THE CATEGORIZATION OF THREE NEWBERRY-AWARD WINNING AUTHORS'

MENTOR EDITORIAL COMMENTS

by

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Abstract

This research study examines the professional editor comments of one Newberry-Award winning author and the development of mentor editorial comment categories. The research continues to include two years of classroom application and the researching of two more Newberry-Award winning authors. Also described is the process for refining the mentor editorial comment categories and developing a description of each.

Chapter I - Introduction

As an undergraduate, my professors introduced me to Nancie Atwell and Donald Graves. My cooperating teacher attended one of Lucy Calkins' summer workshops at the Teachers College for Reading and Writing Project and shared with me what she learned. When I began my teaching career, the majority of practicing teachers I knew incorporated some form or aspects of a writing workshop model in their classrooms. Being surrounded by colleagues with a belief in this model lead to my involvement in the National Writing Project (NWP). The NWP's philosophy advocates teachers teaching teachers and teachers as writers during an intensive four-week summer institute. The institute revolves around a writing workshop model so, through each of my experiences, I became aware of, and sometimes personally involved in, peer conferencing.

Peer conferencing, also known as peer editing, peer revision, peer response, and writing groups, is a component of the writing workshop model for writing instruction. Calkins (1994) and Atwell (1998) both used peer conferencing along with the more common teacher-student conferencing in their writing workshop models. With the introduction of peer conferencing, the writing workshop method moves away from being a solely teacher-directed approach to include a more learner-centered approach. The change enables social interaction between the students. According to Vygotsky (1978), social interaction motivates and engages students in learning, and ultimately the potential for student learning increases.

In my classroom, I try to incorporate the aspects of writing workshop models, including peer conferencing, to develop independent, life-long learners. Murray (1985) wrote, "One of my

primary goals as a teacher is to make everyone else in the class a teacher, so that ultimately my students will be able to be both writers and teachers of writing with themselves as their student" (p. 140). In *Study Driven* Katie Wood Ray (2006) wrote about two teachers, "...what these two teachers were really teaching their students was how to carry on with their learning without needing a teacher" (p. 32).

One of my goals as a teacher is to instruct my students in not just content but higher-order thinking skills. My students will not be in a classroom for the rest of their lives; they will be in the world around them. My students must have the skills to be successful outside of school and writing workshop, including peer conferencing, provides me a method to teach both content and skills.

Statement of Problem

According to Stephen King in *On Writing*, "If you want to be a writer, you must do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot. There's no way around these two things that I'm aware of, no shortcut" (2000, p. 139). The craft of writing is similar to other crafts: a person must practice often to master the skill. "Like running, the more you do it, the better you get at it" (Goldberg, 2006, p. 20). Reading, when it comes to improving writing, is not practice but study.

Similar to a musician listening to another musician's music, a writer studies another writer's writing. The other author's work serves as an example of the craft. Jeff Anderson wrote, "I let Gary Paulsen *show* my students about active verbs and short sentences. I let Patricia MacLachan *show* my students how to make phrases tumble off the end of their sentences" (2005, p. 16). According to Dorfman and Cappelli, "Mentor texts serve to show, not just tell, students how to write well" (2007, p. 4). Mentor texts also provide more knowledge of possibilities.

Katie Wood Ray introduced "...*envisioning,* the ability to imagine what a draft could be before it is even started, or as it is in process, being able to envision how you might write the next words, and the next" to the writing process (1999, p. 49). By reading mentor texts, writers gain knowledge of the craft.

In the classroom, teachers can use their own and students' writing as models, but published materials such as books and articles serve as mentor texts. For example, my students study an excerpt from Gary Paulsen's novel *Woodsong* to learn the author's craft of using dashes, fragments, and coordinating conjunctions at the beginning of sentences to emphasize specific ideas. To model peer conferencing, teachers also can use both their own and their students' writing, but access to other mentor editorial comments is limited.

I have found that when usgin peer conferencing in my classroom, my students generally provide little substantial feedback and focus on surface-level errors such as spelling and neatness. While many resources describe the implementation of and process for writing workshop, few help students become effective editors. Graves, Atwell, and Murray, explore the use of peer conferencing and provide possible discussion questions for use in such but do not provide mentor examples. Examples of editorial comments can guide students as they work in peer groups to improve each other's writing similar to mentor texts guiding students as they envision and draft their writing. Sharpe and Gunther (1994) described the five senses of an editor as "accurate eye," "ear for language," "nose for the market," "feel for writing," and "tasting" of a copy sample. Given my students' struggle to provide quality feedback to their peers, along with a lack of authentic editorial comment examples, I decided to research three Newberry-winning authors and their editors' feedback.

Research Question

What type of feedback do Newberry-winning authors' editors provide, and how can those editorial comments be coded to improve the quality of student peer conferencing?

Definitions of Terms

Acquiring editor: An editor, also known as senior, acquisition, or general editor, who discovers and obtains the initial manuscript for editorial review. The main responsibility of the acquiring editor is to improve a manuscript so it will sell. The focus for revision is on the structure, substance, style, and pacing of the manuscript (Sharpe & Gunther, 1994).

