

## English as a Foreign Language Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback Literacy: Its Role in Improving Students' Writing Skills

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### Abstract

This paper studies the WCF literacy of EFL writing teachers and its role in improving their students' WCF literacy. The study aims to investigate the EFL teachers' written corrective feedback literacy competence and their actual performance with regard to WCF provision. The study employed a case study design with in mixed research approach used self-rating questionnaire and in depth interview. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Thus, it was found out that the EFL teachers have a moderate level of WCF literacy on knowledge and value about written corrected feedback and scored the least on the third component of teachers WCF literacy indicator. They lack knowledge about relevant strategies for giving effective feedback. The teachers' capability of using effective WCF provision strategies in the writing lesson, was found out to be the area the EFL teachers showed the least capable. Limited or no opportunity to the students to clarification and discussion on the feedback, delayed feedback that limited the students' opportunity of learning from their errors and rare follow up by the teacher on the students' uptake of feedback were the major challenges hindering the effectiveness of WCF. The

finding of the study indicated that the teachers attributed their lower WCFL competence to inadequate training on the WCF and high workload. .

**Key words:** Written corrective feedback, feedback literacy, uptake of feedback

### **Introduction**

Feedback is the information given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance. This can be anything from a grade on an exam to a brief oral comment made during class. Ur (1996). It is important to note that she explains the objective of feedback as improving performance, because this is perhaps the most vital goal of good feedback.

Feedback can be both positive and negative. Positive feedback is a confirmation from the teacher to validate a correct linguistic utterance by the student in order to encourage learning. Negative feedback on the other hand, is an oral or written comment from the teacher following an incorrect response by the student. Corrective feedback (CF) is therefore a form of negative feedback as it involves error treatment. It can be both oral and written. One distinction between oral corrective feedback and written corrective feedback (WCF) is that oral CF is mostly provided as part of the instruction within the classroom. WCF, on the other hand, is usually written responses provided by the teacher after reviewing student writings, which is not an immediate response as oral feedback. (Balachandran, A, 2017)

According to Keh (1990) a teacher plays at least four important roles in providing feedback on students writing. First, a teacher is seen as a reader who reads the students' writing and thereafter responds to it through WCF. Second, the teacher functions as a writing teacher or guide. In this aspect, the teacher takes the lead to guide the students if the students do not follow the intended answers wanted from the writing task. Third, the teacher plays a role as a grammarian who informs the students on their grammar errors and gives relative feedback that is useful to the students in order to help them overcome the grammar errors. Fourth, the teacher is seen as an evaluator or a judge that reads and evaluates the students' written work by looking at the quality of their writing and also judges the types of grades which are deserved by the students. Generally, writing teacher plays an important role in providing feedback on students' writing as the feedback will help to improve the students' next writing task apart from giving reliable information for the students to follow in their writing.

However, the writing skill course instructors' actual classroom practices in Ethiopian universities showed that there are much more problems still unresolved particularly on the teachers' writing skill assessment and written corrective feedback provision (Meseret, 2012). As far as the researcher witnessed from the writing papers with WCF given on by some colleagues, the students' errors are either marked "X", put a question mark "?" or circled without giving a clue to correction. There are also some occasions in which teachers simply give mark/grade without looking at the details and the errors. In such cases, the learners will not get an opportunity to correct their writing because they are not provided with a corrective feedback that shows where the error lies. In such occasions most students simply accept the marks and do not ask for where they make error.

Therefore, the current study tried to fill this knowledge gap of understanding the Ethiopian EFL teachers' WCF literacy and practices to improve the learners' writing skill. Therefore, the general objective of the study was to investigate EFL teachers' written corrective feedback literacy and its role in their corrective feedback provision and the students' uptake. Specifically, this study tried to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent EFL teachers' perceive themselves competent in WCF literacy?
2. How do EFL teachers practically manage the students' writing errors?
3. What are the major challenges affecting the effectiveness of EFL written corrective feedback?

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Feedback**

Multiple definitions of feedback have been asserted in the literature. To present the correctional aspect of feedback, Kulhavy (1977) defined feedback as any means of communication to notify learners about the correctness of their responses. Sadler (1989) conceptualized feedback as a gap filler between students' understanding and the expected understanding. Within the informational aspect of feedback, feedback was depicted as information delivered to learners to improve learning by modifying behaviors and ways of thinking (Shute, 2008). According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), this feedback information is not limited to one's understanding, but also includes the consequence of performances or

behaviors, and this information is transferred by an agent such as teacher, peer, experience, source, or self.

