



## Research Paper

# An Analysis of Written Grammatical Errors of Vietnamese Learners of English

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**ABSTRACT:** *Despite not being an aspect of a language a beginner starts with, grammar is regarded as a foundation of four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. It is undoubtedly that knowing about grammar assist learners to convey their ideas and messages. In fact, being able to express grammatically correct utterances can give language users higher esteem and more respect. In writing the syntax capability provides writers with a deeper understanding of the components which make sentences, paragraphs or essays clear and precise. Hence, the specific objectives of my study are to find out grammatical errors learners often make in writing, then analyze errors with a high frequency of occurrence and root out the sources or causes of errors. The study analyzed grammatical errors in paragraphs written by a group of medical freshmen. Their common grammatical problems are classified into these linguistic features: subject and verb agreement, misused words, prepositions, quantifiers, word order and comparison. The result indicates that the interference from their mother tongue – Vietnamese (L1) and a lack of their foreign language competence – English (L2) are two major sources of errors in their writing. Some pedagogical implications are also discussed to help learners overcome their problems in writing.*

**KEY WORDS:** *grammar teaching, grammatical errors, L1 interference, L2 incompetence*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, English has always played an integral part in Vietnamese education; therefore, students are expected to use English effectively. However, having a good command of English is not easy because of the complicatedness of grammatical rules in spoken and written English. As a result, it is inevitable that learners make a lot of errors in their acquisition process. Corder (1967) is one of the first educational scholars to highlight the significance of learners' errors for teachers. He points out that learners' errors are evidence of the development in the language learning process (as cited in Murray, 2002, p. 187). In actual fact, errors are a key part in the learning process and provide teachers with reliable information about where their learners are and what they need to improve next. Recent developments in the field of error analysis have led to a renewed interest in written grammatical errors. Thanks to error analysis, teachers can predict a great majority of learners' written grammatical errors caused by faulty inferences about the rules of a new language.

From my experience and observation in teaching English, most of the Vietnamese students face the problem of writing grammatically correct texts. Their errors in written grammar lead me to wonder whether or not an analysis of their grammatical errors can help them to improve their writing skills. Specifically, my research aims to find out the answers to the two following questions:

1. What are common grammatical errors Vietnamese medical students make in paragraph writing?
2. What are the possible causes of those errors?

The result of this study makes a major contribution in three aspects. First of all, there are still few studies on grammatical errors in paragraph writing of medical students. Thus, theoretically this paper contributes to the literature as a comprehensive analysis of this issue. Additionally, the findings are informative and useful for teachers to understand the nature of students' errors. As a result, they can help learners get over difficulties in writing. Last but not least, this research also makes learners well aware of their current errors so that they can avoid these potential errors in further writings.

The remaining of the paper is structured as follows: Chapter 2 gives a review of definition, some concepts of writing, mistakes and errors. In addition, a great amount of literature about the classification of errors, approaches towards errors, the significance and procedures of errors analysis is also presented. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology. Chapter 4 reports the findings and discussion. Chapter 5 suggests some pedagogical implications. Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and discusses the limitation as well as directions for further studies.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Writing**

It is widely acknowledged that writing is the representation of language in a textual medium by using a set of signs or symbols. Cohen and Riel emphasize the communicative goal when defining writing as “a way of sharing observations, information, thoughts or ideas with ourselves and others” (1989, p. 143). Likewise, Olshtain (2001) defines writing as an act of communication – an interactive process taking place between the writer and the reader via the text (p. 207). Besides, “writing is viewed as involving a number of thinking processes which are drawn upon in varied and complex ways as an individual composes, transcribes, evaluates, and revises” (Arndt, 1987; Raimes, 1985, as cited in White, 1995, p. 5).