Copy editor: An editor after an acquiring editor who notices inconsistencies, errors in factual information, and word choice problems. The copy editor is a level above a proofreader (Sharpe & Gunther, 1994, p. 20).

Editing: "For some teachers and writers, editing is synonymous with revision. For others it is micro editing--that is, line edits and proofreading at the level of the sentence or phrase or word, focusing on mechanics, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions. Editing prepares a piece of writing for its final or published form" (NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 27). In my classroom, editing is after major revisions and is focused on copy editing and proofreading.

Mentor Texts: "...any text that can teach a writer about any aspect of writer's craft" (Anderson, 2005, p. 16).

National Writing Project [NWP]: The NWP is the only federally funded program that focuses on the teaching of writing. Support for the NWP is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, foundations, corporations, universities, and K-12 schools ("About NWP," 2010).

National Writing Project Teacher Consultants: Educators who complete a NWP Invitational Summer Institute at a participating NWP site ("About NWP," 2010).

Revision: "In revising, a writer approaches a rough draft with an editorial eye, identifying and deleting extraneous subject matter, focusing the material, determining what needs to be amplified and what needs to be cut. Revising involves structural changes to a text, or macro editing--refining content and creating structure by organizing ideas and themes into sequenced, coherent paragraphs" (NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 26).

Peer conferencing: also known as peer editing, peer revision, peer critique, and peer response is "writers responding to one another's work" (Gere, 1987, p. 1).

Peer response: "A classroom technique designed to help the student develop editing skills and a sense of authentic audience. The teacher first models a process of supportive critique that sets the tone for positive and useful comments. Students then read and review one another's work in pairs or groups, soliciting critical feedback as they present their writing to peers" (NWP and Nagin, 2003, p. 27).

Proofreader: An editor charged with finding typographical, type-size, and page layout errors (Sharpe & Gunther, 1994).

Writing process: "Any of the activities or thinking strategies used to compose a piece of writing. These are sometimes described as cycles of planning (generating ideas, setting goals, and organizing), translating (putting a plan into writing) and reviewing (evaluating and revising); or they can be categorized as activities such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing" (NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 26).

Writing workshop model: "A usually brief intensive educational program for a relatively small group of people that focuses especially on techniques and skills in a particular field

(http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/workshop). In the writing workshop model, the series of meetings is focused around the studying of and practice of writing.

Chapter II - Review of Literature

Social constructivism theory

Social constructivism is based on the work of Vygotsky (1978). Although Vygotsky agreed with Piaget's claim that knowledge is actively constructed by learners, Vygotsky disagreed with Piaget on the separation of learning from the social context. Vygotsky claimed there are two levels of development: level of actual development and level of potential development. The level of actual development is the level at which a learner is capable of independent work. The level of potential development is the level at which a learner is capable of reaching under the guidance of teachers or collaboration with peers. The rise of Social constructivism and the understanding that "decades of research have shown instructional strategies such as isolated skill drills fail to improve student writing" prompted researchers in the 1970s to begin to look at how a person develops into a writer (NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 22).

Writing Workshop

Early researchers of the writing process, including Graves and Emig in the 1970s, identified phases and activities in the act of writing" (NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 22).   In writing the second edition of *A Writer Teaches Writing,* Murray (1985) revised his original model of the writing process and listed "collect, plan, develop, revise, and edit" as his most current model (p. 10). He emphasized, "This is not *the* model of the writing process, only a model that may help us understand how writing is made" (p. 10). Atwell (1998) focused attention on writers' activities and is "...careful never to talk about *the writing process*, because the phrase implies one

series of steps through which everyone proceeds in creating a piece of writing." Instead, Atwell made a poster of writers' activities: "rehearse: develop an idea...draft one and read, revise, confer..." (p. 157).

Following the 1970's research, The National Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy (NCSWL), an education research center sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education from 1985 to 1995, "supported an extensive program of educational research and development in which some of the country's top language and literacy experts worked to discover how the teaching and learning of writing can be improved" (Freedman, 1987, "National Center for the Study of Writing," para 1). The literacy experts involved in the NCSWL included Graves and Atwell, so it is not surprising that within the NCSWL research, writing is defined as a process with phases. The phases, however named, are recursive in nature; writers spend varying amounts of time on each phase and will revisit phases in varying order. The acceptance of writing consisting of recursive phases increased the study of the teaching of writing. Paired with social constructivism theory the idea of writing being a process ushered in the idea of teaching the writing process in classrooms using a writing workshop model.

Just as there is no consensus on the number or names of the phases, there is no consensus on one writing workshop model. For the purpose of my research, the writing phases are: collecting, planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Each of the phases also encompasses strategies. For example, Murray gives "six ways writers collect information that produces ideas" (1985, p. 13). Fletcher's book, *Breathing In; Breathing Out,* covers just collecting ideas using one concept; a writer's notebook (1996). When using a writing workshop model, teachers are responsible to educate students in the strategies for each writing process phase.

