

Orthographic Correction in the English Subject

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Abstract

In Spanish, there's seems to be a correlation between sounds and spelling, in English this is not the case. As we know the English spelling system presents a lack of concordance between the actual spelling and the way words are pronounced. This irregular spelling is one drawback our students have to face when using the orthographic code. Spanish has a phonological system on the contrary English is a phonetic language, with 26 letters but 36 phonemes. In this article, we are looking at the orthographic code how to correct possible mistakes in our students.

Keywords: Orthographic, Code, Primary, English, Writing

Título: Corrección Ortográfica en la Asignatura de Inglés.

Resumen

En español, parece haber una correlación entre los sonidos y la ortografía, pero en inglés no es el caso. Como sabemos, el sistema de ortografía en inglés presenta una falta de concordancia entre la ortografía actual y la forma en que se pronuncian las palabras. Esta ortografía irregular es un inconveniente que nuestros estudiantes tienen que enfrentar cuando usan el código ortográfico. El español tiene un sistema fonológico, por el contrario, el inglés es un lenguaje fonético, con 26 letras pero 36 fonemas. En este artículo, estamos buscando en el código ortográfico cómo corregir posibles errores en nuestros estudiantes.

Palabras clave: Ortográfico, Código, Primaria, Inglés, Escritura.

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The mastery of the English language is an objective to be achieved during the basic education as English has become a global language used around the world for everyday communication. For this reason, the Educational System in Spain includes English as a foreign language in its curriculum from an early stage.

The main goal when learning a language is to achieve communicative competence, which means the knowledge and ability to use the language for communication in an appropriate and accurate way. In order to acquire this, the domain of the four skills is required, those being listening, speaking, reading and writing.

It is important to say that reading and writing are considered to be the most difficult skills as everybody is able to speak a language but, on the contrary, not everybody is able to read or write. Oral language is a natural gift, however, reading and writing need instruction, that is a teacher-guided process. Also, students have to be able to express themselves in written productions. It is important to mention that writing skills present one drawback which is that English spelling sometimes lacks of concordance to its pronunciation. Consequently, this supposes extra difficulties to students, who can make errors.

Furthermore, some students find foreign languages difficult and can and feel frustration in the lessons. Pupils may feel under pressure when writing, which may block them in their work. To prevent this, it pays to do the first activities either orally and/or in groups as most people find talking easier than writing. Students can first explore an idea together, doing introductory activities to present the topic and brainstorming ideas.

To practice writing and spelling, there are diverse activities that we can carry out in the lessons, from guided to free writing. For instance, they can do meaningful copying by playing with words in activities like unscramble the letters, crosswords, spelling contests or running dictations in which students go and find a piece of paper with a word, sentence or short text, read it, run and dictate to their partners. Those are examples of guided and controlled writing.

On the other hand, writing postcards, letters, invitations, dialogues, etc. are not entirely directed but students can invent the content following a model or pattern. Following a template or model guide students and provide them the steps and patterns to follow when writing. Finally, we can find examples of free writing activities, which provide interesting, lively opportunities for language practice. Although the teacher can give some rules to the writings, students express themselves and their own ideas. Acrostics, haikus, syllables poems are examples of these, activities in which the

teacher asks for a piece of work with some requirements. For example, in acrostics, a topic or key word is given and students have to write words beginning with each letter of the key word in order to form a poem. Haikus must be composed of 3 lines, the first with 5 syllables, the second with 7 syllables and the last one with 5 syllables each. Syllable poem demands the same but the teacher can vary the number of syllables in each line.

Also, some written mistakes may be corrected by the pupils themselves. The teacher will just point at the localization of such errors that will be called slips by means of a series of signs which localize and define the type of error (for instance, WO instead of word order). The set of these signs, called correction code must be known by the pupils before self-correction starts. The use of error codes to help students correct their writing has often been proved to be an effective method to facilitate error correction. This strategy “encourages learner autonomy” (Nunan, 1988) and students become more responsible for their learning.

All these activities provide opportunities for language practice which actively involve the students in creating and producing in English, paying attention to their writing and spelling since they can have a product at the end of the lesson and this needs to be correct.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we can say that the writing skill can present difficulties to our students as English spelling is irregular and does not match the oral pronunciation. Furthermore, this skill is acquired later and it needs academic instruction. Consequently, teachers must bear all this in mind and devote a lot of practice to writing because of the difficulties it may arise.



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