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MISTAKES IN SPEAKING AND HOW TO CORRECT THEM

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Abstract: The given article is about mistakes that pupils make in the process of learning foreign languages. Many pupils make the same mistakes, for instance, in prepositions, articles, in tense forms. The teacher of foreign languages should makes notes of them and gets the pupils to perform drill exercises. The teacher should not emphasize incorrect forms in any way or they will be memorized along with the correct ones.

Keywords. Misunderstand, text, mistakes, speaking, pupils, mispronounce, a word, violate, order, sentence, misuse, a preposition, an article, use, wrong. error.

It is natural while learning a foreign language that pupils make mistakes. They make mistakes in auding when they misunderstand something in a text. They make mistakes in speaking when pupils mispronounce a word, violate the order of words in a sentence, misuse a preposition, an article, use wrong intonation, etc. The teacher's main aim is to prevent pupils' errors. There is a good rule: "Correct mistakes before they occur." In other words, careful teaching results in correct English, i. e., pupils make very few mistakes. However, they make them, and the problem is how to correct pupils' errors.[7,38]

If a pupil misunderstands something when auding the teacher should do his best to ensure comprehension. He suggests that the pupil should either listen to the sentence again; if he does not understand it properly the teacher or the classmates help him to paraphrase the sentence or translate" it, or see it written. The latter often helps if pupils do not get used to hearing, if they are eye-learners. As far as speaking is concerned it is the teacher who corrects pupils' mistakes. It is a bad habit of some teachers to ask pupils to notice mistakes when their classmate is called in front of the class to speak.

This is due to the following reasons. Firstly, pupils' attention is drawn, not to what the classmate says, but to how he says it, i. e., not to the content, but to the form. If we admit that the form may not always be correct, then why should we concentrate pupils' attention on the form? Moreover, when pupils' attention is centered on errors, they often do not grasp what the classmate says, and that is why they cannot ask questions or continue the story he has told them.

Secondly, the pupil who speaks thinks more about how to say something instead of what to say. No speaking is possible when the speaker has to concentrate on the form. He makes more errors under this condition. More than that, he often refuses to speak when he sees the classmates raise their hands after he has uttered his first sentence. This does not encourage the learner to speak.

Accordingly when a pupil is called to the front of the class to speak, the class is invited to follow what he says so that they may be able to ask questions or to go on with the story

when he stops.

There is a great variety of techniques at the teacher's disposal. He selects the one that is most suitable for the occasion.

1. If a pupil makes a mistake in something which is familiar to him, it is preferable to correct it at once. But in order not to confuse the pupil and stop his narration the teacher helps the child with the correct version.

Pupil: My mother get up at 7 o'clock.

Teacher: I see, your mother gets up earlier than you.

Pupil: Yes, my mother gets up at 7.

2. If a pupil makes a mistake in something which he has not learned yet the teacher corrects his mistakes after he has finished speaking.

Pupil: She first visited us in 1960.

She is a good friend of ours since.

The teacher gives the correct sentence: She has been a good friend of ours since.

If many pupils make the same mistakes, for instance, in prepositions (go in instead of go to), articles (the Moscow instead of Moscow, or Volga instead of the Volga), in tense forms (the Present Continuous instead of the Present Indefinite) the teacher makes note of them and gets the pupils to perform drill exercises after answering questions.[5.32]

The teacher should not emphasize incorrect forms in any way or they will be memorized along with the correct ones, for instance: Books is. Do you say "books is"? You shouldn't say "books is". What should you say?

We must distinguish speech and oral exercises for they are often mixed up by the teacher.

Speech is a process of communication by means of language. For example, (1) a pupil tells the class a story about something which once happened to him; (2) the teacher asks questions on the story read by the pupils at home and starts a discussion; (3) pupils speak on the pictures suggested by the teacher, each tries to say what others have not mentioned; (4) pupils listen to the story and get some new information from the text; (5) they see a sound film and learn about something new from it, etc.

Oral exercises are used for the pupils to assimilate phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary. They are mostly drill exercises and the teacher turns to them whenever he works at enriching pupils' knowledge in vocabulary and grammar, at improving pupils' pronunciation, etc. For example, reciting a rhyme or a poem is considered to be an excellent oral exercise for drilling pronunciation and for developing speech habits. Making up sentences following the model is an excellent oral exercise for fixing a sentence pattern and words which fit the pattern in the pupils' mind. Making statements with the words or phrases the teacher gives is another valuable oral exercise which allows the teacher to retain them in his pupils' memory through manifold repetitions.

