

**ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' VIEWS ON
TEACHERS' WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK IN ENGLISH
SUBJECT**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
LINGUISTICS (MAL)
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS AND LITERARY STUDIES OF THE
OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

2023

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance by The Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled, *Assessment of Secondary School Learners' Views on Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback in English Subject* in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics (MAL).

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DECLARATION

I, **Tamasha Kitalima**, declare that the work presented in this dissertation is original. It has never been presented to any other University or Institution. Where other people's works have been used, references have been provided. It is in this regard that I declare this work is originally mine. It is hereby presented in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Linguistics.

.....

Signature

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my spiritual sister, the late Blandina Sembu (Mama Happiness).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give my sincere thanks to my supervisors, Dr Zelda Elisifa and Dr Gerald Kimambo, who have tirelessly been with me on this journey that was full of challenges but with significant learning experiences. Without them, this study would not have taken its current form.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all study participants for their willingness to provide data for this study. A special mention goes to the community of Kigamboni Navy Secondary School. This study could not be possible without them. I am grateful for the time and energy they put into this study.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my husband, Fadhili, my son, Raheem, and my daughter, Riziki, for their unconditional support during my study.

Finally, I would like to appreciate the guidance of the community of The Open University of Tanzania, specifically the Department of Linguistics and Literary Studies. A Special mention goes to Dr. Dunlop Ochieng who sacrificed his time to proofread this work.

However, I remain solely responsible for whatever shortcomings this dissertation may have.

ABSTRACT

Research has shown that learners' responses to WCF depend on their proficiency levels, goals, interests, beliefs, and authentic contexts. The past studies in the Tanzanian context confirmed the preference variation by reporting varying teachers' WCF practices and learners' needs. The present study was therefore vital to establish learners' views on the WCF provided by teachers in Tanzanian EL secondary school classrooms. Specifically, the study identified the types of WCF provided by teachers to English learners, analysed learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by teachers and established the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers. The study adopted a case study design involving 80 Form Two and Form Four students from Kigamboni Navy Secondary School. The study focused on WCF given to these students by their teachers in written assignments. Both purposive and criterion sampling were employed to obtain the students and the written assignments with teachers' WCF. Document review, questionnaire, and focus group discussion were the tools used to collect data. Following Biber et al's Typology of WCF (Biber *et al* 2011), the collected data were transcribed, coded and analyzed using content and thematic analysis methods. Findings revealed a disagreement between teachers' practice and learners' views on the given types of WCF. Learners' views on the WCF provided by teachers were influenced by learners' self-perceived ability, amount of information, teachers' tone, and the scope of the WCF. The present study recommends that, in providing WCF, teachers should focus on what works for learners. Likewise, teachers should focus their attention on the factors that influence learners' preferences for given WCF.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	-	English as a Foreign Language
EL	-	English Language
ESL	-	English as a Second Language
LFIV	-	Learner from Form Four
LFII	-	Learner from Form Two
SL	-	Second Language
SLL	-	Second Language Learning
WCF	-	Written Corrective Feedback

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to The Study

Corrective feedback is an instructional strategy used to help SL learners improve their language skills (Nakamura, 2016). Teachers provide corrective feedback to learners so that they can use it to develop their interlanguage (Ellis, 2008; Li, 2018). Such feedback can be written (e.g. inserting a missing word in a sentence) or oral (e.g. recast). Written Corrective Feedback (henceforth, WCF) is broadly defined as a direct or indirect error correction, words of encouragement or praise, comments, advice, and suggestions that instruct students to make changes to their written works (Irwin, 2017). WCF can take different forms like error locating, which involves marking an erroneous form by underlining or highlighting; reformulation, which involves re- writing the entire sentence that includes erroneous forms; and comment, which involves commenting in the margin or at the end of the text.

Written corrective feedback is an important aspect in both Second Language Learning (henceforth, SLL) and particularly SL writing where it occurs as a response to linguistic errors made by SL learners. However, researchers argue that despite its importance, WCF can discourage learners from improving smoothly in the SLL. For instance, regarding its effectiveness on SLL, Ferris (1995) considers WCF beneficial to SL learners. To Truscott (1996), however, error correction is harmful to SL learners because it makes learners notice their incorrect aspects; thus, they discourage language learning. This area has thus yielded contending views and inconsistent findings.

The idea that WCF is harmful to SL learners as advanced by Truscott (1996) is strongly overruled by most internationalist researchers, specifically based on Swain's (1995) Output Hypothesis. This hypothesis advances the importance of learners' improvement of SLL by noticing the gap between them and their teachers or high-proficiency counterparts through WCF. For instance, Shao (2014) argues that one of the most important reasons for promoting output to improve SLL is that, when learners experience communication difficulties, they need to be pushed into making their output more precise and appropriate (using WCF). Moreover, the effectiveness of WCF on SLL is strongly supported empirically by many studies to date (cf. Kang and Han, 2015; Lim & Renandya, 2020). One of the three functions of learners' output proposed by Swain (1995) is the metalinguistic function which has a reflective role in learners' SLL. This role helps learners to reflect on, discuss, and analyze language learning problems explicitly. Thus, learners' perspectives towards any metalinguistic activities including the provision of WCF influence SLL.

Learner affective engagement with teachers' WCF can affect how learners perceive and respond to the WCF they receive (Ellis, 2010). For instance, in a study by Lee (2019), it was suggested that teachers should correct a certain number of errors at a time to minimize learners' negative emotions. However, in a study by Alshahrani & Storch (2014), some learners tend to prefer to have all errors corrected. Therefore, investigating learners' emotions may help explain their preference for a WCF type. Furthermore, teachers' and learners' practices regarding the use of WCF have received little attention in research compared to WCF efficacy. Focusing on teachers' practices and beliefs regarding the use of WCF, research has revealed inconsistent

findings which are influenced by varied studies' contexts. For instance, some studies have shown that teachers were effective, sensitive and capable; in contrast, others have shown that they are ineffective, insensitive, and incapable (Evans et al., 2010; Nemati et al., 2017; Westmacott, 2017).

Research on teachers' and learners' perspectives on WCF has also drawn mixed responses (cf. Ferris, 2003; Lee, 2008). For instance, Lee (2008) found that learners showed contradicting opinions about their preferences for the WCF. Following these variations, studies researched the factors affecting learners' preferences for given types of WCF and outlined the learners' proficiency level (Zang *et al.*, 2021), learners' goals, interests and beliefs (Bitchener & Storch, 2016), and the teaching and learning contexts (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Mahafodh, 2017).

Based on the mentioned factors, researchers argue that no research on learners' preferences can fit all teaching-learning contexts. For example, according to Amerhein and Nassaji (2010), students from the Iranian EFL teaching context thought that teachers should provide WCF on as many errors as possible. Conversely, Mahfoodh (2017) who studied Malaysian EFL students' emotional responses toward teachers' WCF practices found that students were frustrated after receiving feedback on their writings. Thus, learners from different contexts tend to respond to teachers' WCF differently.

Moreover, a study by Seker and Dincer (2014) on Turkey's EFL context found that Turkish learners preferred to be corrected with only focused WCF on grammatical accuracy in their writing. Likewise, Zang *et al.* (2021), who researched Thai EFL learners, found that low-proficient learners were in favour of explicit (direct) WCF

types while high-proficient learners rated them less. Therefore, students' views on provided WCF tend to vary not only from one teaching context to another but also within the same contexts of studies. This is because both teachers' practices and learners' contextual factors influence how learners view WCF provided. In the Tanzanian context, previous studies focused on teachers' and learners' practices on WCF. Sebonde and Biseko (2013) examined issues related to morpho- syntactic errors among EL learners in Tanzanian secondary schools. It was found that most of the CF techniques used by teachers in EFL classrooms were not pedagogical y effective to treat students' errors.

This suggests a mismatch between teachers' practices and learners' needs. Likewise, Lyimo et al., (2022) researched the feedback practices of secondary school teachers of EFL in Tanzania. They established that teachers had a positive belief about feedback in writing lessons, although there was a mismatch between what the teachers perceived to do and their actual feedback practices. Moreover, Elisifa (2019) assessed the opinions and preferences of Tanzania EFL students and their teachers about WCF. The study investigated learners' feelings regarding the mood, tone, source, time and whether there were differences between teachers' and students' opinions and preferences. The study concluded that, in handling learners' errors, teachers should take into account the feelings and perceptions of students.

These previous studies suggest that there is little understanding regarding the learners' perspective on the WCF. The review also demonstrates that research has not focused on the factors influencing learners' preferences for WCF. That is, the previous studies only focused on aspects related to mood, tone, source, time; leaving

the aspects related to types and scope. Thus, it is from this observation that the present study set out to explore the learners' perspectives on The WCF in Tanzanian EFL secondary schools' classroom context.

1.2 Statement of The Problem

WCF in SL learners can be effective (Ferris, 1995) if teachers and researchers' are aware of their learners' views on such feedback. Learners' responses to WCF are influenced by proficiency levels, goals, interests, beliefs, and authentic contexts (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010; Bitchener & Storch, 2016; Mahafoadh, 2017; Zang et al., 2021). Thus, teachers should understand that no type of WCF fits in all SL teaching/learning contexts. The case in point is that past studies (e.g. Elisifa, 2019; Lyimo et al., 2022) have reported various teachers' practices on WCF in the Tanzanian context. This is to say, this study was necessary to capture the fitting type of WCF in the study area. This is based on the fact that factors influencing learners' preferences for given WCF have received little attention so far. Therefore, a study that would assess learners' views on their respective teachers' WCF practices in Tanzanian secondary schools' EL classroom context was worth conducting.

Accordingly, the present study sought to identify the types of WCF provided by EL teachers to their learners, analyze such learners' preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers, and establish the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian secondary school classrooms context.

1.3 Research Objectives

The present study has one general objective and three specific objectives.

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the present study was to assess learners' views on the WCF provided by teachers in Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The present study was specifically guided by the following objectives:

- i. To identify the types of WCF provided by teachers to learners of English in the Tanzanian secondary school classrooms.
- ii. To analyse the learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by their teachers.
- iii. To establish the factors influencing the learners' preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. Which types of WCF are provided by teachers of English to their learners in the Tanzanian secondary school classroom?
- ii. How are the learners' preferences for WCF provided to them by EL teachers?
- iii. Which factors influence learners' preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant theoretically, practically as well as methodologically. Theoretically, the study shows a remarkable variation in the factors influencing preferences for WCF by individual learners. For instance, while previous studies

found that WCF with detailed explanation (i.e., comments) is comprehensive enough for students' understanding (Zang *et al.*, 2021), the present study found that learners might perceive it useful only if given in a correct tone. That is, the present study provides insights into the role of specific individual learners' needs in determining learners' preferences for WCF.

Practically, the findings of the present study can be a point of reference for English language teachers, schools, and English Language teaching institutions. It can inspire them to think of how they can provide WCF in ways that help their learners. In addition, a mismatch between teachers' practices and learners' preferences for WCF shown in the present study is an alarm for schools and institutions to offer in-service training to teachers to improve their practices.

Methodologically, the previous studies did not collect data on teachers' WCF practices. That is, they did not capture variables related to learners' feelings about data that they are familiar with. Thus, teachers' WCF data in the present study unfolded learners' perceived ability, and teachers' feedback tone as the factors that influence learners' preferences for the given WCF.

