

THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL TEACHER-BELIEFS TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF WRITTEN CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK (WCF) IN ELT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract. Epistemological beliefs are "individual interpretations (beliefs) about knowledge and understanding," Epistemological teachers' beliefs refer to instructors' views on how knowledge is acquired. Teachers' EB is essential in how a teacher evaluates knowledge, justifies the organization and source of information, and, more broadly, how the learning process develops. Therefore, this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) study aims to explore the epistemological beliefs of teachers or educators in the implementation of Written Corrective Feedback in English Language Teaching (ELT) context from multiple existing literatures. There are various results found in this study, such as that the epistemological beliefs cover four categories: necessity and effectiveness, focus, strategy, and scope, teachers' and students' responsibility in WCF, and the teachers' epistemological beliefs in the term of giving WCF to improve students writing skills in ELT context.

Keywords: *epistemological beliefs, English Language Teaching, Written Corrective Feedback, Systematic Literature Review*

INTRODUCTION

Epistemology is commonly known as a philosophical area which investigates the concept of knowledge. It has been accepted as an essential topic of philosophy since it addresses the concept of human knowledge (Sol & Heng, 2022). Moreover, Epistemology is highlighted as the basis for offering and supporting teachers to build their understanding, beliefs, and ideas (Schommer-Aikins, 2004). The Epistemological Teacher-beliefs play an essential part in education. However, studying Epistemological Beliefs (EBs) has been acknowledged as the initial step toward improving teacher education programs and gaining fresh insights into the teaching profession (Lee & Schallert, 2016). Epistemological belief is an ideology, understanding, and guiding value that is important in developing a student's environment for learning. To strengthen the belief and value system of knowledge, learning, and teaching (Munfaridah et al., 2023). In essence, these beliefs function as an understanding through which teachers interpret learning development, comprehension, and recognition in their educational settings. It expresses personal beliefs about the nature of knowledge, its development, and communication, which experiences training, and philosophical perspectives have

influenced. The teachers' EBs tend to perform a vital role in how a teacher examines knowledge, justifies the organization and source of knowledge, and, more generally, how the learning process evolves (Gholami & Husu, 2010).

Teachers' personal epistemological beliefs can occur in various subjects of English Language Teaching (ELT), including corrective feedback. In the current modern instructional setting, the role of Corrective Feedback (CF) in improving language learning, especially in terms of improving students' English proficiency, has received much attention. Moreover, CF has gained the attention of various scholars through the past decades (Al Ghaithi & Behforouz, 2023), especially encouraging interest among L2 teachers and scholars in the fields of applied languages and the study of second languages (SLA) (Ha & Nguyen, 2021). The role of Corrective Feedback (CF) is the methodical response to learner errors aimed at enhancing language learning (Ellis, 2006). In ELT, teachers need to assess students' performance during the teaching-learning process to enhance students' English proficiency or achieve excellent input by correcting students' errors in using English in class settings. However, CF is divided into two types. The first is Oral Corrective Feedback (OCF mode), which is related to teachers' expression responses to students' spoken mistakes. In contrast, written corrective feedback (WCF mode) is related to teachers' comments on students' written assignments or activities (Li & Vuono, 2019). CF is considered a beneficial subject and has unique terms, especially regarding teacher Epistemological beliefs that link to the implementation of CF.

Since writing is a skill that enables individuals, especially students, to express their thoughts and ideas, it is becoming an essential skill in this 21st century (Wondim et al., 2024). However, considered essential in writing in ELT, writing is a complex skill that requires logical skills and an understanding of reader-author interaction that makes students struggle with English language writing due to its complexity, especially in writing abilities (Lo et al., 2020). Furthermore, implementing WCF is essential to overcome this situation due to the complexity of learning writing. The role of WCF refers to teacher-written comments on students' work that enhance their future work. Moreover, despite the consideration of essentials in the implementation of WCF in ELT settings, especially in terms of EBs, beliefs in CF, including WCF, are defined as perspectives that learners and teachers hold about the effectiveness of CF in second language or foreign language (L2) learning and teaching and how it should be applied in a class (Li, 2017). This SLR aims to provide an overview of "The Epistemological Teacher-beliefs towards The Implementation of Written Corrective Feedback (WCF) in ELT." Furthermore, the researcher formulated a question: What are teachers' epistemological beliefs in Written Corrective Feedback (WCF), especially in the ELT context?

