



ELL STUDENTS AND THE WRITING LAB

EL Learners vs. Native Speakers

How are the mistakes they make
different?

Collocation

Words that go together just because!!

QUIZ

1. She smokes a lot. She is a _____ smoker.
2. He was so sad that he _____ into tears.
3. Are you _____ aware of the implications of your behavior?
4. It's your birthday. _____ a wish.

Articles, Prepositions and Phrasal Verbs!!

Articles

1. I saw **a** bus. **The** bus was going to **(x)** school.
2. In **the** United States, **the** Mississippi River flows into **the** Gulf of Mexico. **The** biggest lake in **(x)** Europe is **(x)** Lake Ladoga in **(x)** Russia.

Phrasal Verbs

go out, stay in, pick up, burn down, wake up, turn in, blow up, break in,.....!!

Ex.

The arsonist **burned** the house **down**. The arsonist **burned down** the house.

I **picked** him **up** at the airport. I **picked up** him at the airport.

SYNTAX (word order)

English => S + V + O Not flexible!!!!

I was at the store yesterday.

1. He goes sometimes to the store.
2. She always is late.
3. I have been two times to France.

Present Perfect vs. Past Simple

1. I have been to Mexico. **vs.** I went to Mexico.
2. I have lived in Minneapolis for 5 years. **vs.** I lived in Minneapolis for 5 years.
3. I've been playing volleyball since I was ten. **vs.** I have played volleyball since I was ten.
4. I haven't called him yet. **vs.** I didn't call him yet.

Error Correction

Some points to consider...

- 1. Why are they making this error? (slip, L1 interference...?)
- 2. What kind of error is it? (lexical, syntactical, grammatical?)
- 3. Is it repeated throughout the composition or is it one isolated incident?
- 4. Does it impede comprehension?

How to Correct

- 1. Focus on a maximum of 2-3 problem areas. (or less)
- 2. Have them self-correct when possible.
- 3. Don't just edit, take the time to TEACH them why it's wrong.