BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS: Increasing Student Engagement In Feedback Through Collaboration.

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Context:

• Six week pre-sessional course
• In the UK and in China
• Modular course structure.
• Emphasis on: “Integrated Skills” and “Reading into Writing”
• Culminating in summative assessment (high stakes)
• Draft essay: 20\%
- Draft Essay plan
- Feedback
- Essay plan ★
- Draft essay
- Feedback
- ‘Viva’ ★
- Final essay ★

★ = summatively assessed stages

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Feedback process:

• Essay plan
Feedback process:

• **Essay:**

• Direct, written corrective feedback (*GradeMark*), *plus:*

• Feedback form

• Examples...
Essay Feedback:

• Feedback Form
Problems – For the students

- Cognitive overload in processing direct written feedback
  "...feedback overload, with students being unable to see the wood from the trees."

- Low level of engagement from Ss

- Aversion to tackling some of the more complex issues

- Quality of articulation about essay in ‘vivas’

- Lack of attempted improvements in final draft submission
Problem – student perspective

• Aversion to tackling some types of feedback over others.

• Feedback types students DO typically engage in:
  - Language (word form, spelling, wrong word choice, register etc)

• Feedback types where students RESIST engagement:
  - Coherence
  - Cohesion
  - Task achievement (answering the essay question)
  - Citation
Problem – student perspective

• Aversion to tackling some types of feedback over others.

• Feedback types students DO typically engage in (MICRO):
  - Language (word form, spelling, wrong word choice, register etc)

• Feedback types where students RESIST engagement (MACRO):
  - Coherence
  - Cohesion
  - Task achievement (answering the essay question)
  - Citation
Problem – for teachers

- **Marking burden:**
  - Turnaround time for one student = 1.5/2 hours.
  - Average class size 12 – 14 students.
  - Feedback turnaround time very tight (approx. 2.5 days)

- **Demotivation:**
  - Suspicion that students only read the annotated script.
  - Students lack of engagement /understanding

- **Standardisation issues:**
  - Volume
  - Code consistency
Solution

1) **Feedback in two stages.**
   - 'Macro': argument & organisation, use of sources
   - 'Micro': language and style

2) **Feedback from two teachers**
   - Feedback given on different days.

3) **Revision of 'Viva' stage**
   - Learner Driven (Maas, 2016), based around use of 'feedback grids'.
- Students submit essay to Dropbox
  - Sat 19\textsuperscript{th} Nov

- I.S Tutor marks MACRO elements (Grademark)
  - Tues 22\textsuperscript{nd} Nov

- Students access MACRO feedback Tues 22\textsuperscript{nd} Nov
  - Students create feedback grid 1

- RiW Tutor marks MICRO elements (Word: Track Changes)
  - Thurs 24\textsuperscript{th} Nov

- Students access MICRO feedback Thurs 24\textsuperscript{th} Nov
  - Students create feedback grid 2

- I.S tutor holds learner-driven feedback conference ‘viva’
New process **MACRO** feedback (Grademark)  
Tutor A
Macro compared to previous:

This essay will argue that social media strengthens affordances by connectivity, accessibility and search ability in the society.

Social media can make people connect each other more convenient and efficient. Although romantic jealousy might be promoted from Facebook and it make people feel more stress (Fox and Moreland, 2015). It seems that Facebook makes people’s relationship conflict and stressed their feeling.

However, the position in which social media gadgets are placed in the home are major factors in the type and promote the communication between children and adults by social media (Chambers, 2013). Second, social media’s websites (like Facebook) have integral medium for communicating to different social group members, such as Facebook profile is interacted or modified to self-esteem. It also affords the chance to improve week tes, keep the relationships and define otherwise ambiguous relationship (Moreland, 2015).

Third, Cockley (2010) report that, how illustrators and artists use social media. And his report, artists and illustrators use Twitter and Instagram to communicate and build their own audiences from their online work show. Artists and illustrators want to capitalize and evolve the relationship with a wide audience that is actively opting in to see their messages (Julien, 2016). For those reason, social media makes different social media network becomes the benefactor.

The affordance of accessibility to information in social media improve the teaching system in higher education through student collaboration and interaction. However, it is important to recognize that, we only utilize one or two functions of social media service. Moreover, student may struggle it be used to use other function (Pooe, 2014). Though it is valid point to mention that social media is flexible and easy to manipulate. It is simple for student to create their learning portfolio websites that may lead to put the education at the center (Pooe, 2014). Furthermore, educators find social networking useful and convenient to assess student work online (Pooe, 2014). It can be concluded that, accessibility affordance is a dominant tool to be creative, easy to find information for research and it is easy to learn.

The affordance of connectivity through digital media enhance educator teaching quality. Specifically in relation to course material delivery and student feedback. Others believe that, student will not be able to separate their professional academic life because they will be confused. Furthermore, educators assume that their student are competent because they are digital natives (Pooe, 2014). Even though this is true, still derive student to what called “social constructivism”. This type of environment teach student the collaboration, the participation and information sharing through their interaction in social media (Pooe, 2014). In relation to educator, they are using social media in collaboration tools such as blogs, wikis and others to enhance student interaction and to construct creative community (Pooe, 2014). This type of communication will improve student technical skills that help support them when they are employed (Pooe, 2014). This influence is completely one of the dominant in social media, where the communication and collaboration is separate for student at the university level. Moreover, it promote education, academic profession.
New process MICRO feedback