Other teacher responsibilities include conferencing. Once students have a draft, Murray (1985) and Graves (1983) suggested teacher-student conferences, but according to Vygtosky's level of potential development, a learner can reach a higher level of learning with the guidance of a teacher *or* collaboration with peers.

Peer Conferencing

One of the most prolific researchers on peer conferencing during the 1980s and 1990s was Anne Riggles Gere. Gere's work included, "*Writing groups: History, theory and implications"* in which she defines writing groups as "writers responding to one another's work" (1987, p. 3). According to Gere, writing groups provide immediate feedback compared to a teacher's feedback time, reduce the distance between writer and reader, and highlight the social dimension of writing (p. 3). Gere's work is cited in numerous studies on peer conferencing including NCSWL research.

Sarah Warshauer Freedman, director for the NCSWL, also studied peer response groups. Freedman found many successful teachers dissatisfied with peer response groups. "These teachers said that they experienced difficulty in keeping the groups on task, not to mention in getting students to respond effectively to one another's writing" (1987, "Introduction," para 5). In the report, Freedman remarks how "little research on how peer groups actually function in the classroom is available..." and "The little research available presents conflicting findings..." ("Studies," para 1).

Freedman (1987) provided types of responses students give freely and the types they resist giving and described how the teachers' role affects the groups' interactions. Data collection included audio- and video-tape recordings, ethnographic field notes, teacher-prepared materials, student writings, interviews of both students and teachers, and notes of casual

conversations between the participants and researchers. The two ninth-grade classrooms consisted of both male and female college-bound students from the San Francisco Bay Area of California. The semester-long courses observed included peer response groups with four possible intended functions: responding to writing, editing writing, composing collaboratively, and thinking collaboratively. Freedman involved both teachers in identifying each session's peer response group function.

The importance of the responding to writing function in each classroom in Freedman's study differed. One classroom, Mr. Peterson's, used four of sixteen (25 percent) group sessions for responding to writing while the other teacher, Ms. Glass, used seven of seventeen (41 percent) group sessions with responding to writing as the dominant function. Ms. Glass also used editing of writing peer responses groups two of the seventeen sessions for a total of (53 percent) peer response groups related to revising or evaluating writing.

When asked to complete a written response, students in both classrooms avoided evaluation or negotiated the evaluative comments with the writer. The written response kept students on task more than just oral responses even if an oral report to the whole class was expected. The finding of written responses increasing time on task suggests teachers should require more than oral response during peer conferences.

Freedman (1987) also evaluated spontaneous responses during the peer response group meetings and discovered two types: mechanics/format and content. Mechanical and format responses, those dealing with comma placement, verb tense, or double spacing for example, occurred only in Ms. Glass's classroom, but content responses occurred in both. Content included, "supporting one another with comments about the ideas and asking probing questions or expressing controversial opinions (1987, "Spontaneous Response Not Related to the Sheets,"

para. 8). In general Freedman found, "When students take it upon themselves to choose their topic of discussion and when they are on-task, they gravitate toward discussions of content and meaning" (1987, "Groups in Mr. Peterson's Class Not Guided by Written Forms," para. 23).

The sampling in Freedman's study is narrow as it only includes two classrooms with similar subjects during one semester. It is focused on high school students who tend to think more abstractly than elementary and middle school students. The high school students, one can assume, also have more literary experiences. Both of these factors may positively affect the students' abilities to respond critically to ideas presented in a peer's writing.

In another study, Gere and Abbott (1985) analyzed a total of nine writing groups within three grade levels: fifth, eighth, and eleventh/twelfth. The writing groups were integrated into the curriculum and followed the same general procedures of orally reading the paper twice. Peers only listened the first time, and then wrote a general impression. During the second reading, peers wrote detailed notes focused on the language, likes, and dislikes. Every peer provided oral feedback to the writer who noted the comments for later. For the purpose of this study, Gere and Abbott analyzed the audio-recordings of the writing groups and developed an idea unit coding system to define linguistic function, general area of attention, and specific focus on consciousness.

The results showed older students wrote longer texts and provided a greater number of comments related to the ideas or content of the papers than other groups. Regardless of grade level or texts, the most common comment was about the content of the writing. These results are consistent with Freedman's results. The next most common comments related to the context of the writing. Context comments relate to the larger situation such as, "e.e. cummings doesn't use regular capitalization" (p. 368). The results showed more abstract comments as the age of the

students increased.   "...older students had developed a language for talking about writing. In other words, they were enlarging their capacity to understand *about* writing as well as to understand *how* to write" (p. 375). Gere and Abbott supported the use of writing groups in classrooms and pointed out the substantial amount of time the groups spent discussing the writing versus other topics as is a common complaint heard from teachers.

