

Unlocking the Influence of Training on Language Instructors' Written Corrective Feedback Literacy Öğretmen Eğitiminin Dil Öğretmenlerinin Yazılı Düzeltici Geri Bildirim Bilgisi Üzerindeki Etkisinin Açığa Çıkarılması

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Abstract: This study examined the formation of writing instructors' written corrective feedback (WCF) philosophies and evaluated the effectiveness of a one-shot WCF training session in facilitating teacher transformation in WCF practices, a common professional development practice to train in-service language instructors at universities. Four writing instructors, with varying levels of experience and educational background, teaching in a school of foreign languages in Türkiye volunteered for the study. Prior to the training, seven essays that the instructors provided WCF for were collected. To expand their knowledge of WCF, the instructors then participated in a one-hour WCF training program, which covered types of WCF, forms of WCF, stages of WCF, the benefits of WCF, and some helpful tips for WCF. After the training, the instructors assessed and provided WCF for an additional seven essays. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and WCF analysis of essays and analyzed using a rubric including all themes covered in the training and a thematic analysis of interview themes. The results suggested instructors' WCF philosophies were shaped by a combination of experience, school policies, and master's education. Furthermore, while the one-shot training program did not entirely transform the instructors' WCF philosophies, it had some impact on their practices.

Keywords: Written corrective feedback literacy, L2 writing, professional development, higher education

Öz: Bu çalışmada, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin yazma dersinde verdiği yazılı düzeltici geri bildirimlerin (WCF) nasıl ortaya çıktığı incelenmiştir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerde yaygın bir mesleki gelişim uygulaması olarak kabul gören tek seferlik WCF eğitimi oturumunun etkililiğini, öğretmenlerin WCF kullanımındaki değişimlere bakarak değerlendirmiştir. Araştırmaya Türkiye'de bir yabancı diller yüksek okulunda öğretmenlik yapan, farklı deneyim ve eğitim düzeylerine sahip dört İngilizce yazma dersi öğretmeni gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. WCF eğitimi öncesinde öğretmenlerin WCF verdiği yedi öğrenci makalesi toplanmıştır. Ardından, öğretmenlerin WCF bilgisini geliştirmek amacıyla WCF türlerini, WCF formlarını, WCF aşamalarını, WCF'nin yararlarını ve bazı faydalı WCF ipuçlarını kapsayan bir saatlik bir eğitim verilmiştir. Eğitimin ardından, öğretmenler ek olarak yedi öğrenci makalesini daha WCF kullanarak notlandırmıştır. Veriler, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve makalelere verilen WCF örneklerinin analizi yoluyla toplanmıştır. Veri analizi için eğitimde ele alınan tüm temaların yer aldığı bir değerlendirme listesi hazırlanmış ve röportaj temaları tematik analiz yöntemi kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, İngilizce yazma dersi öğretmenlerinin WCF felsefelerinin deneyim, okul politikaları ve yüksek lisans eğitiminin birleşimiyle nasıl şekillendiğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, tek seferlik eğitim programının öğretmenlerin WCF felsefelerini tamamen değiştirmese de onların pratik uygulamaları üzerinde bir miktar etki yarattığını da ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yazılı düzeltici geri bildirim okuryazarlığı, ikinci dilde yazma, mesleki gelişim, yüksek öğrenim

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Introduction

Written corrective feedback (WCF), is a "complex phenomenon [whose] complexity is reflected in the controversies that surround such issues as whether to correct, what to correct, how to correct, and when to correct" (Ellis, 2009, p. 16). It has been a controversial topic on the point of improving language learning since the early argument of Truscott (1996), who claimed the utilization of WCF in writing classes is futile. Ever since, a myriad of researchers (e.g., Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Sheen, 2007) have tried to search the phenomenon and their findings refuted Truscott's ideas and indicated WCF is sine-qua-non of the second language (L2) writing classes rather than being a useless implication. A plenty of following studies showed positive influences of WCF in the L2 writing classes (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2009; Ellis et al., 2008; Sheen, 2007). These studies investigated the phenomenon by searching different aspects of WCF methods in writing classes.

First and foremost, the focal concern has become to what extent student errors should be provided WCF in these studies.

Whether teachers should offer WCF to all student errors in a particular essay or they should focus only one or two kinds of errors and highlight them (Ferris et al., 2013) were two options. Whilst the former was known as comprehensive (unfocused) WCF, the latter was selective (focused) WCF. The advantages and disadvantages of the two types were sought in various studies (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). The selective WCF was uncovered more effective (Bitchener, 2008; Ferris 1995) because students could capture a single error type in a better way and pay their attention easily, yielding more productive results in L2 writing classes (Ellis et al., 2008). However, further investigation cleared that those teachers mostly preferred comprehensive WCF as their usual way of offering feedback in the authentic L2 writing classes (Cheng & Zhang, 2021; Ellis et al., 2008; Wei & Cao, 2020) and correspondingly, students desired it more than selective WCF (Lee, 2005; Leki, 1991; McMartin-Miller, 2014). Additionally, comprehensive WCF was found influential in catering for student awareness (e.g., Sheppard, 1992; Storch, 2010). Nonetheless, focused WCF was found more feasible in authentic classrooms to apply (Lee et al., 2021).

The additional investigation was on whether to provide correct form of student errors or not. In that sense, attaching correct forms of student errors, known as direct WCF, or indicating the availability of an error by using some error codes or forms with no code, referred to as indirect WCF were two implementations (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Although some research findings supported indirect WCF (e.g., Ferris, 2006; Lalande, 1982) owing to its impact on long-term learning, others showcased that direct forms were more beneficial to enhance student performance (e.g., Shintani et al., 2014) and to trigger the internalization of the newly learned structures (Ellis et al., 2008). Also, studies found out that teachers provided direct WCF more than indirect as they prevent questions from the students (Furneaux et al., 2007; Lee, 2004).