### **2.2 Error**

Ellis (1994) defines error as “a deviation from the norms of the target language” (p. 51). He also clarifies some errors made by learners in terms of the role of language and age. He asserts that second language learners’ errors are generally viewed as unwanted errors, children’s errors are seen as transitional forms, and adult native speakers’ errors are slips of the tongue (1994, p. 47). Later, he (1997) distinguishes between errors and mistakes. Errors reflect gaps in learners’ knowledge; hence, they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. However, mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance; therefore, they occur because the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows. Additionally, Ellis suggests one way to differentiate errors and mistakes, i.e. checking the consistency of learners’ performance (p. 17). For example, in the sentence “The basket contained a snake”, if learners consistently substitute “contain” for “contained”, this will indicate a lack of knowledge – an error. If they sometimes use “contain” and sometimes “contained”, it will be suggested that they possess knowledge of the correct form and just slip up – a mistake. In other words, learners can self-correct their mistakes as they temporarily forget the right form whereas they cannot self-correct their errors as they do not know the rules and tend to repeat their errors.

### **2.3 Types of Error**

There are a number of ways for scholars to classify errors. Errors can be divided according to forms, i.e. errors of addition, errors of omission, errors of selection, errors of substitution and errors of order or specific areas of language, i.e. phonological errors, lexical errors, grammatical errors, semantic errors and spellings.

In the 1982 publication, Dulay, Burt and Krashen categorize errors into four groups: omission, addition, misinformation and misordering. Omission is the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. In contrast, addition is the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance. Misinformation refers to the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure while misordering refers to the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 56).

According to Ellis (1997), based on the sources of errors, errors are divided into three types including omission errors, overgeneralization errors and transfer errors. First of all, learners commit errors of omission. For example, they often leave out the articles “a”, “an” or “the”. Also, they overgeneralize forms they find easy to learn and process, which is so-called overgeneralization errors. For instance, they produce “eated” and “bringed” instead of “ate” and “brought” respectively. The final type is transfer errors. This kind of error reflects learners’ attempts to make use of their mother tongue. The use of “a girl beautiful” in place of “a beautiful girl” is an illustration of transfer errors. They tend to apply the rule “Noun + Adjective” in their first language to the opposite rule “Adjective + Noun” when acquiring English (p. 19).

On the other hand, Brown (2000) roots out the sources of errors and classifies into two major types of errors, i.e. interlingual errors and intralingual errors (as cited in Wetzorke, 2010, p. 9). Interlingual errors are caused by the interference - the negative influence of the first language on learners’ performance of the target language while intralingual errors take place within the target language, the sociolinguistic context of communication, psycholinguistic or cognitive strategies, and countless affective variables. Intralingual errors are not involved in the first language but the target language. They may be caused by learners’ attempts to build up concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their limited knowledge.

## **2.4 Approaches towards Errors**

There are two popular and traditional approaches including Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA) in most of error research.

CA is the systematic study of a pair of languages with the aim of identifying their structural differences as well as similarities. The purpose of CA is to compare the structure of languages and to state where the differences lay so that teachers can focus on the structures where languages differ with the purpose of changing learners' habits in their first language and assisting them to form new and appropriate habits (Towell, Hawkins, & Hawkins, 1994, p. 18).

Some proponents of CA believe that CA allows teachers to develop the most effective teaching programs and teaching materials and students to make use of the most effective learning styles and strategies. Other educational researchers argue that CA only pays attention to predicting what the learner will do, but does not pay attention to the study of what the learner actually does. Many errors do not result from native language interference but rather from the strategies employed by learners in the target language acquisition (Gluth, 2008, p. 6). Therefore, EA – the study of kind and quantity of error in second language acquisition – is an alternative to CA. EA examines errors that are attributable to all possible sources, not just those resulting from the negative transfer of the native language. In fact, Ellis points out that in addition to the role in the reassessment of CA, the most significant contribution of EA lies in its success in evaluating the status of errors from undesirability to that of a guide to the inner workings of the language learning process (1985, p. 53).

