

ESL (English as a Second Language) Students confused using English Language

Ibrahim Alsaiani

Abstract: There are a multiple factors for the ESL students that cause barriers in learning a new language and these include the age at which students learn, who teaches them and the time duration students get to learn the language. Those students who are familiar with the reading and writing of English language may take less time to learn English as compared to the Chinese people. ESL students may not be able to speak English as fluently as their native language. Being fluent in English requires a student to practice English by reading, writing and speaking repeatedly.



Introduction

ESL (English as a Second Language) students may face problems communicating with others in English. This is because these students have not learnt English like people in the west and this is why they cannot speak or write English fluently with perfection. English is not a very easy language to learn and those who do not learn it at an early age are unable to confidently speak in English. This is why there is a very common problem in the ESL students that they get confused when they use the English language.

Literature Review

One of the most common mistakes that ESL students make is confusing words that have the same spellings and/or pronunciation but have different meanings than one another. For

example if we take the examples of words 'lesson' and 'lessen' we will see that even though but these words have similar sounds but they both have different spellings and different meanings.

Lesson means a message, lecture whereas lessen means to cut down, or decrease. It may be difficult and a time consuming process for students to identify and differentiate these kinds of words that may sound the same but have totally different meanings.

“The first language a student speaks is the one that will set the tone for their English pronunciation. So you'll want to watch for languages that don't have all the same sounds as in English. For example, in Spanish, 'b' and 'v' sound the same, though both letters technically exist.” (Scribendi, 2015) While having normal conversations with others people may not be able to pick up the words being communicated to them and they may interpret the meaning of the word in a wrong way. Even though some words may not make sense in certain sentences but in cases where two different words can fit can raise serious confusions for the ESL students.

There are a multiple factors for the ESL students that cause barriers in learning a new language and these include the age at which students learn, who teaches them and the time duration students get to learn the language. Some students may be slower in grasping and understanding a new language as compared to others. Some students may learn to speak English back home but people belonging from countries like China, where English is almost negligible, it may be extremely hard to learn a new language.

When it comes to talking to people whose mother tongue is English it becomes hard for the ESL students to communicate. Their accent may be different due to their background and at times they may also have to work on their pronunciation in order to make others understand what they are saying. Americans may be fast and fluent at speaking English and at times it may also be difficult for the ESL students to recognize and pick their words. At times they may have to ask the meanings of difficult words they do not know the meaning of and this is also a learning process for them. The fluency in English and unable to use proper grammar by ESL students puts them under confusion of communicating with others. At times they may not have the words to express what they want to say and this is why confusion arises.

Those students who are familiar with the reading and writing of English language may take less time to learn English as compared to the Chinese people. China promotes its own language in the country and all of their websites, mobile applications and all the literatures are presented in Chinese. Because these people have lived and breathed Chinese all these lives it may be very difficult for them to understand and learn a new language. Children tend to learn more rapidly than adults which is why they can pick up their mother tongue quickly. But adults may have to also adjust with the new environment which makes them pay less attention to learning English and pay more attention to settling down in the united States. There are some

very common mistakes that ESL students make while learning, writing and speaking English.

These include:

1. Misuse of articles: one of the most common mistakes is the confusion of definite and indefinite articles in sentence formations. For instance students get confused on where to use 'a' and 'an' and the basic rule for this is that words start with a vowel (a, e, I, o, u) are followed by 'an' whereas other words are followed by the word 'a'.
2. Transitional phrases: ESL students get confused as to when they rely too much on the transitional phrases. For example "two logically-related sentences do not need a transitional word to link them. For example, "The lumberjacks chopped the tree. Consequently, it fell down." In this instance, *consequently* is not needed because readers can figure out for themselves that the tree fell as a consequence of the lumberjacks' chopping." (Scribendi, 2015)
3. Use of adjectives: at times the use of adjectives may be tricky and students may require some time to completely understand the concept of using the adjectives. Adjectives are used to describe nouns and sometimes when students don't understand these comprehensively they get confused by its use.

4. **Wordiness:** Sometimes students may tend to be over efficient and use extra words even if it was not necessary. When writing essays it is important that students prevent wordiness and be particular and clear when constructing their sentences.
5. **Plural possessives:** Some students place the apostrophe on the wrong places which can differ the whole meaning of the sentence. If the noun is singular add an apostrophe plus the letter 's' after the apostrophe (the boy's toy) whereas in case where the noun is plural add an apostrophe after the letter 's' (the boys' toys).
6. **Adverbs:** “Another one of the most common ESL mistakes relates to adverbs (words that add something to a verb, such as quickly, slowly, or peacefully). In ESL academic writing, adverbs are sometimes placed far away from the verbs they modify.” (Scribendi, 2015)
7. **Coordinating Conjunctions:** ESL students may not have a fair idea of how to make proper sense of a sentence by use of conjunctions that include if, but, or, and. When students get confused with the applications of conjunctions in their sentences they tend to use more conjunctions which makes the sentences more complex to understand.
8. **Sentence structures:**

ESL students may not be able to speak English as fluently as their native language. Being fluent in English requires a student to practice English by reading, writing and speaking repeatedly.

Conclusion

In conclusion ESL (English as a Second Language) students may face problems communicating with others in English. There are certain elements in English language that students have to be really clear about in order to prevent any kind of confusions in writing, reading and speaking English. One of the most common mistakes that ESL students make is confusing words that have the same spellings and/or pronunciation but have different meanings than one another. There are a multiple factors for the ESL students that cause barriers in learning a new language and these include the age at which students learn who teaches them and the time duration students get to learn the language. However those students who are familiar with the reading and writing of English language may take less time to learn English as compared to others. ESL students may face some confusion in the start but with the passage of time it would enable them to learn and speak English more proficiently.

Reference:

Scribendi. (2015). The 10 Most Common ESL Mistakes.

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