HAYEF: Journal of Education

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Examining the Written Expression of Students Who Have Learnt Turkish Abroad as a Foreign Language via Error Analysis

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the written expression of students who have learnt Turkish abroad as a second language by conducting error analysis. In line with the study purpose, we analyzed 35 different samples written by 19 students who were at A1, A2, and B1 levels. The study data included the written products by students at Comenius University in Slovakia in Turkish classes throughout six semesters consecutively. At the end of the data analysis, we found that there were 691 errors in students' written expression in total. The study findings showed that the students had errors in grammar (61%), spelling and punctuation (19%), choice of words (14%), and syntax (6%). When we examined the sources of the errors, we found out that the errors resulted from misinformation (43%), omission (37%), addition (14%), and syntax error (6%). When we examined students' errors in terms of communicative effects, we concluded that most of the errors (77%) were local errors that did not affect the whole communication, while only a small portion (23%) led to global errors that affected communication. In light of the study findings, we suggest that students who learn Turkish abroad should be provided with more in-class activities by which they can use grammar structures and rules.

Keywords: Error analysis, teaching Turkish as a foreign language, written narration

Introduction

The process of language learning naturally includes errors by students who learn a language as a second/foreign language. Identifying and correcting these errors is of crucial importance for language teaching.

Analyzing students' errors is necessary to think over these errors and give students constructive feedback about them. Analyzing such errors will show that the errors are mostly made in some specific topics, or students have difficulty in the same or similar topics. Student errors can arise from misinformation, transfer from the native language, or overgeneralization. Error analysis makes it possible to identify in which topics students mostly make errors and give effective and constructive feedback after identifying the actual sources of errors. Error analysis is one of the methods frequently used to examine student errors in language teaching. Error analysis is a method based on examining students' written and oral products to identify and analyze these errors.

Analyzing the errors in the written and oral products of students who learn Turkish as a second language will guide teachers as well as those who prepare curriculum and material in the field.

Emergence of Error Analysis

The behaviorist theory, which considers language learning the same as acquiring a habit, affected language learning until the late 1960s. With the effect of behaviorist theory, it was widely thought that errors arose from making the same errors in the target language as in the native language, and so, researchers mostly focused on comparing the native

language with the target language (Erdoğan, 2005, p. 262). This type of analysis, which aims at analyzing students' errors by comparing the native language and target language, is called *contrastive analysis.*

Contrastive analysis emerged as a product of a period when linguistics and psychology were shaped by structuralist and behaviorist theories (Corder, 1975, p. 202). It means examining the native language and the target language comparatively, and it relies on the idea that the more similarities there are between the two languages, the fewer difficulties there will be as a result of positive transference, while there will be more difficulties as the differences increase (Brown, 2014, pp. 254–255). Contrastive analysis has received some criticism. Önder (2017, pp. 18–19) divides the criticisms against contrastive analysis into four categories. These categories include ignoring the other factors that affect second language teaching, having difficulties arising from similarities between the two languages, describing the process of learning the target language insufficiently, and associating all the errors with native language attempts.

On the other hand, the developments in linguistics and psychology have changed the idea that all the errors resulted from students' native language (Corder, 1967, p. 162). When it became obvious that all the errors did not arise from transferring the native language into the target language, contrastive analysis turned out to be insufficient to address student errors. As a result of all these, *error analysis* emerged as an alternative to contrastive analysis.

Error analysis emerged as a sub-branch of applied linguistics in the 1960s, and it started from the idea that many of the errors did not arise

from students' native language, but they reflected global learning strategies (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 201). This approach differs from previous ones in that it examines not only the errors led by the transference from the native language into the target language but also all other possible errors (Brown, 2014, p. 250). Error analysis can be described as observing students' errors, categorizing them in accordance with a particular system, and analyzing them accordingly (Bölükbaş, 2011, p. 1359). It relies on observing, analyzing, and categorizing learners' errors in order to reveal the system operating in them (Brown, 2014, p. 250).

One of the most important differences between contrastive analysis and error analysis is timing. As stated by İşler (2002, p. 130), contrastive analysis is performed in advance, while error analysis is performed afterward as it addresses the data gathered from students' products.

The approach of error analysis differs from contrastive analysis in that it does not assume that students' errors do not result from the effect of their native language. In contrast, this approach does not have any assumptions about the reasons for the types of errors; it prescribes collecting data from the real conversations of those who learn the language and then categorizing the types of errors in light of the collected data (Burt, 1975, p. 54).