Apart from the types and forms of WCF, written commentaries were highlighted in the WCF literature. Written commentaries, mostly known as extra comments, were offered in various forms such as statements, imperatives, hedges, or questions for student writings by teachers (Ferris, 1997; Zamel, 1985). Among these forms, questions were highly suggested as they improved cognitive interaction and yielded student autonomy. To be able to form effective written commentaries, teachers were suggested to offer plain, explicit, text-specific, and topic-oriented comments both for strengths and weaknesses of essays and their feedback should be constructive (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

Furthermore, the stages of WCF were investigated, and some methods were proposed. According to Hattie and Timberley (2007), influential feedback had to answer three questions: Where am I going?, How am I going?, and Where to next?. These questions were related to three stages of feedback: respectively, feed up, feed back, and feed forward. In the feed up stage, the goals of writing are set and related to specific understandings. In the feed back stage, feedback is provided to shed light on the performance of the students as diagnostic and descriptive. In the feed forward stage, feedback aims to develop further learning and encourages critical reflection.

The utilization of important tools to enhance the effectiveness of feedback in L2 writing classes were also examined in WCF studies. The use of feedback forms (Lee, 2014), error ratio analysis sheets, or error logs (Ferris, 2011) was given utmost importance in the classes (McMartin-Miller, 2014) as they promoted learning. Regarding the procedures and cycles of WCF, hitherto studies inferred the importance of informing students about the current feedback procedures and asking their WCF preferences to improve an understanding of the WCF and to lead to open dialogues (Plonsky & Mills, 2006). To that wake, it is of utmost importance that L2 writing teachers inform their students about how they use WCF in their writing classes and share the responsibility of WCF procedures with their students through communication (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010) by considering elements influencing the teacher-student dynamic within WCF activities such as goal congruence, expectation fulfillment, and power dynamics (Liu et al., 2022).

All these aforementioned studies composed the profound knowledge base of WCF. Nonetheless, the studies on WCF detected different theoretical and practical perspectives. In a nutshell, hitherto studies seeking teacher insights and practices on WCF could not find the traces of WCF knowledge base in teachers' real classroom practices, pointing the research-practice inconsistency between teachers' real WCF and

recommended principles (e.g., Lee, 2009; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). Studies pointed out that teachers either do not recall what they learned in teacher education or do not pay attention to the in-service teacher training (Lam, 2015; Vogt & Tzagari, 2014).

To illustrate, against the suggestions of WCF theories, the majority of the L2 writing teachers gave comprehensive WCF for student writings and attempted to pinpoint grammar mistakes more (Lee, 2003). Likewise, solely 20% of teachers utilize selective WCF rather than following the suggestions of selective WCF (Lee, 2008). What is more, L2 writing teachers give WCF for grammar and mechanics errors most of the time (Montgomery & Baker, 2007). To shed light on these findings, some other studies searched the reasons of these preferences and revealed that teachers desired "flexible response strategies that fit the student and the task rather than following rigid prescriptions" (Li, 2012, p. 21) or even if they want to implement what is suggested, they cannot manage it owing to the insufficient teacher training, support from school administrators, and practical restrictions (Li, 2011).

In the light of these studies, it is obvious that there has been a lack of WCF literacy among L2 writing teachers. Hammersley (2004) expresses the reason for the gap between research and practice with these words: "It is because of this gap between theory and practice that practitioners frequently view research information as abstract and irrelevant knowledge that cannot be applied to practical problems." (p. 561). In that sense, the aim of in-service teacher development should be to equip teachers with necessary research information that they can apply to. Kostoulas (2018) propounded that having research literacy requires teachers to have the ability of locating information, criticizing information, and synthesizing information into a functional, personally pertinent, theory of teaching and learning. Correspondingly, the aim of teacher training sessions should be offering information to teachers, and enabling them to reflect on information, and triggering them to use the newly learned information. Only in that way, teachers can develop their knowledge base and yield positive learning outcomes among various students (Timberley & Alton-Lee, 2008). Nonetheless, there is a dearth of research in developing WCF literacy among L2 writing teachers despite the fact that teachers need knowledge that they can use in their classes (Karaağaç-Zan & Yiğitoğlu, 2018; Lee, 2011). Especially, there is a lacuna in this field in the Turkish context. As one of the pioneering studies, Karaağaç-Zan and Yiğitoğlu (2018) examined WCF beliefs and practices of one experienced and one novice English teachers. The results of this descriptive study inclined that the perspectives of teachers regarding writing and mistakes, the responsibilities of teachers and students in writing, the training and background of pre-service teachers, and the policies implemented by schools were the primary reasons of their WCF beliefs and practices. However, teachers were in need of theoretical information on the issue. Therefore, there is an urgent need to bridge the gap between WCF research and practice by informing teachers about WCF literacy (Lee, 2017) with intervention studies. Raising awareness constitutes the first step of constructing WCF literacy among teachers (Lee, 2019). Thus, by proposing an in-service teacher training session which is a common practice at institutions as a professional development activity, this research aimed to fill this void with a case study methodology and raised the following research questions:

1. To what extent does a one-shot WCF training session have an impact on L2 writing instructors' WCF practices and philosophies?
2. What are the factors affecting the WCF philosophy formation of L2 writing instructors?
3. What are the expectations of L2 writing instructors from effective training sessions?

Method

Data collection

This study utilized a qualitative research approach with the aim of gathering, examining, and interpreting the descriptive data for an in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon with a particular group of participants (Gay et al., 2012). Questioning a problem, comprehending all perspectives of a significant phenomenon, collecting data from a restricted number of people based on their narrative to have their insights are some characteristics of the qualitative research paradigm (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, a case study methodology was adopted to cater for more profound insights towards the changes in the philosophies and practices of WCF among participants. In such, each individual provides a unique contribution to the study and collectively similarities and differences between them lead to a better understanding of the phenomenon. Therefore, each instructor's experiences were regarded as a particular case with their background information.

Context and Participants

The current study was carried out in an English language preparatory school of one of the top-tier state universities in Türkiye. The school was reached through personal contacts. The medium of instruction is English in this university. Therefore, students must hold a specific degree in English to be able to start education in their departments. To assess students' English proficiency level, a proficiency test is conducted by the English language preparatory school. This test assesses students' competence in reading, listening, use of English, and writing. Notably, writing proficiency is underscored as particularly pivotal, as it necessitates achieving a designated threshold score (12 out of 20), unlike other skills which do not mandate specific passing criteria. Students who cannot pass the proficiency test successfully have to attend the language preparatory school for one or two terms, depending on their proficiency level. Writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills are offered in different courses with varying teaching hours at the school. Academic writing classes are presented in four hours at intermediate level. Skill classes are divided among the instructors without considering any qualifications of them. For this reason, all instructors teach at least one writing course every semester by following the syllabus sent by the curriculum development office. Instructors do not have to develop any materials or prepare lesson plans, and they solely follow the weekly schedule including the required materials.

