

# Strategic Corrective Feedback in the EFL Classroom

Giving effective feedback that corrects our students' errors is an important language teaching task. Although there are many different corrective feedback strategies, many teachers rely solely on recasting, or correctly restating incorrect learner output without explicitly drawing attention to the error.

In this webinar, we will:

- discuss several corrective feedback strategies
- examine corrective feedback examples
- explore how these strategies can be applied more effectively than recasting alone



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# Agenda

- **Strategic corrective feedback overview**
- **Feedback on student writing**
- **Feedback on student speaking**
- **Reflect on how you can apply corrective feedback in your classroom**



# Strategic Corrective Feedback



# Consider this scenario

Have you ever read a student essay that is really well done? The content is excellent, the essay is well-organized and cohesive. There is at least one error in *every* sentence. Some errors are grammar, some are vocabulary, some are spelling, some are connectors and transitions. How do you decide what to correct? Do you correct *everything*, and risk shutting down the student? Should you focus on form or meaning? Or both? How do you choose? How will you know your corrections will contribute to the student's learning?

I was in that situation. I think we have all been in that situation. Giving feedback to students is somewhat of an art, but we teachers can make informed choices about how much and what type of feedback we give our students. These important decisions about feedback are what we will explore together today

# What is Corrective Feedback (CF)?

One way of assessing our students.

1. Teacher notices an error in student's writing or speaking.

- grammar
- pronunciation
- word choice
- spelling
- etc.

2. Teacher corrects the error.

Hmm. I heard  
an error in  
grammar.

I think we  
should  
**does** this.



# How can corrective feedback be *strategic*?

We think about our response.

We are intentional about our response.

- stay focused, targeted, specific
- choose *what* to correct
- decide *how* and *when* to correct
- be kind and empowering



# Why is corrective feedback important?

- Powerful way for students to learn
- Errors are common in language learning
- Supported by SLA theory and research

This is great writing. Here's how you can make it better.



# Should the focus be on form or meaning?

- Teacher must make these decisions.
- Consider:
  - context
  - relationship with student
  - timing

Hmm. I understood what she meant...

I think we should **does** this



# Let's hear from you!

**What challenges have you faced in giving corrective feedback to your students?**



# What is the connection between CF and theory?

- **Noticing hypothesis**
  - student must notice the correction
- **Comprehensible input**
  - the correction must be within the student's ability to understand

# Strategic Corrective Feedback: Student Writing



# Theory regarding written CF

Students need an opportunity to *notice*, *think*, and *self-correct*.

Student notices + thinks + self-corrects = long-term memory

Long-term memory = long-term learning



# Written corrective feedback



Three types for today's focus:

- Direct
- Indirect
- Metalinguistic
  - *meta* = thinking; reasoning; cognition/brain

# Let's hear from you!

What differences do you see between direct and indirect corrective feedback?

Direct corrective feedback

This town ~~have~~<sup>has</sup> many park~~s~~ that town ~~not~~<sup>does</sup> have many park~~s~~.  
but

Indirect corrective feedback

This town have many park that town not have many park.



# Metalinguistic written corrective feedback

Should it be singular or plural?

Many is followed by the plural

Remember last week when we talked about negation?

This town have many park that town not have many park.

See my note above

This is a comparison, so use a connector here

# Let's hear from you!

Which type of written corrective feedback do you think would best support long-term language learning?  
Why?

Direct,  
Indirect,  
*or*  
Metalinguistic?



# Comparing types of written CF

Direct	I can <del>to</del> cook dinner tonight.	The teacher corrects the error for the student.
Indirect	I can <u>to</u> cook dinner tonight.	The teacher identifies the error, but does not correct it.
Metalinguistic	I can <b>to</b> cook dinner tonight. What form of the verb follows <u>can</u> ?	The teacher identifies the error, and suggests the <i>language</i> needed to make the correction.

# Theory revisited

Indirect and metalinguistic offer opportunity to *notice, think, and self-correct*.

Student notices + thinks + self-corrects = long-term memory

Long-term memory = long-term learning



# Strategic written corrective feedback

**What** to correct: form vs. meaning

- context – grammar class vs. content-area class

**What** to correct: surface level vs. discourse level

**When** to correct: immediately or later as a mini-lesson?

**How** to correct: direct? indirect? metalinguistic?

**How much** to correct: not so much that it stifles the student

Example:

*I have a dog. His name is Rover. My cat eats a lot. Rover likes to play.*

# Let's hear from you!

**The form and meaning are correct. But, is it organized properly?**

**I have a dog. His name is Rover.  
My cat eats a lot. Rover likes to play.**



# Best practices for corrective feedback on student writing

- **Build relationships with students first!**
  - students will be more accepting of written feedback
- **Make informed, strategic choices about what to correct.**
  - correct anything not understandable
  - grammar? spelling? meaning? discourse?
- **Consider context.**
  - grammar lesson vs. vocabulary lesson vs. content lesson
- **Enhance student learning by asking them to self-correct.**

# Let's hear from you!

Write

Write at least 8 sentences comparing the two methods. State advantages and disadvantages for each. Explain which one you think will be more accurate.

I think that Camila's must be right some advantages are she will probably get it right. Some disadvantages are not all of them will way the same and some might be broken and she can weigh them wrong.

**Consider the written CF you would provide.**

- punctuation?
- spelling?
- grammar?
- organization?

