Carlos

**1. What is speaking? (Se debe consultar)**

**2. Introduction of speaking correction**

Everyone makes mistakes, even speakers using their own language when they are hurried, ‘lost for words’, or forced into inappropriate language by a difficult or unusual situation. It is hardly surprising, then, that language learners make mistakes, given the difficulty of the task of comprehending, processing the content of the message and knowledge of the target language, and coming out with a response that is both grammatically correct and appropriate to the situation.

It is generally agreed that correction is part of the teaching/learning process, but that over-correction and poor correction techniques can be demotivating for the learner and may lead to a reluctance to try out new language or even to speak at all. Teachers need to make informed decisions about what, when and how to correct in order to help learners improve their speaking skills without damaging their confidence.

**Raquel**

**3. Mistakes – Errors and slips.**

Errors are produced as a result of the lack or misinterpretation of knowledge, which, in turn, may be a product of the learner’s stage of language development, or inadequate teaching or learning. Errors cannot be corrected and need to be dealt with by teaching or reteaching. Errors are often noticed in less-guided practice activities when the same error is made by a number of learners, leading the teacher to realize that something has gone wrong in earlier stages of the teaching/learning process. Mistakes, on the other hand, are products of the learner’s efforts to produce language despite prior knowledge. They may be due a variety of factors including over-enthusiasm, over-generalization of rules, interference from the mother tongue, and once the cause has been established, can be dealt with by a number of correction techniques.

**4. Reasons why learners make errors**

There are two main reasons why second language learners make errors:

1. The first reason is influence from the learner’s first language (L1) on the second language. This is called interference. Learners may use sound patterns, lexis or grammatical structures from their own language in English.
2. The second reason why learners make errors is because they are unconsciously working out and organizing language, but this process is not complete. This kind of error is called a developmental error. Learners of whatever mother tongue make these kinds of errors, which are often similar to those made by a young first language speaker as part of their normal language development. Learners wrongly apply a rule for one item of the language to another item, are known as overgeneralization.

**Alejandra**

**5. Accuracy and fluency**

Mistakes are usually corrected immediately when the aim of the stage of the lesson is to promote accuracy, particularly during the drilling of the target language and during guided practice. Attention to mistakes in these stages improves the chances of correct use of language later, while mistakes made during less-guided practice often indicate that the teacher has not dealt effectively with mistakes at the accuracy stage. When the aim is fluency, however, less intrusive, ‘gentle’ or delayed correction techniques are required in order not to damage either the flow of the activity or the confidence of the learners.

**6. Interlanguage**

In the process of acquiring the language, a learner may acquire forms of language that are in between their first language and their target language. This is their ‘interlanguage’, and is a product of incorrect application of rules, incomplete knowledge, and comparison between two (or more) languages. Interlanguage may seem completely logical and correct in the mind of the learner and may also be a part of a natural learning process where rules get more refined as more input is received. This leads to the belief that mistakes are a healthy part of language learning and should not be dealt with too severely. However, if learners are not corrected, mistakes in their interlanguage may ‘fossilise’ and become permanent.

**Armando**

**7. Ways of helping learners get beyond their errors.**

* To expose students to lots of language that is just beyond their level through reading or listening.
* To give them opportunities to focus on the form of language.
* To provide them with time in class to use language to communicate, interact and see

if they can do successfully.

**8. Conclusion: Turning a blind eye**

In the introduction we noted that while correction was necessary to prevent fossilization, over-correction could be demotivating. This means that teachers need to be selective in correction. Some students may notice that some mistakes are not being corrected. Here’s an activity you can use to explain this.

Record students’ mistakes and write them on the board, which you divide into two. Write on the right side if they are serious, i.e. interfere with communication, and on the left side if they are not. Ask students to help you decide. When finished, tell students that ‘to turn a blind eye’ means to ignore something wrong, and this is usually done where to do something would be worse than to do nothing. The original expression is reputed to come from Admiral Nelson, who ignored a signal to retreat, by ‘looking’ at it with his blind eye, and then won the battle. Like battles, speaking a foreign language is a risky business, and in the interests of encouragement, mistakes are sometimes overlooked. Ask your students to cover their left eyes and concentrate on the mistakes on the right.

