
Unveiling Algerian High School EFL Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback Practices: A Questionnaire and Content Analysis Approach

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Abstract:

THEcurrent study sheds light on written corrective feedback (WCF) practices in Algerian high school EFL classrooms includingtechniques adopted by teachers as well as their beliefs and preferences. It further explores the extent to which these beliefs match their actual practices. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 45 high school teachers, and a content analysis of 70 students' essays. The findings revealed that teachers inordinately relied on comprehensive and local WCF, and indicated an alignment between teachers' beliefs about their WCF practice and their actual behaviour in terms of direct non meta-linguistic error correction, reformulation, and indirect error correction. However, teachers' beliefs about their use of other

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WCF strategies like the use of error codes and meta-linguistic direct error correction were inconsistent with their practice. The findings suggest that consensus-building regarding the focus, the scope and type of WCF within institutional contexts is crucial. Additionally, prioritizing teacher training becomes essential for maximizing the efficiency of WCF.

Key words:English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing - Written corrective feedback (WCF)- EFL teachers' practices - WCF types - EFL students' writing errors

1-Introduction :

Numerous endeavours have been undertaken with the aim of assisting learners in enhancing their writing skills, particularly in EFL contexts. For many EFL learners, EFL writing can be a quite challenging task, as it requires meeting specific writing conventions. Due to cultural and linguistic dissimilarities, EFL learners face difficulties in expressing themselves effectively in EFL writing. They often struggle with grammar and vocabulary usage, and with structuring their writing coherently as well, leading to errors' occurrence.

Among these endeavours is the provision of WCF. In fact, there may be varying degrees of scepticism or reservations regarding the use of WCF and its effectiveness. Nevertheless, extensive research acknowledges WCF as a vital assessment tool that significantly contributes to the development of students' linguistic proficiency and writing skills (Bitchener&Knoch, 2010; Ferris, 2011; Lee 2017, Hyland & Hyland, 2019 ; Brown et al., 2023). Through WCF, teachers inform their learners about their errors and help them addressing them. Ergo, EFL teachers occupy a pivotal position in the provision of WCF to students, wielding significant influence in this aspect.

The efficacy of WCF is contingent upon the provision approach employed. Therefore, teachers' WCF needs to be constructive, targeted, and based on appropriate approaches.

Owing to its significance, WCF has garnered notable scholarly attention from diverse perspectives. Yet, most of the focus has been on the effectiveness of WCF to dispel the claimed uncertainties in this regard, while EFL teachers' practices and beliefs have relatively received less exploration. Following this trend, most studies related to WCF in Algeria have addressed the issue of WCF from a similar perspective; however, studies on EFL teachers' practices and beliefs regarding WCF — particularly in the context of high schools — remain scarce. Hence, to fill the gap, the present paper illustrates ways teachers enact WCF in Algerian setting. It further examines their beliefs and preferences towards different WCF approaches

2. Review Literature

2.1. Writing in EFL Contexts

In an EFL context, writing as a skill, assumes paramount importance for EFL learners to effectively function in the foreign language. Proficiency in EFL writing is essential for both academic and professional purposes, enabling learners to communicate fluently and convey their ideas with clarity.

Writing, whether in one's native language or English as a Foreign Language (EFL), involves intricate cognitive and meta-cognitive processes. Byrne (1993) identified three key factors contributing to this intricacy:

- **Psychological Challenges:** Writing independently can be difficult without opportunities for interaction or feedback. Learners often grapple with expressing their thoughts effectively.

- **Linguistic Considerations:** Effective communication hinges on skilfully choosing sentence structures and sequencing them. This ensures accurate interpretation of the text.
- **Language Mastery:** A strong command of vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and other linguistic elements is essential for clear and coherent written communication.

In EFL contexts, these challenges are particularly pronounced, emphasizing the importance of targeted writing instruction and feedback

Multiple research investigations have indicated a deficiency in EFL learners' lexical knowledge, where a limited vocabulary repertoire impedes effective writing (Wu, 2007; Lee, 2012; Reynolds, 2015). Learners also grapple with adequately planning and organizing their ideas before embarking on the writing process, even when using brainstorming techniques (Lee, 2012). In this regard, Seensangworn (2017) identified four common challenges faced by EFL in writing: (a) Content and ideas, (b) Organizational pattern, (c) Development of ideas, (d) Language use. Furthermore, Writing in EFL necessitates the use of a divergent system compared to the learners' native language. Thus, writing in EFL poses a daunting challenge for many EFL learners as they find it hard to think in English while writing.