Despite divergent expressions, the common aspect of these multiple definitions is that they put an emphasis on the reflection of students' current state to improve learning. Within an educational context, feedback is mainly considered a crucial and powerful key to improving skills and knowledge. (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). As Shute (2008) stated, the emphasis of feedback on success and achievement triggers student learning. In this process, students complete their academic cycle and present their activities. The existence of feedback enhances feedback, while lack of it may result in impeded learning. Then, feedback is a powerful pedagogical tool (Shute, 2008).

Many researchers (e.g., Heron et al., 2015) also agree that feedback is an inseparable part of education and learning. Kealey (2010) states that regular and constant provision of feedback has a positive impact on the student academic performance. Similarly, useful and proper feedback information contributes to the students' motivation to learn and perform successful results (Narciss & Huth, 2004). Besides, the disparity between learners' current state and learning goals is diminished via feedback (Brooks et al., 2019).

## **2.2. Teachers feedback literacy in L2 writing**

The main objective of a writing class is to produce students who are able to write well. Consequently, EFL teachers' use of various strategies and approaches during writing lesson delivery, their writing skill assessment and written corrective feedback provision foster or otherwise hinder the learners' competence in writing skill. The students' dependence on the teachers' having a good appreciation of feedback and how it can be deployed successfully led now to a focus on teacher feedback literacy, which is complementary to but not identical with student feedback literacy (Carless and Winstone, 2020).

With regard to feedback, teachers are involved in much more than the provision of information on specific student work. They create courses, design assessment tasks and feedback activities and have responsibility to see that feedback processes do what is intended. Carless and Winstone (2020) proposed three dimensions to teacher feedback literacy. These consisted of a design dimension, a relational dimension and a programmatic dimension. They discussed the features of each and identified implementation strategies describing what

teachers could do in each area. This was an important first step. However, they do not make clear what knowledge of feedback teachers should possess. They do not consider different categories of educators some of whom design and create feedback opportunities and others who merely implement them. Structural features and constraints were not considered, and the role of teachers in formulating feedback inputs (which is still part of the process within the new paradigm) was under emphasized. While there have been conceptual discussions of feedback literacy for both students (Carless and Boud, 2018) and teachers (Carless and Winstone, 2020), it is only for students that attempts have been made to base a framework for feedback literacy in empirical evidence (Molloy, Boud, and Henderson 2020).

What has been missing to date is an investigation of teacher feedback literacy in terms of what teachers do in feedback and what capabilities they need to possess in order to do it well. There is evidence of a gap between the lofty concepts of what teacher feedback practices should be, and what they actually are. Teachers often hold advanced views of feedback but fail to enact them in their feedback practices (Orrell 2006). This may partially be due to circumstances, such as policy or academic cultures blocking more sophisticated feedback approaches (Henderson et al. 2019b). This means that a solely conceptually derived understanding of teacher feedback literacy may fail to capture the full range of competencies of teachers who implement effective feedback processes.

### **3. Methods**

This study used a case study design to describe the EFL writing teachers' WCF literacy level, their beliefs about their literacy level and their actual practices during writing lessons. Thus, the study analyzed the findings of the teachers' self-rating WCF literacy level with their actual performance. The dominant paradigm guiding the study was pragmatics. According to Do nyei (2007, p. 56), mixing the two methods, has a complementary function that enables to look into not only overlapping but also different aspects of a phenomenon from different perspectives. It also helps get a comprehensive and fuller portrait of the issue when used sequentially as in the case where the result of the first method informs the need of the second one. Therefore, pragmatism which has a strong philosophical position in mixed-methods approach or methodological pluralism camps was preferred to be used.

#### **3.1. Participants**

Purposive sampling technique was implemented to select 17 EFL teachers (16 Male and 1 Female) who were teaching English language course in DELL in Mettu University. Purposive sampling technique enables researchers handpick cases satisfactory to the specific needs of a study (Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Keith Morrison, 2000). The participants teaching experience ranged from 2 to 18 years at various level of education ranged from Elementary school to university. Their level of education ranged from MA/MEd in TEFL (14 teachers, 82% ) to PhD in ELT(3 teachers, 18%).

### **3.2. Materials and Instruments**

Three data collection instruments namely: teachers' feedback literacy competence evaluation questionnaire, and semi-structured interview were employed.

