

# ERROR CORRECTION CODE AS THE FORM OF FEEDBACK AT THE LESSONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:** *this article is written to present the experience of applying an approach to improve students' writing skills in English lessons. The approach is presented in the form of a set list of symbols for checking students' work and providing oral and written feedback. The article discusses the theoretical basis of this approach, and who of the methodologists paid attention to it. Under what conditions can this approach be applied, the structure of its organization and the results obtained when working with a group of students in grade 8.*

**Keywords:** *writing, verification code, application, independent learning, skills, errors, approach.*

## КОД ИСПРАВЛЕНИЯ ОШИБОК КАК ФОРМА ОБРАТНОЙ СВЯЗИ НА УРОКАХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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**Аннотация:** *данная статья написана с целью представления опыта по применению подхода по улучшению навыков письма учащихся на уроках английского языка. Подход представлен в виде установленного списка символов для проверки работ учащихся и предоставления устной и письменной обратной связи. В статье рассматривается теоретическая основа данного подхода, и кто из методистов уделял ему внимание. При каких условиях может осуществляться применение данного подхода, структура его организации и результаты, полученные при работе с группой учащихся 8 класса.*

**Ключевые слова:** *письмо, проверочный код, применение, независимое обучение, навыки, ошибки, подход.*

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Writing process includes itself physical as well as mental acts. The main idea of writing is delivering ideas, opinion, stating an argument on paper. It is very important in the teaching learning process to produce literate written works and get satisfaction from this process. Satisfaction in this case means coincidence of teacher's - learners' goals as education got the direction of being applicable for life and oriented for independent learning.

As any skill of language writing has been paid attention to and different approaches had been examined. Teachers work is done for the progress and development of learners. As teacher tries to contribute to the development of learners and looks for better ways this work cannot be done without self growth and development. Having faced a new challenge in the current school year with my 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, which appeared to be lack of noticing skills, low scores during summative assessment works raised the question for solution of the problem. It was decided to discuss the situation with colleagues who recommended me to apply error correction code as a new approach, followed by oral and written feedback. From their experience the approach was successful. To start with I decided to look through theoretical material and found out error correction code in some methodological books for teaching English language. For instance, David Riddell in his book Teaching English as foreign/second language (2001, p. 157) states that teachers can use correction symbols (correction codes) to give feedback to students on their writing, and teachers can underline the errors to signify the mistakes and write the symbols for these mistakes in the margin. Tricia Hedge (1988), in Resource Book for Writing suggests that teachers can indicate "an error and identify the kind of error with a symbol, e.g. wo = wrong word order". Jeremy Harmer also mentions that usage of set symbols could be less damaging for learners when they get back their work however teacher should not forget to include a feedback.

Therefore the plan for work had been set. Having studied the suggested symbols from the internet sources such as British Council website, Academic English UK website and having made some additions based on the observations in my groups the list of set symbols was identified. At the first lesson learners were introduced the symbols and the aim of their usage. I gave learners copies of the symbols, which they stuck into copybooks and were able to use when necessary. There is no need to learn by heart all the symbols, the main idea is to understand them, be able to apply correction code and differentiate the mistakes. Therefore expected results were set in the differentiated form according learners abilities:

- Peer assessment of each other's work using criteria and error correction code (learner C)
- Peer assessment of each other's work using criteria and error correction code, making self-correction of the work (learner B)

- Peer assess each other's work using criteria and error correction code, differentiating mistakes and making self-correction of them (learner A)

According educational program at our school criteria – based assessment is used under them was meant criteria for the certain type of writing. Moreover, usage of criteria is like a plan or guidelines that help student in writing process and makes the assessment process clearer for everybody.

After the introduction of the error correction code all the works of students should be checked using it. There are options how to mark mistakes, as for me I started with writing it over the word, then after some period of practice just on the margins and underlined the place of mistake. Now I could just write the symbol on the margins without highlighting it for A and B category students. One essential moment is not to overdo with corrections and choose the focus in written works and to organise it in an engaging way, especially in the beginning. Ken Lackman in his toolkit for students suggests such activities, which could support the process of incorporating the approach into the lessons, drive learners' attention to the mistakes and pointing out areas for improvement:

- Common Error Matching – connecting common errors with their explanations,
- Peer Error Correction Race – form of group work, when learners compete in finding mistakes after peer assessment,
- Error Correction Scavenger Hunt – looking for definite type of mistakes in each others' works,
- Round the Class Competition – speedy error correction of sample work,
- Error Correction Strip Race – similar to previous one plus movement and etc.

After the lessons that have been pointed as check – up learners were interviewed, this helped to get feedback from them and set the following work. In general, learners shared that after enough time of practice they became more able to see and correct mistake. Learner A became more confident, seeing the progress helped to be quicker and more attentive. Learner C could find the mistakes, but still had hesitations in identifying the types of them. Learner B could argue on types of mistakes and prove the correct choice of the symbol. Therefore could be stated that approach of error correction code has brought its success to the process of writing in this group of students and helped them to make changes. However errors correction and pointing out common mistakes does not always bring solutions for this problem, sometimes it is necessary to talk to the student and find out about his thoughts and ideas that he wanted to express in his written work. The approach should be complex, taking into account grammar knowledge, working with structure of the sentences and vocabulary to support error free written works.

By the end of experiment learners pointed out common mistakes, which still needed to be clarified and worked on: punctuation, sentence structure, missing or wrong words. They accepted the approach positively we are going to continue using it in the lessons and incorporate in new ideas, such as differentiated instructions and focusing on noticing skills, which could be helpful during exams and external assessment.

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