METHODOLOGY

This research employed the method of systematic review of the literature (SLR) to examine teachers' epistemological beliefs toward written corrective feedback in the ELT context. It refers to a review that aims to comprehensively observe all relevant research to answer specific questions and analyze the validity of each study, considering this when making conclusions (Popay et al., 2006). This study pursued the

SLR based on the concepts of (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). This refers to the following essential components: creating research questions, developing a search strategy, establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria, study selection, and extracting and synthesizing data. The researcher followed the PRISMA 2020 standards framework (Page et al., 2021) in reporting components to ensure transparency and accuracy in this systematic literature review. Additionally, The PRISMA 2020 guidelines support research transparency and accuracy in explaining each step of the procedure, as stated by Kitchenham and Charters.

The researchers then used three electronic databases, such as ScienceDirect and Eric, to obtain relevant data from different sources. The search phrase contains the following: ("Corrective Feedback" OR CF OR "Written Corrective Feedback" OR WCF OR "Beliefs in Corrective Feedback" OR Teachers' Beliefs in Written Corrective Feedback). The journal was collected from 2019 until 2024.

In this section, the relevant publication is chosen based on inclusion and exclusion criteria; since a systematic review aims to identify primary studies that address the research topic, a detailed list of the selection criteria is provided in Table 1. The screening criteria for inclusion selected journals specifically focused on beliefs related to implementing WCF. For exclusion criteria, the writer removed journals that were not related or cannot answer the research question.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for the present research

Inclusion criteria	
1.	Publications defining epistemological teachers' beliefs in WCF
2.	Publications address the result of epistemological beliefs of teachers in the implementation of WCF
3.	Publication journals published from years 2019 to 2024
Exclusion criteria	
1.	Duplicated journals
2.	Journals contain beliefs of Oral Corrective Feedback
3.	Journals that do not include beliefs in the implementation of WCF

Figure 1 shows the stages of research retrieval and selection using the PRISMA 2020 guidance to present this SLR. In terms of study selection, the researcher collected and identified 20 publications from three digital libraries, namely Science Direct, Eric, and Semantics Scholars, using a search question and filtering. Therefore, various journals were chosen from three digital databases. They were ScienceDirect (n=11), Eric (n=9), and Semantic scholars (n=1). After the identification, the researcher screened for the results and found that out of 20 journals, there were three duplicate journals.

Furthermore, the researchers chose to remove those journals. For eligibility, the writer reviewed 17 publications for inclusion and elimination based on their abstract, introduction, and conclusion. Then, if the journals indicated inclusion criteria, the writer thoroughly investigated them. In addition, the writer excluded fourteen journals that did

not indicate the criteria for inclusion. A total of three journals containing inclusion criteria have been included in this study. Table 1 shows the result of the study selection as inclusion journals.

