

THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' SPEECH ERROR IN BUSINESS PLAN PRESENTATION

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Abstract. This descriptive qualitative research aims to analyze the patterns of speaking errors exhibited by ten sixth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Manado. Data were collected during business plan presentations in the English for Business and Public Presentation course. Data collection involved audio-visual recordings and participant observation, which were then transcribed verbatim. The subjects of this study were ten sixth-semester students enrolled in the English for Business and Public Presentation course. Data analysis was conducted inductively by identifying, categorizing, and deeply analyzing each speaking error identified in the transcripts. Based on the findings, the students made some dominant grammatical errors, significant fluency disturbances (including frequent pauses and false starts), and lexical and syntactic challenges, such as incomplete sentences and inappropriate verb forms. This study highlights the diagnostic potential of speaking error analysis in identifying challenges in foreign language processing. Pedagogically, these findings recommend focused teaching interventions to develop automatic oral fluency and practical strategic competence, better preparing students for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) communication.

Keywords: Speech Errors, Business Plan, Presentation

Abstrak. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pola kesalahan berbicara yang ditunjukkan oleh sepuluh mahasiswa semester keenam program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Negeri Manado. Data dikumpulkan selama presentasi rencana bisnis dalam mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris untuk Bisnis dan Presentasi Publik. Pengumpulan data menggunakan perekaman audio-visual dan observasi partisipan, yang kemudian ditranskrip secara verbatim. Subjek penelitian ini adalah sepuluh mahasiswa semester enam yang terdaftar dalam mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris untuk Bisnis dan Presentasi Publik. Analisis data dilakukan secara induktif dengan mengidentifikasi, mengkategorikan, dan menganalisis secara mendalam setiap kesalahan berbicara yang teridentifikasi dalam transkrip. Berdasarkan temuan, mahasiswa melakukan beberapa kesalahan tata bahasa yang dominan, kesalahan kelancaran berbicara yang signifikan (termasuk jeda yang sering dan awal yang salah), serta kesalahan leksikal dan sintaksis, seperti kalimat yang tidak lengkap dan bentuk kata kerja yang tidak tepat. Penelitian ini fokus pada potensi diagnostik analisis kesalahan berbicara dalam mengidentifikasi permasalahan dalam pemrosesan bahasa asing. Secara pedagogis, temuan ini merekomendasikan intervensi pengajaran yang berfokus untuk mengembangkan kelancaran lisan otomatis dan kompetensi strategis praktis, sehingga mempersiapkan mahasiswa dengan lebih baik untuk komunikasi Bahasa Inggris untuk Tujuan Khusus (ESP).

Kata Kunci: Kesalahan Bicara, Rencana Bisnis, Presentasi

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INTRODUCTION

English plays a crucial role in professional fields particularly in business and public relations settings. In this increasingly connected world, the ability to communicate orally effectively and professionally is key for every individual. Additionally, Syafrizal (2015) explains that students, as members of society, cannot function without speaking, as it is the primary and essential means of communication for all activities, including bargaining and selling. For students who are engaged as foreign language learners, mastering spoken English for specialized purposes, such as those in professional fields, presents unique challenges. These challenges often manifest themselves in a variety of speaking errors which, if not addressed, can hinder clarity, presentation credibility, and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of the message being conveyed.

Otherwise, in academic settings, particularly in English for Business and Public Relations classes, a recurrent linguistic phenomenon is observable during high-stakes communicative events, such as business plan presentations. In this situation, students frequently exhibit systematic deviations from their intended utterances despite diligent preparation and a strong foundation in English grammar and vocabulary. This speech contains a range of linguistic flaws, including enduring grammatical irregularities, evident inconsistencies that interrupt the natural flow of speech, and intrinsic challenges in accurate lexical retrieval and the preservation of complex syntactic structures in real-time. These are not merely random mistakes but systematic reflections of the intricate and often challenging underlying cognitive processes involved in spontaneous language production.