It would be better to consider contrastive analysis not as an alternative to error analysis but as its supplement and support (İşler, 2002, p. 131). According to Dede (1983, p. 123), error analysis starts from the idea that errors do not only result from native language attempts, and it makes up the deficiencies of contrastive analysis. Because of that, it is necessary to consider error analysis as an approach that replaces contrastive analysis but that gives the opportunity to verify the data gathered from contrastive analysis and to overcome the restrictions and problems of contrastive analysis as a supplement. On the other hand, it should be noted that although contrastive analysis falls short of explaining the reasons for students' errors, the data gathered from it will contribute to language teaching. Bölükbaş (2011, p. 1365) indicates that some of the errors made by students are caused by the transference from their native language, and so it is necessary to benefit from contrastive analysis. Similarly, Dede (1983) underlines the importance of examining the similarities and differences between the native language and target language, and listing them in the order of difficulty, adds that it is of crucial importance to prepare teaching materials accordingly, and lastly explains how to benefit from contrastive analysis in language teaching.

On the Concepts of Error and Mistake

The literature review shows that the concepts of error and mistake refer to different aspects of difficulties learners face. Knowing the difference between the two concepts is significant for teachers to adopt an appropriate attitude regarding errors and mistakes in class.

The distinction between error and mistake is based on Chomsky's (1965) concepts of performance and competence. Errors are basically divided into two as performance errors and competence errors. *Competence errors* generally result from lack of knowledge, and it is about competence. *Performance errors* are, on the other hand, errors related to performance such as carelessness and tiredness. The literature uses the concept of *mistake* for performance errors in order to differentiate between these two errors (Dulay et al., 1982, p. 139).

While errors result from lack of knowledge, mistakes result from carelessness, tiredness, and any other aspect of performance (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 201). Similarly, Ellis (2003, p. 17) states that errors arise from students' lack of knowledge, and they consistently appear in their performance at different times. On the other hand, mistakes occasionally arise in students' performance, and they occur when students cannot reflect their knowledge on their performance.

Error can be described as the use of a language unit by learners of a second/foreign language in their written/oral expression in a way that is accepted to be wrong or deficient learning by the native speakers of a language or by those who can speak a target language fluently (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 201). Dulay et al. (1982, p. 138) define errors as deficient aspects of students' written or oral expression.

In light of aforementioned knowledge, it seems possible to state that mistakes do not appear systematically, and they emerge depending on physical, emotional, or psychological factors, whereas errors appear systematically, and they result from lack of knowledge, not from other external factors. Hence, it is obvious that it is not necessary for teachers to address mistakes seriously, while it is important to address errors in class with effective and right feedback.

The Process of Error Analysis

Ellis (2003) suggests the following steps for error analysis:

1. *Identifying the errors:* It should be decided if the deficiencies in students' oral or written expression are a mistake or an error.
2. *Defining errors:* After errors are identified, they can be categorized in many different ways. Errors can be categorized grammatically or under titles such as deficiency, misinformation, or misordering.
3. *Explaining the errors:* Errors are generally systematic, and they do not appear casually. After identifying errors, it is necessary to examine why they appear. Errors can arise from various cases such as creating a rule, deficiency, overgeneralization, and transference.
4. *Evaluating the errors:* The main goal of error analysis is to help students with language learning, which makes it important to evaluate errors carefully. As some errors hinder communication, they should be evaluated more carefully, and students should focus on these errors more carefully. In this line, we can examine errors under two categories, which are *global errors* and *local errors*. Global errors distort the general structure of a sentence and make it difficult to understand the sentence, whereas local errors affect only a single component of a sentence and are less likely to affect communication negatively (Ellis, 2003, pp. 19–20).

Similar to Ellis's classification, the literature is rich with various classifications to explain and evaluate errors according to the types and sources of errors. Corder (1973, 1975) divides errors into four groups, which are lack of a basic unit (1), adding an irrelevant or unnecessary unit (2), choosing a wrong unit (3), misordering the units (4), and adds that it would be better to consider different categories such as spelling, phonologic, morphologic, and syntactic categories in classifying errors. Dulay et al. (1982, p. 150) indicate that errors should be examined in four different groups such as "misinformation, omission, addition, and misordering" in order to analyze the errors in surface structure.

Richards and Schmidt (2010, p. 201) divides errors into two as intralingual and interlingual errors in its most basic sense. While interlingual errors appear when learners make transference from their native language (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 294), intralingual errors depend on different reasons such as educational process and factors related to learners.

