

Effective dynamic written corrective feedback for L2 writers

Paul Michiels & Laurie Miller
George Mason University
pmichiel@gmu.edu | llmiller@gmu.edu

DWCF Background

DWCF originally designed to improve accuracy in English language learning contexts^{9, 10}.

- Unlike recent efforts to demonstrate the efficacy of written corrective feedback for accuracy issues relating to a small number of errors², Dynamic Written Corrective Feedback attempted to address all errors at once and did so based on two underlying principles: 1) feedback must be tailored to student need, and 2) feedback must be meaningful, manageable, timely, and constant¹⁰.

Theoretical Underpinnings of our Model

Skill Acquisition Theory (DeKeyser 2014). Learning a complex skill such as academic writing involves three developmental stages, each accompanied by a corresponding type of knowledge.

1. **Declarative** - learner acquires declarative knowledge, namely, facts, rules of thumb, and other information that can be situated in long-term memory, and pulled into working memory for actual use.
2. **Proceduralization** - learner needs an opportunity to develop procedural knowledge - how to apply a rule or solve a problem.
 - a. Slow, correct, and deliberate proceduralization is “vital for successful skill acquisition⁸”. Properly articulated declarative knowledge (memorable and useful knowledge) and opportunities for proceduralization lead to a drop in error rates and processing time (often represented by a power curve). As procedural knowledge develops, tasks become increasingly contextualized, meaningful, and authentic, thus placing increased demands on working memory.
3. **Automatization** - learner begins the slow process of fine-tuning and perfecting knowledge with the ultimate aim of developing automatic knowledge (unthinking is fluent, and essentially error free).
 - a. Though full automatization may be impossible for some skills, movement in the direction of automaticity inevitably frees up space in working memory to focus on other aspects of writing and thinking.

Sociocultural tradition of second language acquisition (Bruffee (1984). Arguing against the Cartesian tradition that situates the writer as an individual expressing impressions drawn from a lone mind, Bruffee suggests that writing is internalized conversation (with texts or individuals) made social once again (cf. Bakhtin).

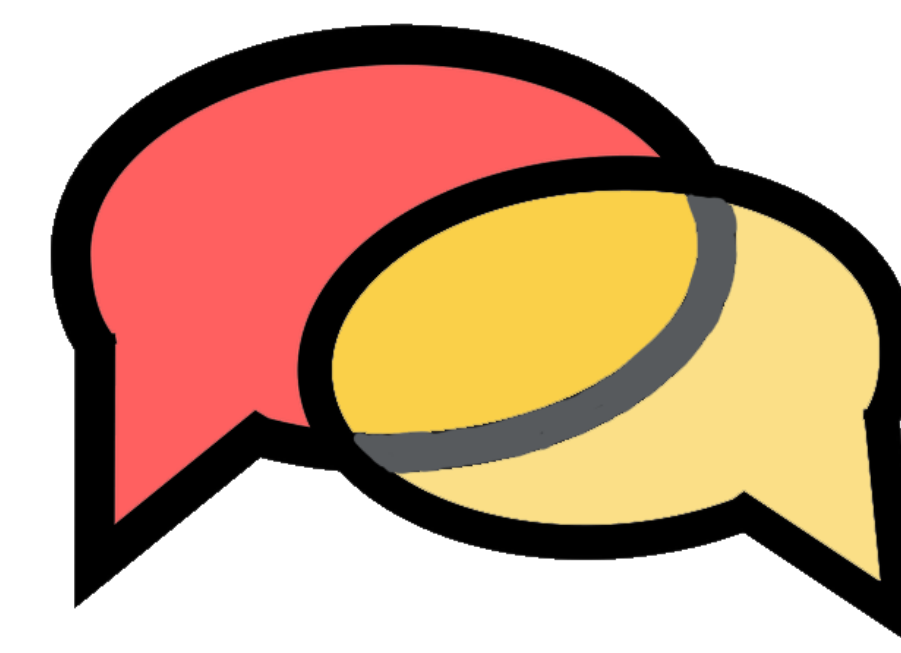
- If writing is essentially dialogic, as Bruffee argues, then a key part of learning to write is learning to write for a community of knowledgeable academic or professional peers (p. 643). We have attempted to replicate writing which takes place in professional discourse communities by incorporating peer feedback into the cycle.

DWCF in the INTO Pathway Programs at George Mason University

Our model adopts the four basic principles of DWCF and includes a fifth, dialogic element.

The screenshot shows a student's writing with various feedback annotations. Red arrows point to specific comments. The feedback includes comments on grammar, content, and organization. The student's text is in a smaller font, and the feedback is in a larger font. The feedback is written in a professional, academic style.

Instructors		Students
Focus on targeted feedback on topics presented and practiced in class <ul style="list-style-type: none">• deeper and more meaningful comments designed to elicit significant revision	Meaningful	Feedback only refers to rhetorical and linguistic materials introduced and practiced in class <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provides students with opportunities to practice applying new forms of declarative knowledge
Instructors and peers provide limited number of comments per paper to ensure revision process remains practice oriented <ul style="list-style-type: none">• significantly limits the time needed per paper	Manageable	In each feedback session, student only receives comments on a specific number of rhetorical/linguistic elements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• student focuses on addressing specific, known issues in the text,• student locates, reviews, and summarizes relevant declarative knowledge that may have been misunderstood or misapplied
Because focus is on one issue per feedback cycle, the turnaround is much faster <ul style="list-style-type: none">• student attending class twice a week receives feedback every class period	Timely	As soon as the student turns in a draft, the teacher begins addressing a given feedback element <ul style="list-style-type: none">• student usually has feedback available by the next class period, which she or he then works through and resubmits
Cycle continues throughout the semester	Constant	Cycle continues throughout the semester
Provides direct feedback to student writer and student peer-reviewer <ul style="list-style-type: none">• students receive additional training in how to use and provide positive, productive, and effective feedback	Dialogic	Receives feedback from instructor and a peer and is graded on how well she or he applies that feedback in the production of a substantive revision



- **Expanded Dynamic Written Corrective Feedback (DWCF)**
- **Theoretically based in Skill Acquisition Theory (SAT) & sociocultural SLA**
- **Addresses accuracy, complexity & adequacy**
- **Separates and focuses feedback**
- **Grades students on their own feedback practices & their interaction with peer & instructor feedback**

Limitations

- DWCF in our model bases all feedback on classroom-based lessons and practice.
 - Lessons reflect the linguistic and rhetorical hallmarks of humanities-based academic writing. Students who arrive already proficient at these skills receive significantly less feedback.
- Our feedback cycle is limited in scope.
- Only a limited number of topics can be covered so questions remain regarding both topic selection and depth of presentation.

Future Research - Design a longitudinal empirical study to test the efficacy of this feedback technique.

Comments & Suggestions

- Post your ideas here with our poster on a sticky note.
- Or use this digital form: bit.ly/DWCF_study_suggestions

References

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