**TECHNIQUES CORRECT SPOKEN ERRORS**

**Raquel**

a) **Body language**

The problems with using body language to show errors could also be that it is taken as very serious criticism or that it is too vague. Possibilities include using your hands (rolling a hand from side to side to mean “so-so attempt”; making a circle by moving your index finger to mean “one more time”; or a cross with fingers, open palms or even forearms to show a very clear “no” or “wrong”- probably only suitable for a team game etc where the responsibility is shared), head (tilted to one side to mean “I’m not sure that sounds correct”), or shoulders (hunched to reinforce “I don’t understand what you are saying”). Again, practising this in a teaching workshop can be useful, as can eliciting other body language teachers could have used after an observation.

**b) Correction symbols**

Some teachers use prompts for correction while speaking. Some well-known examples are:

• Make a ‘T’ with fingers to illustrate missing ‘the’.

• Show a small word missing by holding thumb and forefinger close together.

• Cross hands over to show wrong word order.

To these I would like to add some more prompts, using sounds, gestures and puns:

• Pull ear to show irregular past tense: ‘ear’ sounds the same as the first syllable in ‘irregular’.

• ‘With’ and ‘by’ e.g. with car - teacher waves to signal ‘bye’, which sounds the same as ‘by’.

• Confusion of auxiliary e.g. I aren’t like swimming - sing ‘Do be do be do’ (Strangers in the night - Frank Sinatra).

• Missing ‘ing’ e.g. I am wait for a bus - T says ‘(t)ing’ like a bell ringing.

• Unnecessary ‘to’ e.g. I must to go - draw -2 (minus t(w)o) on the board in the air.

• Where would is used wrongly, e.g. in conditionals, tap on ‘wood’ to show that ‘would’ is wrong.

• Wrong present tense e.g. simple vs. continuous: Use a circling hand motion to prompt continuous, use open arms to show wide, e.g. general time.

• Buzz like a bee to show missing verb ‘be’ e.g. I going.

• Student says For going instead of to go: Hold up four fingers and then cover two of them to show ‘for’ (4) should be ‘to’ (2).

• Make a scissors motion with fingers to cut out unnecessary words .e.g. …which I like it.

• I don’t want no tea - make two minus symbols with your fingers, then cross them to make a plus to show two negatives make a positive in English.

• On/in - make an ‘o’ with your finger/thumb and change it to ‘I’ straight finger, or vice versa (if appropriate to your culture!).

• Adjective used instead of adverb. E.g. He walked slow - make an L shape with your right index finger and thumb. This looks like both ‘l’ and ‘y’, so signifies ‘ly’. Close the thumb and finger to show that the ‘ly’ is unnecessary, i.e. adv. > adj, and open to change adj. > adv.

You could invent own symbols. While students need to learn them, which may take time, it brings humor into the sometimes serious task of correction and avoids the need for words. Once the students have learnt the symbols, there is also potential for peer correction.

**Alejandra**

c**) Facial expression**

For example, raise an eyebrow, tilt your head to one side or give a slight frown. Most people will do this naturally, but there is a slight chance a teacher’s expression will be too critical or too subtle for your students to pick up on, and you can (amusingly) practice facial expressions in a teaching workshop by participants communicating certain typical classroom messages (“move over there to work with this person”, “work in pairs” etc.) using just their heads and faces, including feedback on spoken errors in that list.

d) **Manual chat**

Instead of speaking to each other, students quickly pass pieces of paper back and forward with a written conversation in groups, a bit like chatting on the Internet. This has the advantage of being similar to spoken conversation, but leaving a written record that can be analyzed by students themselves.

**Carlos**

e) **Tell them how many mistakes**

This method is only really suitable for controlled speaking practice, but can be a very simple way of giving feedback in that situation. Examples include “Most of the comparatives were right, but you made two mistakes” and “Three words are in the wrong position in the sentence/ are mixed up”. Make sure you only use this method when students can remember what you are referring to without too much prompting.

Other useful language:

“Very good, but you made just one mistake with the passive”

(For a tongue twister) “Good attempt/ Getting better, but in two places you said /sh/ where it should have been /s/. Can you guess which words?”

f) **Two speaking, one secretary**

Getting students to focus on each other’s mistakes can be useful, if done tactfully and the reasons explained (it is sometimes easier to see other people’s mistakes other than your own.) While two students speak, a third makes notes of anything that he or she thinks may be wrong. Afterwards the three students can discuss it.

