The Teacher Development Series

Learning Teaching

A guidebook for English language teachers

Jim Scrivener

MACMILLAN HEINEMANN
English Language Teaching

- Write a reply.
- Look at the title and the illustrations (but not the text). Predict which of the following list of words you will find in the text.
- Solve the problem.
- Discuss (or write) the missing last paragraph of the text.
- Discuss interpretations of, reactions to, feelings about the text.
- Make notes under the following headings: .....
- Before you read this text, make notes about what you already know about the subject.
- Act out the dialogue, story, episode, etc.
- Put this list of events in the correct order.

4 Writing

Task 1

List some things you have written in the past two weeks.

Commentary ■ ■ ■

Nowadays most people actually do very little writing in day-to-day life, and a great deal of what we do write is quite short – brief notes to friends or colleagues, answers on question forms, diary entries, postcards, etc. ■

Task 2

What are the implications of this for the English language classroom?

Commentary ■ ■ ■

In everyday life the need for longer, formal written work seems to have lessened over the years, and this is reflected in many classrooms where writing activities are perhaps less often found than those for the other three skills.

Despite this, there may still be a number of good reasons why it is useful to include work on writing in a course:

» Exam classes p 185
» ESP and business English p 187

- Many students have specific needs that require them to work on writing skills: examination preparation and business English are two common areas where written work is still very important. At the most basic level, your students are likely to be involved in taking down notes in lessons such as yours; this is a skill that is worth focusing on.
- Writing involves a different kind of mental process. There is more time to think, to reflect, to prepare, to rehearse, to make mistakes and find alternative and better solutions.
- It can give the teacher a break, quieten down a noisy class, change the mood and pace of a lesson, etc.

Writing work in the classroom falls on a continuum from copying to free writing.

1	2	3	4
1 copying	2 doing exercises	3 guided writing	4 free writing

Fig. 10.4

At one end the student is practising forming letter shapes in a handwriting book, noting down substitution tables from the board, copying examples from a textbook, etc. At the other end the student chooses both subject matter and form. Very close to this on the scale would be essay writing where the topic or title is given, but no further help. Accuracy is more of a concern towards the left of the scale; fluency increasingly important towards the right (see Fig. 10.5).

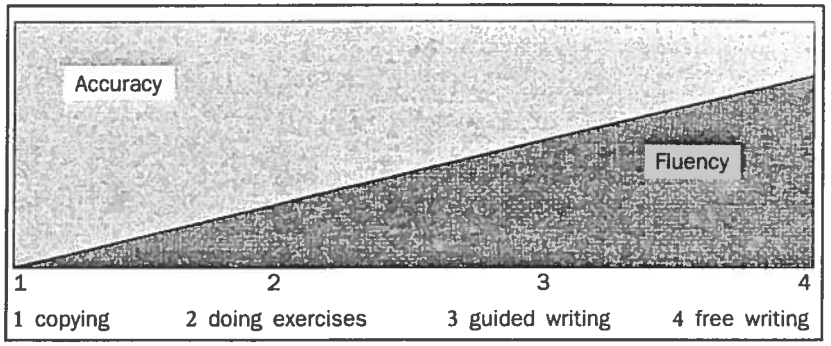
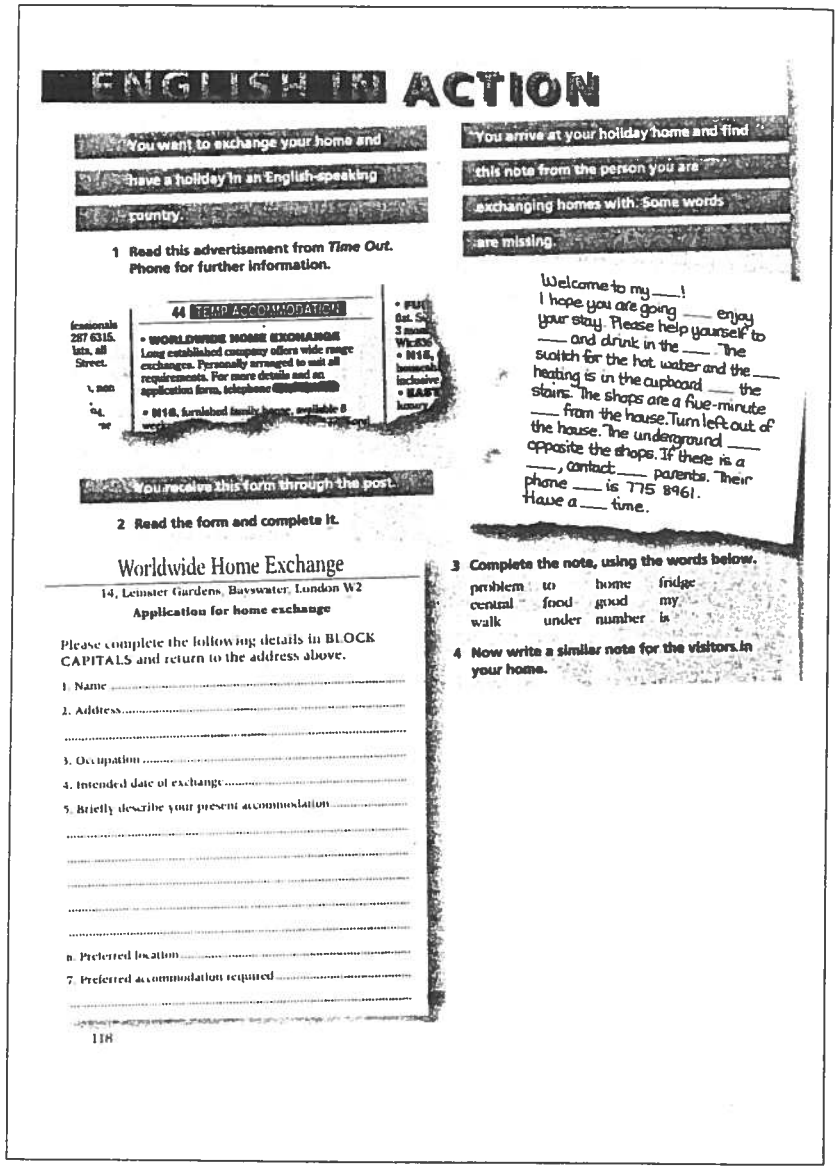


Fig. 10.5: Accuracy and fluency

Guided writing is a very important classroom tool for helping students to become better writers. Help is given in thinking through ideas, ordering them, considering vocabulary and grammar, co-operatively preparing notes and draft copies, and in other ways of making preparations to write. This often seems to be a preferable alternative to simply giving students an essay title and leaving them to get on with it. A student can learn to become a better writer by (a) being actively encouraged to follow through a series of preparatory steps before the final text is produced, and (b) becoming more aware of that preparation process, so that it can be done more independently and transparently in future. ■

Task 3

The coursebook extract in Fig. 10.6 shows a sequence of activities for beginner/elementary level students leading to a writing exercise. In what ways might doing guided writing exercises like this help a student learn to be a better writer?



ENGLISH IN ACTION

You want to exchange your home and have a holiday in an English-speaking country.