Four academic writing course instructors (3 females, 1 male) took part in this research. They were chosen through convenient sampling among the volunteer writing instructors. Their age ranged from 33 to 45 and experience varied from 8 to 18 years. While three of them held a master's degree in English language teaching, one had a bachelor's degree in English language teaching. Also, one of them was continuing his PhD study. The reason for the existence of such various

degrees in this sampling can be explained through the criteria of being an instructor at English preparatory schools in Türkiye. To apply for a position as an English instructor in English language preparatory schools, candidates must hold both bachelor's and master's degrees in one of the following fields: a) English Language Teaching, b) English Language and Literature, c) English Translation and Interpretation, d) Linguistics, and e) American Culture and Literature. Before 2016. Possessing a master's degree was not a prerequisite. However, in a new regulation initiated by the Higher Education Council (HEC), it became mandatory for prospective instructors to hold the aforementioned bachelor's and master's degrees. Additionally, state universities typically expect candidates to have between 2 and 5 years of higher education experience in the relevant field. Hence, whilst most of the instructors do not hold a master's degree in this institution, only the ones recruited after 2016 possess a master's degree. Table 1 demonstrates the participant backgrounds. Pseudo names were attained in the study.

Regarding continuous professional development, some attempts have been launched in the school by the professional development unit, albeit less in number recently. Monthly training sessions mostly offered as one-shot sessions aiming at a specific topic are the most common professional development activities at these institutions like many other state universities in Türkiye. The topics of sessions were determined by the instructors through the needs analysis conducted at the beginning of each term. All instructors were obliged to take part in these in-service training in line with job descriptions. Nonetheless, even though academic writing is of utmost importance in this school, there have not been any one-shot or ongoing training sessions for teaching, assessing, or providing WCF for academic writing. Instructors were left on their own in this sense. Additionally, there was not any school policy regarding the WCF practices of instructors.

Table 1. Demographic characteristic of participants

Name	Experience in Teaching	Degrees	Years of Teaching Writing	Level of Teaching Writing
Ali	12	PhD continued	12	Intermediate
Merve	11	MA	9	Intermediate
Ayşe	18	Bachelor's	12	Intermediate
Pelin	8	MA	6	Intermediate

Data Collection Tools

Semi-structured interviews were used to examine instructors' insights on WCF in the study. 14 questions were prepared under four categories, a) background information, b) instructors' WCF philosophy formation, c) the effects of WCF training on their philosophy and practices, and d) expectations from effective training. Most of the questions were inspired from the topics in Bailey and Garner (2010) and Ferris et al. (2011) and adapted in line with the research questions of this study. Each interview was carried out face-to-face with individual instructors and took one hour.

Two different *sets of essays* provided WCF before and after WCF training were examined in this study. All instructors were requested to randomly choose seven essays that they have given WCF recently before the WCF training. The essays they gave were selected from the first level assessment test of

intermediate level, so the questions and essay type were the same in all essays. The criterion for intermediate level selection was to observe as much as WCF practices of instructors for a full essay as students write only a paragraph or two paragraphs in elementary and pre-intermediate levels. Following the WCF training, seven more essays with WCF were elicited from the instructors. Akin to the first essay set, the second essay set was from the second level assessment test at intermediate level.

Procedures

This research aimed to investigate real practices of professional development and their influences on instructors at English preparatory schools. With this aim in hand, to ensure ecological validity throughout the study, the research design did not necessitate any obligatory participation for a training or obligate instructors to carry out any tasks apart from their daily job routine. Only with that research design which is not forcing them to give WCF for any specific essay out of their daily responsibilities, the research intended to guarantee the observation of real WCF practices of instructors and influences of a one-shot training session.

Prior to the study, the ethical permission has been obtained from the Ethics Committee for Human Research in Social Sciences (Protocol No. 413) at Istanbul Technical University on November 13, 2023. Before the training, a level assessment test where intermediate level students are expected to write a full essay was done in the seventh week of the term. Seven essays were scored and provided WCF from this test were collected from four volunteer instructors. Following that, all instructors had to join a one-shot WCF training offered by the professional development unit for one hour in week 10. The WCF training encompassed a comprehensive overview of the advantages of WCF, its various types, forms, stages, and useful WCF forms that instructors can utilize in their writing classes. Furthermore, a collaborative discussion session was structured, where instructors engaged in groups of four to deliberate on their existing WCF methodologies and assess the insights gained from the training. Subsequently, all presentation slides and supplementary materials were distributed to instructors for reference following the session. After the WCF training, instructors were requested to give seven new essays they scored and gave WCF from the second level assessment test in week 12. After the analyses of essays by the researcher, a semi-structured interview was performed with each instructor to analyze to what extent the WCF training was influential on their philosophies and practices.

Data Analysis

To analyze the WCF practices of instructors in two essay sets, the researchers formed a rubric with all themes covered in the training. Written commentary with praise, criticism, suggestion, the use of imperatives, can “do”es, cannot “do”es and exemplifying the problematic points, types of feedback (comprehensive or selective WCF), forms of WCF (direct or indirect WCF), the stages of WCF (how I am going, where to next), and using error logs were the categories in the rubric. Percentages were utilized to gauge each instructor’s WCF practices within each category, considering the frequency of

specific WCF instances. By comparing the percentages of WCF practices, any discrepancies in the effectiveness of WCF before and after the training were identified and analyzed.

The interview data were meticulously recorded in audio format and subsequently transcribed verbatim. The researchers conducted a thorough review of the transcriptions to ensure accuracy and reliability. For data analysis, the thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was adopted. Initially, the researchers familiarized themselves with the data by reading through it and generating initial codes to systematically organize the information. Later, these codes were categorized into overarching themes, with continuous refinement and modification through iterative cycles of review. Once a thematic map was established, all identified themes were cataloged and documented for further analysis. To maintain inter-rater reliability among coders, the first step involved comparing how both coders classified data into the appropriate categories. Later, any discrepancies were addressed through discussion and adjustments were made in data categorization and assessment.

