Correction and Feedback in the EFL Classroom

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CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

( THE CASE OF COTE d’IVOIRE )

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The classroom teacher is a capital change agent who goes unnoticed. His/her action and attitude with the children and on the children can create deep positive changes for society and for humanity.

Unfortunately they are often given so little means that their daily job experience become a struggle with the classroom realities which makes things difficult for them to look into the future and find solutions to the so many classroom problems.

Aware of that fact, I have tried in this paper to look into the classroom, the EFL classroom in cote d’Ivoire and see how we can procure our children a certain sense of responsibility, a sense of commitment and self-reliance for tomorrow.

In this attempt I have been tremendously helped by my program advisor, Professor Kinsey, my program coordinators (former and present), Marla Solomon and Barbara Gardner. To these persons I would like to express my appreciation and my sincere thankfulness for their assistance.

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My last words will go to the whole Center and through it the University of Massachusetts and the U.S.I.A. which enabled me to attend this program.
To my wife, Mrs KOUAKOU Veronique

my children, KOUAKOU Pauline,
KOUAKOU Lea-Constance,
KOUAKOU Roger,
KOUAKOU Prisca

and KOUAKOU Benedicta,

all of whom made the sacrifice of my eighteen months' absence from home, let this be dedicated.

With love and appreciation!
INTRODUCTION

This project is about the different components of the evaluation of students written work in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom in Cote d’Ivoire. The three main components are correction – feedback – and the class size. And the context of analysis is EFL in Cote d’Ivoire.

In dealing with these points, I will more specifically focus on the written aspect of EFL. My concern will then be to know if there are better strategies for EFL teachers to correct their students’ written papers and give them feedback for further improvement in classes where the average size is about fifty (50).

By correction I mean the marking and grading of papers. By feedback I mean the written and oral comments on and about the students’ written work.

Now, why did I choose to write about this topic?

Evaluation and feedback are to me, very important phases in any process. In the classroom setting, for the teaching to be effective and reaching, we have to have regular checkpoints, both for the teacher and the student. If it is important to check, it is even more important to know how to go about explaining what went wrong and what went right, so that there is continuity in the learning process. This could be schematized as follows:

![Diagram of the learning process with checkpoints and feedback]
Unfortunately in the EFL context in Cote d'Ivoire, my experience has shown me that most students don't benefit from this important phase of their learning. The same mistakes come back over and over again. Students are dissatisfied and teachers frustrated. One of the reasons is that because of the class size, teachers are at a loss — as it were — as to how to mark efficient and giving helpful feedback to all their students.

Another reason is that because of that very first reason, no one really gives correction and/or feedback its due credit. Teachers generally get rid of their correction and feedback sessions in a short time. Or when they take time to do it, the content is still not consistent or well constructed enough. For some, it is just a way to avoid having to prepare a class and teach it. For others, if they happen to take more time for their feedback sessions, they will be called to order by the administration. This also can be understandable if these sessions have no substance.

Students on their part don't seem to take it seriously either because of the lightness and impersonal way correction and feedback are dealt with.

Another reason is the grade factor. Parents, the administration, teachers, and students seem to focus so much on grades, that these grades are the first and last thing students want to know from their papers. Once they know, They are much less interested in what happens next. If they have not got them, they grow so restless that they hardly listen to what is being
said during the session. Besides, that which is being said is often so general, theoretical and vague that it makes sense that they be not interested.

These are the reasons why I chose to deal with this topic and seek to know the possible ways and means to have a more effective correction and feedback strategy in the teaching and learning process of EFL in Cote d'Ivoire.

In order to do this, I will present the context of class size in Cote d'Ivoire before we look closely into how teachers and their students have dealt and still deal with correction and feedback. Then in the light of what literature says about the topic, I will track down through a critical analysis some alternative ways to make correction and feedback in Ivorian EFL classes yield more satisfactory results. These alternatives or suggestions will go along with solving some of the outside-the-classroom constraints that the teaching of EFL is faced with. I will end my project with an evaluation design for the project itself and for its implementation in Cote d'Ivoire.

All this substance will be organized as the table of content shown hereafter.
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II. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND.

II.1. Class size.

We will not go as far back as 1903 when the first public schools were created in Cote d'Ivoire (Paul Desalmand, 1983, p.257.) But it is a useful landmark for us to see that ever since that time, the class size parameter in education has notably evolved. In the beginning, there were even not enough students to make a class. I still remember the time when classes at primary school level were twinned: levels one and two, three and four, five and six were taught in the same classroom by the same teacher. Class sizes were rarely above twenty-five (25).

Even later in 1966 when I was at Junior high, the average size was around thirty (30), though at that time, things were already in a "boom" process. In actuality from the independence days in the mid 1960's, most school systems and populations in Africa started a deep transformation. (Coombs, '85, p.34)

In Cote d'Ivoire, school was not only free, but it was also officially made mandatory for all children after independence. The inherited school infrastructures were improved or extended to the best of the existing means. Hardly before the end of the decade, classes began to suffer from large sizes. In 1968, a government action was undertaken to build more secondary schools which helped maintain the policy of healthy classes. But soon after, the economic situation as well as equal attention to other sectors, no longer enabled the education sector to keep up with the growth of the school population. As an example,
since 1975 until now, no new secondary school has been built. Yet community efforts have resulted in the creation of new primary schools, the motto "school for all" being still important. Hence, there is problem. Despite all the academic selections at various levels of the school system, classes will be more and more congested. Some classes can reach the figure of seventy to eighty (70/80) and some forty to fifty (40/50), with an average around fifty (50).

Parents are appalled but powerless as to what to expect their children to get from such learning conditions. Teachers live in a permanent nightmare, thinking of how they could fulfill their noble task to success and satisfaction. Aware that the government is having problems improving the situation, we Ivorian educators and particularly teachers of EFL, try to look at the whole scene with another pair of glasses. The question we ask ourselves is: how can we keep clear-headed in front of the alarming situation of class sizes and have our teaching of EFL reach, as far possible, the majority rather than the minority of our students, if not all of them.

The irresistible question that might come to the reader's mind is: why is it so important for the French speaking Ivorian student to do that well in English? The answer has to do with the Ivorian Government's policy and objectives for foreign language learning.

II.2. Language Learning Policy and Objectives in Cote d'Ivoire

As part of the world's global network, Cote d'Ivoire
means to be connected and feel included. Thus Ivorians in
general want to learn as many languages as affordable, to be able
to "communiquer avec les autres peuples. Temoigner d'un
In Instructions générales pour l'enseignement des langues
vivantes, a ten-page document of the Ministry of Education in
Cote d'Ivoire issued in 1950, the same thing was already clearly
stated, (p.3), that is that communication is crucial.

So it seems clearly agreed upon that "... un objectif propre à l'enseignement des langues est ce qu'elle [Valette]
nomme "communication." "(Boulouffe, 1976, p.201). (2). This
objective is very general and common for anybody. But it also
holds true for the formal school. Then for practical
dispositions, depending on the context and means, this objective
can be split into more specific ones. In other words, there are
short term objectives under a long term one.

In 1983, the Direction de la pédagogie entrusted the
board of teacher supervisors in charge of English, to work more
specifically on the objectives of ELT (English Language
Teaching). In 1987 the same board of teachers met again and
brainstormed anew on the objectives for teaching English in Cote
d'Ivoire today. Out of these consultations and sharing, came
the basic points that English should be taught for:

(1). Translated: ...to "communicate with other peoples. To show
an enriched intellectual potential."
(2). Translated: "...one inherent objective to the teaching of
languages, is what she [Valette] calls "communication.""
a) Oral and written communication with close and far-off speakers of English.
b) Professional functionality.
c) Exploitation and/or comprehension of any oral or written document in English.
d) Active participation and interaction at international conferences held in English.
e) Accessing to knowledge banked in books and other sources.

Towards achieving these objectives or at least some of them, within the national school system, there are particular curricula that make room for learning English for specific purposes. But we strongly believe that whatever specific purpose one wants to learn English for, there is a minimum of basic communicative English that can/should be learnt, regardless of the type of school or institution in which the learning takes place. This basic aspect of communication that underlies any other aspect is what I am interested in focusing on.

In a nutshell, I will say that in Cote d'Ivoire, we also and mostly learn English is to be able to communicate with native and non-native speakers all over the world. And as already shown, communication is not only oral. It is also written. Indeed we all agree that the first communication need of society is oral language. Thus in our English classes in Cote d'Ivoire, we teach our students to use the oral language as
regularly as possible. That way they could get prepared to use it in the outside world whenever necessary. But realistically, in a French-speaking environment, how many of these students will meet an English speaker in their daily life? How many will travel abroad to English-speaking countries? Even if there were a substantial number of them to do so, there is a chronological mismatch between the time they learn and practice and the time they will actually use it. To me, language is just like a stone thrown in the air. If it stops going up, it can only come down. We have to practice and use it to keep it alive. We can’t learn a language for a perspective day to come.

One of the ways to keep English alive within the borders of Cote d’Ivoire is by writing it. Developing written communication in English will serve a much more realistic purpose and also serve as a reviving support to sporadic oral communication. In doing so, our initial objective of using English for communication will but be doubly secured. And it is to meet that objective that in the official instructions for foreign language teaching in Cote d’Ivoire, it is recommended that all four language skills, - listening, speaking, reading and writing - be taught altogether. And to me, they should be taught with equal emphasis. That is why I chose to concentrate on strategies that can help the students learn and practice their English through their written papers.

But before we get to these correction and feedback strategies, we will have a better idea if we cast a glance at
what others people think about these terms of correction and feedback.

III. EVALUATION/CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK: WHAT COULD THEY MEAN?

When dealing with evaluation and feedback at large, there are endless definitions we can meet. This is so because these terms can be applied in almost every field: counseling, psychology, training, adult education, classroom teaching etc. However, for all these definitions there is a bottom line that remains common to all. Let us see some of the possible dimensions of it, first by looking up the words in dictionaries and encyclopedias. Then I will interview a few people and finally I will give my own perception on the topic.

III.1. Dictionaries and encyclopedias.

III.1.1. Evaluation.

From the International Dictionary of Education, the Cyclopedia of Education, Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Good Dictionary of Education (third edition), evaluation as follows:

"a value judgement on an observation, performance test, or indeed any data whether directly measured or inferred."

or

"the act or result of evaluating," that is "examining and judging, concerning the worth, quality, significance, amount,
degree or condition of...: evaluate a student, a patient, a political trend..."

In short, evaluation is basically the act of making a judgement either with figures or simply descriptive, subjective or objective, depending on the goals and objectives.

III.1.2. Correction.

In the same sources, it was much more difficult to find definitions about correction that were related to education, than it had been for evaluation.(3) However from Webster's Third New International Dictionary and the Encyclopedia of Education, vol.2, the following was said about correction which can apply to the context of school education.

The act or instance of remedying or removing error or defect
The act or instance of calling attention to, reproving or punishing faults or deviations from propriety or rectitude.
...The act or instance of adjusting or altering so as to produce a particular condition or result.

or

getting the substance of a one-page analysis of the methods of correction of errors:

One class of methods aims primarily to extend the power of the child over new facts, relations, forms, conventions, etc; another group is primarily designed to correct the misinterpretation of facts and the misuse of forms and symbols etc. . . . Here the method (second) aims at the modification of an old series of associations, or at its elimination and the substitution of a new series.

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(3). People often talked about correctional education, house of correction, correction and penalty,etc. Only in the Cyclopaedia of education, vol.2, will they extend to error correction.
From these few definitions, we can easily sense out that correction is the act of straightening a deviation, misuse or misinterpretation of something, so to get the expected right form. And this can be done through altering or calling attention to the deviated form. By this act, the remedy is used to modify, eliminate, or substitute something for the deformed element to produce a particular condition or result.

III.1.3. Feedback.

From the same sources the following was said about feedback.

The return to the input of a part of the output of a mechanism, this part of the input constituting that reports discrepancies between intended and actual operation and leads to self-correcting action that can be utilized.

The partial reversion of the effects of a given process of its source or to be a preceding stage so as to reinforce or modify it...

Figurative term for the responses or reactions to an action that can enable the initiator of the action to improve the effectiveness of the action on repeated tries; prompt feedback in this sense from a teacher to students is thought to facilitate the student's learning.

In programmed instruction, information received by the student (also called reinforcement) immediately after a response to a programmed step...

A term borrowed from cybernetics which, in an educational context, means "knowledge of results" or the information which a person receives about the consequences of his/her action. If s/he is not satisfied with those consequences, s/he may take new action. Thus the student receives feedback, for example when he has an essay marked. The teacher receives feedback when she listens to the comments of her students or considers their test results. Either can decide to study or teach differently as a result.

In short, feedback is information on something previously done. This information can help reinforce initial action when it is positive or take a new action to improve it if
But in practice, are these definitions comprehended and used in the same way by everybody? The following interviews will give us an idea of how these terms are perceived and used. In the first part, the interviewees are all present and/or former teachers, presently on a graduate degree program at the University of Massachusetts. They are from different African backgrounds, namely from Tanzania, Somalia, Botswana, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire. In the second part they are American teachers with whom I closely worked while conducting a study.

III.2. Interviews.

III.2.1. The International graduate students.

Through the interview I had with the international graduate students, evaluation was perceived as any act of judging. Correction in the context of education, was defined as the act of telling students what their mistakes are. Two from Cote d'Ivoire added it could also be the act of "showing" either orally or in writing the students' mistakes. Another from Tanzania mentioned teachers and students evaluating class content and behaviours. She also added most specifically students evaluating their teachers.

III.2.2. The hands-on American classroom teachers (Summary).

