

CORRECTING VOCABULARY MISTAKES WITH FUN ACTIVITIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Abdulahatova Iroda Sobir qizi

The teacher of specialized school №116

Abstract. This article explores innovative and fun activities aimed at correcting vocabulary mistakes in language learners. By leveraging engaging methods, teachers can create a more dynamic learning environment that fosters effective vocabulary acquisition and retention.

Key words: Thematic grouping, language acquisition, Error detective game, Peer editing.

Vocabulary is essential for knowledge or language proficiency. It helps in construction of meaning out of the spoken and written words and makes it possible to communicate effectively with others. Therefore, developing and reinforcing vocabulary is an important component in language education or language acquisition, especially English learning. So, vocabulary is crucial because it enables learners to express themselves, raise inquiries, and comprehend others. A broad vocabulary includes the ability to assist both oral and written communication processes. For instance, having knowledge of antonyms and synonyms helps in descriptive writing and expressing oneself accurately [1,502].

A comprehensive vocabulary provides a firm basis for the perception and interpretation of difficult texts. It also helps to understand the subtleties of meanings, tone, and context in both languages. Vocabulary and grammar are complementary to each other. Mastering a language requires many words for the formation of many grammatical structures. For instance, verbs “run”, “ran” and “running” help learners know and apply the correct tense of verbs to the sentences.

Having a good vocabulary has a positive impact on one’s academic performance and undoubtedly helps to boost reading ability. Students who have a fit vocabulary are more likely to be successful in all subjects taught in the classroom. Direct instruction-teachers present new vocabulary words along with their definitions, grammar, and uses in context. For example, the word “benevolent” is taught with its meaning (kind and charitable), some near synonyms (kind-hearted, generous), and sample sentences. Examples of words in context – learners receive vocabulary items in a context, which gives them sense – stories, dialogues, real life cases and situations.

For instance, students learn how to name various dishes in a restaurant through a role-play game.

Thematic grouping-organizing vocabulary around themes helps learners make connections between related words. For example, teaching words related to weather: sunny, cloudy, stormy, humid, and forecast. Use of visuals and multimedia-pictures, videos, and flashcards reinforce vocabulary learning by associating words with images or sounds. For example, showing images of animals while teaching names like elephant, giraffe, and kangaroo. Reading and listening activities exposure to authentic materials, such as books, newspapers, podcasts, and movies, introduces learners to new vocabulary in context. For example, assigning a short story and asking students to highlight unfamiliar words for discussion. Frequent exposure to new words ensures retention. This can be achieved through flashcards, word walls, or vocabulary journals.

Practice through usage-encouraging students to use new words in speaking and writing activities reinforces learning. For example, assigning a creative writing task where students incorporate recently learned vocabulary. Interactive games like crossword puzzles, word searches, and vocabulary bingo make reinforcement enjoyable. For example, a “guess the word” game where one student describes a word, and others try to guess it. Mnemonics help learners associate words with memorable images, phrases, or stories. For example, associating the word “vivacious” with the image of someone lively and full of energy. Apps like Quizlet, Memrise, and Duolingo provide interactive and gamified vocabulary practice. Pair or group activities encourage learners to practice vocabulary through dialogue and peer feedback. For example, in a pair activity, one student describes a word without saying it, and the other guesses. [2,30].

Vocabulary is well covered and expanded upon to perfect the art of the English language. Traditionally, educators combine different techniques such as contextual learning, multimedia tools, and gamified activities, to make learning as engaging and effective as possible. Methods of reinforcement, such as repetition, interactive practice, and technology integration, ensure that the words stay stored long-term. From retention and nuances of a culture to finding creative ways of practice, creating a basic vocabulary can be achieved if planned consistently. A robust vocabulary not only enhances communication skills but also fosters confidence, creativity, and academic success, equipping learners for real-world interactions and lifelong learning.

Mistakes are a natural and inevitable part of the learning process, especially when it comes to language acquisition. In English education, mistakes offer valuable insights into a learner's progress and areas for improvement. However, how mistakes are corrected can significantly impact a student's motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. In traditional education settings, corrections are often done in a formal, sometimes discouraging manner.