Richards (1974, p. 174) states that intralingual errors have four basic sources, which are (1) overgeneralization, (2) not knowing the rules, (3) applying the rules insufficiently, and (4) developing a concept. Richards and Schmidt (2010, pp. 201–202) list the reasons for intralingual errors as follows:

1. *Overgeneralization:* Errors resulting from generalizing the rules in the target language in inappropriate contexts.
2. *Simplification:* Errors resulting from using the grammatical rules of the target language in a simpler way.

3. *Developmental error:* Errors reflecting the natural steps of development.
4. *Communication-based error:* Errors resulting from communication strategies.
5. *Induced error:* Errors resulting from transference in education.
6. *Error of avoidance:* Errors resulting from not using particular structures in the target language because of considering them difficult.
7. *Error of overproduction:* Errors resulting from using structures often.

Benefits of Error Analysis

Error analysis is necessary to identify why students make errors, give teachers insight about students' errors, and provide students with the opportunity to correct their own errors (Ellis, 2003, p. 15). Being familiar with students' actual errors is a valuable guide in language classes to identify the order and emphasis of teaching (Burt, 1975, p. 53). Error analysis can be a guide for teachers to review their teaching methods and materials, evaluate teaching process, and re-arrange curriculum (Bölükbaş, 2011, p. 1359). Corder (1967, p. 167) indicates that error analysis has three main contributions to teaching a language. The first one is that error analysis will guide teachers about how much students have progressed and how close they are to learning objectives. Furthermore, error analysis will contribute to researchers about how a language is learnt/acquired by giving information on which strategies students use and what kind of a process they go through. The third and most important contribution of error analysis is to provide students with new learning opportunities starting from their errors. In this context, making an error can be considered as a tool which is used by students to learn.

Literature Review

Aktaş (2021) conducted a study to examine the writing skills of secondary school students in Turkey, found that the students had a low level of success in writing skill, and also concluded that the students could not gain the learning outcomes in writing skill.

Bayazıt (2019) found in a study that students' errors in syntax resulted from morphological and grammatical errors.

Çerçi et al. (2016) examined students' errors in writing according to their level of language. They found out that the least number of grammatical errors appeared at A1 level, which was thought to result from the fact that there is a limited variety of grammatical topics included in A1 level. They also concluded that the most common grammar errors were about affix. They observed that syntax errors were most common at A1 and A2 levels. They also noticed that errors of spelling and punctuation decreased in number as students' level of language increased.

Güler and Eyüp (2016) conducted a study to examine the use of oblique by students who were learning Turkish in London. They found out that the most common errors were about inessive case and dative case.

Çetinkaya (2015) carried out a study to identify the errors in writing by students who were at B2 level. The study findings showed that the most common errors of students were morphological, syntactic, orthographic, and lexical. Moreover, it was found that the errors mostly resulted from cognitive processes such as displacement, addition, and omission.

Yılmaz and Bircan (2015) conducted a study in which they examined A2 students' writing via error analysis. They concluded that the errors mostly resulted from spelling and punctuation, grammar, syntax, and choice of words.

Ak-Başoğul and Can (2014) examined the errors in writing by Balkan students. In their study, they examined students' errors in two groups, which were grammar and spelling. They found out that the students had the most common errors in phonology-based spelling followed by cases and noun phrases.

Emiroğlu (2014) identified in which areas foreign students who were learning Turkish had the most difficulties in writing. The study findings showed that the students had difficulty in phonology the most, while they were better at vocabulary, relations of meaning, types of words, and word groups. On the other hand, it was concluded that spelling and punctuation was another topic in which students had difficulty.

Büyükikiz and Hasırcı (2013) conducted a study to examine B2 students' writing via error analysis. They found out that the most common errors were in spelling and punctuation, grammar, word choice, and syntax.

Bölükbaş and Yargin (2012) used error analysis to examine the use of Turkish tenses by students learning Turkish at Kirghizstan Manas University. They found out that the students mostly had errors in past indefinite. They observed that the students had difficulty using the structures that were lacking in their native language, and instead, they preferred using the structures that were present in their native language. As students' level of language increased, they got better at using tenses.

Bölükbaş (2011) conducted a study to examine writing skills of Arabian students and found that the most frequent errors among students were in spelling and punctuation, grammar, choice of word, and syntax. Bölükbaş (2011) stated in the study that student errors resulted from transference from native language, teaching and learning processes, as well as materials.

Adalar-Subaşı (2010) conducted a study to analyze errors in essays of Arabian students learning Turkish in Turkey and found out that the errors mostly resulted from differences between students' native language and the Turkish language.