From a study that I made on correction and feedback in the classroom (Independent Study, Spring '89), I closely worked with a few American classroom teachers most of whom, thought that correction was the act of giving a student the correct element or
item to improve his/her production. From my understanding, this is basically during oral activities. When it comes to writing, they will call it feedback. Some will specify "written feedback". This includes partial and global comments on students' papers. When I asked whether correction did not also mean to pinpoint errors in a paper, most of them simply called it marking.

III.2.3. My personal view.

Much has been said about evaluation and/or correction and feedback. And I find my own view included in the many views already expressed. Nevertheless, when I hear or talk about evaluation, the first thing that jumps in my head is the picture of weighing. This weighing can be verbal and descriptive as well as written and judgmental. Very quickly, by professional bias, my mind switches to the latter. I see papers being written about a piece of knowledge to be judged. Irresistibly, I also see marks (on paper) and grades as tokens of this evaluation. But in fact, these marks and grades are also what gives way to feedback and correction. This is how I get the understanding that evaluation is both formative and summative. When it is formative, marks or any other signs suffice to make the learner understand that something is to be reinforced or modified. These signs or marks are what I consider to be correction. However, correction can also be the substitute a teacher suggests to a student to use to correct the wrong or deviated form. Providing
substitutes, telling, showing, pinpointing what is to be reinforced or corrected are therefore all components of correction.

These marks and substitutes can also be seen as feedback in the sense that they are, like comments, something that is said back to the producer of an initial act. It can be positive (and thus, reinforcement takes place), or negative (indicating a new action to take).

Generally I feel that correction sounds more like rectifying, and feedback more like supporting. When we correct, something has to have been wrong. Correction seems more knowledge-and-power-related, as is typical of classical pedagogy. But when we give feedback, it may not necessarily be on something wrong. In actuality however, in the everyday classroom practice, correction and feedback overlap at some point, the end of one being the beginning of the other. In most cases feedback even starts already with correcting that is marking and grading, and correction also goes on during feedback sessions. As a matter of fact in Cote d’Ivoire, we seldom use the term feedback in the English teachers’ milieu. Feedback sessions after tests are taken are indistinguishably called correction sessions. On the whole I find the term feedback to be more participatory, though it encompasses negative and positive aspects.

From the summative point of view, evaluation is a value judgement on what has been done rather than on what could have been done. Summative evaluation is product-based. Within that
frame of view, evaluation also implies designing an instrument to test. Now as soon as the test is taken by more than one person, the tendency is to rank the testees. This tendency to hierarchy and ranking is the reflection of the world around us. Grades are thus put to papers with sometimes marks and comments to justify them.

This aspect of evaluation seems to have been what educators/teachers have as yet indulged themselves in, and so it goes in Cote d’Ivoire. What are the objectives in teaching in general? Is grading the best way to have learning take place, particularly in foreign language learning? Or, in other words, should grades be our prior concern in correcting/marking our students’ papers? These are some of the correction and feedback-related questions we will address in this project, towards finding strategies for correction and feedback in the EFL classroom. To get to that, we will consider in the next chapter how correction and feedback has been dealt with in Cote d’Ivoire up to now.

But to conclude my view on the matter, I agree with most interviewees that evaluation comprises Correction and Feedback. Though they are not interchangeable they are very close, specifically in the context of classroom testing. However, in other fields like supervision, counseling and training, those terms have other connotations that can also help in classroom pedagogy. In our literature review, we will have a hint at these definitions, and see how helpful they can be
when we deal with solutions.

IV. THE STATUS-QUO IN CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK IN EFL IN COTE D'IVOIRE.

Now that we have gone through these different views of correction and feedback, let us come to how they have been practiced in Cote d'Ivoire. As pointed out earlier, correction starts as soon as the teacher begins showing the student through her/his oral or written production, where and what things went wrong.

Let's quickly consider the oral aspect before narrowing it down to the written, which is our main focus.

IV.1. Oral production

In Cote D'Ivoire, we developed and currently practiced a one hour EFL methodology class called S.O.L. (Standard Oral Lesson). It is an integration of all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). But in actuality, it is more of listening and speaking than reading and writing. In an hour's time, EFL teachers are asked to:

- make a five to ten minute oral review of the previous lesson (about 5 minutes),
- teach the day's lesson's vocabulary (10 - 15 minutes). This
is done mostly interactively between teachers and students and implies a lot of listening and oral production. (repetitions and drills). These drills are intended to fix (memorize) the new items learned.

- teach the day's grammar structure (5 - 10 minutes). The procedure involves equally a lot of oral production.
- read and/or have the students read, a short passage of about ten to fifteen lines. The reading is done silently or aloud, depending on the intent and may take about three minutes.
- conduct the "exploitation" (comprehension and therefore discussion) of the passage by asking a series of questions. These questions are mostly integrative of all the previous items studied earlier (vocabulary & grammar).

This is a highly oral and communicative phase in the SDL class.

- make a quick synthesis of the whole lesson (optional).
- have students copy from the board into their note books.

Now, as we have seen, EFL class in Cote d'Ivoire is heavily oral. This involves the repetition of full sentences, bits of sentences, structures and words. These repetitions are done so that the students can practice pronunciation and also for fixation. Unfortunately, too much consciousness of "doing the right thing" had until recently induced teachers into frequently stopping the students to give them the right word, structure,
phrase and/or pronunciation before they are allowed to continue. Sometimes, it is other students who give the faulty student the correct form. These faulty students may have to repeat the whole sentence anew. This practice is frustrating and makes communication less spontaneous. Teachers do all this monitoring because they feel that they are responsible for controlling and fostering their students' intake and output.

A lot remains to be done to decide whether in EFL, teachers should interrupt students' speech flow to bring correction or wait till some point (during/after the lesson, a day or a week later) to give feedback on their oral production. School syllabi will certainly have to be changed and teachers would have to reconsider their rationale behind correction and feedback.

However, there is another type of correction and feedback which everyone expects to be given immediately: correction and feedback on writing. How is it dealt with in Cote d'Ivoire?

IV.2. Written production

Throughout the lesson type we showed above, there is almost no room for using writing as a communicative device, except as a means to remember the lessons. These lessons are just copied for the purpose of learning them later. Yet, students are required to write when taking tests. This paradox is one of my concerns in dealing with correction and feedback in the EFL classroom. To
have an idea of how students are expected to use writing, we will have a glimpse of the test format and content in use in our classes.

IV.2.1. Test format and content.

EFL test format and content in Cote d'Ivoire can be grouped into three broad categories.

IV.2.1.1. The beginners level.

This level is for seventh and eighth graders, that is, first and second year English learners. For these students, the test is composed of a series of gap-filling, combination, transformation, multiple choice questions exercises and/or questions about the previous lessons. The items to be checked are mainly vocabulary and grammar (see appendix #1).

In addition to that, towards the end of the eighth grade, the students are initiated to reading a short passage (5-7 lines) and answering a few literal questions about it. This is mostly discrete point testing since the students haven't acquired much knowledge in the language in which to write. The students are required to put in just the word that they have learned.

IV.2.1.2. Intermediate level.

This level is for ninth and tenth graders, that is students with three and four years of English. Here, the students are trained to deal with the nation-wide tenth grade end-of-the-year standardized test. This test is comprised of the following phases:
I. Reading a twenty to twenty-five passage on a current 
issue of their environment, for comprehension.

II. Answering four multiple choice questions with four 
options each.

III. Answering three comprehension questions based on the text 
they read earlier.

IV. Answering about ten to twelve short grammar questions. 
These questions are in the form of gap-filling, 
completion, transformation, combination...

V. Writing a short essay of about fifteen to twenty lines.

As we can see, phases II and IV are discrete point exercises 
and III and V are rather holistic. With this holistic aspect, 
students are involved in writing, a writing that is used to 
communicate to the reader (teacher), what their comprehension of 
the text is.

IV.2.1.3. Advanced level.

This format is both for twelfth and thirteenth graders. It 
is composed of:

I. A passage of about thirty lines to read for comprehension

II. Four comprehension questions on the passage.

III. An essay of about a page, stemming from a major point in 
the passage.

IV. Ten to twelve grammar questions, formulated in the same 
way as shown above, but with a higher structural level.
Now given the content, the expectations and aims for testing, how do teachers correct and give feedback on those papers?

IV.2.2. Correction and Feedback on written papers:

Considering the size of the classes (average size being around 50) and the level (beginner to advanced), teachers usually take one to two weeks to finish marking their students' papers, particularly when they teach several classes of the same level. Usually the teacher will mark even on the discrete point items, any other error that appears in the text than the precise item that the question is meant to check. If the right item is given but misspelled, or sometimes, if there are some other "heavy" mistakes in the rest of the sentence that bears the item, some points may be deducted.

There is the assumption that if a student gets the right item without being able to spell it, it is certainly because s/he didn't learn her/his lesson. S/he has simply been helped by his/her neighbor. So, s/he is penalized for 1.) not reproducing correctly what is in his/her notebook or what s/he was taught and 2.) for presumably cheating.

In the comprehension questions and essay, grades are attributed on a much more holistic appreciation of each question item. However, the marking is still detailed. Most, if not all grammar errors are identified. Incorrect words are underlined or crossed out. Question marks, circles, arrows, crossing-outs are
correction marks used to show the irrelevance, inappropriateness of ideas and in some rare cases, organization. For example, see appendix #2.

Comments are generally very brief, if there are any at all. They are of the type: "poor paper", "nonsense", "wrong", "learn your lessons", "you still have a lot to do", etc. Conversely, positive comments are rare and brief like these: "good paper", "interesting!", "good, keep on!".

The point is that these comments never say specifically what is good or bad and how to reinforce, improve or change the errors. When all this grading and marking is over, there is a day, a special day after these long weeks of waiting, anticipation and anxiety, the teacher comes in either with a "large smile of victory" or a face screwed up with frustration, papers in hand. The class goes quiet but inwardly excited to know their grades. This is what they have been more exposed to. Because they have been waiting for the teacher's value judgement, when the teacher finally comes in, the only thing they can respond to are the grades.

The teacher keeps the papers and starts going about what should have been done and what should not. The text, when applicable, is re-read by the teacher or by some students. Then item by item, sentences are read and students are asked to contribute the right answers (mostly in multiple choice questions and grammar). These answers are generally written on the board to be copied in notebooks at the end of the correction session.
This is the average type of correction. Some teachers have slightly varied styles. These might even not even spend more than fifteen minutes for their feedback to the whole class.

In comprehension questions and essay there is generally no specific correction/feedback given. How ideas are produced, how we fit them in the whole, how the whole piece is organized are all left out. Ideas are orally discussed but basically from the teacher's point of view. Period. The conscientious teacher will make out of these comprehension questions and essay, a pool of what we call common errors. These errors will show the general tendency of students' minds' trend on the topic. With the exception of a few questions, the teacher's position will be taken for granted.

Moreover, these common errors mostly deal with detailed errors of grammar, spelling, structure and vocabulary. Once again, grades are at value here.

So as we can see, correction (marking and grading), and feedback are targeted at using the language for support of what has been learned in class. Grades are heavily important and are based on the rules of the language rather than on the language itself. This attitude heavily impedes the learning that takes place in our classrooms.

If we understood correction any better, that is from a different perspective, would it help us make better use of it in our classes? If so we need to know what current literature says about it.
WHAT IS THERE IN LITERATURE ABOUT CORRECTION AND FEEDBACK?

As I tried to show in the previous chapter, evaluation/correction and feedback are terms variously interpreted and used. Correction particularly, is a term I found little about in literature. Some authors will deal with it using the wording evaluation and some others that of feedback. Rarely would they refer to it as correction. In the American academic context, we will more often hear of the topic (correction and feedback) simply as "Marking, grading, and feedback". Now, we will look at what these authors mean by these terms they use, and how they use or mean to use them in practice.

Under the term of correction, Walz (1982) deals with marking and giving feedback, not necessarily with the idea of penalty.


In this monograph, Walz uses the term correction to mean helping the students correct their errors. However in the beginning, he makes an appraisal of errors to show that in fact, the occurrence of mistakes/errors in students' various productions is a good sign for learning. Then he goes on to confirm that "learning a new language requires a trial and error approach, and errors are evidence that the learner is testing hypothesis of underlying rules, categories and systems. (Corder 1973, as quoted by Walz, ibid, p.1). Therefore, children "should be corrected
only if communication breaks down" (1982, p.1). Otherwise, "frequent correction destroys their [students'] confidence," and also surely their readiness and ability to learn. That is why I find these questions he asks fundamental: "Should errors be corrected, and if so, which ones, when, how and by whom?" (p.3). Walz even goes further to say, paraphrasing Fanselow that in correcting a student, giving her/him the answer does not establish a pattern for long-term memory. So correction, both oral and written should be done selectively (4), and according to individual students' needs, goals and even personalities. Other factors to consider are also, "the pedagogical focus at the time the error is made, the frequency with which it occurs, the number of learners affected, and its relationship to successful communication" (p.7). Thus Hendrickson, as quoted by Walz ('82, p.8), proposes a hierarchy for error correction which is as follows:

For beginning level, correct only errors that impede communication.

For intermediate level, correct errors that occur frequently.

For advanced level, correct errors that have a stigmatizing effect upon the students.

Besides, if we want correction to be of any help, he continues, it should not be too vague.

(4). The teacher should select/choose what each individual needs in order to be able to improve his/her performance.
This overall view of correction shows us that Walz sees it as most Ivorians do. That is correction is not only what the teacher puts on the student's paper (marks showing where correction is to be brought), but also the classroom interaction about it all, during oral feedback.

From this overview on correction of oral and written errors, Walz goes on to suggest some practical methods and techniques to correct these errors. For example we could:

* provide for self-correction.
* make marginal notes
* explain (during oral session) errors to students.
* oppose right and wrong forms of the mistaken item.
* have the student try to correct her/his own mistake first, then have his/her classmates help, before the teacher steps in if necessary.
* use errors as an illustration for classroom discussions.
(p.16/17)

The problem however is, as he mentions it later, that the students "may even not bother to read written corrections". (p.27). This is a point whose cause and remedy we will deal with later in this study.

