

Language Errors Analysis in Video Projects by Vietnamese Exchange Students in a Short Course at Udon Thani Rajabhat University

Asadang Suwanpakdee^{1*}, Narakorn Janlawong²
and Pitchayanin Inla³

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¹²Faculty of Humanity and Social Science, Udon Thani Rajabhat
University, Thailand

¹(Email: asadang.su@udru.ac.th)

*Corresponding Author

²(Email: narakorn.ja@udru.ac.th)

³Language Center, Udon Thani Rajabhat University, Thailand

³(Email: pitchayanin.in@udru.ac.th)

Abstract

This study examines language errors in video projects produced by Vietnamese exchange students, focusing on pronunciation, grammatical, and lexical challenges. Employing a qualitative-descriptive design, the analysis reveals that pronunciation errors, such as consonant mispronunciations and sound omissions, are the most frequent, reflecting the influence of native language phonology. Grammatical errors, primarily in sentence structure and verb tense, underscore the impact of syntactic differences between Vietnamese and English, while lexical errors, though less frequent, highlight the need for contextual vocabulary knowledge. Findings emphasize the importance of targeted instruction in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary to enhance spoken English proficiency among Vietnamese learners. These insights not only address the challenges posed by language transfer but also contribute to the development of effective ESL teaching strategies, equipping educators to better support Vietnamese and similar EFL learners in overcoming language acquisition barriers.

Keywords: EFL, Pronunciation errors, Grammar errors, Lexical errors, Exchange students

Introduction

Language errors in second-language acquisition have long been a subject of interest, particularly in educational settings

where non-native speakers engage in communicative tasks. These errors, typically observed in grammatical, pronunciation, and lexical mistakes, often result from structural differences between the learner's native language and the target language. Studies show that common errors, such as incorrect verb tense usage, awkward sentence structure, and improper word choice, can hinder effective communication (Liu, 2020; Derwing & Munro, 2005). This challenge is particularly pronounced in multimedia tasks, where students must apply both spoken and written language skills, often leading to cognitive overload and increased error rates (Mohsen & Mahdi, 2021; Mora & Wisniewska, 2020). For exchange students, these challenges are exacerbated by limited exposure to the target language, particularly in informal or task-based learning environments such as video projects (Saz et al., 2011; Zhao & Lai, 2023).

Error analysis, as introduced by Corder (1967), offers a systematic framework for studying errors made by language learners, highlighting that these errors are not merely mistakes but indicators of the learner's developmental stage in language acquisition. Corder (1981) emphasizes that errors, as opposed to simple mistakes, warrant greater attention and study, as they provide insights into what learners have internalized and where they face challenges. Based on this theory of Error Analysis, this paper examines specific errors to better grasp the unique challenges faced by these learners in acquiring English proficiency.

Language transfer in EFL learners often arises from linguistic and cultural contexts, leading to errors in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Corder (1967) viewed such errors as reflections of a learner's internalized language system, revealing how the first language shapes language acquisition. Selinker (1972) expanded on this with the concept of interlanguage, describing how learners create an interim system influenced by their native language, resulting in distinctive pronunciation and grammatical errors. Nation (2001) highlighted that vocabulary errors are particularly prone to transfer effects, as learners frequently rely on direct translations or familiar structures, impacting word choice and usage in English. Together, these perspectives underscore that language transfer in EFL learners often mirrors the influence of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Pronunciation Errors: Pronunciation challenges are significant among language learners due to the phonetic discrepancies between native and target languages. Learners often substitute native sounds for unfamiliar target language sounds, affecting intelligibility. Studies by Zhao and Lai (2023) and Mora and Wisniewska (2020) highlight that pronunciation accuracy, especially in polysyllabic words, is a major factor influencing successful second-language communication. Misplacement of stress in English is another common issue, creating a need for phonetic training (Demko & Wagner, 2010; Zhao & Lai, 2023).

Grammatical Errors: Grammatical errors frequently involve tense

misuse, awkward sentence structure, and subject-verb agreement problems. These errors largely stem from first-language interference, where native grammatical rules conflict with the target language's structural requirements. Al-Seghayer (2005) and Lafford and Sykes (2007) demonstrated that such grammatical challenges significantly impact students' effectiveness in English communication, especially when precise language is required in academic or task-based contexts.

