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Written Corrective Feedback on Intermediate EFL Learners' Formulaic Errors: The Impact of a Teacher Awareness-Raising Program

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Written corrective feedback has been extensively investigated with regard to its effectiveness, comparison of its different types, and perceptions about its effectiveness. However, few studies have addressed the types of errors receiving Corrective Feedback (CF) and still, much fewer have focused on formulaic errors as targets of CF. Thus, the current study compared formulaic and non-formulaic errors as targets of CF in learner writing. In addition, it examined the CF types provided for these errors. Finally, it sought the effect of a teacher awareness-raising program on teachers' attention to formulaic versus non-formulaic errors and on the CF types used to correct these errors. To achieve these purposes, eight English language teachers from four language institutes were selected through convenience sampling. First, during two sessions, the teachers asked the learners to write two compositions on two writing topics. Next, an awareness-raising program for teachers was run to raise the teacher's awareness level about formulaic and non-formulaic errors and CF types for correcting such errors. Then, the learners were asked to write two other compositions each in one session. The results showed that before the treatment, non-formulaic errors received considerably more CF than formulaic errors and that the percentage of direct CF was more than other CF types. In addition, the study showed that the awareness-raising program for teachers influenced their attention to formulaic errors. The findings of this study indicate that teachers need awareness-raising about the importance of formulaic sequences and the need to correct formulaic errors whenever possible.

Keywords: Corrective Feedback, Formulaic Errors, Teacher-Awareness Raising, Written Corrective Feedback.

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1. Introduction

Error correction is a topic that both novice and experienced teachers are concerned with. As Vásquez and Harvey (2010) stated, teachers often keep their minds busy on how to correct learners' errors to provide the most effective ways of responding to these errors. Corrective feedback (CF) research discusses the attitudes, views, opinions, or stances that learners and academics hold about the utility of CF in second language (L2) learning and teaching, the efficacy of CF in language teaching and learning, and the way it ought to be practiced within the classroom. This branch of research has focused on CF in relation to various kinds of errors, including lexical, grammatical, and phonological ones. However, as Shirkhani and Tajeddin (2017) have shown, little attention has been given to pragmatic errors, including formulaic ones. Formulaic sequences (FSs) play a significant role in increasing fluency in L2 learners' writing and speaking. Due to the importance of these sequences in L2 development, they should get attention on the part of teachers, specifically in noticing learner errors and giving suitable feedback. Thus, the present study examined the extent to which language teachers are sensitive to formulaic errors and how they provide CF to such errors. In addition, considering the importance of teacher training, the effect of a teacher awareness-raising program on teachers' attention to formulaic errors was studied.

2. Literature Review

Helping English as a foreign language (EFL) learners develop their L2 writing as one of the main language skills has been the concern of many research studies. Various issues have been studied concerning the practice of L2 writing instruction. One of these issues has always been the role of CF in L2 writing progress. As Hyland and Hyland (2006) stated, feedback is an essential aspect of L2 writing programs which is helpful for teachers across the world and is a mediator to affect L2 learners' writing ability. According to Hyland and Hyland, CF is helpful to learners in both encouraging them and helping them learn better. Reinders and Mohebbi (2018) revealed that written corrective feedback (WCF) has played a significant role in improving L2, and that it is an essential compound of L2 writing instruction around the world.

2.1. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF)

CF given on learner writings can be either oral or written. However, Hyland and Hyland, referring to a number of studies, have shown that learners prefer WCF to oral CF. According to Ellis (2009), WCF is either direct or indirect. Many researchers (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Maleki & Eslami, 2013; Nguyen et al, 2015) have examined the effects of different types of WCF on L2 writing. The study by Bitchener and Knoch (2010) with secondary

