
The importance of accuracy and fluency in english language

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Accuracy and fluency are two key components of second language acquisition. In today's world, it seems that learning the usage of grammar and focusing on accuracy are emphasized by many language students over fluency. This topic of accuracy and fluency has been a controversial issue that has been discussed for many years. Although some formalists argue that learning a language means learning forms and rules, some activists take a different view and claim that learning a language means learning how to use a language [1, p. 12]. Thus, this essay will argue that accuracy is not necessarily more important than fluency. It depends on learners' needs and the purpose of instruction in second language acquisition. In order to demonstrate this, this essay will first focus on the importance of accuracy and fluency in English learning and show that they are both essential by looking at two different teaching methods. Second, it will turn to discuss both accuracy and fluency in term of learner goals, learner variables and instructional variables. Third, it will suggest what language teachers should do to deal with the issue and find the right balance between them. In this section, it will be argued that both accuracy and fluency are needed in second language acquisition.

There has been much discussion about these two components, with arguments put forward in support of either one of the other. However, it will be shown that neither component is useful without the other. Early teaching methods promoted accuracy over fluency. For instance, the Grammar-Translation Method has been used by language teachers for many years. It is the traditional style of teaching method emphasizing grammar explanation and translation. In such a method, it is important for students to learn about the form of the target language. The role of the teacher is the authority. Students merely do what the teacher says and learn.

It's important to balance accuracy and fluency among the various stages and activities in a lesson. Learners usually attain a much higher level of proficiency in the receptive skills than in the productive skills. Mastering the language skills, like mastering any kind of skill, requires a considerable amount of practice. Step by step in the teaching-learning development process the learner should become more proficient [2, p. 78]. When we say a person knows the language, we first of all mean he understands the language spoken and can speak him. Language came into life as a means of communication. It exists and is alive only through speech. When we speak about teaching a foreign language, we first of all have in mind teaching it as a means of communication. Speech is a bilateral process. It includes hearing and speaking. Both refer to the productive skills of the students. Compared to teaching listening skills, where varieties of techniques have been developed since the introduction of the oral communication courses, partly with the help of new technological devices such as the closed captioning system or mini disk, teaching speaking seems to be far behind.

The former is known as the fluency-oriented approach. From this viewpoint, small grammatical or pronunciation errors are insignificant, especially in the early learning stages. As a matter of fact, too much emphasis on correcting them is considered harmful rather than helpful, for it may cause excessive monitor in the mind, hindering the natural acquisition of spoken skills. The fluency-oriented approach believes that spoken skills are developed meaningful communication. Naturally many EFL teachers support this viewpoint [2, p. 80]. The latter, on the contrary, places most emphasis on accuracy by pursuing mainly grammatical correctness. This view is called the accuracy-oriented approach. Practices that focus on repetition of newly introduced forms or grammatical structures are thought to help the learning. Although

once supported by many linguists, nowadays it is seen as rather obsolete. Stern says that the teachers using this approach complained about the lack of effectiveness in the long run and the boredom they endangered among the students. Few EFL teachers, at least ostensibly, favor this viewpoint. In reality, accuracy and fluency are closely related, which leads us to the notion that accuracy as well as fluency is necessary for successful communication. As Ebsworth says, "A steady stream of speech which is highly inaccurate in vocabulary, syntax, or pronunciation could be so hard to understand as to violate an essential aspect of fluency being comprehensible. On the other hand, it is possible for the speaker to be halting but accurate. Sentence level grammatical accuracy that violates principles of discourse and appropriateness is also possible, but such language would not be truly accurate in following the communicative rules of the target language" Thus, it may not be too much to say one speak fluently without accuracy or vice versa [3, p. 112].

Consequently, we see the necessity of combining the fluency-oriented approach and accuracy-oriented approach by meticulously weaving certain language items into communication-oriented tasks. This research paper will discuss how we can develop learners' speaking by enhancing both accuracy and fluency. In the first chapter, the strength and weakness of these two approaches will be examined. Then, EFL learners' speech and major causes of inhibition will be analyzed, along with suggestions for remedies to reduce this inhibition. The second chapter will deal with how we can modify the existing learning tasks in order to implement these remedies.

References:

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