«Էդիթ Պրինտ» հրատարակչություն

# Ավարտական հետազոտական աշխատանք

# ាក់ជំរួយ` Error correction(error correction-when to correct,ways of correcting learners

**Արարկա`** Անգլերեն

- *Ուսուցիչ*՝ Մարինա Բուլղադարյան
- Դպրոց ` Արագածոտն մարզ,Կարինի միջնակարգ դպրոց

**Ղեկավար**` Անուշ Խաչիկյան

ԵՐԵՎԱՆ – 2023

#### Բովանդակություն

Աշխատանքը կատարված է սեփական փորձից ելնելով և իհարկե թեմայի վերաբերյալ բազմաթիվ գրքեր ,հոդվածներ կարդալով և բազում քննարկումներից ելնելով։Այն ներառում է նախ թեմայի վերլուծություն ,երբ և ինչպես է կատարվում և տրվում է լուծում և արվում առաջարկություններ։

1	Բովանդակություն	2
2	Error correction	3
3	Error or mistake, how to correct	9
4	How to correct the students without hurting their fillings	15
5	Conclusion	19
6	Some sayings about mistakes	19
	The sources	

## ERROR CORRECTION(error correctionwhen to correct, ways of correcting)

I am a teacher about 30 years ,and during these years I try to develop my teaching skills and methods of teaching English at school. Today there are many changes in educational system of Armenia and modern demands are also change. The assessment system has also undergone a change. And assessment is depend on different aspects.

But my topic is about correcting the mistakes and errors after all to assess. Now let's differ error from mistakes .ls it the same thing or not?

<u>Error</u> is the difference between the carefully measured value and true value. The errors arising from the fact that the observer has not taken all the precautions necessary to avoid errors are called mistakes.

<u>A mistake</u> is a human action that deviates from the expected or best outcome, while an error refers to a deviation from accuracy or correctness regardless of the cause.

Mistakes can be made due to lack of knowledge, carelessness, or poor judgment. For example, a student who writes the wrong answer on a test has made a mistake. An error, on the other hand, is a deviation from accuracy or correctness.

First, let's make a distinction between errors and slips. An error is a mistake made because of insufficient knowledge of the rules governing the target language. On the other hand, slips are... just that, minor mistakes made due to inattentiveness, tiredness etc. In this article we will mostly address correcting errors.

#### What to do?

When we pick up on an error being made by one of our students, we need to decide how we want to act. To this end, Scrivener indicates a set of questions that can point us in the right direction:

- 1. What kind of error was it?
- 2. Should we deal with it?
- 3. When should it be corrected?
- 4. Who does the correcting?
- 5. How will it be done?

Let's take them one by one:

Kind of error – these can be grammatical, lexical, related to pronunciation, word stress, sentence stress, intonation etc. The reason we are interested in the type of mistake that has been made is because this tells us whether we should intervene or not.

1. Do we correct? As we've just mentioned, we need to know if we step in or not. A simple way of deciding is by asking ourselves whether the mistake was related to something above our students' level. If our young learners tried to use the third conditional and it didn't come out guite right, but it's not something we intend on teaching them yet (or is quite simply above their understanding for the time being), then we may choose not to do anything about it. On the other hand, did our learner forget to use the auxiliary "do" when asking a question in the present simple, despite it being a revision activity? Then maybe this it is a good idea to do some correcting. The point is, we might want to deal with an error if it's related to the target language we've just taught or have taught at some point during the school year. However, there are other things to consider here as well. What is the aim of the activity? Imagine we're trying to improve our learners' fluency. Correcting them as they're trying to express an idea might defeat the purpose of the activity and might do more damage than help. Our student might lose confidence in themselves and feel frustrated due to not being allowed to finish their thought. Conversely, if the activity focuses on accuracy, then we're more likely to tackle mistakes. But does that mean we just interrupt our students in the middle of their answer? And do we never correct errors made during a fluency-based activity?

#### 2. This begs the question, when do we correct?

Sometimes, the answer is never (just like in the example with the third conditional mentioned above). Other times, we have several options to keep in mind.

Correcting immediately – e.g. when practicing the present perfect simple and a student uses the wrong form of an irregular verb, you can do on the spot correction.

