

Common Mistakes Among English Language Learners.

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Abstract: *nowadays, many people want to learn foreign languages in order to communicate and gain more knowledge. Unfortunately, they choose absolutely wrong method to learn and just do common mistakes. In this article, several common errors of learning will be discussed.*

Key words: *mother tongue, different words, memorizing, common mistake, American/English Accent, artificial intelligence.*

Most language learners make common mistakes while they are learning new foreign language. They try to learn language as soon as possible, but unfortunately they make the biggest mistake. They want to find easiest way of learning language and speaking like a native speaker, as a result they just waste their time and disappoint from learning foreign language. Here is several common errors and advice to make them correct:

1. Comparing new language with your mother tongue.

When we decide to learn a new language, our brains feel uncomfortable, and try to find some similarities between our mother tongue and the new language. We need to stop doing this, even if it is hard at the beginning. Most of us are used to think a sentence in our primitive language, then try to make a sentence according to that planned one. It doesn't help your learning process at all because you set boundaries to your brain about what it should think and say. However, there is countless way to say something with different words. You may think of a very complex sentence in your primitive language but if you don't limit yourself with saying/writing the exact sentence, you can give the main idea with lots of alternatives. You may divide the idea into two or three sentences and still, you can give the message you want to transfer.

2. Trying to memorize words

Memorizing is not equal with learning. Memorizing is something instantaneous and most probably something temporal. However, learning requires a process, and that is why it is more permanent. You should accept that learning won't be over a night. When you come across new words, try to understand them, use them in the sentences. It is way more effective than memorizing it because it develops a meaningful concept in your learning process. Just memorizing it is a solution that won't work in the long term.

3. Being afraid of making mistakes

Here is the most common mistake in learning a new language process! Sadly, speaking and writing are the best to improve your language level, yet most of us are too scared of doing these. In my learning experience, I was always too anxious to talk or write in English for years. I had felt insufficient, and sometimes still feeling it. But it is not a good excuse to stop trying. You will improve your English or another new language level by doing it. Even if it means doing mistakes from time to time. Never let your mistakes stop you. Try to learn from them, and keep doing your best. Look at the babies. They don't have egos like us. They don't think that they will be humiliated if they choose the wrong word or make a very weird sentence. If they would think those sentences will make them embarrassed, they may choose to not talk. It would be a great loss, don't you think? All of us are these babies who had learned our primitive languages and we speak them great for years. Because we didn't be afraid of trying to talk, listen, write or read. They are wonderful role models for our learning a new language journey.

4. Focusing grammar too much

Grammar is so important; no one could deny it. But focusing on only perfect grammar can make you feel so overwhelmed. There are plenty of rules! To be honest, only some professionals know the very specific rules of grammar. That is why we shouldn't let the details ruin our learning process. Increasing vocabulary is so important to express yourself in daily life, maybe more than knowing grammar perfectly. You can aim to have a flawless grammar in the next stages of your learning a new language adventure but at the beginning, don't be that perfectionist. I remember a very good example of that, and that advice changed my mindset permanently. Let's look at this sentence with bad grammar: "I go supermarket yesterday and don't find everything." It has a lot of obvious mistakes but you understood the main idea, right? I am not telling you that all of us should talk this way, but if you are a beginner, no one will judge you if you make these kinds of sentences. Because you will get used to it and you will express yourself much better if you keep trying.

5. Being hard on yourself

This is the most important mistake that you can do. Thinking and criticizing yourself about why you cannot learn this language like others... You may think that you have watched so many series and movies, listened to music for years so these must be helpful to talk better! To be honest, these are great ways to improve your language level, but not enough. Be patient and don't be hard on yourself if you don't meet your expectations. You may have an unrealistic expectation, or your learning method can be wrong. Accusing yourself is making you feel worse, and can cause you to stop trying to learn. For example, you want to learn how to drive a car. You can watch millions of YouTube tutorials about how to drive like a pro, listen to some podcasts about the most important rules of being great driver hours and hours. Still, when you switch on the motor, you will be a beginner. Maybe you will forget most of the tips and feel nervous. This is the normal reaction because even if you read or listen to it for millions of hours, you are a beginner. And practicing is the only thing that will make you a professional. So keep practicing. If you don't judge yourself to not be a great driver at the beginning, you cannot do it as a new language learner too.

6. Trying to have a perfect American/English Accent

I don't know your country, but in Turkey, people discourage themselves a lot about having a Turkish accent. I remember a memory from my childhood. One day, the English teacher chose me to read an English paragraph out loud in the middle of the class. When I read it, I pronounced the word "disturbed" in a very weird way. It was funny because it has a kind of ridiculous meaning in Turkish. All my classmates started to laugh and they didn't stop for maybe 10 minutes. I laughed

with them too but I was too embarrassed! This is a childhood memory and almost all of us have very similar stories most probably. But when you become an adult, you need to understand that you have to stop doing it. Learning a new language requires some courage, and it is not easy for anyone. Making each other embarrassed with wrong pronunciations or feeling bad because of your imperfect accent is not right. For sure we need to have a good accent to understand each other. This is the main step of communication, but like everything else, this will happen in time. If you feel embarrassed because of your accent, you can stop trying it. This is the real waste, not your accent or your mistakes.

7. Taking long breaks to your learning a new language process

Guilty as charged! I believe almost all of us did this mistake more than once because learning is a long process. Unfortunately learning a language is not like riding a bike. If you don't use your new information, you will start to forget about them day by day. Doing practice is the only solution against it. If you live in a country full of people who talks the language you want to learn, it's good for you. But if you use your mother tongue in your daily life, you need to spend extra time for the learning process. You should be careful about taking long breaks. It's necessary to make this language a part of your world, that is the only way that you can immerse yourself enough. You may take some notes or to-do lists with the language you want to learn. Or read some short and interesting content with that language. These kinds of small but helpful steps can make you still in it. These days, I can't practice my English speaking skill so I found a solution. When people text and ask me something in Turkish, answering them in English in my mind first! It's a simple yet effective way if you cannot make long dialogues with someone who talks the language you want to improve.

8. Using Translate Services Way Too Much

Translate services are great artificial intelligence products, but it can be dangerous to use them too much. Yes, they are fast and at some points very helpful but if you are decisive to learn a new language, you should use them carefully. Writing your sentences or reading a piece of writing and understand it on your own are important. If you use them a lot, it can become a habit. Then, you can feel so annoyed when you need to write or read in that language without using these services.

Everything has its own difficulties, especially learning another language in order to communicate and express your knowledge. If someone has enough passion to do this, it is really simple. The only and important thing is one has to choose appropriate ways and methods of learning it.

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