A few other techniques he suggests are:

a) Rivers' (1975) and Stacks' (1978) reference to grammar rules. See appendix # 3a.

b) Robinetts' (1972) list of frequent errors from which we should start correction. See appendix # 3b.
c) Cohen's (1975) checklist to be used as a reminder already when the students start writing. See appendix # 3c.

d) Donley's (1978) list of "dos" and "don'ts" when writing an essay. see appendix 3d.

e) Knapp's (1972) and Friend's (1971) checklists. See appendixes 3e and 3f.

Further, Walz also proposes Valette's (1973) group composition technique for teachers who have a large number of students and cannot grade written work frequently.

Groups of five students get together to write an essay. The teacher has less work because there are fewer papers and fewer errors to correct. In addition the students get oral practice by discussing the assignment in the target language. The group writes the finished product on a ditto master and reproduces it for the entire class. (p.30)

Then, she also talks about grading:

"Once group compositions have been evaluated by the class, students can then rank them by preference, indicating their reasons (originality, accuracy of grammar); These criteria become the teacher's values in assigning a grade. This is just one more type of activity which, like those described above, makes the writing of a foreign language a more active learning experience. (p.32).

A similar example is Witbeck's (1976) suggestion that students exchange their papers to mark, with the teacher giving them "the specific type of errors to look for". (p.31).

However, Walz (ibid) also opposes that opinion by saying: 'students certainly expect teachers to correct them and seem to prefer it [teacher's correction]."
Still according to Walz, Fansworth (1974), suggests that students "rewrite their papers, to be sure that they profit from corrections" (p.32).

These suggestions made about written feedback and on writing in general, force us to consider that we should familiarize our students with writing before they are tested on it. This deserves a deeper analysis.

*   *   *

RAIMES, A. (1979) Problems and Teaching Strategies in ESL.
Composition.

Raimes' paper comes as a real supplement to Walz's, to show that if we correct our students' written work, they therefore need to be taught how to write. This together with other oral activities in the classroom will develop their skills for formulating and expressing ideas, arguing, debating, criticising and refuting... Very clearly, Raimes shows that speech and writing are two necessary components of the same unit (communication). She says:

Responding to one irate taxi driver is one very useful communicative skill; expressing one's ideas on the tax proposal in the day's news is another. One line or one word will do for the former. Nothing less than logical connected discourse will do for the latter. (p.1).

And to do that, students should be taught to know that, "all writers when they compose make choices... A writer makes choices about content, organisation, words, sentences,
paragraphs." (p.2). Thus they should have exposure to "prose models examination, paragraph writing according to a model, free writing, simulation games etc. Discussion of theoretical principles, detailed analysis of written text . . . and writing from visual stimuli." (p.3).

Raimas goes further to show how our attitude as "correctors" can stimulate or mine students' efforts for writing. She says:

We must always . . . look at a piece of writing as a piece of message conveying the writer's ideas. We must by the assignments we create, give the students the opportunity to discover their voice. We damage that important reader/writer relationship if we pick out in red all the mistakes we can find and not react to what the writer was writing about. (p.3-4).

Then she continues to show that written feedback on the students' papers in the form of comments are better than detailed word for word correction. These comments give the students a frame of reference for their growth. She therefore suggests that "composition teachers look primarily for ideas, not for mistakes." (p.5). Further she confirms her statement saying

The composition with flair and originality, one that is reaching out to a reader, is a welcome relief even if it has -S endings all in the wrong places. Here is a writer, we say! and the business of helping put the -S in place appears easy. (p.17).

Another important suggestion Raimas makes is to try to know the out-of-school environment of the child and seek to understand the causes of his/her mistakes so as to give the most helpful correction. Raimas is not forgetful of the class size
dimension of the problem. She proposes that short assignments be
given to groups of students with the same problems, so they can
seek answers together. These assignments should be short and
easy to check. These range from:

* sentence combination exercises;
* combination of short kernel sentences or decoding of long
  ones;
* controlled composition on discrete grammar points
  (pedagogical focus);
* Fill in the blank with words the students have problem with
* Rephrasing, expanding, free writing etc...

All this requires time, a lot of time. That is what Raimes
alludes to when she says:

> With all this additional work to be done in a composition
class on vocabulary, spelling, idiom, sentence error,   
rhetorical structure and organisation, teachers might well
wonder why they are assigned only an hour or two a week for
this mammoth task... (p.17)

Most importantly, the author says about correction of errors
that "there is no one solution nor should there be. There are as
many solutions as there are teachers, teaching styles, learners
and learning styles." (p.17).

But the best of all, says Paul Diderich as quoted by
Raimes is that, "noticing and praising whatever a student does
well, improves writing more than any kind or amount of correction
of what s/he does badly." (p.10).

In summation, Raimes is in favor of teaching ESL
students how to write in English because it is necessary for
communication. One of the best way to do it is not to frustrate them by overcorrecting their papers, that is word for word detailed correction. Similarly, feedback to them should be positive and should be done in groups with the teacher assisting all the groups.


Here, Smith spells out clearly the negative effect of class size on correction and feedback in the classroom. He says:

> It stands out to reason too, that a teacher with one hundred students can read and react to their written work more frequently than a teacher with one hundred and fifty students can, and that a student in a class of twenty will get a larger share of the airwaves during discussion than will a student in a class of thirty five. (p.IX).

Then, he mentions some ways to get around this problem of class size suggesting peer-editing groups or having other trained teachers as aides. Walberg (1984) and Hillocks (1986), as quoted by Smith (1986), propose that there be problem-solving activities and grading homework. (p.3).

Another of Smith's views is that students sometimes do some work that is not necessarily read and evaluated by the teacher but by and for the students themselves, for practice.

Smith is also aware that there is no easy solution to the problem. Attempts (as he says) have been made towards finding solutions, by the NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English) since the fifties, sixties, seventies and eighties.
(p.XI) and still, there is a lot of groping. Of course as Smith goes on to say, if our goal in teaching is to have students listen passively, memorize and reproduce, class size does not make a problem. But if students are expected to actively participate and/or discuss, then, there is problem (see p.2-3). Especially about feedback, Smith believes that it is so important that it should not be passed over (as unimportant). He says:

Thoughtful reading and feedback require much more time than this [spending just five minutes on every paper which however, for a class of 80, already amounts to 8 hrs of teacher’s time], for, extensive commenting is believed necessary for improvement in written work. (p.7).

In addition to all this, Smith thinks it is not enough to enumerate the problems that are hereby created, but it is also important, if we want to find viable solutions, to consider what our evaluation instruments are like (formal/informal, value/value free, quantitative/qualitative tests). We must also consider teachers’ own attitudes and perceptions of the students and that of their own role in the classroom and/or in the community or school.

While Millard(77), Shapson et al. (78), Cotton and Savard(1980), Hedges and Stock(1983), as shown by Smith (86) indicate that class size can have a powerful effect on students’ achievement, (Smith, p.2), Chang and Ogletree (79), as quoted by Smith (86), conclude that class size alone does not seem to be the issue. It has to be associated with the mode of instruction. (p.12). Small and large classes both have their advantages and disadvantages. (p.14).
In brief, in his analysis, Smith shows that class size has been a problem in all times and places. Though attitudes and opinions about these advantages and disadvantages vary considerably amongst individuals, he seems to support the view that class size has a dramatic impact on students and teachers in terms of correction and feedback. He therefore suggests a few strategies that we might want to consider a bit deeper in our search for solutions.


In this book, Freedman tackles the difficult problem of feedback, especially in the context of students' writing. She opens up the topic quoting Carpenter, Baker and Scott, who, as early as 1903 thought that the question of "How shall written work be criticized, is one of the most important in the whole problem of teaching English. Upon the value of criticism, success in teaching composition finally depends (p.1).

On pages 4-5 she clearly defines what feedback (or response) encompasses. For her, response includes more than the written comments. It includes peer-response, discussion in groups, reactions to comments etc. Actually, as she mentions on page 33, she believes that students' own evaluation and/or sharing are a clue to success. Thus, they need to be taught how
to do it. If they know how to do it, they will do it as well as their teachers, particularly if they do it in groups.

The idea of group-work, collaboration, support and confidence does not only work when writing a draft. It also works in giving feedback. However regarding feedback, she thinks that there is a point that cramps its value. As noticed, in the classroom environment, giving written feedback creates a double frustration. Students are frustrated to see their papers all marked in red, and teachers are frustrated to notice that students never consider their marks and remarks seriously enough. In this case a compromise is to be found somewhere.

Before she moves any further, she also gives some reasons why students never really take the teacher’s remarks seriously. In composition, comments, remarks and marks almost always depend on the responders taste. This obliges the students to write according to the teacher that they have every succeeding year. She quoted Jody, a student involved in her research as saying:

English is really easy, ‘cause it is easy to get a good grade, if you know what the teacher wants. So that’s what I’ve been doing, you know, all through grammar school and high school. You just like, you know, in your first paper or something you write, and they will say, "Oh you should do this, or you should do this" and you go, "Uh ha, I know what they want," and then you just write the way they want and they go, "Great! Excellent writing." . . . You have a new teacher and they like this. So you say, "Okay, I’ll put that in my writing." And they just love you for it. But then, you end up in college, and you don’t know how to write for yourself. You just write for other people.(p.2).

Another aspect she mentioned was that response to students should be to reassure and help them build confidence in
themselves especially in the beginning. This has a great impact on the students. A twelfth grade boy in her research testifies as follows: "My present English teacher is the best one I have ever encountered in high school. She gives constuctive criticism without attacking me." (P.28).

A teacher also involved in the study made a point that also highly addresses our concern in this project. He says:

I came to recognize that sharing and evaluating need to be separated... I have found the traditional method of response, meticulous correction of errors and evaluative grades seldom works.

As he separates "sharing" and "evaluation" he also separates "response" and "grades". Feedback being a response by which students confront and widen their views on what they are doing, teachers in Freedman's study agree to report that "response during the writing (or any written activity) is significantly more helpful to students than response after a piece of writing is finished." (P. 59). This gives full weight to what Freedman says of the teachers she worked with when she mentioned: "As a group, teachers believed that the most effective response to final versions comes in individual teacher-led conferences and peer groups followed by student self-assessments....with grades coming last." (P. 58)
In this chapter, Horvath also deals with feedback. He opens by describing the frustration and ineffectiveness teachers feel when they mark students’ papers. Then he makes a clear distinction between summative evaluation which consists of:

determining a paper’s grade, writing comments to explain and justify that grade, deciding how well a paper measures up to one’s expectations, … in short passing judgment and ranking,

and formative evaluation where his concern lies. Formative evaluation as he says:

is intent on helping students improve their writing abilities. It approaches a paper, not in term so what has been done, but what needs to be done, what can be done… not to judge, but to identify problems and possibilities (McDonald, ‘78 as quoted by Horvath, p. 269).

Formative evaluation does one of the following several of things: "to correct, to emote, to describe, to suggest, to question, to remind or to assign. (P. 269).

He also makes it clear that the difference that goes between summative and formative evaluations, also goes between product and process approaches to writing. Thus, he says that formative evaluation is based on the assumption that students will learn from their mistakes. Therefore, quoting Sommers, he says "what one says about a text as product differs from what one says about that text as process..." (P. 269)

Now having different aims when evaluating in formative evaluation (that is, during papers in process), Horvath suggests
that the teacher has a hierarchy of concerns and objectives and thus provides the students with first of all, suggestions about large-scale problems like content, focus, organization and purpose. Later in the term/year, the teacher can tackle details like transition, style, mechanics ... which generally "do not interfere with comprehension.". He himself concludes as follows "In short, a tolerance for error must be cultivated in both students and instructors," and adds further that errors "must be treated as occasions for learning." (p. 270) Besides as Cowan says, no text is perfect. Almost any text could be made more perfect. This argument is further supported by Joseph Williams (as quoted by Horvath) when he says: "many 'errors' if unlooked for, would not be found. They occur in published prose regularly and bother no one." (p. 274)

Likewise, he also recommends that the teacher be more direct but precise in his comments (p. 271) if she wants them to be reaching. Unlike Smith, Horvath adds: "Too much comment is counterproductive; too many helpful remarks serve finally to confuse, frustrate and depress students unsure which aspects needs attention." (p.272). Teachers should equally beware not to substitute themselves for the students or confuse the students initiatives and their own ideal for, "comments that do a student's work for her should be avoided." (ibid). Horvath agrees with Faulkerson, Knoblauch, Brannon, Sommers and Larson when they caution teachers "against generic type of responses, against responding outside the assignments' context, against
looking for things which were not asked for, against 
preconceptions..." In short, as Horvath sums up, "comments must 
be student as well as text specific." (p.272).

A certain "climate of trust is essential" in the classroom 
and positive feedback is more conducive to learning than negative 
or absence of feedback. However, avoiding negative feedback in 
favor only of positive feedback is not realistic. Understanding 
how to reconcile one's role as an motivator with one's role as a 
critic and a grader (evaluator) is what it is all about. Thence 
Horvath, after Greg Cowan "instructs evaluators to play all three 
roles..." (p.273).

In short, Horvath is trying to show the value of formative 
evaluation and demonstrate that it goes along with selective, 
realistic and positive feedback. Along the same line, he also 
mentions the importance of teachers' attitude and goal in 
responding to students' written work. Teachers, he concludes, 
have to play the three different roles when they evaluate their 
students.

*     *     *

Attitude Toward Writing and Writing Fluency of Ninth Grade 
Students.