2.1.1. Errors in EFL Writing

Given the acknowledged challenges and complexity of writing in EFL, it is not unexpected that errors manifest as an inescapable component within the written compositions of EFL learners. Hyland (2003) indicated that EFL writing tends to be typically shorter, less cohesive and fluent, along with a higher prevalence of errors.

EFL learners commonly make errors that can range from language knowledge problems, such as grammar, vocabulary errors, to issues with sentence structure, coherence, semantics, and fluency. A major factor found in EFL writing is the interference of the learners' native language which usually leads to translation resulting in serious errors. The occurrence of errors in EFL writing is furthermore associated with erroneously applying the rules of the target language, in addition to developmental errors that often take place as learners make assumptions about the target language based on their current, often limited, knowledge of the language (Richards, 1971). While it is natural that EFL learners commit errors in their language learning process, particularly when writing, these errors need to be addressed.

2.2. Written Corrective Feedback

Among the measures that can be very helpful for EFL learners to address their writing errors and enhance their writing skills is the teachers' provision of WCF. Lightbown and Spada (1993) perceived corrective feedback as a helpful hint to learners that use the target language incorrectly or inaccurately. Bitchener and Knoch (2010) described feedback as the instructional input given by teachers to allow learners recognise, revise, and rectify their errors accordingly. WCF has been also defined as written comments that specifically target language use including grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, and that is frequently employed by ESL and EFL teachers (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Accordingly, and in essence, WCF is a form of response, teachers provide, to diverse errors made by learners particularly when learning a foreign language.

Despite dissenting and exaggerated claims regarding the ineffectiveness of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) (Truscott, 1996; Fazio,

2001; Truscott & Hsu, 2008), it remains a crucial aspect and an essential assessment tool in EFL teachers' writing courses. In this respect, Ferris (1999) claimed that a growing body of research indicate that strategic effective error correction is beneficial at least for certain learners who are learning writing. Additionally, there is a plethora of literature highlighting the benefits of WCF (Bitchener&Knoch, 2010; Ferris, 2011; Bitchener& Ferris, 2001; Li and He, 2017; Lee 2017, Hyland& Hyland, 2019)

The advantages of adopting WCF in EFL classrooms have been widely acknowledged and established. WCF serves as a valuable assessment tool, assisting both teachers and learners in addressing the learners' errors and improving their writing skills. Research suggests that learners who receive WCF tend to excel and demonstrate better proficiency in writing compared to those without feedback (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener and Ferris, 2001; Li and He, 2017). Brookhart (2008) highlights the dual benefits of WCF that pertain to both motivational and cognitive aspects. In terms of motivation, learners gain control and autonomy when they understand what is expected of them. Cognitively, WCF helps learners assess their progress and identify areas for improvement. Furthermore, Different feedback forms cater to diverse learning styles and needs. For instance, direct feedback benefits novice learners, while indirect feedback can be effective for more advanced learners (Kang and Han, 2015). In summary, WCF serves as a valuable assessment tool for teachers, supporting learners in enhancing language accuracy and fluency, ultimately contributing to successful writing.

Several approaches can be adopted in delivering WCF. Given that learners' individual factors can greatly influence the corrective feedback given to them, teachers should be aware that it is important to offer the feedback in a manner that suits and assists the learners._____

2.2.1. Classification of Written Corrective Feedback

In order to systematically respond to learners' errors, teachers utilise various types of WCF. Scholars have listed several typologies of WCF (Ellis, 2009; Sheen, 2011; Guénette&Lyster, 2013; Lee, 2017; Li &Roshan, 2019). According to these typologies, WCF can be broadly divided into direct and indirect feedback. Whereas direct feedback involves explicitly providing learners with correction, indirect feedback prompts learners to autonomously recognize and correct their errors. In terms of focus, researchers divided WCF into local and global feedback. Furneaux et al., (2007) explain that local feedback focuses on lexical, grammatical, semantic, and mechanical errors (e.g., punctuation and capitalization), which impact the essay's language structure. In contrast, global feedback addresses style and discourse errors that affect overall understanding and organization. Scholars debate corrective feedback focus. While some argue for prioritizing global errors due to their impact on overall comprehension and coherence (Brown, 1987), others advocate for minimalistic local feedback to facilitate learning (Pawlak, 2014). Overall, the prevailing consensus leans toward favouring global corrective written feedback. Yet, the distinction between global and local errors is fluid; an error may be global in one text but local in another. Interpretation depends on the teacher or reader assessing the text.