Teachers' complaints of writing groups being off-task and difficult to manage, prompted a more recent study by Denyer and LaFleur (2001), which analyzed one specific peer response group meeting in an eighth grade language arts classroom. The purpose of the study included gaining a better understanding of the students' talk and the teacher's role in the talk. Denvyer and LaFleur video- and audio-taped peer response group meetings in LaFleur's classroom during writing workshop time. While reviewing the tapes, one conference attracted particular interest. In the conference four students of varying ability levels confer about the need for the writer to include two more areas of description. The writer consistently resists adding details to one area but not the other. The study suggested teachers "need to unpack for students what this rule [adding details], and others like it, really mean" (2001, p. 38). Professional editors give specific feedback regarding the need for details. Students need to understand how to give and receive this type of feedback. By "unpacking" the rules, the teachers show the students how to apply rules to editorial comments during peer conferencing.

Editorial Work

Donald Murray (1985) described editing as, "Now the piece is ready to be prepared to be read by strangers..." (p. 61). Sharpe and Gunther (1994) wrote, "By 'editing,' we mean the art and craft of shaping and refining a manuscript into a publishable book" (p.1).

In *Editing Fact and Fiction: A Concise Guide to Book Editing,* Sharpe and Gunther (1994) present an overview of the editing process and descriptions of the various editorial positions. As with the writing process, there are no rules stating an acquiring editor cannot make specific proofreading corrections or a copyeditor cannot be asked to do "substantive editing." According to Sharpe and Gunther, it is beneficial to think of these steps moving from general to specific (p. 18, 14).

Just as the editorial team does with a manuscript, Murray (1985) suggests moving from general to specific. Murray explains revision as repeating the writing process of "COLLECT PLAN DEVELOP = Draft" again and again in whatever order works.   Once the writers are ready for editing their writing, Murray suggests reading each piece three times: first for content, next for structure, and finally for language (57). The three readings suggested by Murray correlate to a portion of Sharpe and Gunthers's stages of editing. Both the first and second readings focus on editorial review and line editing comments. If the reader has questions of these types, the questions must be answered before the writing progresses. There is no purpose is line editing a piece of writing if the whole purpose or focus is ineffective.

If the purpose and focus are effective, the process of editing continues. Murray's third reading, for language, correlates with Sharpe and Gunther's level of copy editing; looking at each sentence, phrase and word to ensure each is effective. To help writers, Murray (1985) lists tricks for editing: "Aim for simplicity." "If it can be cut, cut it. Everything in the text should develop the meaning of that text." and "I have to keep reminding myself not to cut too much. If it works, leave it alone" (p. 63). Sharpe and Gunther (1994) list seven editing principles: economy, tact, flexibility, consistency, confidence, respect, and responsibility. An example under the principle of flexibility is, "Take every manuscript you edit on its own terms," and

"Bring a fresh, open (literally!) eye to every book you edit" (80-101). Both Murray's tricks and Sharpe and Gunther's principles are broad, vague, and sometimes contradictory. Given the difficulty of students to give feedback besides content-related and proofreading comments during peer conferencing and given the difficulty of students to "unpack" the rules, the tricks and principles cannot be fully understood and applied by the students.

Revision and editing are a part of the process in the real world of writing, so when using the writing workshop model in their classrooms, teachers should include these steps. Writing workshop provides the opportunity for students to practice the craft of writers, and having mentor texts improves the process (Anderson, 2005; Dorfman & Cappelli, 2007; Ray, 1999, 2006). Even though there are books on editing and books about the writing process that discuss revision and editing skills, the ideas related to editing presented are broad, often vague, and not connected to interesting texts for adolescent students. The lack of mentor editorial comments poses a problem for teachers wanting to provide the mentor comments.

Social constructivism theory supports the use of peer conferencing in a writing workshop model. The social interaction between the students helps the students reach their level of potential development. The studies of Freedman (1987) and Gere and Abbott (1985) show students naturally gravitate towards providing more content-related and conventions-related feedback during peer conferencing. This may be related to students knowing the rule but needing it to be "unpacked" (Denyer & LaFleur, 2001).

Chapter III - Methodology

Beginning in June of 2006, I participated in a teacher-inquiry project that provided me the opportunity to research ten of Gary Paulsen's novel manuscripts and the background materials related to those novels. Originally my question revolved around Mr. Paulsen's possible intentional choice of not following the standard rules of writing. For example, Paulsen often begins sentences with a coordinating conjunction. The question changed, however, when no data to corroborate or contradict his intentionality emerged. After two more days of data collection and analysis, I designed my research around the question, "What type of feedback do Newberry-winning authors' editors provide, and how can those editorial comments be coded to improve the quality of student peer conferencing?" During two years of classroom research and a follow-up visit for additional data collection using Lois Lowry's and Sharon Creech's materials, I developed and redeveloped categories for coding editorial comments.

Participant Characteristics

My career in education began in 1994 when I was hired as a full-time K-8 English Language Arts and Mathematics teacher. At various times during my first six years, I taught social studies and science while constantly teaching at least two Sixth Grade Language Arts classes. In 2001, I transferred to another middle school and taught classes that included Seventh and Eighth Grade Language Arts. Beginning in the 2006-2007 school year, my position changed to full-time a Eighth Grade Language Arts teacher.