school learners in Dutch multilingual classrooms and advanced EFL learners has reported positive short-term effects for both direct and indirect feedback but has shown more long-term effects for direct error correction than indirect WCF. Maleki and Eslami (2013) investigated the impact of direct, indirect, or no WCF on 90 intermediate Iranian EFL students in three groups. The results of the research indicated positive impacts for WCF over no feedback and outperformance of the indirect feedback group on the delayed post-test suggesting the lasting effect of indirect WCF over direct feedback. Nguyen et al. (2015) compared the effects of direct and meta-pragmatic WCF on learners' recognition and production abilities in writing request emails. The results indicated that both types of WCF have significant effects on students' email writing. The comparison of the two experimental groups showed that the metapragmatic feedback group outperformed the direct feedback group in the recognition task although in the production task, the performance of the two groups was not statistically significant. Meihami et al. (2018) investigated the role of CF giving in portfolio-based writing instruction on intermediate L2 learners' writing ability. The results of the pre-test/post-test design research indicated the significant contribution of CF to learners' overall and componential writing ability. Abbaspour et al. (2021) explored the impact of scaffolded CF on the writing ability of L2 learners in a writing course at the university level. The findings indicated the significant contribution of CF to learners' four aspects of writing skill (i.e., fluency, accuracy, and grammatical complexity, and lexical complexity). Hashemian and Farhang-Ju (2022) compared the effects of two asynchronous compute-mediated CF types, namely direct and metalinguistic feedback, on upper-intermediate EFL learners' writing and willingness to write. The results indicated equally significant positive effects for both types of CF on learners' writing ability. It was also found that both CF types had a positive impact on L2 learners' willingness to write.

2.2. The Significance of Formulaic Sequences (FSs)

CF has been studied in relation to various error types in L2 learners' writings. However, some aspects of writing have been to a large extent ignored. One aspect of L2 writing not getting enough feedback from teachers is knowledge of FSs. FSs have a major role in enabling learners to write better. However, unfortunately, these sequences have not received enough attention in teaching practice, specifically in receiving teacher CF.

FSs are defined as "any sequence of two or more words that are perceived to be more constrained than usual in their co-occurrence" (Hudson & Wiktorsson, 2009, p. 81). They include idioms, collocations, discourse markers, lexical bundles, and compounds. Kuiper (2004) supported the

significant role of FSs in enhancing learner fluency. According to Foster (2013), many studies have shown that about one-half of the English language is made up of formulaic language. Foster found out that about 32 percent of unplanned English native-speaker utterances include formulaic language. According to Hatami (2015), FSs are as important as individual words because more than half of spoken and written English discourse is constituted by FSs. They enable individuals to use the language for social purposes with less cognitive processing required (Wray, 2017). FSs make L2 learners' production fluent and communicative. Thus, if learners want to appear proficient and native-like, they must acquire FSs because though language has a formulaic nature (Gholami, 2022a), as Rott (2009) stated, most language learners are not aware of this characteristic of language. Nesselhauf (2005) studied high-proficiency L2 learners' use of collocations in writing. He found that half of learners' written collocations were erroneous. Nesselhauf concluded that learners dealt with difficulties in using FSs and that if they could use formulaic language, their production would be more natural. Since acquiring FSs is difficult for L2 learners, they should be taught in the classroom and some studies (e.g., Webb et al., 2013) have shown positive effects on the instruction of FSs.

2.3. Corrective Feedback (CF) to Formulaic Errors

An aspect of teaching L2 writing is providing feedback to learners, especially to help them notice and correct their errors. The significant role of FSs in successful native-like communication and the importance of feedback in improving learning calls for attention to formulaic errors and thus provides CF to such errors. The review of the literature shows that a few studies have been done in this regard and that most of them (e.g., Gholami, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2022a, 2022b; Gholami & Gholami, 2018; Gholami et al., 2017; Shirkhani & Tajeddin, 2017) are on CF provided in response to errors in oral communication. Shirkhani and Tajeddin (2017), comparing teachers' perceptions and instructional practices in dealing with pragmatic errors, reported that though teachers had positive attitudes toward providing CF to pragmatic errors, they acted differently in their classes. The result indicated that only one percent of the errors that their CF targeted were pragmatic errors. Gholami et al. (2017) compared formulaic and non-formulaic language as targets of focus on form (FonF) in adult EFL classes. Analyzing 1102 focus on form episodes (FFE) in 30 hours of classroom talk, they found that FonF was directed more at non-formulaic language (62%) than FSs (38%). Similar findings were found by Gholami and Gholami (2018) where they compared FSs and non-formulaic ones as foci of FonF in 36 hours of audio-recorded interactions in three EFL classes. They noticed that FonF targeted FSs in 33 percent of the episodes while 67 percent of the FFEs addressed non-formulaic