Among the most pragmatic classifications of WCF are the two versions provided by Ellis (2009) and Sheen (2011). Sheen's typology was based on the classification provided by Ellis (2008) and which involved six types for systematic provision of WCF by teachers:

- **Direct corrective feedback:** the correct form is explicitly provided by the teacher
- **Indirect corrective feedback:** involves indicating the errors without correction, and with or without locating the error.
- **Metalinguistic corrective feedback:** involves the use of codes or a numbered and brief grammatical description of the error.
- **The focus of the feedback:** it includes focused and unfocused feedback. This concerns whether the correction is provided to all errors (comprehensive feedback) or to specific types of errors (selective feedback).
- **Electronic feedback:** relies on the use of digital tools to indicate the error and provide examples of correct usage.
- **Reformulation:** in this type, the learner's text is reformulated by a native speaker to make it sound more like natural native language while maintaining the original meaning and content.

Although both typologies proposed similar content, there was a subtle alteration in the categorisation in Sheen's revised version. Sheen (2011) proposed seven types of WCF. The presented table provides a comprehensive overview of these various types.

Table01: Categories of WCF [Adopted from Sheen's typology, 2011]

Types of WCF	Description
1.Direct non-metalinguistic error correction	This offers learners the correct form in various ways including: striking out unnecessary words, adding missing ones, or placing the correct form next to the error.
2.Direct metalinguistic	It provides the <u>right</u> form along with some form of

error correction	explanation; for example by numbering different types of errors and then adding a metalinguistic comment below the text.
3.Indirect error correction (non-located errors)	This refers to stating the errors in the margin without locating or correcting them. The learners have to identify and correct their errors on their own.
4.Indirect written correction (located error)	It involves both indicating and locating the error without the provision of the correct form. This can be achieved by underlining the error, using cursors to indicate omissions, or placing a cross in the margin to indicate the error.
5.Indirect error correction using error codes	This option provides learners with explicit feedback about their errors by means of using codes, placed near the errors, that indicate the specific types of the errors.
6.Indirect meta-linguistic written correction	In this type of correction, learners receive meta-linguistic clues about their errors. However, unlike Direct metalinguistic error correction, the actual correction is indirectly withheld; for instance through the use of questions.
7. Reformulation	It involves rewriting the sentence or paragraph to provide learners with positive input. While it helps identify errors, learners must compare the original and reformulated text to locate specific mistakes. Beyond linguistic errors, reformulation also addresses stylistic issues and aims to enhance coherence

Overall, there are several approaches to providing WCF. However, teachers need to consider the individual factors of learners when providing feedback, ensuring that WCF is delivered in a manner that supports the development and improvement of learners' language and writing skills (Sheen 2011).

2.3. Beliefs and Practices

Research consistently emphasizes that teachers' practices and approaches are highly connected to their knowledge and beliefs (Reusser et.al, 2011). While the impact of teachers' beliefs and attitudes on their pedagogical practices has been widely acknowledged, studies on WCF have not established consensus regarding the correlation between teachers' beliefs and their WCF practices.

In a study examining the feedback approaches and perceptions of secondary school teachers, Lee (2009) noticed a misalignment between teachers' WCF actual practices and their stated beliefs. Lee found out that teachers often employ error codes, even though they believe that students may struggle to interpret them. Research also indicated that direct WCF tended to be the most prevalent and employed strategy by teachers (Lee, 2003; Nemati et al., 2017; Pearson, 2018). Additionally, Studies also revealed that teachers relied more on comprehensive WCF rather than on selective WCF (Lee, 2003; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019)

In other investigations (Lee, 2008; Li and Barnard, 2011; Nemati et al., ; 2017, Pearson, 2018; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019), teachers reported their preference for global feedback and that they offered more feedback on global aspects such as content and organization than on local issues. However, the findings indicated that those teachers were concerned with local issues such as grammar and mechanics; while the provision of global

WCF was limited. In another context, Aljasir (2021), conversely, reported compatibility between teachers' stated beliefs and their WCF practices.

