

Exploring Factors Influencing Grammatical Error Rates in Conversational vs. Monologue Settings: A Study of Chinese English as a Foreign Language Learners

Jiale Yao¹

¹School of Education, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, China

*Corresponding author: 0211102018@shisu.edu.cn

Abstract:

Error analysis of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' language production remains a significant area of study in contemporary linguistics. While numerous researchers investigate the prevalence of various error types in EFL learners' communicative interactions, there is a paucity of studies comparing error frequencies across conversational and monologue settings. This paper aims to explore the factors contributing to the prevalence of grammatical errors in conversational contexts compared to monologue settings among Chinese EFL learners. Employing a systematic approach, the study collects and analyzes oral data from Chinese EFL learners, focusing on grammatical errors in both settings. The findings shed light on the comparison of grammatical errors in conversational and monologue settings, revealing that conversational settings tend to elicit a higher number of errors compared to monologue settings, and identify factors contributing to differences in error prevalence. This research enhances existing knowledge on error analysis and offers practical implications for EFL instruction.

Keywords: Grammatical Errors; Oral Production; Chinese EFL learners

1. Introduction

Despite decades of English education reform, oral participation remains markedly insufficient in Chinese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, presenting a formidable challenge to all stakeholders in EFL education, including teachers, administrators, and learners. According to a 2015 study by Nan Zhou, teachers and administrators often neglect learners' perspectives on English oral learning, which results in misaligned efforts and priorities in English education. Besides, despite a mutual recognition of the importance of oral participation, actual classroom practices continue to prioritize exam preparation over the enhancement of students' oral skills [1].

While grammatical accuracy plays a pivotal role in effective communication in a second language, it continues to pose significant challenges for Chinese EFL learners. Among various error patterns observed in EFL learners' oral production—grammatical, phonological, lexical, and others—grammatical errors are the most prevalent, which highlights a particular struggle with mastering grammatical accuracy [2]. In response, extensive research has been conducted to identify common grammatical error types in EFL learners' spoken English and to analyze their causes.

For example, a study by Jiayi Liu and Chengrui Wu pinpoints the six most frequent grammatical errors, investigates the correlation between these errors and the learners' proficiency levels, and emphasizes the critical importance of addressing these errors in educational settings [3].

Error analysis, a subfield of applied linguistics, developed during the 1970s, is designed to explore various errors in second language acquisition (SLA) in order to analyse the way learners process second language data [4]. A learner's errors are significant because they offer teachers valuable educational guidance, give scholars insightful research perspectives, and grant learners a meaningful understanding of SLA [5].

However, existing research primarily focuses on the frequency of various error types, their causes, and the relationship between grammatical errors and English-speaking proficiency levels. Yet, it remains unclear how these errors differ among different settings of communication, specifically between monologue and conversation. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the underlying factors that contribute to the higher prevalence of grammatical errors in conversational contexts as compared to monologue settings among Chinese EFL learners. The essay will first review existing literature on the subject, followed

by a methodology section detailing the approach taken to investigate this issue. It will then present the findings of the study, discuss their implications, and conclude with recommendations for language teaching practices and future research. By elucidating the factors influencing grammatical accuracy in different speaking contexts, this research aims to provide actionable insights for educators in designing more effective EFL instruction that addresses the specific needs of Chinese learners.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies on Grammatical Errors in Language Learning

Previous studies have identified several common grammatical errors made by language learners. Among all, the most frequent errors were related to verb tense, with learners often using the present form instead of the past [6, 7]. Errors were also common with articles, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, nouns (including plural forms), and sentence structure [6-9].

Through decades, researchers considered that factors contributing to these errors mainly included the interference from the learner's first language (L1), the lack of grammatical knowledge in the target language (TL), and the differences in grammar between L1 and the learner's second language (L2) [8, 10]. Besides, studies found that while intermediate learners made fewer overall errors compared to beginners, they still made the same types of mistakes when errors did occur [10]. Errors persisted even at advanced levels [10].