Results

The Analysis of Transformative Shifts: Instructors’ Before- and After-Training WCF Practices

Instructors’ before-training and after-training WCF practices and insights in the interviews implied the impacts of WCF training on different aspects in this research. Firstly, to investigate the first research question, the analysis of WCF instances on two different sets of essays before and after the WCF training was conducted. The findings indicated to what extent WCF training affected university L2 academic writing instructors’ WCF practices. Table 2 and Table 3 present the detailed information about the change in instructors’ before- and after-training WCF practices in percentages with a comparative approach.

Regarding the first category in the rubric, namely written commentary, some changes were observed in instructors’ after-training WCF practices, albeit less in percentages. Although the changes were mostly observed in subcategories of suggestions and exemplifying problematic areas both in the form of increases and decreases, some minor changes were also prominent in criticism, use of imperatives, “Can do”es, and “Cannot do”es subcategories with comparatively lower percentages. As for the types of WCF, even though the training exposed the benefits of providing selective WCF, instructors did not change their habits and continued delivering solely comprehensive WCF before (100%) and after (100%) the training. For forms of WCF, even though no modifications were available in the practices of two instructors, the distribution amount of direct and indirect WCF was different in two instructors’ WCF practices. Likewise, there was no change in the stages of WCF in two instructors’ practices and some rises and declines exist in two others’ practices. There was not any use of logs before or after the training. The following section explains these changes for each participant in a more detailed way.

Table 2. The analysis of instructors' before-training WCF practices

Name	Written Commentary							Types of WCF		Forms of WCF			Stages of WCF		Use of Logs
	Prai.	Criti.	Sug.	Imp.	"Can do"	"Cannot do"	Exe.	Comp.	Sel.	Dir.	Ind.	How	Where		
Ali	0%	0%	0%	40%	100%	100%	0%	100%	0%	20%	80%	60%	0%	0%	
Merve	0%	10%	50%	0%	0%	60%	40%	100%	0%	100%	0%	60%	40%	0%	
Ayşe	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	100%	0%	100%	0%	30%	0%	0%	
Pelin	20%	0%	70%	0%	50%	70%	80%	100%	0%	0%	100%	70%	70%	0%	

Table 3. The analysis of instructors' after-training WCF practices

Name	Written Commentary							Types of WCF		Forms of WCF			Stages of WCF		Use of Logs
	Prai.	Criti.	Sug.	Imp.	"Can do"	"Cannot do"	Exe.	Comp.	Sel.	Dir.	Ind.	How	Where		
Ali	20%	0%	0%	20%	100%	100%	0%	100%	0%	40%	60%	40%	0%	0%	
Merve	0%	10%	70%	0%	50%	60%	20%	100%	0%	100%	0%	80%	50%	0%	
Ayşe	0%	0%	30%	0%	0%	0%	40%	100%	0%	100%	0%	30%	0%	0%	
Pelin	20%	10%	40%	0%	30%	40%	50%	100%	0%	20%	80%	70%	70%	0%	

*The instances of increase or decrease in instructors' WCF practices following the WCF training were bolded in Table 3.

Instructor 1: Ali

Ali, boasting 12 years of experience, stood out as one of the most seasoned instructors among the participants. He has immersed himself in the field of English language education since his undergraduate studies. At the time of the study, he was in the process of completing his PhD thesis. He has been teaching L2 academic writing since the beginning of his career. Although his WCF practices did not change enormously after the WCF training, at least he implied he paid attention to the content of the training and tried to apply some of the suggestions there, albeit his concerns about some possible conflicts which might arise in the classes.

Regarding the written commentary part, he composed two columns titled as "+" and "-" at the end of each essay in his before-training WCF practices. While "+" column implied "can do"es, "-" column indicated "cannot do"es of students. Although there were not any explanatory sentences under these titles, students' strengths and weaknesses on organization, details, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics were shown in the format of a category such as "thesis statement" or "topic sentence". He added some imperative sentences next to error areas with exclamation marks, such as "Rewrite!" (40%). He did not involve any signs of praise, criticism, suggestions, or examples of the errors in his WCF

practices. Conversely, the amount of WCF instances on the second essay set largely dropped after the training. Less number of comments were present on essays. Surprisingly, he commenced to praise some students with remarks like "good" or "great" (20%). The same inclination was prominent for "can do" and "cannot do"es columns. Yet, similar to his before-training WCF practices, no instances of criticism, suggestions, or examples of the errors were found.

Comprehensive WCF was his common practice for all first sets of essays (100%), and he provided it in the form of underlining, circling, crossing out the wrong structures, adding a question mark, and asking critical thinking questions. This tendency did not change even after the training. Furthermore, indirect WCF (80%) was his typical form of WCF for most of the essays without the correct form of the problematic utterance, yet some forms of direct WCF (20%) were also emergent for few students. On the contrary to constant preference for comprehensive WCF, his preferences for direct WCF changed and increased from 20% to 40% and favored indirect WCF less after the training.

In line with the stages of WCF, he supported students for the development of "How I am going stage" (60%). "One argument is missing" or "Topic sentence must reflect your argument" were some examples of his WCF for this stage. By asking many questions to students related to the errors in the

form of a full sentence or sometimes only adding a question mark, he reflected the quality of students' essays. However, there were no signs of WCF for "Where to next stage" or the use of error logs. For the after-training practices, a limited amount of WCFs for "How I am going stage" (40%) were usual and WCF patterns were less controlled. Nonetheless, no error logs existed again.

Instructor 2: Pelin

Pelin, with eight years of experience, was the least experienced instructor among the participants. She completed her master's studies in English language education and has been teaching academic writing for six years. Even though some slight differences were available between her before-training and after-training WCF practices, these were mostly attached to contextual factors rather than the forthright effects of the training.