Correcting later - i.e. letting the student finish their sentence / idea first

At the end of the activity – also known as delayed error correction. This can work for fluency-based activities. This way, the students are not interrupted and mistakes can still be discussed. This method is further explained below.

#### Self correction / Peer correction

**Correction slots** 

#### On the spot correction

#### **Delayed correction**

Let's understand what is what.

- On-the-spot correction techniques. These are used for dealing with errors as they occur.
  - Using fingers
     For example, to highlight an incorrect form or to indicate a word order mistake.
  - Gestures

For example, using hand gestures to indicate the use of the wrong tense.

• Mouthing

This is useful with pronunciation errors. The teacher mouths the correct pronunciation without making a sound. For example, when an individual sound is mispronounced or when the word stress is wrong. Of course it can also be used to correct other spoken errors.

Reformulation
 For example:
 Student: I went in Scotland
 Teacher: Oh really, you went to Scotland, did you?

• Delayed Correction techniques - For example, after a communication activity.

#### • Noting down errors

Either on an individual basis i.e. focusing on each student's mistakes or for the class as a whole.

#### • Recording

In addition to recording students (individually, in pairs etc.) during a speaking task to make them aware of errors that affect communication we can use a technique from Community Language Learning. Students sit in a circle with a tape recorder in the centre. In monolingual classes they check with the teacher, who is bilingual, about how to say something in English, then rehearse it and record it. At the end of the lesson they listen back to the tape and can focus on specific utterances etc. With higher level multilingual classes students take part in a discussion which they have prepared for in advance. When they have something to say they record themselves and then pause the tape. Just as with monolingual classes they classes they can use the teacher as a linguistic resource. At the end of the discussion students analyse their performance with the teacher. The focus

is on improving the quality of what they say and expanding their interlanguage. Although this form of discussion may seem a bit artificial it has two main advantages:

- Students pay more attention to what they say as they are taking part in a kind of performance (it is being recorded)
- Students not only become more aware of gaps in their spoken English but also can see how their spoken English is improving.
- Towards the end of a lesson, where there is likely to be more free production of language (discussions / role plays, etc), the aim is for learners to integrate new language into their fluent speech or writing. For this reason, it may be intrusive to interrupt a learner's flow for the sake of correction on the spot, so leave speakers to complete their ideas, make a note of any errors you hear, and come back to them in an end-of-lesson review.
- If groups of students are producing language fluently in a final stage, walk around the room with a notepad, stealthily taking notes of common mistakes. Then, after the task has finished, anonymously display the incorrect forms on the board. At this point in the lesson, students should have had enough exposure to the forms being taught to correct them easily.
- This is a good opportunity for a race to the board where teams can compete to correct sentences, or a quiz-style activity with points for best correction/explanation. Delayed correction is a good way to keep accuracy work student-centered and maintain sensitivity towards your learner

#### **Correction slots**

 One way to focus on students' mistakes is to take 'time out' of an activity and look at mistakes as a group. When students are doing a speaking task in pairs or groups I often monitor the students and listen in on what they're saying. Students will get used to you hovering around them although if it's not your usual monitoring style they may wonder what you're up to at first! I make a note of the mistakes that I hear; whether they are pronunciation, grammatical or lexical. I collect a selection of their errors and then stop the activity. I write a selection of the mistakes on the board and ask students to correct them. If students are working in pairs and you have a left over student, why not assign them the role of assistant teacher? They can have a notebook and pen and make notes of mistakes they hear. If they do their job well they could even run the correction slot with their mistakes instead of you. Usually most of the mistakes can by corrected by the students themselves.

 Correcting mistakes the second they are made has the advantage that you don't have to bring the activity to a stop as is the case with a correction slot. Students often appreciate instant correction. Think about what type of activity it is before deciding whether or not it's appropriate to correct on the spot. You don't want to destroy the flow of the task by butting in. Students can also be responsible for on the spot correction if they are encouraged to pick up on each other's mistakes.