Albayrak (2010) carried out a study to evaluate Mongol students' writing. The study focused on phonology, conceptual signs, conceptual relations, sentence, spelling, and punctuation individually.

Ersoy (1997) concluded in a study that the students mostly had errors in palatal harmony. On the other hand, morphological errors mostly resulted from conjugation, declension, and accusative case. Syntactic errors were mostly about object and verb agreement, while spelling and punctuation errors were mostly about the use of apostrophe.

The current study aims at evaluating errors in writing by students who were learning Turkish in another country as a foreign language via the method of error analysis. In this line, we sought answers to the following questions:

1. What kind of errors are there in students' writing?
2. What are the sources of students' errors in writing?
3. What are the communicative effects of students' errors in writing?

Methods

Research Model
In the current study, we employed descriptive analysis, one of the qualitative study designs. Descriptive analysis is a qualitative analysis that relies on summarizing the data according to previously identified themes and interpreting them accordingly (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 239).

Study Group
The study group of the current study is composed of 19 foreign students who were learning Turkish at Comenius University in Slovakia between 2019 and 2022. Table 1 shows the qualities of the participants.

Table 1.
Qualities of the Participants

Student	Native Language	Level of Language	Age
S1	Slovak	B1	37
S2	Slovak	B1	23
S3	Hungarian	A2	27
S4	Slovak	A2	28
S5	Slovak	A2	26
S6	Hungarian	A2	22
S7	Slovak	A2	22
S8	Hungarian	A2	23
S9	Slovak	A1	24
S10	Slovak	A1	21
S11	Slovak	B1	30
S12	Slovak	A1	25
S13	Slovak	A1	23
S14	Slovak	A1	21
S15	Hungarian	A1	21
S16	Hungarian	A2	24
S17	Slovak	B1	23
S18	Slovak	A2	27
S19	Hungarian	A2	26

As is seen in Table 1, the native language of 13 participants was Slovak, while it was Hungarian for 6 of them. Six of the participants had a language level of A1, nine of them were A2, and four of them were B1. The participants' ages varied between 21 and 37.

Collecting and Analyzing the Study Data

We collected the study data from among the written products of students who took Turkish courses at the University of Comenius in Slovakia for six terms consecutively. As stated by Sasi and Lai (2021), the duration of the study is a very significant element when the study employs error analysis, and extending the duration of a study makes it possible to consider the fluctuation in the language proficiency levels of the participants. Because of that reason, the current study data were collected from the writing products of 19 students who took Turkish for 6 consecutive terms.

Writing tasks given to A1 level students during a semester included daily routines, festivals and special days, camping, describing physical qualities and personality, and describing a famous person; A2 level students were asked to write a recipe, a letter of apology, description of a house, holiday plan, a tale; B1 level students were asked to write about comparison of languages, types of intelligence, raising a child, and a letter of apology. We analyzed 35 different texts including 4714 words in total.

We analyzed the study data according to the method of error analysis. We did not include interlingual errors in the current study; we only focused on intralingual errors. We categorized the intralingual errors which we identified at the end of the analysis as grammatical errors, syntactic errors, and errors resulting from choice of word, spelling, and punctuation. Furthermore, we relied on Corder's (1973, 1975) classification of errors as "lack of a basic element, adding an irrelevant element, choosing a wrong element, and misordering elements" and we identified intralingual sources of errors as omission, addition, choosing a wrong element, and misordering. On the other hand, considering Ellis' (2003) classification of local and global errors about identifying to what extent errors affect communication, we evaluated the errors in terms of their communicative effects.

We received opinions from a lecturer and an instructor about the categories of error classification and error analysis of the data set in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the analysis. We conducted the data analysis in line with the opinions of the experts.

Results

We found 691 errors in 35 different texts included in the current study. The first sub-problem of the study is "What kind of errors are there in students' writing?" In this line, Figure 1 shows the results of the analysis regarding 691 errors in the texts.

As is seen in Figure 1, the participant students had errors resulting mostly from grammar (61%). On the other hand, they had the least errors in syntax (6%).

When we examined students' errors in detail, we found out that the category of grammar included morphological errors (52.21%), the category of spelling and punctuation included phonological errors (51.2%), the category of word choice included errors in vocabulary (77.55%), and the category of syntax included ordering elements (70.73%).