#### **3.2.1. Teachers' feedback literacy competence evaluation questionnaire**

A five scale likert scale questionnaire which was developed based on Lee-Karaca-Inan(2023) 's writing teachers' WCF literacy measurement scale was used to measure the EFL teachers' knowledge, skill and values regarding WCF. Likert scale was also found to be the best tool to measure the degree of teachers' perceived competencies in teaching the target language (Cohen et al., 2005). Among very few scales developed to measure writing teachers' WCF literacy, the current research used Lee-Karaca-Inan(2023) 's writing teachers' WCF literacy measurement scale as it fits to the major objective of the study.( i.e., to investigate the WCF literacy level of EFL teachers and its role in determining their WCF provision). Thus, three feedback literacy structures used in this scale were *perceived knowledge*, *values*, and *perceived skills*. The questionnaire has 34 items divided into three sections based on the three feedback literacy structure used in this scale.

The first section includes ten items which were about the perceived knowledge which refers to teachers' understanding, awareness, and familiarity about feedback. The second section was composed of 12 items that evaluated the teachers' perceived values about feedback which refers to beliefs, attitudes, goals, dispositions and perceptions about feedback. The third section was about the perceived skills comprised of 12 items which were about teachers' abilities in handling the process of feedback. The Likert scale was labeled for the *Perceived Knowledge* section as *0-Not Knowledgeable at All*, *1- Slightly Knowledgeable*, *2- Somewhat Knowledgeable*, *3- Knowledgeable*, *4- Very Knowledgeable*. For the *Values* section, the labeling was designed as *0- Not True at All*, *1- Slightly True*, *2- Somewhat True*, *3- True*, and

4- *Very True*. Finally, for the *Perceived Skills* section it was labeled as 0- *Not Capable at All*, 1- *Slightly Capable*, 2- *Somewhat Capable*, 3- *Capable*, and 4- *Very Capable*.

### **3.2.2. Semi-structured Interview**

In addition to gather data that require detailed information and to collect data that is not addressed through the questionnaire semi structured interview was used. Combining elements of structured and unstructured interviews gives semi-structured interviews the advantages of both: comparable, reliable data, and the flexibility to ask follow-up questions. (Tegan,2022). Thus, the teachers' interview question was composed of 11 items that can be categorized into three major categories based on the three major components of teachers' WCF literacy framework. The rationale behind using interview was in order to collect data that could not be collected through rating scale questionnaire. Besides, the interview questions were carefully designed so as to draw the EFL teachers' rationale behind the responses they have given on self –rating questionnaire. The first three items were about the EFL teachers' knowledge and understanding on WCF ; the second section( items 4-7) were about the EFL teachers' reason behind the values of WCF ; and the third section ( items 8-10) asked teachers the reason behind their skill regarding feedback. Finally, item 11 assesses the major challenges affecting the WCF process.

### **3.3. Procedures**

After gaining an informed consent from the participants, the questionnaire was administered to the EFL teachers and an interview was conducted to selected four teachers, audio recorded and transcribed.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Quantitative data collected through EFL teachers' written corrective feedback literacy evaluation questionnaire were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS version 24. Then, descriptive statistics of means, frequencies and standard deviation were used to describe their responses to the questionnaire. Frequencies and percentage were also used to analyse the data collected from the written corrective feedback the teachers provided on the students' pieces of writing. Finally, qualitative data collected from the teachers though interview were recorded, transcribed and then analyzed through Nvivo version 10 (qualitative data analysis computer software).

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

#### 4.1.1. Data from EFL teachers' questionnaire

##### 4.1.1.1. EFL teachers' perceived knowledge about WCF

The data presented in table 4.1.1.1. below indicated that among the ten items included in the self-rating questionnaire to measure the EFL teachers' knowledge about WCF, the EFL teachers' perceived themselves as having good knowledge that feedback might come from different source like teachers, peers, and self with mean value of 3.94 and standard deviation of .25. Besides, they also revealed as they have better knowledge on the features of good writing that enable them provide accurate judgment of student writing with mean value (M=3.75) and standard deviation (SD=.44). The data in the table also indicated the teachers perceived themselves as they have good understanding about the role of feedback in the formative assessment with mean value (M=3.69) and standard deviation (SD=.479). The table also showed that the teachers have good knowledge about the impact of assessment criteria for effective feedback process with mean values (M=3.63) and standard deviation (SD=.500).