1.6 Scope of The Study

The present study assessed learners' views on the WCF provided by teachers in Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms. Specifically, the study focused on identifying the types of WCF provided, analysing the learners' preferences, and establishing the factors for such preferences. The study solely focused on Form Two and Form Four learners who take English Language at Kigamboni Navy Secondary School with their written assignments corrected by their

respective teachers. The study was grounded on Biber *et al's* Typology of WCF (Biber *et al* 2011) focusing on two aspects: type and scope.

1.7 Limitations of The Study

The present study was constrained by environmental issues. During data collection all classes were occupied by students. The researcher and sampled students had to use the school library for a limited time. Moreover, some teachers were reluctant to release students for participating in the study timely. This made the researcher wait for students for several hours. As a result, the data collection exercise took a long time to complete.

1.8 Organization of The Study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter One presents the background, problem statement, objectives and research questions, the study's significance, and limitations and delimitation of the study. Chapter Two covers reviewed literature pertinent to the present study. The chapter presents the following sections: definition of key study concepts, critical reviews on supporting theories on WCF and SLL, empirical analysis of relevant studies, and theoretical framework. Additionally, it presents the research gap and the chapter's summary. Chapter Three provides a detailed account of how this study was conducted by describing the research approach and design used in the present study, data collection methods, the study area, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection and data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. In Chapter Four, the data collected via document review, focus group discussion and questionnaires are presented, analyzed and discussed. Finally, Chapter Five

summarizes the findings, concludes and provides recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on written corrective feedback (WCF) in SLL and related studies. It also critically reviews theories relevant to WCF and SLL. Thereafter, a framework based on literature and theoretical review is presented. Additionally, the chapter presents the research gap and the summary of the chapter.

2.2 Theoretical Review of Literature

2.2.1 Definition of Key Study Concepts

In this section, two keywords need to be defined to enable the understanding of this research. These are Written Corrective Feedback and Tanzanian Secondary EL Classrooms.

2.2.1.1 Written Corrective Feedback

Scholars define WCF differently depending on how they view its purposes. For instance, some scholars regard WCF as a response to learners' errors only (negative), while others regard it as a response to both learners' wrong forms and other aspects that need comments (negative/positive). Bitchener and Storch (2016) defines WCF as a written response to a linguistic error that has been made in the writing text by an L2 learner, which can either be direct or indirect. On the other hand, Nakamura (2016) defines WCF as an instructional strategy used to help SL learners improve their writing effectiveness (which can be negative or positive). Thus, in the present study, WCF involves all written comments (negative or positive) that are provided by teachers to their respective learners' written assignments.

2.2.1.2 Tanzanian Secondary Schools EL Classrooms

In the present study, Tanzanian secondary schools EL classrooms refer to English Language teaching classrooms that are found in Tanzanian secondary schools.

2.2.1.3 WCF and its Typology

As pointed out in the background of the present study CF and SLL are inseparable. In traditional language pedagogy, CF refers to responses given to learners' errors. Current literature on error correction as a key term has given way to corrective feedback because the former suggests that the only way to correct error is through the provision of correct form, while actually, it is only one of many ways of responding to errors (Li, 2018). Ellis (2008) asserts that in SLL the purpose of CF is to give information to learners they can use to develop their interlanguage. The interlanguage is reinforced through learners' acts to either reinforce the correct response or to search for a replacement for the incorrect ones (Haltie *et al.*, 1996).

In SLL, CF can be written or oral, depending on the mode of communication. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in SLL is an instructional strategy used to help SL learners improve their writing effectiveness (Nakamura, 2016). WCF can come from any source such as random readers of the composition, the writer's peer or the teacher. This instruction includes informing learners that their sentences are wrong and offering the correct forms of sentences. Moreover, WCF provides explanations of the mistake and informs learners that their TL output is wrong or inadequate (Lightbow & Spada, 2006).

Since WCF became a widely exploited topic of interest in the research world, different studies have proposed various approaches to categorize types of WCF (cf.

Biber *et al.*, 2011; Ellis, 2009; Kang & Han, 2015; Liu & Brown, 2015; Sheen, 2011). The mentioned studies classify WCF according to *source, mode, type, scope, and tone*. Biber *et al.* (2011:22) describe these dimensions as shown in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Typology of WCF

Type	Subtype	Description
Source		Refers to who provides feedback. In the SLL, teachers are the most common providers of feedback, others might be classmates
Mode		Shows the medium through which WCF is provided. WCF can be provided electronically (Microsoft Word) as well as orally (WCF read out aloud in a face-to-face setting. WCF can also be recorded).
Scope	Un- focused	A teacher attempts to correct almost all errors
	Mid-focus	Involves the selection of certain linguistic features to correct
	Highly-focused	Only one specific feature is corrected
Tone		Refers to the types of WCF that comment and identifies whether the comments are about what students have done well(positive) or what they have done poorly (negative).
Type	Direct correction	Direct correction involves a teacher's provision of the correct form in various ways such as crossing out unnecessary words or phrases, inserting missing words, or writing the correct form below or near the erroneous form.
		Reformulation involves rewriting the entire sentence that includes erroneous forms. The idea is to create a target-like text while keeping the original text as intact as possible. Direct correction and reformulation can compose a bigger category of direct feedback.
		Error locating involves marking an erroneous form by underlining or highlighting, but it does not provide information regarding why it is an error or how it might be Corrected

		<p>Error coding refers to the use of error codes typically consisting of abbreviated labels of the kinds of errors. Some of the commonly used error codes are ‘sp’ i.e., spelling error, ‘W.R’ i.e., wrong word, and ‘rt’ missing article.</p> <p>Metalinguistic feedback involves providing explicit comments about the nature of errors that students have made. This can be done by using error codes similar to those above or providing an in-depth metalinguistic explanation of the errors</p> <p>The comment refers to written comments in the margin or at the end of the text, typically regarding the progress of</p> <p>ion.</p>
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From this typology, as previous studies in the context of Tanzania, such as Elisifa (2019), focused on mood, tone, and source, the present study explored the learners’ perspective on teachers’ WCF according to the types and scope.

2.2.2 Teachers’ Practices and Students’ Views on WCF

Learners’ perceptions and preferences for teachers’ feedback practices is a significant aspect that cannot be ignored in SLL. Research shows similarities and differences across proficiency levels and learning contexts (cf. Nemati *et al.*, 2017; Sebonde & Biseko, 2013).

According to Amerhein and Nassaji (2010), Iranian EFL students thought that teachers should provide WCF as much as possible. Contrary to Amerhen and Nassaji (2010), Seker and Dincer (2014) found that Turkish learners of EFL preferred WCF focusing on grammatical accuracy in their writing. Furthermore, Mahfoodh (2017) who studied students’ emotional responses toward teachers’ WCF practices, found that students were frustrated after receiving feedback on their writings. The research

established that students were in preferred teachers' feedback, some rejected them, some expressed satisfaction and some were dissatisfied with their teachers' feedback practices. Therefore, students' views on WCF provided tend to vary not only from one teaching context to another but also within the same contexts of studies. It is from this argument that the present study sought to explore the learners' perspectives in Tanzanian EFL secondary schools' classrooms as a learning context. Lee (2009) also researched the Japanese learners of EFL preference for WCF and found a mismatch between learners' preferences and the feedback provided by their teachers. For instance, whereas teachers would give comprehensive feedback, students preferred focused feedback. It was also found that teachers preferred indirect feedback which some students could not decode. Furthermore, students mentioned that teachers' feedback left little room for learners to take responsibility for their writing. In Tanzania, Msanjila's (2005) and Sebonde and Biseko's (2013) findings concur with Lee's (2009) that most CF techniques used by teachers in EFL classrooms are not pedagogically effective to treat students' errors. These mismatches are brought by poor teachers' knowledge of their learners' preferences for WCF. In addition, research shows that despite these mismatches, there is only a few incomprehensive studies on learners' views and preferences for scope, source, type, mode, and tone of WCF provided to them (Nemati *et al.*, 2017). Establishing learners' preferences for WCF is an important variable to be studied, which in turn unfolds the factors that influence their preferences. However, there were only a few incomprehensive studies on the factors influencing learners' views and preference for WCF by their respective teachers.

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

A considerable number of studies on the WCF have been done in on the topic of WCF. This sections reviews selected studies due to their relevance to teachers' practices on WCF, learners' views and preferences for the kind of WCF given by teachers. Reguieg and Hamitouche (2022) examined learners' and teachers' preferences for written corrective feedback types in enhancing EFL learners writing. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 40 learners. The findings revealed that learners preferred their writing to be corrected via unfocused, direct feedback while teachers preferred to use indirect, focused feedback on their learners' writings. The findings imply a mismatch in the beliefs in how WCF works among teachers and learners. Thus, in any context of EL teaching/learning, there is still a need to explore the needs of learners regarding WCF, which of course was the purpose of the present study. Moreover, this study did not comprehensively explored factors that influence the participants' interest. Therefore, the present study sought to explore the factors for the learners' preferences for given types of WCF, which in turn explain the reasons for their interests.

Lyimo et l. (2022) researched feedback practices of secondary school teachers of EFL in Tanzania. The study employed a concurrent embedded mixed design to collect data from 22 secondary schools in six districts of Kilimanjaro Region. From convenient sampling, 22 Form Three teachers filled out questionnaires; six of whom participated in semi-structured interviews. A documentary review collected information on teachers' feedback practices from 176 students' written texts using purposive random sampling. Findings showed that teachers marked students' written

tasks using a holistic approach, focusing mainly on content errors. They paid little attention to form errors using indirect feedback strategies. The written comments were also controlling and judgmental. The teachers had a positive belief about feedback in writing lessons, but there was a mismatch between what the teachers perceived to do and their actual feedback practices. Such practices were influenced by inadequate training, a large number of students, a shortage of time, and too many written errors for teachers to handle.

The study recommends for teachers to involve feedback that would help students develop writing skills in both form and content. Likewise, it recommends the need for teachers to be provided with professional training in feedback practices for effective writing lessons. Nonetheless, this study did not include learners' views on teachers' WCF feedback, which the present study complemented. Successful teachers' practices on learners' written tasks are influenced by learners' perception of such feedback.

Zang et al. (2021) investigated the preference for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) for four types of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF), on grammatical, lexical, orthographic, and pragmatic errors. Particularly, the study investigated whether learners' preference for WCF is influenced by two variables (Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) and proficiency level). It also examined the preference for selective vs. comprehensive WCF. The study involved 117 University students in the Thai EFL context. Its analysis of questionnaire data revealed a tendency for learners to prefer more explicit types of WCF (namely metalinguistic explanation and overt correction) for most error types, irrespective of their

proficiency and FLE level. High proficiency level learners rated explicit WCF types (i.e., underlining and error code) as useful to some degree, whereas their low proficiency level counterparts did not. Similar results were found for the two FLE groups. Besides, the FLE level seemed to play a role in perceiving the value of WCF in terms of scope.

Similarly, results of follow-up interviews showed that the linguistic features of learners' first language, existing knowledge of the target language, affective feelings, and teacher's role were the main factors for the variation in learners' preferences. Research showed that learners' preferences for WCF varied from one teaching context to another. Thus, the present study sought to investigate whether the same factors would influence EL learners in the present context of the study. Moreover, the reviewed study relied on the aspect of focus (i.e., grammar, content), different from the present study which explored the aspects related to types and scope, which in turn has found other factors that influence learners' preferences for more discussion.