My focus on language arts results from my experience with the National Writing Project (NWP). During the summer of 1999, I participated in one of the NWP's Invitational Summer Institutes. My experience also is the biggest influence on my philosophy of teaching. The Upper

Peninsula Writing Project (UPWP) hosted the institute, and I continue to be an active member as a member of the UPWP Leadership Team.

During the 2006-7 and 2007-8 school years, a total of ten of my Eighth Grade Language Arts classes participated in the study by using the mentor editorial comments I collected. The classes, comprised of 24-32 students, included both general education students and approximately ten percent special education students. There is very little diversity in race in the school district with the largest minority population being Native American. The school district's scores on the writing portion of the English Language Arts Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) ranked near or above the state average. In 2006 the eighth grade state average was 67 while the school district's students scored 74.2. In 2007 the state average was 70 while the district's was 68 (Michigan Department of Education [MDE], 2009). My desire to improve my writing instruction influenced my choice to become involved in the UPWP Kerlan Collection Teacher Inquiry project during the summer of 2006. Twelve other UPWP Teacher Consultants and two university professors committed to the project.

Sampling Procedures

Before visiting the Kerlan Collection in June 2006, I selected Gary Paulsen's work to study and reviewed some of his novels. My original focus was not editorial comments, but once I realized the research materials lent themselves to this focus, I used convenience sampling to gather the initial editorial comments from ten of Gary Paulsen's typescripts. On my next visit to the Kerlan Collection in 2008, I again used convenience sampling to gather additional editorial comments. This time I chose Lois Lowry and Sharon Creech as they, along with Gary Paulsen, earned Newberry Award honors and have manuscripts housed in the Kerlan Collection.

Research Design

I designed my research using Glasser's and Strauss's Grounded Theory (as cited in Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). I began by reviewing the Kerlan Collection's holdings of Gary Paulsen. After the initial coding and categorizing of editors' comments, I obtained and examined student work. Finally, I sampled and categorized editorial comments from Lowry's and Creech's manuscripts.

 Data Collection

The TC Andersen Library is located on the campus of the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and contains a special collection named after Dr. Irvin Kerlan. Dr. Kerlan transferred his personal collection of children's books and background material such as original manuscripts, correspondence, and artwork to the library in 1949. After making an inquiry, anyone who shows a need to consult the materials in the collection can gain access. An online catalog and some materials are available at the website

<http://special.lib.umn.edu/clrc/kerlan/index.php>.

My two-and-half-day experience at the TC Andersen Library in June 2006, began with an original focus on Newberry Award Winner Gary Paulsen's unconventional grammar and mechanics. In my classroom, I struggle strive to effectively teach writing effectively, including grammar, and I notice how published authors such as Gary Paulsen break many of the rules I am told to teach. Paulsen's continual use of "And" and "But" to begin sentences, his use of fragments, and short one- to two-word paragraphs peaked my interest even more. Another reason I chose Mr. Paulsen is that many of my students enjoy reading his books. I wanted to use his works as mentor texts but wanted to discover if these unconventional uses were intentional. If

intentional, I planned to share the discovery with my students so they too, could be intentional in breaking the rules.

The first data samples found in six file boxes of Mr. Paulsen's work included both corrected and uncorrected typescripts of *My Life in Dog Years* (1998)*, Caught by the Sea: a A Life in Boats* (2001), *Night John (1995), Guts: The True Stories Behind Hatchet and the Brian Books (2002), Hatchet (1987),* Brian's Hunt (2003), *Brian's Return (1999), Brian's Winter (1996), Puppies, Dogs, and Blue Northers: Reflections on Being Raised by a Pack of Sled Dogs (1996),* and *Sarny, a Life Remembered (1997),* In addition, a few boxes contained page proofs, front matter, and uncorrected bound galley proofs. These materials, along with a total of three pages of correspondence and two pages of notes, provided little data for researching Paulsen's intentionality when it came to his unconventional grammar and mechanics.

My second day of research required a new focus. Upon further examination, the editorial notes written either directly on the manuscripts or on sticky notes, turned my attention to the written conversation between an author and his editors. Knowing that an editor's job is to help an author develop a piece of writing into a publishable, and hopefully best-selling product, the notes provided insight into the process of how editorial comments can help an author improve a piece of writing. As a result, my research question changed to, "What type of feedback do Newberry-winning authors' editors provide to improve a piece of writing?"

I devoted the entire next day to constructing a list by combing through all the manuscripts and copying the editorial comments. The comments ranged from *"Will your readers underst.* spike & rack? *Could you just say 'young buck, unbranched horns in velvet...?'"* (Paulsen, Box MF3227, Folder 8) and *"On the bottom of what? The pond or lake?"* (Paulsen, Box M3216

Folder 4) to *"Don't we need a comma here rather than a dash to signal a series?"* (Paulsen, Box M3216, Folder 5).