From a foundational psycholinguistic perspective, these speech errors, often termed “slips of the tongue,” are more than simple imperfections in performance. In addition, a performance error is essentially a mistake, like a random guess or a slip, indicating that someone failed to properly apply a system they already know. It is an issue or imperfection in the process of speaking. From a linguistic perspective, speech errors can represent deviation from established grammar of an adult native speaker, reflecting the student's current stage of interlanguage competence (Syafrizal, 2015)). Thus, such errors in the spontaneous speech of students indicate ongoing language processing efforts and clarify the dynamic nature of language development. Therefore, students can naturally produce errors when they speak in an academic presentation.

Additionally, fluent and precise oral communication is essential in teaching and learning process particularly in English for Business and Public Relation subject. So, it is essential to understand the specific characteristics of speech errors that university students often

experience. While general research on foreign students' errors is extensive, a focused investigation into the particular patterns of errors that emerge in the highly demanding context of specialized business presentations offers significant pedagogical relevance. Meanwhile, previous research consistently shows that students exhibit a variety of speech errors. For instance, Pravitasari et al (2021) in their study found that eight distinct types of speech errors from Clark and Clark's classification, specifically including silent pauses, filled pauses, retraced false starts, corrections, interjections, stutters, and slips of the tongue. Among these observed errors, silent pauses were found to be the most predominant, followed by slips of the tongue, with filled pauses and repeats also occurring frequently in descending order of commonness.

Additionally, fluent and precise oral communication is essential in the teaching and learning process particularly in English for Business and Public Relations subjects. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the distinct characteristics of speech errors that university students frequently encounter. While general research on international students' errors is extensive, a focused investigation into the particular patterns of errors that emerge in the highly demanding context of specialized business presentations offers significant pedagogical relevance. Meanwhile, previous research consistently shows that students exhibit a variety of speech errors. For instance, Pravitasari et al. (2021) in their study found that eight distinct types of speech errors from Clark and Clark's classification, specifically including silent pauses, filled pauses, retraced false starts, corrections, interjections, stutters, and slips of the tongue. Among these observed errors, silent pauses were found to be the most predominant, followed by slips of the tongue, with filled pauses and repeats also occurring frequently in descending order of commonness.

Furthermore, Fadhila (2013), who analyzed university students' academic speaking, described speech errors as stemming from cognitive and psychological processes, while interlingual and intralingual transfer are the primary sources of lexical and grammatical mistakes. Nuruzzakiyyah & Yahya (2022) described how speakers experience nervousness, which cognitively diminishes their ability to articulate thoughts. It is because anxiety interferes with the planning and execution of their speech, making these processes ineffective. Consequently, individuals who are concerned about their utterances tend to become more deliberate and selective in their word choices.

This research will systematically analyze and categorize the types of speech errors made by sixth-semester students in the English Education Department during their business presentations. Such an empirically grounded analysis is crucial for developing targeted

pedagogical interventions, refining existing lesson plans, and ultimately enhancing the practical communicative competence of future English education graduates as they transition into professional spheres requiring advanced English oral proficiency. Based on the problem, this research aims to analyze the patterns of speaking errors exhibited by ten sixth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Manado. By identifying prevalent speech errors, students can become more aware of their linguistic competence in professional presentations. This heightened awareness can empower them to engage in more focused self-correction and targeted practice, leading to enhanced communicative competence in business English.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design. A qualitative approach is most suitable for this study as it aims to provide an in-depth and nuanced understanding of a phenomenon. In this case, the nature and types of speech errors occur within a natural setting. The participants in this study will be ten sixth-semester students from the English Education Department who are currently enrolled in the “English for Business and Public Relations” course. These students are purposefully selected because they are the target population for the study, as they will be undertaking mid-semester business plan presentations, which serve as the primary data source for the study. The limited number of participants (ten) is suitable for a qualitative study, enabling a thorough analysis of their speech productions during the presentations. The selection aims to capture the typical linguistic performance of students at this specific stage of their academic and linguistic development within the specified course context.