Lexical Errors: Lexical mistakes, such as incorrect word choice, often occur due to literal translation or lack of context-based vocabulary exposure. Farhat and Dzakiria (2017) observed that learners frequently misuse vocabulary in multimedia tasks due to insufficient exposure to English nuances, underscoring the need for targeted vocabulary training in context.

The video creation tasks demand interactive language application, exposing students to prevalent linguistic errors. Such multimedia assignments frequently reveal the impact of native language structures on English, manifesting in unique challenges for students transitioning from Vietnamese to English (Nguyen, 2019; Ngu, 2022). Previous studies suggest that language errors commonly result from direct translation, especially when learners attempt to transfer native language structures into English. This tendency is especially pronounced among Vietnamese students, who experience challenges adapting to English's tense and pronunciation requirements (Nguyen et al., 2021; Pham, 2020).

Studies from both local and international scholars highlight that while multimedia tasks provide interactive learning, they also expose learners to specific linguistic vulnerabilities (Suzukida & Saito, 2022). Addressing these errors with focused instruction and feedback is essential to enhance proficiency.

This study's primary objective is to identify, categorize, and analyze the specific spoken language errors made by Vietnamese exchange students in video-based assignments, focusing on pronunciation, grammatical, and lexical issues. Through this analysis using a qualitative-descriptive design, the research aims to reveal patterns of spoken language difficulties and offer insights that inform teaching strategies, thus supporting students in improving their spoken English skills and overall language competence in international exchange settings.

Objectives

To identify, categorize, and analyze the specific types of spoken language errors (pronunciation, grammatical, and lexical mistakes) made by Vietnamese exchange students in their video-based assignments.

Methodology

Research Design

This study follows a qualitative-descriptive design. The sample consists of 20 video submissions selected through

purposive sampling. Data collection involved transcription of spoken content to identify errors, categorized into pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary produced by Vietnamese exchange students in a task-based learning environment.

Participants

The participants are Vietnamese exchange students enrolled in a short course at Udon Thani Rajabhat University. These students are non-native English speakers participating in video-based projects that require spoken communication in English.

Data Collection

Video-Based Projects: Students are tasked with creating video projects as part of their coursework. The videos serve as the primary data source for analyzing spoken language errors.

Transcription: The spoken content from the videos is transcribed to ensure an accurate analysis of spoken language errors. Each individual conversation within the video projects is carefully transcribed for further categorization.

Error Classification

The spoken language errors are classified into the following categories:

1. **Pronunciation Errors:** Issues with incorrect articulation of sounds or words.
2. **Grammatical Errors:** Incorrect use of tenses, sentence structures, or word forms.

3. Lexical Errors: Incorrect word choices or misuse of vocabulary.

These errors are recorded using an error collection form, which ensures consistent categorization across all video projects.

Data Analysis

The analysis is divided into the following stages:

Error Frequency Count: The frequency of each type of error (pronunciation, grammatical, lexical) is calculated.

Error Source Interpretation: The potential causes of errors, such as language transfer from Vietnamese to English, are interpreted based on error patterns.

Patterns of Errors: Analysis focuses on identifying common patterns across different students to provide insights into shared challenges.

Results

Table 1 Overall Analysis of Language Error in Video Projects by Vietnamese Exchange

No.	Type of Error	Frequency	Percentage of Errors
1	Pronunciation Error	78	49.06%
2	Grammatical Error	66	41.51%
3	Lexical Error	15	9.43%
	Total	159	100%

Table 1 shows the results of a quantitative examination of the

language errors in video projects by Vietnamese exchange students in a short course at Udon Thani Rajabhat. The 159 errors that were identified were divided into three main categories: pronunciation, grammatical, and lexical errors. Additionally, 78 instances, or 49.06% of all errors, were found to be pronunciation issues, followed by grammatical errors (66 instances, or 41.51%) and lexical errors (15 instances, or 9.43%).