Examples of Errors

Examples of Regarding Grammatical Error

Errors of Morphology

Tatil gittim: Tatile gittim.[1]

Güzellik karıştırmadan sonra diğer malzemeleri ekliyoruz: Güze*lce* karıştır*dıktan sonra* diğer malzemeleri ekliyoruz

Hafta sonunda ailemle ızgara *yaparken* çok seviyorum: Hafta sonunda ailemle ızgara *yapmayı* çok seviyorum.

Errors of Phrases

Evimiz iyi ve avantajlı bölgesindedir: Evimiz *Bratislava'nın* iyi ve avantajlı bölgesindedir.

Slovak yemekler biraz farklı: *Slovak yemekleri* biraz farklı.

Patates hamurdan küçük makarna gibi ve slovak tuzlu peynirle servis edilir: *Patates hamurundan* küçük makarna yapılır ve *tuzlu Slovak peyniriyle* servis edilir.

Errors of Mood

Bu kadın sık sık *sarhoş oldu*: Bu kadın sık sık *sarhoş oluyordu*.

Gel, bakın: *Gelin, bakalım.*

Errors of Lacking Elements

Kocaların da kadınların hayatlarında çok önemli rolu var. Onlar desteklemeliler: Kocaların da kadınların hayatlarında çok önemli rolü var. Onlar *eşlerini* desteklemeliler.

Asansör seyredelim: Asansör*den* *İzmir'i* seyredelim.

Bugün çok güzel Türk yemek: Bugün çok güzel Türk yemeği *yapacağım.*

Errors of Punctuation and Spelling

Phonology-Based Spelling Errors

Bir arkadaş bana *geçe* aradı. "Yasemin yoldayım ve *benzimi* yok." dedi: Bir arkadaş beni *gece* aradı. "Yasemin yoldayım ve *benzinim* yok." dedi.

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1 *In the current study, students' errors are underlined and in italic. The corrections are given in italic after a colon.*
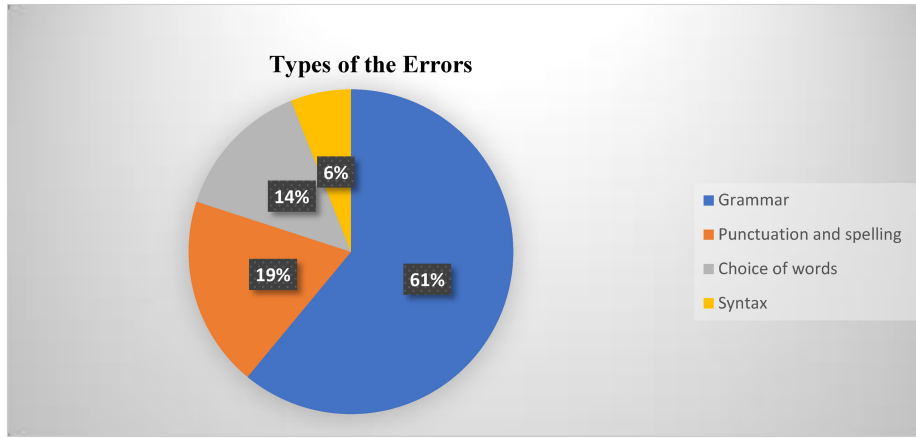
Figure 1.
Types of Errors in Students' Writing.

Hos geldiniz: *Hoş* geldiniz.

Annesine ve babağına yaptığı gibi çocuğun da öyle: Annesine ve *babasına* yaptığı çocuğun da öyle.

Word-Based Spelling Errors

Size *kültürümüz* hakkında *bir kaç* tavsiye vermek istiyorum: Size kültürümüz hakkında *birkaç* tavsiye vermek istiyorum.

Spelling Errors About Conjunctions

Mutfakta de kiler var: Mutfakta *da* kiler var.

Sahillerde genellikle restoranlar de var: Sahillerde genellikle restoranlar *da* var.

O zamanda siz onlardan daha başarılı olacaksınız: O *zaman da* siz onlardan daha başarılı olacaksınız.

Errors of Punctuation

Burada çeşitli kitaplarım var - roman, tarıhı kitaplar, rehberler, dil *kitaplar,...* : Burada çeşitli kitaplarım var*:* roman, tarihi kitaplar, rehberler, dil kitapları...

Parise önce hiç gitmedim ama çok istiyorum: *Paris'e* önceden hiç gitmedim ama çok istiyorum.

Sizin hik*a*yesi çok ilham verici: Sizin hik*â*yeniz çok ilham verici.

3-üncü günde şanslıydım ve 6 bizon gördük: *3. gün* çok şanslıydım ve 6 bizon gördük.

