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ERROR CORRECTION STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH SPEAKING CLASSROOM

The use of error correction strategies in English as a Foreign Language（EFL）classrooms has always been controversial. There are theorists who insist that error correction is effective for EFL learners while there are those who assert that this method does not provide any benefits.

It is generally agreed though, that correction is part of the teaching/learning process. As J. Scrivener puts it, "errors often show us that a student is experimenting with language, trying-out ideas, taking risks, attempting to communicate, making progress" [2, p. 285]. But 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.

When and how to correct errors. While it is important to accentuate the positive in learners' journeys to success it's up to the teacher to discern when to correct or not correct the student. One of the criterions when deciding when to correct student errors is whether the error is global or local. A local error, at the discretion of the teacher, can often be overlooked for the greater good of the students learning process. This is because "Local errors do not prevent the message from being heard, usually because there is only a minor violation of one segment of a sentence, allowing the hearer/reader to make an accurate guess about the intended meaning." [1, p. 263]. On the other hand when a student makes a global error, this is probably an error that should be corrected. This is because global errors hinder communication; they prevent the hearer from comprehending some aspect of the message the student is trying to convey.

Another important consideration is when to correct. There are such options: immediately; after a few minutes; at the end of the activity; later in the lesson; at the end of the lesson; in the next lesson; later in the course; never. J. Scrivener focuses on the distinction between accuracy and fluency aims. If the objective is accuracy, then immediate correction is likely to be useful; if the aim is fluency, then lengthy immediate correction that diverts from the flow of speaking is less appropriate. We either need to correct briefly and unobtrusively as we go or save any correction for after the activity has finished or later [2, p. 286].

In dealing with errors, teachers often look for correction techniques that, rather than simply giving students the answer on a plate, help them to make their own corrections. The most widely-spread methods of error correcting in speaking classrooms are:
1. **Echoing**: teachers echo the word or the phrase or the whole sentence with questioning intonation and stress to give students the hint where exactly the mistake was made.

2. **Repetition up to the error:** a teacher repeats the sentence up to the error and waits for students to correct it.

3. **Hinting / prompting**: showing where an error is and giving a clue how to correct it, a teacher gives some hints how to proceed.

4. **Making a note of common errors:** a teacher makes notes of typical errors and deals with them in a remedial or feedback session.

5. **Nonverbal way:** as soon as an error occurs a teacher uses facial expression to draw student's attention. This is when teachers have a worried look or hand outstretched to "hold" until the error is corrected. Nonverbal method involves a raised eyebrow, a finger correction, shaking head as well.

6. **Telling them:** "There is an error in the sentence. Who can correct it?"

7. **Reformulation:** a teacher reformulates incorrect version, provides a correct answer, repeats it and makes an emphasis on it.

Error correction in any form is a powerful tool. It can crush a student if used incorrectly – taking away any feelings of success and competency. On the other hand, it can be empowering to students and teachers, building students up to perform higher than they ever expected. Therefore, it is really important for teachers to use a variety of correction strategies when giving error correction.

References

1. Brown, H.D. Principles of Language Learning and Teaching: 5th Edition / H. Douglas Brown. − New York: Longman, 2007. – 410p.
2. Scrivener, J. Learning Teaching: 3rd Edition / Jim Scrivener. − Mcmillan Books for Teachers, 2011. − 430p.

Анотація. Андрейко Л. Методи виправлення помилок на заняттях з англійської мови. *Проаналізовано питання доцільності виправлення помилок під час мовленнєвої діяльності студентів на заняттях з англійської мови, зокрема коли і як їх виправляти. Наведені приклади ефективних прийомів виправлення помилок.*

Ключові слова: помилки, виправлення, англійська мова, викладання, мовленнєва діяльність..

Аннотация. Андрейко Л. Методы исправления ошибок на занятиях по английскому языку. *Проанализирован вопрос целесообразности исправления ошибок во время речевой деятельностии студентов на занятиях по английскому языку, в частности, когда и как их исправлять. Приведены примеры эффективных приемов исправления ошибок.*

Ключевые слова: ошибки, исправления, английский язык, преподавание, речевая деятельность.

Summary. Andreyko L. Error correction strategies in English speaking classroom. *The article analyses effectiveness of error correction in speaking classrooms, when and how to correct errors in order to help learners improve their speaking skills. Some of the most effective error correction strategies are suggested.*

Key words: errors, correction, English classroom, teaching, speaking skills.