

Correction traffic lights

Trainer's notes

Aims	To familiarise trainees with correction codes To raise trainees' awareness of issues relating to error correction
Syllabus area	Correcting learners
Timetable fit	For use in an input session on written error correction
Interaction pattern	Group work
Timing	25 minutes
Materials needed	One copy of the background information (see 3.6A), the correction code (see 3.6A) and the writing sample (3.6B) for each trainee One correction instruction card (see 3.6A) for each group One copy of writing sample (3.6B) on a transparency for each group Different colour OHT marker for each group (red, orange and green) Set up an OHP in the room

Instructions

- Hand out the background information to each trainee, and ask a few comprehension questions. Explain that in the next activity, you will look at a piece of written work by this learner. Explain that the activity focuses on the way teachers correct written mistakes.
- Hand out the correction code to each trainee, or elicit symbols for the items on the correction code and make sure that all the trainees are familiar with the symbols.
- Divide the class into three groups (or multiples of three if the group is very large). Elicit the colours of traffic lights (*red, amber and green*), and assign a colour to each group.
- Explain that each group will correct the same piece of work but in different ways. The colour of their group will dictate how they will correct the work. The green group are 'given the green light' to correct all the errors; the amber group will be quite cautious in correcting the errors and the red group will be very cautious.
- Hand out the appropriate correction instructions, a copy of the writing sample on a transparency, and a red, orange (amber) or green pen as appropriate to each group. Hand out a copy of the writing sample to each trainee. Explain that each group should make their corrections on the transparency.
- Allow ten minutes for the groups to complete their work.
- Collect in the transparencies from the different groups and use the projector to show the differences between the corrections by laying the transparencies on top of each other, as well as displaying them individually.
- Conduct feedback on factors to consider when making corrections. Draw out the following:
 - the need to motivate and not demotivate the learner
 - identifying slips versus developmental errors
 - the role of self- or peer-correction
 - the need to take into account learner needs, expectations and previous learning experience
 - grading work for accuracy and/or fluency
 - alternative strategies for tackling errors

Answer key

Green group

Teake 350ml lukewarm water, 500g flour, 10g salt, 20g baking powder or yeast, some corns of sesam pumkin sunflower or diffrent fullcorns if you like style?

Make a dough, give him 15min. to rise, then put it in a baking tin, which is prepared whith some butter and put it by 180° for 1 hour in the oven. It works, i'm know, because i do it sometimes at home. You'll see it's delicious!!!!

is this necessary in a recipe?

Amber group

Teake 350ml lukewarm water, 500g flour, 10g salt, 20g baking powder or yeast, some corns of sesam pumkin sunflower or diffrent fullcorns if you like.

Make a dough, give him 15min. to rise, then put it in a baking tin, which is prepared whith some butter and put it by 180° for 1 hour in the oven. It works, i'm know, because i do it sometimes at home. You'll see it's delicious!!!!

Red group

Teake 350ml lukewarm water, 500g flour, 10g salt, 20g baking powder or yeast, some corns of sesam pumkin sunflower or diffrent fullcorns if you like.

Make a dough, give him 15min. to rise, then put it in a baking tin, which is prepared whith some butter and put it by 180° for 1 hour in the oven. It works, i'm know, because i do it sometimes at home. You'll see it's delicious!!!!

Correction traffic lights

Background information

Gert is a middle-aged, pre-intermediate level learner. He studied English (fairly reluctantly) at school and since then has mainly practised his listening and speaking when travelling around Asia on his motorbike. Although he has read a few books and magazines in English, he doesn't have much need to write in his second language and admits that he's a lousy speller. He attends classes once a week through the local adult education programme and loves sharing his many life experiences with his teacher and classmates.

Correction code

WW	wrong word
P	punctuation
SP	spelling
G	grammar
WO	word order

Correction instructions

Green group

Mark all the mistakes you see using the correction code and any other words/phrases you think will help the learner to 'see' his mistake.

Amber group

Mark any mistakes you think a learner at pre-intermediate level should be able to correct themselves (i.e. slips rather than errors), using the correction code only.

Red group

The learner produced this writing in response to a written fluency exercise, where students were invited to share their favourite recipes through English. Mark only those errors that interfere with the message, and would prevent another learner from following the recipe successfully, using the correction code only.

Correction traffic lights

Recipe for Wholegrain bread

Teake 350ml lukewarm water, 500g flour,
10g salt, 20g baking powder or yeast,
some corns of sesam pumkin sunflower or diffrent
fullcorns if you like .

Make a dough, give him 15min. to rise , then put it in
a baking tin, which is prepared whith some butter
and put it by 180° for 1 hour in the oven. It works, i'm
know, because i do it sometimes at home. You'll see it's
delicious!!!!

(written by Gert Pöppel, German adult learner)