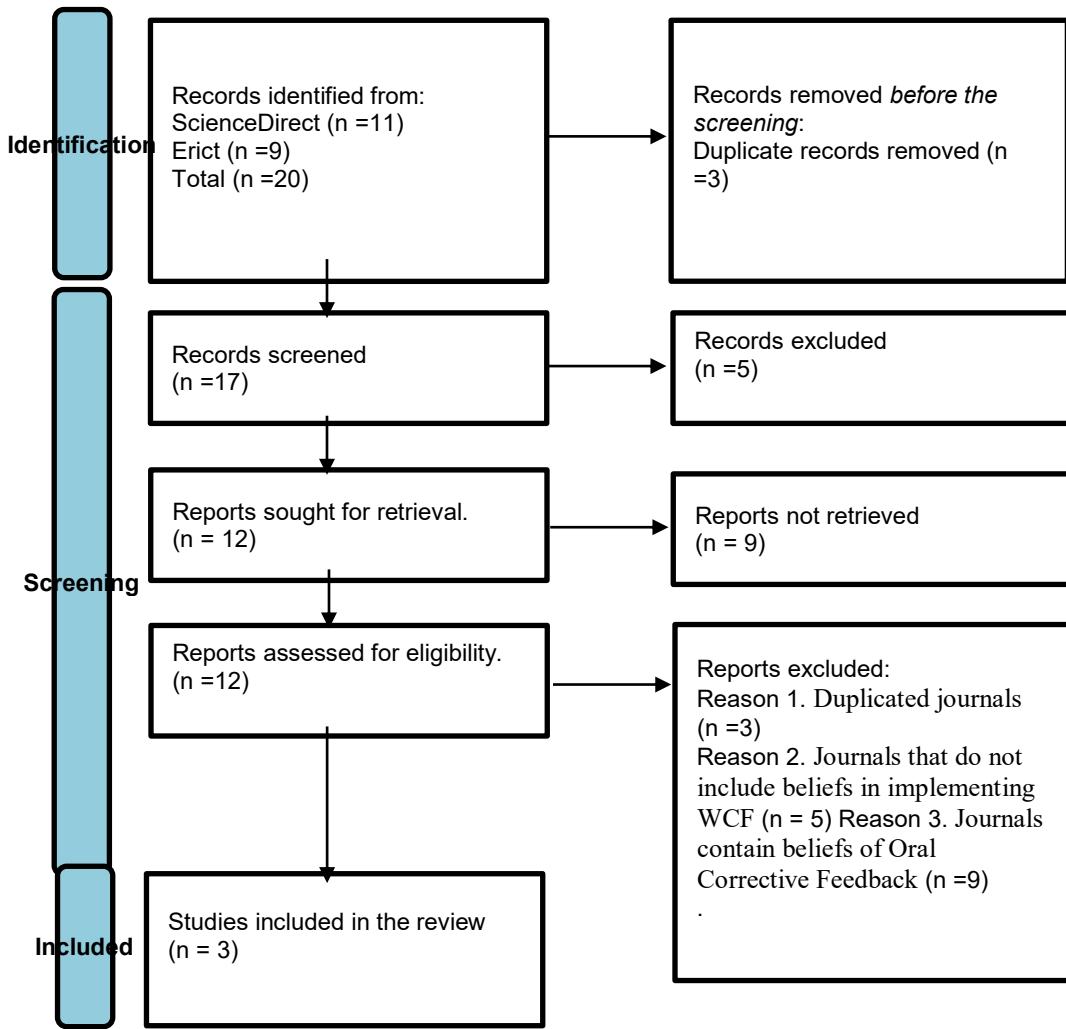


Fig 1. The outline for identifying and screening this SLR to support research transparency and accuracy is based on Page et al. (2021).

Table 2. Inclusion Journals

Author, nation, year, and database	Title	Method	Participants
Xiaohan Liu, China, 2024, ScienceDirect	Understanding the development and implementation of teachers' beliefs of written corrective feedback: A study of two novice transborder teachers in mainland China	In-depth Interviews	Novice transborder teachers
Windy Wahju Purnomo, Yazid Basthomi, Johannes Ananto Prayogo, Indonesia, (2021). Eric	The second study concerns EFL university teachers' perspectives on written corrective feedback and their actual applications.	Survey method	EFL university teachers
Gülnehal Şakrak-Ekin, Cem Balçıklı, Turkey, 2019. Eric	Written Corrective Feedback: EFL Teachers' Beliefs and Practices	A mixed-method research study combining the data collection techniques of questionnaires	English instructors

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the context of giving feedback, teachers' beliefs are defined as what exactly teachers understand, agree with, and assume (Borg, 2003). However, more is needed about the beliefs and practices of WCF in EFL situations, where most English learners are taught globally (Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019). Therefore, from various existing literature, this study examines teachers' beliefs, especially epistemological beliefs related to implementing WCF in the ELT context.

