

TYPES OF LEARNERS' MISTAKES

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Mistakes in language learning are generally divided into two main categories: errors and slips. According to linguist Corder (1967), errors occur due to a lack of knowledge and are systematic, while slips (or mistakes) happen when learners know the rule but fail to apply it correctly, often due to fatigue, stress, or inattention.

Keywords. *Language learning, learner errors, slips, interlingual errors, intralingual errors, error analysis, mistake correction, grammar, phonology, pragmatics*

Further classification includes:

Grammatical Mistakes

These involve incorrect use of tenses, subject-verb agreement, word order, etc.

Example: "He go to school every day." (instead of "He goes to school every day.")

Lexical Mistakes

These concern the misuse or confusion of vocabulary.

Example: "I am interesting in books." (instead of "interested")

Phonological Mistakes

Mispronunciation of words or stress patterns fall into this category.

Example: Pronouncing "live" like "leave."

Spelling Mistakes

Incorrect spelling can obscure meaning and is especially common in written work.

Example: "definatly" instead of "definitely".

Pragmatic Mistakes

These occur when learners use language that is grammatically correct but inappropriate for the context.

Example: Saying "Shut the door!" to a teacher instead of "Could you please close the door?"

Interlingual Mistakes

These arise from negative transfer or interference from the learner's first language (L1).

Intralingual Mistakes

These result from the learner's overgeneralisation or misapplication of language rules.

Importance of Categorisation

Understanding the type of mistake a learner makes is crucial for effective correction. If a teacher misinterprets an error as a slip, or vice versa, the feedback may not help the learner. Categorisation allows for:

Focused Feedback: Knowing the nature of a mistake allows the teacher to tailor feedback appropriately.

Error Analysis: Repeated patterns can be identified and addressed in classroom instruction.

Learner Autonomy: Categorisation can be shared with learners, enabling them to recognise and self-correct their mistakes.

How to Categorise Mistakes

Collect Learner Data – Gather both written and spoken samples.

Identify Mistakes – Mark all forms of non-standard language.

Determine Type – Is it grammatical, lexical, phonological, etc.?

Identify Source – Interlingual, intralingual, or performance-related?

Suggest Remediation – Plan lessons or exercises targeting frequent issues.

Challenges in Categorising Mistakes

Some mistakes may overlap categories or be difficult to assign. Additionally, the cultural and contextual use of language can complicate the identification of pragmatic errors. Teachers must also be cautious not to over-correct, as this may demotivate learners.

Conclusion. Categorising learners' mistakes is a powerful tool for both teachers and students. It provides structure to the process of error correction and aids in the development of focused language instruction. By distinguishing between types of mistakes and understanding their sources, educators can more effectively support language learners in achieving greater fluency and accuracy.

USED LITERATURE

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