In terms of usefulness, most studies have reported positive attitudes of teachers towards WCF, as they believe WCF to be an effective tool that builds learners' confidence, facilitates learning and enhances their writing proficiency (Lee, 2004; Li and Barnard, 2011; Ferris, 2014).

Mao and Crosthwaite (2019) claimed that the inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and practices can be attributed to three contextual factors: perceptions of students' attitude to WCF, workload, and time constraints. Perceptions of learner needs may shape the focus of teachers, leading them to provide a certain feedback to address the learners' writing problems. In addition, WCF can be time-consuming, and teachers often struggle to correct all errors they should. Moreover, when teachers have to handle large class sizes, it often leads to heavier workload. As a result, it becomes challenging for these teachers to align their beliefs with their actual WCF provision practices.

The vast array of literature concerning teachers' beliefs and practices of WCF reveals a multitude of dissimilar findings, underscoring the pressing need for further in-depth inquiries, particularly within the sphere of EFL high school settings.

3. Statement of the Problem

Error correction is among the crucial assessment practices of teachers, be it in native or foreign language contexts. The use of WCF serves as an advantageous tool that highlights learners' progress, and assists them to autonomously address their errors and enhance their writing skills. In the Algerian context, most studies conducted on WCF focused attention on the

impact of WCF on learners' writing proficiency. Yet, little attention was given to teachers' WCF beliefs and practices, and it was mainly in higher education settings; however, their investigation in Algerian high school context appears to be scarce resulting in a lack of understanding of the problem.

Considering the relevance of the setting, the present study sought to fill the gap and provide insights on high school EFL teachers' WCF practices and beliefs.

4. Research Aims and Questions

This study aims to address the issue of EFL teachers' beliefs and practices of WCF in the Algerian high school setting. Substantially, it endeavours to highlight WCF approaches embraced by Algerian EFL high school teachers in addition to their attitudes and beliefs about WCF. The study further seeks to examine the alignment of teachers' WCF actual practices with their beliefs about WCF. Accordingly, this study was guided by these specific research questions:

RQ1: What are Algerian high school EFL teachers' beliefs of WCF?

RQ2: What types of WCF do Algerian high school teachers employ?

RQ3: To what extent are the teachers' practices aligned with their beliefs of WCF?

5. Methodology:

The current study relies on a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative and qualitative research methods. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic under investigation, the current study seeks to gather both quantitative data through a questionnaire addressing teachers' beliefs, and qualitative data through content analysis of students' essays to determine the teachers' practices. The integration of quantitative and

qualitative data collected can yield more profound insights into the problem at hand, surpassing the analysis of either data type in isolation (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

5.1. Research Population and Sample

The target population of the study was EFL high school teachers. The sample participants were selected in accordance with the convenience of access to the researcher, and thus, the participant teachers were particularly from high schools in the province of Bouira. The sample included 45 EFL high school teachers, involving both novice and experienced teachers, holding different academic degrees with different years of experience. The following table represents the profile of the sample participants.

Table02: The Sample Participants' Profile.

Gender		Age			Academic degree			Years of Experience			
male	female	23-33	34-44	44-60	Licnse degree	Graduated from NHEI	Master's degree	1-5	5-15	15-20	More than 20
5	40	14	18	13	14	26	5	12	18	12	3
11.1 %	88.8 %	31.1 %	40 %	28.8 %	31.1 %	57.7 %	11.1 %	26.6 %	40 %	26.6 %	6.6 %

5.1. Data Collection Methods

As already noted, this study relies on two different data collection instruments, namely, a survey questionnaire to investigate teachers' beliefs and WCF practices; and content analysis of students' essays to determine the types of WCF utilised by teachers.

