英作文推敲法の有効性の比較
——学習者の視点から——

Effects of Different Editing Methods on EFL Writing Quality: What Do the Students Think?

静　　哲　人

英作文推敲法の有効性の比較
——学習者の視点から——

Effects of Different Editing Methods on EFL Writing Quality: What Do the Students Think?

静　　哲　人　　　大妻多摩高等学校
SHIZUKA　Tetsuhito　　Otsuma Tama High School

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore EFL students' views on four different editing methods: editing based on direct teacher correction, editing based on teacher's uncoded indication of the location of error, editing by peer feedback, and unaided self-editing. One hundred and twenty Japanese high school students rated these methods on a 5-point scale and also gave verbal comments on their advantages and disadvantages. The results indicated that the students perceived editing based on teacher's indication of the location of error the most effective, and direct teacher correction and self-editing the least effective. The students' verbal comments are examined in detail and the advantages and the disadvantages of each editing method are discussed.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the keenest interests of writing teachers is to determine what kind of feedback has an optimal effect on developing students' writing proficiency. Various kinds of feedback have been compared in previous studies.

One way of creating different editing conditions is to differentiate the degree of salience of feedback, from direct to indirect to no correction. Lalend (1982) found that indirect feedback with the use of an error code produced significantly greater gains than direct correction. Ross (1982) compared direct and coded feedback and found no significant difference. Robb, Ross and Shortreed (1986) found no significant difference by differentiating the degrees of salience of feedback. Hatori et al. (1990) compared direct correction, underlining, and mere stamping and found no significant difference in students' performance in writing, except that direct correction seems to discourage students.

Another line of research has been concerned with the effect of changing the source of feedback from teacher to peer. Witbeck (1976) stated that peer feedback resulted in

improved writing quality and a more constructive classroom atmosphere. Urzua (1987) reported that revising with trusted peers resulted in acquiring a sense of audience, a sense of voice, and a sense of power in language. Keh (1990) states that peer feedback is superior to teacher correction in that the former can be more at the learner's own developmental level, and that the reader can learn more about writing by reading others' drafts. In EFL, Ohshita (1990, 1992) empirically examined peer feedback and suggested that using peer feedback in combination with indirect teacher feedback would attain optimal results in improving students' writing quality.

Shizuka (1993) combined the above two lines of research and quantitatively compared four editing methods: editing based on direct teacher correction (T-C), editing based on teacher's uncoded indication of the location of errors (T-U), editing by peer feedback (Peer), and unaided self-editing (Self). The measurement by the use of the percentage of error-free T-units indicated the superiority of T-U and Peer in immediate and retained improvement rate over the other two; the great immediate improvement by T-C was the least well maintained and almost no improvement was achieved by Self.

The present study was designed to complement the findings of Shizuka(1993) by exploring the four editing methods from the students' perspectives. How do the students view the four methods? Which do they perceive to be the most/least effective and why? Do the proficiency levels of the students effect any difference on their perception of the different methods?

2. METHOD

2. 1. Subjects

The subjects in this study were the same as those in Shizuka(1993): 120 Japanese EFL students, all of whom were females between 16-17 years of age, at Otsuma Tama High School. They were divided into high, middle, and low proficiency groups of forty based on their average scores on three mid-term and term-end English tests administered during the six months previous to this study. In their writing classes, they had all experienced the following editing methods:

(1) T-C: All the grammatical errors in the first drafts are directly and completely edited by the teacher. Students produce the second drafts by carefully incorporating the teacher's corrections.

(2) T-U: The first drafts are marked by the teacher to indicate locations of surface structure errors by underlining the parts that contain errors. Students produce the

second drafts by trying to improve the underlined parts.

(3) Peer: No feedback is given to their first drafts by the teacher. The students form groups of three or four and try to give each other editing and revising suggestions, based on which they produce the second drafts.