Westmacott (2017) explored how university students from Chile who were learning EFL at the intermediate level would respond to the direct and indirect WCF in their context of learning and their perception of such feedback. Data were collected via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews while teachers shifted from providing direct to indirect coded feedback and explored the responses of six learners to the two types of feedback. The findings revealed that the EFL teaching context, students' previous learning experiences and level of motivation affected students' responses to different types of WCF. The finding of this study implies that there is no "one-size-fits-

al” approach to providing feedback to learners. Thus, there is a need for teachers to be aware of the learning context. Moreover, the findings of the study implied the need for more research in authentic EFL contexts, and to continue to consider learners from the wide variety of contexts where EFL writing takes place. Drawing from this suggestion, the present study intends to assess how Tanzanian EFL learners respond to WCF given and factors for such responses, which in turn will improve classroom teaching and learning.

Nemati et al. (2017) researched language learners’ perceptions, beliefs, and preferences about teachers’ feedback practice in Iranian classrooms. The study involved a total of 311 students at three language proficiencies (elementary, intermediate, and upper-intermediate, and advanced). A questionnaire was used to inquire teachers’ feedback practices from learners’ viewpoints and preferences. The findings indicated some similarities and differences across the three proficiency levels. All respondents were in favour of direct unfocused feedback with different viewpoints on satisfaction with their teachers’ feedback practices, the need to revise their writing, the targeted structures, and their feelings after receiving feedback. Moreover, the findings revealed discrepancies between research, teacher practices, and language learners’ needs and preferences. That is, the needs for the nature of WCF varied across learners. The present study intends to find out the needs of the EFL learners and factors that influence their responses specifically in Tanzanian secondary schools’ classroom.

Sebonde and Biseko (2013) assessed the corrective feedback techniques that teachers use to handle their students’ morpho-syntactic errors in Dodoma Region. The study

involved a total of 54 Form Three students from nine secondary schools who were purposively sampled. Data were collected via documentation, observation, and questionnaires. It was found that most CF techniques used by teachers in EFL classrooms were not pedagogically effective to treat students' errors. Correspondingly, many teachers selected the CF to use in classrooms based on either experience or the need to simplify their work and not the pedagogical requirements. Apart from the conflicting results on the effectiveness of different types of WCF from different contexts, the findings of this study call for the need to understand how learners can respond positively to WCF given by their teachers in Tanzanian EFL classrooms, which of course was the aim of this study. Moreover, this study did not research the factors influencing the learners' interest in given WCF, which is also the purpose of the present study.

Elisifa (2019) assessed the opinions and preferences of Tanzania EFL students and their teachers for WCF. The study focused on respondents' feelings on errors, their preferences for actors of error correction, the immediacy of error correction and social company during error correction and whether there were differences between teachers' and students' opinions and preferences. The study involved 20 secondary school EFL teachers and 60 students from the same schools where the teachers were drawn. A questionnaire was used to study both teachers and students' opinions about their perceived preference for WCF.

The findings revealed that the majority of students and their teachers felt that it is the teacher who ought to correct errors. Furthermore, the majority of both students and their teachers opined that errors were corrected every time they had committed and a

significant number felt that their errors should be handled by their social groups rather than their teachers. It was concluded that, in handling learners' errors, teachers should take into account feelings and perceptions of learners. Thus, the present study was inspired by this recommendation to study factors influencing learners' views and preference for WCF which was missing in Elisifa's study.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Interactional Perspective of SLL; specifically, Swain's (1995) Output Hypothesis. This hypothesis came as a challenge to the traditional assumption that regarded input as the only requirement for second language acquisition, and that output is the only end product of SLA that does not have any significant function in the language acquisition process (cf. Krashen, 1985).

Swain's Output Hypothesis claims that output can under certain conditions provide language acquisition by allowing learners to invite feedback from interlocutors and teachers which informs them of the comprehensibility and well-formedness of their interlanguage utterances (Shao, 2014). In her hypothesis, Swain proposes three functions of learners' output. The functions are elaborated by Mitchell and Myles (2004) as follows:

The first is the noticing/triggering function or the consciousness-raising role, the second, is the hypothesis-testing function, and the third, is the metalinguistic function; or what might be referred to as its reflection role. Thus, the activity of producing the TL may push learners to become aware of gaps and problems in their current SL systems (which is the first function, provides them with opportunities to reflect on, discuss, and analyse these problems explicitly (which is the third

function), and experiment with new structures and forms (which is the second function).

Several studies on the role of written corrective feedback reflect support for the Output Hypothesis (Izumi *et al.*, 1999; Izumi & Bigelow, 2000). Izumi and Bigelow (2000) explored the potential of pushed output to promote English second language students' learning of the counterfactual conditional sentences. In their experiment, students were given different kinds of texts including rich examples of the structure, and had to generate similar texts (in an essay writing task and a text reconstruction task). Control groups received the same textual inputs but did other activities based on them (e.g., answered comprehension questions). The writings of the experimental groups showed significant improvement during the experimental treatment, but on the eventual post-tests, focusing on the target grammar structure, the control groups performed just as well.

Thus, it seemed that rich input combined with a variety of 'noticing' activities, may have been enough, in this case, to lead to grammar learning, without any added benefit being derived from the output requirement. Up to now, it seems that the benefits of 'pushed output' remain somewhat elusive and hard to demonstrate.

Recently, Swain's Output Hypothesis has dominated several studies on the effectiveness of WCF (cf. Li, 2018; Shao, 2014; Tam & Chiu, 2016). For instance, Shao (2014) argues that one of the most important reasons for promoting output to improve second language learning is that when learners experience communication difficulties, they need to be pushed into making their output more precise and appropriate.

Due to the Swain's Output Hypothesis relevance, the current study adopted it to address the study's objectives. In the first specific objective, the study identified WCF used by EL teachers in Tanzanian secondary school classrooms. This is in line with the triggering/noticing function of Swain's Output Hypothesis which involves pushing learners to become aware of gaps and problems in their current SL systems. The third function of the output model, the metalinguistic/reflective role function provides learners with opportunities to reflect on, discuss, and analyze problems explicitly (e.g. Efficacy or preferences for WCF) is relevant in addressing the second and third objectives of the present study which are; to analyze the English Language learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian secondary school classrooms, and to ascertain the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms. Thus, Swain's Output Hypothesis was the relevant model in assessing learners' views regarding teachers' WCF provided in the Tanzanian EL secondary schools classroom context.

2.5 Research Gap

Research shows that teachers' and learners' practices and perspectives regarding the use of WCF are underrepresented (cf. Ferris, 2014; Lee, 2013; Westmacott, 2017). Similarly, several studies on teachers' WCF practices (cf. Amerhein & Nassaji, 2010; Elisifa, 2019; Mc Millers, 2014; Msanjila, 2005; Sebonde & Biseko, 2013; Zhou *etal.*, 2014) have revealed unexplored aspects that require further research. As shown in the review, past studies exempted the actual WCF provided by teachers to their respective learners' written assignments (works). Rather, they focused on teachers' suggested interest and perception regarding the WCF that they provide to

their learners (cf. Elisifa, 2019; Mc Millers, 2014; Zhou *et al.*, 2014). Second, studies that focused on the actual teachers' WCF to learners' works (Msanjila, 2005; Sebonde & Biseko, 2013) found teachers opted to use CF based on their experience or the need to simplify work although many writing problems were pedagogical.

Furthermore, relevant studies such as Elisifa (2019) worked on learners' opinions regarding aspects such as source, frequency, immediacy, and social company but not learners' views and perceptions regarding other aspects of WCF (e.g., types, scope) provided by their teachers. Therefore, the present study intended to build on the existing knowledge to find out the factors influencing Tanzanian secondary school EFL learners' views on the WCF provided by their respective teachers based on scope and types.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed several studies relevant to this study. It has given a critical review of supporting theories: the meaning and typology of WCF, factors affecting the effectiveness of WCF on SLL, and learners' views on WCF. The chapter has also presented the empirical analysis of the selected studies, the synthesis and research gap. Besides, this chapter has presented the theoretical framework that guided the study, that is, Swain's (1995) Output Hypothesis. The following chapter presents the methodology of research for the present study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed account of how this study was conducted. It begins with a description of the research approach in Section 3.2 and the research design of the present study in Section 3.3. Thereafter, it describes data collection methods and the reasons for selecting each method. The explanations cover the following: the study area in Section 3.4, the population in Section 3.5, sample and sampling procedures in Section 3.6, and data collection procedures in Section 3.7. Thereafter, data analysis procedures are presented in Section 3.8. Ethical considerations are presented in Section 3.9, and the summary of the chapter is presented in Section 3.10.

3.2 Research Approach

The present study adopted a qualitative approach under the constructivist paradigm which relies on participants' views on the situation being studied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Constructivists consider the importance of the study's context, intensive study of participants' perspectives, the availability of multiple sources of information (i.e. documentary review, questionnaires, and focus group discussion), and the in-depth nature of analysis (Duff, 2008; Gilbet, 2008). These considerations are in line with the present study as it intended to explore the nature of teachers' practices of WCF to their respective EL learners and to determine the factors influencing such learners' perspectives regarding teachers' feedback.

3.3 Research Design

The present study adopted a case study design. The case study is a design in which a particular instance or a few carefully selected cases are studied intensively' (Gilbert 2008). It is a very useful design in exploring an area where little is known or where one wants to have a holistic understanding of a situation, phenomenon, episode, site, group or community (Kumar, 2011). In the present study, Kigamboni Navy Secondary School learners of EL were regarded as a case. As a result, their views and perspectives about the WCF provided by their respective teachers were studied in detail. The design was relevant to the present study because it exhibits contextual factors that offered more insights into the EL learners' perspectives regarding the WCF provided by their teachers (c.f. Mackey & Gass, 2005).

3.4 Study Area

Data for the present study were collected in Kigamboni Municipality, Dar es Salaam. The area was purposefully relevant to the present study because Kigamboni District featured both urban and rural characteristics which are purposefully relevant in studying EL learners of both characteristics present in Tanzanian secondary school classrooms. Kigamboni is one of the five districts of Dar es Salaam Region. Kigamboni District has a total of 21 secondary schools, of which 14 are community-based and 7 are privately owned. All 21 secondary schools provide EL courses from Form One up to Form Four. Moreover, as the purpose of the present study was avoid generalisations of the findings. Thus, the area was selected as a case for getting an understanding of how EL learners view WCF provided by their respective teachers.

3.5 Population

Population refers to all instances of individuals (or situations) that share certain characteristics (Mackey & Gass, 2005). The population of the present study consisted of all students taking the EL courses at Kigamboni Navy Secondary School and their teachers corrected written assignments. This school was purposively selected because its population includes learners of different ability level from primary school. Likewise, being a private school, it allows students' enrolment from all wards in Kigamboni District. Thus, the population of this school was unique in the sense that it consisted of students from both urban and rural areas of Kigamboni District. Kigamboni Navy Secondary School is a public-private secondary school owned by the Kigamboni Navy Base since 1996. It is among the oldest secondary schools in the district, with Form One up to Form Four level. It has 378 students; all taking English as a compulsory subject. Each class has 45 to 50 students with two streams. There is at least one teacher of English Language subject in each class. As a secondary school that provides EL courses, this school provided adequate and relevant data to address the present study's objectives. Data obtained from the school shed light on how EL teachers provide WCF to their learners and how such learners' preferences are influenced by the WCF provided.