Errors About Choice of Word

Errors Resulting from Wrong Choice of Word

Uyumak için uyku tulumu paketledim, *ılık* kıyafetleri ve çadır: Uyumak için uyku tulumunu paketledim. *Kalın* kıyafetleri ve çadırı…

Sarımsağı, tuzu, karabiberi *sıkın:* Sarımsağı, tuzu, karabiberi *ekleyin.*

Türk kelimeleri Slovaklar için hatırlamak kolay değil: Slovaklar için *Türkçe* kelimeleri hatırlamak kolay değil.

Sizin kocası size yardım ediyour mu? Mesela evde *çamaşır yapıyor mu*? Ve ya *vakum yapıyor mu:* Sizin kocanız size yardım ediyor mu? Mesela evde *çamaşır yıkıyor mu*? Veya evi *süpürüyor mu*?

Errors Resulting from Choosing Irrelevant Words

Evimiz daireydi ve üçüncü katta *vardı:* Evimiz daireydi ve üçüncü *kattaydı.*

Anneanne, dede, anne, baba, erkek ve kız kardeşler *için* ilk kez tatilde birlikte gittiler: Anneanne, dede, anne, baba, erkek ve kız kardeşler ilk kez tatile birlikte gittiler.

Errors of Syntax

Errors Resulting from Misordering Elements

Nasıl günü geçti: Günü nasıl geçti?

Ansansör´da en çok güzel manzarasi var: En güzel manzara Asansör'de var.

Müzik yüksek sesle dinledi: Yüksek sesle müzik dinledi.

Errors Resulting from Misordering Phrases

Canım benim arkadaşım: Benim canım arkadaşım.

Hepsi ekleri bilmeden Türkçe konuşmak zor: Eklerin hepsini bilmeden Türkçe konuşmak zor.

The second sub-problem of the current study is "What are the sources of students' errors in writing?" In this line, Figure 2 shows the results of the analysis.

As is seen in Figure 2, the students most frequently had errors resulting from wrong choice (43%), while the percentage of errors resulting from omission is also quite high (37%). On the other hand, the students had the fewest errors about misordering (6%).

Examples Regarding the Sources of Errors

Errors Resulting from Wrong Choice

Geleçek yil bir kucuk turu yapalım: Gelecek yıl küçük bir tur yapalım.

Bu odasında küçük bir *iş köşesi* yaptım: Bu odada küçük bir *çalışma köşesi* yaptım.
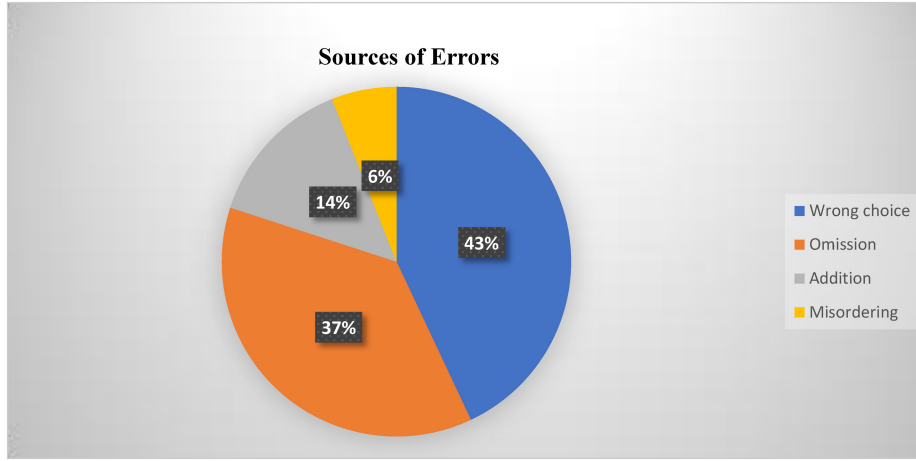
Figure 2.
Sources of Errors.

Odada bir *evlilik yatağı*, iki komodin, bir koltuk, iki dolap, *bebek yatağı* büyük pencere ve balkon kapısı var: Odada *iki kişilik yatak*, iki komodin, bir koltuk, iki dolap, *beşik*, büyük bir pencere ve balkon kapısı var.

Errors Resulting from Omission

Çamaşır odasında çamaşır makinesi: Çamaşır odasında çamaşır makinesi *var*.

Evizden okul ve mağaza uzak değil: *Evimizden* okul ve mağaza uzak değil.

Eski müze ziyaret ettik: *Eski müzeyi* ziyaret ettik.