(4) Self: No feedback is given to their first drafts by the teacher nor by the peer. The writers revise and edit completely on their own, trying to identify and correct mistakes.

2. 2   Data Collection

A questionnaire in L1 was administered to examine the subjects' quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the four different editing conditions (see Appendix). As for quantitative data, each subject was asked to rate the editing methods on a $1-5$ scale, one being the lowest and five the highest, in terms of perceived effectiveness on their subsequent writing quality. As a qualitative evaluation, they were asked to verbally comment freely on what they thought was good, bad, easy, or difficult and so on about the four editing methods.

2. 3   Data Analysis

First, a 3(proficiency level) x 4 (editing condition) ANOVA with a repeated measure on the editing condition factor was run on the means of the ratings. Second, following Mangelsdorf (1992), students' comments were divided into what Langer and Applebee (1987) called "communication units", each unit being a separate expression about a thought, and were examined in detail.

3. RESULTS
3. 1   Rating

The means and SDs of the students' ratings are shown in Table 1 and the results of a two-way ANOVA are shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Means and SDs of the Students' Ratings

		T－C	T－U	PEER	SELF
high	Mean	2. 62	4. 35	3. 62	2. 82
[n=40]	(SD)	(0. 94)	(0. 79)	(0. 94)	(0. 94)
middle	Mean	3. 00	4. 35	3. 47	3. 10
[n=40]	(SD)	(1. 07)	(0. 57)	(0. 86)	(1. 01)
low	Mean	3. 22	4. 40	3. 72	2. 90
[n=40]	(SD)	(1. 06)	(0. 66)	(0. 74)	(0. 83)
Total	Mean	2. 95	4. 36	3. 60	2. 94
[n=120]	(SD)	(1. 05)	(0. 68)	(0. 85)	(0. 94)

The main effect for editing condition was significant ($F(3,351)=67.87$, $p<0.01$). This indicates that there was some difference somewhere among the ratings for the four editing conditions. The interaction between proficiency level and editing condition was not significant. This means that the students' perception of the four methods was not influenced by their proficiency levels.

Table 2. The Results of a Two－Way ANOVA

Source	S S	d f	M S	F
Proficiency : A	3. 45	2	1. 73	2. 23
S(A)	90. 51	117	0. 77	
Editing condition : B	164. 72	3	54. 91	67. 87**
A x B	6. 85	6	1. 14	1. 41
B x S(A)	283. 94	351	0. 81	
Total	549. 47	479		

$**p<.01$

Since the main effect for editing condition was significant, it now had to be investigated where the difference was. Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) tests were performed for multiple comparisons of the means (Table 3). It was revealed that, at $p<0.01$ level, the rating for T－U was significantly higher than that for Peer, which in turn was significantly higher than those for T－C and Self, which did not differ significantly from each other(T－U > Peer > T－C, Self).

Table 3. Multiple Comparisons by Tukey's HSD tests

	T − C	T − U	PEER	SELF
T−C = 2. 95		1. 41**	0. 65**	0. 01
T−U = 4. 36			0. 76**	1. 42**
PEER = 3. 60				0. 66**
SELF = 2. 94				
		HSD=0. 369		**p<.01

3. 2 Verbal Comments

All the verbal comments by the subjects were broken down into communication units and classified as either positive or negative. Tables 4 − 7 show the number of positive and negative communication units about each editing method.