Pertaining to her written commentary, she included a detailed commentary at the end of each essay. Therefore, she never corrected or commented on an error within the text before the training. The only interruptions she attempted were to imply crucial errors to explain the problem. Her commentary was mostly related to the errors of organization, details, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. As a positive remark, her commentary always commenced with "Can do"es of the students (e.g., "Linkers are used well") in the first paragraph. By starting a new paragraph, she explicated what the student "Cannot do" and the problematic areas in the essay. She also provided many examples of the errors to help students understand better. To illustrate, she highlighted the wrong word preference and listed all possible words that can be used instead of the wrong word. Although she clarified what students can do in a detailed manner, she rarely praised the students (20%). In like manner, she did not criticize or dictate imperatives on the essays. She closed her written commentaries with a final remark as "suggestions" (e.g., "You can study if clauses."). Conversely, her after-training written commentaries were not as detailed as the previous ones. Instead, she held shorter written commentary parts mostly attached next to the errors within the essay, rather than writing a separate commentary section at the end of the essay in the second essay set. Significantly less amount of WCF was available for organization, details, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics compared to before-training comments, too. She still included "Can do"es, "Cannot do"es parts and exemplified some errors (respectively 30%, 40%, 50%) at the end of the essays. However, their quantity was not as much as her previous WCF practices (respectively 50%, 70%, 80%). The level of praise was the same (20%), yet some criticism existed (e.g., "Too many if clauses"). Likewise, there was a decline in the number of suggestions (from 70% to 40%). She did not use imperatives.

Touching on types of WCF, she supplemented comprehensive WCF (100%) for all student errors, without focusing on one or two types of errors before the training. To imply the error, she underlined the wrong utterance or used an insertion icon to indicate the missing part. There was no use of writing error codes. Correspondingly, no alteration was available in her after-training WCF practices for the types of WCF. She provided comprehensive WCF (100%) by underlining the errors and inserting an icon, too.

Respecting the forms of WCF, she selected indirect WCF and did not present the correct forms of the errors in her before-training WCF instances. In addition, she did not explain the

error within the text, as her commentary and leading questions were attached to the end of the essay. Contrastively, her after-training practices differentiated from the previous ones to some extent, and she became aware of direct WCF (up to 20%) in some essays despite the majority of indirect WCF (80%) in most of the papers.

As for stages of WCF, she clarified how the students are going with leading sentences (e.g., "The organization is clear"). For Where to next stage, she drew a road map for the students for their future studies while motivating them with phrases such as "Keep going" or "You need to read a lot to overcome the vocabulary problem". No error logs were used in her before-training WCF practices. There were not any revisions for stages of WCF in her after-training WCF, she kept giving the similar feedback for the students. Furthermore, she did not benefit from error logs.

Instructor 3: Ayşe

With the highest level of experience, 18 years in English teaching, Ayşe was the oldest instructor among the participants. She had been teaching academic writing for twelve years. Although she had a bachelor's degree in English language teaching, she did not pursue further studies at the master's level. Though she had fewer WCF instances on her essays and did not change her after-training WCF practices a lot, she could justify her attempts in a clear way.

Her first WCF practices did not consist of a written commentary nearly in all the essays. Only organization errors or some significant problems were given to WCF as a brief comment next to the error. Although she focused on organization by focusing on the topic sentence in some essays and grammar use, she did not signify content details or vocabulary use with WCF for most of the papers. She did not include any comments to praise, criticize, provide suggestions, or to imply what students "Can do" and "Cannot do". No use of imperatives was available. Nonetheless, she exemplified student errors by juxtaposing the correct form denoted by a tick icon and the wrong form by marking a cross on certain essays. Regarding her after-training WCF practices, there was no significant change observed. Repeatedly, no written commentary section consisting of praise, criticism, "Can do"es, "Cannot do"es and imperatives was attached to the essays. The only significant change was the existence of more suggestions about the organization of the essay inserted by some short notes (30%). In addition, she exemplified the errors up to 20%.

Pertaining to the types of WCF, comprehensive WCF was offered for all grammatical errors in the form of underlining, circling, crossing out the error or adding question marks. In the same vein, direct WCF was most common, and she gave the correct forms of the mistakes. The only WCF for the stages of WCF was for the where I am going stage. She added statements like "Not relevant" or "No need". Nonetheless, there was not any WCF for Where to next stage and the utilization of error logs. On the other hand, her after-training WCF practices for the types of WCF, forms of WCF, and stages of WCF did not vary from her previous practices. She never benefited from error logs.

Instructor 4: Merve

Merve obtained her bachelor's and master's degrees from the English language teaching department. With a total of 11 years of teaching experience, she possesses a solid foundation, particularly in academic writing, having dedicated nine years

to teaching this skill. She was one of the most productive academics who provided a vast amount of WCF for the student errors in the study. Like other instructors, she could not transform all of her WCF practices and continued to provide WCF in the same manner after the WCF training. Yet, some of her practices inclined the traces of the WCF training in specific categories.

She offered an in-depth WCF pattern for nearly all of her students' errors in her first set of essays before the training. Even though she attached a brief written commentary to the end of essays, most of her feedback was integrated into the essay next to the errors. Her commentary did not involve students' "Can do"es, imperative sentences, or occurrences of praise (0%). Yet, it was possible to observe some criticisms like "Hard to understand" (10%). She presented various suggestions to the students (50%) (e.g., "This part could be developed more.", "General statement could be better."). Besides the strengths of the students, she largely focused on the weaknesses of them with statements such as "Supporting ideas are not clear.", "Grammar is not correct." or "It does not meet the word limit" (60%). Also, she explained the wrong utterances by correcting them as well as offering more options to use in this specific part (40%). In contrast, some remarkable changes stood out in her after-training WCF practices. To illustrate, more positive comments emphasizing what students can do (50) particularly at the beginning of the written commentary as suggested in the training became more prominent in her data. Similarly, the occurrence of suggestions increased up to 70%. Nonetheless, any change was not detected in terms of criticism, praise, the use of imperatives, and what students cannot do. She also commenced to less exemplify the errors (20%).