Implications for pedagogy have also been proposed by researchers, to help reduce grammatical errors in language learning. For instance, experts recommended to explicitly teach grammar rules and differences between L1 and L2, encourage extensive reading in the target language, have learners proofread their own writing to identify and correct errors, and use effective teaching strategies to raise learners' awareness of common errors [6, 8, 9].

In summary, grammatical errors are common across proficiency levels, with certain error types like verb tense, articles, and subject-verb agreement being particularly prevalent. Addressing these errors requires a combination of explicit instruction, extensive practice, and learner awareness.

2.2 Factors Influencing Grammatical Errors in Conversational and Monologue Settings

Grammatical errors can significantly impact oral communication in both conversational and monologue settings by hindering fluency and comprehension [11]. The most common types of grammar mistakes made by students

include errors with prepositions, articles, plural forms, subject-verb agreement, and tense [11-13].

According to researchers, several key factors contribute to these grammatical errors, containing intralingual factors, interlingual factors, the lack of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, native language influence, anxiety and lack of confidence, and limited practice opportunities. Firstly, learners often overgeneralize grammar rules, omit necessary elements, and mis-form structures, as exemplified by using the base form of a verb instead of the past tense [13, 14]. Secondly, interference from the learner's first language can result in incorrect word order or the overuse of prepositions based on L1 patterns [13]. Thirdly, insufficient mastery of vocabulary and grammar impedes the ability to construct accurate sentences [12]. Fourthly, thinking in the first language and translating to English can cause delays and errors in speech production [12]. Moreover, anxiety and lack of confidence, including fear of making mistakes and grammatical phobia, can inhibit fluency and lead to avoidance of complex structures [12]. Lastly, insufficient practice in speaking English, particularly in a monotonous learning environment, reduces opportunities to improve grammatical accuracy [13].

Addressing these factors through explicit grammar instruction, error correction, and providing ample opportunities for meaningful practice can help learners reduce grammatical errors and enhance their overall oral communication skills [14].

2.3 Cultural and Linguistic Factors Specific to Chinese EFL Learners

Studies have found that Chinese EFL learners face several cultural and linguistic factors that affect their English language learning, particularly in speaking and writing, including linguistic factors, psychological factors, and cultural factors.

Regarding linguistic factors, Chinese EFL learners encounter challenges with English pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, compounded by a lack of adequate practice opportunities in English-speaking environments [15]. Concerning psychological factors, these learners grapple with anxiety, shyness, and a fear of making mistakes when speaking English [15, 16]. Additionally, perfectionism and apprehension of negative evaluation from peers and teachers can impede their fluency in communicative interactions [16]. Furthermore, experts have noted a lack of motivation among Chinese EFL learners to engage in spoken English [15]. Regarding cultural factors, the traditional Chinese classroom ethos prioritizes flawless behavior and penalizes mistakes, placing greater emphasis on written English over oral English in the exam-centric education system [16]. Moreover, Chinese EFL learners

often find themselves at odds with North American classroom dynamics and teaching methodologies, particularly in discussion-based classes [17].

Aiming to help Chinese EFL learners overcome these challenges, researchers recommended teachers to create a supportive environment to reduce anxiety and build confidence, provide more opportunities for English speaking practice, implement strategies like regular oral presentations and debates, offer detailed feedback and guidance on writing, adapt teaching methods to align with Chinese students' expectations [15-17].

3. Methodology

3.1 Subject Selection

The subjects of this research encompass a cohort of Chinese EFL learners hailing from diverse social and educational spheres, spanning an age spectrum of 15 to 30 years. The sample, consisting of 35 individuals primarily sourced from various Chinese universities, boasts a heterogeneous mix of majors. Notably, 20 participants specialize in English-related disciplines, while the remaining 15 pursue studies in other fields. This deliberate selection seeks to encompass a broad spectrum of language proficiency levels and backgrounds, facilitating a comprehensive analysis of error patterns in oral production.

3.2 Data Selection

The research data comprises audio recordings from two professional courses: one delving into learning theories and the other exploring philosophical perspectives of education. Each recording spans ninety minutes and encompasses monologues such as self-introductions, presentations, and lectures, as well as dialogues including online classroom discussions and interactions among teachers and students.