## **2.5 Significance of Error Analysis**

It can be noted that nobody could learn a language without making any errors as errors are regarded as an indicator of their target language development. Accordingly, Corder (1967) claims that errors are of importance in three ways. First of all, they provide teachers with information about how much their learners have studied. They also help learners to discover the rules of the target language by themselves. Lastly, they supply researchers with evidence of how language is learned (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 48). Therefore, Corder puts emphasis on the contribution of error analysis in his 1973 writing. He asserts that “the most obvious practical use of the analysis of errors is to the teacher. Errors provide feedback, tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and teaching techniques, and show him what parts of the syllabus he has been following have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention” (p. 265). In addition, there are a lot of theoretical uses of error analysis. Thanks to error analysis, applied linguists can understand what is going on when people learn languages, and psycholinguists can predict how the nature of the mother tongue will facilitate or discourage the learning of a language (Corder, 1973, p. 266).

## **2.6 Procedures of Error Analysis**

Corder (1974) suggests five following steps in error analysis process: collection of a sample of learner language, identification of errors, description of errors, explanation of errors and evaluation of errors (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 48). However, a lot of research does not include the final step as the evaluation of learner errors has generally been handled as a separate issue with its own enquiry.

# **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA**

## **3.1 Sample**

The data source for this study is from writing papers of freshmen at Dong Nai University. Firstly, 50 students were asked to write a paragraph (150 words) about the topic “How to live a healthy lifestyle”. Then 30 writings were randomly selected to form the sample for the study.

All participants are native speakers of Vietnamese from different family, social and educational backgrounds. They have already enrolled in the “paragraph writing” course; as a result, they know the structure of a paragraph, i.e. topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence.

All of them have learned English since they were twelve years old. However, their levels are not even as some students studied English at a foreign language center at an early age while others did not learn English until they started secondary school. Therefore, most of them have an Intermediate level, some have an advanced level and a few have a low level.

## **3.2 Research Methodology**

The analysis of written grammatical errors of Vietnamese learners of English follows four steps:

1. Collection of 30 writing papers
2. Identification of common errors
3. Description of common errors
4. Explanation of common errors

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data were analyzed by the researcher in terms of identifying and classifying errors. A total of 226 common grammatical errors were found which were classified into 6 major linguistic categories including subject/verb agreement, wrong/misused words, prepositions, quantifiers, word order and comparison. Table 1 below shows the analysis of errors committed by the participants based on the type of errors, number of errors and percentage.

Item	Type of error	Number of errors	Percentage (%)
1	Subject/Verb Agreement	55	24.3%
2	Wrong/Misused Words	43	19.0%
3	Prepositions	40	17.7%
4	Quantifiers	33	14.6%
5	Word order	26	11.5%
6	Comparison	29	12.9%
<b>Total</b>		<b>226</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1:** The number and percentage of errors

##### 4.1 A detailed identification of errors

The aforementioned errors are reported in a more detailed way. In particular, the errors committed in the writing of participants and the correction will be presented as well.