1 Read this advertisement from *Time Out*. Phone for further information.

44 TEMP ACCOMMODATION

• WORLDWIDE HOME EXCHANGE
Long established company offers wide range exchanges. Personally arranged to suit all requirements. For more details and an application form, telephone [illegible]

• N16, furnished family house, available 8 [illegible]

You receive this form through the post.

2 Read the form and complete it.

Worldwide Home Exchange
14, Leinster Gardens, Bayswater, London W2
Application for home exchange

Please complete the following details in BLOCK CAPITALS and return to the address above.

1. Name .....
2. Address .....
.....
3. Occupation .....
4. Intended date of exchange .....
5. Briefly describe your present accommodation .....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
6. Preferred location .....
7. Preferred accommodation required .....
.....

118

You arrive at your holiday home and find this note from the person you are exchanging homes with. Some words are missing.

Welcome to my ___!
I hope you are going ___ enjoy your stay. Please help yourself to ___ and drink in the ___. The switch for the hot water and the ___ heating is in the cupboard ___ the stairs. The shops are a five-minute ___ from the house. Turn left out of the house. The underground ___ opposite the shops. If there is a ___, contact ___ parents. Their phone ___ is 775 8961.
Have a ___ time.

3 Complete the note, using the words below.

problem	to	home	fridge
central	food	good	my
walk	under	number	is

4 Now write a similar note for the visitors in your home.

Fig. 10.6: From *The Beginner's Choice* Student's Book 1, Mohamed and Acklam (Longman 1992)

Commentary ■ ■ ■

Some ways in which guided writing exercises can help students prepare for a writing task:

- Students think about the topic before they write.
- Students brainstorm ideas and approaches.
- Students discuss the topic with other students, getting new ideas and clarifying their own thoughts.
- Students see example writing that deals with similar issues.
- The class works on a piece of similar writing together.
- Students do some preliminary writing exercises – making notes, answering questions, ordering ideas, linking sentences, etc.
- Students work through some language exercises containing language that may be useful in their writing.
- Students prepare a rough draft of writing for discussion, correction and amendment. ■

A typical route for classroom work on helping students to write might involve some of the following steps:

1 Introduction of topic. Group discussion. Clarification of main writing task. Consideration of audience for the final text. Consideration of specific requirements – style, information, layout, etc. Consideration of likely difficulties and problems.
2 Initial individual or group brainstorming.
3 Selection and rejection of ideas.
4 Sorting and ordering of ideas – note-making.
5 Focus on useful language models – in other written texts, in board examples, etc.
6 Small groups or class construct a preliminary skeleton or example text.
7 Individuals or groups prepare draft text.
8 Discuss with others and with teacher.
9 Individuals or groups prepare final text.

Once the final text is ready, what happens next?

Task 4

Your students have done some written work. You now collect in the papers, underline every mistake in red pen and write a mark or grade at the end. That's one option – but why may it not always be a good idea? What alternative options can you think of?

Commentary ■ ■ ■

Getting back a piece of work with a teacher's comments and corrections on it can be helpful. It can also be discouraging, especially if there is too much information, if the information is inappropriate or hard to interpret, or if the general tone is negative rather than positive. The red pen particularly has associations for many people with insensitive and discouraging correction and judgement.

Here are some other options available to you:

- Use a green pen – or a blue pen!
- Discuss the marking criteria with students. Negotiate and agree a mark or grade.
- Write the correct answers in the margin.
- Use correction codes in the margin (see below).
- Underline all errors of one type (eg all verb tense mistakes, all spelling mistakes, etc).

- Write a letter in reply.
- Write nothing. Discuss the work with the individual students.
- Only write a comment about the meaning and message of the piece.
- Students mark each other's work.
- Create a composite essay using good bits and problematic bits from a number of students' work. Photocopy it and hand it out for students to discuss and correct, together or in groups or individually, perhaps for homework.
- Use errors from a number of different students' writing to devise an exercise, quiz, game, etc. Or get students to make the exercise themselves based on their own mistakes (much more challenging than simply copying out correct answers).
- Give a dictation based on sentences from their work.

In all of these options there is one important guideline to bear in mind: Tell them (or agree) before the writing what will happen afterwards (eg *I'll be marking tense mistakes only*). ■

Task 5

Some teachers like to use 'correction codes' for marking student work.

1 In the text in Fig. 10.7, what does each code mean?
2 Why might correction codes be more useful to a learner than if the teacher had written the correction in?
3 Why have some mistakes been ignored?

Harry Greenman

The spaceship landed. A door opened. Harry the Greenman
V stumbled and fell out of the spaceship - He mumble something
WW sp that any body could understand but than a bit louder. My rome
^ is captain Greenman and I want study your language. Who
is Director of this school?"
Frank, a tall man gave to understand that he is the boss and they
sp arranged some lessons. Next morning Frank thought some
WW V grammar. But the lesson was very bored. Captain Greenman felt
asleep. Frank was very angry and threw the greenman back in
WO the spaceship. Suddenly came another creature out. It was Mrs
Greenman. She hit the director and turned back into the
spaceship.

Fig. 10.7: Correction codes

Commentary ■ ■ ■

« Errors and correction p 109

Codes can indicate where an error is and what type of error it is. However, they leave the learners to do some work in order to find the corrections for themselves. This may seem preferable to handing them the correction 'ready-made'. It is of course essential that the students understand your own set of codes! In the example in Fig. 10.7, V/ = verb problem (possibly incorrect tense); WO = word order; WW = wrong word; ^ = missing word; SP = spelling.

It often seems inappropriate to point out every error; it can be dispiriting to get back work with a large quantity of marks on it. The teacher probably needs to decide which errors she thinks most important or useful for the student to work on at the moment and then to draw attention to these. ■

Task 6

Here are two pieces of student writing.

1 Note some of the students' language or writing problems.
2 What classroom work do you think might help these learners to become better writers?

MY BARENTS. SAYED GOOBY
MY. WHANT GO EARBORT. IAM
GONNING FLY. MENY HOWRES.
WHANT ARIV ON SUNNEDAY GONNING
LONNDEN

It was my birthday. I had really nice birthday party. It was party with my friends. I had lovely chat with friends. Although I was eating something at the party, I couldn't. I just drank. I had an absolutely wonderful time.

Next morning climate was fine. Whereas my feeling was awful with headache. I couldn't work properly. I had bad condition. Eventually I did big mistake. Customer complained at me.

At that evening I met to my friend. My friend and I had dinner. Needless to say, I didn't enjoy any more. It was absolutely bad mood. I had promised never to do anything like that again.

Fig. 10.8: Student texts

Commentary ■ ■ ■

The first of the two texts on p 161 has a number of serious problems:

- orthography: poor formation of letters; no lower case letters;
- punctuation: wrong use of full stops; no other punctuation;
- spelling: many mistakes in moving from sound to spelling;
- layout: no attempt to lay text out;
- language: student does not have enough control of basic vocabulary or grammar.

These problems really prevent the writer getting his message across. The writing task set seems to have been inappropriately difficult for his level (ie 'free' writing as opposed to guided sentence making) and it looks as if insufficient help was offered in preparation for writing. It would probably be pointless to try to work through a correction or rewrite of this letter; what the student needs is a lot more practice work on a range of vocabulary and grammar items. He also needs some real support and guidance when attempting any future writing task and probably some practice work on forming the shapes of letters and using these in written sentences. A discussion of the subject matter of the text with the student (ie content rather than language) might be fruitful. It may be that the writer's intended meaning is clearer in spoken English than in written English.