The collected data is well-suited for the research owing to its authenticity, diversity, and spontaneity. Firstly, it accurately mirrors real-life language usage scenarios, thereby furnishing a realistic context for error analysis. Secondly, it encompasses a variety of modalities, thereby providing insight into diverse communicative styles. Lastly, it captures spontaneous language production, unaffected by external factors such as prompting or deliberate practice. The collected data will be systematically analyzed to identify, classify, and interpret the grammatical errors made by Chinese EFL learners in their oral production. The analysis process consists of six steps.

1. **Transcription:** Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, capturing hesitations, repetitions, and non-verbal cues. The transcriptions were then entered into a standardized notation system to ensure consistency in analysis.

2. **Error Identification:** The transcribed data underwent meticulous scrutiny to identify grammatical errors in the selected oral productions. Each error was meticulously labeled and categorized by type, including verb tense errors (VT), subject-verb agreement errors (SVA), preposition errors (PP), article errors (AT), noun ending errors (NE), as well as other errors which mainly contain sentence structure errors and word order errors. Each marked error was independently verified at least three times to ensure accuracy.

3. **Error Classification:** Identified errors were categorized into specific types based on their contextual settings, namely, conversational or monologue settings.

4. **Error Frequency:** The frequency of occurrence for each grammatical error type was determined by tallying the number of instances for each error. This analysis provided insights into the prevalence and significance of different error types among Chinese EFL learners.

5. **Error Source Analysis:** Potential sources or causes of errors were examined, including the influence of the EFL learners' native language, their stage of interlanguage development, proficiency level, and specific linguistic difficulties.

6. **Interpretation and Discussion:** The research delved into the patterns and implications of errors, focusing particularly on the linguistic challenges faced by Chinese EFL learners and their potential pedagogical implications for instructional practices.

4. Result

4.1 Comparison of Grammatical Errors in Conversational and Monologue Settings

The data provides valuable insights into the grammatical errors made by Chinese EFL learners in their oral production across two professional courses (see Table 1 and Table 2). By analysing the errors in both conversational and monologue settings, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the linguistic challenges faced by these learners and tailor instructional strategies to address specific areas of difficulty.

Table 1. Grammatical Errors of Chinese EFL Learners (Course 1)

Error Type Settings	VT	SVA	PP	AT	NE	Other	Total	Percentage
Conversation	73	68	22	52	39	6	260	73%
Monologue	28	22	10	17	17	2	96	27%
Total	101	90	32	69	56	8	356	
Percentage	28%	25%	9%	19%	16%	2%		

Table 2. Grammatical Errors of Chinese EFL Learners (Course 2)

Error Type Settings	VT	SVA	PP	AT	NE	Other	Total	Percentage
Conversation	99	93	27	77	50	13	359	77%
Monologue	30	31	11	21	10	6	109	23%
Total	129	124	38	98	60	19	468	
Percentage	28%	26%	8%	21%	13%	4%		

In both courses, conversational settings seem to elicit a higher number of errors (619 errors or 75%) compared to monologue settings (205 errors or 25%) (see Table 3). This suggests that learners may struggle more with spontaneous speech, where they must quickly retrieve and apply grammatical rules in real-time communication.

Conversely, in monologue settings, learners have more time to plan and organize their speech, resulting in fewer errors overall. This difference highlights the importance of providing opportunities for learners to practice both spontaneous conversation and prepared monologues to improve their overall oral proficiency.

Table 3. Grammatical Errors of Chinese EFL Learners (Both Courses)

Error Type Settings	VT	SVA	PP	AT	NE	Other	Total	Percentage
Conversation	172	161	49	129	89	19	619	75%
Monologue	58	53	21	38	27	8	205	25%
Total	230	214	70	167	116	27	824	
Percentage	28%	26%	8%	20%	14%	3%		

The most common type of error across both settings and courses is verb tense errors (230 errors or 28%). This finding indicates that Chinese EFL learners often struggle with accurately expressing the timing of events in English. Verb tense errors can significantly impact the clarity and coherence of learners' speech, making it essential for instructors to dedicate ample time to teaching and practicing verb tense usage through various communicative activities and drills.