Table 4.   Subjects' comments about T−C

Communication units	# of Communication units
Positive:	
Easy to perform	44
Prevents fossilization	36
Helps acquire new knowledge	16
Helps produce high quality product	4
Negative:	
Discourage independent thinking	32
Modifications are unlikely to be retained	20
Task is dull and boring	8

Table 5.   Subjects' comments about T−U

Communication units	# of Communication units
Positive:	
Encourages/forces independent thinking	44
Helps pay selective attention to errors	40
Facilitates retention/acquition	24
Prevents fossilization	16
Helps concentrate on the task	12
Promotes dictionary use	4
Creates careful attitude for subsequent writing	4

Helps correct careless mistakes	2
Negative:	
Does not attain complete correction	28
Feedback is sometimes incomprehensible	20

Table 6.　　Subjects' comments about Peer

Communication units	# of Communication units
Positive:	
Helps learn various expressions	28
Helps find mistakes undetected by the writer	24
Cooperation facilitaes correction	20
Helps produce various ideas	20
Fun and motivating	12
Helps produce reader-based writing	8
Helps improve content	7
Promotes independent thinking	3
Promotes retention	3
Saves time for dictionary use	1
Negative:	
Time-consuming	44
Cooperation is sometimes difficult	16
Providing suggestions require courage	8
Promotes dependent attitude	4
Does not help with grammar	2
Discourages dictionary use	1

Table 7.　　Subjects' comments about Self

Communication units	# of Communication units
Positive:	
Promotes independent thinking	32
Promotes concentration	24
Allows having one's own way	20
Promotes dictionary use	15
Helps confirm already learned knowledge	3

Negative:	
Correction is unlikely to be successful	44
Time-consuming	16
Creates uneasiness	7
Dull and boring	3
Does not help with content	2

4. DISCUSSION

The results indicated that, irrespective of the subjects' proficiency levels, the perceived effectiveness was in the following order: T-U > Peer > Self = T-C. It is interesting to compare this perceived order with the order measured by an objective scale in Shizuka(1993), which were:T-C > T-U = Peer > Self, for the immediate improvement in the second draft, and; Peer = T-U = Self > T-C, for the maintenance of the improved quality over time. When these three orders are compared, it can be seen that the subjects' know very well what is and is not good for them in the long run. Although no significant difference in the ratings was observed among the three proficiency levels, subjects' verbal comments revealed subtle differences according to proficiency. Also, methods rated high were not without problems and those rated low were not without advantages. Each editing method will be taken separately to be discussed below.

The students as a whole clearly perceived T-U as the most effective. The mean for the rating of this condition was significantly higher than that for the other three. The reason for this high rating can evidently be seen in the students' verbal comments, in which this technique was evaluated favorably by almost all the subjects. When the location of errors is indicated in the feedback, they feel the task is easy to tackle because they know what to focus their attention on. It is not too easy like just copying the given correction nor too demanding like locating and correcting errors by themselves. The goal is felt to be just as far as they can reach when they make the effort. One high proficiency subject wrote, "I think T-U is the best because it gives us both accurate knowledge and the ability to solve problems on our own". This perception seems to be common at all proficiency levels. However, it is not without problems, especially for low proficiency subjects. One low proficiency subject wrote, "Since I have no confidence in English, when I can't possibly figure out what you mean by your underline, I have a real trouble." This subject may be helped more if a coding system indicating the kind of errors is adopted, as was actually suggested by one high proficiency subject in her comment.

The second highest rating was given to Peer. The main advantages the subjects cited were that they can have their peers point out errors they themselves have overlooked and that they can learn various expressions by reading other members' drafts. Many referred to the fact that working together is "just fun".

However, there were some thought-provoking comments on disadvantages or limitations of this method. One thing that they were aware of was that they tended to depend too much on their peers and to neglect thinking on their own, which could be regarded as the opposite side of the same coin of the advantage mentioned above. Although this is a problem that threatens the value of peer feedback, the very fact that students themselves are aware of their tendency of dependence lessens the threat with the possibility of their conscious effort toward independent thinking.

Another comment worth noting is that Peer is not as effective for surface level structure improvement as for content enrichment or organization improvement. One high proficiency subject wrote; "Since I cannnot help looking at my own draft from the viewpoint of a writer, it helps me to have a friend who reads it as a reader who has no prior knowledge of the content and who tells me what is not communicated well. I think we should ask peers for their opinions as readers to know how we can communicate the message effectively to the reader, rather than for such peripheral things as grammar or usage." It is rather surprising that a 17-year-old Japanese learner reflected upon the distinction between what Flower (1979) referred to as the "reader-based prose" and the "writer-based prose", and has reached the same argument as Johnson and Morrow (1981) that writers write best when writing to communicate a meaning to a real reader.