Comprehensive WCF was the common practice for all the essays by circling, crossing the error, or inserting an icon to demonstrate there is a missing constituent (100%). Regarding the forms of WCF, direct WCF integrated with the correct forms of the mistakes were dominant in the pre training samples (100%). Furthermore, her feedback was mostly towards the how I am going stage with "Supporting ideas are not clear." or "Where is your personal opinion?" (60%). Despite comparably having less percentage, for where to next stage, she offered some feedback (e.g., "Please work on grammar." or "Develop better ideas.") (40%). She did not use

error logs in the previous essays. When compared to before-training WCF practices, she did not make changes related to types of WCF and forms of WCF, she kept utilizing the same ones even after the training. Nonetheless, only a slight increase was noticed in the use of how I am going stage (80%) and where to next (50%). Similarly, there were not any error logs.

The Way L2 Writing Instructors Navigate the Change and Growth in their WCF Philosophy

To shed light on the more in-depth insights of the instructors, semi-structured interviews were performed to examine the first, second and third research questions. The interview data revealed how instructors' WCF philosophies have been formed throughout their career, how a one-shot training session affected their WCF practice and philosophy, and what instructors expect from an effective training session. Based on the thematic analysis, three major themes namely 1) *influential factors shaping philosophy development*, 2) *influences of the training*, and 3) *criteria for effective training* were found out. The first theme held three sub themes, a) experience, b) school policies and c) master's education. The second theme included two sub themes, a) change in practice, b) change in philosophy. The third theme had two sub themes, a) the quantity, and b) the aim. Figure 1 presents the themes and sub-themes of the interview data.

Regarding the second research question, asking what affects the WCF philosophy formation of L2 writing instructors, the first theme unveiled in the interview data, namely *influential factors shaping philosophy development*, implied three main factors. The first factor, *experience*, was quite impactful for all the instructors' WCF understanding. Related to WCF philosophy development process, instructors declared their philosophy of WCF has been shaped throughout the teaching career with trial-and-error approach.

"Examples of my in-class WCF practices consist of conducting one-to-one conferencing sessions, allowing students to silently interpret feedback, and creating PDFs or PowerPoint presentations to highlight students' errors in essays to share with all students together. I found them through my personal experiences throughout the years." (Ayşe)

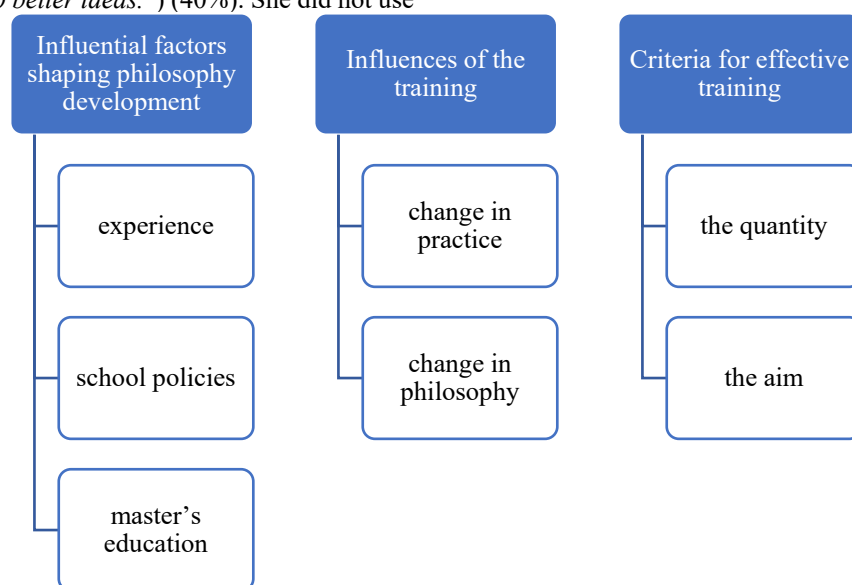


Figure 1 Occurring themes and sub-themes in the interviews

Despite the effectiveness of other facets in philosophy development, one participant mentioned that the most effective tenet was her own experiences of teaching in shaping her WCF practices. To give a mundane example, whilst she utilized error codes, she quitted them upon realizing their ineffectiveness in transforming students.

“Recognizing that my students did not make use of error codes, and they could not enhance their writing skills, I opted to supply them with correct forms of the errors. I am convinced this is a better way to deliver WCF and reshaped my philosophy in that way.” (Merve)

The second sub theme, *school policies*, was another impact on philosophy development. All instructors stated they constructed their WCF philosophy via the experiences at various schools of foreign languages with different WCF policies they worked on. Most of the time, the rubrics utilized in the schools and their WCF applications determined their WCF habits constantly. One instructor stated, although she utilized error codes before, she stopped using them owing to school policies. In addition, disappointments related to school policies and students compelled her to reassess and change her WCF philosophies.

“I gave up. When I realized that the WCF I provided did not alter students’ motivation or practices, it let me down, and I decided to change my practices.” (Ayşe)

One instructor considered alterations of WCF practices must be ensured institution wise and only in that way they should start to apply it. The instructor did not approve diverse practices by instructors within the same school, which can lead to unfairness. The duration of lessons, the profile of students, class size, and student expectations all influence the type of WCF that an instructor offers. For this reason, all these factors should be paid attention while determining WCF practices within an institution.

Finally, *master’s education*, the third sub theme also formed L2 writing instructors’ WCF philosophies. One instructor assumed her WCF philosophy has evolved as through the effect of the courses she was offered at her bachelor’s and master’s degree. Another instructor signified that her feedback philosophy has evolved over time, particularly during their master's education. Before pursuing her master's degree, the instructor used to offer WCF exclusively for grammar and vocabulary errors, neglecting aspects like organization, mechanics, and details. Contrastively, through readings and discussions during their master's program, the perspective on WCF shifted, prompting them to incorporate more WCF.

“I realized the importance of WCF for the development of students; therefore, I attempted to offer WCF as much as I could do.” (Pelin)

On the other hand, one participant indicated even though the influence of undergraduate and master’s education was dominant when he began his teaching career, the impact of foreign language education was scarce on his WCF practices when the time passed because these departments did not offer any WCF related courses in their curriculum. Hence, he could not find a chance to directly learn from his education.