**Armando**

g) **Just tell them they are wrong (but nicely)**

Positive ways of being negative include “nearly there”, “getting closer”, “just one mistake”, “much better”, “good idea, but…”,”I understand what you mean but…”, “you have made a mistake that almost everyone does/ that’s a very common mistake”, “we haven’t studied this yet, but…” and “much better pronunciation, but…” With lower level and new classes, you might have to balance the need to be nice with the need to be clear and not confuse them with feedback language that they don’t understand, perhaps by sticking to one or two phrases to give feedback for the first couple of months. It can also be useful to give them translations of this and other classroom language you will use, for example on a worksheet or a poster.

**h) Encourage participants to keep an error correction notebook.**

This notebook contains error entries, corrections made, and explanation or background knowledge underlying the correction. This will help both teachers and participants to monitor their errors and review the corrections made. The relevance of the error correction notebook will depend on how the teacher will use this notebook. The teacher, for example, could check the notebook once in a while or give additional speaking exercises in relation to the errors made. This activity will give learners the opportunity to reflect on their errors and hopefully avoid or lessen them.

**Sugiero solo enlistar estos otros ejercicios o si creen pertinente explicar alguno de éstos además de los mencionados arriba, háganlo o cámbienlos.**

**Point at the correct language**

If you have something on the correct form easily accessible on the whiteboard, in the textbook or on a poster, just pointing at it can be a subtle but clear way of prompting students to use the correct language. What you point at could be the name of the tense or word form they are supposed to be using, a verb forms table or the actual correct verb form, a grammatical explanation, or another grammatical hint such as “future”, “prediction” or “polite”.

Useful language:

“Have a look at your books/ the board”

“The correct version is somewhere in this chart/ poster/ table”

“You copied this down earlier. Have a look in your notebooks”

**Repeat what they said**

This can mean repeating the whole sentence, one section of it including the wrong part, the sentence up to the wrong part, the sentence with the wrong part missed out (with maybe a humming noise to show the gap that should be filled) or just the wrong part. You can illustrate that you are showing them an error and give some hint as to which bit is wrong by using a questioning tone (for everything you say or just for the wrong part). This method is overused by some teachers and can sound patronizing if used too often or with the wrong tone of voice, so try to mix up the different versions of it described here and to alternate with methods described in the other tips.

Useful language:

“The man GOED to the shops?”

“The man GOED?”

“GOED?”

**Correction table**

Draw a table on the board. While students are talking, point to the type of mistake, giving students a chance to self-correct. You could ask for volunteers to speak, e.g. a pair. Afterwards students could try it in groups, with two speaking and one listening and pointing. A table could look like this:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Preposition wrong / missing | Wrong tense, e.g. simple / continuous | Article a / the missing |
| Wrong Irregular past tense, e.g. swimmed | sounds e.g. silent letters | Word pronoun, he/she, we/us |
| Wrong infinitive form, e.g. Let him to go. | Simple present, 3rd person -s, e.g. He go. | Word order, e.g. I speak well English |

**Correction drill**

Choose a confident student who will not mind having mistakes corrected. Explain that you are going to correct him as he speaks, and that the purpose behind this is not to humiliate, but to help. The student should speak, e.g. tell a story about himself. You repeat each sentence. If there are mistakes, you repeat the sentence correctly and the rest of the class does the same after you. The rationale is 1) students get to hear how they should sound, 2) the rest of the class is involved, and they listen to the original and the teacher’s improvement. 3) By using intonation to show interest, approval, disapproval, and surprise in a light-hearted way, which can be echoed by the class, you focus on meaning as well as form. Example:

• S1: I stood up late.

• T: Oh you got up late! (disapproving)

• SS: You got up late! (disapproving)

• S1: I got up late, then I eat big breakfast.

• T: You had a big breakfast. (amused)

• SS: You had a big breakfast. (amused) etc.

• S1: Yes, I had a big breakfast then I went at the park.

**Collect the errors for later**

You can then correct them later in the same class (with a game like a grammar auction or just eliciting corrections from the class) or in a future class (for example writing error dictation pairwork worksheets or using the same techniques as can be used in the same class). Make sure you give positive reinforcement as well, e.g. “Someone said this sentence, and that is really good.”