However, the teachers showed below average level of understanding on their knowledge about deploying relevant strategies for giving effective feedback with mean value (2.25 and SD=.775), and how to give feedback according to individual needs with (M=2.62 and SD=.500). Moreover, the teachers' understanding about the benefit of peer feedback with (M=2.62 and SD=.500) is **weak**. Generally, the data presented in the table indicated that the EFL teachers perceived knowledge about written corrective feedback with (M=3.20 and SD=0.45) is **average**.

From this it can be understood that the teachers have good understanding about the various sources of feedback but they lack ample knowledge on how to deploy various strategies that are relevant to exploit the feedback from these sources. Among this peer feedback is perceived as the least beneficial source. Moreover, from the data presented above it can be understood that the teachers have good knowledge about the features of good writing that enable them give accurate judgment on the students writing but they lack knowledge on how to give this feedback according to individual students' needs, emotion, attitude and motivation.

**Table 4.1. 1. Descriptive Statistics:EFL teachers' perceived knowledge about WCF**

| N   | What is the extent of your knowledge about...                                                                                     | N  | M           | SD          |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------|-------------|
| 1.  | how feedback from different sources can be given i.e., teachers, peers, and self?                                                 | 16 | 3.94        | .250        |
| 2.  | the features of good writing that enable you to provide accurate judgment of student writing?                                     | 16 | 3.75        | .447        |
| 3.  | the role of feedback in formative assessment?                                                                                     | 16 | 3.69        | .479        |
| 4.  | The relevant strategies for giving effective feedback?                                                                            | 16 | 2.25        | .775        |
| 5.  | how to give feedback according to the needs of your teaching context (e.g., age, educational level and expectations of students)? | 16 | 3.50        | .632        |
| 6.  | different delivery modes for feedback – i.e., written, oral, and technology supported?                                            | 16 | 3.00        | .000        |
| 7.  | how to give feedback according to individual student needs?                                                                       | 16 | 2.62        | .500        |
| 8.  | the benefits of peer feedback?                                                                                                    | 16 | 2.63        | .500        |
| 9.  | the role of students' affective dimension (e.g., emotions, attitudes, and motivation) in the feedback process?                    | 16 | 3.06        | .443        |
| 10. | the impact of clear assessment criteria for effective feedback?                                                                   | 16 | 3.63        | .500        |
|     | Valid N (listwise)                                                                                                                |    | <b>3.20</b> | <b>.452</b> |

#### 4.1.1.2. EFL teachers' perceived values about WCF

The second part of the EFL teachers' questionnaire was about the EFL teachers' perceived values about WCF which is the second component of the teachers WCF literacy. In this part there were 12 items that were designed to make teachers reflect their values about WC feedback. These items evaluate the teachers' beliefs, attitudes, disposition and perception about WCF.

Thus, the data presented in table 4.1.1.2. indicated, the teachers valued feedback as it should be understandable to students ( $M=3.94$   $SD=.250$ ), it should be given timely without delay ( $M=3.88$  and  $SD=.342$ ) and continuing professional development is important for teachers' feedback literacy ( $M= 3.94$ and  $SD =.250$ ). The table also shows that the teachers valued feedback is a shared responsibility between teachers and students ( $M=3.75$  and  $SD=.447$  ) and valued feedback as it should be given to multiple drafts rather than one draft ( $M=3.44$

and  $SD=.512$ ). However, the teachers valued feedback as it should aim to make students become autonomous writers (  $M=2.25$  and  $SD=.447$ ), Feedback is both a process and a product ( $M=2.94$  and  $SD=.574$ ) and feedback should encourage students to revise their writing ( $M=3.06$  and  $SD= .250$ ).

From the data presented here it can be understood that the EFL teachers have given better value to WCF as it should be clear and understandable to the students and it should also be given timely so that the students can correct it and learn from the feedback process. Moreover, they also believe that feedback is a shared responsibility between teachers and students and it is not a one draft task rather should be given to multiple drafts. However, teachers have given less value to feedback as it should aim to make students become autonomous writers, feedback as both process and product and should encourage students to revise their writing.

