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SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK FOR GRAMMAR ACCURACY: ESL NOVICE TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

While corrective feedback (CF) is widely recognised as pivotal to language learning, its implementation in online classrooms remains under-explored. This study investigates Malaysian novice ESL teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices concerning synchronous and asynchronous CF. Thirty teachers had completed a 28-item, closed-ended questionnaire. Results show a clear preference for asynchronous CF as it gives students more time to reflect and revise. Overall, ACF was more strongly endorsed than SCF (highest ACF mean = 4.53 vs highest SCF mean = 4.27). Yet, participants most frequently provided synchronous oral feedback during live lessons (70% reported using oral corrections during activities often), which exposed a belief–practice mismatch. These findings highlight the need for targeted digital-feedback training that helps early-career teachers align their pedagogical convictions with their online classroom behaviours.

1. Introduction

Form-focused instruction (FFI) remains a cornerstone of ESL pedagogy, directing students' attention to specific linguistic forms within communicative tasks (Ellis, 2016). Recent syntheses confirm that integrating FFI into meaning-oriented interaction supports durable L2 development (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2021). Within FFI, corrective feedback (CF) is pivotal for shaping students' evolving interlanguage. A state-of-the-art meta-analysis covering 56 experiments reports a robust

overall benefit for CF and identifies timing as a key moderator (Li, 2022). While teachers vary the type and explicitness of their feedback between face-to-face and virtual classrooms, their beliefs and actual practices remain only moderately aligned (Asltaleb & Alavinia, 2024). Likewise, students value the social presence afforded by asynchronous video feedback but continue to seek real-time clarification through chat or audio (Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024).

In the ESL field, synchronous CF typically occurs during live online classes via platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Microsoft Teams. Teachers may correct learners orally, use chat features for written corrections, or employ shared documents for collaborative editing. Asynchronous CF, in contrast, may involve providing written annotations on assignments submitted through learning management systems, sending audio or video messages with corrections, or using screen casting tools to highlight and explain errors in learners' work.

Research into novice teachers' beliefs and practices is crucial for understanding the future trajectory of ESL pedagogy. In Malaysia, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to online instruction, requiring pre-service and novice ESL teachers to master both synchronous and asynchronous teaching modes. As recent graduates of teacher education programmes, novice teachers' approaches often reflect contemporary trends in TESOL methodology and digital pedagogy. However, their limited classroom experience can make them more susceptible to contextual pressures and less confident in adapting their beliefs to real-time instructional demands (Farrell, 2023). This rapid transition to technology-mediated environments has raised important questions about how novice teachers conceptualise and operationalise corrective feedback (CF) in virtual settings. While they may have received theoretical training on CF during their studies, their practical application in online contexts may differ due to factors such as technological constraints, students' varying digital literacy levels, and institutional expectations.

Although a growing body of work now documents CF effectiveness across a range of tasks and delivery modes (Cao, 2024; Li & Ou, 2025), far less is known about teachers' beliefs and classroom enactment of CF in online settings, particularly among novice teachers. Most existing studies focus either on experienced teachers in well-resourced contexts or on student perceptions of CF. Studies specifically investigating the alignment between novice teachers' beliefs and practices in synchronous versus asynchronous feedback remain scarce. Moreover, research in the Malaysian ESL context is limited, despite the country's multilingual environment and the increasing integration of technology in language teaching.

2. Literature Review

The Timing of Corrective Feedback (CF)

CF raises students' awareness of error and supports the development of linguistic accuracy within instructed second-language learning (Ellis, 2009; Nassaji & Kartchava, 2021). However, debates persist about when CF should be delivered. Classic work distinguishes feedback given during task performance and after task completion (Lightbown & Spada, 1990). More recent studies further operationalise this contrast as immediate versus delayed CF (Fu & Li, 2020). A recent meta-analysis reported an overall benefit for CF and identified timing as a significant moderator with advantages for immediate CF in some meaning-focused activities (Li, 2022). Although laboratory and classroom studies favoured immediate CF for short-term gains (Fu & Li, 2020) others found no long-term difference between immediate and delayed conditions or highlighted contextual moderators such as anxiety and task demands (Cao, 2024; Rassaei, 2023).