Error classification	Identification of errors	Correct sentences
Subject/Verb Agreement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone <b>want</b> to have a healthy life (paragraph 1, line 1)</li> <li>It also <b>help</b> to circulate blood on vessel to heart better (paragraph 3, line 6)</li> <li>Stress <b>make</b> your immune systems weaker (paragraph 6, line 9 and 10)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone <b>wants</b> to have a healthy life</li> <li>It also <b>helps</b> to circulate blood on vessel to heart better</li> <li>Stress <b>makes</b> your immune systems weaker</li> </ol>
Wrong/Misused Words	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firstly, we should do exercise <b>everyday</b> (paragraph 1, line 2)</li> <li>Swimming is the most <b>interested</b> and useful sport that somebody can take part in regardless ages and genders (paragraph 3, line 2)</li> <li>Second, <b>often</b> exercising (paragraph 6, line 3)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Firstly, we should do exercise <b>every day</b></li> <li>Swimming is the most <b>interesting</b> and useful sport that somebody can take part in regardless ages and genders</li> <li>Second, <b>regular</b> exercising</li> </ol>
Prepositions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doing that can <b>prevent you some sicknesses</b>. (paragraph 1, line 4 and 5)</li> <li>First, unlike <b>with</b> wrestling and jogging which concentrate only a part muscle's body, swimming brings total interests such as to grow enduring and strength of muscle, to improve carriage and flexible... (paragraph 3, line 3)</li> <li>Smoking and drinking are very harmful <b>for</b> your health (paragraph 4, line 8 and 9)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doing that can <b>prevent you from some sicknesses</b>.</li> <li>First, unlike wrestling and jogging which concentrate only a part muscle's body, swimming brings total interests such as to grow enduring and strength of muscle, to improve carriage and flexible...</li> <li>Smoking and drinking are very harmful <b>to</b> your health</li> </ol>
Quantifiers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moreover, we also eat and drink suitably such as eating <b>much vegetable, fruit</b>, etc. (paragraph 1, line 4)</li> <li>Besides, you shouldn't eat too much in one meal and shouldn't eat <b>too much snacks, candies</b> or too much fried food because they will make you fat (paragraph 4, line 5)</li> <li>The lack of activity is linked to <b>a number of illness</b>, such as obesity, diseases of heart, joints and etc. (paragraph 6, line 4)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moreover, we also eat and drink suitably such as eating <b>many vegetables, fruits</b>, etc.</li> <li>Besides, you shouldn't eat too much in one meal and shouldn't eat <b>too many snacks, candies</b> or too much fried food because they will make you fat</li> <li>The lack of activity is linked to <b>a number of illnesses</b>, such as obesity, diseases of heart, joints and etc.</li> </ol>

Word order	<p>1. Having a <b>diet balance</b> with a lot of vegetable and enough water, and exercising regularly are things we can do to have a healthy body (paragraph 5, line 2)</p> <p>2. For that, a schedule can help you work effectively, a hobby can help you relax after work and a close friend can eliminate your <b>pressure work</b> (paragraph 5, line 5)</p> <p>3. Therefore, having breakfast of enough nutrients can help stay <b>enough energetic and enthusiastic</b> to study or to work (paragraph 7, line 7 and 8)</p>	<p>1. Having a <b>balanced diet</b> with a lot of vegetable and enough water, and exercising regularly are things we can do to have a healthy body</p> <p>2. For that, a schedule can help you work effectively, a hobby can help you relax after work and a close friend can eliminate your <b>work pressure</b></p> <p>3. Therefore, having breakfast of enough nutrients can help stay <b>energetic and enthusiastic enough</b> to study or to work</p>
Comparison	<p>1. Finally, live a <b>more happy</b> life (paragraph 2, line 6)</p> <p>2. Swimming is <b>most interested and useful</b> sport that somebody can take part in regardless ages and genders (paragraph 3, line 2)</p> <p>3. In short, health is <b>most invaluable</b> thing a man has (paragraph 7, line 13)</p>	<p>1. Finally, live a <b>happier</b> life</p> <p>2. Swimming is <b>the most interesting and useful</b> sport that somebody can take part in regardless ages and genders</p> <p>3. In short, health is <b>the most invaluable</b> thing a man has</p>

Table 2: Most errors and some examples of errors

## 4.2 Description and Explanation of Errors

### 4.2.1 Subject/Verb Agreement

It can be seen clearly that 24.3% of the total errors belong to subject-verb agreement. In other words, most of the participants fail to perform subject-verb agreement rules when writing a paragraph. The wrong forms of verbs are chosen after indefinite pronouns (everyone, someone, anyone, etc.) and a singular third person, for example, “Everyone **want** to have a healthy life” instead of “Everyone **wants** to have a healthy life” and “It also **help** to circulate blood on vessel to heart better” instead of “It also **helps** to circulate blood on vessel to heart better”.