5.1.1. Questionnaire

In numerous studies examining teacher beliefs, survey techniques have been commonly employed as a primary means of data collection. Questionnaires serve as effective instruments enabling researchers to gather rich and informative data from a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, thereby enhancing the breadth and depth of insights acquired through the research (Bee & Murdoch-Eaton, 2016).

The questionnaire of the study consists of two sections. The first section is devoted to demographic information (table2). The second section of the questionnaire is about teachers' WCF beliefs, practices and the adopted WCF approaches.

5.1.2. Content Analysis

In order to investigate the actual WCF practices of teachers and the types of WCF utilised in correcting their students' writing, 70 high school students' compositions, corrected by the target participants were analysed. To reach data that really reflect the usual WCF practices of teachers, the compositions selected involved previous corrected students' written expressions from tests and the Rubrics: "Write it up" and "Write it out" of written expression activities. The Written samples chosen were those of intermediate level students as these are students who are able to produce relatively average length compositions and still make errors.

5.1.3. Types of Written Corrective Feedback in the Study

The present study adopted Sheen's (2011) typology of WCF as well as Guénette and Lyster's (2013) Clarification requests.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire adopted was similar the model developed by Lee (2009) to investigate teachers' beliefs and practices, with some modifications.

6.1.1. Demographic Information

Demographic information serves as a valuable type of data to be collected owing to the inherent significance of understanding how background knowledge, age, and experience influence beliefs and practices. According to our findings; 26.6% of the respondents were novice teachers, while 40% of them had a teaching experience that ranged between 5 to 15 years, the remaining 33.3% were seasoned teachers with an experience of more than 15 years. Additionally, 11.1% of teachers hold a Master's degree, 31.1% of them hold a license degree, while 57.7% of them graduated from the national higher education institute. These findings suggest that these teachers have inevitably encountered the didactic and pedagogical traditions and practices associated with a teaching degree and experience. Consequently, their beliefs and opinions serve as a valuable source of information for understanding the subject under investigation.

6.1.2. Teachers' Beliefs

To the initial question in the section (How important do you believe WCF is in the EFL classroom?), 44.44% of the participants stated that WCF is essential in the EFL classroom; while 55.55% of them perceived it as important. None of the respondents considered WCF as moderately important or secondary. The findings indicated that teachers overall have a

positive attitude towards WCF and they acknowledge its importance in the EFL classroom.

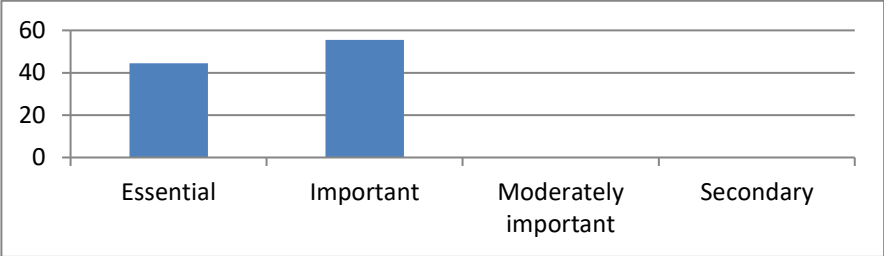


Figure 1: Teachers’ Attitudes towards WCF

The second item in this section sought to explore teachers’ beliefs regarding the purpose of providing WCF on students’ writing. While 71.11% of the respondents believe that providing WCF should help students become aware of their errors and give them the opportunity to learn from them, 28.88% maintain that WCF serves to enhance students’ accuracy and prevent errors’ fossilizations, and thus enhance their writing proficiency. Basically, these findings indicate that teachers recognize the importance of providing WCF and they consider the provision of WCF as an approach to guide their learners and help them improve their writing abilities. Yet, none of the respondents regard the provision of WCF as a means to encourage reflection, self-correction and autonomy. This indeed may indicate teachers’ tendency towards more direct WCF. Respondents’ answers in subsequent sections will serve as verification.

The third item in the section was concerned with the way teachers corrected their students’ errors. The findings represent teachers’ description of their existing error feedback practice.