“I did not undergo any formal training in teaching writing; therefore, my approach to WCF stemmed from my experiences in the schools, specifically, the writing policies of schools played a significant role in shaping my philosophy.” (Ali)

The second main theme of the interview data, *the influences of the training*, with two sub themes namely a)

change in practice, and b) change in philosophy answered the first research question examining to what extent a one-shot WCF training session influenced L2 writing instructors’ WCF philosophies and practices. As for the effects of the WCF training on practice *change*, one instructor said even though he acknowledged selective WCF during the training and aspired to use it, he had some concerns about its approval from the students on the point of explaining student grades. He had some hesitations towards the use of it, which might create various conflicts between students and the instructor in the classroom environment and cause an awkward conversation.

“If I provided selective WCF, it would become challenging to justify the scores assigned to students, as there are only a few WCF instances on their essays after the WCF training. This scenario might lead to conflict between the student and me. However, when I offer feedback on organization, details, vocabulary, and grammar, students can comprehend the rationale behind their scores. If I solely mark vocabulary errors, students may question, “Did you only focus on vocabulary errors?” and think these are the only errors they made.” (Ali)

Another instructor acknowledged that due to time constraints, student motivation issues, and the necessity of being concise, she adapted her approach and provided a different attitude to WCF in the second set of essays in reference to the changes in her after-training WCF practices. She could not focus on the training content in her mind whilst providing WCF.

“I had different concerns while I was providing WCF for the second set of essays such as students’ expectations and time, so I had to be concise and more time efficient. I think this perspective changed my WCF practices and I could not apply what I have learned during the training.” (Pelin)

Additionally, some instructors believe that although they were made aware of some helpful information about the WCF, it was difficult for them to change their practices. For instance, one of them told that the most significant intake from the WCF training was the awareness about WCF types and forms as well as their advantages and disadvantages for students. Her vision towards certain implementations in writing classes was enlightened. To give a mundane example, comprehensive WCF was her common practice before the training, still she implied she wanted to pay attention to this issue and offer less comprehensive WCF after the training. In contrast, she was not successful in transferring her awareness into her WCF practices in the second essay sets after the training because her students were not informed about this kind of WCF process. Correspondingly, in the absence of a formal WCF policy in the school, she hesitated in determining her WCF practices and adopting a new WCF method.

“I noticed I gave WCFs for all students’ errors, which might be boring for students. Yet, it proves to be incredibly challenging to restrain myself, as I find it nearly impossible to let it go.” (Ayşe)

As for the *philosophy change* after the training, nearly all instructors agreed on the difficulty of changing their philosophy with only one training session. Even though one-shot training affected their perspectives to some extent, it was not possible to transform their philosophy developed throughout years with the effect of many factors. One instructor inclined that the training reminded him of theories he learned during his education and realized the existence of the traces of these theories in his practice. He indicated that his comprehensive WCF practices supported with a direct

approach were intentional and stemmed from his philosophy, in line with his practices. Also, another instructor thought the training content was inspiring and informative on the benefits of providing WCF, however, she felt the need to delve deeper into the subject matter and learn more about it. Consequently, instead of immediately applying what she learned from the training, she opted to tailor her feedback approach based on contextual factors while grading subsequent papers. Nevertheless, she expressed intentions to integrate error logs into her writing classes and provide feedback accordingly.

"Limiting the amount of WCF on a paper and offering selective WCF for specific errors can be advantageous for students. However, it's essential to engage in discussions with students beforehand to negotiate this approach." (Pelin)

Another instructor mentioned the training was influential and well-prepared, so it was comprehensive enough to equip instructors with the required information. It inspired her about the use of selective WCF, and she desired to try it in her classes. In that way, the training affected her perspectives of WCF. However, even though the training was good enough to change the perspectives of the instructors on WCF, it was not so effective to change WCF philosophy. Changing the philosophy and the practice as well is a challenging phenomenon and takes a lot of time. Therefore, one-shot training might not be influential in that sense.

"Offering selective WCF for one or two error types was novel to me. I thought it to be quite rational, as my students can be overwhelmed by my comprehensive WCF, and this might lead to boredom. I want to incorporate selective WCF in the future, yet it is very challenging to abandon what you used to do. Adjusting requires both time and dedication." (Merve)

Establishing Expectations for Effective Training Sessions

Respecting the third research question, investigating what L2 writing instructors expect from a successful training session, the third theme, *criteria for effective training*, demonstrated two sub themes a) the quantity and b) the aim. *The quantity* was found out as a sub-theme in the data, as some instructors emphasized the importance of participating in a series of sessions rather than one-shot training. To illustrate, regarding the ineffectiveness of one-shot training sessions, instructors mentioned a series of training sessions would be more beneficial for the best intake as it would raise their awareness eventually and lead to a philosophy and practice change. Still, they inclined that owing to many factors such as long teaching hours, the burden of assessment and the number of students, they do not want to join numerous sessions in such a scenario. However, they thought one-shot training sessions could be supported with a few follow-up activities in the form of application to ensure the effectiveness. In that sense, they suggested the development of some forms on the point of applying what they have learned in the training.

"One-shot training sessions are needed. Although this is a traditional perspective, considering external factors, it becomes necessary in some situations. The workload is quite heavy, so the instructors' motivation decreases, and they do not want to participate in the training. In this case, one-shot training can be conducted, accompanied by follow-up activities." (Ali)

Touching on the second sub-theme, the aim, instructors assumed that to yield the best results from the training sessions, the content of the sessions should be aligned with the

needs of the instructors. Training sessions should aim to answer the needs of the instructors rather than bringing on their own agenda. A needs analysis should be carried out and based on the results of it, the training themes should be determined. Only in that way, institutions cater for effective training sessions.

Discussion

The current research contributed to the WCF literature with three significant findings. First, it revealed to what extent a one-shot WCF training session influenced L2 academic writing instructors' WCF philosophies and practices at university settings. Secondly, this research found out how L2 academic writing instructors composed their WCF philosophies and what the underlying factors were at stage. Finally, the findings highlighted the insights of L2 academic writing instructors on their expectations of an effective training session.