**Table 4.1.1.2. Descriptive Statistics: EFL teachers' perceived values about WCF**

| <b>N</b>   | <b>To what extent do the following statements reflect your values about feedback?</b> | <b>N</b> | <b>M</b> | <b>SD</b> |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>1.</b>  | Feedback should aim to make students become autonomous writers.                       | 16       | 2.25     | .447      |
| <b>2.</b>  | Feedback should encourage students to revise their writing.                           | 16       | 3.06     | .250      |
| <b>3.</b>  | Feedback should be given to multiple drafts rather than one draft.                    | 16       | 3.44     | .512      |
| <b>4.</b>  | Teachers should provide students with reinforcement after feedback is provided.       | 16       | 3.19     | .403      |
| <b>5.</b>  | Feedback should be given timely without delay.                                        | 16       | 3.88     | .342      |
| <b>6.</b>  | Feedback should be understandable to students.                                        | 16       | 3.94     | .250      |
| <b>7.</b>  | Feedback is a shared responsibility between teachers and students.                    | 16       | 3.75     | .447      |
| <b>8.</b>  | Continuing professional development is important for teachers' feedback literacy.     | 16       | 3.94     | .250      |
| <b>9.</b>  | Feedback is both a process and a product.                                             | 16       | 2.94     | .574      |
| <b>10.</b> | Teachers should encourage students to make individual feedback requests.              | 16       | 3.13     | .342      |
| <b>11.</b> | Feedback information should enable teachers to improve their                          | 16       | 3.00     | .000      |

|            |                                                                                                          |    |      |      |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|------|
|            | teaching.                                                                                                |    |      |      |
| <b>12.</b> | Feedback information should enable students to set further learning goals for their writing development. | 16 | 3.00 | .000 |
|            | Valid N (listwise)                                                                                       | 16 | 3.29 | .318 |

#### 4.1.1.3. EFL teachers' perceived skill about WCF

The third part of the teachers' questionnaire was about the EFL teachers' perceived skill about WCF which is the third component of the teachers' WCF literacy. In this part there were 12 items that were designed to make teachers reflect their perceived skill about WC feedback. These items evaluate the teachers' ability in handling the process of feedback.

Thus, the data presented in the table 4.1.1.3. below indicated that the teachers rated themselves as capable in terms of engaging students actively throughout the feedback process ( $M=3.25$   $sd=.447$ ), plan and organize peer feedback activities effectively ( $M=3.00$ ), avoid overwhelming students by addressing every writing problem in giving feedback ( $M=2.88$   $SD=.806$ ), help students determine their own learning goals to guide self- and/or peer feedback ( $M=2.81$  and  $SD=.403$ ).

However, the data presented in the table indicated that the teachers rated themselves as somewhat capable in items of making use of technology to enhance feedback in the writing classroom ( $M=2.00$ ), empower students to use self-feedback effectively ( $M=2.06$ ) and use information from feedback to improve their own teaching ( $M=2.00$ ).

**Table 4.1.1.3. Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' perceived skill**

| <b>N</b>  | <b>How would you rate your ability to...</b>                 | <b>N</b> | <b>M</b>    | <b>SD</b> |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| <b>1.</b> | reflect on your own feedback practice to further improve it? | 16       | 2.38        | .500      |
| <b>2.</b> | help students determine their own learning goals to          | 16       | <b>2.81</b> | .403      |

|     |                                                                                     |    |             |              |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------|--------------|
|     | guide self- and/or peer feedback?                                                   |    |             |              |
| 3.  | help students use feedback to monitor their own learning and writing?               | 16 | <b>2.81</b> | .403         |
| 4.  | involve other colleagues in professional learning about feedback?                   | 16 | 2.31        | .479         |
| 5.  | avoid overwhelming students by addressing every writing problem in giving feedback? | 16 | <b>2.88</b> | .806         |
| 6.  | use information from feedback to improve your own teaching?                         | 16 | 2.00        | .000         |
| 7.  | engage students actively throughout the feedback process?                           | 16 | <b>3.25</b> | .447         |
| 8.  | provide effective training to prepare students for peer feedback?                   | 16 | 2.25        | .447         |
| 9.  | plan and organize peer feedback activities effectively?                             | 16 | 3.00        | .000         |
| 10. | provide feedback that addresses individual student needs?                           | 16 | 2.50        | .730         |
| 11. | empower students to use self-feedback effectively?                                  | 16 | 2.06        | .250         |
| 12. | make use of technology to enhance feedback in the writing classroom?                | 16 | 2.00        | .000         |
|     | Valid N (listwise)                                                                  | 16 | <b>2.52</b> | <b>0.372</b> |

#### 4.1.2. Data from the teachers' interview

The main purpose of the interview was to substantiate the data gathered through the questionnaire and to gather data that can not be collected through the questionnaire. Therefore, the items in the interview were clustered and analyzed according to the major components of teachers' WCF literacy indicators.