To counteract this, educators are increasingly adopting fun and interactive methods for correcting mistakes, which not only ease the learning process but also foster a positive attitude towards learning from errors. This approach is particularly beneficial in language classrooms, where mistakes are common, and the focus on communication rather than perfection can make students feel more at ease. By using playful, non-threatening techniques, teachers can ensure that students do not become discouraged by their mistakes but instead view them as learning opportunities. Mistakes in language learning can occur in many forms, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary usage, and comprehension. These errors provide educators with important diagnostic tools for understanding where a student may be struggling and what areas need further attention.

However, the way mistakes are addressed can greatly influence a student's motivation and willingness to learn. Effective correction strategies help students. Recognize areas for improvement through error correction, students can become aware of specific areas in which they need to improve. Reinforce correct usage-correcting mistakes helps solidify understanding of grammar rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation. When corrections are done in a non-judgmental way, students feel more comfortable making and learning from mistakes [3,102].

Fun activities that correct mistakes keep students engaged and help them internalize learning. Some learners feel embarrassed or discouraged by their errors, which can hinder their willingness to participate. Over-correction-constantly pointing out every mistake can overwhelm students, making them feel inadequate and decreasing their self-confidence. Lack of engagement-traditional correction methods may fail to maintain student engagement, especially in larger or less motivated classes. To address these challenges, educators are finding creative ways to make the correction process more enjoyable and productive. Incorporating fun activities into the error correction process can help maintain a positive atmosphere in the classroom while still achieving educational goals. Games are one of the most effective ways to correct mistakes because they engage students actively. The fun, competitive nature of games makes it easier for students to accept and learn from their errors without feeling embarrassed.

Error detective game-in this game, students are given a passage or a short text that contains deliberate mistakes. Working in pairs or groups, students must find and correct these mistakes. This game can be adapted to target specific error types, such as grammatical mistakes, spelling errors, or incorrect word usage. Students become actively involved in identifying mistakes and correcting them, and the competitive aspect makes the task enjoyable.

Grammar bingo create a bingo card filled with different grammar or vocabulary rules. As your present sentences with mistakes, students check off the corresponding rule on their cards if they identify the error. The first student to complete a line of correct answers wins. This activity helps students apply grammar rules in context, reinforces their understanding, and makes mistake correction fun. Spelling Bee with a Twist- in a typical spelling bee, students are asked to spell words aloud. To make it more engaging, turn it into a “Spelling Bee with a Twist,” where after each misspelling, the student must also explain why the correct spelling is used in context. This not only corrects spelling errors but also promotes deeper learning of word usage and structure.

Role-playing is a creative method that allows students to practice their language skills in real-life situations, providing opportunities to make mistakes in a low-pressure environment. Peer correction is a collaborative and engaging way to correct mistakes in the classroom. It fosters a sense of community and allows students to learn from one another. In writing exercises, students can exchange papers and work together to identify and correct mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Teachers can guide the process by providing a list of common errors to look for, but students are responsible for reviewing and suggesting corrections [4,54].

Peer editing encourages students to become active participants in their learning, and it also provides an opportunity for them to spot errors they might overlook in their own work. Group dictation have students work in groups to listen to a passage or sentence that includes mistakes. After hearing it, each student writes their version of the passage. Then, they compare their answers as a group, discussing the corrections collectively. Group dictation promotes collaborative problem-solving and helps reinforce the correct usage of language in a group setting.

Music is a fun and effective way to reinforce language learning and correct mistakes. Many students are motivated by music, which can make the learning process enjoyable. Correcting mistakes is an integral part of the learning process, particularly in language acquisition. However, traditional methods of correction can sometimes discourage students. By incorporating fun and interactive activities, teachers can turn mistakes into valuable learning opportunities, encouraging students to engage with language in a positive and productive way.

Games, role-play, peer correction, music, technology, and creative writing all provide enjoyable ways to correct mistakes while reinforcing language skills. With these methods, students not only become more comfortable with their errors but also develop a deeper understanding of the language they are learning. The key is to make mistake correction a process that students embrace, not fear, and to foster an environment where learning from mistakes becomes a natural and enjoyable part of their educational journey.

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