In mobile-assisted settings, students often prefer post-task corrections delivered through messaging apps because these allow time to reflect and revise (Qiu & Lin, 2025). While acknowledging that delayed CF may better support consolidation and transfer, these mixed findings are compatible with a behaviourist rationale for immediate reinforcement (Skinner, 1954). Furthermore, learner autonomy can be enhanced via visuals when students engage with feedback at their own pace by promoting deeper cognitive processing (N. Haris et al., 2022). However, the absence of immediate clarification in delayed feedback may risk entrenching misconceptions if learners misinterpret the corrections.

Corrective Feedback in an Online-Mediated Environment

In fully or partly online instruction, CF can be delivered synchronously (during live sessions) or asynchronously (after task completion). The present study adopts the synchronous-versus-asynchronous terminology introduced by Shintani and Aubrey (2016) in their research on computer-mediated writing. Since 2019, technology-mediated CF research has expanded rapidly. Students report that synchronous written CF (e.g., comments or chat prompts in Google Docs during collaborative writing) is immediate and helpful, particularly for resolving local errors (Papin & Michaud, 2023). By contrast, asynchronous video or text feedback is valued for its social presence and opportunity for considered revision (Cunningham, 2019; Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024).

Comparative work also shows that direct synchronous CF can yield higher short-term accuracy on targeted forms, whereas delayed e-feedback may promote deeper noticing (Tatsanajamsuk & Saengboon, 2021). Still, the outcomes are not uniform. Synchronous feedback sometimes reduced fluency without yielding clear accuracy gains (Kim et al., 2020). Emerging research on automated written CF adds further options for delayed, trackable responses in online writing (Rahimi, Fathi & Zou, 2025). It complemented teacher-led feedback by providing consistent data-driven input that students can revisit at their convenience.

2.3 Teachers' Beliefs and Practices of Corrective Feedback (CF)

Borg's (2006) Framework of Teacher Cognition

Understanding what teachers do in the classroom and the reasons behind it remains central to second-language pedagogy (Deford, 1985). Teacher cognition encompasses what teachers know, believe and think about teaching and learning (Borg, 2003). Borg's detailed framework shows how prior schooling, professional coursework and contextual factors interact to shape classroom practice (Burns, Freeman, & Edwards, 2015). Although the model was not designed specifically for ESL, subsequent reviews confirm its relevance to language-teacher thinking (Nishino, 2012).

Building on this foundation, the present study adapts Borg's framework to foreground teachers' beliefs and practices related to synchronous (SCF) and asynchronous corrective feedback (ACF). Figure 1 illustrates the adapted model, which incorporates the modifications proposed by Nishino (2012) and adopts the CF terminology introduced by Shintani and Aubrey (2016).

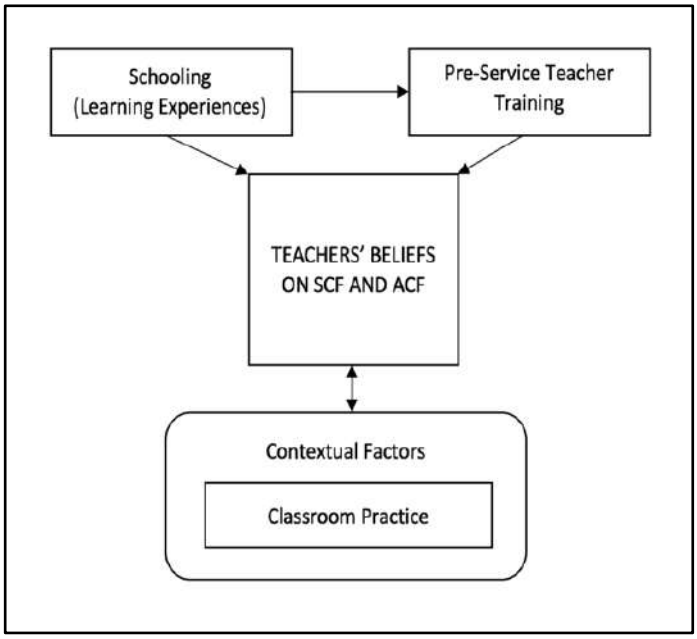

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework based on Borg (2006) & Nishino (2012)

In the adapted model, learning experiences cover teachers' personal and formal learning histories. Teacher Cognition is narrowed to beliefs about SCF and ACF, and professional coursework is relabelled pre-service teacher training to reflect the novice status of participants.