Errors Resulting from Addition

Arkadaşım*la ile* gittik: *Arkadaşımla* gittik.

Bu en sevdiğim *bayramı*: Bu en sevdiğim *bayram.*

Onun hiç *arkadaşları* yokmuş: Onun hiç *arkadaşı* yokmuş.

Errors Resulting from Misordering

Ezgi arkadaşım: Arkadaşım Ezgi.

Tatile yanıma *aldım* terlikler, sandalet, elbise, tişörtler, şortlar ve güneş gözlüğü, şapka, plaj çantası ve güneş kremi: Tatilde yanıma terlik, sandalet, elbise, tişört, şort, güneş gözlüğü, şapka, plaj çantası ve güneş kremi *aldım.*

Poloniny doğa Slovakya'da, Nová Sedlica'ya *küçük bir şehir yakın*: Poloniny Doğu Slovakya'da, Nová Sedlica'ya *yakın küçük bir şehir.*

The third sub-problem is "What are the communicative effects of students' errors in writing?" Figure 3 below shows the results of the analysis conducted in this line.

According to Figure 3, students' errors in writing mostly affected communication locally (77%), a small group of the errors affected it globally (23%).

Examples of Errors Regarding Their Communicative Effects

Errors Affecting Communication Globally

Denge bana problem yapmıyor: Dengemi koruyabilirim.

Bazaarda acibeler alayım: Pazardan elbiseler alayım.

Birçok tane bile Çekya'ya taşındığımızda aldık ve şimdi onlar daha az kullanılan odalarda var: Birçok eşyamızı Çekya'ya taşındığımızda aldık ve şimdi o eşyalar daha az kullandığımız odalarda duruyor.

Sizin karar üniversiteye daha sonra başlamak doğruydu, çünkü çocuklar olmasından sonra özel hayat bitirmez ve kadınlara ne istiyorlar bu yapmak lazım: Sizin üniversiteye sonradan başlama kararınız doğruydu çünkü çocuklar olduktan sonra özel hayat bitmez ve kadınlar ne istiyorlarsa onu yapmalılar.
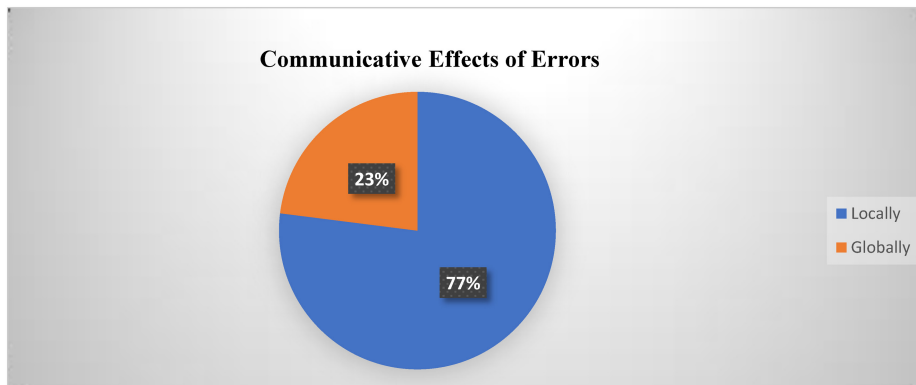

Figure 3.
Communicative Effects of Errors.

Errors Affecting Communication Locally

Ama apartman binasın arkasında Tuna'nın <u>kanalı</u> ve bir çayır vardı: Ama apartman binasının arkasında Tuna'nın *bir kolu* ve çayır vardı.

Türk <u>dil</u> eklemeli bir dili, Slovak <u>dil kaynaşma dili:</u> Türk *dili* eklemeli bir dil, Slovak dili ise *çekimli bir dil.*

Çok hızlı <u>Çekçe grameri</u> öğrendim: *Çekçenin gramerini* çok hızlı öğrendim.

Bazı evlerde size <u>mısafır terlığı vereyecekler</u>: Bazı evlerde size *misafir terliği verecekler.*

Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the written expression of students who learn Turkish abroad as a foreign language. In this study, we reviewed 35 different texts written by 19 students whose levels of Turkish were A1, A2, or B1. At the end of the study, we found out that there were 691 errors in the written products of the participant students.