3.6 Sampling Design and Procedures

The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher to understand the problem and the research question (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This does not necessarily suggest strictly random sampling or selection of a large number of participants and sites because the purpose

is to study in-depth the topic under study rather than generalizing findings. In selecting a case, therefore, the researcher used EL students from Kigamboni Navy Secondary School as justified in the population section. In the present study only Form Two and Form Four EL students were purposively involved. The selection of these classes was motivated by the tradition of providing more writing assignments in classes sitting for the national examinations. This ensured an adequate source of documents for analysis. As Form Four class had 36 students and Form Two class had 44 students, a total of 80 students were selected to participate in filling out the questionnaires.

At another stage, a criterion sampling technique was used to select 14 written assignments from the two classes (seven each) whereas a high frequency of WCF in them was used as a criterion for selection. Accordingly, fourteen students whose written assignments were sampled (seven from Form Four and seven from Form Two) were involved in the focus group discussions.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

Yin (2003) lists six sources of evidence commonly used in case studies: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and physical artefacts. Data collection procedures are determined by the underlying research questions and the forms of evidence deemed necessary to answer such questions (Duff, 2008). In the present study, documentary review, focus group discussion, and questionnaires were used to collect data. The description of the data collection procedures in each method is given in the following subsections.

3.7.1 Document Review

To identify WCF used by teachers in Tanzanian secondary school EL classrooms, the researcher used the documentary review method. Document analysis might involve relevant paperwork and artefacts, such as textbooks, newspaper articles, students' writing samples or assignments, course outlines, and research journals kept by participants or researchers (Duff, 2008). The present study sought to identify the types of WCF provided by teachers where data were extracted from students' written assignments sampled. The procedure involved noting relevant types of WCF found in the written assignment. The WCF was recorded in the checklist based on types and scope adapted from Biber *et al's* Typology of WCF (Biber *et al.* 2011) (cf. Appendix 1).

Documentary review was a relevant strategy for collecting data from EL students' written assignments. The review focused on identifying the types of WCF provided by EL teachers that appeared in written assignments. Then the types of WCF collected from the written assignment were used as reference points for preparing questions used in focus group discussions and questionnaires.

3.7.2 Open-Ended Questionnaire

To address the second and third research questions, open-ended questionnaires were used. Eighty students participated in filling out the questionnaires. The questions needed participants to first state whether the WCF example is preferable or not preferable, and secondly to give reasons for their answers (cf. Appendix 3). Since questionnaires provide greater anonymity, sensitive questions were likely to be answered with accurate information (cf. Kumar, 2011). The open-ended

questionnaire provided respondents with an opportunity to express their views regarding WCF provided by their respective teachers and the factors that influenced their preferences. The tool was administered before the focus group discussion to avoid influence that would be brought by fellow students in the focus group discussion. Likewise, data from the tool were compared with data from focus group discussions to triangulate data to ensure the consistency of findings.

3.7.3 Focus Group Discussion

To address the second and third research questions (analyzing the English Language learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by teachers, and ascertaining the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms), focus group discussion was used. This allowed participants to express views and preferences in a specific and more focused way (c.f. Kumar, 2011). Having obtained teachers' WCF from the document review, the researcher organized the same questions with teachers' feedback and shared them with the EL learners' participants during the focus group discussion which was audio-recorded (cf. appendix 2). These questions enabled the researcher to obtain the language that the participants were familiar with. It also represented data that participants had given attention to (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the present study, focus groups were useful for interpreting WCF obtained from the documents and for determining the learners' views on the WCF provided by their respective teachers (Duff, 2008). Focus group discussion had two sessions involving seven participants each. During the discussions, all participants were given turns to respond to each question asked which helped each

participant to express his/her preferences for a given feedback. The questions for discussion were structured from collected teachers' WCF in the written assignments. Thus, it was important to use these teachers' feedback as point of reference because they were familiar to their respective students who participated in the FGD.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

In qualitative studies, data analysis is often associated with iterative or cyclical (inductive) analysis (Duff, 2008; Mackey & Gass, 2005). Thus, data analysis is already taking place from the earliest stages of data collection and transcription. The present study involved two phases of data analysis. That is, data collected through document review were analyzed before collecting data through questionnaire and focus group discussion. Document review data were used as point of reference in structuring questions used in focus group discussions and questionnaires. Both content and thematic analysis methods were also used to analyze data in the present study.

Document review data were analyzed using the content analysis to address the first objective; identifying the types of WCF provided by teachers to learners. Content analysis involves organizing information into categories related to the central questions of the research (Bowen, 2015). Accordingly, the researcher identified the WCF that appeared in the collected written assignments after which all corrections were grouped into their respective categories grounded on Biber et al.'s Typology of WCF (Biber *et al.* 2011). The WCF categories were only those related to types (direct, indirect, metalinguistics, and commenting) and scope (un-focused, mid-

focused, and focused). These categories were used for asking learners about their preferences for WCF and ascertaining the factors for their preferences.

Focus group discussion and questionnaire data used for the second and third objectives were analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a method that allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences of learners regarding their preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2006). Accordingly, the researcher analyzed the English Language learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by teachers; and ascertaining the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms. Before coding data into themes audio-recorded focus group discussion data were transcribed into written words. Then, both focus group discussion transcripts and questionnaires' data were analyzed thematically. All the data collected were read to get a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning by considering the general ideas that the learners gave about their preferences for WCF, the tone of the ideas and the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and information usage (Creswell, 2014).

Then, the read information was coded into meaningful chunks relevant to the objective of the study to generate themes. Thematic analysis was useful in finding repeated patterns of meanings which provided the ground for identifying important themes out of the collected data (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Finally, questionnaires and focus group discussion data were triangulated to gain as complete an understanding of the learners' preferences for WCF provided by their

teachers. As Creswell (2014) and Duff (2008) argue, converging data from different sources help to build coherent justification for themes. The process thus ensured validity.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

In research, attention should often be directed toward ethical issues pertaining to collecting, storing, analyzing and reporting data as well as in sharing findings (Creswell, 2014). Accordingly, before starting data collection, a research permit was sought from The Open University of Tanzania. Besides, the clarification on the nature and purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks, and benefits were given to the respondents. It also stated clearly that the participants would be free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Also, the study ensured the participants anonymity in reporting the data, and integrity and honesty in presenting their data.

3.10 Summary of The Chapter

This chapter has described the approach and design of the present study. It described data collection methods and data analysis procedures. Lastly, it has presented ethical considerations made in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes and discusses data collected through document review, focus group discussion and questionnaire. The data on the types of WCF provided by the teachers of English are analyzed and discussed in section 4.2.1, whereas data on the learners' preferences and views regarding WCF provided by their teachers are presented and discussed in Section 4.2.2, and data on the factors affecting EL learners' preference for given types of WCF are presented and discussed in Section 4.2.3. Section 4.3 is the conclusion of the chapter.

4.2 Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

Learners' responses to WCF are said to be influenced by factors like proficiency level, goals, interests, beliefs, and authentic contexts (Bitchener, 2012; Bitchener & Storch, 2016; Lee, 2008). Nonetheless, research has shown that no one or two findings can fit all SL teaching/learning contexts (Elisifa, 2019; Westmacott, 2017). Hence, the learner's contextual variables including their views and preferences for given types of WCF should be given attention. In this regard, data analysis in this section focused on Kigamboni Navy Secondary School learners' views on the WCF provided to them by their teachers of English. The research focused on three research questions, which are:

- i. which types of WCF are provided by teachers to learners of English in the Tanzanian secondary school classroom?

- ii. how are the learners' preferences for WCF provided to them by EL teachers?
- iii. which factors influence learners' preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers?

The analysis of data was hinged on Biber et al's typology of WCF (Biber *et al* 2011) (cf. Section 3.7). In addition, codes were used to denote meanings as follows: L = learners, F = form, II and IV = class levels, and 1/2/3/4 = respondents' numbers.

4.2.1 Types of WCF Provided by Teachers to Learners of English

The first objective aimed at identifying the types of WCF provided by teachers to learners of English in Tanzanian secondary school classrooms. Data were collected through documentary review. The written feedback was checked in the learners' English Language written assignments given to them by their respective teachers. Thereafter, the researcher selected assignments with high frequencies of WCF provided to constitute the sample of the study. Table 4.1 summarizes the types of the written assignments provided by teachers to the studied students.

Table 4.1: Types of Written Assignments

Type of assignment	Class level		Total number
	Form Two	Form Four	
Classroom individual work	2	2	4
Classroom group work	2	2	4
Individual homework	-	2	2
Weekly tests	2	2	4
Grand total			14

Table 4.1 indicates that six assignments were collected from Form Two and eight from Form Four making a total of fourteen assignments. The assignments belonged

to three types, namely individual work, group works, individual home work, and weekly tests.

Further, in line with the first question of the study, the study analyzed the types of written feedback in the sampled assignments according to Biber et al's Typology of WCF (Biber et al 2011; cf. Section 3.7). The present study focused on two aspects: types and level of focus. Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 show the types of WCF in the students' written assignments in detail.

Table 4.2: Direct WCF Used by Teachers in EL Learners' Assignments

Specific WCF	Frequency	% Covered
Crossing words	13	43.3
Inserting missing words	7	23.3
Writing correct words(s) near/below erroneous form	6	20
Re-writing the entire sentence (reformulation)	4	13.3
Total	30	100

Table 4.2 indicates that crossing words (43.3%), inserting new words (23.3%), writing correct words near/below erroneous forms (20%), and reformulation (13.3%), were the direct WCF given by English language teachers to students. The table reveals that within the category of direct WCF, teachers relied more on crossing words the most (almost 50% of all feedback provided), while reformulation covered less than 15%, implying that it lowly used by teachers in the learners' written assignments. The following is an excerpt from the students' assignments evidencing teachers' WCF by crossing words:

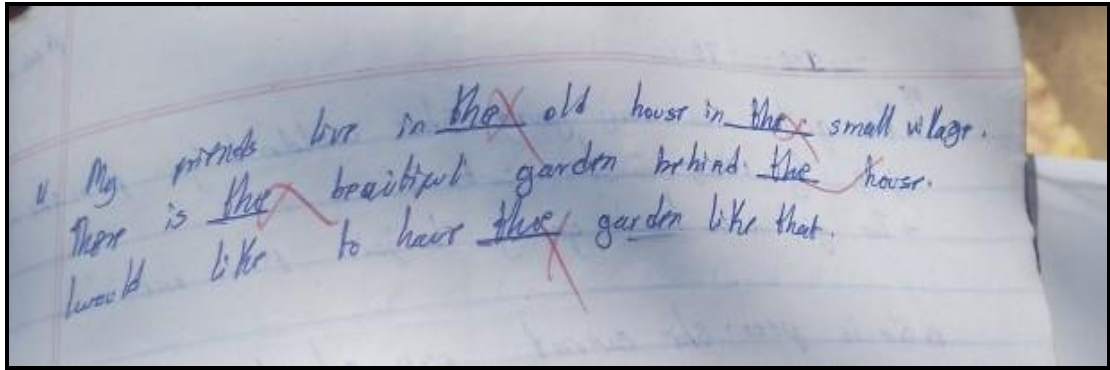


Figure 4.1: A Sample of the Teachers' WCF by Crossing Words

Table 4.3: Indirect WCF Used by Teachers in EL Learners' Assignments

Specific WCF	Frequency	% Covered
Rounding erroneous forms	10	20
Underlining erroneous forms	11	22
Error coding	0	0
Commenting	15	30
Metalinguistics	14	28
Total	50	100