language. Gholami (2022a) found that most FonF episodes provided to learners were on non-formulaic forms (61%), that teachers had the tendency to draw learners' attention to non-formulaic language (85%), and that most of the treatment of errors by teachers addressed non-formulaic forms (66%). However, learners tended to initiate more FFEs focused on FSs (82%) in comparison with those targeting non-formulaic forms (18%). Gholami (2021b, 2021c) compared the number of formulaic and non-formulaic errors occurring during communicative activities in three classrooms, the amount of feedback provided to any of these two error types, and the uptake level of correction for any error type. The results indicated that while the number of formulaic errors was more than non-formulaic ones, more CF was provided to non-formulaic errors than formulaic ones and that the amount of uptake was more for FSs. The findings related to the number of errors and amount of feedback in the two studies have been the same as those by Gholami (2021a).

Comparing teacher-initiated and learner-initiated FFEs, Gholami (2022a) found that while more teacher-initiated episodes were non-formulaic, 85 percent of the FFEs initiated by learners included formulaic forms. To interpret this finding, Gholami referred to Wray's (2019) reasoning that FSs give learners the required tools to instantly fulfill their linguistic needs in communication. On the other hand, some studies (e.g., Gholami, 2021b, 2021c) have shown more uptake for formulaic errors than for non-formulaic language. This calls for teachers' awareness of the role of providing CF to formulaic errors. Teacher training can be influential in raising teachers' awareness as well as increasing their knowledge and skills in CF provision to FSs. Some previous studies (e.g., Glaser, 2018; Ishihara, 2011; Karatepe & Civelek, 2021; Ngai & Januch, 2018; Rose, 1997; Shirkhani & Tajeddin, 2017; Taguchi, 2011) have stressed the need for teacher training about pragmatics awareness and instruction.

Mostly as L2 learners make errors in the classroom, they receive CF. Learner errors might be formulaic or non-formulaic and teachers decide whether to provide CF or withhold and which CF types to use when deciding to provide CF. Since research has shown that most of the CF by teachers address non-formulaic errors, there is a need for some teacher training aiming at increasing teachers' CF provision to formulaic errors. This attempt would be in line with a call for a balance in teachers' CF provision to non-formulaic and formulaic errors by Gholami (2021a). Therefore, the main objective of this study was to see the effect of teacher awareness-raising on teachers' treatment of formulaic errors in addition to two other objectives, including a comparison of formulaic and nonformulaic errors receiving feedback from teachers and a description of the types of CF provided to such errors. To achieve the objectives of the study, the following three questions were posed:

- 1) What types of errors (formulaic or non-formulaic) in learner writings do teachers in intermediate EFL classes correct the most?
- 2) What types of WCF do teachers in intermediate EFL classes use the most to correct errors in learner writings?
- 3) Does an awareness-raising program for teachers influence their CF provision to formulaic errors?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Eight female EFL teachers from four private institutes in Khorram Abad, Lorestan were selected through convenience sampling to participate in the study. Six of the teachers held a BA degree in English language literature, and two of them had MA degrees in teaching EFL. All of them had more than seven years of teaching experience. None of them had the experience of living or language teaching in English-speaking countries. Their learners in the classes under study were 52 EFL learners at the intermediate level aged from 12 to 18. The official language of the teachers and the learners was Persian but they all talked in Lori as their mother tongue.

3.2. Materials and Instruments

The materials and instruments used for data collection in this study included four series of learners' corrected writings and a checklist used for data codification. Writings on four topics were written by each of the participating learners and corrected by their teachers. Two of the topics were given to the learners and corrected by the teachers before the teacher awareness-raising program and two others were given after the program. Before the treatment, the teachers did not know about the focus of the study. They were just asked to have the learners write in two successive sessions two paragraphs on the topics introduced to them, to correct them, and then to give the corrected papers to the second researcher. Similarly, after the treatment, two series of corrected writings on two other topics were collected. However, this time as a result of attending the teacher training program, the teachers were aware of the purpose of the study which was to draw attention to formulaic errors and how to correct them. The four writings were then scrutinized for types of errors corrected by the teachers and CF types used by them. A checklist prepared by the authors for the purpose of this study was used for coding the data collected from the writings. The checklist specified CF types and error types in each of the writings by any of the teachers and their learners. Based on Ellis's (2009) typology of WCF, four CF types had been specified in the checklist which included direct CF, indirect CF, metalinguistic CF, and reformulations. According to Ellis, direct CF refers to the correct form that the teacher gives