**How would you offer CF?**

- direct?
- indirect?
- metalinguistic?

Writing sample from <https://aresecure.dpsk12.org/public/assessadmin/test.pdf> WIDA Level 3, grades 6-8

# Which of these is more effective?

I am married  
with a  
wonderful  
person!

I am married  
~~with~~ **to** a  
wonderful  
person!

I am married  
with a  
wonderful  
person!

She ate  
dinner in 6:00  
pm.

Option 1:  
Is it *with* or *to*?

Option 2:  
**WE TALKED ABOUT  
THIS LAST WEEK!!!!**



# Written corrective feedback for large classes

- **Workshopping format**
  - “Trade and correct” in small groups
  - teambuilding first!
  - model and give examples
  - give directions of what to look for
  - they can give direct or indirect corrective feedback
- **Group assignments**
  - intentional grouping
  - frequent “check ins” and drafts



# Strategic Corrective Feedback: Student Speaking



# Three focuses for today

- Recast correction
- Direct correction
- Metalinguistic correction
  - remember metalinguistic?
- Strategic
  - intentionally choose a method
  - based on many factors



# Recasts

- Repeating what the student said with a correction
- Most common type of correction
- Results in less self-correction
  - most often, the student does not notice the recast

Less self-correction => less long-term learning



# Let's hear from you!

**How would you correct the student using a recast?**



*She had a lot of  
advices for me*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Direct correction

- Also very common
- More noticing
- No self-correction => less long-term learning



# Let's hear from you!

**How would you correct the student using direct correction?**



*She had a lot of  
advices for me*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Metalinguistic corrective feedback

Teacher points out the error, and the student self-corrects.

Many alternatives:

- Remember from yesterday's class?
- Is it *I have 10 years* or *I am 10-years-old*?

*Noticing + self-correction* = long-term learning



# Let's hear from you!

**How would you correct the student using a metalinguistic correction?**

*She had a lot of advices for me*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Your turn!

I am very interested in  
PHOtography

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



I was so boring  
Last weekend!

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Comparing types of spoken CF

<b>Recast</b>	<b>S: I can to cook dinner tonight.</b> <b>T: I can cook dinner tonight.</b>	The teacher corrects the error for the student but does not clearly point out that the student has made an error.
<b>Direct</b>	<b>S: I can to cook dinner tonight.</b> <b>T: In English we say I can cook dinner tonight</b>	The teacher identifies the error and corrects it for the student.
<b>Metalinguistic</b>	<b>S: I can to cook dinner tonight.</b> <b>T: What form of the verb follows <u>can</u>?</b>	The teacher identifies the error, and suggests the language needed to make the correction.

# What kind of CF is this?

**Direct,  
Recast,  
or  
Metalinguistic?**

I want to  
major in  
Biology

What syllable is  
stressed in a word  
with the –logy suffix?  
Remember from last  
week?



# What kind of CF is this?

Direct,  
Recast,  
*or*  
Metalinguistic?

I want to  
major in  
Biology

Oh, you want  
to major in  
biOlogy!



# What kind of CF is this?

Direct,  
Recast,  
*or*  
Metalinguistic?

I want to  
major in  
Biology

In English, we stress  
the syllable directly  
before the -logy  
suffix. So, it would  
be biOlogy.



# Overcorrection

I want...

...to major...

I'm never going to talk in class again!



It's pronounced want. Say it again...WANT!

It's pronounced major. Say it correctly...MAJOR!

# Setting priorities for spoken corrective feedback

- **What** to correct: understandable?
- **What** to correct: pronunciation? word form?
- **When** to correct: immediately or later as a mini-lesson?
  - do you really want to stop the flow of the conversation?
- **How** to correct: recast? direct? metalinguistic?
- **How much** to correct: not so much that it stifles the student

# Best practices for corrective feedback on student speaking

- **Build relationships with students first!**
  - students will be more accepting of spoken feedback
- **Make informed choices about what to correct.**
  - correct anything not understandable
  - word choice and pronunciation
- **Consider context.**
  - presentation skills lesson vs. vocabulary lesson vs. content lesson
- **Enhance student learning by asking them to self-correct.**
- **Do NOT overcorrect!**

# Spoken corrective feedback for large classes

- **Choose “focus” students**
  - 3-5 different students in each class/activity
- **Group assignments**
  - intentional grouping
  - frequent “check-ins”
- **Use listening skills!**
  - Dictation => peer discussion/negotiation and correction
  - Small group read-alouds and repeated reading for fluency and confidence



# Strategic Corrective Feedback: Reflection



# How you can analyze your current practice

- **Review your CF on written assignments from students.**
  - tally/count direct, indirect, and metalinguistic
- **Ask a colleague to observe.**
  - tally/count recast, direct, and metalinguistic
- **Challenge yourself to practice and use metalinguistic corrective feedback with student writing and speaking.**

Observer



# Let's hear from you!

**What is one strategy that you learned today?**

**How will you use different types of corrective feedback in your classroom?**



# References

[Please include a list of works cited or links to other resources you demonstrated/referenced.]

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# Reflection Questions

1. In written work, how do you typically indicate to a student that they have made an error? How well do you think your current strategies work?
2. In spoken activities, how do you typically indicate to a student that they have made an error? How well do you think your current strategies work?
3. Which strategies from today's session might you add to your corrective feedback toolkit? Why?



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