These omission errors are a direct consequence of the native language interference on the target language. Due to linguistic deep-rooted habits, participants automatically transfer the structure of the first language to the surface of the target language. Unlike Vietnamese which does not mark subjects and verbs by changing something, in English the subject and the verb must agree in number: both must be singular or plural. This difference between

Vietnamese and English leads participants to make a great number of these kinds of errors. That is the reason why Vietnamese learners often forget subject/verb agreement rules in writing.

### 4.2.2 Wrong/Misused Words

Wrong/Misused words constitute 19% of the errors. Many participants lack appropriate and accurate vocabulary items. For instance, one participant uses the word ‘everyday’ instead of ‘every day’; and another participant uses the word ‘interested’ instead of ‘interesting’ in the following sentences:

- Firstly, we should do exercise **everyday** (paragraph 1, line 2)
- Swimming is the most **interested** and useful sport that somebody can take part in regardless ages and genders (paragraph 3, line 2)

Learners commit these errors because they cannot distinguish the difference between “everyday” and “every day” as well as “interested” and “interesting”. These words which have the same meaning but not the same forms and usage cause learners some confusion as to which one should be used. These errors reflect learners’ failure to learn conditions to which rules apply, which is so-called intralingual errors.

The wrong application of vocabulary can be seen when the participants do not apply the appropriate and correct words to the sentences. It can be assumed that some of the participants are not aware of the different forms and usage of new words. “Interested” and “interesting” are a clear illustration. “Interested” is a past participle to say how someone feels whereas “interesting” is a present participle to describe the people or things that cause the feelings. However, in the writing students tend to use these two words interchangeably.

### 4.2.3 Prepositions

This category (17.7%) adds up to one of the most problematic areas for the subjects. Most of them omit, add or misuse some prepositions in expressing their ideas. The participants demonstrate confusion for correct usage of preposition since English prepositions have different forms and functions. In sentence number 1, the correct preposition ‘from’ should be used after the object “you”. In sentence number 2, the preposition ‘with’ ought to be deleted. In sentence number 3, the preposition ‘to’ should be used rather than ‘for’.



1. Doing that can **prevent you some sicknesses**.

2. First, unlike **with** wrestling and jogging which concentrate only a part muscle's body, swimming brings total interests such as to grow enduring and strength of muscle, to improve carriage and flexible.

3. Smoking and drinking are very harmful **for** your health.

The omission, addition and misuse of prepositions are a result of literal translation from Vietnamese language. In details, the English verb "prevent" is followed by an object and the preposition "from" while the Vietnamese equivalent is not. The preposition "with" and "for" are wrongly used in the sentence 2 and 3 as the preposition "with" and "for" mean "khác" and "cho" in Vietnamese respectively.

#### **4.2.4 Quantifiers**

These errors derive from participants' failure to select the correct quantifier when they lack the understanding of distinction between countable and non-countable nouns. They write "much vegetable, fruit" instead of "many vegetables, fruits".

In addition to false concepts hypothesized, the error in the sentence "The lack of activity is linked to **a number of illness**, such as obesity, diseases of heart, joints and etc." is caused by the simplification of English grammar rules. 'A number' refers to more than one person; hence, the noun "illness" must be in the plural form. Unfortunately, the writer does not give the plural form as he/she thinks that the article "a" in "a number" requires a singular noun.

#### **4.2.5 Word order**

Word order errors result from the influence of learners' previous knowledge of Vietnamese grammar on their English acquisition. They put pre-modification (a noun, adjective) after the head noun of a noun phrase because it is the order of Vietnamese noun phrases. It is the difference in the word order of noun phrase between English and Vietnamese that leads Vietnamese learners to produce naturally "a diet balance" and "pressure work".

Another example of learners' attempts to use Vietnamese in acquiring English is "**enough energetic and enthusiastic**". A possible reason for the failure to give the correct order probably is that Vietnamese follows the rule "Enough + Adj", not the rule "Adj + enough" in English.

English	energetic and enthusiastic	enough
Vietnamese	đủ (enough)	năng lượng và hăng hái (energetic and enthusiastic)

All of word order errors are classified as transfer errors with the negative impact of learners' first language.