in response to a learner error while indirect CF is given when the teacher helps the learners to notice that they have made an error without telling them what the correct form is. Ellis defined metalinguistic CF as the metalinguistic clue that the teacher gives the learners so that they learn about the nature of the error. Finally, reformulation refers to when the teacher restates what the learner has written in order to make the form better without changing the meaning. The error types included in the checklist were errors in vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and formulaic sequences. The first three error types were considered non-formulaic errors. Formulaic errors refer to all incorrect uses of formulaic sequences in learners' writings.

3.3. Procedure

This study was carried out in two phases: a descriptive phase and a quasi-experimental one. It was carried out during summer 2022 over five weeks with eight teachers who had on the whole 52 learners in the classes under investigation. The descriptive phase examined the current pattern of giving WCF to learners' writings, specifically focusing on whether formulaic errors received enough attention. In this phase, eight teachers were selected from four language institutes in Khorram Abad based on their willingness to cooperate in the study. The data collection for this phase was done during a week in two class sessions. These teachers gave two topics to their 52 learners in two different sessions and asked them to write two paragraphs (each at least 70 words) on the topics. To ensure that the teachers' correction of the writings was not influenced by the purpose of the study, no information about the focus of the study was given to them at this stage. The teachers corrected the learners' writings and were then asked to give the second researcher the corrected writings. Then the writings were analyzed and the types of errors and types of CF used to correct the errors were coded based on the checklist described in Section 3.2. Finally, frequencies and percentages were calculated to describe the types of errors that had been corrected by the teachers and the types of CF they had used in giving feedback to the learners.

The pretest-posttest quasi-experimental phase of the study was concerned with the effect of a teacher awareness-raising program on teachers' noticing of formulaic errors and ways of correcting them. The data gathered in the first phase of the study were used as pre-treatment data for the second phase. Next, the teachers received some training on the importance of FSs and providing CF to formulaic errors in six online sessions during three weeks. During the treatment, the second researcher trained the participating teachers about FSs (including the definition and types of FSs), the importance of FSs, the role of CF in enhancing learners' successful use of FSs, and ways of correcting formulaic errors. After this training, they were asked to have their learners write two other paragraphs on two other topics and correct them. The

corrected writings were then received and analyzed in the same way they had been in the first phase.

3.4. Data Analysis

After coding the data by completing the prepared checklist for data from both phases of the study, the data were fed into SPSS. For the first two questions which were concerned with types of errors corrected and types of CF given to learners, frequencies and percentages were calculated using the data from the first phase. For the third question, which focused on the effect of the teacher awareness-raising program, Kruskal Wallis was used to check whether there was a significant difference between pre-treatment and post-treatment data. After observing significant differences, three Mann-Whitney tests were carried out as post-hoc tests to locate the differences.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

Analysis of data was done to answer the three questions of the study. For the first two questions addressing error types and CF types, descriptive statistics were run and for the third one, a comparison of pre-treatment and post-treatment data was required to check the effectiveness of the teacher awareness-raising program on the teachers' CF provision to formulaic errors. For this purpose, Kruskal-Wallis and three Man-Whitney tests were run.

4.1.1. Types of Errors Corrected by EFL Teachers

To answer the first question which addressed the types of errors in learners' writings which were corrected by the participating teachers, descriptive statistics was run for error types in the data gathered in the first phase of the study. The results are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Types of Errors Corrected by EFL Teachers

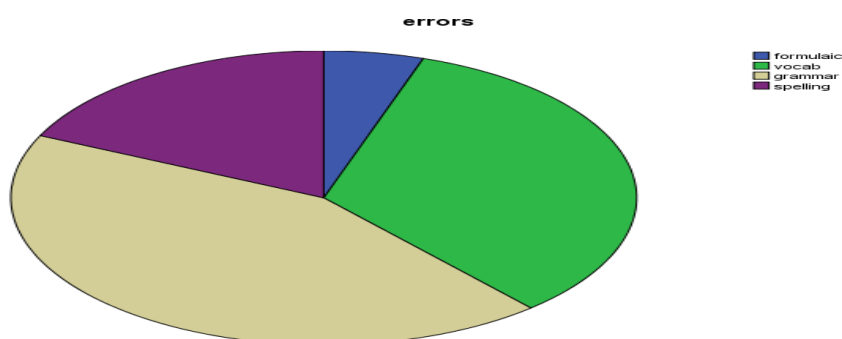
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Formulaic	30	5.2	5.2	5.2
Vocabulary	194	33.3	33.3	38.5
Grammar	253	43.5	43.5	82.2
Spelling	105	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total	582	100.0	100.0	