As I considered the variety of comments I found, I wrote additional questions in my notebook, such as: "Which do editors do more--ask questions or make changes? When do editors make changes and not ask for an okay? Why do editors make wording suggestions? Are they experts? What would happen if editors' questions were all answered? Would we lose the yearning to read? If editors question, aren't they just like us as readers?" I also started to reflect upon my knowledge of the writing workshop classroom and the use of mentor texts. I wondered if I could find any patterns to share with my students when they prepare to peer conference. At this point I decided my research question needed a second half: "How can the editorial comments be coded to improve the quality of student peer conferencing?"

To begin coding, I wanted to choose an organizational structure familiar to educators so I chose Bloom's Taxonomy (1956). After half an hour it became obvious that the categories would not meet my needs.. I didn't know which level of Bloom's taxonomy to use for an editorial comment such as *"What was the first thought?" in relation to the text "On my way down the second thought..."* (Paulsen, Box 3216 Folder 5). If I was getting confused, I couldn't imagine what it would be like to teach my eighth grade students these categories. I needed something simpler.

My next choice was the 6+1 Trait® Writing model (Culham, 2003). I heard of the model through colleagues and was aware of schools adopting the program but was not trained. Again, I became frustrated almost immediately. The same comment, *"What was the first thought?"* probably belonged under the "Word Choice" trait, but then where did I code *"I do believe that dogs smile, but I've never heard one laugh"* (Paulsen, Box 3216 Folder 7)?

Finding no current organizational system to use, I spent the rest of my day coding to develop a list of eight categories:

1. editing for mechanics and punctuation based on author's style

2. fact checking

3. word choice

4. clarification

5. repetition/awkwardness/conciseness

6. questioning as a demanding reader does

7. questioning due to the editor's lack of prior knowledge.

8. checking for consistency

With the research question, "What type of feedback do Newberry-winning authors' editors provide?" answered, I focused on my second question, "How can those coded editorial comments be used to improve the quality of student peer conferencing?"

Beginning in November 2006 and continuing through April 2007, I used the eight categories in a total of ten eighth-grade language arts classes. In each class, I showed the individual categories and mentor comments. Each student found a partner and exchanged papers. They were instructed to not talk to one another; any comments or questions needed to be written on the editorial comment sheet. The sheet listed each category with blank space below. Under each category, I required the student-editors to write a related comment. I roamed around the room answering questions such as: "What does clarification mean? "I don't know where to write my comment? "What if I don't have a comment for word choice?" After writing editorial comments on a peer response form, students returned both the editorial comment sheet and the paper to the author. I suggested the author read the comments, revise the paper, and turn in all

three pieces.

When I reviewed the editorial comment sheets, I found examples of students' comments in each category. A student wrote, "if ur family was gone then who did u go up w/so u wouldn't be alone?' for a comment linked to the checking for consistency category. Another student wrote, "Did cancer exist back then?" as a fact checking comment. Word choice suggestions included "scared - terrified, frightened. excited - exhillerated (sic)." Under clarification one student wrote, "Gun facing up where? can't see scene." Another student pointed out repetition, awkwardness, conciseness by underlining a repeated word: "Papa was sent away to someplace far away." Finally, many students asked questions like a demanding reader, "did the uncle die too?" The students wanted more information from the writing and asked questions to get the additional information.

An unexpected result also occurred. In the spring of each year when peers became editors, student-editors for the more advanced writers found it difficult to make any comments. I would be called over to review the student paper and find minimal chances for comment. Upon further questioning, writers explained they used their editing skills on their own papers after drafting to make changes before they brought the paper to class. The students, now familiar with editorial skills, utilized the skills during their own writing process. Instead of waiting for a peer's feedback, the students provided feedback to themselves.

In spite of the substantive comments, I noticed overlap. A student writing "yell: to (sic) much use shout," could be listed under repetition, awkwardness, and conciseness category or word choice category. Also, comments that didn't quite fit under any of the categories appeared on the peer conference forms. "You need more emotion! Like a person was writing it not a S.S. book." and "Would this be better in 1st person?" As the work continued in my classroom, this

possible overlap confused students, so I decided to revisit the Kerlan Collection with a colleague in April 2008 and gather a larger sample of editorial comments to refine the categories.

After working with my students and studying their comments, I possessed deeper knowledge of the different levels of editing. When I revisited the Kerlan Collection, I found broad, plot-development comments such as, *"Chap 25 This chapter could be a good opportunity to develop the mystery of the notes, and reveal more of Zinny's feelings."* (Creech, Box MF3755, Folder 6) written by Sharon Creech's editor related to her book *Chasing Redbird* (1998) . Because my students' writing is rarely longer than two pages or fictional in nature, I chose to focus on more specific copy editor-level comments such as the following word change, *"In large seas such ~~waves~~ swells are known..."* (Paulsen, Box MF3236, Folder 17) written by Gary Paulsen's editor.   Comments at the copy editor level, unlike acquiring and proofreader level, rarely appeared on students' peer conference forms, yet these types of comments improve the writing. I continued using selective coding and gathered data from Sharon Creech's and Lois Lowry's boxes.