#### **4.2.6 Comparison**

In order to form the comparative forms of short adjectives which are one-syllable ones learners add the suffix "er" to the adjective. Following this rule, the writer unconsciously overgeneralizes some two-syllable adjectives ending with "y". Clearly, two syllable adjectives ending with "y" are regarded as short adjectives; therefore, the comparative form is produced by adding "er", not "more".

In terms of superlative adjectives, the writers leave out "the" from two superlative forms as a result of incomplete application of grammar rules. These kinds of omission errors involve learners' failure to fully develop a structure. For instance, they forget to put "the" in front of "most" in the following sentence "In short, health is **most invaluable** thing a man has".

In short, most of the grammatical errors in paragraph writing are strongly affected by students' overgeneralization, incomplete application, simplification, interference and false concepts. On the other hand, the errors partly prove that the learners attempt to improve their target language on the basis of their current experience.

## **V. IMPLICATIONS**

The study indicates that interference from L1 and inadequate competence of L2 are two main sources of errors in learners' paragraph writing. Hence, some implications for teaching English are suggested based on these causes of errors.

First of all, the negative transfer - the most dominant cause for Vietnamese students' errors in second language learning - makes students confused about the differences between the forms and usage in the native language and the target language that they have expected to be similar. Thus, it is essential that learners are well aware of the differences between L1 and L2. The contrastive analysis between English and Vietnamese needs to be carried out in order to help the students see clearly the problems they are likely to encounter. In addition, based on some differences between two languages, teachers should be well-prepared for some useful teaching materials such as role play, interviews, information gap, games, language exchanges and surveys to help students to avoid these mistakes.

Secondly, errors result from faulty or partial learning of the target language including overgeneralization, incomplete application, simplification and false concepts. As a result of this, they ignore the rules of target language and form their false concepts. In order to overcome these intralingual errors, the teacher should provide them with the structures or forms of the target language before getting students involved in some

practices. To draw students' attention to grammar, teachers can present structures, forms and usage visually by pictures, objects, blackboard drawing, etc. Then, lists of tasks will be given for students to be familiar with the structures, forms and usage through controlled, guided and free activities as Ellis (2003) explains that only when the difficulty degree of tasks matches students' level of development can previous tasks scaffold current tasks (p. 67).

It cannot be denied that errors are an inevitable part of language learning and teaching; and error correction plays a very important role in language teaching. Errors should be corrected whenever students produce in practice tasks. Correction can provide positive feedback as the learners need to be confirmed what is correct they should produce. Sometimes errors seem to be deeply ingrained, which requires teachers to give feedbacks; but at other times students can correct themselves with ease. As a matter of fact, teachers should let learners identify and correct their errors themselves as self-correction is a good technique in avoiding such errors later and having a better understanding of their errors. In fact, "selfcorrection gives students an opportunity to consider and activate their linguistic competence so that they can be active participants in written compositions rather than passive recipients of feedback" (Makino, 1993, p. 340).

Last but not least, the remedial approach is the most profitably undertaken in order to reacquaint the students with the intricacies of the target language grammar and to help them learn to use the target language rules which they have already learned in an appropriate way. Taylor (1975) indicates that review, contrast and re-review are three characteristics of the remedial approach. The first part of the remedial approach should involve a review of the syntax which has been incompletely learned. However, intellectualization in the first part is not enough. Teachers should design drills and exercises on the basis of contrasts. The purpose of the contrast drills and exercises is to force them to use rules appropriately as a result of the comparison of what they have already known and what they are doing. The last characteristic of the remedial approach is re-review. The last stage will help to eradicate students' errors in that grammar point (p. 395-397).