This paper reports a research on the impact of peer 
evaluation on attitude toward writing and increasing fluency. 
The research was conducted in seven ninth grade classes. Katstra
and her colleagues agree with most of what has already been mentioned about teacher paper marking habits, students writing difficulties, the new attitude and climate, and the importance of feedback in the classroom. These few sentences will give us an idea of their position.

This kind of word by word writing (worrying over mechanics spelling and form) probably destroys fluency" (Calkins, '83, p. 33) as quoted by Katstra. Further, she mentions: "... as teachers respond positively, students who are scared of writing begin to increase the length of their efforts..." (Beaven '77) as quoted by Katstra ('87, p. 139). "Honest, positive comments motivate students to write more" (Katstra '87, p. 168)

It is also good to mention, Katstra's idea that "the peer group is a powerful motivator in a teenager's life..." Thus, following Beaven (77) he suggests that "as the dynamics of the small group continues to work, peers develop a sense of trust, group inclusion, support and acceptance." (Ibid, p. 165).

"In conclusion the research findings suggest that writing teachers might use peer evaluation groups to develop positive attitudes towards writing." (p.171)

This conclusion by Katstra herself, is self-contained.

*     *     *

*

This analysis is another study researchers in a midwest University in the USA. It deals with the problem of assigning grades and led to the identification of promising practices that may be used by both teachers and students to ameliorate some of the difficulties experienced in the field.

Right from the beginning the authors state clearly: "Problems arising from giving grades are rooted in communication failures between instructors and students." (p. 133) They also affirm that students "could assess their own work as validly as their instructors do." (p.133). For that, instructors have simply to teach their students the standard used in determining grades

"...As students attempt to apply the instructors' standards to assignments similar to the ones they are working on, they are likely to learn more clearly the rules of the game." (p.135). This method however, as he goes on to say, has a drawback. It might be seen as irresponsible of the teachers.

Two ways are to be made explicit: the numerical grade or "arithmetic algorithm", made of added points given to precise, discrete items in the paper (no matter what type) and the holistic grade that they call "intuitive". Here the instructor might be more at demand because, with subjectivity involved in the grading, there is need for more professional judgment. However they mention that from their previous work (Raths 1983)
they learned that "students generally do not see subjective grading as ipso facto unfair." (p.134).

Nevertheless, they continue:

...for grading to be perceived as fair at the same time that it takes into account the necessary subjectivity of the process itself, instructors must take care to communicate their expectations and standard to their students. ...In a sense instructors must communicate their intuitions to the intuition of their students. (p.134).

Another interesting point that they mention is that grades on papers, may play formative and summative roles. To the extent they provide students with clues as to how to improve, they are decidedly formative. As they are averaged into the final grades' accounting, they take a summative tinge. (p.134).

Along with it, they also propose that the students be given the opportunity to rewrite the assignment if the first grades are too bad.

* * *

James Webb, (1988). In defense of Correction: A reply to those who say that correcting students' writing is a waste of time.

This piece of opinion about correction is a reaction article to another article, in the Japanese Language Teacher's Magazine (Apr. '88). To start, Webb makes it clear to the reader that when he says "Correction", he includes "the practice of pointing out students' mistakes and having the students correct them themselves" (The language teacher, April '88, p. 29). Then he gives three reasons why students' mistakes should be
corrected. One of them is that "most students write more carefully if they know that their work will be corrected, and conversely, they are less careful about grammar, spelling and organization if they know that their work will not be corrected."

Another is that "the common mistakes in students' writing do not disappear if they are never pointed out." And finally, "students who really want to learn English, usually like being corrected, provided it is done sensitively and kindly." (p.29)

Webb obviously doesn't line up with most writing theorists nowadays, who by advocating the process approach to writing, think that all mistakes need not be corrected at the same time. He, himself, points it out:

The current vogue amongst those who write and speak about EFL is to say that it does not matter if there are a lot of mistakes in a student's writing because the purpose of writing should be solely to express ideas, but I think most students who are interested in learning English would disagree with this. For them, the purpose of writing in English is both to express their ideas and to improve their English....(p.29).

He concludes stating that if students want to use and write correct and beautiful English teachers are obliged to point out and explain the mistakes that they make.

How all that can be done is another point he briefly touched on. He says:

It may be tedious to point out the same common mistakes again and again but eventually most students who are motivated and interested will stop making them, especially if we just underline the mistakes...It may be necessary to point out the same mistakes many, many times before they
disappear. (p. 29)

In a word, unlike other writers, Webb thinks that students should be corrected on all the mistakes they make especially when they are common. But teachers should not overlook the human dimension of the correction they bring to their students.

* * *


In this essay, Redfield has a skeptical attitude towards evaluation as it is done today in our classrooms, and its bias towards grades. There is, as he says, informal evaluation going on in the daily classroom management and lesson planning and implementation. But formal evaluation leading to a grade, seems to have been the most current practice to date. This formal evaluation is what he points out as "difficult and dangerous and detrimental to the students" (p. 20), particularly in a foreign language learning context.

As a result there is "competition rather than cooperation in the classroom", whereas, "language (in his terms), is acquired through social activity, in groups and in a community... Competition divides the class and can lead to more able (or ambitious) students scrambling for grades with less able students giving up." (p. 30). Therefore he suggests that foreign language teaching evaluation be "undertaken with extreme caution, and if possible, avoided altogether." (p. 29/30) Reasons he gives
are that language learning "being fundamentally non-academic" its
evaluation should be different from the evaluation of other
subjects.

Another reason is that, "Communicative language testing
techniques have not kept pace with classroom procedures." For
example, as he shows, "If the sociology professor employs
multiple choice exams, does that mean that the EFL instructor
must do the same?" (p.30). If acquisition is the goal, he
continues, other forms of evaluation that foster cooperation
should be found. If grades are the goal, we shouldn’t be
surprised to witness competition, unreadiness to collaborate and
therefore, some students falling off.

This mentality, as he shows, is a legacy of the
tradition of school. "One of the reasons is that schools by
their very nature are conservative" (p.30). That attitude also
stems from the requirement of the outside world work-market,
itself emanating from man’s value of quality and "class". All
the recommendations that are made derive from that. So it is
current to hear that "hard graders are good, while lenient
graders are somehow less serious." (p.31)

However, Redfield remains realistic to say:

With pressure from tradition, hierarchy and business to
maintain the current grading system, it is a bit idealistic
to expect an exception to be made for foreign language
classes...Compromises have to be made.(p. 31)

Thereupon, he went to make some practical suggestions
of which we’ll just mention the last:

A final system is the 'base plus plus outside projects'
...
a minimum grade, say a 'C'. Then, give added credit to those who complete outside projects, such as book reports. This allows students... desirous of higher marks to work towards them, while at the same time, eliminating grade pressure from the classroom itself. (p.31).

In a nutshell, Redfield thinks the grade factor has made the teaching/learning too stiff and unhandy. He, therefore, opts for another evaluation strategy that does away with formal grades and better fosters language learning.

* * *


Though Hahn et al. basically focus on oral production, which is not our major focus in this study, a few things that they say apply as well to writing. Their main question is, "Is grading in the form of points counted in the students' final evaluation, a motivator or incentive to work harder during oral activities?"

They conducted a survey in which two groups of beginning German students were studied, one graded, and the other not, (on their oral performance) over a period of six months. They came to exactly the same considerations as the process approach writing advocates, recommending "the use of strategies especially constructed to further authentic communication in an atmosphere in which correction is limited to those responses which fail to communicate" (p. 242). But in doing so, as Webb mentioned earlier, some teachers report: "students often fail to
take such activity seriously since they do not count on the grade." (ibid).

If on the other hand, these oral activities were all to be graded, other students become "stressed" and their performances "negative". Therefore, their "original premise that frequent and structured opportunities to use the language meaningfully might be enough in themselves, has been reinforced by the results of the study" (p. 246), and so proposed that "other forms of classroom feedback and informal assessment of progress may prove more productive" (p. 247).

The point in Hahn et al.'s analysis (of oral production) is as Redfield ('88) suggested for writing, that when dealing with communicative language teaching, we must use communicative language evaluation procedures. This also entails giving and receiving communicative feedback.

* * *


In this article, Terry addresses the reasons why learning to write in a second language is important. In that, he cites Magnan (1985) saying:

There are two basic purposes for writing in the second/foreign language classroom: as a support skill (class and homework exercises to practice grammatical forms and structures, vocabulary and spelling); and as a communicative skill (to inform, relate, question, persuade, etc.) (p. 43).

These two poles, to paraphrase Terry, are the two ends
of the continuum in developing writing skills (p. 43). Between these ends, there are stages, each of which "will involve less and less teacher control and more and more substantive content and length." (p. 45).

Hence, he enumerates a series of activities that could help achieve the purpose of communication. These range from note taking, completing forms, writing notes, (providing essential information), correspondence, to formal papers...) (p. 44). At the same time these activities can help as a support activity for what the student learned in class. For example, narration of a social activity that a student participated in some time before the exercise could lead to the practice of the past tense. A real postcard to a friend, telling him/her about the student's future plans for Christmas could help use the immediate future etc. (p.45-7).

In the second part of his analysis, Terry hits the thorny problem of evaluating writing, and like Smith, evokes the amount of time spent marking papers, because teachers think "written work calls for meticulous (and tedious) correction," and yet are "seldom rewarded by improved student performance on subsequent tasks." (p. 48).

Then he makes clear the two alternatives for correcting and grading papers. The first is discrete point scoring, which is easy, quick, objective and justifiable. (p. 48). This type of scoring applies to the writing activities that are meant to support classroom learning.
The second is the holistic scoring for more communicative writing. Right away, he went to appease teachers saying:

Research has shown that holistic scoring of students written work can be as effective, if not more effective, than objective discrete-point scoring techniques, and that it offers a very strong measure of validity and reliability... (p. 48 quoting from seven other authors).

He even adds: "Holistic scoring involves one or more readers assigning a single grade based on the total impression of a whole text." (p. 48/9). As he points out:

To help the graders avoid falling prey to many of the causes of the diversity of judgement among graders or among papers evaluated by one grader, a scoring guide should be spelled out in advance." (p. 49).

Terry also mentions another type of grading procedure, the analytical scoring. "It involves separating the various features of a composition into individual components for scoring purposes." (p. 51) He proposes Heaton’s scoring grid (1975) which is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
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<td>Fluency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The text would then be read as many times as needed to satisfy all the criteria/items mentioned on the grid.

In his analysis, Terry made it clear to us that the ESL classroom teachers should not dread correcting and grading their
students' written productions for 1) they need to learn to write; and 2) ways can be found to make the marking or grading less insidious or tedious.

Discrete points scoring is one way and holistic multiple scoring, based on an agreed-upon grid, is another. This last solution can be richly exploited in the context of large classes as is the case in Cote d'Ivoire.

* * *


This is a document produced by the Center for the Study of Writing (CSW) at the University of California at Berkeley and from Carnegie Mellon University.

This report on writing (of about 40 pp), tells us about the new way of looking at writing. According to Freedman et al, we should be open enough to acknowledge our differences, mostly social and cultural. Writing, as they say, is "a social act" (p.30 from Vigotsky). It always involves part of ourselves and of our culture. Teachers, should first bear that in mind if they want to help their students improve their skills in writing. As they say, "students who may be viewed as poor writers by their teachers may in fact make extensive use of writing for their own purposes." (p.9, quoting Fiering, ’81 and Gilmore, ’83). Therefore, students should be encouraged to use writing to communicate with the world around them. Too many rules on
writing creates blockage. As they put it,

Writers who suffer from writer's block follow rigid rules and inflexible plans. Students who have this type of difficulty, are stymied because they apply rules rigidly to situations where they do not apply". (Rose, 1980, as cited by Freedman, p.18).

This blockage kills the latent communication impetus in learner writers. Not only that, it also scares the learner who never more will want to approach writing. (see also Zemelman, '88).

Thus they propose approaches to help students not dread writing but rather enjoy writing and use it effectively. For example, they propose that "... the teacher does not simply direct the learner's performance but rather collaborates with him/her; that is, the teacher models the problem-solving process, but also involves the learner in the solution" (p.30).

They even went further to suggest that the teacher gets down to the level of the learners, and become one of the participants of the class, for, as they showed in a metaphor, when a mother wants to teach her child how to dance, she accommodates herself to the child, so that the latter could also accommodate to her. (p.31).

They also mention that to gain confidence, especially at the beginning, learner writers be shown what they call collaborative writing. Here, they are encouraged to work in groups, where they discuss, take notes, gather information and write freely about things they want to write about. After all, in real life, they say, all the written work we do at our job place is seldom done solitarily. We almost always have
colleagues, friends, our wives and husbands, contribute their input. (p. 28 and 38).

Freedman and her colleagues' approach to writing, as well as that of other authors, most other writers think, Bruce (78), Elbow (80), Flower (80b), Black (82), Applebee (84), Langer (87), Black (82), Applebee (84), Langer (87), Zemelman (88) is the process writing approach as opposed to the old product approach. They advise that writing be learnt participatorily, communicatively and in an atmosphere of trust, comfort and confidence. Teachers' attitude in correcting students' errors should likewise be supportive and not extremely mindful of rules that cramp students' progress. Moreover, there should be no grade before the end of the process of each paper.

*    *    *


Goodman and his colleagues bring up a slightly different problem, that of whole language evaluation. The whole language evaluation according to the authors can be equated with informal evaluation. It's an ongoing evaluation; "Whole language teachers don't decide to think about evaluation in June" (p. 8). It's an evaluation in which everybody participates: as they put it: "It is therefore also important to involve other teachers, administrators, parents in the process of evaluation (p. 4).

Whole language evaluation consists basically of
observation, interaction and analysis. Teachers observe their students all term/semester/year long, make assumptions and verify them by interacting with the students concerned. Then they analyze reasons why there is failure so as to remedy it. These results are recorded in each student's folder. Through discussion and interaction with the students they are made to participate in the sense that they make contracts with the teachers, explain what they can and cannot do, how, why and why not, and then take new contracts.