Teachers' Beliefs about Corrective Feedback

Recent studies continue to examine teachers' perceptions regarding the timing and manner of providing CF. Surveys across Asia and the Middle East show that many teachers still judge grammatical errors to merit feedback, especially in writing, but remain concerned about harming spoken fluency with constant on-the-spot correction (Uludağ, 2024; Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2024). Teachers' preferences also vary with proficiency level and institutional culture. For instance, Zhang, Cao and Zheng (2022) reported that secondary-school teachers favour explicit ACF for low-proficiency students, whereas university instructors lean toward SCF integrated into discussion.

The beliefs of novice teachers appear to be adaptable. Longitudinal studies show that during the first two years of teaching, beliefs about CF evolve under the joint influence of prior learning memories and workplace mentoring (Rahimi & Zhang, 2022). Structured reflection activities in pre-service programmes further strengthen the view that feedback, whether synchronous or delayed, must balance accuracy with affective support (Grainger & Adams, 2021). Overall, recent literature depicts teachers as generally positive about CF, but still adjusting its scope and timing to balance learner effect with curricular goals.

Teachers' Practices and Preferences

Classroom observations continue to document a belief–practice gap. While teachers in several studies endorsed ACF as efficient and learner-centred, they still relied most on synchronous oral moves such as recasts, clarification requests, or brief metalinguistic prompts during live sessions (Asltaleb & Alavinia, 2024; Papin & Michaud, 2023). In technology-rich contexts, written comments

embedded in learning-management-system tools have become common. Nevertheless, there were frequency lags behind teachers stated intentions (Liu et al., 2024).

Research focused on fully online environments offers similar contrasts. Teachers reported that asynchronous video feedback promoted social presence and afforded detailed explanation (Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024). Synchronous text-chat or audio comments remain their default during breakout activities (Kim et al., 2020; Qiu & Lin, 2025). Professional-development interventions that model integrated SCF or ACF routines have begun to close this gap, but workload and platform limitations still constrain day-to-day practice (Cunningham, 2019; Rahimi, Fathi & Zou, 2025).

Therefore, three key gaps emerge which are: (i) mixed evidence on whether immediate or delayed CF best supports sustained grammatical accuracy in online settings (Li, 2022; Cao, 2024); (ii) limited insight into how novice teachers decide between synchronous and asynchronous feedback modes when digital tools are readily available (Papin & Michaud, 2023; Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024); and (iii) a persistent misalignment between teachers' stated preferences and the feedback they deliver, especially during the first years of teaching (Uludağ, 2024; Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2024). Addressing these gaps, the present study aims to investigate novice ESL teachers' orientations toward CF and how those orientations translate into practice in fully online classrooms. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are ESL novice teachers' beliefs on synchronous corrective feedback (SCF) for grammar accuracy?
2. What are ESL novice teachers' beliefs on asynchronous corrective feedback (ACF) for grammar accuracy?
3. What are ESL novice teachers' practices of corrective feedback (CF) in online ESL classes?

3. Methodology

Participants

Thirty Malaysian novice ESL teachers (22 female, 8 male) with fewer than two years of full-time teaching experience took part. All held a Bachelor of Education (TESL) from the same public university and had completed:

i. a two-week school orientation programme (classroom observation).
ii. simulated-teaching workshops
iii. a ten-week practicum in national secondary schools.

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling using Telegram groups and professional networks. Table 1 summarises participant characteristics.