Apart from the above general recommendations, some detailed solutions to each kind of error of participants are also presented. With regard to subject/verb agreement and wrong/misused words, teachers can distribute a worksheet of some common errors from previous writings and ask them to identify and correct mistakes in pairs or groups. Concerning preposition errors, teachers ask students to complete one correct preposition after a verb or phrase in a certain situation so that they can improve their knowledge of English prepositions. In terms of quantifiers and comparison, games can make the acquisition of these complicated grammar points more likely, motivating and entertaining. In fact, games help teachers to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. A lot of intense and meaningful practices are provided for learners to be exposed to language. In this way, learners are likely to experience the language rather than merely study it (Wright, Betteridge & Buckby, 1983, p. 2). Finally, so as to help students overcome errors of word order, the exercise "Unscramble the Sentences" is an effective task. Students work cooperatively to unscramble the sentences to get familiar with the order of English structures or phrases which seem to be mostly opposite to Vietnamese ones.

## **VI. CONCLUSIONS**

The study has been devoted to introducing what error analysis is and what sort of relationship it has with language learning and what contribution it provides for studies of language acquisition. The results of the study show that participants often commit errors in applying grammatical rules in the English language especially writing skill. Their errors mainly derive from the negative transfer and incomplete knowledge. They simplify and overgeneralize the rules; thus, in writing they tend to ignore grammar rules and form false concepts. Most importantly, this study has shed light on pedagogical implications for teachers to identify common trouble-spots in language learning which can be used in the preparation of effective teaching materials. Also, it helps students minimize or overcome their language learning problems.

Nevertheless, the study is limited in the following aspects. Firstly, the number of participants is limited because of time constraints. Only first-year students take part in this mini-research, therefore, the findings cannot cover all aspects of grammatical errors of Vietnamese students in writing. Hence, the scope of further studies should be more expanded to a larger sample. The sample must be selected randomly and encompass the entire population to get a more valid and reliable result.

Secondly, due to time limitations, qualitative research, which is much more reliant upon, cannot be carried out to gather an in-depth understanding of learners' errors and the reasons that govern such errors. It is recommended that in further research interviews with experienced teachers about grammatical errors should be conducted or learners can be asked about their opinions of errors. Teachers and learners are a rich source of information for researchers to gain a deeper and more thorough understanding in analyzing and interpreting the findings.

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## APPENDIX

### Paragraph 1

Everyone **want** to have a healthy life. But to achieve that is not easy. In my opinion, there are four things we can do to have a healthy life. Firstly, we should do exercise **everyday**, but just in our power, not too much. Doing exercise will help us feel stronger and improve our immune system. Moreover, we also eat and drink suitably such as eating **much vegetable**, fruit, etc. Doing that **can prevent you some sicknesses**. For instance, eating less salt, meat **decrease** both heart disease and cholesterol in blood. The third important thing is sleeping. We not only should sleep on time but also sleep enough. The last one is we must balance between work and entertainment. We should not only **concentrate in** working. It will make us feel **stress** and it is not good for our health. In conclusion, there are many ways to have a healthy life, but it is too hard. If we try, we can do it.

### Paragraph 2

It is easy to lead a healthy life. First, you should have a scientific diet. It means your meal must have a balance of nutrition. You should eat more vegetables and fruit than meat, sugar, fat and so on because the odd energy from these can cause many diseases. Therefore, reducing fast food as much as you can is good for your health. Second, **exercise is also important for you**. You can run, walk, swim or play another game such as football, volleyball, badminton, and so on. It reduces your odd energy and **make** you stronger. Finally, live **a more happy life!** You should build good relationships with everyone, have some best friends and make the most of your hobbies. Thus, try yourself best and you can live well!

### Paragraph 3

To have a good health is not a difficult thing and swimming is the best choice to have it success. Swimming is **most interested and useful sport** that somebody can take part in **regardless ages and genders**. First, **unlike with wrestling and jogging** which concentrate only a part muscle's body, swimming brings total interests such as to grow enduring and strength of muscle, to improve carriage and flexible... When you are swimming, water **help** loss of pressure in joints that rejects possibility pain of back, knee, muscles... It also **help** to circulate blood on vessel to heart better. Besides, swimming thirty to forty minutes a day for three to four days per week can lessen the danger of heart disease, having a stroke, diabetes and reducing pressure and cholesterol... last, **swimming make you feel so relaxed after working hard**. Overall, if swimming is so good, why you not try it? Let's enjoy!

