



# Bringing linguistic corrective feedback to the mainstream classroom

Action research  
at Oxford Spires Academy

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# Some facts about EAL:

- EAL does not have a status of a school subject (Leung, 2001)
- Lack of common EAL policy in England (Creese, 2010; Costley, 2014 ).



# Key facts about EAL at OSA

- Over 50% of our students speak a language other than English at home.
- Around 40 languages are spoken in our school.
- Our academy has a dedicated EAL Department running a number of intervention programmes and collaborative projects in order to support the students to achieve their best.

# Research in Corrective feedback

- Explicit corrective feedback as a teaching tool
- Corrective feedback in the Science ESL classroom (Doughty&Varela, 1998) – CF given to a group of secondary school students in past forms and conditional verb forms used to produce Science reports. The intervention resulted in both short and long term gains in accuracy and development of the independent language use.

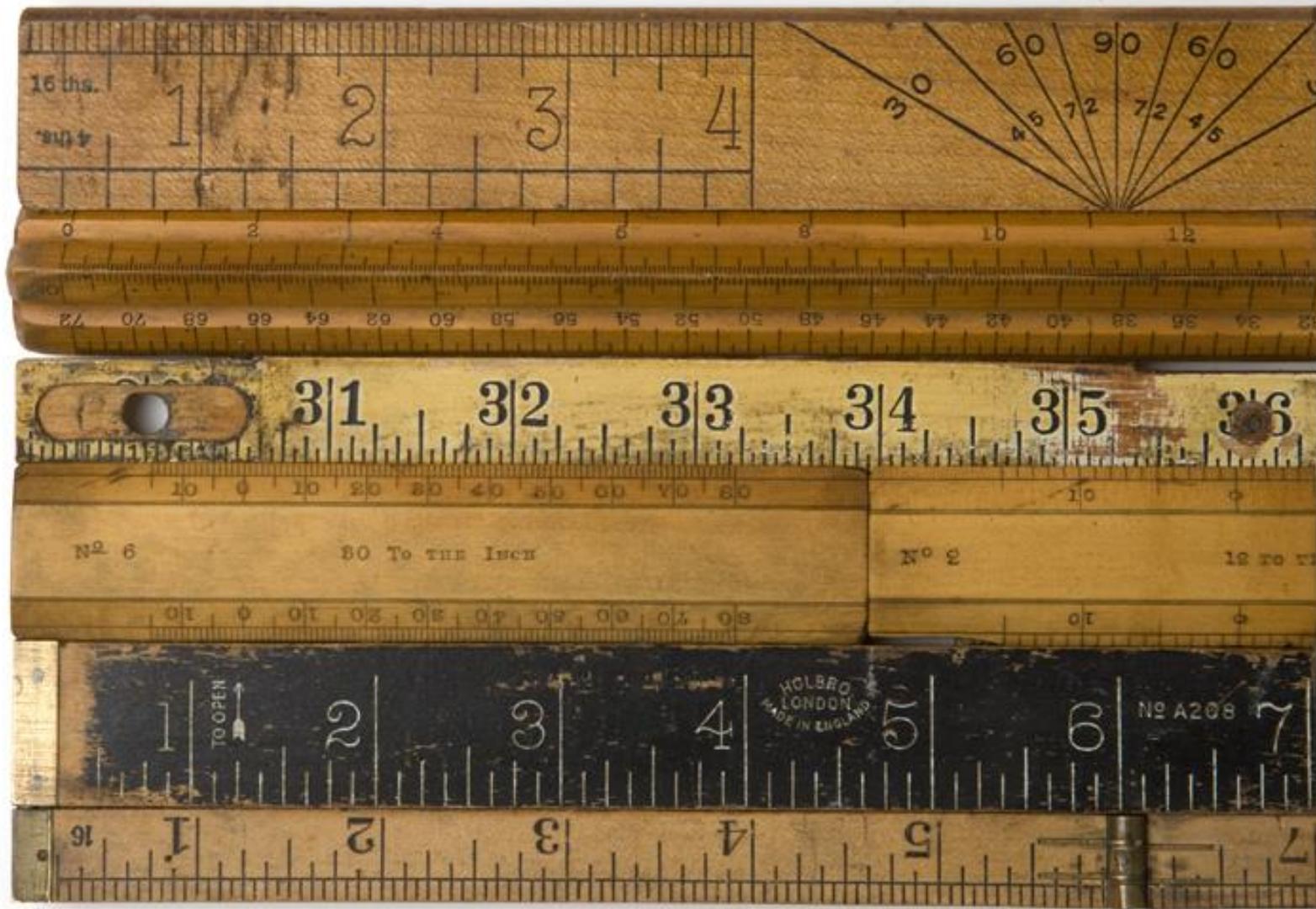


# Project aims:

- To ensure that the EAL students' learning needs are better met in the mainstream and their language learning is facilitated by all the teachers in a more targeted way
- To raise the mainstream subject teacher's awareness of L2 acquisition processes and the EAL students' needs

## The long term aims:

- To promote the EAL focus in the mainstream subjects
- To ensure sustainability of the project's gains



- The idea of a ruler!