##### 4.1.2.1. The Importance of WCF information

The EFL teachers that were incorporated in the study were interviewed regarding the importance of WCF provided by EFL teachers on their students' writing; they stated two major benefits for both the teachers themselves and their students. Teacher A stated that students benefit from the WCF provided by teachers on their writing as the students could get information about the errors they made and the ways of correcting them.

*I think it is important because students can get direct comments suggestions or feedback regarding the error that they encountered during writing.*

Source: Teacher A

Moreover, it was stated by teacher respondents that tracing the students' writing errors and then providing WCF helped the teachers in terms of gaining information about their students' understanding, disposition and performance with regard to WCF they received so that teachers could change the type of WCF they are using and the approach they are implementing during the writing lesson.

*For teachers it helped them to follow the performance of their students, to check if the methodology is right or not, whether the feedback is effective or not, and based on the information they have got, they can even change they have been using in the lesson.*

Source: Teacher A.

#### **4.1.2.1. The types of WCF**

Regarding the types of WCF teachers were using to correct the students writing errors, representative EFL teacher respondents stated that they used direct WCF and they opted this type of WCF as it gives clear information to the students to correct their writing error.

*Most of the time I use direct feedback because the students easily understand where their error lies and how to correct it.*

Source: Teacher B

#### **4.1.2.2. The sources of feedback**

The data collected through the teachers interview regarding the major sources of written corrective feedback employed in the writing lesson, representative teacher respondents stated that teachers WC feedback is the major source of feedback and sometimes they engage the students in peer feedback.

*It is obvious that we teachers provide WCF to correct our students' writing error and even our students expect WCF coming from me. I also engage them in peer evaluation, they try comment and correct on each others' work.*

Source: Teacher C

Besides, teachers also stated exemplars or model writings were also be used as additional source of feedback even though it was a rarely used source of feedback.

*In some cases I used model approach or bringing model writing texts to the classroom.*

Source: Teacher C

Regarding the nature of the students involvement in the feedback process, the teacher respondents stated that most of the time the students actively participate in receiving

feedback coming from either teacher or peer and correcting their work. This indicated that the students were rarely participate in providing feedback on their peers writing.

*When feedback is provided to them, they simply accept it and try to correct their error. They do not or rarely engage themselves in discussion with the teacher or peer on the feedback given.*

Source: Teacher D.

#### 4.1.2.3. Improving the students' WCF literacy

##### 4.1.2.3.1. The use of feedback rubrics

Regarding the EFL teachers use of WCF rubrics in the writing lesson, teacher respondents they sometimes use feedback rubrics at the beginning of writing lessons it created opportunities to for the students to exercise another feedback role giving feedback on their peers writing and experience WCF coming from peer as another source of feedback.

*I use a certain criteria that was set at the beginning. Based on that criteria, the students were also been provided with a sort of writing task to be done. After that based on that criteria, I engage them in peer evaluation, they try comment and correct on each others' work, they would also present their feedback to the classroom and finally, I my self give final conclusion.*

Source: Teacher B

##### 4.1.2.3.2. Giving clear WCF

Regarding the WCF teachers provided on the students' writing , EFL teachers were interviewed if their WCF were clear and understandable to their students or not. To this point, most of the teacher respondents said that their WCF were clear and understandable to their students.

*As far as my understanding is concerned, I give clear feedback that are understandable to the students. Because each and every error the students made would be addressed.*

Source: Teacher A

Regarding the strategies the teachers used to trace whether the feedback they provided were understandable by their students or not, the teacher respondents said that after feedback was given on their writing , they asked the students to revise their writing and develop a new writing and some times they also collect their revised writing for evaluation. In these moments the the teachers understood that most of the writing errors were corrected .

*After feedback was given on the students' writing , I asked the students to revise their writing and develop a new writing and some times I also collect their revised writing for evaluation.*

*In these cases I understood that the students corrected most of their writing errors as per the WCF I provided.*

Source: Teacher B

#### **4.1.2.3.3. Providing training on WCF**

#### **4.1.2.4. The timing of feedback**

Regarding giving WCF on time with out delay, the teacher respondents mentioned two occasions that determine how quick they give feedback on the students writing. They said that they give WCF on time with out delay when the students were practising the the writing task during writing lesson. However, when it is during writing assignment or exam, there could be some sort of delay due to the large number of students, work load and sprang ling schedule of lessons.