Parents are solicited through correspondence to contribute information, guidance about their child and suggestions to the teacher so that a better course might be taken for the child's growth. Other persons likely to contribute any help (administrators, other teachers) constitute a whole community around the child that nurtures his/her growth.

If grades cannot be totally done away with, we should know as Goodman and his colleagues say: "Evaluating to provide marks or grades on report cards, is, at best, the outgrowth of evaluation for improving teaching and learning. (XIII)

In fact, Goodman et al. still continue, "The ultimate goal of the evaluation process in whole language classrooms is self-evaluation for both the teacher and the student." (p. 13) Students are evaluated by teachers, parents, etc., but they are also evaluated by their peers in pairs or in small groups (p.47).

But to do all this "...a framework of rules and expectations sets the criteria for ongoing evaluation" (p.52)
for, the "emotional-context for language learning in the classroom is vital to the issue of evaluation." (p. 51). This climate should even be a general concern movement in which everybody (administration, teachers, students) have their responsibility. It must become more than a classroom climate. It must be a school climate. (p. 51).

In case grades are required anyway, like in a whole language experimental classroom in Texas, "Children are provided with the scoring system ahead of time".

The point in Whole Language Evaluation is that formal evaluation should be discarded for the benefit of informal evaluation. This form is ongoing and descriptive, with grades only coming in the end.

* * *

The foregoing review of the EFL literature takes us close to another view of evaluation and feedback, that of training, supervision and group dynamics. Here we will no longer refer to the topic in terms of correction but simply terms simply of evaluation and feedback.

In supervision as well as in training we evaluate workshop designs, content, implementation and even facilitators in a more participatory way. No grade is expected. All is done for the growth of each individual involed in the given group: the facilitator or the trainees.
Because those who take part in an experience are adults, they are considered knowledgeable in some parts of life experiences. Therefore, education of adults is much more of a sharing of different approaches to a given situation than some people teaching and some others learning. That's what Malcolm Knowles ('80), calls andragogy as opposed to pedagogy.

In Supervision, as advocated by Combs ('81, p. 446-49), Educational Leadership ('74, p. 212-16), Karp H.B. (1984), Training and Development Journal (March '84, p. 69-74), Snyder and Anderson ('86, p. 448-66), human relationships and a positive climate are the basis for any successful experiential learning. For example, the supervisor and the supervisee sit and think together of what they have or want to do, the former helping the latter to state his/her problems, aims and goals clearly. It's a sort of needs' assessment. The same process goes for the means to use for the educational activities, and the ways in which to use those means.

Finally when the activity has been carried out, both the supervisor and supervisee meet again to give and receive feedback (reciprocally sometimes) and thus evaluate the learning. Most of the time, if the ground rules of the contract are clear, the evaluation is self-made. If the supervisor has something to suggest, it is always positive, for we always build on strengths. If some negative feedback is to be given, it will be wrapped in a positive manner.

The same thing holds true in group dynamics. Here
providing a good climate for human relations is at stake. Many people at different periods of their lives need moral support to give their lives a sense. "S." Groups are formed toward that purpose. And to have these groups function effectively members have to be good listeners (interested, and sharing) as mentioned by Porter, and Mohr, (1982) and Lee and Freedman, (1984).

Whatever feedback is given on members' behavior is only positive. Or, if there should be any negative feedback at all, it should be expressed as follows: "when 'x' or 'y' happened, I felt...", rather than attacking, e.g. "you were wrong doing 'x, y, z'". Any human being has the tendency to defend himself/herself when feeling attacked.

In training as shown Knowles ('80) and Eitington ('84), it is still true that whenever we have to deal with professionals or would-be professionals, the learning context is the same; that is, adult learning context. The climate or human relations is made to trigger participation and commitment. Programs are evaluated participatorily. Neither during the learning nor in the assessment phases do adults want to be treated as objects. As Eitington says:

The adult learner does not want merely to sit and listen, to take notes, to struggle with exams, to be talked down to, to be bored, or to be bombarded with theory without opportunity for practical application. (‘84, p.IX)

Trainees evaluate trainees' learning. Trainees evaluate trainers. Facilitators are evaluated in their methodology and their human approach. All this is done through written
questionnaires and oral evaluation sessions, not with the intention of making any value judgments, but just for better learning.
VI. CRITICAL ANALYSIS.

VI.1. Critical Analysis of Literature.

Of all the literature that has been reviewed, correction, evaluation and feedback can be viewed as a whole continuum. It stretches from those who think that detailed marking and feedback of the students' errors are necessary, to the tenants of the Whole language Evaluation approach. These latter advocate that formal evaluation is dated and should be discarded. In that, it makes us draw a parallel between formal pedagogy and informal andragogy, experienced in adult learning.

However, as we can see, all these authors seem to agree on the value of evaluation and feedback. How to do it is where differences come up. This richness along the line of the continuum is a resource we can utilize to create further improvements in the existing patterns of evaluation and feedback.

What are the details about these views?

There are those who, on one end of the line, believe that most, if not all of children's learning errors should be corrected. These authors sustain the view that it is good to do so because it meets the students' expectations and fosters effective learning. Surely errors are a good source of learning. The problem is basically how much input is affordable at a particular time.

Some other authors think it is better to correct only a few mistakes at a time, while making them context and student-specific. Knowing that too many things can confuse students,
correcting a few ideas at a time, depending on the focus of that particular moment, can be truly helpful to the student. But having correction be specific to every student seems to be dependent on the context. A class of more than twenty-five students is already difficult to deal with in terms of individualized feedback.

However, Smith, in his analysis of class size, mentioned that small classes also present a disadvantage; that of the student being directly exposed to the teacher at any time and not being able to gain trust and confidence in himself through peer groups. (p. 12).

Most others suggest that we correct only those among these few errors that really impede communication. This enables students to "feel themselves", (rulewise), free to write whatever they like writing about, minding only the message. This not only frees them, but also thrills them to want to write, which is a good attitude, at least for a beginning student (Zemelman, '88; Elbow '81).

This attitude towards freeing writing is sensible particularly when we know that no written piece is ever perfect if read by different people, supposedly professionals. Nevertheless, it is also true that because of our human tendency to selection, quality and class, (Redfield, 1988), we feel good if not only our ideas are correct and well conveyed but also if our writing is not marred with small grammar-mechanics mistakes (Webb, '88). Even when readers don't point them out, they make
themselves an idea of the writer.

So quality writing that makes one feel good is everything together. But what I side for throughout the literature is that not everything should be worked on altogether. There is an end where to start and another to reach.

The Whole Language Evaluation advocates (Goodman, et al. '89) who think at the other extreme of the continuum, that there should be neither formal evaluation nor correction, also aim at a certain mastery of the written language, after all. Through their informal evaluation, they expect students to be able to use the language effectively, efficiently and beautifully as shown in an analysis of the progress of a young child’s writing from November to February is shown in Goodman (1989, p.79-81).

In whole language learning, the classroom is made to be like the home environment, with no pressure. The child learns in a simulated natural way. But then we will have to question the role of school in society. Experiential learning is good but it takes time. It is actually a lifelong learning.

For my own part, if it is good to go to school to get prepared for life, it is important as well that children be involved in learning or rather experiencing life. As such, learning to communicate with the world (through writing) is a way to be involved in life around and far from us. Tightly or loosely evaluating this learning, or pretending not to be evaluating, depends on how we want the learner to feel during
that experience.

Still in this literature I reviewed, I was expecting to see students evaluate or give feedback to their teachers. If learning is to be seen as a life experience, teachers need to be evaluated too. In doing so, they also learn from their shortcomings; they and their students learn how to improve the course of their teaching and learning. When students get involved in that two-way evaluation, they learn more about evaluation and feedback, its value, and mostly how to use it to learn better.

Most evaluations have been geared towards checking students' knowledge, sometimes the content of the class and rarely the learning. Besides, as mentioned earlier, most authors acknowledge that correction and feedback should aim at achieving a more effective learning rather than recording figures for administration and/or parents. But why is it that administration and parents and even the children themselves are so grade-oriented? Very little is said about the subject.

For the administrative part, Redfield (1988), thinks that it is due to the conservatist nature of school; that is to say, the perpetuation of tradition. But still, why is that tradition is so encrusted in our ways? The real reason, as Redfield showed, is social and innate to human beings. In human being, there is a natural tendency to hierarchy, elitism and ranking. The example he provided us with, was the companies' attitude towards recruiting employees. Most companies prefer for
example, top graduates, or recommendations from 'Harvard' or 'Cambridge'. Is it not true that we always want the best things for ourselves?

The human world outside the classroom is in actuality a world of competition and selection. This impacts on our educational system. But can't it be the other way round? Can't changes in society come from the classroom: the classroom today for the society tomorrow? As we saw in our brief summary of issues in correction and feedback at the beginning of this chapter, most authors suggest that these issues be dealt with more humanly, participatorily and communicatively.

If evaluation and feedback in the classroom go that way, will it satisfy everybody - administration, parents, students and even teachers -? If administrators and teachers have long indulged in keeping records of students' progress through grades, certainly, it seems to me, it is a question of practicality. The grade record of one thousand students, can be easily be stored, kept in and retrieved from a small file. It will be difficult to do so of even five hundred descriptive records of students' progress with five lines each.

But on the other hand, it looks arbitrary to have grades without any comments or tokens of how they were "deserved". Furthermore, in so doing, there is no precise idea of how to help the student.

So the question is: Do we want the easiest or the most useful method of evaluation? In the classroom context, we
certainly want the most useful. Out in the world we'll need the quickest, though it most often does not prove to be the quickest.

Parents and kids' interest in grades is simply a result of the system. Some parents get the school grade reports of their children, and still are not satisfied, especially when results are not good. They ask: "What did you do to get this result, where are your papers, etc.?" But as Goodman et al. (1989) propose, if parents, administrators and classmates participate in the evaluation, and if there is a brief description of the students' progress, everybody, even the students themselves would be clear about their (the students') aptitudes and shortcomings.

This will also spare teachers from falling into the dangers of overcorrection, distrust, unfairness, etc. As a matter of fact one of the reasons for detailed correction of every single mistake is the grade factor. If the teacher is to give figured grades to the students, there is point that s/he justifies those grades by the number of errors counted, which s/he shows through his/her red pen marks on the paper.

The second reason for those pen-marks is that, the students will be able to correct their mistakes. But not all these marks and comments are explicit enough in themselves, to entail correction, due to the fact that they do not stem from commonly agreed upon rules at the beginning. The fact that in most cases, there is no or not enough feedback, interaction and participation in the classroom (between teachers and students as
well as between students themselves and with other people outside the classroom) to help students understand their mistakes or errors better and correct them, is another source for students failing to learn from their mistakes.

Teachers often attribute this insufficiency to the lack of time and to the size of classes, which I agree is a reality in most of our classes. But Smith, (1986) mentioned, large classes have their advantages. One of these is the possibility for kids to share in groups each one’s contribution.

Another point I could not see in the literature I covered was the cultural variables to feedback in the classroom setting. I must recognize however that the scope of my reading was too small to expect to find everything about feedback in the classroom.

However, we can learn from Zemelman (1988) and Goodman (1989) that it is always painful for adolescents to disclose to other people, if there is no climate of trust and comfort. So what we call cultural variables, will first be personal variables. In speaking, when first learning a language, it is well established that extrovert persons will learn much quicker because they create for themselves more exposure to the world around them. The same thing is true for writing.

Some individuals do not mind being read and given feedback. Some do mind and they are many. For these latter, to break "the chains" of introversion, trust, comfort, and support are necessary. In some cultures like in the U.S.A., children are
brought up to be inquisitive. Yet in Zemelman and Goodman's studies (based on US society), they report that some children in America are not always comfortable to let part of themselves out. It's even more so in a culture like Africa where respect and submission of the younger to the older has moulded minds in a way that feedback goes only in one direction: superior to inferior in terms of age and/or position. Even in that direction, "how" the feedback is given, which is generally more of a reproach or condemnation than advice, causes a lot of frustration and creates at times, abandonments of aims.

I have known students who hate this or that discipline and subsequently score low and finally drop out because the first feedback (oral or written) they ever received from their teacher was devastating.

Sometimes, feedback itself is a notion that is more or less inadequate or inexistant in some cultures. The teacher has to see to it carefully so that if there should be any feedback from him/her to some students, it be done in the tone and climate that help.

* * *

As for the training, group dynamics, and supervisory perspective of evaluation and feedback, though they do not address the formal school setting we are concerned with, I should say they have a lot to offer in devising a method of evaluation and feedback line for our classes in Cote d'Ivoire.
In short, many perspectives of feedback and evaluation have been analyzed and many others remain to be touched upon. In that immensity, I acknowledge my analysis of the data I found in literature insufficient to strongly disagree with any of the authors herein mentioned. However, as to the applicability of their perspectives to the classroom context in Cote d'Ivoire, a few modifications/adaptations seem to be necessary.

The following chapter will give us a clearer idea of what that could be.

VI.2. Critical Analysis with Regard to Applicability in Cote d'Ivoire.

When we look closely and selectively at all that has been said in the literature we have just run through, a few points can be retained as to their applicability or possible adaptation to the EFL context in Cote d'Ivoire. One of them is that grades are important, but that learning comes first. Nevertheless, even though we can change our attitude about that, we shouldn't expect it to happen overnight. So grades will still be a full component of school. However, it is a common fact that school also gives knowledge that is expected to be transformed into experience in life. So school is meant to learn, and not to "stock" knowledge.