Table 3: The amount of WCF provided by teachers

Item	Frequency	Percentage
I mark all students' errors (any error)	26	57.77%
I mark students' errors selectively (I focus on specific errors)	16	35.55%
I don't mark students' errors	3	6.66%

While some teachers tend to correct their students' errors selectively, the majority of the participants declared that they mark all their students' errors. However, few teachers reported that they do not mark students' errors at all when correcting their writings. These claimed practices can be attributed to teachers' beliefs and attitudes about errors, in addition to other factors that may influence the amount of WCF that teachers can provide. This can be interpreted as: (1) Teachers recognize the importance of providing comprehensive feedback to meet students' needs. (2) Providing focused and thorough feedback can be an extremely time-consuming process.

The next item investigates the errors teachers believe they should prioritize when providing WCF. According to 71.11% of the participants, both local and global errors are important to consider when providing WCF. 28.88 % of the participants believed that global errors should be prioritized and they should focus on content and organization rather than

on local issues. The findings show that many teachers consider WCF on local errors as important as on global errors, most probably because they are aware of the importance of accuracy in writing in addition to considering meeting their students’ needs who often commit too many local errors. However, some other participants report that global errors are more important to take account of, and this can be attributed to the fact that, they consider global errors as an issue that can impede comprehension and significantly affect the quality of writing, and thus focusing on these errors ensures clarity and guides students towards fundamental improvements.

The fifth item was about WCF techniques used by teachers. Participants were asked to rate the frequency with which they use the following WCF techniques according to the scale below.

Table 4: WCF Techniques (Types) used by Teachers

How often do you use the following feedback techniques?	Never or rarely	Sometimes	Often or Always
A.I cross out the error and I write the <u>correction</u> near or above it. (e.g., scared about _{of} heights)	17.77% (8)	57.77% (26)	24.44% (11)
B. I directly cross out unnecessary words, morphemes, or insert missing ones. (e.g., I saw a rabbit. It was running with having a carrot in the mouth.	22.22% (10)	26.66% (12)	51.11% (23)
C. I indicate the error (by numbering for example) and I correct it by providing a brief comment. (e.g., I saw _____	35.55% (16)	24.44% (11)	40% (18)

(1) rabbit. The rabbit had (2) carrot in (3) mouth. (1) and (2) - you need 'a' before the noun when a person or thing is mentioned for the first time			
D. I indicate the error (e.g., by putting a mark in the margin) but I neither locate nor correct it.	53.33% (24)	37.77% (17)	8.88% (4)
E. I indicate the errors (underline/cross/circle) but I do not correct them.	15.55% (7)	64.44% (29)	20% (9)
F. I indicate the errors and categorise them using error codes without correcting them. (e.g., He speaked (W.F) = (Wrong form)	13.33% (6)	31.11% (14)	55.55% (25)
G. I provide clues about the errors; by way of questions (e.g., what word do we need before a noun when a person/thing is referred to for the first time?)	17.77% (8)	68.88% (31)	13.33% (6)
H. I reformulate the entire sentence with erroneous forms so that the students will use it to identify their errors.	55.55% (25)	33.33% (15)	11.11% (5)

I. I Ask for clarification because I don't understand what the student means.	17.77% (8)	37.77% (17)	44.44% (20)
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The findings in table 4 reveal that teachers have more tendency toward providing direct non-meta-linguistic correction (cross out unnecessary words, insert missing ones) and using error codes than other WCF techniques. In addition, they exhibit an average tendency to provide direct non meta-linguistic correction (write the correct form near the error), direct meta-linguistic correction (number the error and provide a comment), indirect corrective feedback (location with correction), and indirect meta-linguistic correction (provide clues/ask questions); however, reformulation, and indirect correction (non-located errors) tend to not be used often by the half majority of the participants. These findings can be interpreted as: (a) time constraints and workload that make teachers opt for direct non meta-linguistic correction (b) considering students' level and needs (c) the effectiveness of specific techniques (d) school or inspectors may prescribe specific techniques. However, these frequency rates may not reflect the actual techniques teacher really adopt. Verification will be conducted via content analysis.

The sixth item aimed to explore teachers' beliefs about the most effective WCF technique among the previously mentioned techniques. 37.77% of the respondents believed that indirect correction using error codes is more effective, as it allows students to understand their errors and correct them independently. 28.88% stated that the best way to provide WCF is to provide the correct form with an accompanying explanation (direct meta-linguistic written correction); that is to say, provide feedback in a meaningful

and explicit way, as this guides students and help them understand their errors without being baffled. 20% of the respondents thought that indirect meta-linguistic written correction (through providing clues) can be more effective as it boosts students' autonomy and critical thinking skills. Yet, 13.33% of the respondents viewed that for WCF to be effective, teachers should vary their WCF techniques according to the type of the errors committed by students and their level.