The writer of the second text clearly has a much greater command of English. We can identify some grammar problems (eg missing articles: *a* and *the*) and some vocabulary problems (eg *climate* instead of *weather*). We can also notice some effective and correct uses of grammar, vocabulary and 'chunks' of language (eg *needless to say, I didn't . . .*). Importantly, the message that the writer wants to convey is usually quite clear; she comes over as an individual with something specific she wants to tell us.

There is, however, another problem: the text doesn't seem to flow in the way we expect a story to. There are a lot of short sentences. The repetition of words (eg *party*, *friends*, etc) gives the story a stilted, unnatural feel. It takes us a lot of reading to discover a small item of new information; even a sympathetic reader might soon become bored.

As well as offering some practice of specific language items (eg articles), we could also help the writer work on ways to make a written text more natural and readable – using pronouns to replace nouns, using synonyms to avoid repetition, varying the length of sentences, using conjunctions, using metaphor, etc. These are some examples of writing skills that can be focused on in the classroom. ■

Task 7

You teach the writer of the second text in Task 6. Write a response to the student.

Ideas for writing tasks

This section finishes with ideas for some interesting classroom writing tasks. I'm particularly looking at ways of transforming writing tasks from 'writing for the teacher' into 'writing with a real purpose':

- Write real letters – eg to Members of Parliament, to prisoners, to manufacturing companies, to fan clubs, to local newspapers, to other schools, etc. Send them. Get replies. Write back.
- Publish your own newsletter, magazine, handout, etc.
- Advertise (ideas, school events, products, etc) around the school, around town, send in your ads to local papers, etc.

- Write questionnaires and then use them out in the street (maybe in English or in the learners' own language). Write up the results. Publish them!
- Instant poetry. You could do this as a simple dictation. For example, read out the following instructions allowing time to think and write between each one:
  1 *Write one sentence describing this room.*
  2 *Look at one person in the room. Write one sentence describing her.*
  3 *Write a sentence about what she's thinking.*
  4 *Describe the view through the window in a few words.*
  5 *Listen – what can you hear? Write that down.*
  6 *How do you feel now?*
  7 *Write something about the future.*
  8 *OK – now you have three minutes – look at what you have written. Change anything you want to. Put things in a different order. Cross things out. Think about how it sounds. Your aim is to finish with a short poem ...* (which could be shared between individuals or read out or put up on a poster, etc).
- Long-term projects. These are a good way of integrating writing with other work. The aim could be a file or book at the end.
- Computer word-processing. Make use of any high-tech equipment you have to produce professional-looking documents, texts, etc.
- Students prepare the teacher's material – eg tell them what the next unit of the book is and get them to study it in order to prepare better and more interesting material.
- Postman. Allow ten or fifteen minutes for students and teacher to write short (one or two sentence) notes to each other across class. When each note is finished the writers deliver them by hand. Reply to ones you receive. Keep writing, faster and faster. An exercise in fluent (rather than accurate) writing.

THE PRACTICE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

THIRD EDITION

COMPLETELY REVISED AND UPDATED

Jeremy Harmer

Longman

We can also record students' language performance on audio or videotape. In this situation the students might be asked to design their own charts like the one above so that when they listen or watch they too will be recording more and less successful language performance in categories which make remembering what they heard easier. Another alternative is to divide students into groups and have each group watch for something different – for example, one group focuses on pronunciation, one group listens for the use of appropriate or inappropriate phrases, while a third looks at the effect of the physical paralinguistic features that are used. If teachers want to involve students more – especially if they have been listening to audiotape or watching the video – they can ask them to write up any mistakes they think they heard on the board. This can lead to a discussion in which the class votes on whether they think the mistakes really are mistakes.

Another possibility is for the teacher to transcribe parts of the recording for future study. However, this takes up a lot of time!

- **After the event:** when we have recorded student performance we will want to give feedback to the class. We can do this in a number of ways. We might want to give an assessment of an activity, saying how well we thought the students did in it, getting the students to tell us what they found easiest or most difficult. We can put some of the mistakes we have recorded up on the board and ask students firstly if they can recognise the problem, and then whether they can put it right. Or, as in the example above, we can write both correct and incorrect words, phrases, or sentences on the board and have the students decide which is which.

  When we write examples of what we heard on the board, it is not generally a good idea to say who made the mistakes since this may expose them in front of their classmates. Indeed, we will probably want to concentrate most on those mistakes which were made by more than one person. These can then lead on to quick teaching and re-teaching sequences which arrive opportunistically in this way (see Chapter 11, A2).

  Another possibility is for teachers to write individual notes to students, recording mistakes they heard from those particular students with suggestions about where they might look for information about the language – in dictionaries, grammar books, or on the Internet.

D Feedback on written work

The way we give feedback on writing will depend on the kind of writing task the students have undertaken, and the effect we wish to create. When students do workbook exercises based on controlled testing activities, we will mark their efforts right or wrong, possibly pencilling in the correct answer for them to study. However, when we give feedback on more creative or communicative writing (such as letters, reports, stories, or poems) we will approach the task with circumspection and clearly demonstrate our interest in the content of the students' work.

D1 Written feedback techniques

When handing back students' written work (on paper), or using a computer 'reviewing program' to give feedback on word-processed documents (see Chapter 10F), we can use a number of devices to help them write more successfully in the future:

- **Responding:** one way of considering feedback is to think of it as 'responding' to students' work rather than assessing or evaluating what they have done. When we respond, we say how the text appears to us and how successful we think it has been – and, sometimes, how it could be improved. Such responses are vital at various stages of the writing process cycle (see Chapter 18, B1). Thus students may show us a first draft of their work; our response will be to say how it is progressing and how we think they might improve it in subsequent drafts. The comments we offer them need to appear helpful and not censorious. Sometimes they will be in the margin of the student's work (or, on a computer, written as viewable 'comments'), or if more extensive may need a separate piece of paper – or separate computer document. Consider this example in which the teacher is responding in the form of a letter to a student's first draft of a composition about New Year's Eve:

Dear Gabrielle,

I really enjoyed reading your draft. You have some good expressions, e.g.

... you look to the dark sky and it seems like a special party.

Why don't you begin with that sentence? e.g.

I looked up at the dark sky and it seemed a special party. It was like an explosion everywhere. People were throwing fireworks into the sky, and everywhere there were lights.

Now at this point you can tell the reader what night it is:

It was New Year's Eve and everyone was celebrating.

Then you can explain what New Year's Eve means in Uruguay, how families and friends come together and how everyone has hopes for the future. You can end by coming back to the idea of fireworks.

You can organise your essay to have two times:

Past	*I looked up ...* *it seemed*	Introduction
General present	*Family celebrations in Uruguay are very important.* *People usually send greetings to each other ...*	
Past	????	Conclusion

From *Process Writing* by Ron White and Valerie Arndt (Pearson Education Ltd)

This type of feedback takes time, of course, but it can be more useful to the student than a draft covered in correction marks. However, it is designed specifically for situations in which the student will go back and review the draft before producing a new version.