Subject-verb agreement errors also appear prominently in the data (214 errors or 26%), suggesting that learners may have difficulty matching the subject and verb forms correctly in English sentences. This aspect of English grammar can be particularly challenging due to the various

verb conjugation patterns and irregularities. To address subject-verb agreement errors, instructors can incorporate focused grammar exercises, error correction activities, and communicative tasks that require learners to use proper subject-verb agreement in context.

Preposition errors, although less frequent than verb tense and subject-verb agreement errors, still represent a significant area of difficulty for Chinese EFL learners (70 errors or 8%). Prepositions play a crucial role in expressing relationships between objects, time, and location in English, making their accurate usage essential for clear and effective communication. To help learners improve their preposition usage, instructors can provide explicit instruction on preposition usage rules, offer practice activities

with common prepositions, and encourage learners to pay attention to prepositions in authentic language input.

Overall, the data underscores the importance of targeted instruction and practice in addressing the specific grammatical challenges faced by Chinese EFL learners in oral production. By understanding the patterns of errors and their underlying causes, instructors can develop more effective teaching strategies and support learners in achieving greater accuracy and fluency in spoken English.

4.2 Identification of Factors Contributing to Differences in Error Prevalence

Several factors contribute to the differences in error prevalence observed between conversational and monologue settings, as well as between the two professional courses.

First and foremost, the level of spontaneity and preparedness can be one of the factors that contribute to the differences in error prevalence. In conversational settings, learners must respond spontaneously to prompts and interact with others in real-time. This spontaneity can lead to more errors as learners may struggle to apply grammatical rules accurately under pressure. In contrast, monologue settings allow learners to prepare and organize their thoughts beforehand, resulting in fewer errors as they have more time to consider and revise their speech.

Secondly, variations in error rates may stem from differences in time constraints. Conversational settings often involve rapid turn-taking and limited time for reflection, leading to rushed speech and increased likelihood of errors. Monologue settings, on the other hand, provide learners with the luxury of time to think through their sentences and correct errors before delivering their speech.

Thirdly, discrepancies in error frequency can be attributed to variances in contextual support. Conversational settings may provide more contextual cues and scaffolding through interaction with interlocutors, which can aid learners in overcoming linguistic challenges and reducing errors. In monologue settings, learners rely solely on their own linguistic knowledge and skills, making it potentially more difficult to self-correct errors without external support.

Fourthly, the disparity in error occurrence may hinge on the contrast in task demands. The specific tasks or topics presented in conversational and monologue settings can influence the types and frequency of errors made by learners. For example, conversational tasks may require learners to engage in spontaneous problem-solving or express opinions on various topics, leading to errors related to complex grammar structures. In contrast, monologue tasks may focus on describing personal experiences or presenting factual information, resulting in errors related to simpler grammar concepts.

Fifthly, the divergence in error prevalence may be influ-

enced by language input. Learners may receive different types and amounts of language input in conversational and monologue settings, which can impact their language production and error patterns. Conversational settings expose learners to a wider range of language forms and registers through interaction with interlocutors, while monologue settings may provide more focused input on specific topics or language structures.

Finally, differences in error rates may result from variations in individual learner factors. Variations in learners' proficiency levels, learning styles, language backgrounds, and previous experiences can also contribute to differences in error prevalence between conversational and monologue settings, as well as between courses. Learners with higher proficiency levels may exhibit fewer errors overall, while those with limited exposure to English or specific grammar concepts may struggle more in both settings. Additionally, learners' attitudes towards speaking tasks and their motivation to communicate effectively can influence their error rates.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of Findings

The examination of grammatical errors in the oral production of Chinese EFL students uncovered several prevalent error patterns. Across both courses, conversational settings tended to yield a greater number of errors than monologue settings. Particularly, verb tense errors emerged as the most common. Additionally, errors related to subject-verb disagreement and the misuse of articles were notable within the category of grammatical errors. noun ending errors also occurred frequently. In comparison to the aforementioned errors, preposition errors and other errors—such as sentence structure errors and word order errors—were less prevalent, likely due to the majority of participants being high-level learners.