#### On-the-spot correction

- In an accuracy-focused restricted practice lesson stage, such as when going through the answers from a gap-fill task where there are specific, expected answers, errors and mistakes can be dealt with as they happen, with teacher responses given answer-by-answer as students feed back their ideas to the class.
- In this case, all the learners in the group should be aiming for the same correct response, so it is beneficial to include other members of the class in the process. On hearing an error, open it up to the rest of the class to evaluate ('what do you think? Did you get the same answer?').
- This encourages learners to listen to each other and brings evaluative thinking into the classroom process. After getting one or two responses from other students, return to the original student and ask them to rephrase their idea.
- If this does not lead to a correct form, refer to any notes or sentence examples on the board and see if anyone can rethink the idea correctly.
- If these techniques do not work, run through the correction for the student and compare to earlier examples to fix the correct form.
- Passing student responses around the class for analysis gets everyone in the group used to being listened to, and integrates higher-order thinking skills into a common lesson stage.

#### New mistakes or the same old ones?

• I always remind students that if they are always making new mistakes it's okay. New mistakes are usually a sign that they are exploring new uses of language or experimenting with new vocabulary but if they are always repeating the same mistakes it's not such a good sign! By noting their mistakes students have a record of their progress and can avoid repeating the same mistakes time and time again. It's a good idea to have a set space in their notebooks to write down their errors and the correct version. One way of doing it is to divide a page into three columns:

Mistake	correction	note
It depends of the weather.	It depends on the weather	Depend ON

As teachers, our first instinct is to correct the mistakes ourselves. After all, that's why we're there, isn't it? To impart our knowledge to our students. Well, not quite. We'll see things are not so straightforward. Every teacher will have different views on this and different ways of correcting their students and it's a case of finding out what both you and your students feel comfortable with. I would like to offer several ideas of how to go about it.

#### Ask the students how they want to be corrected

 This sounds obvious but it can be easily overlooked. Talk to your students about error correction and to find out from them how they like to be corrected. Often students have clear ideas about how they would like you to correct them. With large groups you may have to go with the majority, but if you have a small group you can cater for individual needs.

One way to give students a choice on how much they want to be corrected in a particular class or activity is for them to make a traffic light to put on their desk. A strip of card with three circles (one red, one orange and one green) folded into a triangle with a bit of sellotape does the trick. Now we all know that our students make mistakes. No matter how clear we make our explanations, no matter how many examples we offer, and no matter how much practice we have them do, it still happens. Errors in the classroom are as natural and as unavoidable as death and taxes. But unlike these two, hearing mistakes in the classroom may actually be a good sign.

We tend to view mistakes negatively, but these may just be an indicator that learning is taking place, that our students are trying to make room for a new piece of information in their personal repository of language. This can sometimes disrupt pre-existing connections and links, meaning it may take some time until new items are fully integrated in this complex web.

Our jobs, as teachers, is to help our learners expand this web, and part of this involves dealing with the mistakes we hear or read in the classroom. But how can we ensure error correction can be efficient? How can we use it so that it helps, rather than hinders, the learning process?

What Innocent never mentions in his writing is that the Church at the time faced more opposition than perhaps it cared to admit. Innocent didn't enjoy the security that his writing made it seem that he did. The goal of Henry VI had been to control Italy. The papacy did its best to prevent this by refusing to crown Henry emperor unless he promised not to control Italy. Henry was obviously very interested in doing so, but died before his plans could come to fruition. Innocent was quite brilliantly using the vacancy in the emperor's throne to try to place the church back into assured power, by stepping in to control who would become pope, almost exactly what Henry IV had done in 1075. Innocent was also reluctant to mention the position in which heresy was putting the church. It was relatively easy to stomp out a few flames of nonbelievers, but lately more and more people were opposing the official viewpoint in one way or another. Innocent saw his people taken from him by the Waldensian heresy and the Albigensian, or Cathar, heresy. People began to realize that the church was corrupt, that church practices were more and more motivated by income. Heresies that were motivated by legitimate concerns were more likely to attract attention, but none of this was mentioned by Innocent in his writing on *The Punishment of Heretics* in 1198.