By the end of July 2008, I completed the data collection and analysis I had begun in June 2006. Within those two years, I visited the TC Andersen Library's Kerlan Collection on the University of Minnesota campus in Minneapolis, Minnesota, twice. Between the visits, I coded the mentor editorial comments into eight categories. The mentor comments provided examples and the categories prompted my ten classes of students to go beyond their usual surface-level comments when peer conferencing. Some confusion resulted when my students used the categories. This provided me a reason to return to the Kerlan Collection to study two additional authors' manuscripts and background material and redefine the categories. The analysis resulted in revised categories explained in detail in Chapter IV.

Chapter IV - Results

The original results of the first data collection and analysis caused some uncertainty for my students and for me. Both the students and I found comments could be written in more than one original category causing confusion. I chose to revisit the Kerlan Collection of the TC Andersen Library. With data from two more Newberry-award winning authors' manuscripts, I triangulated the data and redefined the original categories down from a total of eight to a total of four with one primary category being divided into four sub-categories.

During classroom conversations with individual students I found it difficult to determine the difference between the fact checking and lack of prior knowledge categories. When gathering the additional editorial comments, I also became confused. At times, I was tempted to write a comment under both the repetition, awkwardness, conciseness category and the word choice category. To correct this, I first looked at the current categories and determined I could combine some of them. Recognizing that word choice was a category incorporating four original categories and how an editor's lack of prior knowledge could be a form of fact checking, I developed a more defined list of categories. With this new list, I recoded the original editorial comments. Finally, I triangulated the data using the editorial comments from Lowry's and Creech's manuscripts.

The following is a listing and description of my current categories:

1. Consistency. This category relates to the consistency in the manuscript. A perceived lack of consistency may be found in the actual story line, in a character's behavior, or in details throughout the story. It is similar to fact checking because the editor is making sure the facts in

the story are consistent with previous facts. These facts, however, cannot be checked in any outside reference resources.

Examples of editorial comments related to consistency include, *"It's been about a week since the full moon, so wouldn't it be a half moon?"*(Paulsen, Box MF 3236, Folder 16). *"The bag isn't empty if the Coke is still in it."* (Paulsen, Box MF3216 Folder 6). *"Warplane? I thought they didn't know of war?* (Lowry, Box MF1941 Folder 16)

2. Fact Checking. Most often found in autobiographical, biographical, or historical fiction manuscripts, this comment also can be found in other manuscripts such as realistic fiction. The comment is in regard to such details as the setting. For example, the editor may be fact checking if a specific animal mentioned in the manuscript is an inhabitant of that area. The answer to this type of comment can be found in a reference resource such as a dictionary or atlas. Examples of fact checking comments include, *"checked Twin Forks, MN, not on atlas--too small?"* (Paulsen, Box MF3216 Folder 4), *"Are garter snakes poisonous?"* (Creech, Box MF3755, Folder 6), and *"Do bird sing in Denmark in October?"* (Lowry, Box MF1461, Folder 10).

Fact Checking also may arise due to the editor's lack of prior knowledge. For example, *"Crank? Maybe cranky. Is crank a sailing term*?" (Paulsen, Box MF3236 Folder 19). Even though a specific vocabulary term may be unfamiliar to the editor the definition can still be found in an outside reference.

 3. Clarification. This type of comment is usually posed as a question. The editor cannot fully understand a point in the manuscript. Sometimes the editor cannot visualize a scene, or the editor may ask for additional information because he perceives there is information missing.

Examples of clarification comments are, *"Has he actually had a heart attack? Is that why he's in bed?"* (Creech, Box MF3755, Folder 6) *"Receivers in other communities? This gets confusing."* (Lowry, Box MF1941, Folder 19) and *"Sorry, I'm not getting the idea clearly--many what?"* (Paulsen, Box MF3216, Folder 5).

4. Word Choice. This category is focused on any specific word or phrase in the manuscript. Originally four separate categories, I decided all of the categories related to word choice but with enough difference that subcategories needed to be created.

    1. Repetition is defined as an author using a word too often without effect, using two or more similar words, or using additional word(s) that are not needed because the meaning is implied. An example of repetition is, *"Is 'native' needed since the context implies it?"* (Paulsen, Box MF3216, Folder 4).

    2. Awkwardness is chosen when the wording does not flow: *"Do you mean reasonable? Or a period of reasoning and learning?"* (Paulsen, Box MF3236 Folder 16).

    3. Conciseness. This comment is given when a similar word is suggested by the editor to draw a more precise picture in the reader's mind. Lowry's editor wrote, *"How about changing knuckley to gnarled roots?"* (Lowry, Box MF1461, Folder 10).

    4. Usage. When the word or phrase is not grammatically correct an editor will use this type of comment. An example is, *"Slather is a transitive verb so it needs an object. How about sloshed?"* (Paulsen, Box MF3216 Folder 6).