When comparing the two settings, it becomes evident that monologues generally exhibit fewer grammatical errors compared to conversations. This discrepancy can be attributed to several factors, including the heightened level of improvisation inherent in conversational settings, the dynamic interplay among EFL speakers, and the potential anxiety induced by communicative interactions.

In the realm of spoken communication, the setting profoundly influences the quality of language production. Monologues, by nature, grant speakers the luxury of time to meticulously craft and refine their expressions, ultimately resulting in a diminished occurrence of grammatical errors. With ample opportunity for planning and revision, speakers can carefully structure their thoughts, select precise vocabulary, and ensure grammatical accu-

racy, thus presenting a polished discourse. Conversely, in spontaneous conversations, where responses are often impromptu and time constraints loom, the likelihood of grammatical slip-ups escalates due to the rapid nature of interaction. Consequently, the distinction between monologues and conversations underscores the significance of preparation and deliberation in shaping linguistic proficiency.

Also, in conversational settings among EFL speakers, a notable phenomenon emerges wherein the mutual influence between participants can inadvertently amplify the prevalence of grammatical errors in oral production. Within the dynamics of group discourse, individuals may unconsciously replicate errors made by their counterparts, leading to a perpetuation of linguistic inaccuracies. This tendency to mimic error patterns can arise from a desire to establish rapport or a subconscious assimilation of speech norms within the group. In contrast, monologue settings, characterized by a singular speaker, lack this interplay of influences, thereby reducing the likelihood of error replication. Consequently, the social dynamics inherent in conversational interactions among EFL speakers can exacerbate the occurrence of grammatical errors compared to the more controlled environment of monologue settings.

In contrast to the relatively tranquil atmosphere of monologue settings, speakers engaged in conversational settings often contend with heightened levels of anxiety. The dynamic nature of group discussions, where individuals must quickly process information, formulate responses, and navigate social cues, can evoke feelings of apprehension and pressure. The presence of multiple interlocutors, each with their own perspectives and expectations, adds complexity to the interaction, intensifying the potential for anxiety. Furthermore, the immediate feedback and scrutiny inherent in conversational exchanges can further exacerbate feelings of self-doubt and unease. As a result, compared to the solitary nature of monologue settings, speakers in conversational contexts are more susceptible to experiencing heightened levels of anxiety, impacting their ability to communicate effectively.

5.2 Implications for Language Teaching and Learning

The findings regarding grammatical errors in conversational and monologue settings among Chinese EFL learners have significant implications for language teaching and learning:

1. Targeted Instruction: Teachers can use the identified error patterns, such as verb tense errors and subject-verb disagreement, as focal points for instruction. By providing explicit grammar lessons and targeted practice activities, learners can improve their accuracy in these areas.

2. Balanced Practice: Recognizing the discrepancy in error prevalence between conversational and monologue settings, instructors should incorporate a balanced mix of both types of speaking activities into their curriculum. This allows learners to develop proficiency in both spontaneous speech and prepared monologues, addressing the different challenges posed by each setting.

3. Error Correction Strategies: Teachers should employ effective error correction strategies tailored to the specific needs of learners. In conversational settings, immediate feedback and error correction techniques can help learners recognize and correct errors in real-time. In monologue settings, feedback can be provided after the speech, allowing learners to reflect on and revise their errors.

4. Promotion of Language Awareness: Encouraging learners to reflect on their own language use and errors can promote language awareness. By engaging in metalinguistic discussions about grammar rules and error patterns, learners can develop a deeper understanding of the linguistic structures of English and become more conscious of their own language production.

5. Anxiety Management: Recognizing the potential for heightened anxiety in conversational settings, teachers should implement strategies to manage and reduce learner anxiety. Creating a supportive and non-judgmental classroom environment, providing opportunities for practice and feedback, and teaching relaxation techniques can help alleviate anxiety and enhance learners' confidence in speaking English.