Table 4.3 indicates that indirect WCF found in the students' written assignments were rounding erroneous forms (20%) and underlining (22%) erroneous forms, metalinguistics (28%), and commenting (30%). The analysis shows that error coding was not used in the assignments. Meanwhile commenting and metalinguistics were the most used WCF (covering more than 27%). The following is an excerpt from the students' assignments evidencing teachers' comments and metalinguistics, respectively, in the students' written assignments:

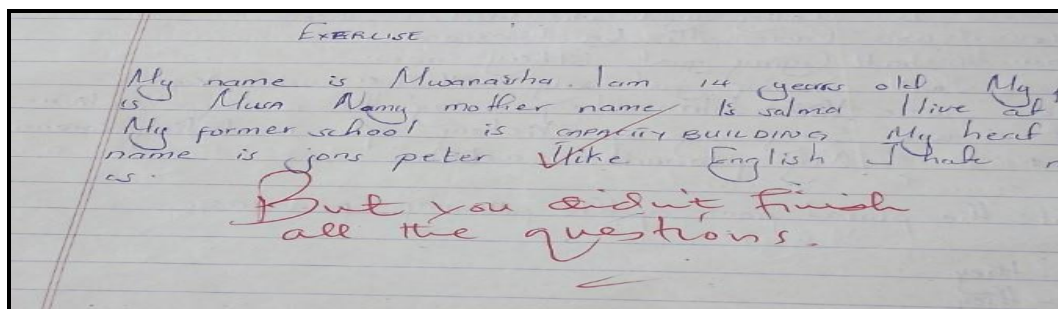


Figure 4.2: A Sample of the Teachers' WCF by Commenting and Metalinguistic

Table 4.4: Scope of WCF Used by Teachers in EL Learners' Assignments

Specific WCF	Frequency	% Covered
Un-focused	5	29.4
Mid-focused	9	52.9
Highly-focused	3	17.6
Total	17	100

Concerning the scope, Table 4.4 indicates that all three sub-categories of WCF were reflected, whereas unfocused covered 29.4 %, mid-focused 52.9%, and highly focused 17.6%. Mid-focused WCF is the most used feedback as it covered more than 50%, whereas highly-focused was the less used WCF, covering less than 20%. The following excerpt from the students' assignments show the teachers' mid-focused

WCF:

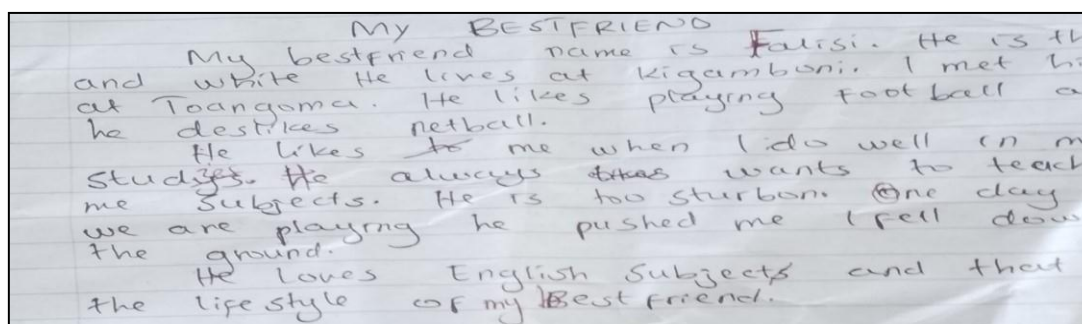


Figure 4.3: A Sample of the Teachers' Mid-Focused WCF

Generally, based on the first objective, data have shown that metalinguistics (28%), commenting (30%), crossing words (43.3%), and mid-focused (52%) were the most WCF used by teachers, whereas, reformulation (13.3%) and highly focused (17.6%) were the least WCF used. This is to say, error coding was not used at all by the teachers. All these findings imply the following:

In the case of direct WCF, literature shows that teachers used crossing words more than other feedback types such as reformulation because the former is simple to use while the latter needs time to think and paraphrase all ill-formed sentences. Thus, in providing WCF it seems teachers would like to simplify their work. This is evidenced in Sebonde and Biseko (2013), where Tanzanian EFL teachers selected the CF to use in classrooms based on either experience or the need to simplify their work, not the pedagogical requirements.

Often previous studies have shown that EFL learners preferred the use of codes (e.g., ‘sp’- spel ing/ ‘wr’ – wrong word) to inform learners the ill-formed sentences explicitly (Diab, 2015). In the present study, learners have shown high interest in explicit WCF-like error coding, while teachers seem not to prefer such feedback to learners. The finding implies that teachers normally provide WCF to their learners without considering their interests. This is also supported by Li and Vuano (2019) who found that despite participants’ strong preferences for metalinguistic explanation, almost all reported that they were rarely given it in class.

In the case of scope, a mid-focused scope which involves the provision of WCF by focusing on several selected language aspects covers more than 50%, while highly-focused which deals with one specific language aspect covers less than 18% of the

feedback given. This implies that teachers would prefer to provide feedback that covers several language aspects at once. This is likely because teachers find it difficult to deal with one aspect only when reading learners' works.

4.2.2 Learners' Preferences for the Types of WCF Provided by Their Teachers

To address the second objective (analyzing the English Language learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by teachers in the Tanzanian secondary school classrooms), data were collected through questionnaires and focus group discussions. WCF identified through documentary review was used to prepare questionnaires and discussion questions for establishing learners' views. Learners were asked to fill out a questionnaire by indicating whether they preferred the given types of WCF or disinclined and provide reasons for their choices.

Below are the findings on the learners' preferences for different types of WCF provided by their respective teacher, and the reason behind such preferences.

4.2.2.1 Preference for Direct WCF

This is a direct correction that involves the teacher's provision of the correct form through various ways such as crossing out unnecessary words or phrases, inserting missing words, or writing the correct form below or near the erroneous form. In the direct WCF, there is also reformulation which involves rewriting the entire sentence that includes erroneous forms. The practice aims to create a target-like text while keeping the original text as intact as possible. Direct correction and reformulation can compose a bigger category of direct feedback (cf. Section 2.2.2). Table 4.3 summarizes results on learners' preferences for direct WCF.

Table 4.5: Learners' Preferences for Direct WCF

Subcategory	Preferences	Disinclination
Crossing words	18 (25.3%)	62 (74.7%)
Inserting missing words	80 (100%)	0
Writing correct word(s) near/below	80 (100%)	0
Reformulation	80 (100%)	0

Table 4.5 shows that, except crossing words (which was preferred by only 25.3%), most learners preferred to be corrected with all forms of direct WCF. On top of that, learners had the following views on their preferences for direct WCF that were provided by their respective English Language teachers:

To start with crossing words feedback was preferable to only 18 learners (25.3%) while 62 learners (74.3%) did not prefer this kind of feedback. Both questionnaire and focus group data showed that those who preferred crossing words favoured the feedback because they thought it was a very direct and clear way of communicating feedback, as exemplified in the excerpt below:

- *I prefer crossing words because it directly informs me that I'm wrong and it is short and clear without too much information. (LFII, 1)*

On the contrary, those who did not prefer crossing words said it did not where and why the sentence/word is ill-formed and it is not impressive because it is very negative. The following extract exhibits the learners' views:

- *I do not prefer crossing words because it does not tell me why am wrong, it is too general to expose where a specific problem is, it sounds as if everything in a sentence is wrong, and it is not impressive, it is very negative. (LFIV, 2)*

The extracts above show that a few English language learners would like to be provided with crossing words as a WCF, while the majority would not. Another form of direct WCF was inserting missing words between incomplete written word/phrases/sentences. Regarding this feedback all learners (80, which equals 100%) involved in the questionnaire and focus groups discussion revealed their likeness of the WCF. The following extract is an illustration of the learners' views regarding inserting missing words:

- *I prefer teachers to provide me with words that are missing in my sentences because it clearly directs me where the error is and it suggests the correct or forgotten forms. This provides an opportunity for me to learn about new words which I forgot or never used at all. (LFIV, 1)*

The learners preferred this feedback because they thought it clearly suggests where the missing forms are and provide the missing form(s), and it provides them with the opportunity to learn about new forms that they could not use before.

Writing correct words near/below erroneous forms was another subtype of direct WCF that was established in the questionnaire and focus group discussion. All learners (80/100%) revealed their preference for this feedback. The following extracts serves as an example of the learners' preferences:

- *I prefer this kind of feedback because it provides correct forms which facilitates my learning". (LFII, 6)*

- *I would like teachers to provide me with correct forms near the wrong ones because it helps me in my revision. (LFIV, 2)*
- *I prefer this feedback because it clearly shows where the problem is and it provides the answer. (LFII, 4)*

The above extract show that learners preferred correct forms because it clearly makes expose the error and provides the correct form, it explicitly helps learners in their revision, therefore, facilitating learning of the English Language.

Reformulation was also preferable subtype of direct WCF. This involves rewriting a wrong sentence/phrase by paraphrasing it in the correct form. All 80 (100%) learners who participated prefer reformulation because it provided a comprehensible opportunity for them to learn about writing correct sentences, thus, encouraging further revision. The following extract exemplifies English Language learners' responses:

- *I like being corrected with reformulation because they direct where the problem is with detailed information which facilitates further revision. (LFIV, 3)*
- *I like paraphrasing because it improves my English learning daily. (LFII, 7)*

The above extracts indicated that paraphrasing allowed them to notice many ill-formed words and sentences in detail, which facilitates gradual language learning. The extracts demonstrate that learners prefer to be provided with comprehensive WCF that would give them enough information for improving their language learning. English language learners have revealed different feelings regarding their preference for the same category. While a few (25.3%) said they preferred crossing

words because it tells explicitly of incorrect forms, the majority (74.7%) said it was very difficult to understand the exact problem with it. This finding raises the question of teachers' awareness of the learners' needs regarding WCF. This is because crossing words takes almost half (43.3%) of all direct WCF provided by teachers, despite the declination by most learners.

In addition, regarding the direct WCF, all learners said they would prefer inserting missing words, writing correct words near/below erroneous forms, and reformulation which is explicit enough to expose errors. However, all these feedback strategies were less used/noticed in the teachers' feedback provided to learners. Previous studies that focused on contextual factors for the effectiveness of WCF regard individual learners as an important variable (Evans, Harshtorn, & Tuioti, 2010). Thus, individual learners have shown to differ in preferences for forms of the same type of feedback (i.e., direct). These findings are concurrent with Westmacott (2017) who researched learners' perceptions of the direct and indirect WCF. Some students said they would prefer to explicitly be corrected with direct feedback because they openly show where the problem is. Moreover, Zang *et al.* (2021) found that there was a tendency for students to prefer overt (direct) correction to the other types of WFC concerning lexical errors. This is also reflected in the study by Bonilla-Lopez *et al.* (2018) in which learners showed preferred overt (direct) corrections to indirectly coded ones. The reason behind learners' preference for direct coded WCF is possibly learners' low ability to understand the indirectly coded feedback; the difficulty might mainly lie in their poor knowledge of a target language which communicates the nature of an error committed. Contrary to Bonilla-Lopez *et al.*

(2018), in the present study some learners said that they would like to be corrected directly, specifically, by writing correct words near/below erroneous forms and reformulation because they provide directives for further individual revisions. This comparison cements the argument that in providing WCF teachers should consider learners' characteristics and nature of the feedback type as significant variables.