    The four main categories described above represent a refinement of a coding process that began several years ago. The categories, in conjunction with the mentor editorial comments,

guide students before and during peer conferencing. With the additional support, students'

feedback goes beyond not only content related and proofreading comments

Chapter V - Recommendation and Conclusion

Recommendations

My study of professional editors' comments provides four main categories of mentor editorial comments.   The seemingly lack of productive comments during peer conferencing is a common complaint made by teachers at the middle school and high school level. The peer comments usually revolve around mechanics or content; rarely do students provide copy editor feedback without prompting. The application of the mentor editorial comment categories during peer conferencing showed more substantial peer feedback at the copy editor level. Similar to the use of mentor texts for the teaching of writing, the categories I developed provide support for students learning to peer conference. The mentor editorial comments act as mentor text by showing not telling. The students' comments move from the surface level, "You spelled 'their' wrong," to "They didn't go to the jury, they went to court," and "How were Sam and Father getting along when Sam isn't even home yet?" Given the fact that most literature related to peer conferencing gives broad, often contradictory, suggestions, teachers looking for more specific techniques would benefit from using the categories I developed.

Areas for Further Research

I plan to study the inter-reliability of the redefined list of categories before using the categories in my classroom. The inter-reliability study will provide a set of five or more reliable mentor editorial comments per category. Having more mentor editorial comments for teacher and student use may decrease confusion on the part of the students. Statistically reliable categories and a set of mentor editorial comments compiled for each category present an opportunity to analyze student peer conference feedback. A potential study can be based on the

research question, "What type of peer conference feedback do students provide when given mentor editorial comments and categories, and how can that knowledge improve writing instruction?"

Additionally, Kittle (2003) suggested that reading strategies can be used to help students become peer editors. This study, and others including one by Gail E. Tompkins (2001), show the relationship of reading and writing (as cited in NWP & Nagin, 2003, p. 31). A study of the reading and writing relationship using the mentor editorial comments is possible and may possibly show a relationship to the unexpected result of some of my student writers using the mentor editorial comments to improve their own writing before presenting to a peer. Improving peer conferencing skills may be linked to reading achievement.

Summary and Conclusion

Improving my students' writing and my association with the NWP lead me to research authentic author's manuscripts in the Kerlan Collection located in the TC Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota. In the beginning, I collected, coded, and categorized editorial comments written to improve Gary Paulsen's manuscripts. The eight original categories and mentor editorial comments provided my own students professional examples as a reference when peer conferencing. After using the categories in my classroom for two years, I triangulated the original mentor editorial comments with additional comments collected from Lois Lowry's and Sharon Creech's materials. The result is a list of categories which can be used as an instructional tool for teachers giving direct instruction and for students working to improve their writing.

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Editorial comments. Taking treaties less seriously. A decade ago, my predecessor as Editor in Chief wrote a trenchant critique of what he saw as a tendency of the United States not to give its treaty obligations the weight they deserved.1 I return to the subject to report that the last ten years have seen an alarming exacerbation of that situation. Seemingly on the opposite track were the cases involving the UN Convention on Arbitral Awards.20 They interpreted the Convention as calling for the withdrawal from U.S. courts of jurisdiction over cases implicating the antitrust and securities laws where the parties had agreed to arbitrate them. But the apparent cause of this self-denying outcome appears to have been an urge to shed a caseload that was not desired. Start studying Newberry Award Winners 1946-1975. Learn vocabulary, terms and more with flashcards, games and other study tools. Author Joseph Krumgold set this 1954 Newberry winner in New Mexico in the 1950's. Every summer the men of the Chavez family go on a long and difficult sheep drive to the mountains. All the men, that is, except for Miguel. In her second Newberry award-winning nove (1962)l, Elizabeth George Speare set this story in Galilee in the time of Jesus. She tells the story of a young Jewish rebel who is won over to the gentle teachings of Jesus. A wrinkle in time. Meg Murry and her friends become involved with unearthly strangers and a search for Meg's father, who disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government. This Newberry Award winning HISTORICAL FICTION book is okay a suppose. It is award winning worthy because it sparks several different imaginative thoughts. This book about twelve year old Claudia Kincaid and her little brother's runaway journey is very eye opening and would be a nice book for around middle school age. The Goose Girl and the rest of the series by Newberry Award winning author Shannon Hale are all $1.99 each today. Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (Pefection Learning). Amazon.com: Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (Pefection Learning) (8580001043616): HOUGHTON MIFFLIN HARCOURT: Books. The New York Daily News' Editorial Board won the Pulitzer Prize in April for its groundbreaking series of editorials, "9/11: The Forgotten Victims," which documented the growing medical fallout from the World Trade Center attacks. In riveting, persuasive prose, the five-month series established how breathing the atomized air of the World Trade Center after 9/11 had sickened more than 12,000 emergency responders, at least five of them fatally. The series, produced by Arthur Browne, Beverly Weintraub and Heidi Evans, also forced all levels of government to reexamine their initial medical response to the attacks, and in many cases react with a range of new benefits and services for rescuers, volunteers or their surviving family members.