Does feedback really matter?

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Don’t!

Do!

selective

Comprehensive fb

formative

summative

Ask questions

feedback

correction

input

replies

reviews

answers

evaluations

opinions

ratings

comments

surveys

responses

input

Truscott (1996) - feedback is harmful

teachers can’t provide adequate and consistent feedback

learners don’t know how to make use of feedback

corrective feedback overlooks interlanguage development

one form of corrective feedback is not effective

Truscott (1996) in The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes
Ferris (1999) - *feedback is helpful*

Let us not rely on inadequate evidence to make important pedagogical decisions. Instead, let us keep our own experiences and intuitions in mind, listen to our students, and consider their needs in deciding if, when, and how to provide error feedback and correction to L2 student writers.

Today..?

*Feedback is useful but ...*

different types - different effects

*longterm - shortterm*
Our problem...?

- comprehensive fb
- indirect, meta-linguistic fb
- recurring errors
What is ..?

Selective WCF

- Focused feedback
- Fewer error types

Comprehensive WCF

- Unfocused feedback
- All error types
When I grown up I wants to be photografe I think.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-metalinguistic located</th>
<th>Direct WCF</th>
<th>Indirect WCF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grow</td>
<td>When I grown up I wants to be a photographer, photografe I think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>want</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When I grown up I wants to be photografe I think.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marginal comment: “Check verb tense, concord, indefinite article usage and noun form”.

Or coded:
”V tense, C, indef art, N errors”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metalinguistic located</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I grown up I wants to be photographer</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_ photografe I think.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) you should use the present tense verb form grow because this refers to the future in a temporal clause (underlined)
(2) The subject I has to agree in form with the verb want
(3) You need the indefinite article ‘a’ before the noun referring to a job
(4) This noun is photographer in English
What was the INTENT of the feedback?

- questions or suggestions on the content
- comments on grammar/mechanics
- providing encouragement
What linguistic FORM was used?

- **Statements**  *You need to use 3rd pers. singular here.*
- **Questions**  *Which verb form is needed here?*
- **Imperatives**  *Use 3rd pers. singular here!*
- **Exclamations**  *Good use of verb form!*
Research questions:

- Does writing improve after feedback?
- Does improvement apply to all feedback areas?
- Is there a relation between type, form & intent of feedback and improvement?
Pilot study 2012

- 25 student teachers
- 2 teachers
- Written proficiency course
- Longitudinal study 20 weeks

The set up - teacher feedback

- comprehensive feedback
- positive & corrective fb
- online marginal comments = located
- indirect: metalinguistic
- direct: delete/insert OR colour codes
The set up - peer response

- star
- star
- wish
Figure 2. Procedure: collection of material during the autumn 2012
## Analysis of target areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEXT structure</td>
<td>paragraph structure, summary format and main content coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERB mastery</td>
<td>subject–verb agreement, tense/aspect usage, verb form (regular vs. irregular form; verb + infinitive/gerund/bare infinitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENTENCE structure</td>
<td>coordination/subordination, word order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER areas</td>
<td>spelling, vocabulary, article usage, punctuation etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improved areas?

Most improvement

Text structure:
- summary format
- content

Sentence structure
- Coord/subord
- Word order

Least improvement

- Verb mastery
  - concord
  - tense

‘Other’ area increased
- vocabulary choice
- spelling

Too much feedback to take in?
Students who improved:

- more fb in practice texts
- even balance DIRECT - INDIRECT fb
- more comments on grammar/mechanics
- more positive comments (format, content)
- fewer questions - more statements
Pedagogical suggestions:
- balance direct & indirect fb
- direct with metalinguistic comments
- use statements rather than questions
- selective fb with variation

shortterm
- direct WCF for immediate revision and rule-based errors
- direct WCF better for low achievers

longterm
- indirect WCF for lasting effect
- indirect WCF better for cognitive engagement
RESULT?

- selective fb *verb mastery, sentence str, text str*
- don’t avoid direct correction
- questions used carefully
- set shortterm and longterm goals
- new programme course on feedback

More research needed...
YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS

Thank you!


