQ2. For the document analysis, a coding scheme adopted from Ferris (2011) was used to categorize the type of errors and feedback provided. Interrater reliability was established by having a second rate code 20% of the essay, yielding a coheres kappa of 0.85.

7.1 Reliability of the Questionnaire: To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for both individual statements and the questionnaire as a whole. According to AlBayati (2005, p. 49), a coefficient above 0.60 reflects acceptable internal consistency.

Table (1): Reliability Statistics for the Study Questionnaire

Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha
14	0.867

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As shown in Table 1, the questionnaire achieved a reliability coefficient (86.7%), well above the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, confirming that the instrument is highly reliable for the purposes of this study.

8.2 Document Analysis

Teachers' actual feedback practices were examined by analyzing the corrective feedback provided by the fourteen participating teachers on two randomly selected student essays. The resulting feedback was classified by type and frequency, following the analytical procedure outlined by (Lee,2013).

Table (2): Comprehensive vs. Selective Corrective Feedback

Teacher	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	Total
Feedback points	42	10	11	37	9	25	34	30	64	43	30	12	43	37	427

As shown in Table 2, the total number of corrective feedback points provided across all fourteen teachers was 427, with the majority of teachers relying on comprehensive rather than selective feedback (355 comprehensives vs. 70 selective feedback points).

Table (3): Direct vs. Indirect Corrective Feedback

Teacher	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	Total
Direct (n)	6	7	0	10	0	7	7	0	25	29	12	0	11	20	134
Direct (%)	14	70	0	27	0	28	20	0	39	67	40	0	25	54	31
Indirect (n)	36	3	11	27	9	18	27	30	39	14	18	12	32	17	293
Indirect (%)	86	30	100	73	100	72	79	100	61	32	60	100	74	45	69

N= number of feedback points.

Table 3 shows that indirect feedback accounted for 69% of all feedback points (293 in total), compared to 31% for direct feedback (134 in total), indicating a clear overall preference among teachers for indirect over direct correction in practice.

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Table (4): Types of Indirect Corrective Feedback

Teacher	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	Total
Indicating error (n)	22	3	11	14	0	11	20	28	30	6	10	5	20	17	197
Codes (n)	7	0	0	4	0	5	0	0	6	0	0	4	0	0	26
Grammatical description (n)	7	0	0	9	9	2	7	2	3	8	8	3	12	0	70

As shown in Table 4, simply indicating the presence of an error (e.g., underlining or circling), without further explanation, was by far the most common form of indirect feedback (46%), followed by grammatical description (16%), while the use of error codes was the least common strategy (6%).

8.3 Summary of Document Analysis Findings:

1. Teachers predominantly apply comprehensive, rather than selective, corrective feedback.
2. Most teachers use a combination of direct and indirect feedback, with indirect feedback used more often.
3. Simply indicating an error's location is the most common indirect strategy; error codes are rarely used.

8.4 Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as outlined by Dörnyei (2007) and Cohen et al. (2007), based on a closed-ended, 5-point Likert-scale instrument measuring teachers' perceptions of WCF.

All teachers viewed providing feedback as part of their responsibility, and most believed it should accompany every assignment (77%), be delivered immediately on first drafts (77%), and follow a systematic, coded approach (74%). Teachers largely grounded their practice in both research-informed principles (77%) and personal experience (91%), while a majority (60%) expressed a need for further training.

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Teachers also expressed strong confidence in the value of WCF, with nearly all agreeing that it helps students improve their writing, recognize strengths and weaknesses, and address grammatical, vocabulary, and mechanical errors (91–97% agreement across items).

In terms of preferred feedback type, teachers favored comprehensive correction of all errors (71%) over selective correction (29%), and, among feedback styles, direct correction (63%) over indirect feedback with codes (46%), metalinguistic explanation (40%), or uncoded indirect feedback (29%) — teachers were permitted to select more than one option for this item. The main difficulties reported were the time-consuming nature of feedback and the volume of papers to correct (71% each), followed by the frequency of student errors and students' tendency to disregard feedback (49% each), and misunderstanding of corrections or codes (23%).