When we respond to a final written product (an essay or a finished project) we can say what we liked, how we felt about the text, and what they might do next time if the students are going to write something similar.

Another constructive way of responding to students' written work is to show alternative ways of writing through reformulation (see C2 above). Instead of providing the kind of comments in the example above, we might say *I would express this paragraph slightly differently from you*, and then rewrite it, keeping the original intention as far as possible but avoiding any of the language or construction problems which the student's original contained. Such reformulation is extremely useful for students since by comparing their version with yours they discover a lot about the language. However it has to be done sympathetically, since we might end up 'steamrollering' our own view of things, forcing the student to adopt a different voice from the one they wanted to use.

- **Coding:** some teachers use codes, and can then put these codes either in the body of the writing itself, or in a corresponding margin. This makes correction much neater, less threatening, and considerably more helpful than random marks and comments. Frequently used symbols of this kind refer to issues such as word order, spelling, or verb tense as in the following table:

SYMBOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE
S	Incorrect spelling	I recieved your letter.
W.O.	Wrong word order	We know well this city. Always I am happy here.
T	Wrong tense	If he will come, it will be too late.
C	Concord. Subject and verb do not agree	Two policemen has come. The news are bad today.
WF	Wrong form	We want that you come. That table is our.
S/P	Singular or plural form wrong	We need more informations.
ʌ	Something has been left out	They said was wrong. He hit me on shoulder.
[ ]	Something is not necessary	It was too much difficult
?M	Meaning is not clear	Come and rest with us for a week. The view from here is very suggestive.
NA	The usage is not appropriate	He requested me to sit down.
P	Punctuation wrong	Whats your name He asked me what I wanted?

From *Teaching Writing Skills* by D Byrne (Pearson Education Ltd)

When we use these codes we mark the place where a mistake has been made and use one of the symbols in the margin to show what the problem is. The student is now in a position to correct the mistake.

We can decide on the particular codes and symbols we use with our students, making sure that they are quite clear about what our symbols mean through demonstration and example. We might also consider having a two-stage approach with simple and more complex codes for students at different levels (Cox and Eyre 1999).

It is worth remembering, however, that one of the marks that students respond to best is ticks when they have used language well, or made a particularly telling point.

A way of avoiding the over-correction of scripts, which also has the advantage of helping students to concentrate on particular features of written English, is **focusing**. In this mode we restrict feedback to a particular aspect of language. We can tell students that we will only give feedback on, say, spelling for the next piece of writing. On other occasions we can say that we are going to focus only on punctuation or tense usage or linking words or paragraph construction – or any other written feature we consider important for our students at that stage. Because we tell students this before they write, we guarantee their close attention to the features we have singled out.

D2 Finishing the feedback process

Except where students are taking achievement or proficiency tests (see Chapter 23, A1), written feedback is designed not just to give an assessment of the students' work, but also to help and teach. We give feedback because we want to affect our students' language use in the future as well as commenting upon its use in the past (see 'homework' in Chapter 24, A1).

When we respond to first and second written drafts of a written assignment we expect a new version to be produced which will show how the students have responded to our comments. In this way feedback is part of a learning process, and we will not have wasted our time. Our reasons for using codes and symbols is the same: if students can identify the mistakes they have made they are then in a position to correct them. The feedback process is only really finished once they have made these changes. If students consult grammar books or dictionaries as a way of resolving some of the mistakes we have signalled for them, the feedback we have given has had a positive outcome.

Chapter notes and further reading

- **Feedback and correction in general**
  See P Ur (1996: Module 17), and J Edge (1989). M Rinvolucri (1998) and R Bolitho et al. (1994) discuss many of the issues surrounding feedback and correction.

- **Written feedback**
  See J Muncie (2000) on the kind of feedback teachers should give.
- **Analysing errors**
  On interlanguage and analysing errors, see H D Brown (2000: Chapter 8).
- **Student self-assessment**
  M Harris (1997) shows how self-assessment is useful both for autonomous learners, but also for students in a more formal educational setting.
- **Teachers' attitudes to feedback and correction**
  In a fascinating teacher-training activity R Tanner (1992) shows how teachers do not necessarily enjoy the feedback methods which they use in class when they themselves are being corrected.

CAMBRIDGE TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Series Editors: Marion Williams and Tony Wright

This series is designed for all those involved in language teacher training and development: teachers in training, trainers, directors of studies, advisers, teachers of in-service courses and seminars. Its aim is to provide a comprehensive, organised and authoritative resource for language teacher training and development.

Teach English – A training course for teachers
by Adrian Doff

Training Foreign Language Teachers – A reflective approach
by Michael J. Wallace

Literature and Language Teaching – A guide for teachers and trainers*
by Gillian Lazar

Classroom Observation Tasks – A resource book for language teachers and trainers*
by Ruth Wajnryb

Tasks for Language Teachers – A resource book for training and development*
by Martin Parrott

English for the Teacher – A language development course*
by Mary Spratt

Teaching Children English – A training course for teachers of English to children*
by David Vale with Anne Feunteun

A Course in Language Teaching – Practice and theory
by Penny Ur

Looking at Language Classrooms – A teacher development video package

About Language – Tasks for teachers of English
by Scott Thornbury

Action Research for Language Teachers
by Michael J. Wallace

Mentor Courses – A resource book for trainer-trainers
by Angi Malderez and Caroline Bodóczky

Alive to Language – Perspectives on language awareness for English language teachers
by Valerie Arndt, Paul Harvey and John Nuttall

Teachers in Action – Tasks for in-service language teacher education and development
by Peter James

Advising and Supporting Teachers
by Mick Randall with Barbara Thornton

* Original Series Editors: Ruth Gairns and Marion Williams

A Course in Language Teaching

Practice and Theory

Penny Ur

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Module 17: Giving feedback

▶ Unit One: Different approaches to the nature and function of feedback

Preliminary definition: What is feedback?

In the context of teaching in general, feedback is information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance. Some examples in language teaching: the words 'Yes, right!', said to a learner who has answered a question; a grade of 70% on an exam; a raised eyebrow in response to a mistake in grammar; comments written in the margin of an essay.

Feedback has two main distinguishable components: assessment and correction. In assessment, the learner is simply informed how well or badly he or she has performed. A percentage grade on an exam would be one example; or the response 'No' to an attempted answer to a question in class; or a comment such as 'Fair' at the end of a written assignment. In correction, some specific information is provided on aspects of the learner's performance: through explanation, or provision of better or other alternatives, or through elicitation of these from the learner. Note that in principle correction can and should include information on what the learner did **right**, as well as wrong, and why! – but teachers and learners generally understand the term as referring to the correction of mistakes, so that is (usually) how it is used here.

Question **Are the two components of assessment and correction completely separable? In other words, can you have assessment without correction, or correction without assessment?**

Read on for a possible answer to this.

The relationship between assessment and correction

It is, of course, perfectly possible to give assessment without correcting, as when a final percentage mark on an exam is made known to a learner without the exam itself being returned or commented on. The other way round is very much less feasible: it is virtually impossible to comment on what is right or wrong in what a learner has done without conveying some kind of assessment. If a correction is supplied, the learner is very aware that this means the teacher thinks something was wrong; if comment is given on why something was appropriate, there is necessarily an underlying message of commendation.