The purpose of this part was to compare the amount of attention given to formulaic errors and that given to non-formulaic errors. As the results in

Table 1 show, the lowest percentage of errors being corrected was that of formulaic errors. The findings indicated that of 582 errors being corrected in the two writings of all the 52 participating learners, only 30 were formulaic. This number constitutes only 5.2 percent of all the corrected errors. This incomparable percentage is more clearly represented in Graph 1. Considering the frequency with which any of the three non-formulaic error types are corrected, the highest frequency belongs to grammatical errors which were 253 cases (43.5%). The next was vocabulary with a frequency of 194 (33.3%) and the last error type was spelling with 105 cases which constituted 18 percent of all the corrected errors.

Graph 1

The Pie Chart for Types of Errors Corrected by EFL Teachers



As indicated in Graph 1, formulaic errors receiving CF by EFL teachers were much fewer than any other error types and incomparable with non-formulaic errors on the whole.

4.1.2. Types of WCF Provided by EFL Teachers

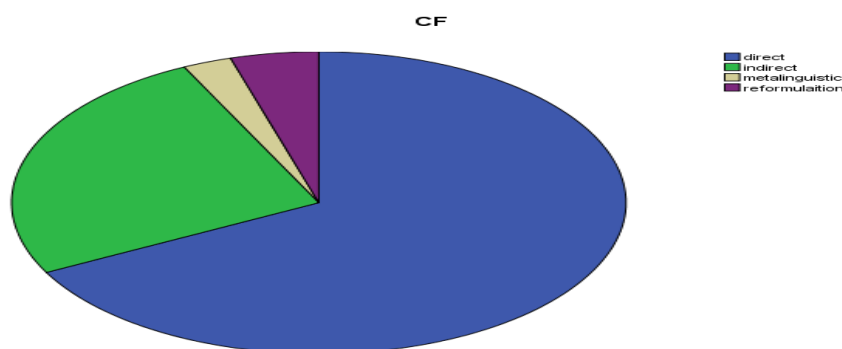
The focus of the second question was the types of CF the participating teachers used for correcting their learners' writings. Similar to the first question, descriptive statistics were used to answer this question.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Types of CF Used by EFL Teachers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
direct	392	67.4	67.4	67.4
indirect	148	25.4	25.4	92.8
metalinguistic	15	2.6	2.6	95.4
reformulation	27	4.6	4.6	100.0
Total	582	100.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 2, of the four CF types used by the teachers, direct CF had the highest frequency, that is, 392 (67.4%), and metalinguistic feedback had the lowest frequency which was 15 (2.6%). Indirect CF with a frequency of 148 (25.4%) was the second most frequently used corrective strategy after direct CF and the third strategy in order of frequency was reformulation which was used in 27 (4.6%) cases. Graph 2 presents the results of this section.

Graph 2
The Pie Chart for Types of CF Used by EFL Teachers



As the pie chart illustrates, the largest proportion of CF given was direct CF and the smallest parts of the chart were metalinguistic feedback and reformulation.

4.1.3. The Effect of the Awareness-raising Program on Teachers' Correction of Formulaic Errors

The last question was whether a teacher awareness-raising program could significantly influence EFL teachers' attention to formulaic errors while correcting learner writings. First, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to check the significance of differences in frequencies of each of the error types before and after the treatment. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3*Test Statistics for Types of Errors Corrected by EFL Teachers*

	Error. pre	Error. post
Chi-Square	83.137	65.133
df	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000
a. Kruskal Wallis Test		
b. Grouping Variable: Error Type		