Table (5): Comparison Between Teachers' Stated Preferences and Actual Practices (Direct vs. Indirect Feedback)

Category	Direct Feedback	Indirect Feedback
Stated preference (questionnaire)	63%	29% (uncoded) / 46% (coded)
Actual practice (document analysis)	31%	69%

Table 5 illustrates the central finding of this study: while teachers stated a clear preference for direct feedback, their actual documented practice was predominantly indirect, revealing a marked mismatch between stated perceptions and observed classroom behavior.

8. Discussion:

This study examined EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding written corrective feedback, drawing on document analysis and questionnaire data. Taken together, the findings point to a notable gap between what teachers believe about feedback and what they actually implement in the classroom.

In practice, teachers relied predominantly on comprehensive rather than selective feedback, and favored indirect over direct correction, most commonly by simply marking an error's location rather than explaining or coding it. This preference for comprehensive, indirect

feedback is broadly consistent with previous studies (Al Kharusi & Al-Mekhlafi, 2019; Jamoom, 2016; Rajab, 2018), which similarly link such approaches to a desire to encourage learner engagement and self-correction.

Teachers' stated perceptions echoed this preference for comprehensiveness, but diverged sharply on the question of directness: while their actual feedback was mostly indirect, teachers reported a strong preference for direct correction. This finding partly aligns with, and partly contradicts, prior research, reflecting the broader diversity of feedback beliefs documented in the literature (Erkkilä, 2013; Rajab, 2018; Jamoom, 2016; Rajab, Khan, & Elyas, 2016).

This mismatch between teachers' stated preference for direct feedback and their predominantly indirect actual practice likely reflects practical classroom constraints, particularly limited time and heavy workloads, rather than a rejection of direct feedback's value. In the Libyan University context, where class sizes are often large and teaching loads are heavy, these constraints may be even more pronounced, thus explaining the reliance on less time-consuming indirect strategies.

9. Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the relatively small, context-specific sample limits the generalizability of the findings, and future research draw on larger, more diverse participant groups. Second, the focus on a single institution- the Department of English Language, Faculty of Arts, University of Zawia- means the findings may not represent EFL teachers in other contexts. Third, reliance on quantitative instruments alone (questionnaire and document analysis) limits depth of insight; qualitative tools such as interviews and observations could enrich future studies. Fourth, the exclusive focus on written corrective feedback leaves other modalities, such as oral and peer feedback, unexplored. Finally, the limited literature on teachers' perceptions of WCF, as distinct from its effectiveness, constrained the review process.

10. Implications

The gap between teachers' stated preference for direct feedback and their indirect practice points to a need for professional development in time-efficient direct feedback strategies

for large classes, supported institutionally through measures such as lighter grading loads to help teachers' apply their preferred WCF strategies. Since teachers also favor comprehensive feedback despite evidence favoring focused feedback for accuracy, teacher training should promote more evidence-informed practices. Ultimately, WCF policies in Libyan EFL programs should reflect classroom realities rather than assume uniform implementation of theoretically preferred strategies.

11. Recommendations

1. Teachers should combine direct and indirect feedback, grounded where possible in established theory and research, to meet students' diverse needs; feedback should also be timely, accompanying initial drafts with clear codes or brief explanations.
2. Institutions should provide regular professional development on effective WCF strategies, ensure teachers have adequate time and resources to implement them consistently, and periodically evaluate feedback practices in relation to students' needs.
3. Students should be trained on how to interpret and utilize different types of WCF to promote autonomy and self-editing skills.

12. Conclusions

The finding of this study reveal several key conclusions regarding EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of written corrective feedback. First, teachers clearly value written corrective feedback as a means of improving students' grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, underscoring its perceived importance in the writing classroom. This value is further reflected in their preference for comprehensive feedback, which appears consistently in both their stated belief and their actual classroom practice. However, a significant mismatch emerges between teachers' stated preference for direct feedback and their predominantly indirect actual practice, suggesting a gap between what teachers consider ideal and what they are able to implement. This discrepancy can largely be attributed to practical classroom constraints, particularly time limitations and heavy workloads, which stand as the main barriers preventing teachers from providing more direct and detailed feedback.

13. Suggestions for Further Research

1. Future research should examine students' perceptions of WCF, alongside longitudinal studies tracking the long-term impact of different feedback types on writing development.
2. Further studies could compare WCF practices and perceptions across different educational and cultural contexts, and explore the potential of technology-based feedback tools.

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