Red pens have traditionally been used by teachers when grading papers – ostensibly to make their comments and markings stand out from the original work – but this new research suggests that the use of a red pen may convey unintentional negative emotions. There are a few reasons why teachers may be moving away from using red pen to correct papers. One reason is that research has shown that using red pen can be

#### seen as overly critical and negative, and can negatively impact a student's motivation and learning. Additionally, there are many digital tools available now that can be used for editing and commenting on papers, which some teachers find more efficient and effective

Red does have its benefits though – possibly the easiest colour to differentiate from the blue or black that your students will have written which may make it easier for them to see where they have made errors and learn from their mistakes

Some evoke calm and tranquillity, while others are more loud and powerful. Red falls under the latter category and is said to signify everything from energy, to aggression, danger, violence, and war.

Everyone has their favorite pen color, but when it comes to teachers, there are some colors that are essential to have. Blue and black are the most commonly used, while red is used for grading papers or writing comments and suggestions. A great option for teachers is a multifunction pen that has three or more colors

They say it's because the colour red has 'bad' or 'evil' connotations. They say teachers should mark in green, I'm guessing because on the traffic light system it is the opposite of red. Red meaning 'stop' but green meaning to 'proceed' and carry on. Apparently it's all about frightening and not frightening the student. Another example is the exam boards for GCSE and A Level Maths changing "trial and error" to "trial and improvement." They don't want to make the student think they've made an error, so they state it in a more positive sense.

Personally I think it's been blown out of proportion and gone too far. I have no preference as to what colour a teacher marks my work in. So long as it highlights what I've done right and how I can improve, they can do it in rainbow for all I care...

When we pick up on an error being made by one of our students, we need to decide how we want to act. To this end, There are a set of questions that can point us in the right direction:

- 1. What kind of error was it?
- 2. Should we deal with it?
- 3. When should it be corrected?
- 4. Who does the correcting?
- 5. How will it be done?

As teachers, our first instinct is to correct the mistakes ourselves. After all, that's why we're there, isn't it? To impart our knowledge to our students. Well, not quite. We'll see things are not so straightforward. Mistakes are not the end of the world. Everyone loves a second chance. Just get the learner who made an error correct themselves. There's nothing better than showing your students you have confidence in their abilities and giving them time to think and self-correct. Just because they got it wrong at first does not necessarily mean they do not know the rules. Maybe they're

still trying to wrap their heads around them, or they haven't yet integrated them into their web.

2. If this works, then hurrah! But what about when it doesn't? Now, just because one of the learners made a mistake, it doesn't mean the others would, too. So why not let them lend a helping hand to their colleague? This is beneficial from two points of view. Firstly, by getting the other students to correct, you're helping them practice their English and confirm their knowledge of the rules. Secondly, it minimises your input and lets the learners take centre-stage. Not everything has to come from you. You're just the director, guiding things from behind the scene. Let your actors try their hand at perfecting their craft. And, most importantly, don't let them tell you how to correct the mistake. Get them to tell the learner who originally got it wrong, so they can say it again correctly. A little note here: make sure your students can correct each other in a sensitive way. If you think they might be a bit too blunt about it (e.g. "I can't believe you got that wrong!"), then you may want to do the correcting yourself. This is again a perfect moment to remember that less is more i.e. the less you help, the better. Ideally, you would avoid just correcting someone as soon as a mistake has been made.

The first step would be to simply indicate a mistake has been made. There is a number of ways to do this. You might just raise an eyebrow. You might give the class a confused look. You might repeat the sentence with a rising intonation, like a question. You might repeat the sentence and stress the incorrect word / part. You can just repeat the sentence, stopping right before the mistake. You could just repeat the incorrect word with a rising intonation, as if asking "Are you sure this is the word you want?".

If self-correction still hasn't taken place, then you can try to be a bit more explicit. Indicate the type of mistake made e.g. "Word order?", "Tense?" "There's an extra / missing word". You can even narrow this down e.g. "Do we need the present simple or present continuous?", or go further "Is it 'we are going' or 'we go'?", but only if you see your students are lost.

I may sometimes board the sentence and underline the error there, as I feel making it visual helps keep everyone on the same page. You can even use gestures. To indicate the need for the past, I point over my shoulder. If two words need to switch places within a sentence, I hold out two fingers as if I were ready to plug them in a wall socket and turn them clockwise repeatedly.

You can also use the finger method: get your learner to repeat the sentence, and as they say a word, you show them your palm and indicate one of your fingers for each word they say. After they finish, indicate the finger where the mistake is,

wiggle it, bite down on it (I've seen Scrivener do it, so why not?), bend it, do anything to indicate that's where the problem is.