*Giving feedback on time depends on whether the writing activity is done in classroom or in test or exam. If it is classroom activity they probably finalize their work on the spot so that they could receive feedback immediately. If it is on exams there could be some delays as it require time to give feedback carefully on each students every error and give mark which took time. Besides, the large number of students, additional responsibilities and the nature of classroom schedules also contribute to delayed feedback.*

Source: Teacher A

#### **4.1.2.5. Challenges affecting the effectiveness of WCF**

Regarding the challenges affecting the effectiveness of WCF, the teacher respondents mentioned that lack of training particularly on WCF and then lack of frequent exposure to teaching writing lesson are the major challenges related to the teachers. Besides, the process of providing WCF by itself requires time but the teachers do not only teach writing course, they also require time to other courses.

*Lack of training particularly on WCF and then lack of frequent exposure to teaching writing lesson are the major challenges. WCF by itself requires time but the teachers do not only teach writing course, they also require time to other courses. Thus, these could make it challenging.*

Source: Teacher B

The teachers also mentioned that the lack of frequent exposure to the writing tasks, lack of vocabularies to produce writing in English language, unfamiliarity to the WCF codes they were provided were among the major challenges affecting the effectiveness of WCF that were related to the students.

*As EFL learners they lack exposure to the writing lessons, lack of knowledge on the WCF codes and also lack of vocabulary.*

Source: Teacher D

## **4.2. Discussion**

This section discusses the results of the study merging the findings from qualitative and quantitative data, looking relationship between data from the students and teachers , and where available results from previous studies.

### **4.3.1. EFL teachers' WCF literacy**

The teachers' WCF literacy could be analyzed in terms of the three basic components of the teachers written corrective feedback literacy framework : teachers' knowledge on WC feedback, teachers values on written corrective feedback and teachers skill on written corrective feedback. The first research question of the current study was dedicated to measure WCF literacy level EFL writing teachers' in the DELL at Mettu university in 2024 AY. In order to answer this research question, the data collected through the teachers' WCF literacy measurement questionnaire, interview and the WCF provided by the teachers on students' actual pieces of writing were summarized into the three major components of the teachers' WCF literacy framework.

#### **A. Teachers' knowledge on WCF**

EFL teachers have good understanding about the various sources of feedback but they lack ample knowledge on how to deploy various strategies that are relevant to exploit the feedback from these sources. Among these peer feedback is perceived as the least beneficial source. This finding coincides with the data found from the teachers' interview that teachers' WCF was employed in the writing lesson as the major source of feedback while peer feedback was the leas.

Moreover, from the data presented above it can be understood that the teachers have good knowledge about the features of good writing that enable them give accurate judgment on the students writing but they lack knowledge on how to give these feedback according to

individual students' needs, emotion, attitude and motivation. This result supported the finding of the previous research by (Yu, 2021) that L2 teachers tend to provide error-focused feedback even though such feedback is overwhelming, frustrating, confusing and demotivational for students.

Moreover, the data collected from WCF the teachers provided on the students' writing indicated that the WCF provided by the teachers were limited to certain types of errors and escaped a good number of errors with out correction. This might be due to delimited knowledge on the fewer types of errors to be corrected or due to lack of emphasis on every treatable errors.

### **B. Teachers' values on WCF**

Regarding the teachers' values on WCF it was found out that the EFL teachers have given better value to WCF as it should be clear and understandable to the students. This data was also verified by the data from the students' interview that the feedback their teachers provided on their writing were clear and understandable particularly during direct corrective feedback. Nonetheless, the students mentioned occasions when they found it difficult to understand the WCF provided by their teacher particularly when teachers put question marks or X on their writings as it gave the students no clue on how to correct their error.

Besides, it was found out that teachers have given better values to WCF as it should be given on time with out delay. However, it contradicted with the data gathered through the students' interview that the students mentioned that they commonly receive WCF from their teachers during writing assignments or exams which were returned to the students delayed for days or weeks long after they produced their writing and forget about it. The finding of the current research indicated that the teachers have given good values to the general feedback principles except few principles such as feedback should aim to make students become autonomous writers, should be both a process and a product and feedback should encourage students to revise their writing. Besides, the finding of this study indicated that even though the teachers' have given better value to many principles of feedback, they have not yet implemented effectively in the actual writing classroom. This finding supported Lee and Mao (2024)'s finding that the EFL teachers generally support many of the feedback principles espoused in the literature but found it hard to put them into practice.