In addition, the primary data collection instruments for this study will be audio-visual recordings of the students' business presentations and observations. A high-quality digital recorder (video camera with good audio capabilities) will be used to ensure clear capture of both verbal and non-verbal aspects of the presentations. Additionally, transcription sheets will be used to convert the recorded oral data into written text. In addition, the observation sheets or field notes will be used to record contextual information and non-verbal cues during the presentations, which may provide additional insights relevant to the speech errors. It will facilitate meticulous analysis and accurate classification of speech errors. Otherwise, the data analysis process will be conducted inductively, beginning with the verbatim transcription of all audio-visual recordings of student business presentations. The next step involves carefully identifying every speech error incident that appeared in the transcriptions. After

identification, these errors will be categorized by type including grammatical errors, fluency disturbances (such as pauses and false starts), and lexical and syntactic challenges (incomplete sentences or improper verb tense usage). Finally, each error category is analyzed in depth to uncover dominant patterns and potential underlying causes.

RESULTS

The analysis, based on verbatim transcriptions of audio-visual recordings and supplementary observation notes, revealed several recurrent patterns of speech errors, primarily falling into categories of grammatical errors, lexical errors, and fluency errors. The identified error types are described and exemplified with actual utterances from the students' presentations. The findings describe the phenomenon of slips of the tongue which are unintentional deviations from the intended utterance, providing insight into students' real-time language processing during the teaching and learning process.

Grammatical Errors

Grammatical errors represent deviations from standard English syntactic and morphological rules. In the collected data, notable categories of grammatical error included issues with the verb "to be" and the redundant use of auxiliary verbs.

Errors in the Use of 'To Be'

Students frequently exhibited inaccuracies in selecting the correct form of "to be" or omitting it entirely, leading to ungrammatical sentence structures. These errors often appeared in subject-verb agreement or in the formation of basic declarative sentences. For example:

Today I'm present my business proposal the title is Cake Shop."

In this instance, the auxiliary verb "am" is used incorrectly before the base form of the verb "present." The intended meaning likely required a present continuous tense ("I am presenting") or a simple present tense indicating intent ("I will present" or "I am here to present"). This suggests an issue with the formation of verb phrases. Another example:

The products is very interesting to buy." Analysis: the singular form "is" is used with the plural subject "products," indicating a lack of subject-verb agreement. The correct form should be "are." This error reflects a fundamental grammatical inconsistency.

Redundant Auxiliary Verb Usage

Another type of grammatical error observed was the redundant use of auxiliary verbs, particularly “do,” which resulted in ungrammatical or stylistically awkward phrasing.

I did do the process in some steps like prepare th..things.”

Analysis: The phrase “did do” is grammatically redundant. In standard English, either “I did the process” or “I do the process” would suffice, depending on the intended tense. The use of both auxiliary and main verb “do” suggests a potential over-application of emphatic “do” or a struggle with precise verb tense and aspect formation in spontaneous speech, contributing to a “slip of the tongue.” Another example:

Our team really does achieve the target.

The construction “does achieve” is redundant in this context unless strong emphasis is intended. The simple present “achieves” would be grammatically sufficient and more natural. This error may stem from an attempt to ensure the verb is correctly formed or to add emphasis, but it results in an ungrammatical repetition of auxiliary verb function.

Fluency Errors

Fluency errors refer to breaks in the smooth flow of speech, often indicating cognitive processing difficulties during real-time language production. These errors did not necessarily alter the meaning but significantly impacted the coherence and professionalism of the delivery.

Frequent Pauses and Hesitation Phenomena

Students frequently employed filled pauses (e.g., “uh,” “um,” “eee”) and unfilled pauses, which disrupted the rhythm and continuity of their presentations. These pauses often occurred when students were apparently searching for words, formulating ideas, or navigating complex sentence structures. For example:

You...you...can buy in Tondano...eee...in...

This example demonstrates multiple repetitions and filled pauses (“eee”), indicating a struggle with lexical retrieval or sentence completion. The speaker is attempting to specify a location but hesitates, leading to a fragmented utterance. Another example:

The budget are ee..ee 1 million ee...