# The EAL-friendly Science resource

- Simplified key definitions
- Plain language
- Visuals
- EAL focus & the Science focus

<p>Human      Cell      Nucleus      Chromosome (black region - genes)      DNA</p>	
<p><b>Alleles</b></p> <p><b>Dominant allele</b></p> <p><b>Recessive allele</b></p>	<p>Different versions (types) of the same gene (instruction for a feature)</p> <p>The allele that is in charge. It is always expressed</p> <p>An allele that will only show up if the dominant isn't present. You have to have two recessive alleles for the feature to show</p>
<p>A = is the dominant allele for flower colour</p> <p>a = is the recessive allele for flower colour</p> <p>AA = [purple flower]</p> <p>aa = [white flower]</p> <p>Aa = [purple flower]</p>	
<p><b>Carrier</b></p> <p><b>Genetic disorder</b></p> <p><b>Cystic Fibrosis</b></p>	<p>A person who has the recessive allele for a feature or disorder, but doesn't have that feature or disease.</p> <p>A disorder (not normal) due to inheritance of a faulty (bad) gene</p> <p>A genetic/inherited disorder caused by two recessive alleles</p>

Key word	Explanation
<b>Environment</b>	Everything around you
<b>Sex Cells</b>	Male ( <b>sperm</b> ) and female ( <b>egg</b> ) cells with <b>genetic</b> information produced for <b>reproduction</b> . They join together ( <b>fertilisation</b> ) to produce the new <b>offspring</b> (baby)
<b>Stem cells</b>	Not specialized animal cells which can <b>develop</b> (grow, change) into any type of cell
<b>Inherited</b>	A feature such as eye colour that parents give to a child in their genes
<b>Hormone</b>	A chemical in plants and animals which makes changes in different parts of a plant or animal's body.
<b>Nucleus</b>	Control centre of the cell, contains genetic information
<b>Chromosome</b>	Threads of <b>genes</b> found in the <b>nucleus</b> of a <b>cell</b> . Small sections of <b>DNA</b> .
<b>Genes</b>	The instruction on the chromosome that decides what the organism (animal, plant) looks like

# The literacy (EAL) ruler

- Proofreading check list – incorporating the already existing school policies into the EAL focus
- Providing a re-usable, laminated resource for individual use, and as a peer-marking tool.
- Promoting learner's independence

<b>Proofreading check list</b> <b>(Green pen policy)</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. I have checked my <b>spelling</b>.</li><li>2. I remembered about <b>capital letters</b> and <b>full stops</b>.</li><li>3. My <b>sentences make sense</b>.</li><li>4. I used <b>connectives</b>.</li><li>5. I used <b>key words</b>.</li><li>6. I used <b>paragraphing</b></li><li>7. I asked <b>another person to read</b> my work.</li></ol>	

# The linguistic focus sticker

- **Step 1:** The EAL teacher models marking students' book providing linguistic corrective feedback (CF), often including short, personalised linguistic tasks.
- **Step 2:** The Science teacher assigns time in her lesson for students to reflect and act on the feedback.
- **Step 3:** Having reflected on the teacher's corrective feedback, the students decide on specific, individual targets to focus on in their writing tasks and proofreading.
- **Step 4:** Students use their target stickers in Science to self monitor their writing, and improve their mastery of the language
- **Step 5:** The mainstream teacher provides CF

**My personal targets**  
(add a sticker):



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# Outcomes and the feedback

- **Students' feedback:**

The targeted students were very positive about using the rulers. They liked the key terms section, they particularly valued visuals.

They all loved the personalised targets and the prompts (the checklist). In fact the non-EAL students in the class, who also had the same rulers, thought they were very good.

The students appreciated the fact that the ruler was portable and in a manageable size.

- **The mainstream teacher's feedback:**

Gill really liked the personalised targets, the pictures and the generic prompts (the checklist). She would like to have a ruler for each chapter now (with key words). Gill values the role of CR and could see how the use of target stickers have promoted language learning and students' self-regulation.

- **EAL teacher's feedback:**

The EAL teacher was pleased that the first step has been made. The EAL focus in the mainstream lesson proved to be very promising, although it would have been useful to include some more substantial analyses of its benefits, and ensure more data is available. The main goals have been to some extent achieved, and the project opened up a discussion on EAL students' linguistic needs in OSA's mainstream. It has certainly paved the way to further develop the CR practice within the school.

# ...the continuation phase!

- Work on new research questions to evaluate the gains in terms of students' attitudes and progress, and teachers' awareness is in progress- Gill and I have enrolled on the action research project programme at OSA to expand on the project.
- A whole school approach is considered.
- The dialogue has begun...

# References

- **Costley, T.** (2014). English as an additional language, policy and the teaching and learning of English in England. *Language Education*, 28:3, 276-292.
- **Creese, A.** (2010). Content-Focused Classroom and Learning English: How Teachers Collaborate. *Theory Into Practice*, 49, pp. 99-105.
- **Doughty, C.** and **E. Varela.** (1998). 'Communicative focus on form' in C. Doughty and J. Williams (eds.): *Focus on Form in Classroom SLA*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 114-38.
- **Leung, C.** (2001). English as an Additional Language: Distinct Language Focus or Diffused Curriculum Concerns? *Language and Education*, 15 (1) pp. 33-54.