Some pointed out difficulties which derived from the required cooperative nature itself of peer editing. "Answering all the questions posed by the peers takes away my time to concentrate on my own draft." "I like discussing, but it takes time." "It is really difficult for our group members to work cooperatively. I want to interact with my peers, but they remain silent most of the time. In order to make Peer fruitful, they should speak out." The last comment came from one of the highest proficiency subjects. The reason the other members do not talk much might be that these particular members are resistant to a cooperative learning style, based on the belief that learning should be teacher-oriented, like some Asian students reported by Mangelsdorf(1992). Or it might be the case that they can not contribute much due to the lack of confidence which comes from the perceived gap in the members' proficiency. If even professional English teachers, once in student position, find it difficult to give feedback to equals (Winer,1992), it is no wonder that real students feel unwilling to take the risk of providing suggestions to those who

seem to be of superior proficiency. From these comments, it can be assumed that ample time, awareness of the purpose of the task, and good interpersonal relationships among the members are crucial for a peer editing session to be successful.

One of the two least favored was T–C, which was somewhat against the researcher's preconceived idea that students in general tend to go easy ways. Almost all the subjects commented negatively on this method. They argued that though T–C might well be the best in producing the best quality second drafts and the easiest for them to perform, they didn't feel they were learning the correct forms at all. One middle proficiency subject went as far as to say, "To have everything corrected by you lowers our motivation because there is nothing left for us to work out on our own." Clearly students seem to want some challenging factor in the task they perform. However, although the surface differences in the ratings for T–C among the three proficiency levels did not reach statistical significance, there was a subtle trend in relation to proficiency observed in verbal comments; low proficiency subjects tended to comment on T–C more favorably than high proficiency ones. It stands to reason that the former, lacking knowledge and ability to make use of indirect suggestions, welcome overt corrections. One low proficiency subject wrote, "Since I lack basic knowledge of English, it helps me a lot if you correct my draft in detail. If there is no feedback, I am at a loss what to do." It can be seen that completely abandoning the practice of direct teacher correction in the face of bulk of research evidence against it should be given a second thought. There seem to be students who want and need salient feedback, not as a punishment but as a help.

The other method which was rated at the bottom was Self. The typical evaluation of this treatment was that it had a severe limitation to improving one's own draft alone. Although the comments by the subjects were negative as a whole, most mentioned some advantages such as the importance of independent work as well. One high proficiency subject felt, "Self–editing practice is a good way to becoming an independent editor who can examine one's own writing objectively. Editing with the help of others is good, but I found that editing on my own is also important." However, the comments by several low proficiency students were exclusively concerned with defects of this method. Self–editing experience seems to give them a real hard time, creating a sense of helplessness and bewilderment. Although this editing style will have to be used most frequently in the real world because "writing eventually requires a high degree of autonomy and self-sufficiency" (White and Arndt 172), it seems to work little for Japanese EFL students at high school level, when employed exclusively.

5. SUMMARY

This study was designed to explore quantitatively and qualitatively students' perception of four different editing methods. It was found that their perceived effectiveness agrees to a great extent with the objective effectiveness measured in a previous study. Quantitatively, the perceived effectiveness order was: T-U > Peer > T-C = Self, with no significant differences according to proficiency levels. Qualitatively, there were some perception differences in relation to students' proficiency levels, observed in their verbal comments.

The following comment by one high proficiency subject seems to well represent subjects' overall perception of the four different editing conditions. "In terms of the product quality of the second draft, naturally T-C is the best, but it is doubtful that the copying task contributes to improving our writing proficiency in the long run. I think T-U is the best for students at our level. Depending on Self is a little too early for us, since we often cannot find sheer careless mistakes. Peer seems to be of a different nature from the other three, and I think this is also a very good way of editing."