Similar to the previous example, this utterance is characterized by an extended pause and repeated filled pauses (“ee..ee”), suggesting difficulty in recalling precise numerical information or completing the financial detail. The pause also co-occurs with a grammatical error in subject-verb agreement (“budget are”)

False Starts and Self-Interruptions

Students often began an utterance, paused or rephrased, and then continued, leading to false starts or self-interruptions. This indicates real-time monitoring and attempts at self-correction, which themselves contribute to disfluency. For example:

I did do the process in some steps like prepare th..things.

The “th..things” part of the utterance exemplifies a false start and self-interruption. The speaker initiates “th-” (likely intending “the” or a word starting with “th”) but pauses and then corrects or shifts to “things.” This demonstrates an immediate lexical retrieval difficulty or a change in linguistic planning mid-utterance, resulting in a phonological-level “slip of the tongue.”

So, the first step is to... uh... implement our marketing strategies.

This example shows a clear false start where the speaker begins a phrase (“to...”) then pauses with a filled pause (“uh...”) before successfully reformulating and completing the sentence. This suggests a momentary hesitation in selecting the precise verb or structuring the phrase, leading to an immediate self-correction.

Lexical and Syntactic Errors Affecting Completeness

This category encompasses instances where students struggled to complete sentences or formulate coherent thoughts, often due to apparent word retrieval issues or challenges in maintaining syntactic control under pressure.

Unfinished Sentences and Word Forgetting

Several students exhibited instances where sentences were left grammatically incomplete, or the flow of thought was interrupted, suggesting a breakdown in either lexical access or overall syntactic planning. For example:

The concept of this cafe is you can find this place is very good for healing.”

This shows an abrupt shift in sentence structure. The initial clause “The concept of this cafe is...” is left hanging, followed by a new, seemingly unrelated thought. This could indicate a momentary lapse in word recall for the intended predicate of the first clause, or a spontaneous change in topic without properly concluding the preceding one. Another example:

This boutique present if you are interested in some clothes you can visit this.

Analysis: Similar to the previous example, the sentence beginning with “This boutique present...” is incomplete. It lacks a direct object or a complete verb phrase to describe what the boutique presents. The sudden transition to a conditional clause suggests a re-formation of thought, abandoning the initial sentence structure.

Wrong Verb or Inappropriate Verb Choice

Students occasionally used verbs that were grammatically incorrect for the context or semantically inappropriate, affecting the precision and clarity of their message. For example:

Our marketing strategy make customers aware of our brand.

In this context, “make” is grammatically incorrect. More appropriate verbs would be “makes” (for subject-verb agreement if “strategy” is singular) or verbs that convey the action of making aware, such as “will make,” “will enable,” or “will ensure.” A more precise choice would be “Our marketing strategy aims to make customers aware...” or “Our marketing strategy will raise customer awareness of our brand.” This indicates a struggle with selecting the most precise and grammatically correct verb for a business context. Another example:

We are give a special discount for early birds.”

The verb “give” is in its base form following the auxiliary “are” (part of the present continuous tense), which is grammatically incorrect. It should be “giving” to form the present continuous tense, or “will give” for future simple. This error reflects a common difficulty for EFL learners in correctly forming verb tenses and aspects, leading to a noticeable grammatical slip.

Reliance on External Cues and Lexical Retrieval Difficulties

Observation revealed that students frequently looked at their mobile phones during their presentations. This behavior appeared to be a coping mechanism to recall or memorize parts of their presentation, particularly when they experienced a momentary inability to find the appropriate words or complete their thoughts. This often coincided with the “forgetting the word” phenomenon. This reliance on external cues (their phones) suggests a struggle with spontaneous lexical retrieval and a lack of internalized fluency. The act of looking at the phone is an indicator of memory or vocabulary gaps, which disrupts the natural flow of communication and highlights difficulties in producing language without external support. This indicates that their spoken production is less spontaneous and more reliant on pre-prepared or memorized chunks, which they struggle to access in real-time.