Useful language:

“Here are some things that people said in the last activity”

“I heard several people say this one.

“Can anyone correct this sentence? It has one missing word/ one word missing/ You need to add one word”

“The words are in the wrong order/ You need to change the words around/ change the word order/ mix the words up”

“This is a typical mistake for students from…”

“Don’t worry, even native speakers make this mistake sometimes/ every nationality makes this mistake”

“This mistake is something we studied last week”

**Just say the right version**

The students can then repeat the correct version or tell you what the difference between the two sentences was and why their version was wrong. Because the students don’t do much of the work in this way of being corrected, it might not be as good a way of remembering the correction as methods where you give more subtle clues. Its advantages are that it is quick and suits cultures, classes and students that think of elicitation as shirking by the teacher. It can also be more face-saving than asking them for self-correction, as trying to correct themselves risks making even more mistakes. The “right version” could mean the whole sentence or just the correction of the part that was wrong. In the latter case, you can then ask them to put it into the sentence in the right place and repeat the whole thing.

Useful language:

“I understand what you are saying, but you need to say…”

“We studied this last week. “Hardly” has a different meaning to “hard”, so you need to say…?”

“The past of say is pronounced /sed/. So your sentence should be…?”

**Use grammatical terminology to identify the mistake**

For example, “(You used) the wrong tense”, “Not the Present Perfect”, “You need an adverb, not an adjective” or “Can change that into the passive/ indirect speech?” This method is perhaps overused, and you need to be sure that the grammatical terminology isn’t just going to confuse them more.

Other useful language:

“Because that is the present simple, you need to add the auxiliary (verb) ‘do’”

“Say the same sentence, but with the comparative form”

**Give the rule**

For example, “‘Since’ usually takes the Present Perfect” or “One syllable adjectives make the comparative with –er, not more + adjective” This works best if they already know the rule, and you at least need to make sure that they will quickly understand what you are saying, for example by only using grammatical terminology you have used with them several times before.

“You got all the articles right this time, so I’ll give you 9 out of 10”

**Ask partners to spot errors**

This is a fairly well-known way of giving feedback in speaking tasks, but it can be a minefield if the person giving feedback has no confidence in their ability to do so or in how well the feedback (i.e. criticism) will be taken, and even more so if the person receiving the feedback will in fact react badly. This method is easier to do and easier to take when they have been told specifically which language to use while speaking and so to look out for when listening, usually meaning controlled speaking practice tasks. The feedback can be made even simpler to give and collect and more neutral with some careful planning, e.g. asking them count how many times their partner uses the target form as well as or instead of looking for when it used incorrectly.

**Try again!**

Sometimes, students don’t need much help at all but just a chance to do it again. This is likely to be true if you have trained them well in spotting their own errors, if there was some other kind of mental load such as a puzzle to solve that was distracting them from the language, or if they have had a chance to hear someone else doing the same speaking task in the class or on a recording.

Useful language:

“One more time (but think about the grammar more this time/ but concentrating on making less mistakes instead of speaking quickly)”

“Give it another go”

“Do you want one more chance before you get the final score”

**Written correction exercises**

Written correction exercises can raise awareness of errors made in speaking, and can be chosen to reflect students’ common mistakes.

**Launch an initial investigation into the participants’ learning profile.**

A quick survey, for example an introductory session before beginning the class or questionnaires, will help both teachers and participants to negotiate and determine the most suitable method to deal with the participants’ errors. This will also give the participants the opportunity to see for themselves if they could cope with the selected correction method. The most important thing here is to make the learners comfortable with the error correction method used in class.

**Give positive feedback and acknowledge learners’ progress in L2 speaking.**

These acts can touch boost participants’ confidence. A teacher’s response of ‘That’s wrong!’ will make them focus on the errors and not the revision. On the other hand, constructive comments like ‘Do you mean?’ and sincere compliments such as ‘That is interesting’ or ‘What a clear explanation’ will add participants’ willingness to improve. In short, if teachers can highlight participants’ progress, they can neutralize the negative emotions created by the corrections on fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

**Sources Por favor incluyan los enlaces o la bibliografía**

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