Tutor B

Through digital technologies, accessibility, homes are no longer private spaces, family members are affected even though it helps households in their lives and homes can afford digital technologies. According to Madison and Miller (2012, see Chambers, 2013:104), the decrease of the prices and accessibility of digital technologies has coincided with universal increase of living cost. This effect has resulted to media technologies like television and radio to be integrated into home and family lives (see Berker et al. 2006; Miller and Slater 2000; Silverstone and Hirsch 1992). Furthermore, Horst (2010: 168, see Chambers, 2013:107), indicates the use of social media in family-related activities where family members were able to access family major events information on their websites like family vacations and photographs. However, the accessibility of digital media in homes appear to endanger homes. Broadbent (2011, see Chambers, 2013:103) show that homes may take on a price reality, but fully became more permeable to the outside world by using digital tools like webcams and instant messaging while communicating with family members and partners and showing each other significant domestic contexts and objects. More importantly, the accessibility of digital technologies may be harmful to family members. Aitken & Clark; Cassel & Cramer (2004; 2007; see Chambers, 2013: 195) demonstrate that parents worry about the time spent online by children and possible isolation may result in addiction of games and social network sites, expose to aggressive commercial targeting, sexual explicit material, and online violence. In addition, Bevan, Gomez, and Sparks (2014, see Fox and Moreland, 2015: 156) show that the overuse of social networking sites may result in lower quality of users. It is important for parents to control the access time of media technologies by children and restrict access of some contents and more importantly discuss and advise them how they can use it appropriately.
Example of a feedback grid: MICRO
(created by student in response to feedback)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Error</th>
<th>Example(s) of error from your essay</th>
<th>Your correction and explanation</th>
<th>Source of correction (e.g. dictionary, online grammar guide, classmate, teacher, etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| WW           | 1)Language loss would lead to the loss of many part of world cultures<br>2)Globalization is the beneficial to spreading it | 1)Correct: language loss will lead to the loss of many parts of world culture.  
Explanation: “will” shouldn’t be past tense<br>2)Globalization is beneficial to spreading it  
Explanation: “Be beneficial to something” be + adjective | Grammar website<br>Teacher feedback/friend |
| unnec        | the globalization compress the space and time, and we may not find the definite boundary in the future.       | Correct: delete “the”  
Explanation: We do not need to use an article when we are talking about something in general terms. | |
| s/v agr      | As we know, globalization brings different kind of cultures to nearly every corner and impact all thing such as media, language and food. | Correct: impacts  
Explanation: globalization is singular form. | |
Example of a feedback grid: MACRO (created by student in response to feedback)

| Dev:claim | 1. Globalization accelerates the development of media, which is one type of culture. | Correction: globalization facilitate the development of local media and enrich the global media.  
Explanation: claim needs to be more specific |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| interpretation | Now the situation of the media has changed and the media system is more complex than before.  
Media plays a critical role in the process of globalization, | Correction: I need add a link words to connect these two sentences or these two sentences could in one paragraph.  
Explanation: I should interpret it clearly and link it with next sentences more closer |
| unclear | globalization, which contact globalization firstly and under the influence directly. | Correction: change” under the influence directly” to “directly effected by globalization” |
Feedback conferences ‘viva’

- Dubbed ‘vivas’ on our course due to the summative assessment involved.

- 15 minutes per student (with five minutes at the end for the tutor to input)

- Learner driven
Findings and Evaluation - Positives

**STUDENTS:**
- Student engagement
- Lowering cognitive load
- Staging of feedback

**TEACHERS:**
- Marking load
- Motivation
Positives (student):

‘Each teacher can focus...is more good for our working...’

‘The claim or coherence problem is much difficult to fix by ourselves...’

‘..I will know that my paragraph is too complex for my readers to understand.’

‘Feedback tables make us really know our problems...’

‘...I can go back to my feedback... improve my next essay...’
Positives (teacher):

‘because two teachers were feeding back on the content I feel that the students focused harder on the activity…’

‘…it might free up the IS teacher to focus on more substantive but also more ephemeral problems…’

‘..I noticed more engagement in the process from the students’

‘Marking for [macro]…enabled me to focus…thus engaging more effectively with the rhetorical flow of the essay.’

‘...[the] feedback table…compelled them to engage with their feedback more proactively…’
Findings and Evaluation: **negatives**

- **STUDENTS:**
  - Potential for increased pressure in ‘viva’.
  - Very weak students may struggle with the feedback grids.

- **TEACHERS:**
  - Increase marking burden on the Writing teacher.
  - Potential for duplication or omission
  - Collaborative feedback not demonstrably better than one teacher providing feedback in stages.

- **Logistics**

- **Training time required for the students and teachers.**
Negatives:

‘...quite a complex process in what is already quite a complex course...’

‘...difficult to roll out on a large scale...’

‘...not convinced there is an advantage to two different teachers providing feedback.’

‘Some students may not have the resources to be able to make changes to their writing based on corrections alone. Some kind of balance is needed’

(Student about Viva):
‘nervous because I don’t know what to...I don’t how to tell you what’s my problem....’
Limitations of study:

- No control group

- Other variables in the process (such as amendments to the assessment criteria, course materials, teaching cohort and standardisation)
Next steps

• Further exploration through amendments to the model:

  Pedagogical:
  - no collaboration (just one tutor)
  - variations to the collaboration
  - variations in standardization of the process
  - variations in training the students

  Research:
  - Control group
  - Longitudinal study
Date for your diary!

Intercultural Communication and English for Academic Purposes

BALEAP Professional Interest Meeting
18th November 2017

Nottingham Trent University
www.baleap.org/event/intercultural-communication

Plenary speaker: Prof. Adrian Holliday (Canterbury Christchurch Uni.)
Reading list:


• Chandler, J. (n.d.). The efficacy of various kinds of error feedback for improvement in the accuracy and fluency of L2 student writing.


• Maas, C. (2016). Receptivity to learner-driven feedback in EAP. *ELT Journal*