These methods can work when doing on-the-spot correction, or after the student has finished speaking. When it comes to activities meant to improve fluency, i.e. when we shouldn't interfere during the task itself, then we can go for delayed error correction. It's quite simple. As the students are working, you monitor them and collect instances of language (either good or... not so good). Try to aim for recurring mistakes, or errors related to the target language. Board these (but while the students are still doing the task), then let them read the sentences and figure out if they are correct or not. Let them confirm their answers with a partner, then with the whole class. This way, you do not interrupt the students while they are working but do get to correct some recurring errors. Also, no one is put on the spot, as the class has no idea who said the things that are now on the board. This is by no means meant to be an exhaustive list of all the ways of doing error correction. But it's a good place to start, and it's well worth trying out some of these techniques.

There are several ways to do correction ; There are different ways you can do this.

Firstly, you can make a note of mistakes you hear and write them on the board after the exercise.

You don't have to say who made the mistakes (but usually the student who made the error will recognize their mistakes).

The group as a whole then correct the mistakes in the sentence. This way, the students are not directly embarrassed by being corrected in front of their classmates.

Secondly, you can write the mistakes and get students to correct them in pairs. This has the added advantage of creating more English speaking time for the students.

Thirdly, you can also use the 'correction time' to give praise for good language you heard during the exercise.

"Max, your pronunciation was much better today, well done. Now, why do you think "Yesterday I go to the cinema" was wrong? (wait for student to reply). Yes, that's great. Well done, it's really good that you are starting to correct your own mistakes." correction is an important teaching tool, which can be most helpful to students when done properly. Implement these methods for correcting students to get the best results.

A crucial issue for any teacher is when and how to correct students' English mistakes. Of course, there are a number of types of corrections that teachers are expected to make during the course of any given class. Here are the main types of mistakes that Grammatical mistakes (mistakes of verb tenses, preposition use, etc.) • Vocabulary mistakes (incorrect collocations, idiomatic phrase usage, etc.) Pronunciation mistakes (errors in basic pronunciation, errors in word stressing in • Written mistakes (grammar, spelling and vocabulary choice mistakes in written work). The main issue at hand during oral work is whether or not to correct students as they make mistakes. Mistakes may be numerous and in various areas (grammar, vocabulary choice, the pronunciation of both words and correct stressing in sentences). On the other hand, correction of written work boils down to how much correction should be done. In other words, should teachers correct every single mistake, or, should they give a value judgment and correct only

#### Mistakes Made During Discussions and Activities

major mistakes?

sentences, errors in rhythm and pitch)

With oral mistakes made during class discussions, there are basically two schools of thought: 1) Correct often and thoroughly 2) Let students make mistakes. Sometimes, teachers refine the choice by choosing to let beginners make many mistakes while correcting advanced students often. However, many teachers are taking a third route these days. This third route might be called 'selective correction'. In this case, the teacher decides to correct only certain errors. Which errors will be corrected is usually decided by the objectives of the lesson, or the specific exercise that is being done at that moment. In other words, if students are focusing on simple past irregular forms, then only mistakes in those forms are corrected (i.e., goed, thinked, etc.). Other mistakes, such as mistakes in a future form, or mistakes of collocations (for example I made my homework) are ignored. Finally, many teachers also choose to correct students after the fact. Teachers take notes on common mistakes that students make. During the follow-up correction session, the teacher then presents common mistakes made so that all can benefit from an analysis of which mistakes were made and why.

#### Written Mistakes

need to be corrected:

There are three basic approaches to correcting written work: 1) Correct each mistake 2) Give a general impression marking 3) Underline mistakes and/or give clues to the type of mistakes made and then let students correct the work themselves

11

What's All the Fuss About?

There are two main points to this issue:

If I allow students to make mistakes, I will reinforce the errors they are making.

Many teachers feel that if they do not correct mistakes immediately, they will be helping reinforce incorrect language production skills. This <u>point of view</u> is also reinforced by students who often expect teachers to continually correct them during class. The failure to do so will often create suspicion on the part of the students.