Table 2 Pronunciation Errors and Their Frequencies and Percentages

No.	Type of Pronunciation Error	Frequency	Percentage of Errors
1	Mispronunciation of individual consonant sounds	45	57.69%
2	Omission of sounds (e.g., dropping final consonants)	11	14.10%
3	Incorrect word stress	6	7.69%
4	Mispronunciation of individual vowel sounds	5	6.41%
5	Substitution of sounds (L1 to L2 interference)	3	3.85%
6	Addition of extra sounds	3	3.85%
7	Inaccurate pronunciation of syllables	2	2.56%
8	Mispronunciation of diphthongs	2	2.56%
9	Incorrect use of voiced and voiceless consonants	1	1.28%
10	Incorrect sentence-level intonation	0	0.00%
Total		78	100%

The Table 2 provides a detailed examination of 78 pronunciation problems classified into ten types, emphasizing parts where participants face significant phonological accuracy concerns. Mispronunciation of specific consonant sounds appears as the most important issue, accounting for 57.69% of all errors. This high frequency indicates that learners may struggle with consonant pronunciation due to differences in phonetic inventory between their first language (L1) and the target language (L2). For example, the word with -tion, the learners significantly pronounce the sound /s/ instead of /ʃ/.

Furthermore, Omission of sounds ranks as the second most common error at 14.10%, with examples such as dropping final consonants. This omission pattern is typical in learners from languages that may lack final consonants, resulting in a tendency to exclude them in L2 speech. For instance, the word next some of them pronounce /nek/. It should be /nekst/. Incorrect word stress errors, comprising 7.69% of errors, point to challenges with prosodic features, potentially due to differences in stress patterns between L1 and L2.

Additionally, Errors in vowel sounds (6.41%), sound substitutions (3.85%), and the addition of extra sounds (3.85%) are also noticeable. Sound substitution, which is often impacted by L1 phonetic structure, suggests that learners might replace new L2 sounds with familiar L1 phonemes, demonstrating L1 transfer effects. For example, the word internship were significantly

pronounced /^h**I**n.t**3**:n.s**I**p/ instead of /^h**I**n.t**3**:n.**ʃ****I**p/. Similarly, the addition of extra sounds might be caused by overgeneralization or attempting to imitate difficult phonemes. These patterns highlight the importance of L1 interference in molding learners' pronunciation in L2.

Moreover, Errors in syllable pronunciation and diphthong mispronunciation each account for 2.56% of errors, while incorrect use of voiced and voiceless consonants is less common, at 1.28%. No errors were observed in sentence-level intonation, suggesting either that sentence-level prosody may not be as challenging for these learners, or that the instructional focus on isolated words and phrases may reduce instances of intonation errors.

In summary, the data reveal that individual consonant sounds and sound deletion are the most difficult. These findings may influence pronunciation-focused methods by stressing consonant pronunciation, final sounds, and stress patterns, so dealing with the most frequent errors in a targeted manner.

Table 3 Grammatical Errors and Their Frequencies and Percentages

No.	Grammatical Error Type	Frequency	Percentage of Errors
1	Sentence structure errors	22	33.33%
2	Incorrect verb tense usage	20	30.30%
3	Errors in subject-verb agreement	14	21.21%
4	Errors in noun or adjective forms	10	15.16%
Total		66	100%

According to Table 3, The data categorizes 66 grammatical errors into four main types, with sentence structure errors being the most frequent (33.33%). This shows that learners struggle with correct word order and clause construction, likely due to syntactic differences between their first language (L1) and the target language (L2). For instance, “There also have comfortable rooms...” should be “There are also comfortable rooms.”

Moreover, incorrect verb tense usage is the second most common error (30.30%), indicating challenges with tense consistency and temporal markers, which may arise from overgeneralization or limited exposure to L2 tense rules. For example, “The Ho Chi Minh Historical Site become one of the most popular tourist attractions...” should be “has become.”

In addition, subject-verb agreement errors (21.21%) reflect difficulty with aligning subjects and verbs in both number and person, potentially influenced by differing grammatical requirements in learners' L1. For instance, “This room offer us a variety of services...” should be “This room offers...” Finally, errors in noun or adjective forms (15.16%) point to challenges with morphological rules, such as pluralization or adjectival agreement. For example, “I have some purpose location for you.” likely meant to be “I have some recommended locations for you.”