6. Social Learning Opportunities: Leveraging the social dynamics of conversational settings, teachers can create opportunities for collaborative learning and peer interaction. Pair and group activities allow learners to practice speaking in a supportive environment, while also providing opportunities for error correction and peer feedback.

7. Authentic Language Input: Exposing learners to authentic language input through a variety of sources, such as podcasts, videos, and authentic texts, can enhance their language proficiency and fluency. Authentic materials provide learners with exposure to natural language use, including grammar structures, vocabulary, and cultural nuances, which can help improve their oral production skills.

By integrating these implications into language teaching practices, instructors can effectively support Chinese EFL learners in addressing grammatical errors and developing greater proficiency in spoken English.

6. Conclusion

The research examined grammatical errors in the oral production of Chinese EFL learners across conversational

and monologue settings in two professional courses. The findings showed that conversational settings generally resulted in a higher frequency of grammatical errors compared to monologue settings. Also, verb tense errors were the most common type of error across both settings and courses. Besides, subject-verb disagreement, misuse of articles, and noun ending errors were also notable error patterns. Moreover, monologue settings exhibited fewer grammatical errors due to factors such as preparation time and reduced anxiety. Additionally, social dynamics in conversational settings could amplify error prevalence through the replication of linguistic inaccuracies. Furthermore, anxiety levels were higher in conversational settings, potentially impacting language production.

These findings have implications for language teaching and learning, including the need for targeted instruction, balanced practice, effective error correction strategies, anxiety management techniques, promotion of language awareness, utilization of social learning opportunities, and exposure to authentic language input. Overall, understanding the nuances of error occurrence in different settings can inform instructional strategies to support Chinese EFL learners in improving their oral proficiency in English.

However, this study acknowledges certain limitations. Firstly, the subjects are confined to a specific group of Chinese EFL learners, necessitating further data collection to generalize error analysis across all Chinese EFL learners. Additionally, the analysis solely focuses on errors, potentially overlooking non-error linguistic information. Future research should incorporate both error and non-error analysis. Furthermore, the analysis does not compare different types of grammatical errors made in monologue versus conversation respectively, suggesting the need for additional methodologies to compare the specific sorts of errors across different settings. Lastly, the analysis relies on predetermined error categories, introducing subjectivity. Utilizing multiple raters and establishing interrater reliability would enhance the validity of future studies.

References

- [1]Zhou, N. Oral participation in EFL classroom: Perspectives from the administrator, teachers and learners at a Chinese University. *System*, 2015, 53: 35–46.
- [2]Mohammed, A. A. Error analysis of oral production by EFL students: A comprehensive study. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*, 2023, 4(6): 269–277.
- [3]Liu, J., & Wu, C. An analysis of grammatical errors in Chinese efl learners' oral English. *Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media*, 2023, 14(1): 201–212.
- [4]Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. *How languages are learned*. Oxford University Press, 2013.
- [5]Corder, S. P. *The Significance of Learner's Errors*. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*. 1967.
- [6]Alghazo, K.M. & Alshraideh, M.K. Grammatical errors found in English writing: A study from alhussein bin talal university. *International Education Studies*, 2020, 13(9): 1.
- [7]Zahid, H. Grammatical error made by students in speaking English. *European Journal of Linguistics*. 2023, 2(3): 53–72.
- [8]Shuk, L. C. Grammatical Errors in Written Assessments of Non-Native English- Speaking Undergraduate Students and Pedagogical Implications in Correcting Mistakes. *International Conference on Social and Education Sciences*, 2022.
- [9]Hidayat, D.N. et al. An investigation into the grammatical errors of students' writing. *EDUVELOP*, 2020, 4(1): 9–16.
- [10]Patrik F. *Language Acquisition and the Errors We Make - A comparison between beginners and intermediate learners*. 2009.
- [11]Ting, S. H. & Mahadhir, M. & Chang, S. L. Grammatical Errors In Spoken English Of University Students In Oral Communication Course. *GEMA OnlineTM Journal of Language Studies*, 2010, 10(1): 53-70.
- [12]Chand, G. B. Challenges faced by bachelor level students while speaking English. *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*, 2021, 6(1): 45.
- [13]Susidamaiyanti. Grammatical Errors Made by Students in Speaking English. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 2021, 2(2): 23-33.
- [14]Leonard, L. B., & Kueser, J. B. Five overarching factors central to grammatical learning and treatment in children with developmental language disorder. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 2019, 54(3): 347–361.
- [15]Amoah, S., & Yeboah, J. The speaking difficulties of Chinese EFL learners and their motivation towards speaking the English language. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 2021, 17(1): 56–69.
- [16]Yu, Y., & Zhou, D. Understanding chinese EFL learners' anxiety in second language writing for the sustainable development of writing skills. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2022.
- [17]Huang, J., & Brown, K. Cultural factors affecting Chinese ESL students' academic learning. *Education*. 2008.

