



Mistakes can affect your speech. If they're too big people won't understand you.

They can also influence your convincing power when listeners realise there is something wrong.

Kill Those Mistakes

Teachers are divided on mistakes. Some think it's not a good idea to correct students because it could affect their self confidence.

Other teachers consider they should be corrected because the quality of what people say is as important as what they say.

I believe that making many mistakes could affect credibility. Therefore, I will take the second approach and recommend you ask your teachers to correct your mistakes.

Errors can ruin your speech. Even though listeners consciously know that you're foreign they could subconsciously feel that someone who can't speak properly might also not work properly. Therefore, it makes sense to try and get rid of at least your bigger mistakes.

Which ones to attack? The answer is simple: first tackle errors that affect understanding such as pronunciation, vocabulary or verbal tenses; then, insist on those that correspond to earlier stages of learning—i.e. if your level is advanced but can't differentiate between some and any.

The way to do it? You'll need a teacher, if possible a private teacher. Then you can ask your teacher to apply any of these two methods:

Immediate correction

Tell your teacher to interrupt you every time there's an error. Stop the conversation, discuss the correction, write an example and go on. Repeat the process every time you say something wrong—don't forget the writing!—until you have trained your brain to produce the right form.

Postponed correction

The second method is for teachers to make notes of your errors and discuss them once the conversation is over. This system has the advantage that you won't be interrupted all the time but you need well organised teachers who can keep consistent records of what you did wrongly. As we mentioned before, write an example for every correction.

Andrew's advice: Keep a notebook and only record correct examples. We don't want you to remember the wrong versions!



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