We analyzed the errors in the texts according to their type. At the end of this analysis, we concluded that 61% of the errors were about grammar, 19% of them were about spelling and punctuation, 14% of them were about word choice, and 6% of them were about syntax. Therefore, it is obvious that most of the errors made by the participant students in the current study were grammatical. Similar studies in the literature (Bölükbaş, 2011; Büyükikiz & Hasırcı, 2013; Özkan, 2021; Yılmaz & Bircan, 2015) concluded that most of the errors were about spelling and punctuation followed by grammar. Hence, the current study findings do not support the previous studies in the literature. The common feature of the said studies is that they were all conducted in centers where Turkish was taught in Turkey. On the other hand, we conducted the current study with students learning Turkish in a foreign country. We concluded in the current study that the students had grammatical errors the most, and this might be because students could not find enough opportunities to use grammar rules in practice, and so they could not internalize the grammar rules. Arhan (2015) carried out a study to examine the errors of case suffixes in writing the expressions of A1 and A2 level students who were learning Turkish in Egypt and indicated that language learning environment was one of the reasons why students made errors of case suffixes. Likewise, the study conducted by Emek (2021) with students who were learning Turkish in Algeria concluded that the most frequent error type was about spelling and punctuation (37%) as well as grammar (37%), which might be indicating that students who learn Turkish in a foreign country have more grammatical errors depending on language learning environment. Considering all these findings, it is clear that those who learn Turkish in a foreign country have more grammatical errors than any other types of error when compared to those who learn Turkish in Turkey.

Another finding of the current study is that errors in spelling and punctuation were fewer when compared to similar studies in the literature. This might result from the fact that this study was conducted with students whose native languages were Slovak and Hungarian, and there are no important differences between Turkish and the other two languages, so there were fewer errors in spelling and punctuation. In fact, Aytan and Güney (2015) found out in a study that students whose native language was Arabic had errors in spelling and punctuation the most and observed that the native language of the students affected the type of the error students made. On the other hand, the current study finding that students had the fewest errors in syntax supports the previous study findings in the literature (Bölükbaş, 2011; Büyükikiz & Hasırcı, 2013; İpek & Aliyeva-Çınar, 2021; Kırbaş, 2017).

We re-classified the types of errors in the current study and tried to analyze them in detail. In this line, grammatical errors were mostly about morphology (52.21%). This finding reinforces the previous study findings by İpek and Aliyeva-Çınar (2021) as well as Özarslan (2018), who concluded that the students had morphological errors the most. The reason why students had morphological errors the most might be that Turkish is an agglutinative language. According to another finding of the current study, students had phonology-based errors in the category of spelling and punctuation the most (51.2%), and this finding supports the findings of the studies conducted by Ak-Başoğul and Can (2014). On the other hand, the most frequent vocabulary errors resulted from wrong choice of words (77.55%), while syntax errors were mostly due to misordering elements (70.73%).

In the current study, we also analyzed the sources of errors and found out that the errors mostly resulted from wrong choice (43%), omission (37%), addition (14%), and misordering (6%). Jabeen et al. (2015) conducted a study to examine the errors of Pakistani and Iranian students who were learning English as a second/foreign language, and they concluded that the sources of the errors were the same in order as the current study. Similarly, Sasi and Lai (2021) carried out a study to analyze the errors in writing of Taiwanese university students who were learning English, and they concluded that the errors resulted from wrong choice and omission the most.

When we evaluated students' errors in terms of their communicative effects, we found out that 77% of the errors were local errors that did not affect communication, while 23% of them were global errors that affected communication. The current finding complies with the study conducted by Çetinkaya (2015), who concluded in a study that local errors were 81.31% and global errors were 14.84%. Considering the fact that the ultimate goal of language teaching is to communicate in the target language, it is a positive thing to see that most of the errors were local errors that did not affect the whole communication. On the other hand, Brown (2014, pp. 250–251) starts from the idea that the main goal of language teaching is to be able to communicate fluently in the target language and warns teachers that focusing on students' errors will prevent positive reinforcement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It should be noted that errors are not always bad, and they are a natural element of language learning process. However, as stated by Ellis (2003, p. 15), error analysis is necessary to identify why students make errors, give teachers information about students' errors, and provide students with the opportunity to correct their errors. Using the method of error analysis in the field of teaching Turkish as a foreign language is significant to evaluate the issues where foreign students have difficulty in learning Turkish and to focus on the areas where students have difficulty. Furthermore, it will be helpful to provide students with more in-class activities to use grammar structures and practice them in order to decrease the number of errors made by those who learn Turkish in a foreign country. On the other hand, further research to comparatively analyze the errors in writing made by those who learn Turkish in Turkey and in other countries will contribute to the literature in terms of revealing the effect of language learning environment on the type of error.

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