Likewise, looking at direct feedback in the present study, it was revealed that some learners have shown less preference for crossing words because it is not expressive enough to tell what a problem is. Some learners felt that crossing words sounds as if everything in a sentence is wrong. This finding is in line with that of Chen *et al.*, (2016) that learners' preferences for WCF would have something to do with the nature of feedback itself and the type of error corrected. This is to say while learners generally prefer more explicit (direct) types of WCF, the preference might vary according to error type. This is true with the present study's findings where learners have shown varying preferences for WCF of the same direct feedback depending on the subtype involved (i.e., Crossing words, reformulation, or inserting words).

4.2.2.2. Indirect WCF

Indirect WCF includes Error locating which involves marking an erroneous form by underlining or highlighting, but it does not provide information regarding why it is an error or how it might be corrected; metalinguistic which involves providing explicit comments about the nature of errors that learners have made by providing an in-depth metalinguistic explanation of the errors; and commenting which refers to written comments in the margin or at the end of the text, typically regarding the

progress of students' writing (cf. Section 2.2.2). Table 4.6 illustrates the percentage of learners' preferences for indirect WCF provided by their respective EL teachers.

Table 4.6: Learners' Preferences for Indirect WCF

Subcategory	Preference	Disinclination
Underlining/rounding erroneous forms	38 (49%)	42 (51%)
Metalinguistics	66 (77%)	14 (23%)
Commenting	60 (75%)	20 (25%)

Table 4.6 shows that the majority of the learners (more than 70%) preferred to be corrected with metalinguistics and commenting while only 38 participants (49%) preferred underlining and rounding of erroneous forms, and 42 (51%) did not prefer it. Below are the excerpts of the learners' views regarding their preferences for locating errors (underlining or rounding of erroneous forms):

- *I less prefer underlining errors because it is difficult for me to understand what the feedback communicates". (LFII, 1)*
- *Indirect underlining discourages less capable learners to improve since it does not clearly explain the problem at hand, however, for independent learners, they encourage independent practice. (LFIV, 5)*

Based on the above extracts, learners revealed less preference for indirect underlining because they do not explicitly tell what the problem is (the nature of the problem is not clear). Similarly, the learners believed this kind of feedback discourages less capable learners to improve, as they are not capable of comprehending information communicated indirectly.

However, some of the learners in the focus group discussion highlighted that error locating works very well with capable learners who understand the indirect feedback given. They added that for capable learners, error locating is a platform for individual practice and language improvement.

In the case of metalinguistics and commenting, majority of the learners in both questionnaires and focus group discussion (77% and 75%, respectively) revealed their preference for them. The participants had this to say and suggest during focus group discussions and questionnaires, respectively:

- *I like my work to be marked with several comments because they provide me with an opportunity to communicate my problems in detail with my English teacher. (LFIV, 2)*
- *I prefer to be commented on in my work because they are very communicative for more understanding. (LFII, 3)*

The majority of the learners who participated in the study said they preferred metalinguistics and commenting because they communicated problems in detail for more understanding, easily to be used for further revision, provide a platform for written interaction with their teachers, it is an opportunity to communicate for further face to face discussion, and have the language that helps to understand the feedback easily. Moreover, English Language students said that some positive comments like “excellent” or “Very good, keep it up” are very motivating complements which motivate their language learning.

On the other hand, a few learners (25%) revealed their negative preference for commenting as a method of teachers’ provision of WCF. Their reason behind this is

the fact that some comments (specifically negative comments) can discourage individual learning progress. Also, negative comments can threaten the students' willingness to meet the teacher. The following extracts show the learners' views during focus group discussion and questionnaires respectively:

- *Sometimes when comments like 'see me! or do correction!' are written in my work, they create a sense of fear of even meeting with the teacher (LFII, 1)*
- *Honestly speaking, some comments are negative enough to discourage my learning. Having read a comment like 'poor work' makes me feel hopeless in learning this language. (LFIV, 7)*

Based on the above analysis one can say that learners' preferences for indirect WCF in the present study have revealed different results from the direct one. To some students, indirect WCF was regarded as frustrating for being unsure of what the correct answer is, while other students were in favour of indirect WCF because they were autonomous enough to understand the problem recast and would favour to use it for personal practices. Contrary to independent learners, dependent learners showed less preference for indirect WCF because they were not competent enough to understand indirect feedback.

The findings of the present study concur with that of Westmacott (2017) who found that capable learners were in favour of indirect WCF because it provided them an opportunity to do more practice by working on clues from the indirect feedback given. In other words, indirect WCF makes them active learners.

In the case of metalinguistics and commenting data analyzed have revealed different views among learners involved in the study. Learners who showed preference for metalinguistics and commenting revealed that such feedback is communicative enough to reveal the nature of the error which provides an opportunity for further revision and allows teachers and learners to contact physically for more improvement. Learners who showed less preference for metalinguistics and commenting found it difficult and threatening to the extent of making them uncomfortable.

Previous studies have also researched metalinguistic and commenting. One of them is that of Lee (2017) and Zhang *et al.* (2021) who found that metalinguistic explanations enabled learners to notice and understand corrected errors easily. The reason behind these findings is also supported by Bitchner and Knotch (2008) who explained that metalinguistic feedback allows learners to engage in guided learning and problem-solving. This is very true in the present study where it is shown that learners preferred metalinguistics and comments because they were comprehensive enough for their practices.

Previous studies (Guo & Barrot, 2019; Zang *et al.*, 2021) also found that some students showed less preference for metalinguistics and comment; the reason being their low knowledge of the target language features. Despite this finding, in the present study, it was found that some learners showed less preference for metalinguistic and commenting because they saw them as discouraging and threatening. As raised by Zang *et al.* (2021), some learners in the present study said sometimes they fail to understand the language used in the comment, while other

comments were very threatening, especially those that required them to meet their teachers physically. Thus, though previous studies regard metalinguistics and commenting as preferable when or if understood by learners or less preferable when not understood, the present study argues that learners might understand a metalinguistic or comment feedback and yet find it less preferable. The reason behind being the nature of the feedback itself whether encouraging or threatening/discouraging.

4.2.2.3 Preference for the Scope of Correction

Another type of WCF involved in the data collection was on the scope of correction, whereas unfocused (correction of every aspect), mid-focused (selection of several linguistic features to correct), and highly focused (involves only one specific feature) feedback were involved (cf. 2.2.2). Table 4.5 summarizes learners' preferences on the scope of the WCF provided by their respective teachers.

Table 4.7: Learners' Preferences for the Scope of WCF

Subcategory	Preferences	Disinclination
Un-focused	44 (52.5%)	36 (47.5%)
Semi-focused	80 (100%)	0
Highly-focused	80(100%)	0

Table 4.7 reveals that in the case of scope, all learners (100%) have preferences for semi-focused and highly-focused WCF, while un-focused WCF was preferred by 52.5% of the learners, while 47.5% revealed their disinclination for unfocused WCF. The reason behind their varied levels of preferences is given in the following extracts.

The following extracts exemplify learners' views on unfocused WCF during focus group discussion and the questionnaire responses, respectively:

- *I like to be corrected in every aspect of my writing because it is comprehensible, thus, allowing me to find my mistakes in many language aspects at once. (LFIV, 2)*
- *Correcting every error in my written assignment irritates me because it kills my confidence and I feel uncomfortable having them in my book or paper. (LFIV, 4)*

The learners who (47.5%) were in favour of unfocused WCF suggested that these feedbacks provide them with comprehensible input for correction because they point out every erroneous aspect. Correcting every error helps them to learn about many aspects at once while 52.5% who were not in favour of unfocused WCF viewed them as demotivating factors for learning English language because they make them feel too incompetent. Moreover, they thought that unfocused feedback makes them uncomfortable with their writing since they give a bad impression of the written work. This finding implies that the same unfocussed WCF is more preferred by few students while less preferred by the majority, the reason being their negative or positive attitude towards such feedback.

Semi-focused WCF was also involved in investigating learners' preferences. All student respondents in both questionnaires and focus group discussion expressed positive view towards semi-focused WCF. The following extract shows some of the learner's views during the focus group discussion:

- *I am very impressed by feedback that focus on several selected aspects because I believe that several corrected mistakes are*

comprehensive enough to draw attention to aspects that I have to learn. (LFIV, 5)

The learners suggested that semi-focused WCF were enough in terms of quantity and thus allowed the learners to focus on a few selected language aspects to deal with when learning the English Language.

Another feedback involved in the scope was the correction of only one specific feature (highly focused WCF). In this kind of feedback, only one aspect is given attention in the writing. For instance, a teacher can choose to mark and correct only articles while ignoring other aspects like verb-subject agreement, use of prepositions, arrangement of modifiers in a noun phrase, etc. All data collected through focus group discussions and questionnaires revealed a positive attitude of the learners toward highly focused feedback. The reason behind such preference was because they considered highly focused feedback as helpful in realizing minor errors. Correcting one aspect allowed them to learn such aspects attentively, hence, improving in them greatly. The following extracts reveal learners' responses in both focus group discussions and questionnaire suggestion respectively:

- *I mostly prefer to be corrected in only one aspect of my writing because they allow me to realize minor errors. (LFII, 3)*
- *I like to be corrected in only one aspect of the error I make because highlighting a specific mistake helps me to focus on learning the specific aspects. (LIV, 6)*

Generally, in the case of scope some have shown different views in expressing their preferences for unfocussed feedback where less than half (47.5) preferred them while

more than half (52.5%) did not prefer them. On the other hand, all 40 students (100%) showed that they prefer to be corrected with semi-focused and highly focused feedback in comparing this finding with the teachers' practice in the first objective, there is a mismatch between learners' high preferences and teachers practices in providing highly focused WCF, where only 17.6% of it is provided by teachers to learners.

Moreover, the findings reveal that WCF was perceived by differently by learners. Lee (2008) and Nakamura (2016) equally found that nearly half of the students in the group he studied indicated that they wanted their teacher to respond to none of their errors, while more than two-thirds of the students in the latter group expected their teacher to respond to all of their errors.

Furthermore, in Amrhein and Nassaji (2010) learners thought it was most useful for teachers to provide WCF on as many errors as possible. This is the same as in Alshahrani and Storch (2014), where learners tended to prefer to have all errors corrected. However, some researchers recommend that highly-unfocussed WCF is postulated to be less effective than highly focused WCF because it can easily lead to an overload of information processing (Bitchener, 2008; Sheen *et al.* (2009).