Table 1
Participants' particulars (N = 30)

Characteristics	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	8	26.7
	Female	22	73.3
Current employer	Government institution	22	73.3
	Private institution	8	26.7
Student age level taught	Higher education	2	6.7
	Secondary	23	76.7
	Primary	5	16.7

Instrument Development

A 28-item closed-ended questionnaire was adapted from Ene and Upton (2018) and Cunningham (2019). Item wording was localised for Malaysian usage and online-classroom terminology.

In this study, SCF refers to real-time feedback during live lessons (e.g., oral corrections, chatroom prompts, and error highlighting in synchronised documents), whereas ACF refers to feedback that students can revisit after the task or lesson is completed (e.g., comment-box annotations and email responses).

Pilot Study

The draft instrument was piloted with five non-participating novice teachers. Cognitive-interview feedback led to minor wording adjustments such as replacing "video screencast" with "recorded video feedback". Cronbach's alpha for the pilot study was .82 which indicates satisfactory internal consistency. All items in the questionnaire were retained.

Procedure and Ethical Considerations

Participants received an information sheet and e-consent form. The questionnaire was hosted on Google Forms and remained open for two weeks in May 2025. The link was distributed via WhatsApp and Telegram groups. Response anonymity was assured, and IP addresses were not collected. All 30 invitees completed the survey which resulted in 100 % response rate.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire structure is as follows:

i. Section A (4 items): demographics
ii. Section B (10 items): beliefs about synchronous CF (SCF)
iii. Section C (10 items): beliefs about asynchronous CF (ACF)
iv. Section D (4 items): self-reported CF practices in online teaching

Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree/Never, 2 = Disagree/Rarely, 3 = Neutral/Sometimes, 4 = Agree/Often, 5 = Strongly Agree/Always).

Data Analysis

Survey data were exported to SPSS 28. Descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations were computed for every item. No inferential tests were run because the study is exploratory and the sample size is modest. Results appear in Tables 2 to 4.

4. Findings

Teachers' Beliefs about Synchronous Corrective Feedback (SCF)

Participants responded to ten statements on SCF for improving grammar accuracy in the online classroom. Results are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2
ESL Novice Teachers' Beliefs on SCF (N = 30)

Question	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	M	SD
Students need to notice their own and others' mistakes.	–	16.7	83.3	4.27	0.74
Teachers can provide useful SCF via online platforms.	6.7	16.7	76.6	4.03	0.89
Immediate interaction is beneficial for CF.	–	16.7	83.3	4.03	0.62
Synchronous CF is easier for students to understand.	3.3	16.7	80.0	4.00	0.74
Students will feel more self-conscious with SCF.	–	26.7	73.3	3.87	0.63
The timing of SCF is at the right speed.	3.3	53.3	43.3	3.53	0.78
Students have less opportunity to correct mistakes properly.	13.3	46.7	40.0	3.30	0.88
Teachers should respond immediately to mistakes.	23.3	43.3	33.4	3.23	1.07
Students can review mistakes after class.	43.3	40.0	16.6	2.67	0.96
Providing SCF is a waste of time.	83.3	16.7	–	1.73	0.74

Most teachers endorsed SCF positively. A large majority (83.3 %, M = 4.27) agreed that learners should notice peers' errors, and 76.6 % viewed synchronous, platform-based feedback as useful. Perceived benefits of real-time interaction were likewise high (83.3 %, M = 4.03). Four-fifths of respondents found SCF easier for students to understand (M = 4.00), echoing recent reports that live chat or audio prompts can clarify local grammar issues efficiently (Papin & Michaud, 2023).

Nearly three-quarters (73.3 %, M = 3.87) believed SCF heightens learner self-awareness, aligning with findings that immediate feedback can trigger greater self-monitoring in synchronous classes (Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024). Timing, however, remained contentious as over half of the teachers chose "neutral" when asked whether SCF was delivered at the "right speed" (M = 3.53). It suggested uncertainty about pacing which was a concern noted by Asltaleb and Alavinia (2024).

