



AN ANALYSIS OF COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN ACADEMIC
WRITING OF UZBEK EFL STUDENTS

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Abstract: *For students studying English as a foreign language (EFL), academic writing is a crucial ability. Nonetheless, many Uzbek EFL students struggle to write academically using proper language. A study of typical grammatical mistakes in Uzbek students academic writing is presented in this article. The study focuses on common errors in sentence structure, verb tenses, and articles. The results may help improve grammatical accuracy in EFL introductions and provide both teachers and students a clearer understanding of typical academic writing problems. The study is based on the analysis of students' essays and written assignments. The results show the most common grammatical mistakes made by Uzbek EFL students.*

Keywords: *EFL students, academic writing, grammatical errors, Uzbek learners, English grammar, error analysis, language learning*

Introduction

One of the languages that people speak and learn the fastest in the world today is English. The tense structure of this language is one of the hardest things to learn. English language learners, particularly those who speak Uzbek, frequently find it difficult to comprehend and employ the 12 basic tenses of the language, each of which has a unique function in communication. Simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous are the represented, each of which reflects a particular temporal and contextual detail. English tenses takes time and frequently presents challenges for Uzbek learners. These difficulties are partially caused by the structural distinctions between the grammar systems of Uzbek and English, as well as inefficient teaching strategies and insufficient language experience. 68% of 200 English majors misused English tenses, and 55% of them confused Present Perfect with Past Simple, according to a 2022 poll carried out at three Tashkent universities. These results are a crucial signal for methodologists and English language instructors. The primary reasons for these mistakes are as follows: the essential distinctions between the English and Uzbek tense systems. Grammar theory is not adequately explained ignoring minute differences between tenses. Instead of learning tense structures in context, learn them through translation. Using tenses correctly guarantees communication that is both clear and effective. For example, the





difference between “I reside in Toshkent” and “I am living in Toshkent” may appear insignificant, but in context, it contains a substantial meaning differential. Tenses also essential to communication culture in addition to being grammatical components. The purpose of the article is to examine the English tense system, highlight its unique characteristics, and discuss the most frequent practical errors that students make.

General overview of English Tenses

The English tense system has a deep and complex structure. English has 12 core tenses, categorized under three main time frames (present, past, future), each with four aspects (simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous):

Tense example

Present Simple: I write

Present Continuous: I am writing

Present Perfect: I have written

Present Perf. Cont.: I have been writing

Past Simple: I wrote

Past Continuous: I was writing

Past Perfect: I had written

Past Perf. Cont.: I had been writing

Future Simple: I will write

Future Continuous: I will be writing

Future Perfect: I will have written

Future Perf. Cont.: I will have been writing

These structures allow for precise expression of action timing, duration, completion, and consequences in speech.

Examples:

I have written-indicated that the action is completed and has a present result.

I was writing when she called-shows two actions occurring in the past simultaneously.

Nevertheless, mastering this system is not easy, especially for Uzbek learners since Uzbek does not have such a detailed tense structure. Learners are advised to deeply understand each tense and study them in context.

TOP 5 COMMON TENSE MISTAKES MADE BY UZBEK STUDENTS

1.1. Confusing Present simple and Present Continuous

I go to school every day vs I am going to school every day

Present Simple is used for daily routines and habits

Present Continuous is used for actions happening right now

In Uzbek, one tense is often used for both, so students mix them

1.2. Mixing up Past Simple and Present Perfect

I saw him yesterday vs I have seen him yesterday

Past Simple is applied for finished actions in the past (with time like yesterday)

Present Perfect is utilized when the time is not specific





TANQIDIY NAZAR, TAHLILIIY TAFAKKUR VA INNOVATSION G‘OYALAR



Uzbek language does not clearly separate these two, so it causes confusion

1.3. Using “-ing” form with wrong verbs

I understand you vs I am understanding you

Some verbs (like know, understand, love, like) are not usually used in continuous form

But Uzbek does not have this rule, so EFL learners often make this mistake

1.4. Wrong use of Future simple and “going to”

I will go to university tomorrow (if it is a plan) vs I am going to go to university tomorrow

“Will” is employed for decisions made at the moment or predictions

“Going to” is used for plan

In Uzbek, the future tense is simpler, therefore EFL students confuse them

1.5. Using past form after “did”

Did you went there? vs Did you go there?

