Strategies for Writing, Assessment and Peer Review

S*W*A*P
Overview: Writing and Revision

• Does error correction help?
• Do students who receive feedback improve?
• Does the type of feedback matter?
  • Type: direct / indirect / coded / uncoded?
• What feedback strategies are effective?
• How can we reduce the burden?
  • Target: Maximum benefit Vs. Workload.
The Writing Process

- Pre-writing
- Drafting
- Editing
- Revision
- Publication
Purpose: Revision and Editing

• **Motivating**
  – Positive feedback on the content of the writing.

• **Improving the quality of writing**
  – Self-assessment; checklists; marking errors; peer feedback.

• **Diagnosing Problems**
  – Finding poorly controlled parts of the writing.

• **Measuring Proficiency**
  – Awarding a grade.
8. Write a story that you helped someone.

Before a week when I was down the street I saw a woman fell down to help her. When everyone was laughing and people went to help her we were so cool. When we went to call the doctor he went to the hospital. The doctor said the doctors and the doctors must be funny. They were very satisfied being an old person. We were also satisfied because other people were laughing. In the future I believe that everyone will get off his help and they will help any man not only 100 men who have a problem, but also every human.
Giving Feedback

“Written feedback tells the writer that their work is being read, is understood and interests the reader. Especially with younger learners, it is important not to discourage writing by always giving feedback that points out the errors in the writing.”

(Nation, 2009, pp. 137-138)
How Much Feedback?

Law of Diminishing Returns

Where High Producers Stop

Where Most People Realize They Need to Stop

Biggest Time Waster

INVESTMENT: TIME, ENERGY, MONEY ETC.
OH DEER
IT'S HARD TO SPEL
WHEN YOUR HUNGRY
IF YOU KEEP MAKING TYPING MISTAKES
GRAB YOURSELF A SNICKERS FAST

VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE IF YOUR NOT SHAKING TO MUTCCH
Does Feedback Help?

- In one study, 73% of grammar-focused teacher comments led to successful changes in students’ revisions.

- Notable because these were:
  - Verbal comments
  - Notes in margins
  - Endnotes

- * * *NOT AT THE POINT OF ERROR * * *
  (Ferris 1997)
What Type of Feedback Helps?

• Direct feedback Vs. Indirect feedback
  – Target specific issues at the point of error?
  – OR Less explicit

• How explicit?
  – Replace with target language? ------>
  – Mark with error codes? -------------->
  – Mark the point of error? ---------->
  – Mark in the margins? -------------->
    (*coded / uncoded)

Explicit

Less Explicit

(Higher Processing Demand)
Writing Correction Codes?
(Metalinguistic Feedback)

Code Use Examples
• C Capital Letters
• A Articles (a / an / the)
• WW Wrong word
• WT Wrong tense
• WO Wrong order
• SP Spelling
• P Punctuation(! ? . ,)
• SV Subject-verb agreement
• X Delete
• MW Missing word
• ? Not clear / incomprehensible
• Etc...
Correction Code Efficacy?

- German Ss improved in accuracy using error codes (Lalande 1982)

- No more effective than other feedback (Robb et al. 1986)

- Error codes helped in 2/4 categories (Ferris 2006)

- Error codes helped Ss to self-edit but no more than indirect feedback. (Ferris 2001)

Overall, limited evidence to show error codes help writers more than other forms of CF.
Peer editing: working in the ZPD

Zone of proximal development (Learner can do with guidance)

Learner can do unaided

Learner cannot do

Lev Vygotsky (1978)
Input: set them up to succeed

- Give an example of student writing
  - (preferably authentic)
- Include the first draft
  - Warts and all!
- Include the final draft
  - The target!
- Let students ‘notice’ the gap
  - An excellent pairwork task (“I think...”)


Peer Review:
Better to Give Than to Receive?

- Peer review is learner-centered
- Ss can critically evaluate their own work
- Ss can use language in an authentic, meaningful way
- Provides a real audience for their writing
- Good for the four skills and critical thinking
- Offers vital cooperative pairwork activities

— Lundstrom & Baker (2009)
What does S*W*A*P look like?

S.W.A.P. FAILURE!
# Self / Peer Checking Checklists

- **Global (Content and organization)**
- **Local (Grammar, spelling, vocabulary quality)**
- **E.G.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>QUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Title (Centered)</td>
<td>- Capital letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Topic sentence</td>
<td>- Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Transition words</td>
<td>- Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Supporting sentences</td>
<td>- Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Concluding sentence</td>
<td>- Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Etc...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parting words...

• The goal: an efficient and effective, maintenance-free schedule.
• Self/peer-assessment promotes more cognitive engagement, may enhance learning, and reduces teacher workloads.
• Giving feedback is as good (or better) than receiving it.
• Teacher modeling, practicing and using checklists supports the learners.
• End result: learners improve their writing and teacher’s reduce their blood-pressure.
THANK YOU!
Further Reading…