Firstly, the findings of the study affirmed the previous literature indicating the inconsistency between teachers' real WCF practices and suggested principles on the types of WCF, stages of WCF and written commentaries (e.g., Lee, 2003; Montgomery & Baker, 2007), implying the need for more in-service teacher training in this field. As for the first research question, examining both philosophy and practice change on WCF preference of instructors, the study identified manifold results in terms of changes. First and foremost, the study showcased that instructors were unable to internalize all suggestions of the WCF training and convert the information into their practices, which merges with the previous findings implying that teachers forget what they learned or ignore in-service teacher training (Lee, 2009; Montgomery & Baker, 2007). This finding might be related to the frequency of WCF training, practical constraints and student expectations as stated by the participants in the interviews. In addition, to abandon a practice might be too difficult after one session of training. On the other hand, although instructors could not fully change their WCF practices and improve their WCF philosophies after the training or internalize what they taught, their interview results shed light on how the training raised awareness about WCF literacy, yet they could not apply it due to the factors such as student expectations. Therefore, this finding can be accepted as the effect of one-shot training session in constructing the first step to develop qualified WCF philosophies and practices among instructors in line with the suggestions of Lee (2019). Nonetheless, for a permanent philosophy development, more sessions and time are required. Concomitantly, these results clarified that instructors internalized the suggestions in the training which focuses on taking students' expectations into account and informing them about WCF policy to be applied in the class (Plonsky & Mills, 2006) as instructors shared the responsibility with their students (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010).

Delving into the details of the practice change, corresponding to the previous literature, instructors provided more comprehensive WCF compared to selective WCF in this study (e.g., Cheng & Zhang, 2021; Lee, 2003; Lee, 2008; Sheppard, 1992; Storch, 2010; Wei & Cao, 2020). Their overall preferences did not change after the WCF training. Various explanations might stand out for this result as stated in the interview. First, instructors found selective WCF novel to their practices and hesitated to apply it. Also, they felt the urge to discuss it with their students before applying it, to prevent a possible conflict in terms of justifying their scores in

the classroom. Next, instructors also believed the suitability of using selective WCF following the teaching of a specific grammar structure.

Secondly, instructors preferred direct WCF over indirect WCF before the training and two instructors who did not use direct WCF before utilized it after the training, corroborating with Ellis et al. (2008), Furneaux et al., (2007), and Shintani et al. (2014). This finding can be clarified through the effect of WCF training on conveying the importance of direct WCF on student development. Furthermore, nearly all the instructors used written commentaries with different styles in the research (Ferris, 1997). After the training, instructors' suggestions, "Can do"es and exemplification patterns grew, albeit to some extent as suggested in the training. This alteration in instructors' WCF practices approved that they were able to associate the importance of effective commentary provided for positive and negative facets of the essay and student success (Hyland & Hyland, 2021).

Additionally, against the suggestions of Hattie and Timberley (2007) about the questions of effective feedback, instructors only emphasized "How am I going?" and "Where to next?" questions in their feedback. No feedback was available for "Where am I going?" question. Their practices were not transformed following the training, denoting that one-shot training session might not be successful to transmitting all the required information of WCF stages. Also, the current study confirmed the findings of Lee (2003) stating that teachers offer WCF mostly for grammar errors. Contrastively, instructors also provided WCF for organization, details, vocabulary, and mechanics in this study.

In reference to the second research question asking what factors affected instructors' WCF philosophy, the first interview theme, influential factors shaping the philosophy development revealed experience, school policies and master's education. Among them, experience was the most influential one as it also affected how instructors perceive the training sessions. It was found out that less experienced instructors are more eager to learn through training. In contrast, more experienced instructors lose their enthusiasm in time. They transform their practices through student and institution expectations, which is in line with McMartin-Miller (2014) indicating that teachers compose their WCF based on the conditions of their students and correspondingly Li (2012) asserting that teachers select flexible strategies adaptable to the student and task needs instead of adhering to rigid rules.

Although instructors expected a needs-based training, it is possible to state that they cannot be aware of their needs in some cases. In this study, instructors did not use to integrate suggested WCF practices into their practice, yet they did not feel the urge to improve their WCF literacy and benefit from the training due to some other constraints. This finding pointed out contextual factor's outcome teacher needs in some situations. Additionally, opposing to Hammersley (2004) assuming teachers find research findings irrelevant and too abstract, this study did not indicate this kind of result. All instructors focused on the training content and considered the ways of integrating them into their classes. Nonetheless, due to the number of the sessions, instructors could not transform their practices. In that sense, additional activities supporting the content of the one-shot training might be influential in yielding more effective results.

Conclusion and Implications

To conclude, this study contributed to a growing body of literature on the effects of training sessions on instructors' WCF practices. Firstly, the results pointed out all teachers could not fully internalize the WCF training and transform what they have learned into their WCF practices. However, this one-shot training managed to yield an awareness of types, forms, and stages of WCF among the instructors, which is the initial step to develop feedback literacy among in-service L2 writing instructors (Lee, 2019). Bearing that in mind, further teacher training activities should accord an important place to the critical role of WCF literacy with ongoing training sessions to help instructors' internalization process of the knowledge base without disregarding the teaching burden of instructors. Also, it is of utmost significance for schools to embed specific WCF policies into their curriculum in line with the recent developments in the literature. Additionally, as instructors become experienced in these schools, the curriculum and materials should be developed by experts in the field.

Furthermore, findings suggested that instructors' WCF philosophies are shaped by a combination of experience, school policies, and master's education. In that sense, the development of L2 teacher feedback literacy training activities should account for contextual and individual factors as well as pedagogical and practical knowledge, rather than divorcing them from the realities of teaching. By scaling up professional development regarding feedback literacy, the future training sessions should help instructors to use feedback effectively and concomitantly improve student learning. Additionally, as master's education is influential, master's programs are suggested to integrate writing and WCF related courses to their curriculum to equip their students with required knowledge.

In conclusion, some suggestions for the future research were promoted in this study. Firstly, instead of a one-shot training session, the effects of training sessions on teachers' WCF literacy should be searched. Also, the study should be replicated in different contexts with different applications added to one-shot training sessions.

Author Contributions

Each author contributed equally to all aspects of the article. Furthermore, all authors have reviewed and endorsed the final iteration of the study.

Ethics Declaration

This study was carried out with the approval decision from the Ethics Committee for Human Research in Social Sciences (Protocol No. 413) at Istanbul Technical University on November 13, 2023.

Conflict of Interest

The authors affirm that there is no conflict of interest with any institution or individual within the scope of the research.

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