The results, as presented in Table 3, indicated a significant difference in the frequencies of the types of errors being corrected before and after the treatment ($p = .000$). Next, in order to locate the differences, three Mann-Whitney Tests were run between the existing pairs to see how attention to formulaic errors had significantly changed in relation to the other error types (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, and spelling). The first Mann-Whitney Test was used to compare the changes in frequencies of formulaic errors and errors of vocabulary. The results are presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4*Mann-Whitney Test for Changes in Frequencies of Formulaic and Vocabulary Error Types*

	Error Type	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Error. pre	formulaic	50	30.41	1520.50
	vocab	50	70.59	3529.50
	Total	100		
Error. post	formulaic	50	36.26	1813.00
	vocab	50	64.74	3237.00
	Total	100		

Table 5*Test Statistics^a for Formulaic and Vocabulary Error Types*

	Error. pre	Error. post
Mann-Whitney U	245.500	538.000
Wilcoxon W	1520.500	1813.000
Z	-7.127	-5.079
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
a. Grouping Variable: Error Type		

In interpreting the results of the Mann-Whitney tests, the new level of significance (i.e., p-value) was calculated by dividing 0.05 by 4 (which was the number of error type groups). Hence, the results were interpreted at a 0.0125 level of significance. According to Table 5, there was a significant difference between the changes in frequencies of formulaic errors and those of vocabulary errors ($\text{sig} = .000 < 0.0125$). As Table 4 indicates, the mean rank of formulaic

errors receiving CF increased from 30.41 to 36.26 while the mean rank for vocabulary errors decreased from 70.59 to 64.74. The results, thus, show that the treatment was effective in drawing teachers' attention from vocabulary to formulaic errors.

The next, Mann-Whitney Test compared the changes in frequencies of formulaic errors with those of grammatical errors. Table 6 and Table 7 show the results.

Table 6

Mann-Whitney Test for Changes in Frequencies of Formulaic and Grammar Error Types

	Error Type	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Error. pre	formulaic	50	28.80	1440.00
	grammar	50	72.20	3610.00
	Total	100		
Error. post	formulaic	50	29.49	1474.50
	grammar	50	71.51	3575.50
	Total	100		

Table 7

Test Statistics for Formulaic and Grammar Error Types

	Error. pre	Error. post
Mann-Whitney U	165.000	199.500
Wilcoxon W	1440.000	1474.500
Z	-7.660	-7.372
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Error Type

The results of the Mann-Whitney Test (Table 7) showed that there was a significant difference between changes in attention to formulaic errors and grammar errors ($\text{sig} = .000 < 0.0125$). As shown in Table 6, the mean rank of formulaic in pretest (28.88) increased in the post-treatment (29.49), while the mean rank of grammar declined from 72.20 in pre-treatment to 71.51 in post-treatment. Hence, as a result of the treatment, attention to formulaic errors increased concerning errors of grammar.

The final analysis compared the changes in formulaic errors in relation to spelling errors. The results of the related errors Mann-Whitney Test are shown in Table 8 and Table 9.

Table 8*Mann-Whitney Test for Changes in Frequencies of Formulaic and Spelling Error Types*

	Error. Type	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Error. pre	formulaic	50	38.56	1928.00
	spelling	50	62.44	3122.00
	Total	100		
Error. post	formulaic	50	42.68	2134.00
	spelling	50	58.32	2916.00
	Total	100		

Table 9*Test Statistics^a for Formulaic and Spelling Error Types*

	Error. pre	Error. post
Mann-Whitney U	653.000	859.000
Wilcoxon W	1928.000	2134.000
Z	-4.364	-2.839
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.005

a. Grouping Variable: Error Type

As can be seen in Table 9, there was a statistically significant difference between the changes in the post-treatment for formulaic errors concerning errors of spelling ($\text{sig} = 0.005 > 0.0125$). As indicated in Table 10, while the rank for formulaic errors increased from 38.56 to 42.68, the mean rank for errors of spelling decreased from 62.44 to 58.32. Therefore, the results are indicative of the positive effect of the treatment on having the teachers notice formulaic errors more with spelling errors.

To sum up, the results of the second phase of the study showed that the teacher awareness-raising program could positively impact teachers' attention to formulaic errors in comparison with any of the three linguistic error types under study (i.e., errors of vocabulary, grammar, and spelling).

