Learners' Beliefs About Error Logs

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The Study

The Problem

- Repeated written errors/mistakes by L2 learners

Possible Solution

- Use error logs to provide error/mistake awareness in order to elicit self-reflection and self-improvement

Research aim

- Explore student beliefs about their experiences with the error logs

Research Question

What are language learner beliefs about using error logs?

Literature Review

Beliefs

- "A messy construct" (Pajares, 1997)
- Not stable and static, but variable and dynamic (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2003)
- Students' subjective truths have strong influence on language learning (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2003)

Error Logs

- Error logs

  - Little research on error logs after receiving corrective feedback (CF) (Ferris, 2004)

Which errors to correct?	
Global	Impedes understanding e.g. verb tense (VT)
Local	Merely distracting e.g. subject-verb agreement (SVA), plural/singular(PL/S)
• Corrections of most frequent errors are encouraged.	

Corrective Feedback

Uncoded	Focused	Feedback
An error has been located in some way	Intensive (specific errors)	

Methodology

Academic Writing Course	Participants
Second-year	48

Methodology Cont'd

- First submitted draft every five weeks

- Uncoded focused CF for SVA, PL/S, and VT errors

- Other errors given either direct or indirect feedback

Methodology Cont'd

- Only SVA and PL/S errors

Writing 3, Spring Semester, 2019
Error Log: Essay 1

Sentence with error	What kind of error is this?	Corrected sentence	Rules and notes	Error or mistake?
Example: The average number of bicycles are increasing.	*Subject-verb agreement*	*The average number of bicycles is increasing.*	*The subject comes before a phrase beginning with 'of' and a singular subject takes a singular verb.* *Class handout*	*Error: You did not know the correct rule.* *Mistake: You knew the correct rule, but accidentally used the incorrect form.*
One of the biggest fact of life span is~	Singular / Plural problem	One of the biggest facts of life span is~	Since, there are many kind of facts, I had to write plurals's..	mistake!
With the spread of portable game	Singular / Plural problem	With the spread of portable games	"game" is not only one, so it is plural.	mistake
restriction prevent children from playing...	"	restrictions prevent children from playing	"restriction" is not only one, so it have to put "s"	mistake
Workers is likely to~	Subject – Verb Agreement.	Workers are likely to~	"Workers" is plural, I had to write "are.	mistake

Methodology Cont'd

- Reflection given after the final treatment

Reflection prompts:
1. How do you feel about completing the error log after each second draft?
2. In general, do you find the error logs useful? Why/why not?
3. Do you think error logs can be used to improve students' writing? Why/why not?
4. Do you think completing the error logs this semester has improved your writing? Why/why not?
5. Can you suggest ways in which error logs could be used more effectively?

Findings (Qualitative)

THEMES	Code	n
Benefits	Positive responses	46
	Improvements in writing	29
	Self-understanding	26
	Increased grammar knowledge	16
	Future/other applications	11
Difficulties	Challenges	16
	Self-assessment challenges	10
	Future improvements	9
	Lack of improvement	6

Findings (Qualitative)

BENEFITS	
Positive Responses	**46**
"When I fix my draft completely, I could make great essay. Thus I think error logs can be used more effectively for writing essay :)" – Hanako	

Findings (Qualitative)

BENEFITS	
Improvements in Writing	29
"I have improved my writing thanks to error logs. When I wrote the first draft, there were a lot of mistakes, so I used both sides of paper to fix my mistakes. However, this third draft had only one mistake." – Naoko	

Findings (Qualitative)

BENEFITS	
Self-understanding	**26**
"Thanks to the error logs, I could notice mistakes." – Nana	

Findings (Qualitative)

BENEFITS	
Increased Grammar Knowledge	**16**
"I felt about error log that I became to have been care about those grammar problems so much. For example, "s" which is end of the noun." – Kaho	

Findings (Qualitative)

BENEFITS	
Future/other Applications	11
"I couldn't realize all the error log by myself. In general, I noticed them after check of teacher." - Sara	

Findings (Qualitative)

DIFFICULTIES	
Challenges	**16**
"It is hard to complete the error log because there are many points which is pointed out, so it takes a long time to write down it." – Mana	

Findings (Qualitative)

DIFFICULTIES	
Self-assessment Challenges	**10**
"I felt hard because I had to look for the correct way of grammar. Also, when I couldn't find the right answer by myself, it took very long time to finish a paper." – Kumi	

Findings (Qualitative)

DIFFICULTIES	
Future Improvements	**9**
"Sometimes it is hard to understand why it is wrong, so if there was some advice, it might be helpful." – Toshio	

Findings (Qualitative)

DIFFICULTIES	
Lack of Improvement	6
"Using error log paper is not good for students' writing." – Yu	

Implications

What we can learn from this:

- Students generally have strong positive beliefs about the error logs

- They generally shared the belief that the error logs helped their writing

- Students were diligent about completing the error logs even though no points were awarded for completion

Limitations

Limitations of this study
• Only English majors
• No comparison group
• Only self reporting
• Only one reflection
• Required to write in English
• Research is context-specific
• Reflection prompts may have influenced their responses

Future Studies

Future research interests

- Test it with students possessing lower/higher L2 ability

- Use the reflection throughout the semester to see how their beliefs change

- Compare reflections with error logs; correlation between number of errors/mistakes and beliefs?

References

Barcelos, A. M. F., & Kalaja, P. (Eds.). (2003). *Beliefs about SLA: new research approaches.* Kluwer Academic.

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Thank you

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