Regarding mid-focused feedback, all learners in the present study, showed a high preference for being corrected in several language aspects. It seems the provision of WCF on selected aspects (i.e., grammatical aspects, punctuation and organization) helped English language learners to focus on a few aspects effectively, which simplify their learning process. In comparing this finding with that of Hylands (2011), learners expressed the importance of form-focused feedback because they

felt that they needed to consolidate their L2 learning with few manageable aspects. The same argument is echoed in Seker and Dencer (2014) where learners expressed a strong preference for receiving feedback focused on grammatical accuracy. Consonantly all learners in the present study preferred highly-focused feedback (targeting only one error type), likely because they thought that highly-focused feedback help learners to learn about minor errors because it deals with very specific mistakes.

Nonetheless, some previous studies criticize the highly focused WCF for its lack of ecological validity and pedagogical significance for the real classroom (Storch, 2010). Some researchers suggest that it is necessary to examine how learners perceive the usefulness of selective and comprehensive WCF to provide implications for teachers in justifying WCF instructions (Zang *et al.*, 2021).

Overall, the findings of the present study clearly tally the findings of previous studies which recommend teachers' provision of mid-focused WCF to help learners to focus on a few language aspects that are manageable. Teachers are advised to correct a certain number of errors at a time to minimize learners' negative emotions (Lee,2019). Likewise, the researcher recommends that teachers adopt mid-focused as a leverage the weaknesses of highly-focused and highly-unfocused.

The following section presents data on the factors influencing learners' preferences for the WCF provided by teachers in Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms.

4.2.3 Factors Influencing Learners' Preferences for the WCF

Data from sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 (on objectives 1 and 2) have shown the WCF provided by teachers in the English Language classrooms and the preferences of learners for each feedback and the reasons for such preferences. Data on the factors influencing English Language learners' preferences were collected through questionnaire and focus group discussion are presented and discussed. Based on the learners' explanations in the present study, the following were the factors identified:

4.2.3.1 Amount of Information Given in the WCF

One of the factors that influence learners' preferences for given feedback is the amount of information given by teachers in the WCF. All 80 learners (100%) who participated in the study preferred to be given reformulation to help them in their further revision. 42 learners (51%) did not prefer underlining erroneous forms because they are such indirect that they do not have any explanation that could be understood by learners. During the focus group discussion, English Language learners said the following:

- *I like teachers to re-write a full sentence or correct some phrases with enough information because through it I get an opportunity to learn about my problems in detail. (LFVI, 1)*
- *When a teacher just underlines words, it is too difficult for me to see where the problem is because no explanation is there to help me to understand the nature of the problem so that I work on it. (LFVI, 7)*

Extracts reveal that some learners prefer to be given detailed information about erroneous forms so that they understand the nature of the problem. These found it

difficult to understand the nature of an error they have made with indirect underlining compared to a direct comment/metalinguistic which explains the nature of the problem, and sometimes suggests the appropriate structure. This is also reflected in previous studies such as Lee (2017) who found that his respondents considered a metalinguistics explanation highly explicit, because it did not only locate errors but also provided detailed information about why they occurred and how they can be corrected. The provision of metalinguistic explanation enables learners to notice and understand errors, which allow them to learn (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008).

However, the provision of a metalinguistic explanation did not ensure learners' comprehension of the feedback in this study. Some learners (particularly less capable) did not prefer comments expressed with difficult words. This concurs with previous studies which found that learners may find it challenging to deal with item-based errors when a metalinguistic explanation was provided; the difficulty arises mainly from the lack of knowledge of the target feature (Ellis, 2005). Bonila-Lopez *et al.* (2018) and Guo and Barrot (2019) revealed that learners find it difficult to deal with the same metalinguistic comments on item-based error if they lack knowledge of the target vocabulary (language) used in the comment. Likewise, in the present study, some learners expressed a high preference for simple inserted words on wrong forms, while expressing disinclination for indirect comments with difficult language. Learners' ability to understand comments

Data collected have revealed that an ability had an influence on learners' preferences for WCF given. For instance, indirect WCF feedback, like highlighting erroneous

forms for recasting was highly preferred by autonomous learners over the dependent ones. The reason is, while incapable learners are challenged to understand indirect WCF; autonomous learners take them as challenge as part of learning. The following extracts exemplify the learners' views on this aspect:

- *I prefer the teacher to insert a correct word in my work because it directly gives me a correct word to learn than underlining which does not tell me what the problem is, and in most cases, I fail to notice the problem. (LFII, 6)*
- *Just underlining wrong words/phrases is preferable because it challenges me to think about what exactly the problem is, which to me is a part of exercising and improving my English. (LFIV, 2)*

Analysis of the data above implies that whereas incapable learners would not prefer indirect feedback, capable learners would take it as a challenge for improving their learning. In comparing this finding to the previous studies, the present study concurs with Chen et al. (2016) whose study indicated that perception of WCF on grammatical errors varied among Chinese EFL learners with different proficiency levels: error code was preferred by intermediate learners, and overt correction was preferred by advanced learners.

Moreover, in the present study some learners felt that the depth of clarification provided by teachers can encourage or discourage them to understand and deal with the WCF provided. For example, in the questionnaires, more than 75% of the learners said that they would prefer given writing correct forms near or below erroneous forms, metalinguistics, and commenting because they provide clear information than other indirect feedback like underlining/highlighting erroneous

forms. The following extract from the data collected during the focus group discussion exemplifies the fact:

- *I would like to be corrected with comments because it explains the nature of my mistake clearly, while feedback like underlining erroneous words tend to be very indirect and unclear. (LFII, 2)*

The presented extract implies that learners understand direct WCF easily because they explain how to correct errors, while unclear feedback discourages learners. Clear feedback helps learners to understand the nature of the problem. Likewise, the previous studies (Zang et al., 2022; Lee, 2017) revealed that the provision of metalinguistic explanation could enable learners to notice and understand errors, while indirect feedback is difficult for them to interpret.

4.2.3.2 Learners' Self-Perceived Ability

Data collected have revealed that learners' self-perceived ability has an influence on their preferences for a given WCF than others. For instance, indirect WCF feedback like highlighting erroneous forms which are recast in nature are highly preferred by learners who perceive themselves as autonomous than the dependent ones. The reason is while incapable learners are challenged to understand indirect WCF; autonomous learners would like to take a challenge as part of learning. Thus, learners' self-perceived ability to understand the nature of a feedback provided influences their preferences for given types of feedback. The following extracts exemplify the learners' views via focus group discussion:

- *I prefer for a teacher inserting a correct word in my work because it directly gives me a correct word to learn than when*
- *underlining which do not tell me what the problem is, and in most cases I fail to notice the problem. (LFII, 6)*
- *Just underlining wrong words/phrases are preferable because they give me a challenge to think what exactly the problem is, which to me is a part of exercising and improving my English. (LFIV, 2)*

Analysis of the data above implies that while learners who perceive themselves as incapable would not prefer indirect feedback which needed some knowledge to grasp a feedback, capable learners would take it as a challenge for improving their learning. In comparing this finding to the previous studies, the present study concurs with Chen et al. (2016) whose study indicated that perception of WCF on grammatical errors varied among Chinese EFL learners with different proficiency levels: error code was preferred by intermediate learners, and overt correction was preferred by advanced learners.

4.2.3.3 Tone of the Comment Provided

The tone of the feedback refers to whether the comments are about what students have done well (positive) or what they have done poorly (negative) (cf. Section 2.2.2). During the focus group discussion, some learners said they would prefer to be corrected only with positive tone because negative tone tends to discourage them towards learning English. Some learners felt that they did not prefer direct crossing words feedback because it is too harsh. Some said they would not prefer unfocused

feedback because correcting each error encountered made them feel weak and uncomfortable.

Furthermore, some learners felt that comments like *very poor*, or *see me*, discouraged or threatened them in the learning of the English Language. For such, comments like *good try*, *keep it up*, and *excellent* were very encouraging and helped them to learn positively. Hereunder are excerpts that represents the views of some respondents:

- *Crossing words do not impress me because they sound very negative to me. (LFII, 3) I hate comments like see me because with this comment I feel threatened even to go and meet the teacher especially when my work has so many errors (LFIV, 5)*
- *I am very different from my friends. I usually regard a comment “see me” as an opportunity for me to meet my teacher and ask questions. (LFIV, 4)*

The above extracts reveal how different learners' feelings towards the tone of the WCF provided. Whereas some learners regard a comment such as “see me” as an opportunity to meet teachers for learning, others take it as a threat that discourages them from meeting such teachers. This implies that in the provision of WCF, teachers should consider the fact that learners have varying perceptions. Similarly, Elisifa (2019) found that positive WCF made learners feel confident in the process of language learning.

Therefore, the tone of the feedback and learners' mood towards the feedback has a great influence on learners' preferences for feedback given.

4.2.3.4 Scope of the Feedback Provided

Feedback's scope also influenced learners' preferences for the WCF in the present study. The analysis showed that 47.5% of the learners disinclined the correction of every error they commit (unfocused correction). It made them feel unconfident, incompetent, and too weak to learn English. The following excerpts presents both views:

- *Correcting every error in my written assignment irritates me because it kills my confidence and make me uncomfortable. (LFIV, 4)*
- *I am very impressed with feedback WCF focusing specific aspects. This inspires me to learn such an aspect comprehensively. (LFIV, 5)*

This finding concurs with Nakamura (2016) whose respondents expressed strong preferences for receiving feedback focusing on grammatical accuracy than unfocused.

However, some learners preferred unfocussed WCF believing that being corrected in every aspect help them learn many aspects at once. Consider the following extract:

- *I like to be corrected in every aspect of my writing because it is comprehensive, which allows me to find my mistakes in many language aspects at once. (LFIV, 2)*

The extract above proves that the scope of the WCF provided can influence learners' preferences. This is concurring with a study by Reguied and Hamitouche (2022) where learners expressed their preferences for unfocused feedback because it contributes to the learning of many aspects. The finding also concurs with Amrhein

and Nassaji (2010) and Lee (2008) who found that learners preferred the correction of all mistakes in their writing because it made them aware of the gaps and problems in their SL system, as suggested in the interactional perspective of SLL (Swain, 1995). Moreover, variation of findings in the compared studies is attributed to the fact that learners' preferences for WCF are highly influenced by contextual factors such as learners' goals, interests, and beliefs; teaching-learning context; and nature of the feedback provided (i.e., scope). Thus, teachers and researchers should consider these contextual variables when providing WCF to learners. Hanaoka (2007) showed that WCF was more likely to direct the attention of Japanese learners of English to lexical errors but not to other types of errors, whereas similar sounds were observed in the study of Garcia-Mayo and Labandibar (2015) conducted with Spanish learners of English. It is suggested that the more explicit the WCF is, the more the accurate understanding of errors is likely to be (Stefanou & Revez, 2015; Suzuki *et al.*, 2019).