4.2. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate EFL teachers' attention to formulaic errors in learner writings and how the errors were corrected. In addition, it examined the effect of teacher awareness-raising on teachers' provision of CF to formulaic errors. The first two questions of the study were examined in the descriptive phase of the study. Regarding the types of errors (i.e., formulaic vs. non-formulaic errors) corrected by teachers, the results revealed that only around five percent of the errors receiving CF were formulaic errors while

about 95 percent of the CFs addressed the linguistic errors, that is, grammar (43.5%), vocabulary (33.3%), and spelling (18%). The results, therefore, indicate that formulaic errors are neglected in correcting learner writings. This is despite the high importance that various studies in the literature (e.g., Foster, 2013; Hatami, 2015; Kuiper, 2004; Webb et al., 2013) have given to FSs in L2 learner production. Some authors (e.g., Kim, 2011) are concerned with the shortcomings of some automatic writing evaluation tools, such as Criterion, in that they cannot correct formulaic errors while studies with humans show that in this regard human teachers do not perform better than computer tools. As Wray (2019) mentioned, learners' unawareness of the formulaic characteristic of language leads them to produce grammatically correct utterances that are not normally used in real contexts of language use. This means that higher L2 proficiency does not necessarily lead to better and more effective use of FSs. Thus, even highly proficient learners' production might be far less natural and real. The results, therefore, call for the instruction of FSs and making learners aware and knowledgeable about the function of FSs and how they can be employed to enhance their production.

The results of this section of the study showing inattention to formulaic errors are in line with the findings by Shirkhani and Tajeddin (2017) who showed that pragmatic errors constituted just one percent of all the 1898 errors corrected by the 40 teachers under study. The findings, furthermore, confirm those reported by Gholami and Gholami (2018), Gholami (2021b, 2021c), and Gholami (2022a, 2022b). Gholami and Gholami (2018) and Gholami (2022a, 2022b) showed that a noticeable percentage of FFEs addressing FSs led to successful uptake and that this percentage was much higher than that for FFEs on non-formulaic sequences. Similarly, Gholami (2021b, 2021c) found that although more CF was given to non-formulaic sequences than to FSs, there was more uptake for CF targeting FSs than non-formulaic ones. Gholami (2022a) believed that this might show that learners learn to attend to formulaic forms more because they are more communicative, noticeable, and salient.

The results related to the second question revealed that direct CF constituted around two-thirds of all the CFs provided by the participating teachers, that the second most frequently used CF type was indirect feedback, and that reformulations and metalinguistic feedback were the least frequently provided types of CF with metalinguistic feedback being used only in 2.6 percent of the cases. Many research studies on CF (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2010; Sheen et al., 2009) have suggested differential effects for different types of CF. Although some studies (e.g., Ajabshir, 2014; Koike & Pearson, 2005)

have shown direct CF to be more effective than indirect CF in pragmatic development, the results of this part of the study are not rewarding since many studies (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2017; Fukuya & Zhang, 2002; Holden & Sykes, 2013; Nguyen et al., 2015; Nipaspong & Chinokul, 2010; Panova & Lyster, 2002) have shown that indirect CF types are more effective than direct CF in pragmatic development. The results of the second part of the study are congruent with those found by Shirkhani and Tajeddin (2017). They reported that all the pragmatic errors in their study were corrected using explicit CF although the participating teachers believed that implicit CF was more effective and the use of explicit feedback was justified only when implicit feedback was not effective. In addition, the results regarding the low frequency with which metalinguistic feedback was provided to formulaic errors in the present study are in line with Reynolds and Teng's (2021) finding that teachers' use of direct and indirect CF was significantly higher than metalinguistic feedback in correcting learners' collocation errors.

Regarding the answer to the third question as answered in the quasi-experimental phase of the study, it was found that the awareness-raising program for teachers could significantly influence the teachers' practice of pragmatic CF in response to formulaic errors. This finding implies the need for teacher education programs on pragmatic CF. The significance of giving credit to teacher education has been stressed in the literature. Hosseiny (2014), for instance, stated that it was logical to assign some time to training teachers. According to Kennedy (2016), the idea that professional development can foster improvement in teaching is widely accepted. Sparks and Hirsh (2000), working on a national plan for improving teacher professional development, stressed that improving the quality of teacher development was the most effective way to enhance learner achievement and emphasized that improving the quality of education could happen only if the change happened in the way in which teachers taught and learners learned. Regarding teacher training on CF, Reinders, and Mohebbi (2018) stated that if teachers' skill level in WCF practice and teaching writing increased, they would become more professional.