Teachers are sometimes urged to be 'non-judgemental' when giving feedback; in my opinion this is unrealistic. Any meaningful feedback is going to involve

some kind of judgement. It is more useful, perhaps, to accept that there is judgement involved, but to try to make the attitude to this more positive: that mistakes are a natural and useful part of language learning; that when the teacher gives feedback on them, the purpose is to help and promote learning; and that 'getting it wrong' is not 'bad', but rather a way into 'getting it right'.

Approaches to the giving of feedback

In Boxes 17.1 and 17.2 you will find expressions of selected opinions on the nature and functions of assessment and mistake correction; these are based on different theories of language learning or methodologies. It is not essential for you to be familiar with the names or details of the theories for the purposes of this bit of study; but if you are interested in reading further on any of them, see McLaughlin (1987) and/or Richards and Rodgers (1986); or references provided with specific items.

The opinions as stated here are obviously simplified, and expressed in 'strong' forms, as these are likely to provide more interesting and fruitful departure-points for discussion.

BOX 17.1: THE PROVISION OF ASSESSMENT: DIFFERENT OPINIONS

Audio-lingualism
Negative assessment is to be avoided as far as possible since it functions as 'punishment' and may inhibit or discourage learning. Positive assessment provides reinforcement of correct responses, and promotes learning.

Humanistic methodologies
A crucial function of the giving of assessment is to preserve and promote a positive self-image of the learner as a person and language learner. Assessment therefore should be positive or non-judgemental.

Skill theory
For successful acquisition of a skill, the learner needs feedback on how well he or she is doing; hence the importance of the provision of constant and honest assessment (Johnson, 1995).

Task *Stage 1: Study*

As you read, think about or discuss how far you agree with the various statements.

Stage 2: Discussion

After reading: can you summarize your own opinion on the functions of assessment and correction? Write down your own statements in a format similar to that shown in Boxes 17.1/2; if you are working in a group, compare your ideas with those of colleagues.

If you are interested in comparing your own opinion with mine, look at the Notes, (1).

BOX 17.2: THE CORRECTION OF MISTAKES: DIFFERENT OPINIONS

Audio-lingualism
Learner mistakes are, in principle, avoided by the limiting of progress to very small, controlled steps: hence there should be little need for correction. The latter is, in any case, not useful for learning; people learn by getting things right in the first place and having their performance reinforced.

Cognitive code-learning
Mistakes are regrettable, but an unavoidable part of learning: they should be corrected whenever they occur to prevent them occurring again.

Interlanguage

Mistakes are not regrettable, but an integral and important part of language learning; correcting them is a way of bringing the learner's 'interlanguage' closer to the target language (Selinker, 1972, 1992).

Communicative approach
Not all mistakes need to be corrected: the main aim of language learning is to receive and convey meaningful messages, and correction should be focussed on mistakes that interfere with this aim, not on inaccuracies of usage.

Monitor theory
Correction does not contribute to real acquisition of the language, but only to the learner's conscious 'monitoring' of speech or writing. Hence the main activity of the teacher should be to provide comprehensible input from which the learner can acquire language, not to correct (Krashen, 1982).

▷ Unit Two: Assessment

Note: In literature on education, a distinction is sometimes made between assessment (of learner performance), evaluation (of innovation or change in, for example, school organization or a course syllabus) and appraisal (of teacher performance). This unit is concerned only with feedback on learning, and the terms 'evaluation' and 'assessment' are used interchangeably.

Most of the feedback we give our learners is ongoing correction and assessment, directed at specific bits of learner-produced language with the aim of bringing about improvement; the type of evaluation involved here is sometimes called 'formative', since its main purpose is to 'form': to enhance, not conclude, a process. Distinct from this is the evaluation usually termed 'summative', where the teacher evaluates an overall aspect of the learner's knowledge in order to summarize the situation: how proficient he or she is at a certain point in time, for example, or how much he or she has progressed during a particular course.

Summative evaluation may contribute little or nothing to the ongoing teaching/learning process; but it is a part of the teacher's job, something we need to know how to do effectively.

Below are descriptions of various ways of gathering the information which will serve as a basis for assessment, and of some common criteria used for assessing it.

Gathering information (1): Tests

The most common way of gathering information for assessment is through tests (see Module 3); the usual criterion is an arbitrary level which the learner is expected to have reached; and the result is generally expressed through percentages.

Question **Can you remember taking an exam or test at the end of a programme of study, or in order to be accepted into a course or profession? What was the criterion for success, and how was your result expressed?**

Gathering information (2): Other sources

There, are, however, various problems with tests as a basis for summative evaluation: they are a one-off event which may not necessarily give a fair sample of the learner's overall proficiency; they are not always valid (actually testing what they say they are) or reliable (giving consistent results); and if they are seen as the sole basis for a crucial evaluation in the learner's career, they can be extremely stressful.

Other options do, however, exist. These are summarized below; or see Brindley (1989) for a more detailed discussion.

1. **Teacher's assessment.** The teacher gives a subjective estimate of the learner's overall performance.
2. **Continuous assessment.** The final grade is some kind of combination of the grades the learner received for various assignments during the course.
3. **Self-assessment.** The learners themselves evaluate their own performance, using clear criteria and weighting systems agreed on beforehand.
4. **Portfolio.** The learner gathers a collection of assignments and projects done over a long period into a file; and this portfolio provides the basis for evaluation.

Question **Have you yourself any experience of any of the above, as teacher or learner? How valid or useful were/are they, in your experience?**

Criteria

Having collected the 'evidence' of the learners' proficiency in one or more of the ways described above, what will be our yardstick in deciding how good it is? The following are some of the possibilities.

1. **Criterion-referenced:** how well the learner is performing relative to a fixed criterion, where this is based on an estimation of what it is reasonable or

desirable to demand from learners at the relevant point in their development (age, career, level, stage of a course).
2. **Norm-referenced:** how well the learner is performing relative to the group. In this case, a group of slow learners would be assessed according to different, easier, norms than a group of faster ones.
3. **Individual-referenced:** how well the learner is performing relative to his or her own previous performance, or relative to an estimate of his or her individual ability.

Question **What criteria do/would you yourself use in assessing learners' performance? Would you combine different criteria? Would you take into account learners' effort, motivation and progress in deciding on a final grade?**

Assessment grades

Percentages are probably the most common way of expressing assessment grades, but there are others.

1. **Letters, words or phrases:** 'A' or 'B'; 'Good', 'Excellent'. These look a little less impersonal, less definitive than percentages; but in fact learners often 'read' them as definitive number-type grades, exactly as they read percentages.
2. **Profiles:** a totally different kind of expression of assessment, comprising a number of separate grades on different skills or sections of knowledge, so that there is a possibility of describing the performance of an individual learner in more detail, showing his or her various strengths and weaknesses.