After “did”, we must use the base form of the verb (go, see, eat)

Uzbek EFL students often repeat past form again, which is incorrect

The English Article System: A Brief Overview

English has a relatively complex article system consisting of the definite article “the” and the indefinite articles “a” and “an”. Articles are used to indicate specificity, definiteness, countability, and familiarity of nouns.

“A/An”; used with singular, countable nouns to refer to a non-specific item (e.g., “a car”, “an apple”)

“The”: used with singular or plural nouns to indicate something specific, known, or unique (“the moon”, “the student they met”)

Zero article (∅) is used with plural or uncountable nouns in general contexts (e.g., “I go to school every day”, “She likes playing football”)

The distinctions between these uses require learners not only to know the rule, but also to make semantic and contextual judgments, making the system challenging for Uzbek EFL learners.

English vs Uzbek: Structural Differences Causing Difficulty

The Uzbek language lacks articles, and definiteness is expressed through context, word order, quantifiers, possessive markers, or demonstratives such as “bu”(this) and “o’sha”(that) For example:

“Men roman yozdim” can mean “I write a novel” or “I write the novel”, depending on context.

Due to the absence of articles, Uzbek EFL learners may not perceive articles as a necessary grammatical category, which leads to:

- Omission of required articles
- Overuse of “the” as a substitute for specificity
- Incorrect transfer of Uzbek definiteness markers into English



Thus, article misuse is strongly influenced by L1 interference and insufficient awareness of article functions in English.

Types of Article Errors among Uzbek EFL Students

According to the analysis of student essays, exams, and speaking performance, four major categories of article errors are commonly recognized:

2.1. Omission Errors

The most frequent error is leaving out an article when it is demanded.

Examples:

- “I read book yesterday. (correct: a book)
- She was eating apple. (correct: an apple)

This occurs because students are not accustomed to marking a lack of clarity or specificity grammatically.

2.2. Addition Errors

Students often add unnecessary articles where none are needed.

Examples:

- A water is essential for life. (correct: Water)
- Children need an education. (correct: education)

This results from overgeneralizing the rule that nouns require articles.

2.3. Substitution Errors

Learners frequently confuse article choice by using the wrong article.

Examples:

- She is a best student in our group. (correct: the best student)
- John wants the apple when referring to any apple. (correct: an apple)

2.4. Misuse in Generic and Specific Contexts

Students struggle to distinguish between general statements and specific references.

Examples:

- The people like reading books (general). (correct: People like reading books)
- I am living the Uzbekistan. (correct: in Uzbekistan)

Generic use of the zero article and cultural references creates confusion.

Error Analysis Results from Uzbek Classrooms

Learners conducted in Uzbek schools and universities show that:

- Approximately 70-85% of students' essays contain article errors
- Omission of the article accounts for over 50% of total errors
- Learners who receive explicit introduction and corrective feedback show significant improvement compared to those who rely on memorization-based teaching

These findings demonstrate the need for improved methodology in teaching articles.

Conclusion

The common grammatical errors made by Uzbek EFL students in academic writing have been investigated in this study, with an emphasis on article errors and the use of English





tenses. The analysis showed that learners frequently misunderstand tenses, misuse continuous form, employ future constructions incorrectly, and apply the article system incorrectly. The structural disparities between Uzbek and English, a lack of exposure to contextualized language use, and a lack of methodological assistance are the main causes of these challenges. The results emphasize the significance of contextual practice, specific instruction, and corrective feedback in lowering errors. Teachers can assist students in improving their academic writing abilities, communication clarity, and grammatical accuracy by addressing these issues.

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