In Cote d'Ivoire, we teach and learn English not just for fun, that is, not just as a school subject. We don't learn it to stock knowledge either. We want it to serve a
communication function (and many others too). So we mean it to really be a real learning. One way to do this, is therefore, to combine teaching it for that real learning with academic requirements attached (grades).

From the gist of this review, we can also mention that:

- Comments help better than grades do in helping students learn.
- Students can learn better if they do so in groups or interactively.
- Students can learn how to mark, grade and share feedback together in groups.
- Classroom evaluation can even be more objective if more people, else than the teacher alone, (that is students, themselves, parents, administration) are involved.

But these few points mentioned above raise some more questions and views. While the general consensus is for having students work in groups, some researchers affirm that following up with students in individual teacher-led conferences (Freedman '87, p.58), yields the best results. It surely does. But in a context of overcrowded classrooms, like in Cote d'Ivoire, such management is almost impossible. Dealing with students in groups is rather the best management possible.

Still the disposition of chairs and tables in most classrooms in Cote d'Ivoire and the hour shift of teachers, make group-work not a plausible reality. Nevertheless, an ultimate possibility in the classroom could be not to arrange the seats
but rather the students themselves. They can sit in groups of four, facing each other in twos. Some would be totally in uneasy postures.

Anyway, these days with more than sixty to seventy students in a classroom, in their usual sitting, nobody feels at ease. Sometimes they are three to four students on the same bench.

Another possibility to facilitate feedback is if the administration agrees to create special English Classrooms, whose management could be left to the teachers and students who use them.

A further possibility could be, weather permitting, to go out into the open (playground, shed, shade of a tree). There we can make whatever group is judged appropriate by the teacher and students.

These last three solutions are some alternatives to ease out the management of these large classes. Thus, in a class of sixty students, the teacher could talk, give instructions, and assist them as if he were doing it for fifteen pupils.

Groups being formed that way, students could learn how to mark, grade and share feedback together by being given the opportunity to do so. I believe with most of the authors mentioned in our survey that the only way to learn is to be involved in practice.

Teachers themselves keep learning as they teach. If the students are shown the standard for evaluation, they will do
it as well as their teachers. And they will also learn as they practice. Whatever problem they might come across, they will ask questions, interact with one another and with the teacher. This will help them understand better, not only the English that they are learning but also the teachers' ordeals in terms of value judgments and the effort to be objective. It will also help avoid situations where students distrust the teacher.

But for that to happen, there should be a careful psychological preparation of the students and also the teachers themselves.

Hence, we can try to devise a guideline for correction and feedback in the EFL classroom in Cote d'Ivoire, if only that is proved to necessary.
VII. NECESSITY FOR CHANGE?

After we have gone through how Correction and Feedback are presently practiced in Côte d'Ivoire in EFL classes, and what literature says about the topic and offers us, where can we draw the dividing line? In other words, is there a necessity for changing our correction and feedback strategies in our EFL classrooms in Côte d'Ivoire?

A change in attitude or ways of doing what we do implies a change in objectives. Our objectives for learning English in Côte d'Ivoire that is for communication and human relations, have not changed. Our belief that English can be used to tighten our connection with the world has rather been reinforced. In this reinforcement of perspective, it is not change we need, but strengthening our strategies for better learning. Improvement means being open but critical to ongoing trends in the field at hand, in our case correction and feedback in the EFL class.

As we have seen, our teaching/learning of English is very interactive and therefore, orally communicative. We also try as much as possible to cover the four language skill areas. However, we pointed out that in our English class pattern (SOL) there is not enough room for writing (being proved that communication is not only oral, and that there is a point for the EFL student in Côte d'Ivoire to learn to use writing as a means for communication). Yet classroom tests are more written than oral.
VIII. SUGGESTIONS.

VIII.1. Dispositions.

The first disposition to think of is a mind preparation. I would call it psychological orientation. From a system heavily oriented towards grades, competition and tendency to being ‘dishonest’, to a system oriented towards mutual trust, collaboration and growth, it is important for teachers and students to understand clearly what participatory evaluation and feedback in a classroom could be like.

Thus, for this model of correction and feedback to be efficiently applied in EFL classrooms, I suggest that the teachers not only get sufficiently briefed on what they are expected to do, but that they participate in a workshop that will be organised for them if the needs assessment reveals the need for it.

Then teachers will in turn take the responsibility to explain to their students what they are going to get involved into, its benefits to them, the conditions for making it a success, etc. In short, the students should understand clearly what is expected from each of the class participants.

In the case of this project, the teacher will be asked to conduct an open-ended debate with his/her students about the whereabouts of correction and feedback. In practice, this students’ phase should precede the teachers’ workshop so that the latter can have practical data to work on.

For this session with students, teachers can stay in
their classrooms, shift with other colleagues or simply give them time to answer as they want. But it would be good if after the students have worked on their questionnaire, the teacher could already give them the flavour of open-ended teacher/students discussions on such an issue.

Another disposition to think of is a kind of study of the classroom's physical environment. The teachers should be reminded to assess how they can manage the classroom for the implementation of correction and feedback activities.

Still, after everybody has known what the "change" is all about, it would be safer to conduct the implementation in a few experimental classes before it takes total ground.

VIII.2. Objective(s)/target.

As I mentioned earlier, why all this is being done should be made clear to everybody from the needs assessment poll. Responses from teachers as well as students will be of a great contribution. Students, teachers and the administration should all know why there is modification and what we are aiming at, that is learning effectively for oneself and for communication through participatory action (input/output).

Ground rules should be set at the beginning of the year concerning the objectives in evaluation, each one's contribution and what and how each contributor is expected to act. Respect, trust, seriousness (no mockery) should be the bottom line of it all.
VIII.3. Activities

Now what are the activities involved in this participatory learning, or more precisely in participatory evaluation and feedback? It is of some sense, when talking about correction (marking and grading), that we find something to mark and grade; that is to say, a piece of writing.

Producing that piece of writing should not only be when the students write a paper. They should be given the opportunity to practice writing and reading in the normal process of classes. Then, when they take tests, there can be more reason to evaluate their writing skills and the communication their writing conveys.

VIII.3.1. Writing groups.

My focus not being writing as such, I will not labour this point too far. For teaching students how to write, we can pick up some ideas from various readings, use teacher peer consultations and also our creativity. In any case, there is more to adapt than to take for granted.

Right now, my basic interest is in finding ways to help students learn from their errors. A good way to approach this is as many authors have suggested, to have the students work in groups to produce ideas and also as Valette suggested (1973), to produce text together.

Groups of three, four or five maximum can be given a topic or let to choose their own and write about it. Each group member jots down ideas. Then they try to explain them and make a
synthesis. Everybody starts from this synthesis to create a paragraph. Then another synthesis is made from reading them and commenting them briefly. The same procedure continues till the end of the second, third or fourth paragraphs they may be asked to write. The teacher, their guide, manages the time.

These activities might require a lot of time. And in our normal EFL time schedule, there cannot be room for that much time. But if we do not look for the time, we will never find it. Some ways for making it possible are: either to make, in the weekly three or four-hour schedule, room for reading and writing, listening and speaking are already being taken care of in the SOL. For example: For three to four hours/week, we can have two hours of SOL and one/two hour(s) for reading and writing. After all while writing and reading, the four skills are still integrated.

Another possibility is, contrarily to what most authors say (Zemelman, 88; Freedman, ’87; Black, 84), have the groups continue their work out of class. All this benefits the students in that they talk more, receive feedback and learn openly or tacitly from one another.

Group composition not only gives the students the opportunity to build trust and confidence and create a positive community, but it also helps teachers of large classes be more efficient in helping the students. Instead of sixty individual students’ copies to correct, the teacher will have only fifteen copies. S/he can then devote more time assisting more
personally students or groups of students who need help.

Something to subsequently think of is group grades. If we have group work, group composition, it is normal that we have group grades. These group grades are another device to induce every group member to do something, to feel included and responsible to the group. It all depends on how we prepare the students to see it.

Another possibility is to have each individual student write his own piece and instead of having the teacher mark and grade all sixty copies by him/herself, have the students contribute, learn and practice through group marking and grading.

VIII.3.2. Marking and grading.

Marking and grading, as we have said, can be about a piece of composition or a class paper after the standardized test models. Let us take the example of the standardized test, since it has all the components: on the one hand, discrete-point marking and grading, encountered in Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) and grammar and on the other, holistic marking and scoring, dealt with in Comprehension Questions (CQ) and Essay Writing (EW). For an idea of what this standardized test looks like see appendix #1.

Now regarding either discrete-point or holistic scoring, there are some generalities that we should consider.

After the students have produced a piece of writing—a composition or a standardized test—the teacher helps the
students make groups of three, four or five. The copies which have already been collected will be given back to them in groups. Then s/he gives them his/her standard of marking and grading. In other words they are shown where to look and what to look for in marking.

Together with that the students also have the score distribution. They also receive a score sheet that we will describe later in appendix 4. Each individual, though working in group with the other two or three members, corrects one copy at a time. Then they exchange once, twice or three times, until the three or four members of the group have marked and graded all the copies given to the group. For bigger groups, the teacher or the class should decide how many copies each group member should correct.

It is also important that because of various temptations students might have (cheating), it would be advisable especially at the beginning to use card codes rather than names on test papers. In fact, at the beginning of the year, the teacher prepares some square hardcuts of about five centimeters the side, (i.e A2, C3, Z10, etc). When writing a composition or a test, each student is given one. His/her paper will only bear the code on the card. The cards are collected as copies are collected.

Students are also given each, a scoring sheet which has room for grades in MCQ, in Grammar, C.Q. and Essay. This is a suggested adaptation of Heaton’s holistic scoring. See appendix
#4. Then, there is one extra per copy to finalize the grades after group consultations.

In Multiple Choice Questions and grammar, once all these preliminaries have been achieved, the student only has to tick the right answers from looking on the answer sheet. Then they put the total where indicated, and pass on to the next test item.

The Multiple Choice Questions section has generally 4 questions with four options each. Only one of these options is the right answer. The student generally does not have to write the full sentence but rather the letter a, b, c, or d, indicating the choice. This has the advantage of saving time to the student and to the scorer and can also be seen as a good "starter", by its easiness. Some students use it effectively as a starter, a gain of self-confidence, and a source of spared points (2 maximum). I share this point.

However, if we set out not to hunt scores—especially in the classroom—but to learn, there might be another way of looking at that. Besides, choosing an option becomes so mechanical that the student can not always provide reasons to support his/her choice if asked to, which they almost never are.

Thus, as well as we ask students to repeat oral models, we can also ask them to rewrite the sentence of their choice. The objective in so doing will be the reliable copying of the piece of text. I believe that it is by dint of practice that new or unmastered patterns can be fixed (in their mind). Then they can provide a brief justification (2-3 sentences) for why none of the
whatever error may come up. Therefore they are encouraged to ask their partners questions about things they do not understand in the text they are scoring. To consolidate the spirit of group, each time a new group is formed for writing or marking and grading or for feedback, a group name may be chosen and signed where applicable.

Now, to make grammar a useful writing activity, it should be done in two different steps. The first one is the filling in with the right option. The second step would be a wrap-up. Using the items utilized in the answers and also using the context, the testees are asked to make a short wrap-up passage or story of their own. This could be a very close replication of the original passage or something totally different, depending on their own will. What matters is their ability to use effectively all or most of the words or structures in the answers.

**Comprehension Questions and Essay Writing.**

Now about the Comprehension Questions, in the tenth grade test format, there are four questions. These four questions meant to check the comprehension of the text can be graded out of 5 each for a total of 20. (See appendix 5.) for details. The grading will be a bit more holistic than in the first phase but still with some discrete references to look for. The logic in the question should reflect in the answer. For a literal question, what/where...was....?, was...how) there is
always an almost obvious answer to be found in the text.

For an inferential question (why, do you think, how...), there is always a reason, a logic for giving an answer. That, added to the clarity of expression (short and well sequenced sentences plus structure and vocabulary chosen according to the audience), will trigger communicability. These are the features the marker should pay attention to in the first place.

However, at this level, we should not lose track that the main aim for asking comprehension questions is to evaluate the students' capacity to retrieve direct or indirect information from a passage. Being able to express it (communicatively) is what enables the scorer to evaluate the aptitude/skill. Therefore, credits should be given where they are due. Style and mechanics mustn't come into play yet.

So clearly here, the marking itself will be more comment-like rather than singling out specific errors:

For example:

- I agree.
- 2 sentences less instead of one.
- Are you sure?
- This is a good idea.
- Why would you do so?

However, for some important structures or vocabulary that might impede comprehension of the answer, it would surely be better not to verbalize but rather spot out the item by underlining, circling it or write ????? !!!!! above and next to the item to be modified. According to Walz ('82) we can also do
both; underline in text, comment in margin. But his technique is more convenient to use when marking the essay.

Now the essay: Essay marking and grading is the most subjective phase in evaluating students' performance. As such its scoring is the most holistic. But if we look closely at Heaton's holistic scoring grid as proposed by Terry ('89) (Appendix ...) we can have, as with the BEPC oral evaluation grid a sense of how to be less subjective and give a very close to approximate right evaluation of the students' competence.

Some authors suggest that the teacher give the student a whole codification of errors, Robinetts, ('72); Cohen, ('75); Rivers, ('75); Stack, ('78), in Walz, ('82). This, though it is a good idea, will give tendency to marking all the errors that are listed. I would suggest that teachers and students work on basic errors that are to be looked at. The list can increase as they move along the year, if so they wish.

Now how to go about holistic marking and grading?

The passage should be read through first. Then in the light of the code of mistakes, see which ones should be mentioned in the comments or right in the text. Then look at the grid (see appendix 4) and translate into grades as specified on the grid.

This is an instance of how writing could serve a communicative purpose. The reader of the comments (owner of the copy), will be impatient to read these comments. Of course here there can be risks of message conveyance. That is what will be cleared up during feedback. A balance between too much comment
and too few error "spotting" should be made.