Summary question **What is the most common way of gathering information, assessing proficiency and awarding grades in your own teaching context? What changes or improvements would you like to see introduced?**

▶ Unit Three: Correcting mistakes in oral work

Preliminary note. On the whole, we give feedback on oral work through speech, on written work through writing; and although there are occasional situations where we might do it the other way round (for example, discuss an essay with a student in a one-to-one tutorial, or write a letter providing feedback on speech) these are very much the exceptions and will not be dealt with in this unit and the next.

There are some situations where we might prefer not to correct a learner's mistake: in fluency work, for example, when the learner is in mid-speech, and to correct would disturb and discourage more than help. But there are other situations when correction is likely to be helpful.

Question **Would you support the recommendation to refrain from correcting during fluency-oriented speech, and to do so only during accuracy-oriented exercises? Can you add any further comment?**
Read on for my answer to this.

The recommendation not to correct a learner during fluent speech is in principle a valid one, but perhaps an over-simplification. There can be places where to refrain from providing an acceptable form where the speaker is obviously uneasy or 'floundering' can actually be demoralizing, and gentle, supportive intervention can help. Conversely, even where the emphasis is on getting the language right, we may not always correct: in a grammar exercise, for example, if the learner has contributed an interesting or personal piece of information that does not happen to use the target form; also, when they have got most of an item right we may prefer not to draw attention to a relatively trivial mistake.

Techniques of oral correction

Oral corrections are usually provided directly by the teacher; but they may also be elicited from the learner who made the mistake in the first place, or by another member of the class. Corrections may or may not include a clarification of why the mistake was made, and may or may not require re-production of the acceptable form by the learner.

The objective of the inquiry project suggested below is to ascertain which of these techniques are in fact most used in a selection of lessons taught locally, and which are preferred by learners. Some practical conclusions may be drawn from the results.

Inquiry **Correction techniques in the classroom**

Stage 1: Preparation

Look at the set of oral correction techniques listed in Box 17.3. Reword, or add further items as you feel necessary. Think about and note down for yourself: which do you expect to be used most frequently in the classroom, and which do you imagine most learners actually prefer?
Make copies of the list for use at Stages 2 and 3.

Stage 2: Observation

Observe some lessons, taught, if possible, by different teachers; or watch video recordings of lessons. Every time you hear a correction, try to identify to which category it belongs and put a tick in the appropriate box. At the end, count your ticks, and note down which kinds of correction are most often used and which least.

Stage 3: Interview

Interview some learners to find out which kinds of correction they find most useful. If you are working on your own try to find ten or so respondents; if you are working in a group, then each participant can interview one or two, pooling results later.

The same list of techniques as used for observation can function as a basis for the interviews. Plus or minus signs can be inserted in the appropriate boxes to show which your respondents preferred or disliked.

The learners should be interviewed one by one, but the interview may be held in various ways. You may simply show them a copy of the list, and ask them to identify which techniques they prefer; or read out the options and ask them to comment; or ask them a general question like: 'Do you like the teacher to correct your mistakes, and if so, how?' – interpreting their answers yourself in order to fill in answers. The interview may, of course, be conducted in the learners' mother tongue, if you feel this is appropriate.

Summarize the most, and least, popular techniques in the same way as you did at the end of Stage 2.

Stage 4: Summary and conclusions

Discuss or think about what you have found out. Some interesting questions to consider might be the following:

- Did your results differ from your expectations as recorded at Stage 1? If so, how?
- Did the teachers you observed actually correct in the way learners say they prefer? If not, how would you account for the differences?
- As a general conclusion, which would seem to be the most helpful way(s) of correcting? And under what circumstances might you do something different?

Comments

One of the crucial issues which will emerge in this discussion is the discrepancy between what teachers think is best, or usually do, and what learners find most useful. Given that there is a discrepancy, whose opinion should be more respected? The learner has reliable intuitive knowledge about what kind of correction helps most; but teachers – especially experienced ones – have a different kind of knowledge which may be no less valid. My own feeling is that learner preferences are on the whole a reliable guide; and if I choose to disregard these I should be very clear in my mind why I am doing so.

How the correction is expressed

At least as important as what the correction consists of is **how** it is expressed: gently or assertively, supportively or as a condemnation, tactfully or rudely. On the whole, of course, we should go for encouraging, tactful correction; but it is less easy to generalize about gently/assertively: some learner populations respond better to the one, some to the other. In general, in fact, learner responses to different expressions of feedback are often surprising: a teacher correction that seems to an observer a humiliating 'put-down' may not be perceived as such by the learner to whom it was addressed; or an apparently gentle, tactful one may give offence. A good deal of teacher sensitivity is needed here.

BOX 17.3: ORAL CORRECTION TECHNIQUES

*Class observed .....

*Learner interviewed .....

Teacher's responses to mistakes	*Observation / Learner opinions*
1. Does not react at all.	
2. Indicates there is a mistake, but does not provide any further information about what is wrong.	
3. Says what was wrong and provides a model of the acceptable version.	
4. Indicates something was wrong, elicits acceptable version from the learner who made the mistake.	
5. Indicates something was wrong, elicits acceptable version from another member of the class.	
6. (May go with any of 3–5 above) Asks the learner who made the mistake to reproduce the corrected version.	
7. (May go with any of 3–5 above) Provides or elicits an explanation of why the mistake was made and how to avoid it.	

*Delete or fill in as appropriate.

Task **Observation and inquiry**

Pick out five or six instances of correction in a lesson, and for each note down briefly what happened and then add some adjectives you would use to describe the manner in which it was given (e.g. gentle/loud/hesitant/brisk/supportive?). If you were observing together with a colleague, compare your descriptions after the lesson: did your opinions tally? If not, is there any way of finding out whose perception was truer?

If feasible, find out from the learner(s) how they felt at the time, and compare their impressions with your own.

▶ Unit Four: Written feedback

Learners' written work includes not only written compositions, but also assignments on grammar or vocabulary, answers to comprehension questions, tests and so on; and teachers are expected, as part of their job, to respond to such work, providing appropriate (written) feedback.

How can this feedback be made optimally effective?

Question

Can you remember how you felt about the ways teachers responded to your own written work when you were learning a foreign language (or even your own)? Try to recall particular instances, and perhaps share with colleagues.

The following task invites you to experiment with correcting written work yourself; if you do not actually do it, you may find it interesting and helpful simply to look at the examples of learner writing in Box 17.4 and then read straight on to the *Comments* below.

Experiential task

Correcting written work

Stage 1: Reading

Look at the written assignments provided in Box 17.4. The first is a grammar exercise mainly on the present perfect tense, which the students did for homework. The second is a test on vocabulary, which is also intended to check their mastery of the use of relative clauses in definitions. The third is a short piece of writing done in class as an individual summary of a group discussion, and given in to the teacher at the end of the lesson.

Stage 2: Giving feedback

Imagine these are assignments done by your own students, and write in your corrections and other feedback either on the page itself or on a copy. Do this on your own rather than collaboratively.

Stage 3: Reflection

If you are in a group, come together with other participants when you have finished to compare your responses. Perhaps work in pairs, reading each other's corrections and discussing differences.

Whether working on your own or with others, you might find the set of questions shown in Box 17.5 useful to stimulate thinking. My own answers to these appear in the Notes, (2).