Finally, 43.3 % disagreed that students could revisit errors after class (M = 2.67), implying scepticism about the durability of spoken feedback once the live session ends. Consistent with earlier literature, most teachers rejected the notion that SCF is a waste of time (only 16.7 % neutral; 83.3 % disagree or strongly disagree). These results depicted novice teachers as generally positive about synchronous feedback. Yet, they recognised its potential to cause self-consciousness and time pressure.

Teachers' Beliefs about Asynchronous Corrective Feedback (ACF)

Participants evaluated ten statements on ACF for improving grammar accuracy in the online classroom. Descriptive statistics appear in Table 3.

Table 3
ESL Novice Teachers' Beliefs on ACF (N = 30)

Question	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	M	SD
Teachers can provide useful ACF via online platforms.	–	6.7	93.3	4.53	0.63
Teachers should allow time before responding to errors.	–	23.3	76.7	4.13	0.78
Students can review their mistakes after class.	3.3	20.0	76.6	4.07	0.83
Students have more opportunities to correct mistakes properly.	3.3	20.0	76.7	4.03	0.81
The timing of ACF is at the right speed.	3.3	23.3	73.4	3.87	0.73
ACF is easier for students to understand.	13.3	33.3	53.3	3.60	0.97
Delayed interaction is beneficial in general.	10.0	43.3	46.7	3.43	0.90
Students will feel more self-conscious with ACF.	26.7	40.0	33.3	3.13	1.11
Students need only notice their own errors.	46.7	33.3	20.0	2.73	1.11
Providing ACF is a waste of time.	96.7	3.3	–	1.57	0.57

Nearly all teachers (93.3 %, M = 4.53) judged asynchronous feedback via online tools to be useful which mirrored recent reports that delayed, screen-recorded or text-based comments promote thoughtful revision (Papin & Michaud, 2023; Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024). More than three-quarters also endorsed giving learners time before responding (76.7 %, M = 4.13) and believed that ACF enables students to review and self-correct errors after class (≈ 76 % on both items).

Perceptions of timing were generally favourable (M = 3.87), contrasting with the uncertainty noted for SCF (Section 4.1). A slim majority (53.3 %) felt ACF was easier for students to understand, consistent with Cunningham's (2019) finding that learners appreciate the clarity of video or annotated-document feedback.

Two items revealed residual doubt. One-third of teachers (33.3 %, M = 3.13) agreed that ACF might heighten learner self-consciousness, and almost half rejected the idea that students should focus only on their own errors (M = 2.73). Finally, virtually all respondents dismissed the claim that ACF was a waste of instructional time (M = 1.57).

The highest mean in Table 3 (M = 4.53) exceeded the top SCF rating (M = 4.27) which indicated a stronger overall endorsement of asynchronous feedback. Teachers valued ACF for in-the-moment noticing and immediacy yet praised ACF for the reflective space it afforded (Qiu & Lin, 2025; Tatsanajamsuk & Saengboon, 2021). This pattern reinforced the belief–practice tension reported in the recent literature (Asltaleb & Alavinia, 2024) as novice teachers recognised the pedagogical benefits of ACF but still relied heavily on synchronous oral moves in daily teaching.

Teachers' Practices of Corrective Feedback (CF)

To gauge how often novice teachers apply different feedback modes, participants rated eight practice statements (four SCF, four ACF). Table 4 reports the frequency data.

Table 4
Self-Reported Frequency of CF Practices in Online Classes (N = 30)

Mode	Never / Rarely (%)	Often / Always (%)	M	SD
Spoken explanations / oral corrections during activities (**SCF**)	10.0	70.0	3.80	0.89
Spoken explanations / oral corrections after activities (**SCF**)	6.7	66.7	3.80	0.85
Chat-room interaction after activities (**SCF**)	10.0	63.3	3.70	0.99
Yellow highlighting of errors in synchronised documents (**SCF**)	10.0	60.0	3.53	0.86
Mouse-pointer cues during screen-sharing (**SCF**)	33.3	56.7	3.27	1.34
Mode	**Never / Rarely (%)**	**Often / Always (%)**	**M**	**SD**
Comment-box feedback after activities (**ACF**)	16.7	53.4	3.47	1.11
Comment-box feedback during live collaboration (**ACF**)*	16.6	50.0	3.37	0.93
E-mail responses after class (**ACF**)	30.0	30.0	3.03	1.16

**Note*. "Comment-box feedback during live collaboration" refers to written document comments that remain accessible for review after the live session.