Then, once all the sections of the test have been covered under the close guidance of the teacher, points are added up and the totals made. Usually this would take about four times fifteen minutes (1 hr) if there are four members in each group. If they are three, it would be three times fifteen minutes (45 min). Correction time can be a class hour on a regular basis or once in a while or it could be an extra time for teachers and students. Each of them would have a chance to assign a grade to each of the four copies of the group and written a brief comment.

Comments should generally be based on strengths. But the students could also learn how to wrap a negative comment and/or feedback so that it triggers no frustration. A few examples of comments are listed in appendix #6.

We should note that this group correction will only be effective starting from 4th/3e (9th/10th graders) on, unless in 6th/5e (7th/8th) children are allowed to write their comments in French, which I do not personally favor.

Actually from class to class, from teacher to teacher, from school to school, U.P. to U.P. etc. the symbols or codes of correction used for marking and grading could be shared. In the end teachers will use the same and will not get the students too much foreign to the system.

Once the average has been established by the group, it is written down on the score and comments sheet. Then the teacher opens up the oral feedback session for groups to start.
paper. This should take place two or three days later. Special arrangements in terms of place and time should be made. This possibility everybody has to get good grades will suppress the spirit of competition and build up that of collaboration. Furthermore, they will also understand that after all, what minds is no so much the grades, but what they learn.

The new grade and comments, as well as the former, should be kept, like for everybody in his/her folder. That is how we can keep track of each problem, effort and progress. At the end of the semester, when it comes to reckoning averages all marks (rather than the best 3 or 4, as proposed by Langer, 87) are added up and written under a final comment of the teacher, describing the students move through the term/semester/year.

All these comments, descriptions, grades, exercises should be kept in a folder per student. These folders should be duplicated in double (one for the administration, one in the classroom). This folder is made accessible to all (parents, students, teachers) whenever the cabinet is open.

This form of evaluation seems very fair and should be able to even replace exams. Exams are one-day situations that don’t always reflect the actual potentiality of the candidate. Moreover, sometimes errors of grade recording create irreparable prejudices.

However, if exams should exist at all, they should count for half and the classroom comments and grades for another
half, not just looked up for to make a decision.

Another point that most authors support is that comments/feedback should be always be positive. It's most desired that comments, feedback be only positive, especially at the beginning of the practice of this method. It's also true that building on strengths promotes the best psychological and emotional environment in a learning context.

But it is equally true that reality outside the school walls is not always "rosy". Should we deceive our children? On the other hand, is it not true that life is what we make it? If children grow up with another perspective of the world, they might be able to make another world.

VIII.3.4. Follow-up or evaluation.

At the end of every session, particularly in the beginning of this model, the teacher should ask the students how they feel about the session, what they think they have learned, and what they think they will do better next time. In addition, the teacher should be able to ask the students what they think s/he can do to help them better next time. In other words students evaluate their teacher's input. Each group (teacher and students) takes a contract for the next time and they should keep it in mind and begin the following time from there.

This form of evaluation is neither the whole language evaluation nor the classical form of evaluation. One has no formal assessment of the students, nor has it a formal time to
evaluate a student. It is ongoing and it is specifically descriptive. The teacher is only one of the evaluators. Students themselves, parents, the administration take part in the evaluation. The other, (classical) is punctual, figured and only the teacher evaluates the students. Only the teacher gives feedback. With this form of evaluation proposed here, we make a blend. Two aims are achieved: grades and learning. Everybody gets served. (administration, parents, students, and also teachers.). Still, it is not the miracle yet. They are lots of necessary conditions to see to, for it to be successfully implementable. What can these conditions be?
IX. TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION: Various constraints.

IX.1. Administrative constraints.

One of the aspects of schools that we already mentioned is their conservative nature. Besides, the school system in Cote d'Ivoire is centralised for all the country. As such, for a (good) proposition for change to reach, it is a long way, but still not impossible. This represents already the first condition.

Still, at the level of the administration, taking it only from the point of view each school, there is a problem of availability of room, time and means. All the classes are overcrowded because there is not enough means to build more schools, create specialised rooms, buy tables and chairs. It is to thwart this total lack, that we want to find ways to help the teaching and learning of English. And ironically again, we seem to get caught in the same webbs. The administration has no means. And the administration is reluctant to change because it has no means to man the change.

So, from the point of view of means, the administration might:

- not be able to provide the type of classroom that enables such management easily.
- not be able or willing to provide the students with the folders, the cabinets, etc. particularly in the beginning when they are still skeptical.
- feel uncomfortable about the grade (not the grading) system. They always think it is exclusively a teacher's
job to mark, grade and give feedback to the students. Having the students do the evaluation would mean the teachers are no longer doing what they should. The argument is that teachers are trained to evaluate and students are not. They are not and should not be trained to do the teacher's work either. They have better priorities; learning. But if learning is the objective, then we can find a common ground to stand on. This form of evaluation can be a compromise.

IX.2. Parents constraints.

Like the administration, parents might think that it is primarily a teacher's job to evaluate their children, particularly if there is extra time needed for these correction and feedback sessions. But if they are briefed and explained about the rationale for this practice, (fairness in the evaluation of their children's abilities, efforts and progress, but most importantly how to better trigger their children's learning from doing it and getting various feedbacks, etc.), they might even get readier to collaborate.

The other aspect of the parents' reluctance or unreadiness is the fact that most of them are still illiterate in terms of being able to read and respond to the teacher about their kids. Moreover home situations are not always proper to following students' work out of school. (being far from parents, having no place to live in, having no school materials, no light to work with at home, etc). But this is no new thing. Yet reports have always been sent to children's parents or guardians.
As the former reports were sent and made sense of, the new ones will be sent, read and responded to. For illiterate parents or guardians, a translation will not alter the results of the procedure. On the contrary, it will give more responsibility to parents as to the development of their child. Besides, there are less and less illiterate parents. This is comforting as we think of the applicability of the method.

IX.3. Teachers.

Teachers will certainly love the method, as it decreases their workload. But they might resent investing extra time working with the students. But it seems logical that if they want a decrease of their workload, they have to agree working a couple of extra hours with their students. After all they would have spent more time marking all those papers their students write.

Another level of teachers’ possible hesitation about applying the method is the reading of the students’ comments in the folders. There is also their own descriptive comments (evaluation) about sixty kids per class to parents, the administration and the students themselves so that they can take stock of the situation going on in the classroom. But it is still better than the hectic end of the term scramble we have so often experienced, particularly if it is done in their own time. They should simply be ready by the end of the term.

IX.4. Students constraints.

The main constraint I can see with students is their
large numbers in classrooms. The teacher must be very alert to
be able to control this many students in a correction and
feedback class and make sure everybody gets something out of the
whole experience.

Another of their tendencies is to want to cheat or to
favor one another and let no real learning take place. But as I
have already said, if before beginning the method, the teacher
sees to an adequate preparation, and keeps reminding them until
they get well into the habit, everything will go alright.

Another of the constraints is that students have many
other subjects to study. Therefore, teachers should not find in
this way a total unloading of their evaluation work onto the
students. Students, as we said should have as much practice as
possible, but the teacher should see to the right balance of it.
PROJECT EVALUATION.

Now that we have tried to circumscribe some of the problems that we might run into towards implementation, the next thing is to evaluate the project itself in terms of its content and its applicability in Cote d'Ivoire. One of these two aspects (content), will be evaluated here while I am still at the University of Massachusetts, and the other (applicability), in Cote d'Ivoire.

1. Project evaluation at the University of Massachusetts.

To evaluate this project, I need to ask and have answers to four (4) questions:

1. First, what is the object of the evaluation? Most evidently it is the present project in its content.

2. Who is doing the evaluation? First those who are responsible for my programme. Then any other neutral person (preferably a graduate student who has had a language teaching experience) or anybody else in any other field, will be a ressource for me. This variety of backgrounds will give a richer feedback from which to choose for further improvement.

3. What purpose is the evaluation for? This evaluation should enable me to see if the project is well thought out and well built to serve its purpose. For that reason,

4. How? I devised a short questionnaire for the readers of the project, which is as follow:

Questionnaire for the evaluation of a master's project.

Dear reader, here is a questionnaire I have devised to help
you focus on particular aspects of your feedback to me. However, feel free to add any other comments you think is important.

1. What in this paper is academically acceptable and what is not?
Evaluation (continued).

2. What, in this paper is unclear or insufficiently explained?
3. What is redundant,
5. Do you have any other remark?

*********************************************************
* Many thanks for your collaboration. *
*********************************************************
After I get back all the feedback on these points, I will amend my text and produce the final manuscript.

Then, when I reach Cote d'Ivoire, the same four stages of evaluation will be as follows:


2. Who will evaluate it? The various evaluators I can think of are first the responsible for the inservice teacher training staff (two inspectors). Then the board of inservice teacher trainers. The administrations of the secondary schools in my region, the teachers, and the students. Parents will be involved at a later stage.

3. What is the purpose of the evaluation? To see if the content (participatory evaluation and feedback in the classroom for a better learning and practice of English), is implementable.

4. How is it going to be carried through? I will first make a brief oral presentation of the project to all the people mentioned above. Then I will do some local workshops with pilot classes. These workshops will consist of two parts. First two questionnaires (for teachers and students) about feedback and correction in our EFL class environment (see appendixes #7 and 8).

Then the practice that implies actual doing by myself, some voluntary teachers and students. For that I will design a day workshop for teachers, preceded by class discussions with
students based on a questionnaire. Then in the end there will another set of questionnaires (appendixes 9 and 10) for teacher and student to evaluate what it all turned up to be.

From these feedbacks, I will, write a report mentioning the results of the workshop(s) and make further amendments before the final implementation is undertaken.
XI. CONCLUSION.

In this paper, I have tried to touch upon the problem of correction and feedback in the EFL classroom in Cote d'Ivoire. But for the problem to be better perceived and remedied, it has to be presented in context.

Presenting the context takes us to speak about the objectives of teaching English in Cote d'Ivoire, which as we saw is comprised of many levels. The one we stuck to as being most important was communication and specifically written communication. This consequently brought us to consider writing as important in the EFL classroom. Correction and feedback were therefore analysed from the the point of view the written comments on students' papers and the oral feedback that follows the marking. To do that successfully, many other obstacles had to be cleared; the problem of class sizes and the problem of grades. The problem of class size seems to be alleviated if not solved, by organizing students into groups. The problem of grades can be solved by an approach between the classical evaluation paradigm and the Whole Language Evaluation approach.

What we did was therefore to read and analyse literature about the topic and make the choice and adaptation that seemed appropriate to the context. But the thrill to have an idea to share did not make us overlook the practical problems/constraints across the way towards implementation. Some of them could be caused by the administration, some by the
parents, and some others lie on the side of teachers and students. After we have identified them, it is necessary to design an evaluation questionnaire to check the content.


There are two ways by which learning takes place. One aims primarily to extend the power of the child over new facts, relations, forms, conventions, etc.; another is primarily designed to correct the misinterpretation of facts and misuse of forms and symbols.

We chose the second alternative to learning, that is by correcting the misinterpretation and the misuse of facts and forms. How then to do it is the other step. Redfield (’88) suggests that since language learning is non-academic, but rather social, participatory evaluation and feedback, seem an appropriate means to reach that end. / /
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The priest of Nade was a man whom most of the natives called Ji Oji, which was a wilful mispronunciation of his actual name, George.

One day, George came out to the market square to preach. Soon after he had started he proceeded to shout against pagans and idols, threatening them with one type of fire or the other. Some of his audience, answering, called him a lunatic orator; some just snapped their fingers in their horror at the things that were coming out of the lunatic’s mouth...

He had spoken for nearly an hour when beaming his sharp small eyes at the audience and punching steadily at the air, he said: 'I tell you again, men and women of Nade, it’s very foolish to say that xinhabit trees and bushes. Come and join the church and stop these foolish things to do. Those who refuse to come to church are wrong. They will be left in the fire to burn for countless years. Come and worship God. And when I say God, I mean the only true one. Igwe which you people adore is nothing and his shrine is only a hut over a pile of earth!'

The crowd roared at him. Some said: 'Go and touch it if it is nothing, and see what will happen.'

There, at the square with George, were almost all his converts, about twenty in number. David and Dominic, the very first converts George and made in the town accepted the challenge thrown to their master. Known to him, they proceeded to Igwe’s shrine which was about a hundred yards away. About twenty minutes later, a mournful cry arose from there. "Igwe has been assaulted", the voice said and added something about the sky coming down to meet the earth. It was the voice of the head priest of the shrine. David and Dominic had pulled down part of the hut. They had also thrown handfuls of sand on the earth idol inside the hut!

Twenty eight days passed. On the morning of the twenty ninth, David and Dominic were both reported dead. The story went that each of them had died quietly in his own house.

It was Igwe that did it....

From The Only Son - John MUNCYNE

Notes: A shrine: a sacred place.
A lunatic: a person suffering from madness.

QUESTIONS

1 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS - choose the correct answer and write it down

a) The villagers called the priest Ji Oji because:
   - George wasn’t his real name.
   - all the priests of the village were called so.
   - the priest was the son of Oji.
   - They wouldn’t pronounce his name George correctly.

.../..
THE PRESS IN AFRICA

Most Africans are bound to ask: What is the freedom of the Press? Does it include licence to do and say what they please, even if it means directly or indirectly wrecking all our efforts at consolidating our dearly won independence and our efforts for economic reconstruction?

Does this Press in Africa recognize that in our special circumstances it has a duty to Africa and that in fact we expect it to make its own constructive contribution towards our general efforts?

Can the Press in Africa afford to behave and write as though it were operating in London, Paris or New York, where the problems and anxieties are entirely different from those current in Africa?

