Lambert, Judy C.

**Title:** Teacher Response to Beginning Reader Errors: Three Case Studies.

**Note:** 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, October 25-28, 2000).

**Descriptors:** *Beginning Reading; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Elementary School Teachers; Emergent Literacy; *Error Correction; *Feedback; Miscue Analysis; Oral Reading; Reading Instruction; Tutoring

**Abstract:** This study investigated how three experienced teachers responded to beginning readers' errors. Participants were three teachers and their assigned tutees in the summer 1999 course, Interactive Literacy Intervention. Pre- and post-course sessions of the tutee reading to the tutor were videotaped. Transcripts of the sessions were made, and miscues, self-corrections, and teacher corrections were coded and analyzed. Researchers determined whether each teacher had a dominant or preferred feedback style, such as ignoring errors or suggesting a meaning or decoding strategy and whether this varied according to miscue type. In the pre-course sessions, teachers were each found to display a preferred feedback response, and the response style varied little according to type of miscue. In the post-course sessions, each teacher maintained the same feedback preference, but two of the teachers varied their feedback according to whether or not the error changed text meaning. The importance of teacher feedback to children's oral reading and suggestions for modifying the intervention course are discussed. (Author/SM)
Teacher Response to Beginning Reader Errors:

Three Case Studies

Dr. Judy C. Lambert
Department of Reading Education/COEHS
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI 54901
920-424-2478
e mail: lambert@uwosh.edu

Paper received at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association Conference, Chicago, IL, 10/00.
Abstract

This study investigated how three experienced teachers responded to a beginning reader’s errors. Subjects were 3 teachers and their assigned tutees in the Summer 1999, *Interactive Literacy Intervention* course. Pre and post course sessions of the tutee reading to their tutor were videotaped. Transcripts of the sessions were made and miscues, self-corrections and teacher corrections coded and analyzed. Determined were whether each teacher had a dominate or preferred feedback style, such as ignoring errors or suggesting a meaning or decoding strategy and whether this varied according to miscue type. In pre-course sessions, the teachers were each found to display a preferred feedback response and that response style varied little according to type of miscue. In the post-course sessions, each teacher maintained the same feedback preference, but two of the teachers now varied their feedback according to whether or not the error changed text meaning. The importance of teacher feedback to children’s oral reading and suggestions for modifying the intervention course are discussed.
Teacher Response to Beginning Reader Errors:

Three Case Studies

When beginning readers read, they make mistakes. The teacher listener then does something they think will help the child develop as a reader. In other words, they respond to the error. The way the teacher responds sets up an expectancy message for the child as to how to approach the reading task. The purpose of this project was to investigate experienced teachers’ feedback to children’s oral reading errors and the possible impact of an intervention course. This is an outgrowth of an original study by the proposer (1996) in which the miscue and feedback classification categories were developed.

Theoretical framework. An error episode is defined as “the sequence of events initiated by an oral reading error...” (Chinn, Waggoner, Anderson, Schommer & Wilkinson, 1993, p.362). This series of events involves first, the reader making an error, second, the reader reacting in some way to his or her own error (including the reader ignoring the error or not being given the chance to react) and third, the teacher listener providing feedback in some way (including choosing to ignore the error). Teachers also provide expectancy messages in other types of short responses and interactions as the child reads. For example the feedback and interactions may focus on word pronunciation (decoding) or on content (meaning).

The conceptual framework and techniques for looking at oral reading performance were first provided by Kenneth and Yetta Goodman and Carolyn Burke (Goodman, 1967; K. Goodman & Burke, 1973; Y. Goodman & Burke, 1972, Stanovich, 1991). Teachers have three basic decisions to make when an oral reading error is made. They must decide whether to give feedback, when to give it, and what type to give (Chinn et al., 1993; Hoffman et al., 1984). Feedback can be classified as terminal, providing the correct word, or sustaining, supplying some
type of aid to help the reader figure out the word. Sustaining feedback has been found by clinical experience (Clay, 1979) to be the type of feedback most likely to help students become better readers.

**Method**

Three experienced teachers enrolled in Reading 720, *Interactive Literacy Intervention*, for the Summer of 1999 and the children they tutored were involved in the study. Each child was given an appropriate level book to read aloud. The tutor was directed to do whatever they thought best when the child made an oral reading error. Each pair was video taped both before and after the tutor had completed the *Interactive Literacy Intervention* course. The course was a four week summer class that met for four days a week. Transcripts were made of each reading session. Miscues were recorded and classified as to whether or not they changed text meaning. Reader and tutor response was also recorded and classified. The dominant or preferred feedback style for each tutor was identified for each pre and post course reading session.

**Results and Conclusions**

**Tutoring pair #1.** In the pre-course reading, before any specific tutoring, Shala made mostly syntactic and nonsense miscues and hesitations. Very few of her miscues kept the story meaning intact. Shala made self-corrections for less than half of her errors and tended to use a decoding strategy when she did attempt a self-correction. Ms. E., her tutor, allowed very few miscues to go with no correction. Her preferred correction pattern was to suggest a decoding strategy to Shala.