Regarding pragmatic CF, the good point is that studies (e.g., Shirkhani & Tajeddin, 2017; Vásquez & Sharpless, 2009; Vellenga, 2011) have reported that language teachers have high attitudes toward teacher training programs on pragmatic CF. This shows that teachers are aware of their need and this awareness enhances their willingness to attend teacher training programs which, in turn, influences the effectiveness of such training. Teacher training on pragmatic CF, and specifically on formulaic error correction, can aim at

increasing teachers' knowledge of FSs, raising their awareness about FSs and the importance of CF on formulaic errors, and familiarizing them with different factors impacting the efficacy of feedback. Timing of CF (i.e., immediate vs. delayed CF) is a determining factor in CF effectiveness which teacher training programs can address. For example, Stengers and Boers (2015) showed that the CF that students received after exercises on collocations was not significantly effective in their learning of the collocations. Another important factor is the how of giving CF. Considering the emphasis in the literature on the effectiveness of indirect CF in correcting pragmatic errors, teachers need to devise more creative ways of providing indirect CF to learners' pragmatic errors. For instance, Holden and Sykes' (2013) and Sykes and Dubreil (2019) suggest using digital games to give indirect feedback to pragmatic errors. Last but more important is the competency of the teacher in recognizing formulaic errors and identifying them in learner production. As mentioned by Gholami (2022a), one possible reason for teachers more attention to non-formulaic errors than formulaic forms in their FonF practice was their low formulaic competence.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The current study showed that FSs were not noticed by teachers while correcting their learner writings. In addition, the study indicated that direct CF was used more than all the other WCF types in response to learners' written errors. The final and most important finding of this study was that teacher training aimed at raising teachers' awareness about what FSs are, how important they are in fluent writing, and how helpful CF can be in developing learners' writing could significantly impact teachers' treatment of formulaic errors. The study, thus, suggests that despite the status quo of treating formulaic errors, hopefully, teacher development programs can be beneficial in changing teachers' treatment of these errors. Teacher development which is viewed as teacher learning instead of others getting teachers to change, should focus on raising awareness about the importance of FSs and correcting formulaic errors. Drawing teachers' attention to studies that shed light on the function of FSs in improving the quality of learner production can be part of this awareness-raising program. Moreover, the results of the current study and similar ones can be used to warn teachers about the ignorance of some important aspects of language, such as FSs, in teachers' classroom practice, including CF provision.

Another aspect of teacher education related to the findings of the study is the way of correcting formulaic errors. On the one hand, various studies have

emphasized the priority of indirect over direct CF, and, on the other hand, the results of studies like the current one show that in practice teachers mostly use direct CF. Therefore, teacher training aimed at raising teachers' awareness regarding which CF types to use and about the discrepancies between research findings and teachers' classroom practice can be illuminating. Considering the importance of pragmatic competence, and in particular FSs, training teachers about the significance of FSs and helping learners with using them can be rewarding.

The current study has some shortcomings which should be acknowledged and used to make some suggestions for further research in the same area. First, the current study was carried out with only eight teachers and two sessions of each teacher's classes. Thus, future studies with larger numbers of participating teachers are encouraged. Second, the setting of this study was bound to language institutes; therefore, more studies are recommended to be carried out in other educational contexts and to compare results in different contexts. Third, the teacher training program was a short-term program while long-term training programs for teachers might give us better insights. Fourth, due to the small number of participating teachers, teacher individual factors, including gender, age, and educational background were not taken into account in interpreting the results. Therefore, other studies with larger samples are suggested to examine the probable moderating effects of such variables. Fifth, this study focused on comparing formulaic and nonformulaic errors being corrected and the CF types employed for correcting them. Other studies can investigate the extent to which uptake of CF, specifically on FSs, occurs. Sixth, since learner attitudes and preferences can influence the rate of uptake, future studies can examine these variables and how they might influence the uptake of CF on formulaic errors. Finally, this study looked into the change in teacher behavior; however, as teacher decisions are dependent on their thoughts, beliefs, and cognition (Borg, 2011), further studies are welcomed to examine the change in teacher cognition regarding CF on FSs after teachers' attending awareness-raising programs.

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