Oral exercises are quite indispensable to developing speech. However, they only prepare pupils for speaking and cannot be considered to be "speech" as some teachers

are apt to think and who are often satisfied with oral exercises which pupils perform following the model; they seldom use stimuli for developing pupils' auding and speaking in the target language.[5,12]

In order to get a better understanding of what speech is we are to consider the psychological and linguistic characteristics of speech.

To fulfil the task the teacher must train his pupils in listening comprehension beginning with the first lesson and throughout the whole period of instruction. These are the techniques the teacher uses for the purpose:

1. The teacher uses the foreign language:
 - (a) when giving the class instructions;
 - (b) when presenting new language material (words, sentence patterns);
 - (c) when checking pupils' comprehension;
 - (d) when consolidating the material presented;
 - (e) when checking pupils' assimilation of the language material covered.

These are the cases when the target language is used as a means of communication and a means of teaching. There is a great deal of auding in all the points of the lesson. This raises the problem of the teacher's speech during the lesson. It should be correct, sufficiently loud, clear, and expressive. But many of the teachers are too talkative. We can hear them speaking most of the time.

2. The teacher uses drill and speech exercises for developing listening comprehension.

We can group drill exercises into exercises designed for overcoming linguistic difficulties, and exercises which can eliminate psychological difficulties.

The first group of drill exercises includes:

(a) phonetic exercises which will help the teacher to develop his pupils' ear for English sounds:

- Listen to the following words and raise your hands when you hear the words with [æ] (The teacher says: desk, pen, ten, bag, etc.)

- Listen to the following pairs of words and say in what sound they differ: pen - pin; bed - bad; eyes - ice; white - wide.

(b) lexical exercises which will help the teacher to develop pupils' skills in recognizing words:

- Listen to the words and recognize the word boy among other words: a baby, a toy, a boat, a boy, a girl.

- Listen to the following words and raise your hands when you hear the words referring to plants: street, tree, grass, class, flower, tower.

- Listen to the following sentences and say whether the word country has the same meaning in both sentences:

I usually spent my holidays in the country.

Russia is a large country.

(c) grammar exercises which help the teacher to develop pupils' skills in recognizing grammar forms and structures:

- Listen to the following words and raise your hands when you hear words in plural: desk, tables, book, box, pens, books, boxes, etc.

- Listen to the following sentences and say in which one the word help is used as a noun.

He can help you. I need his help.

The second group of drill exercises includes:

(a) exercises which help the teacher to develop his pupils' auditory memory:

- Listen to the following words and try to memorize them. (The teacher pronounces a number of words pointing to the object each denotes: a carrot, a potato, a cucumber, a tomato. Afterwards pupils are told to point to the object the teacher names.)

- Listen to the phrases and repeat them. The teacher says: on the table,, in the box, near the blackboard.

- Listen to the sentences and repeat them. (The teacher says: I like tea. Ann doesn't like tea. She likes milk.)

- Listen to the sentences and repeat them in the same sequence. (The teacher says: In the evening we have tea. I like it very much. The teacher may increase the number of sentences for pupils to memorize.)

(b) exercises which are designed for developing pupils' attention:

- Listen to the following text: I have a sister. Her name is Ann. Mike has no sister. He has a brother.

Now say what is the name of Mike's sister.

- Listen to the text. (The text follows.) Now say which sentence was omitted (added) when you listened to it a second time.

(c) exercises which develop pupils' visual imagination:

- Listen to the following definition and give it a name: We write with it on the blackboard. We take it when it rains.

- Listen and say which season it is: It is cold. It often snows. Children can skate and ski.

(d) exercises which help the teacher to develop his pupils' logical thinking:

- Listen to the sentences and say whether they are logically arranged: Her name is Mary. This is a girl.

Conducting a lesson in a foreign language gives the teacher an opportunity to develop pupils' abilities in hearing; to train them in listening to him attentively during the lesson; to demonstrate the language as a means of communication; to provide favorable conditions for the assimilation of the language; to perfect his own speaking skills; to keep his own speech under control and to keep himself from undue talkativeness.

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