In the post-course reading, after four weeks of tutoring, Shala continued to make primarily syntactic and nonsense miscues and hesitations. Again very few miscues kept the story
meaning intact. Shala made few self-corrections and continued to primarily use a decoding strategy in her self-correction attempts. Ms. E. continued to allow few miscues to go uncorrected. Her preferred assistance pattern continued to be suggesting a decoding strategy. In conclusion, there was little or no change in the child’s reading behavior and in the teacher’s feedback behavior.

Tutoring Pair #2. In the pre-course reading, Odessa made fairly equal numbers of miscues that either retained text meaning or distorted meaning. Odessa self-corrected approximately 14% of her errors using decoding and meaning strategies fairly equally. Ms. C.’s preferred feedback strategy was to ignore the errors and provide no correction. This did not differ for meaning change or no meaning change errors. When she did provide a correction, she preferred to suggest a meaning strategy to Odessa, but did occasionally suggest a decoding strategy or just provide the correct word.

In the post-course reading, Odessa continued to make fairly equal number of miscues that retained text meaning and that distorted meaning. She self-corrected approximately 31% of her errors, primarily using a meaning strategy when it could be determined how she was making the self-correction. Ms. C. continued to prefer to ignore errors. This did differ somewhat. Now she primarily ignored just non-meaning change miscues rather than all errors as she had done before. When she did provide a correction she fairly equally suggested a decoding or a meaning strategy to Odessa. In conclusion, the correction of only meaning-altering errors can be considered a positive change. It could also be considered positive that Odessa increased her self-correcting behavior. This was perhaps due to the tutor’s tendency to ignore errors providing Odessa the opportunity to make self-correction attempts.
Tutoring Pair #3. In the pre-course reading, Morgan made mostly syntactic and nonsense miscues and hesitations. Very few of her miscues kept the story meaning intact. Approximately 23% of the time she made self-correction attempts, when it was identifiable always using a decoding strategy. Approximately 40% of the time, Ms. R. let the miscues go uncorrected, whether they changed the story meaning or not. When she did provide a correction she equally suggested a decoding strategy or just provided the word to Morgan. Only 1% of her corrections involved suggesting a meaning strategy for Morgan to try.

In the post-course reading, Morgan made fairly equal numbers of miscues that either retained text meaning or distorted meaning. She made hardly any self-corrections. Ms. R. provided feedback a little over half the time most often suggesting a meaning strategy. She also focused her corrections exclusively on meaning change errors allowing the non-meaning change errors to go uncorrected. In conclusion, it is a positive change that Morgan made more errors that did not change text meaning. Her tutor also focused more on correcting only the meaning altering errors and now quite often suggested a meaning strategy to Megan.

Significance

Since oral reading is extremely common in elementary classrooms, particularly with beginning readers in the lower grades, it is a crucial area of study. Oral reading occurs as part of an instructional interaction between teacher and student (Hoffman & Baker, 1981). Teacher feedback during oral reading informs the learner about the accuracy with which she or he is performing the task and allows either the teacher or the student to engage in corrective activity (Hoffman et al., 1984). Effective feedback can encourage a perception of reading as meaning-making and encourage an independent, rather than a passive learner stance (Purcell-Gates & Dahl,
That teachers exhibit a strong feedback preference that tends to remain consistent over time is an important finding and has implications for the development of pre-service and inservice educational programs and for the modification of instructional activities in the Reading 720 Interactive Literacy Intervention course.

A modification to consider is offering the intervention course only in the traditional 14 week term rather than in a condensed summer session. Four weeks may just be too short of a time to expect any significant changes in tutor feedback or in a child’s oral reading strategies. This must be balanced, though, with the advantages of meeting daily in the summer versus only once a week during the regular term. Perhaps a more realistic goal for the intervention course, regardless of how offered, would be for the teacher-tutors to just become acutely aware of their preferred feedback pattern and able to monitor their actions as a first small step toward providing more appropriate and beneficial supportive feedback to a child’s oral reading.
References


I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Teacher Response to Beginning Reader Errors: Three Case Studies

Author(s): Judy Lambert

Corporate Source: Paper presented at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association Conference, Chicago, IL

Publication Date: 10/00

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 1

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 2A

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 2B

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, please

Judy Lambert

Chair + Professor

UW Oshkosh, 800 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh, WI 54901

Telephone: 920-224-2478
Fax: 920-224-0858
E-Mail Address: lambert@uwosh.edu

Printed Name/Position/Title

Date: 10/18/00
### III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publisher/Distributor:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

**ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
1129 SHRIVER LAB
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742
ATTN: ACQUISITIONS

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

**ERIC Processing and Reference Facility**
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfac.plccard.csc.com