### If I don't allow students to make mistakes, I will take away from the natural learning process required to achieve competency and, eventually, fluency.

Learning a language is a long process during which a learner will inevitably make many, many mistakes. In other words, we take a myriad of tiny steps going from not speaking a language to being fluent in the language. In the opinion of many teachers, students who are continually corrected become inhibited and cease to participate. This results in the exact opposite of what the teacher is trying to produce: the use of English to communicate.

#### Why Correction Is Necessary

Correction is necessary. The argument that students just need to use the language and the rest will come by itself seems rather weak. Students come to us to **teach** them. If they only want conversation, they will probably inform us, or, they might just go to a chat room on the Internet. Obviously, students need to be corrected as part of the learning experience. However, students also need to be encouraged to use the language. It is true that correcting students while they are trying their best to use the language can often discourage them. The most satisfactory solution of all is to make correction an activity. Correction can be used as a follow-up to any given class activity. However, correction sessions can be used as a valid activity in and of themselves. In other words, teachers can set up an activity during which each mistake (or a specific type of mistake) will be corrected. Students know that the activity is going to focus on correction and accept that fact. However, these activities should be kept in balance with other, more free-form, activities which give students the opportunity to express themselves without having to worry about being corrected every other word.

Finally, other techniques should be used to make correction not only part of the lesson but also a more effective learning tool for the students. These techniques include:

- Deferring correction to the end of an activity
- Taking notes on typical mistakes made by many students
- Correcting only one type of error
- Giving students clues to the type of error they are making (in written work) but allowing them to correct the mistakes themselves
- Asking other students to remark on mistakes made and then explain the rules by themselves. A great technique for getting 'teacher pets' listening instead of answering each question themselves. However, use this with caution!

Correction is not an 'either/or' issue. Correction needs to take place and is expected and desired by students. However, the manner in which teachers correct students play a vital role in whether students become confident in their usage or become intimidated. Correcting students as a group, in correction sessions, at the end of activities, and letting them correct their own mistakes all help in encouraging students to use English rather than to worry about making too many mistakes.

## How to Correct a Student Without Hurting Their Feelings

Part of our job as a teacher is to give our students the kind of feedback that will help them learn and grow. Of course, we want to do this in a way that encourages them to continue trying, and certainly not to hurt their feelings. As we probably already know, some students are more sensitive than others, so giving constructive criticism can be a tricky thing. Here are some ways to correct a student without hurting their feelings.

- Stay Positive. The most important thing you want to remember when giving out correction is to keep your words and attitude positive. . You want the student to gain from your correction and learn form it. Being negative may only serve to bring down the student's self-esteem and give him a feeling of hopelessness. You might try saying, "Johnny, you made good effort here, but I think if you try ..., it will work better next time." This way the child knows that you see the effort he made, and you are telling him that it can be even better than it already is...
- 2. Know When to Deliver Correction.

.. Never ever embarrass a student in front of the class. When a student walks into your classroom, you are responsible for that child, and you want to build a trust in your students. If you pinpoint mistakes and make corrections in front of the entire class, especially with negative comments, you will be forcing a student to distrust you. Pull a child aside during lunch break or at the end of the day to discuss what he or she needs to correct..

3. Know Your Students.

. It is important that you know your students and their personalities as best you can. The way in which you deliver correction will probably need to be different for different students. Some students are more sensitive than others. Students who really try to make an effort will take correction to heart, whereas students who are not that ambitious may rub off correction and not care so much how you deliver it. Either way, you need to know which students are more sensitive than others...

4. Don't Use Correction as Punishment.

... In order for correction to be effective, it has to be used for the right reasons. Correction is not a form of punishment. Punishment is discipline. Correction is pointing out a way to change what was wrong and make it better next time. Don't chastise a student for doing

something incorrect. Instead, as mentioned above, make it a positive experience for the student; something she can apply the next time she tries a similar action or activity. Save punishment for disruptive students, but not merely for correction.

5. Provide Examples.

Correcting a student will work best when you can provide examples of the right thing to do. For instance, if you give an assignment on the benefits of good eating habits, and a student puts down French fries are healthy because they are made from potatoes just telling him that is wrong does no good. You have to explain that French fries are fried in grease, which makes them unhealthy. Give your students reasoning for your correction to help clarify what they did wrong. This will help give them the motivation they need to make changes in the future....