These and many other questions keep coming up in minds of many Africans as they try to decide what freedom of the Press should mean in the African context. It is, therefore, important that the Press should concern itself with finding out what goes on in the mind of the African.

In the majority of cases the world Press is served by foreign journalists who pay short visits to the various parts of Africa and on whom the world’s verdict over Africa may rest. The news agencies are often relying on such journalists or reporters, who may not themselves know enough or physically be able to cover the area assigned to them to be able to interpret the African scene.

The result is that news coming out of Africa is often, if not always, related to the biased and prejudiced mind that keeps asking such questions as -- is this pro-East or pro-West? Very few, if any, of the world’s Press ask such logical and simple questions as -- is this pro-African?

From "THE CHALLENGE OF NATIONHOOD" Tom Mboya.
I - COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (Answer each question in no more than 5 lines)

1) Would Tom Mboya agree with the complete freedom of the Press in Africa?
2) What should the duty of the local press be in Africa?
3) Why should the African press work differently from the foreign press?
4) Why is outside world ill-informed about Africa?

II - ESSAY (No more than 20 lines)

Is censoring the press necessary? To what extent is it?

III - GRAMMAR

1) Turn into the negative form:
   a - You'd better stay here
   b - He often goes out on Sundays; so do I.
   c - He ought to work hard at school.

2) Fill in the blank with the right preposition:
   a - He reproaches his wife .................. laziness.
   b - Whether the game will be played depends ................ the weather.
   c - Come straight home as soon as you get ................ the plane.
   d - I doubt whether he will recover ................ his illness.

3) Give the correct tense and form of the verb in brackets:
   a - Yesterday, they (wait) at the bus stop for 2 hours.
   b - Those pupils (learn) English these last five years.
   c - I can't help (be) home sick whenever I travel.
   d - Please, help me (carry) that big bag.
   e - I (meet) this man before.
Reference to grammar rules. Rivers (1975) and Stack (1978) mention briefly the possibility of indicating a specific rule of grammar in the textbook when a student breaks that rule in written work. (I have used this technique successfully on the elementary level. In two to four hours one can prepare a detailed outline of a grammar book from which to indicate to the student the pages and the numbers of important rules.) Sending a student to pages 96-98 for an incorrect object pronoun will not help. Instead, the teacher, using the outline as a guide, can write 94:3(c) above a sentence like

S: Il donne lui du thé.

By consulting rule 3(c) on page 94, the student is reminded that object pronouns precede the verb in French. This technique can be particularly useful in a sequenced course in which the class finishes a grammar book and then moves on to a reader or other activity. One should not attempt to send a student ahead in a book to a rule that has not been studied in class. As with the technique of using symbols and abbreviations, success depends upon students' rewriting the paper and turning both copies in.

Checklists. Several writers have prepared checklists that students can use as reminders when they write compositions. Cohen (1975) suggests that students go over their written work several times with a particular structure in mind each time. This can be individualized if a teacher knows a particular student has trouble with adjective agreement, for example. Four other scholars have developed checklists for students; the lists all differ somewhat in purpose and use.
### Frequent Errors Made by ESL Students

#### AGREEMENT
- Subject and verb do not agree.
- Pronoun and referent do not agree.

#### ARTICLES AND DETERMINERS
- **Omission**
- Incorrect Use
  - a
  - an
  - the
  - other

#### CAPITALIZATION
- Omission
- Incorrect

#### COMPARISONS
- Use:
  - like
  - the same as
  - different from
  - more - than
  - the -- est
  - the most --

#### CONTENT
- Incorrect information:
  - awkward: needs rewording
  - cannot understand your meaning

#### DOUBLE NEGATIVE
- Avoid double negatives.

#### FORMAT
- Improper heading
- Improper size paper
- Not written in ink
- No title
- Improper left margin
- Improper right margin
- Indent for each paragraph

#### NOUNS
- Should be singular
- Should be plural
- Improper form
- Mass noun (should be singular)

#### PARAGRAPHING
- Begin new paragraph
- No new paragraph

#### PENMANSHIP (Handwriting)
- Handwriting interferes with communication
- Avoid non-English symbols

#### PREPOSITIONS
- Omission
- Incorrect Use
  - in
  - on
  - at
  - to
  - of
  - other

#### PUNCTUATION
- Omission
  - Period .
  - Question mark ?
  - Exclamation point !
  - Comma ,
  - Colon :
  - Semicolon ;
  - Apostrophe ’
  - Hyphen -
  - Quotation marks “ "
  - Underlining __
  - Others: Parenthesis, etc.

#### SENTENCE
- Incorrect: Incomplete sentence
- Incorrect: Two sentences run together

#### SPELLING
- Incorrectly spelled

#### VERBS
- Tense incorrect
- Form incorrect
- Do not use to after a modal
- Do not use "ing" after to
- Use to + verb form
- Use plain form
- Use "ing" form
- Correct sequence of tenses

#### VOCABULARY
- Form incorrect
- Item incorrect
- Word(s) omitted
- Unnecessary word(s)

#### WORD DIVISION
- Divide words at syllable boundaries
- Write as one word
- Write as two words

#### WORD ORDER
- Observe SVO Place Time word order
- Incorrect question word order
- Incorrect included-question word order
- Change word order as indicated
Appendix 3A  (Douley's checklist)  for learner Writers

APPENDIX-B

Points to Aid Essay-writers

The wise essay writer:

• reads (or chooses) the title carefully;

• writes an opening paragraph that does not ramble but is business-like and to the point;

• clearly informs the reader of what he will attempt to do (before he does it);

• makes sure that his introductory section exhibits a funnel-like pattern, narrowing down and focusing on some particular aspect or approach (the general background thus sketched in perhaps constituting the 'known' which should always precede the 'unknown');

• plans well, arranging his points in a logical order;

• says explicitly at each stage of the argument what he is about;

• keeps to the point throughout;

• establishes at every stage (the sentence-level included) some expectancy of what is to follow;

• writes unified paragraphs, using this device to help carry the reader along;

• makes good use of transition, in the form both of transitional phrases within paragraphs and of transitional paragraphs themselves;
Appendix 3c (Knap’s Composition Checklist)

APPENDIX C

Composition Check-List

Rough Outline
- A clear thesis statement that can be supported or proved
- Three or more useful supporting points

Rough Draft
- Shows examples of thoughtful editing

Final Draft
Mechanics give a clean, orderly impression
- The title—is correctly capitalized shows imagination in phrasing indicates the subject clearly
- Adequate margins—sides, top, bottom
- Clear indentation for paragraphs
- Clear, easy-to-read handwriting or typing

Logical development of one idea in a paragraph
- A topic sentence that gives the idea of the paragraph
- A clear controlling idea in the topic sentence

- Supporting statements that focus on the controlling idea
- Clear relationship or transition between sentences

Imaginative, precise use of language
- Connectives used with precision to show relation
- Careful, correct use of expanded vocabulary
- Examples of artful phrasing
- Correct spelling and hyphenating
- Correct punctuation to develop the meaning of ideas
- Good use of parallel structure in series
- Good use of phrases or clauses to modify or to express the idea
- Good selection of detail to suggest larger meaning
- A good conclusion that draws the paragraph together

Good idea content
- A clearly expressed idea, worthy of adult comment
- Challenging, original thinking

Corrections—with adequate practice to insure mastery
- A clearly expressed idea, worthy of adult comment
- Challenging, original thinking
Composition Check-List

CONTENT

• Is your topic interesting to a mature reader?
• Did you restrict your subject?
• Did you state your purpose clearly?
• Is every idea in the paper relevant to the thesis?

STRUCTURE

• Did you arrange and develop your paragraph(s) in a logical manner according to main ideas? (Introduction, body, conclusion?)
• Did you arrange your sentences logically? (Does each sentence clarify the major idea in the paragraph? In other words, is each sentence necessary?)
• Did you use transitions effectively? Between sentences? Between paragraphs?

MECHANICS

• Did you write grammatically correct sentences? (Does each sentence express a complete thought?)
• Did you use other grammatical patterns correctly? (Modals, idioms, verb tenses, number shifts, etc.)
• Did you vary your sentence patterns?

40
Appendix 4: Heaton's scoring grid (adapted)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Class:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Task description:</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Multiple choice questions: (Comments)

Reliability of copying
Justifications

Grammar:
- Use of items
- Originality

Comprehension questions:
- Retrieval accuracy
- Sense of pie
- Short sentences
- Pronunciation
**SSAY:**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>7</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
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<td>Ideas</td>
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<td>Clarity</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Punctuation - Capitalization*

Comments

**Final Grade:**
Appendix #5. (Suggested Score Distribution)

Whatever the grading system is (out of 10, 20, 50 or 100), in my opinion it always serves the same purpose, that is that of giving the students' work a ciphered value. For classroom conveniences, we can use any of them even if it means converting them to another frame for administrative purposes. We do it during exams and they work well.

I therefore suggest a grading system out of 100. With it, we can easily make any other conversion.

Based on the regular tests, this can be applied:

I. Multiple Choice Questions. /20

1. [ ] an answer out of /5 based on:
   - choice of option 1pt
   - Rewrite — 2 pts
   - Justification 2 pts

2. [ ]

3. [ ]

4. [ ]

II. Grammar. /30

For a suggested ten (10) to fifteen (15) items, with one point each, we total /10 to /15 for the items. Then there is the wrap-up out of fifteen (/15).

III. Comprehension Questions. /15 or 20.

The three or four comprehension questions (ninth/thirteenth graders and twelfth/thirteenth graders), are graded out
of five (5) each, which makes a total of fifteen or twenty.

The grading and scoring are based on:

a) The students' retrieval capacity, 2pts
b) the logic in answer (point defense), 2pts
c) The language (short sentences, connectedness) 1pt

IV. Essay,

Graded out of thirty (30), and based on communicability,

that is:

a) ideas, .................................10pts
b) organisation, .........................10pts
c) language (clarity), ................. 5pts
d) mechanics (punctuation, capitalisation...) 5pts
Topic: My goals and objectives and a preliminary outline of the major skill areas of my program of study

After the brainstorming session my colleagues and I had on our respective skills - academic competencies and interests, it came out that my underlying field of interest was EFL methodologies in the third world context which actually meets my expectation and interest. As a matter of fact, due to the formal school system I work in (11 years), the needs that arise there and also the "open-endedness" of the field, I have intended my goals to address more specifically the area of grading and classroom correction strategies. I worked out the following tentative title: "Correction strategies for EFL overcrowded classroom in the Ivory Coast" to give a squeezed-up idea of my project. Because of the country's economic position practically no new classroom have been built since long. In the same time the number of school-goers has doubled. Classrooms are overcrowded (60 to 70 pupils) Learning pedagogy and particularly language learning...
Log: Week 10 (due 12/5/88)

I was hoping to have a few more class visits this week but things turned to be different unfortunately. Still I gathered enough data to keep learning. The sources were the video-taped simulations we had in class and the model of class observation techniques in the document "Another set of eyes". I also looked for complementary information in Supervision of Instruction by Carl D. Glickman [1985, p.206 to 229].

Until we started video-taping our pre and post-observation conference scenarios, I didn't realize how revealing it was going to be. Then when we started, I discovered I was going through one of the stages G. Egan had talked about when dealing with would-be supervisors' training. That was "step-by-step supervised practice" that is made with feedback, as I reported in my last report. While doing it, I felt I was not prepared enough, for there were demands I couldn't meet. For instance with the type of lesson my supposed teacher was going to teach, within a six minutes' talk what particular appropriate questions could I ask him to get maximum information to be helpful to him? I mean something more elaborate than the simple terms of the
the forerunner of professional improvement. Interpretation
leads to resistance."

It has been fun
taking class
people in this class
are you interested
in seminar. Are you interested
in seminar in the spring?
Will you be supervising
as in the spring?

Moo
Appendix 1: Workshop Questionnaire
for Teachers

Introduction: Your active participation (ideas and actions) will be very much appreciated for trying together to find a solution to the problem of classroom evaluation (correction and feedback) in our EFL classes.

1. What do you think teachers should test their students on?
2. Would it for the administrative requirements, have you marked and graded your students' copies?
3. How do you feel when you have 50 copies to mark?

   more than 50 copies to mark and grade?

   several sets/packs of 50 copies to mark did you?

4. Would you feel differently if there were no administrative pressure?
5. Do you often write comments that guide your students when marking their copies?
6. What, according to you, is most important for your students between comments and grades?
7. Can you think of strategies to keep records of your students' progress in the process of the year?
8. Given an Essay, what do you think would be the best strategy to help your students improve their writing skills?
Appendix 8. Workshop Questionnaire

for students

Answer any (all) of these questions where you feel confident.
You can also discuss it/them with your teacher, if you want.

1. Do you like teachers to pinpoint your mistakes on your test papers?

2. What would your preference be?

3. Not considering the administrative constraints, would you like to have grades? - why or why not?

4. Do you think grades reflect your value? What is your feeling about that?

5. Would you agree to mark and grade one another’s copies in your class or with another class? Give your reasons!

6. You are a class of 50. What delay do you think is reasonable to have your copies back to you?

7. Do you also want your teachers to tell you (through comments) what to do for further progress?

8. How do you feel about correcting marking in groups?

Questionnaires for teachers.

1. What is your overall feeling/appreciation of the workshop?

2. What did you particularly like in this workshop?

3. What do you think should be improved?

4. Can you make a few suggestions?

5. Is there any other point you would like to comment upon?

Thanks for your collaboration!
Appendix # 10  Evaluation of Workshop.

Questionnaire for students.

1. Did you enjoy this session on grading and marking together?

2. What did you like most? Why?

3. What didn't you like? Can you explain that?

4. You would feel better if.................

5. Would you feel happy, confident and ready to participate if this method were used in your class from now on?