In item seven, the participants were asked if their guider inspector prescribed the error feedback strategies that they often use. 68.88% of the teachers claimed that their inspector recommends them to mark their students' writing errors selectively and to focus on global issues relating to coherence and fluency rather than accuracy. 31.11% of them stated that their inspector has prescribed the use of error codes as the main strategy for students' error correction.

The participants were subsequently asked whether their previous training/or inspectors in seminars had demonstrated and tutored them on how to provide WCF. 75.55% of them asserted that they have not received any formal training or workshop on the provision of WCF; while 24.44% of them claimed that their inspectors had only provided with some handouts that included examples of Error Codes correction that they can adopt in their correction of their students' writing errors.

The final item is meant to explore factors influencing teachers' WCF practices. All participants identified time constraints and large class sizes as critical challenges when dealing with their students' writing errors. They added that, in large classes, it is challenging to thoroughly review and comment on every student's writing and provide detailed feedback; and teachers struggle to correct all errors they should. Furthermore, 26.66% of

the participants mentioned students’ level as a factor that they consider when providing WCF on their students’ writing. They believed that many of their medium or low-level students may not be able to understand and self-correct their errors if not provided with the right feedback type.

6.2. Content Analysis (Teachers’ Practices)

6.2.1. The Focus of WCF

After the analysis of students’ compositions that reflected the actual and usual WCF practices of teachers, 448 WCF actions were detected. These actions were then categorized counting their frequency.

Table 5: Categories of WCF Provided by Teachers

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Local errors	Spelling	156	34.82%
	Grammatical accuracy	123	27.45%
	Punctuation	37	8.25%
	Capitalization	52	11.60%
	Vocabulary	55	12.27%
Local errors total		423	94.41%
Global errors	Content	11	2.45%
	Organization	14	3.12%
Global errors total		25	5.58%

The findings from content analysis (Table 5) indicate that teachers inordinately emphasize local errors when providing WCF on their students’ writing, and particularly focusing on spelling and grammatical accuracy

issues. These findings, however, seem to be inconsistent with teachers’ beliefs and what they reported in the questionnaire, as 28.28% of them believed that global errors should be prioritized for they can impede comprehension and affect the quality of writing, while 71.11% of them believed global errors to be as important as local errors. Although the majority of participants believed that local and global issues were equally important, they disproportionately focus on local errors. This is probably due to the fact that students make too many language problems, hence resulting in less space to address issues content-wise.

6.2.2. The Scope of WCF

Table 6: Teachers’ Practices of WCF Scope.

Action	Frequency (number of compositions)	Percentage
All errors were marked	56	80%
Errors were marked selectively	8	11.42%
Errors were not marked	6	8.57%
Total number of compositions	70	100%

Data from content analysis (Table 6) reveals that most teachers tend to correct their students’ errors comprehensively. This aligns with the results from the questionnaire, where a significant proportion of teachers (57.77%) reported that they provided comprehensive feedback on their students’ errors. This seems so because these teachers recognize the significance of comprehensive WCF for their students’ progress and their language

accuracy. Additionally, they feel responsible for pointing out all student errors, since they believe that most students may struggle to identify and correct errors independently if not highlighted. Selective WCF, however, is observed to be less frequent than what teachers reported (35.55%). In addition, in approximately 8.57% of the compositions, teachers did not mark any error, and instead provide only a brief comment or note. This may be attributed to time constraints and the challenge of managing large class sizes, which limits the scope of WCF.

6.2.3. Types of WCF

Table7: WCF Types Provided by Teachers

WCF Type	Occurrence	Frequency	Remarque
1. Direct non-metalinguistic error correction	232	51.78%	
Cross out the error and write the correction	123	27.45%	
Cross out unnecessary words /add missing words	109	24.33%	
2. Direct metalinguistic error correction	30	6.69%	Often on content or organization (a comment without numbering)
3. Indirect error correction (non-	4	0.89%	

located errors)			
4. Indirect written correction (located errors)	98	21.87%	
5. Indirect error correction using error codes	37	8.25%	
6. Indirect metalinguistic written correction	0	0%	
7. Reformulation	6	1.33%	Reformulate sentences
8. Clarification request	41	9.15%	Using a question or exclamation mark / "what do you mean?"