The strong preference of T-C and Peer by students lends support to the claim based on an objective measure that "students are likely to benefit most from indirect teacher feedback or peer editing sessions or the combination of both" (Shizuka 1993 : 154). At the same time, we should bear in mind that there is no single method that is good for everybody and that any method is good for somebody. A reasonable conclusion may be that we should give T-U and Peer leading roles and T-C and Self supporting roles, with their advantages and limitations in mind, in the cyclical and recursive process of editing in the writing classroom.

NOTE

* This paper is based on a part of my MA project submitted to Teachers College Columbia University in June 1993.

REFERENCES

Flower, L. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing."
    College English XLI(1)(1979):19-46.
Hatori, H. et al. *Effectiveness and Limitations of Instructional Intervention by the Teacher
    --Writing Tasks in EFL--.* The Ministry of Education. Tokyo. 1990.
Johnson. K. and K. Morrow (Eds.). *Communication in the Classroom.* Longman.

London. 1981.

Keh, C.L. "Feedback in the Writing Process: A Model and Methods for Implementation."
ELT Journal 44(1990): 294−304.

Lalende, J. F. "Reducing Composition Errors: An Experiment." *The Modern Language Journal* 66(1982): 140−149.

Langer, S. and A. Applebee. *How Writing Shapes Thinking*. Urbana, Illinois :
NCTE: 1987.

Mangelsdorf, K. "Peer Review in the ESL Composition Classroom: What Do the Students
Think?" *ELT Journal* 46(1992) : 274−284.

Ohshita, K. "Effects of Peer Feedback on the Students' Written Product." *Research Reports of Fukui National College of Technology: The Humanities and Social Science* 24(1990): 31−46.

−−−. "Peer−feedback and Its Effects on Error Correction." *Research Reports of Fukui National College of Technology: The Humanities and Social Science* 26 (1992) : 105−124.

Ross. S. The Effects of Direct and Heuristic Correction on First Year Level College
Compositions." *JALT Joural* 4(1982): 97−108.

Robb, T., S. Ross and I. Shortreed. "Salience of Feedback on Error and Its Effect on EFL
Writing Quality." *TESOL Quarterly* 20(1986): 83−93.

Shizuka, T. "Effects of Different Editing Methods on EFL
Writing Quality at High School Level." *JACET Bulletin* 24(1993): 139−158.

Urzua, C. "You Stopped Too Soon: Second Language Children Composing and Revising."
TESOL Quarterly 21(1987): 279−304.

White, R. and V. Arndt. *Process Writing*. Longman. 1991.

Winer, L. ""Spinach to Chocolate": Changing Awareness and Attitude in ESL Writing
Teachers." *TESOL Quarterly* 26(1992): 57−79.

Witbeck, M. C. "Peer Correction Procedures for Intermediate and Advanced ESL
Composition." *TESOL Quarterly* 10(1976): 321−326.

APPENDIX:　The Questionnaire

■英作文の授業で推敲をする際に、次の4つの方式がありました。

> P ：友達と相談して共同作業で推敲する
>
> S ：全く自力で推敲する
>
> T－U：教師のアンダーラインをヒントに自力で推敲する
>
> T－C：教師の訂正を見て推敲する

A.あなたの個人的考えでは、英作文の力を伸ばすために、

（5 大変有効だ　　4 有効だ　　3 どちらでもない　　2 あまり効果がない　　1 全く効果がない）
とすると、

Pは	5	4	3	2	1
Sは	5	4	3	2	1
T－U　は	5	4	3	2	1
T－C　は	5	4	3	2	1

B.それぞれの方式の良い点、助かる点、悪い点、苦労する点、改善の余地等、何でも構いませんので
詳しく書いてください。