Overall, this data reveals that sentence structure and verb tense usage are primary challenges, comprising over 60% of the total grammatical errors. This breakdown suggests a need for

targeted grammar instruction focusing on sentence construction, verb tense accuracy, and subject-verb agreement to address the most frequent errors in learner output.

Table 4 Lexical Errors and Their Frequencies and Percentages

No.	Lexical Error Type	Frequency	Percentage of Errors
1	Incorrect word choice	10	66.66%
2	Misuse of vocabulary	4	26.67%
3	Overgeneralization	1	6.67%
Total		15	100%

The Table 4 reveals that 15 lexical errors were found and classified into three main types: incorrect word choice, misuse of vocabulary and overgeneralization. Incorrect word choice is the most frequent, representing 66.66% of all lexical errors, indicating that learners often struggle to select contextually appropriate words. This may suggest limited lexical knowledge or inadequate awareness of nuanced word meanings within specific contexts. For instance, “Medical room...” more accurately termed “health clinic” or “infirmary.”

Misuse of vocabulary accounts for 26.67% of errors, likely reflecting instances where learners apply words incorrectly or inappropriately, perhaps due to insufficient exposure to nuanced usage in the target language. For example, “We provide courses for all Thai and foreigners” could be better phrased to “for both Thais

and foreigners.”

Besides, overgeneralization (6.67%)—where learners apply rules too broadly across vocabulary—appears infrequently, yet it highlights a tendency to overapply familiar language patterns to novel contexts. For instance, “Internship exchange” likely a mix-up between “internship” and “student exchange.”

This distribution highlights that word choice and vocabulary misuse are primary lexical challenges, together accounting for over 90% of the observed errors, emphasizing the need for contextual vocabulary training and semantic precision.

Conclusions

This study analyzed language errors in Vietnamese exchange students’ spoken English, focusing on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Pronunciation errors, especially in consonant sounds and sound omissions, were the most frequent, highlighting challenges in adapting to English phonology. Grammatical errors, primarily in sentence structure and verb tense, underscored the need for focused grammar support to bridge differences between Vietnamese and English syntax. Lexical errors, though less common, emphasized the importance of contextual vocabulary training to improve word choice accuracy. Overall, these findings suggest that targeted instruction in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary can significantly enhance Vietnamese learners’ proficiency in spoken English.

Discussion

The analysis of language errors among Vietnamese exchange students highlights key challenges in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, aligning with prior research indicating similar ESL difficulties (Ngu, 2022; Ha, 2005). Pronunciation errors, particularly consonant mispronunciations (57.69%) and sound omissions (14.10%), reveal strong L1 influence, as Vietnamese learners often struggle with consonant clusters and final sounds, frequently omitting or altering them to fit native phonological norms (Ngu, 2022). Nguyen (2019) emphasizes additional challenges in vowel distinction, suggesting that targeted phonetic exercises could improve spoken fluency. Grammatical errors were the most prevalent, comprising 46% of all errors, with notable difficulties in sentence structure (33.33%) and verb tense usage (30.30%). These issues reflect significant structural differences, as Vietnamese verbs lack tense markers, making tense consistency challenging (Nhut, 2020). Subject-verb agreement errors further complicate English syntax adoption (Bui et al., 2021), indicating that focused grammar instruction on tense and cohesion may aid learning. Lexical errors, primarily incorrect word choice (66.67%), result from limited exposure to nuanced vocabulary, with students often relying on direct translations (Pham, 2020). Vocabulary training emphasizing contextual usage could enhance lexical precision. Overall, these findings suggest that a comprehensive approach to language instruction, incorporating phonetic, grammar, and vocabulary training, could better support Vietnamese ESL learners, as tailored approaches

have proven effective in addressing specific linguistic needs (Nguyen et al., 2022).

Recommendation

Future research could compare pronunciation, grammar, and lexical errors among EFL learners from various linguistic backgrounds (e.g., Thai, Vietnamese, Chinese) to identify unique language transfer effects. This comparison would provide insights into how native language influences specific error patterns, helping to tailor ESL instruction to address these group-specific challenges effectively.

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