BOX 17.4: SAMPLES OF LEARNERS' WRITTEN WORK

1. Grammar exercise on the present perfect tense, given as homework

14.1 *You are asking someone about things he has done in his life. Use the words in brackets to make your questions.*

Example: (you ever / be / to Italy?) Have you ever been to Italy?

1 (you ever / be / to / South America?) Have you ever been to south America?
2 (you / read / any English books?) Have you ever read any English books?
3 (you / live / in this town all your life?) Have you ever in this town all your...
4 (how many times / you / be / in love?) how many times have you been in love?
5 (what's the most beautiful country you / ever / visit?) What's the most beautiful country have you ever visited?
6 (you ever / speak / to a famous person?) have you ever spoken to a famous...?

14.2 *Complete the answers to these questions. Use the verb in brackets.*

Example: Is it a beautiful painting? (see) Yes, it's the most beautiful painting I've ever seen.

1 Is it a good film? (see) Yes, it's the best film I'ev ever seen
2 Is it a long book? (read) Yes, it's the longer book I'ev ever read
3 Is she an interesting person? (meet) Yes, she's the most interested gril I have ever met.

(From Raymond Murphy, *English Grammar in Use*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 29)

2. Test on vocabulary and relative clauses

Define the following words, using who/which/that/whose/when/where.

For example: a deserted house = a house where nobody lives

1. a temple: a house where religious people lives in.
2. a motionless tree: a tree which not moving at all.
3. an illusion: a false sight.
4. courage: a man who not have any Fear.
5. sweat: its like terrible but more then this.
6. a PR man: a man who work on a public relations.
7. a virus: a thing which make people sick.
8. an antibody: a thing which help the man get over the sickness.
9. a host: a man who takes visitors to his house
10. a paw: a part of a animal.

3. Writing following a discussion

Dear Helpful Harriet,
I have a problem with this teacher at school. He is always shouting at me, though I don't disturb more than lots of other pupils in the class. It's true that I sometimes don't do my homework, but I know his subject very well, always get high marks on the tests, so there is no point doing silly homework. He gave me a much lower mark than I deserve at the end of the term. It's not fair. And it's no good saying go to the class teacher, she always backs him up. What can I do?

Yours,
FRUSTRATED STUDENT

My advice to you is to talk with the problematic teacher and trying to explain what do you fill and think about her and what do you think that you can do together to solve your problem together please let me know what happend with your case

Follow-up discussion

Conclusions

Can you draw some conclusions as to what makes feedback on learner writing more or less effective? Try writing down what for you would be the three most important principles in giving written feedback, and share with colleagues.

If you wish to explore this topic further, you might like to look at Module 11: *Teaching writing*, Unit Five; for the topic of feedback on more advanced writing, see Zamel (1985).

BOX 17.5: CONSIDERING WRITTEN FEEDBACK

1. Did you use a red pen for your comments? Or another colour? Or a pen or pencil? Can you account for your choice?
2. For which of the assignments, if any, did you give some kind of assessment at the end ('Good', for example)? Why, or why not?
3. Did you correct all the mistakes? If so, why? If not, on what did you base your decision which to correct and which not?
4. Those mistakes you corrected: did you write in the correct form? Give a hint what it should be? Simply indicate it was wrong? Why?
5. Did you note only what was wrong, or did you give some kind of indication of what was right or particularly good?
6. Did you provide any kind of informative feedback other than mistake correction and overall assessment, designed to help the student improve? (e.g. 'This was good because...', or 'Take care when you...')
7. When responding to the assignment that entailed expression of personal opinion, did you provide a response of your own to the content? ('I agree with this point', 'Yes, but have you considered...?')
8. Did you require the student to redo any of the assignment? Can you say why, or why not?
9. Finally, try rereading your corrections imagining you are the student: what do you think the student will feel about them?

▷ Unit Five: Clarifying personal attitudes

This unit asks you to define your own attitudes to various aspects of the topic of feedback; it focusses particularly on the feelings and relationships which may be affected by the giving and getting of feedback.

Task

Agree or disagree?

In Box 17.6 there is a list of statements, with an 'Agree–Disagree' continuum below each. You may like to add more statements in the spaces provided.

Put a cross on the continuum for each statement to indicate how far you agree with it. Perhaps look first at the *Comments* section below, which may help (or complicate!) your thinking. My own opinions are expressed in the Notes, (3).

Comments on Box 17.6

1. In relating to this question try to free yourself from the superficial negative connotations often associated with the phrase 'power hierarchy'. Power hierarchies may in some circumstances be necessary, productive and fully compatible with good human relationships.
2. In answering this question, teachers often conveniently overlook the word 'potentially'! Note: the question is not whether assessment humiliates, but if

BOX 17.6: STATEMENTS ABOUT FEEDBACK

1. The fact that the teacher gives feedback on student performance implies a power hierarchy: the teacher above, the student below.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
2. Assessment is potentially humiliating to the assessed person.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
3. Teachers should give their students only positive feedback, in order to encourage, raise confidence and promote feelings of success; negative feedback demoralizes.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
4. Giving plenty of praise and encouragement is important for the fostering of good teacher–student relationships.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
5. Very frequent approval and praise lose their encouraging effect; and lack of praise may then be interpreted as negative feedback.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
6. Teachers should not let students correct each other's work, as this is harmful to their relationships.
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
7. .....
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*
8. .....
   Very much agree ⟷ *Totally disagree*

there is or is not such a **potential**. (And if so, what should or may be done about it?)

3. The main controversial feature in this statement is the word 'only' in the first line.
4. In considering this question it might help to ask yourself: can I conceive of (or recall) a good teacher–student relationship where the teacher gives or gave very little positive feedback? Can I conceive of (or recall) one where there is or was plenty of positive feedback but relationships are or were nevertheless bad?
5. Can you recall a situation where the teacher over-praised? Or is the opposite usually the case?
6. Again, your answer to this will very much depend on your own experience.

Notes

(1) The value of assessment and correction for learning

In general, both positive and negative assessments should, in my opinion, be made available to the learner, as honestly as possible: mainly because in my experience this is what learners feel, and say, they want. However, it is essential for such assessments to be given in an atmosphere of support and warm solidarity, so that learners feel that the teacher's motive is honestly to promote and encourage their learning, not to put them down. The problem in negative assessment is often not the assessment itself, but rather the accompanying implications of aggression on the side of the assessor and humiliation on the side of the assessed – which can, and should, be eliminated.

As to correction: I think there is certainly a place for correction. Again, most learners ask for it; and it does contribute to some extent to learning. However, we should not over-estimate this contribution; most experienced teachers are familiar with the phenomenon of recurring corrections of the same mistake which do not seem to lead to improvement. I would rather invest time and energy in creating opportunities for learners to get things right as much as possible than in painstaking work on correcting mistakes. This is one point on which I am in agreement with the presently unfashionable audio-lingual method.