### Paragraph 4

Many people nowadays are concerned about having a healthy life. However, leading healthy life is not difficult. First, you must have a healthy diet. For example, you should eat safe and clean food. In addition, you should eat various food and eat in time (three meals a day: breakfast, lunch and dinner), so that you can be prevented from gastric ulcer. Besides, you shouldn't eat too much in one meal and shouldn't eat **too much snacks**, candies or too much fried food because they will make you fat. Also, you should drink boiled water about two or three liters a day and other drinks which are good for your health, such as tea, juices, etc., but you shouldn't drink too much fizzy drinks **because they are harmful for your teeth and will make you fat**. Second, you must have healthy routines. **Smoking and drinking are very harmful for your health**. Besides, you should get up early in the morning and shouldn't take a cup of coffee or tea before going to bed, so that you can have a deep sleep to refresh your mind. Furthermore, exercising each morning, such as walking and running, is good for your health, or you can go to the gym after work about three times a week. Additionally, you should go out on Sundays to



play sport or to go camping with your friend, in order to release your stress. In conclusion, it is easy to have a healthy life.

Having a good health can lengthen your life.

Paragraph 5

A healthy life is divided into two aspects, they are: a healthy body and a healthy mind. Firstly, we have to keep our fitness. Having **a diet balance with a lot of vegetable and enough water**, and exercising regularly are things we can do to have a healthy body. Also, a healthy life needs a comfortable mind. For that, a schedule can help you work effectively, a hobby can help you relax after work and a close friend can eliminate your **pressure work**. Finally, leading healthy life is not such a hard work but it needs your effort and perseverance.

Paragraph 6

Following recommendations from the experts, good habits create a healthy life. First, eating healthy diet. **This means you eat less foods which contain lots of fat and calories**. Hamburger, coca, potato chips, etc. are examples. You should eat more fruits and vegetables. Second, **often** exercising. The lack of activity is linked to **a number of illness**, such as obesity, diseases of heart, joints and etc. Exercising is helpful for weight control, cardiovascular health and bone health. It also helps you to feel better by reducing stress. Next, eliminating bad habits. If you smoke, try to quit. If you drink much alcohol or playing video games all day, try to stop or reduce. Identify other bad habits in your life and develop a plan to eliminate them. And the last, relaxing and enjoying life. Nowadays, life is so stressful because of many factors, such as work deadline, academic pressure, money, etc. **Stress make your immune systems weaker**. It's very bad for your health. If relaxing doesn't come easy to you, try some activities like listening to music, watching movie, chatting with your friends or yoga. If you follow the recommendations above, a long life will be certainly yours.

Paragraph 7

Nowadays, what people believe to be the most precious thing is health? Health becomes even more priceless than money, gold, or diamond, for no one can maintain his life without health. However, not everyone knows how to keep healthy every day. First, doing exercises in the morning is said to be best for health. In recent researches, however, scientists have proved that working out in the evening is far better than that in the morning. **Reliable it is, everyone should follow this to be healthy**. Second, breakfast is the most important meal of all as **it provides us energy to start a day healthily**. Therefore, **having breakfast of enough nutrients can help stay enough energetic and enthusiastic to study or to work**. Besides, don't forget to have much fresh water and fruit as well. Third, a famous quote indicates that it is not work that kills man, it is worry. Heavy working or studying can surely lead a man to tension. **The solution for this problem is that the workloads should be reduced if necessary**, you ought to take your time doing such hobbies, for instance, listening to music, watching a movie, or going fishing,... Last, a regular medical check-up is essential. Thanks to this, every sickness or disease can be timely detected and treated. In short, **health is most invaluable thing a man has**. There are several ways for us to keep good health, but it is more dependent on our sense and responsibility than anything else.