The results of the analysis (Table 7) show that the actual feedback strategies provided by teachers to some extent reflect their beliefs and what they have reported in the questionnaire. Most of the feedback provided by teachers (51.78%) was done utilizing direct non meta-linguistic error correction. The half majority of teachers (55.55%) indicated they rarely used reformulation and indirect correction without error location (53.33%). These proportions actually reflect the frequency rate teachers reported in the questionnaire. However, certain inconsistencies can be identified. 55.55% of

teachers reported using error codes frequently, and 37.77% considered error code correction the most effective strategy for addressing student errors as it allows students to understand their mistakes and correct them independently. Additionally, 31.11% of participants mentioned that their inspector recommended this method. However, the analysis indicates that the actual usage rate of error codes was much lower than expected. In addition, 68.88% of the participants believe that they sometimes utilise indirect meta-linguistic written correction, and 13.33% indicate that they often or always do that. 20% of them perceive this WCF technique as highly effective because it enhances students' autonomy and critical thinking skills. None of the compositions however includes indirect meta-linguistic written correction. 40 % of the surveyed teachers claim they often utilise direct meta-linguistic correction, and 28.88% of them regard it as the best strategy to provide WCF on their students' writing because they believe it assists students explicitly and meaningfully in comprehending and correcting their errors without feeling bewildered; nevertheless, its rate of use in composition analysis was very low (6.69%) primarily focusing on content and organization. These practices can be interpreted as:

- Indirect meta-linguistic written correction can help students but not those with low proficiency levels. Bitchener and Knoch (2010) suggest that providing direct feedback can be more effective for students with low proficiency levels.
- Not all students can understand error codes and independently correct their errors.
- Due to time constraints and large class sizes, utilising reformulation and direct meta-linguistic error correction can be a challenging task.

- Given time constraints and heavy workload, teachers may feel compelled to use indirect error correction (with locating errors) despite students' incapability to understand and rectify the error.

7. CONCLUSION

This research sought to examine the beliefs and embraced approaches of EFL teachers concerning WCF within the Algerian high school educational context. The findings across two sources, a questionnaire and content analysis, have indicated both alignments and misalignments between teachers' beliefs and their actual behaviours of WCF provision contrary to several previous studies where teachers' beliefs and practices were found to be totally inconsistent. In terms of WCF scope, the teachers' practices echoed their beliefs. Their tendency towards utilising comprehensive WCF was highly emphasized, and it was linked to teachers' awareness of the significance of comprehensive feedback to develop accuracy and enhance students' linguistic ability, in addition to contextual factors including time constraints and large class sizes. Another finding that indicated consistency between teachers' beliefs and practices was the use of direct non meta-linguistic error correction, reformulation, and indirect error correction (non-located errors). The half majority of the participants indicated that they never or rarely utilised reformulation or non-located errors correction rather they stated they frequently employed direct non meta-linguistic error correction. Inconsistencies between teachers' beliefs and practices were apparent in terms of focus in addition to some strategies. Although the majority of teachers emphasized global WCF, they actually provided feedback mostly on local issues. Another identified belief-practice inconsistency regarded the use of error codes correction, direct meta-

linguistic error correction, and indirect meta-linguistic written correction, which seem to be rarely used when teachers claimed to have used them very often. Teachers explicitly stated that though their guider inspector prescribed the use of error codes and global WCF; they lacked any formal training or workshops specifically focused on the provision of WCF.

This study underscores the need for targeted teacher education to enhance instructional practices. Teachers should receive training and institutional guidance to enhance their effectiveness in providing WCF to students. Yet, it suggests that effective implementation of WCF requires not only training but also favourable conditions including manageable class sizes, adequate time, and appropriate curriculum. When administrative staff actively assists teachers in their ongoing development by offering resources and motivation, educators receive the support they require to take charge of their professional development.

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