The most frequently used feedback was spoken explanation or oral correction, both during and immediately after activities (M = 3.80). Although the means matched, a larger share of teachers reported giving oral feedback during live tasks (70 %) than after tasks (66.7 %). Chat-room prompts followed closely (M = 3.70). Visual cues such as highlighting text in shared documents ranked fourth (M = 3.53). By contrast, only about half the teachers relied on comment-box annotations, and e-mail feedback was clearly least common with just 30 % of them using it often or always.

The preference for synchronous, speech-based feedback mirrors classroom observations in current online-CF studies (Asltaleb & Alavinia, 2024; Papin & Michaud, 2023). Despite teachers' strong endorsement of ACF in Section 4.2, their practice still tilted toward real-time modes, which echoed the belief–practice gap noted in Liu, Zheng, and Chen (2024).

Low uptake of e-mail contrasted with findings that students valued detailed and asynchronous commentary when it was delivered through LMS comment tools or annotated documents (Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024; Rahimi, Fathi & Zou, 2025). One plausible explanation is limited training in platform-specific feedback functions. Novice teachers in this study completed pre-service practicum largely in face-to-face settings where e-mail and document comments received less emphasis.

In summary, novice teachers rely most on synchronous oral and chat feedback, employ visual document cues moderately, and seldom turn to e-mail, even though they rate asynchronous feedback highly. It reinforced recent calls for targeted professional development on integrating rich ACF tools into routine online instruction (Qiu & Lin, 2025).

5. Discussion

This study set out to explore Malaysian novice ESL teachers' beliefs and practices concerning SCF and ACF for grammar accuracy in online classrooms. The findings reveal three key patterns of (i) a generally positive orientation toward both SCF and ACF; (ii) a stronger overall endorsement of ACF in beliefs; and (iii) a practice pattern still dominated by SCF especially oral and chat-based feedback during live sessions.

In line with recent work (Papin & Michaud, 2023; Thomas, West, & Borup, 2024), novice teachers in this study perceived both synchronous and asynchronous feedback as pedagogically valuable. High agreement rates for SCF items related to immediate interaction and clarity suggested that real-time exchanges were still viewed as essential for scaffolding students' accuracy in grammar-focused tasks. Similarly, the strong endorsement of ACF, especially its usefulness in allowing students to review and self-correct, resonated with Tatsanajamsuk and Saengboon's (2021) and Qiu and Lin's (2025) findings that delayed e-feedback facilitated deeper noticing and reflection.

This dual recognition of SCF and ACF benefits suggested that novice teachers were open to multimodal feedback repertoires. However, as Uludağ (2024) observed, positive beliefs did not necessarily translate into balanced implementation, particularly in contexts where platform affordances, pacing demands, and perceived learner expectations nudged teachers toward one mode over the other. Consistent with the literature (Asltaleb & Alavinia, 2024; Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2024), the present study found a noticeable gap between teachers' beliefs and their reported practices. While participants rated ACF more positively overall than SCF, their practice was still dominated by authentic oral and chat feedback during live sessions. Less than one-third reported frequent use of email-based or post-task comment-box feedback, even though such tools were strongly associated with reflective revision and durable accuracy gains in recent studies (Rahimi, Fathi & Zou, 2025; Fathi & Ebadi, 2021).

Several factors may explain this misalignment. First, novice teachers' practicum experiences in largely face-to-face settings may have habituated them to oral recasts and clarification requests which make these their default approach even in online environments. Second, synchronous delivery may be perceived as more manageable within the temporal flow of a lesson whereas ACF requires additional time management and technological familiarity. This is consistent with Cunningham's (2019) observation that without targeted training, teachers underutilised platform-integrated asynchronous tools despite acknowledging their values.