6. Correct the Work Not the Child.

Keep in mind that correcting a student's work or behavior is not you correcting the student. It is important that your student understands you are correcting his work, not who he is. Let your student know that you still like him, and he is a good student, but that you see a way he can improve on his work in the future

### STUDENTS NEED TO MAKE MISTAKES -HERE'S HOW TO LEARN FROM THEM

#### WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

Researchers showed students one word from a pair, and asked them to guess the other word. In almost all cases, students guessed wrong before being given the correct answer.

However, when tested on these pairs later, the results showed that students remembered the right answers significantly better when they had made mistakes compared to when they had not.

So, it seems that mistakes can actually induce learning - but why?

#### WHEN DO MISTAKES HELP STUDENTS LEARN?

#### Mistakes act as clues to the correct answer

Some research proposes that making mistakes might act as a stepping-stone to eventually reaching the correct answer. Mistakes therefore act as cues to help students remember the correct information.

However, saying that mistakes equal learning in all situations wouldn't be true. So, under which conditions does it work?

Research has suggested that making mistakes is only beneficial to learning when students are producing informed mistakes, rather than just making an arbitrary guess by taking a shot in the dark. Some researchers have investigated the effect of confidence when making mistakes on learning. In these studies, participants answer a general knowledge question, and then rate how confident they are in their answer. They are then given feedback and told what the correct answer actually was. Research suggests that high-confidence mistakes are more likely to be corrected in the future. Encourage students to make their own mistakes, not just listen to someone else's Once your students become more confident in the classroom, some may start to feel more comfortable making mistakes. This may help those students but remember that it won't apply to the rest of the class. For students to learn from this, they need to be making their own mistakes.

Ensuring that you create a psychologically safe environment for your students where they feel comfortable making mistakes is essential. Remind your students that making mistakes is part of the learning process and will actually help them in the long run.

However, make sure that you are asking your students to make educated guesses when answering questions in the classroom instead of making a random guess, as this does not enhance learning.



### Conclusion

- Teacher correcting errors doesn't have to be intrusive or exposing for students. If they expect it as part of your classroom routine, then it can become an inclusive process. After all, errors and mistakes are part of the fabric of the classroom, and are examples of students trying out new things with confidence. As long as your response to inaccurate forms is appropriate, correction can be a constructive experience all round.
- Mistakes teach us what doesn't work and encourages us to create new ways of thinking and doing. Creativity and innovation are a mindset where mistakes are viewed as educational challenges. This shift in mindset can provide positive energy for discovering something new and better
- Whichever way you go about correcting your students, try to keep the experience positive for the learner. Being corrected constantly can be a really de-motivating, as every language learner knows. As you are listening out for your students' errors, make sure you also listen out for really good uses of language and highlight these to the group too. In the case of language learning I really do believe the classic saying, "We learn from our mistakes"

### SOME SAYINGS AND QUOTES ABOUT MISTAKES

Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new. Mistakes are a part of being human. Appreciate your mistakes for what they are: precious life lessons that can only be learned the hard way. Unless it's a fatal mistake, which, at least, others can learn from.

A smart man makes a mistake, learns from it, and never makes that mistake again. But a wise man finds a smart man and learns from him how to avoid the mistake altogether. Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.

"Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new"- Einstein

You can learn great things from your mistakes, when you are not busy denying them-Stephen Covey

The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing- Henry Ford

The brain is very sensitive to mistakes and it produces a specific type of electrical activity when we make errors, called the ERN

Learning to handle a mistake gracefully and using it to your advantage is a valuable life skill.



#### The sources

- 1. Harmer, J. (2007) The Practice of English Language Teaching, 4th edn. Pearson Longman
- 2. Scrivener, J. (2011) Learning Teaching, 3rd edn, MacMillan

https://quoteinvestigator.com/2018/09/18/live-long/

https://langeek.co/en/grammar/course/1204/error-vs-mistake

https://theenglishfarm.com/blog/mistakes-vs-errors-know-difference

https://www.englishlessonviaskype.com/difference-between-error-and-mistake/

18

https://www.wikipedia.org/