### **C. Teachers' skills on WCF**

The teachers' skill about WCF can be analyzed from three basic perspectives: their capability of engaging students into the feedback process, making use of effective strategies to enhance feedback in the writing classroom; and use information from feedback to improve their own teaching. In this regard, even though the teachers rated themselves as somewhat good in terms of engaging students through out the feedback process, the data collected from interview indicated that teachers engage the students mainly in receiving feedback from teachers or sometimes from peers. They rarely engage their students in providing self or peer feedback. Moreover, the teachers were found out as they rarely engage the students in revising their writing based on the feedback they received.

Regarding the teachers' capability of using effective WCF provision strategies in the writing lesson, it was found out to be the area the EFL teachers showed the least capable. The use of technologies that enhance the process of feedback in the writing classroom was found rarely practiced by the writing teachers. Moreover, even though, the teachers during interview mentioned feedback was useful to check if the methodology they are using is effective or not, they rated themselves as not capable of using information from feedback to improve their own teaching. This finding supported the result of the previous study that teachers considered themselves to be only somewhat capable of most aspects WCF included in the section. Specifically, the participants did not report strong confidence in their ability to use feedback for fostering students' ability to engage in peer and self-feedback, and to exploit technology to enhance feedback, which suggests that these feedback strategies were unlikely to be part of their regular practice, as in many EFL classrooms (e.g., Junqueira & Payant, 2015; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019).

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendation**

This section summarizes the analysis of the data presented through questionnaire and interview and the major findings concerning Mettu university EFL teachers' Written corrective perceived feedback literacy and their practice in actual classroom and the challenges affecting the effectiveness of WCF to improve the students' English writing skill. Thus, based on the analysis of the descriptive statistics EFL teachers have good understanding about the various sources of feedback but they lack ample knowledge on how

to deploy various strategies that are relevant to exploit the feedback from these sources. EFL teachers have given better value to WCF as it should be clear and understandable to the students. Besides, it was found out that teachers have given better values to WCF as it should be given on time without delay. Teachers engage the students mainly in receiving feedback from teachers or sometimes from peers. However, they rarely engage their students in providing self or peer feedback. Moreover, the teachers were found out as they rarely engage the students in revising their writing based on the feedback they received. Meanwhile, the teachers' capability of using effective WCF provision strategies in the writing lesson, was found out to be the area the EFL teachers showed the least capable.

The challenges that affected the effectiveness of WCF mainly attributed to the teachers and their students. The teachers' lower level of competence on the major WCF literacy indicators affected the effectiveness of the WCF process. Besides, giving no opportunity to the students to clarification and discussion on the feedback, delayed feedback, rarely follow up their students whether or not the students improved their writing according to the WCF provided were the major challenges found out on the EFL teachers and they attributed to lack of training on WCF during teachers' training centers or on short term on job training. Besides, there was no experience of formal or informal discussion with colleagues regarding the WCF. Therefore, teachers training institutes should incorporate courses that improve the written corrective feedback literacy of teachers. Besides, the university and/or the department should arrange platforms in which the teachers discuss on the ways they can improve their written corrective feedback literacy.

Therefore, it is recommended that the EFL teachers written corrective feedback literacy should be improved. Particularly, employing various strategies of implementing WCF in such a way that help their students benefit from it. Besides, teachers training institutes should incorporate courses that improve the written corrective feedback literacy of teachers. Besides, the university and/or the department should arrange platforms in which the teachers discuss on the ways they can improve their written corrective feedback literacy. The EFL teachers should also work hard on improving their own students' WCF literacy. If the written corrective feedback given by the EFL teachers are not understood by the students, it cannot achieve the final target of feedback provision – improving the learners writing. Meanwhile various stakeholders such as teachers' training institutions, curriculum developers and educators should take in to account incorporating contents that focus on effectively utilizing WCF strategies in writing classroom.

This study has got few limitations to be acknowledged. Consequently, further study has been suggested. The study was conducted at university level so further study should be conducted at lower level English language writing lesson classrooms. Moreover, further studies are needed to be conducted on students' level of written corrective feedback literacy.

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