The first study was conducted by (Liu, 2024). This study examined how two novice transborder teachers in mainland China's public secondary schools established and used their opinions or epistemological beliefs on written corrective feedback (WCF). They employed WCF samples, interviews, teacher voice memos, and paper. Participants' epistemological beliefs about WCF can be divided into four categories:

necessity and effectiveness, focus, strategy, and scope. Therefore, both participants strongly supported providing WCF to students for necessity and effectiveness. They considered this one of a teacher's most important duties: advising students of any weaknesses they could not detect independently. Then, for the next category, "Focus," both participants showed epistemological beliefs that WCF should be given to students in two different focuses, such as grammar, language expression, mechanics, content, ideas, and organization. The third category is related to "strategy." In this term, participants, on their epistemological beliefs, showed that they tended to utilize indirect and direct feedback when giving WCF to overcome students' error performance in learning English, especially writing.

Moreover the last category is "Scope." In this term, the epistemological beliefs of two participants showed that both participants primarily utilized unfocused WCF rather than focused WCF. This study also revealed that the epistemological teachers' beliefs about WCF were greatly influenced by their prior learning experiences and context.

The following finding from another journal examines epistemological beliefs in WCF conducted by (Purnomo et al., 2021); this study examines University teachers' epistemological beliefs and practical implementations in offering written corrective feedback to EFL university students' writing errors and their correlation. The study was based on 80 responses from a Google Form survey given to EFL university lecturers with diverse teaching experiences across Indonesia. This study found that participants had various EBs when implementing WCF. The study highlighted that there are at least nine EBs shown in this study:

1. Teachers must provide feedback on students' writing errors.
2. Teachers should use different corrective feedback approaches depending on the type of error.
3. Teachers should provide selective comments on their students' faults.
4. It is the teacher's responsibility to identify errors and provide corrections to students.
5. Problems with marking codes are an effective way for students to address errors independently.
6. The marking codes should be simple for students to follow and understand.
7. Students should learn how to identify their own mistakes.
8. Students should learn to identify and correct their errors.
9. Students should learn how to assess their own mistakes.

Another similar finding was found in the study (Balçıkanlı, 2019). This study evaluates EFL instructors' perspectives on written corrective feedback (WCF) and (ii) how these ideas align with classroom practices. First, 25 English instructors were given a questionnaire about their beliefs toward WCF. Later, 175 randomly selected student writing tasks corrected by the same teachers were gathered. This study reveals various epistemological teachers, such as Participants' beliefs that the primary aim of providing feedback, especially in WCF, is to overcome students' errors in writing, participants'

beliefs that their current WCF procedures resulted in students achieving 'excellent improvement' or 'some progress.'

CONCLUSION

This study shows that teachers' epistemological beliefs about written corrective feedback (WCF) in English language teaching (ELT) situations are multidimensional and influenced by various factors, including prior experiences and contextual considerations. However, Liu examined teachers' epistemic beliefs (EBs) regarding WCF implementation. Liu's study highlights four critical categories of teachers' epistemological beliefs: necessity and effectiveness, focus, strategy, and scope. It reveals that teachers generally support providing WCF to students, emphasizing its importance in addressing student weaknesses. Additionally, there needs to be more beliefs regarding WCF's focus, strategy, and scope, with teachers employing both direct and indirect feedback strategies and often prefer unfocused over focused WCF. Purnomo et al.'s research expands on this by identifying nine distinct EBs regarding WCF among university teachers. These beliefs range from the necessity of providing feedback to students' responsibility in identifying and correcting their errors. The study underscores the diversity of teachers' beliefs, reflecting the complexity of WCF practices. Sakrak-Ekin and Balçıkanlı's study investigates EFL instructors' perspectives on WCF and their alignment with classroom practices. The findings indicate that instructors prioritize overcoming students' errors through feedback and perceive their current WCF procedures as conducive to student improvement.

In conclusion, these studies collectively emphasize the importance of understanding teachers' epistemological beliefs in shaping WCF practices in ELT contexts. Recognizing the diversity of beliefs and their impact on instructional decisions can inform professional development initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of WCF implementation. Further research in this area is warranted to explore the intersection of teachers' beliefs, instructional practices, and student outcomes in greater depth.

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