(2) Comments on the questions in Box 17.5

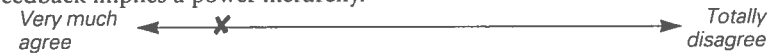
1. I usually use a coloured pen for corrections, simply in order to make them maximally clear and visible to the learner. The exception to this is when providing feedback on advanced writing (essays, papers, other forms of self-expression); here, if the writer has printed or written in ink, I give comments in pencil in order to convey a less authoritative, more diffident message: I'm suggesting, not telling.
2. I provided an assessing comment on the grammar exercise, in order to let the student know how well I thought he or she had mastered the material. Similarly, I gave a grade on the test, partly because this is what people who do tests usually expect and want. For the third assignment, however, I did not: this is a piece of spontaneous composition where the main activity was discussion, the writer had little chance to reread or polish, and I did not think it fair to judge it as a sample of the learner's writing.
3. I corrected virtually all the mistakes in the test. In the grammar exercise I corrected all the mistakes which had to do with the target forms, but ignored most of the others: learners can only use just so much feedback information: to give too much may simply distract, discourage and actually detract from its value for learning. In the third assignment I did not mark in corrections in the body of the student's text, but noted below some points they might attend to for the future: this was because I see this kind of writing not, like the others, as a presentation of language samples for display, but mainly as a form of self-expression, to be respected as such.
4. I wrote in the full correct forms. I do not see much value in demanding that students focus again on the wrong form and try to work out what is wrong

about it – besides, many of them never bother to do so! I would rather confront them with the acceptable forms as quickly and clearly as possible. (However, in the case of a first draft of an essay which a student is to rewrite, I might simply indicate there is a mistake, knowing that they are going to take the trouble to find out how to correct in order to make the final draft as good as possible.)

5. Yes. I put in ticks here and there indicating my appreciation of a difficulty overcome, or a note such as 'well expressed' in the margin. These responses can draw learners' attention to their successes, thus boosting morale and reinforcing learning.
6. Yes. For example, I noted for the student who did the relative clause exercise that she needed to review the irregular third-person forms of the present tense. If we can give information that makes students aware of their particular problems and suggest what they might do about them, this is one of the most valuable kinds of feedback we can provide.
7. Again, yes. I think it is very important to respond to an expression of opinion with one of my own: 'Yes, I feel the same...', 'I'm not sure about this. What would happen if...?'. This kind of comment makes it clear that the message is important, and that I see it as valuable enough to respond to as interlocutor.
8. Asking learners to re-do all their corrected work as a routine can be tedious and discouraging. For these exercises I did not require rewriting, though I did give another very similar grammar exercise to the one shown here a week or two later, having reviewed what I saw as the main problems. One instance where I do consistently request rewriting is for longer compositions or essays. In this case, the first draft does not get graded, only corrected, with constructive suggestions for the second version. The student then knows that, if he or she incorporates all the corrections and suggestions, there is a very good chance of getting a high mark, and the procedure is immediately rewarding as well as learning-valuable.

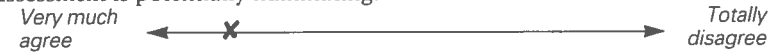
(3) Statements about feedback

1. Feedback implies a power hierarchy.



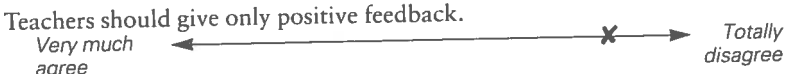
In my opinion a power hierarchy in the classroom, with the teacher in charge and students subordinate, is inevitable: the right of the teacher to correct and assess is one expression of it. Underlying, and to some extent offsetting this apparent dominance, however, is the teacher's role as server and supporter of the learners: the two roles are not only compatible, but, I think, complementary and essential for healthy classroom relationships.

2. Assessment is potentially humiliating.



If you have recently undergone assessment yourself, you may recall the experience of real, or feared, humiliation. It is important to recognize that the potential exists in order to be able to ensure that it is not realized.

3. Teachers should give only positive feedback.

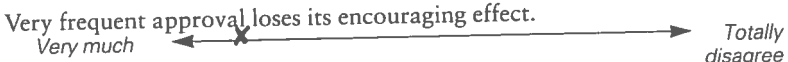


It is true that positive feedback tends to encourage, but this can be overstated, as here. Negative feedback, if given supportively and warmly, will be recognized as constructive, and will not necessarily discourage.

4. Giving praise fosters good teacher–student relationships.

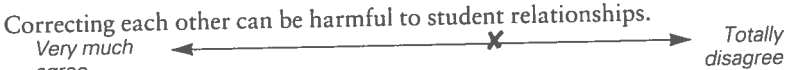
Yes, up to a point. But if there are good relationships, praise often becomes unnecessary; frank, friendly criticism is probably more appropriate and contributes more to the further strengthening of the relationship. And see the next question.

5. Very frequent approval loses its encouraging effect.



I have seen this happen: the giving of praise can easily be devalued through overuse. Students come to expect it as a matter of course, cease to be particularly encouraged by it, and are hurt if it is not forthcoming. In fact, overused, uncritical praise can begin to irritate.

6. Correcting each other can be harmful to student relationships.



If peer-correction causes conflict or tension between individuals, this probably means that relationships were not particularly warm or trusting in the first place. In other words, I do not think that peer-correction in itself can hurt if students feel good with one another in general; it may, however, do so if there was previous dislike or lack of trust between them.

Further reading

Bartram, M. and Walton, R. (1991) *Correction: Mistake Management – A Positive Approach for Language Teachers*, Hove: Language Teaching Publications.
(A compact, clear, systematic and, as it says, practical guide to the subject; interesting and relevant reader tasks help to clarify)

Brindley, G. (1989) *Assessing Achievement in the Learner-Centred Curriculum*, Macquarie University, Sydney: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research.
(A comprehensive and readable overview of ways of assessment in language learning)

Edge, J. (1989) *Mistakes and Correction*, London: Longman.
(A simple, practical handbook: suggests various techniques for correcting in different situations)

Harmer, J. (1984) 'How to give your students feedback', *Practical English Teaching*, 5, 2, 39–40.
(Practical guidelines on ways of correcting in the classroom)

Johnson, K. (1988) 'Mistake correction', *ELT Journal*, 42, 2, 89–96.
(Ways of correcting mistakes effectively within a skill model of language learning)
Leki, I. (1991) 'The preferences of ESL students for error correction in college-level writing classes', *Foreign Language Annals* (New York), 24, 3, 203–18.
(An interesting piece of research, indicating that learners do, on the whole, want detailed correction of grammar, spelling, etc.)
Norrish, J. (1983) *Language Learners and their Errors*, London: Macmillan.
(A basic, sensible teacher's guide, clearly written, with plenty of practical examples and suggestions)
Raz, H. (1992) 'The crucial role of feedback and evaluation in language classes', *The Teacher Trainer*, 6, 1, 15–17.
(Stresses the importance for the learner of ongoing supportive feedback rather than test-based evaluation)
Zamel, V. (1985) 'Responding to student writing', *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 1, 79–101.
(A thoughtful discussion of dilemmas in giving feedback on (advanced) student writing, and some practical solutions)

REFERENCES IN UNIT ONE

Johnson, K. (1995) *Language Teaching and Skill Learning*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
Krashen, S. D. (1982) *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
McLaughlin, B. (1987) *Theories of Second-Language Learning*, London: Edward Arnold.
Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T. S. (1986) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Selinker, L. (1972) 'Interlanguage', *IRAL*, 10, 219–31.
Selinker, L. (1992) *Rediscovering Interlanguage*, London: Longman.