The study also highlighted differences in timing perceptions between SCF and ACF. For SCF, over half of the respondents were neutral about whether feedback was delivered at the "right speed" which suggested uncertainty in pacing real-time corrections. It aligned with Rahmani and Marefat's (2023) finding that novice teachers sometimes struggled to balance immediacy with maintaining communicative flow. In contrast, perceptions of ACF timing were more favourable, possibly because delayed delivery allowed teachers to structure feedback more carefully.

Interestingly, both SCF and ACF were perceived as potentially increasing students' self-consciousness. However, the concern was stronger for synchronous contexts. It mirrored Kim et al. (2020) who found that immediate oral CF can interrupt speech flow and heighten anxiety particularly for lower-proficiency learners. Such affective considerations appeared to shape beliefs and decisions about when and how to provide feedback.

Additionally, the findings reinforced the need for professional development that explicitly addressed the integration of SCF and ACF in technology-mediated environments. While novice teachers in this study recognised the pedagogical value of ACF, their low reported use of asynchronous tools suggested a skills gap. Therefore, training should focus on practical strategies for embedding ACF within learning management systems, balancing SCF and ACF to optimise both immediacy and reflection and using multimodal feedback to match students' preferences and task demands.

Recent interventions (Fathi, Maleki, & Nourzadeh, 2022; Warschauer & Liaw, 2023) showed that modelling integrated feedback routines can significantly narrow the belief–practice gap especially when combined with peer-sharing of digital feedback. By focusing on early-career Malaysian ESL teachers, this study adds to the relatively small body of work examining feedback beliefs and practices in Southeast Asia's online ESL contexts. It confirmed patterns found in broader contexts, including positive beliefs, limited use of asynchronous tools, and concerns about timing. The findings also illustrate how these factors manifest in a multilingual national setting shaped by post-pandemic shifts to digital learning. The emphasis on grammar accuracy further extended current CF scholarship which had tended to focus more on content and discourse-level writing feedback in recent years (Cao, 2024; Li & Ou, 2025).

As an exploratory study with a small sample, the findings were not generalisable to all novice ESL teachers in Malaysia or beyond. Moreover, self-reported practices may not fully capture actual classroom behaviours as previous research shows discrepancies between reported and observed CF use (Liu, Zheng, & Chen, 2024). As these data reflect reported rather than observed practice, findings should be interpreted as perceived patterns of CF use, which constrains internal validity. Future studies should triangulate survey data with classroom observations or stimulated recall interviews to better capture decision-making processes in situ. Additionally, it would be valuable to investigate students' perspectives on the same SCF and ACF balance, particularly in contexts where digital literacy varies widely. Longitudinal designs could also track how novice teachers' beliefs and practices evolve as they gain more online teaching experience and receive targeted feedback training.

6. Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between the beliefs and self-reported practices of novice Malaysian ESL teachers regarding synchronous and asynchronous corrective feedback (SCF and ACF) for grammatical accuracy in online classrooms. The findings show that participants were positive about both feedback modes, with stronger theoretical support for ACF because it promotes reflection and revision. However, their reported practice still leaned heavily toward synchronous oral and chat-based correction during live instruction, indicating a belief-practice mismatch.

This pattern suggests that habits shaped by largely face-to-face practicum experiences, together with the pacing demands of live online lessons, continue to privilege immediate feedback. Therefore, targeted professional development should move beyond introducing tools by modelling practical routines for integrating ACF alongside SCF (e.g., LMS comment features, annotated documents, or recorded feedback). This may help early-career educators make more deliberate decisions about when immediate correction is sufficient and when delayed feedback can support deeper noticing and revision.

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Authors Contributions
All authors contributed to developing ideas. Aiman Zulaikha initiated the research idea, defined the research questions, and supervised the overall study process. Sheela Faizura was responsible for confirming data extraction and analysis of discussion. Abdul Azim provided critical reviews and revisions of the paper. The final approval was provided by all authors.

Conflict of Interest
There is no conflict of interest associated with this publication.

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