4.3 Summary of the Chapter

Data analysis and discussion of the findings have shown that teachers relied mostly on indirect and mid-focused WCF than direct and highly focused/unfocused WCF. Error coding was not identified in all learners' written assignments despite learners expressing their preference for such feedback. The study found that the learners preferred direct feedback except crossing. With regard to indirect feedback, learners preferred commenting and metalinguistics than rounding and underlining erroneous forms. Furthermore, in terms of scope, the learners showed moderate preference for unfocused, with a high preference for mid-focused and highly focused WCF. The

study established that learners' preferences for different types of WCF depended on their interests and experiences, whereas learners' self-ability to understand the WCF provided, the amount of information, tone of the WCF provided, and scope of the WCF influenced learners' preferences for given types of WCF. The analysis also revealed that teachers' WCF practices contradicted learners' preferences. That is, teachers used less or did not use some WCF which were highly preferred by learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is organized into three sections: Section 5.2 presents the study's conclusion and Section 5.3 presents the study's recommendations.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 General Summary

The present study set out to assess learners' views on the WCF by teachers in Tanzanian EL secondary school classrooms. In particular, the present study sought to address the following research questions:

- i. which types of WCF are provided by teachers to learners of English in the Tanzanian secondary school classroom?
- ii. how are the learners' preferences for WCF provided to them by EL teachers?
- iii. which factors influence learners' preferences for the WCF provided by their teachers?

To answer the stated questions, the study used a case study design involving forty Form Two and Form Four students from Kigamboni Navy Secondary School. Both purposive and criterion sampling were employed to obtain students and written assignments with teachers' WCF. Document review, questionnaire, and focus group discussion were used to collect data. Following Biber *et al* Typology of WCF (2011), the collected data were transcribed, coded and analyzed by content and thematic analysis methods.

5.2.2 Summary of the Major Findings

The first research question focused on identifying the types of WCF provided by teachers to learners of the English Language in the Tanzanian secondary school classroom. Generally, it was found that teachers' provision of WCF to their learners relied on metalinguistics, commenting, crossing words, and mid-focused. The analysis showed that, reformulation and highly focused were the least WCF used by the teachers.

The second question focused on the learners' preferences for the types of WCF provided by their teachers in Tanzanian secondary school classrooms. The findings revealed that learners preferred to be provided with direct comprehensive WCF that would give them enough information for improving their language learning. A section of learners preferred explicit (direct) types of WCF the most. For example, paraphrasing allowed learners to notice many ill-formed words and sentences in detail, which facilitates gradual language learning. Learners of this category found indirect WCF frustrating for making them unsure of what really the correct answer.

Regarding scope, determined learners preferred unfocussed WCF for challenging their language ability. However, there was a mismatch between learners' and teachers' practices in providing WCF. It was found, for example, that teachers used less or did not use some WCF which learners preferred. That is, learners preferred explicit WCF-like error coding, but teachers did not provide such feedback to learners. This finding implies that in some cases teachers provide WCF to their learners without considering their interests. The third question focused on establishing the factors that influenced learners' preferences for the WCF provided

by teachers in the Tanzanian English Language secondary school classrooms. The findings revealed that learners' preferences for different types of WCF relied on individual interests and experiences, whereas learners' self-perceived the ability to understand the WCF provided, amount of information, tone of the WCF provided, and scope of the WCF influenced learners' preferences for given types of WCF.

5.3 Conclusions

Teachers' WCF on learners' written tasks is an important aspect of SLL. The present study has revealed teachers' practices and learners' views regarding such practices. The study found a mismatch between learners' needs and teachers' practices which requires attention. Moreover, teachers should pay attention to factors that influence learners' preferences for given WCF. These include learners' self-perceived ability, amount of information, teachers' tone, and scope of the WCF. Thus, in providing WCF, teachers should focus on what works for the learners.

5.4 Implications of the Findings

The present study is grounded in the Interactional Perspective of Swains' Output Hypothesis which advances the importance of learners' improvement of SLL by noticing the gap between them and higher proficiency counterparts/teachers through WCF. The present study reveals that teachers rely on indirect and mid-focused WCF only which cause a mismatch between teachers' practices and learners' preferences.

The fact that teachers use less or do not use some WCF preferred by learners calls for the teachers to focus their attention on the learners' needs.

Moreover, the present study has established the factors that influence learners' preferences for a given kind of WCF. The factors include learners' ability, amount of information, comprehensiveness, tone, and scope. Therefore, teachers and researchers should consider these variables when providing WCF.

5.5 Recommendations

In line with the findings and implications of the present study, the following are recommended:

5.5.1 Recommendation for Action

From the pedagogical implications of the present study, the following are the recommendations:

- i. The present study has revealed a mismatch between the WCF by the teachers and learners' preferences. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers should be aware of the preferences for their students for WCF for them to provide helpful feedback.
- ii. Moreover, it was found a remarkable variation in the preferences for individual learners' interests; while some learners found WCF with detailed explanations like metalinguistics comprehensive enough for their understanding, other learners found it difficult to understand the explanations due to poor language ability. Thus, teachers should not generalize the usefulness of each WCF to all learners. They should provide WCF based on the learners' interests, individual character and their context of learning.

- iii. Although Swains' Output Hypothesis claims that WCF facilitates SLL, teachers are urged to consider the factors that influence such learners' preferences. This is because some WCF only work for some learners depending on the learners' ability, amount of information, comprehensiveness, tone, and scope.

5.5.2 Recommendation for the Further Research

- i. It is recommended that a further study be carried out on how learners make preferences for the WCF provided by their respective teachers on other aspects (i.e., tone, mode, and source). The present study was delimited to the aspects of the types and scope of WCF. Since the nature of the WCF itself has shown influence on learners' preferences, a future study would focus on the aspects which were left out by this study, namely tone, source and mode.
- ii. A study that would explore learners' preferences based on the sociocultural perspective is worth doing. This is because apart from the interactional perspective (which the present study focused) it is useful to understand how sociocultural variables (e.g., engaging in social interaction with other people at different contexts) influences learners' preferences for given types of WCF in the Tanzanian context.
- iii. The present study's solely focused on learners' feelings regarding WCF provided by their respective teachers. That is, the voices of teachers were not heard. Thus, it is worth conducting a study on teachers' views on different WCF provided to their learners.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: DOCUMENTARY REVIEW CHECKLIST

Learners' views and preferences for the WCF by teachers in Tanzanian EL classroom context

Date School.....

District/Region..... Class Level

Reviewer Book/Paper Given No

WCF	Sub-Type	Specific WCF	EG. 1	EG. 2
Type	Direct	Crossing words		
		Inserting missing words		
		Writing correct words(s) near/below erroneous form		
		Re writing the entire sentence (reformulation)		
		Others		
	Indirect	Highlighting erroneous forms		
		Underlining erroneous forms		
		Others		
	Metalinguistic	Error coding		
		Comment		
Others				
Scope	Unfocused	Correcting all errors		
	Mid-focused	Correcting specific errors type		
	Highly- focused	Correcting one specific error		

Adapted from Biber et al. (2011)

APPENDIX II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PROTOCOL

Learners' views and perceptions of the WCF by teachers in Tanzanian EL classroom context

Date:

Name of school:

Part I Instructions

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Tamasha Kitalima. Thank you for taking part in this discussion. This discussion will focus on the **learners' views and perception of the WCF by teachers in Tanzanian EL classroom context**. The purpose is to understand your views perceptions of the WCF provided in classrooms. You are invited to participate here because you have potential information about the subject matter. There is no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answer. I would like you to feel comfortable to say what you really think and how you really feel about it.

If it is ok with you, I will be tape-recording our conversation. The purpose of this is to get all details while we carry on with our conversation. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will compile a report which will contain comments by all the students while adhering to the anonymity requirement. I have placed name cards on the table in front of you to help us remember each other's names. Let us find out some more about each other by going around the table

Part II: Discussion Questions

Let us study the following WCF instances and suggest the instances that work for us best and those which do not work for us. (Give the reason for your suggestion)

Four sentences with the following WCF instances will be taken from the documentary review data:

1. Crossing words
2. Inserting missing words
3. Writing correct word(s) near/below erroneous form
4. Rewriting the entire sentence(s)
5. Highlighted erroneous form
6. Underlined erroneous form
7. Coded errors
8. Commented feedback

Let us read the following paragraphs and say which feedback is desirable or not desirable to us. (Give the reason for your suggestion)

1. WCF focused on more than one grammatical aspect
2. WCF focused on vocabulary choices
3. WCF focussed on punctuation marks
4. WCF on all errors aspect (unfocused)
5. WCF on specifically one aspect

6. What are some of the things that you like most regarding the WCF we have discussed?
7. What are the things you like the least regarding the WCF we have discussed?
8. Do you have any additional questions concerning this discussion?

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE PROTOCOL

Learners' views and perceptions of the WCF by teachers in Tanzanian EL classroom context

1. If you look at the following WCF instances, which one do you consider preferable or not preferable. Use the suggested alternatives given to identify your answer by underlining your choice.

2. Crossing words preferable/ not preferableReason:

.....

.....

3. Inserting missing wordspreferable/ not preferableReason

.....

.....

4. Writing correct word(s) near erroneous form preferable/not preferable Reason.....

.....

5. Rewriting the entire sentence(s)preferable/ not preferableReason:

.....

.....

6. Highlighted erroneous form preferable/ not preferableReason:

.....

7. Underlined erroneous form preferable/ not preferable Reason:

.....
.....

8. Coded errors preferable/ not preferable

Reason:

.....
.....
.....

9. Commented feedback preferable/ not preferable Reason:

.....
.....
.....

10. Read the following paragraphs and say which feedback is desirable or notdesirable to you by underlining your choice

i. WCF focused on more than one grammatical aspect *desirable/not*

desirable Reason:

.....
.....

ii. WCF focused on vocabulary choices *desirable/not desirable*

Reason:

.....

.....

iii. WCF focussed on punctuation marks *desirable/not desirable*

Reason:

.....

.....

iv. WCF on all errors aspect (unfocused) *desirable/not desirable*

Reason:



.....

.....

v. WCF on specifically one aspect *desirable/not desirableReason:*

.....

APPENDIX IV: CLEARANCE LETTER

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA		
DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES		
P.O. Box 23409 Dar es Salaam, Tanzania http://www.out.ac.tz		Tel: 255-22-2668992/2668445 ext.2101 Fax: 255-22-2668759 E-mail: dpgs@out.ac.tz
Our Ref: PG201900647	26th May 2022	
Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS), Dar es Salaam Region, P.O Box 5429, DAR ES SALAAM.		
RE: RESEARCH CLEARANCE		
<p>The Open University of Tanzania was established by an Act of Parliament No. 17 of 1992, which became operational on the 1st March 1993 by public notice No.55 in the official Gazette. The Act was however replaced by the Open University of Tanzania Charter of 2005, which became operational on 1st January 2007. In line with the Charter, the Open University of Tanzania mission is to generate and apply knowledge through research.</p>		
<p>To facilitate and to simplify research process therefore, the act empowers the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania to issue research clearance, on behalf of the Government of Tanzania and Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology, to both its staff and students who are doing research in Tanzania. With this brief background, the purpose of this letter is to introduce to you Ms. TAMASHA, Kitalima, Reg No: PG201900647 pursuing Master of Arts in Linguistics (MA-Linguistics). We here by grant this clearance to conduct a research titled "Assessing Learners Views for Written Corrective Feedback Provided by Teachers in Tanzanian English Language Secondary School Classrooms" She will collect her data at your area from 01st June 2022 to 15th July 2022.</p>		
<p>In case you need any further information, kindly do not hesitate to contact the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) of the Open University of Tanzania, P.O Box 23409, Dar es Salaam.Tel: 022-2-2668820. We lastly thank you in advance for your assumed cooperation and facilitation of this research academic activity.</p>		
Yours, THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA		
		
Prof. Magreth S. Bushesha DIRECTOR OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES.		