Appendix A: Definitions and Examples of Errors

The analysis of EFL students' oral production errors revealed some common error patterns, including verb tense errors, subject-verb agreement errors, preposition errors, article errors, noun ending errors, and other errors. The definitions and examples of them are as follow:

Verb tense errors refer to mistakes made in the use of verb tenses in writing or speech. These errors can include using the wrong tense, failing to maintain consistent tense

throughout a sentence or paragraph, or using inappropriate tense shifts. For example, using past tense instead of present tense (“She go to the store” instead of “She goes to the store”), or using present tense when past tense is required (“Yesterday, he is playing soccer” instead of “Yesterday, he was playing soccer”). Verb tense errors can affect the clarity and accuracy of communication, as verb tenses indicate the timing of actions or states described in a sentence.

Subject-verb agreement errors occur when there is a mismatch between the subject of a sentence and the verb, resulting in grammatical inconsistency. In English grammar, the verb in a sentence must agree with its subject in number and person. For example, a singular subject requires a singular verb, while a plural subject requires a plural verb. Subject-verb agreement errors commonly occur when writers fail to correctly match the number or person of the subject and the verb in a sentence, leading to grammatical inaccuracies.

Preposition errors occur when there is misuse, omission, or incorrect placement of prepositions in sentences. Prepositions are words that indicate relationships between nouns, pronouns, and other elements in a sentence, such as time, place, direction, or manner. Common prepositions include “in,” “on,” “at,” “by,” “for,” “with,” and “to.” Preposition errors can include using the wrong preposition, omitting a necessary preposition, or placing a preposition incorrectly within a sentence, leading to grammatical inaccuracies or confusion in meaning.

Article errors refer to mistakes made in the use of articles (such as “a,” “an,” and “the”) in writing or speech. These errors can include using the wrong article, omitting articles where they are needed, or using articles unnecessarily. For example, using “a” instead of “an” before a vowel

sound (“a apple” instead of “an apple”), or omitting articles altogether (“He went to store” instead of “He went to the store”). Article errors can affect the clarity and accuracy of communication, as articles play an important role in specifying and defining nouns.

Noun ending errors refer to mistakes in the formation or use of noun endings in a sentence. In English, nouns typically change their endings to indicate plurality, possession, or other grammatical functions. Common noun endings include adding “-s” or “-es” to form plurals, adding “’s” or “’” to indicate possession, and adding suffixes like “-ity,” “-ment,” or “-tion” to form abstract nouns. Noun ending errors occur when these endings are applied incorrectly or omitted, leading to grammatical inaccuracies or confusion in meaning.

Sentence structure errors involve issues with the organization, arrangement, or construction of sentences in written or spoken language. These errors can manifest in various ways, such as run-on sentences, fragments, awkward phrasing, or lack of clarity in the sentence structure. They may result from incorrect punctuation usage, improper sentence formation, or failure to adhere to grammatical rules governing sentence construction.

Word order errors, on the other hand, pertain specifically to the arrangement of words within a sentence. In English, word order generally follows a subject-verb-object (SVO) pattern, though variations exist based on sentence type and emphasis. Word order errors occur when the sequence of words deviates from standard grammatical conventions, leading to confusion or ambiguity in meaning. These errors may involve placing modifiers in the wrong position, misplacing verbs or objects, or disrupting the natural flow of the sentence by rearranging its elements improperly.