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this descriptive qualitative study was to analyze the types of speech errors made by ten sixth-semester students in the English Education Department during their mid-semester business plan presentations. Based on the transcription of audio-visual recordings and supplementary observations, the study identified three main categories of speech errors: grammatical errors, fluency errors, and lexical and syntactic errors that affect completeness. Specific manifestations included inaccuracies in 'to be' usage, redundant auxiliary verbs, frequent pauses, hesitation phenomena, false starts, self-interruptions, unfinished sentences, word forgetting, inappropriate verb choices, and a notable reliance on external cues (such as mobile phones) for lexical retrieval. These findings offer empirical insights into the specific nature of interlanguage performance in the teaching and learning process, highlighting the cognitive processes involved in producing spontaneous speech in the business and public relations subject.

The observed patterns of speech errors offer compelling evidence that aligns with psycholinguistic models of speech production. Clark & Clark in Nuruzzakiyyah & Yahya (2022) identified nine distinct types of speech errors that can happen when people speak. These include silent pauses, filled pauses, stammers, corrections, interjections, unretraced false starts, retraced false starts, repeats, and slips of the tongue. In addition, According to Darwowidjojo in Ariyoga (2018) , ideal speech flows seamlessly with words neatly strung together in an unbroken sequence. Any pauses should naturally occur at appropriate breaks within the sentence structure and the intonation should maintain a unified flow from start to finish. However, completely fluent speech is not always achievable, and incoherence can emerge. Darwowidjojo identifies several reasons for pauses in speech: a speaker might have begun an utterance without a complete sentence ready, forgotten necessary words, or is being particularly careful in their word selection (Ariyoga, 2018).

Additionally, the speech errors include lexical errors and grammatical errors. The pervasive nature of grammatical errors specifically issues with the correct form of "to be" and the redundant use of auxiliary verbs, directly indicates challenges within the intricate stages of linguistic formulation (Levelt et al., 1999). These errors reveal a fundamental breakdown in subject-verb agreement and proper construction of verb phrases. To illustrate, utterances like "today I'm present my business proposal the title is Cake Shop" and "the products is very interesting to buy" vividly illustrate these inaccuracies. In the first example, the incorrect auxiliary "am" with the base verb "present" suggest a struggle with present continuous formation. In contrast, the second shows an agreement error between the plural subject

“products” and the singular “is.” These can be theoretically grounded in Levelt’s (1999) model.

Otherwise, Finardi (2016) suggests that foreign language learning often relies more on a rule-based system (requiring conscious attention and working memory) rather than a highly automatized memory-based system. The grammatical errors observed in this study align with this view; students’ struggles with basic grammatical agreement and auxiliary usage indicate that these rules are not yet fully proceduralized, requiring conscious effort that can lead to errors under pressure. Similarly, the redundant auxiliary verb usage, as seen in “I did do the process in some steps like prepare th..things” or “our team really *does achieve* the target,” points to this lack of automaticity in manipulating auxiliary verbs. The consistency of these grammatical errors with findings from Brown (2006) study on Indonesian EFL students, which also noted a high prevalence of tense and subject-verb agreement issues, reinforces the notion that these are common and persistent challenges in interlanguage development, particularly for students whose first language grammatical structures differ significantly from English.

Fluency Errors

The frequent instances of disfluency, including filled pauses, unfilled pauses, repetitions, false starts, and self-interruptions, are observable manifestations of the substantial cognitive load placed on EFL learners during spontaneous speech production. These phenomena are well accounted for by psycholinguistic models as indicators of active processing and problem-solving in real time. For example, utterances like “You...you...can buy in Tondano...eee...in...” and “The budget are ee..ee one million ee...” prominently feature repetitions and filled pauses, indicating significant struggle with lexical retrieval or sentence completion. Additionally, false starts and self-interruptions are evident in phrases such as “I did do the process in some steps like prepare th..things” (with “th..things” as the false start) and “So, the first step is to... uh... implement our marketing strategies.

Otherwise, Dell’s Connectionist Model of speech production, often referred to as the spreading lexical access activation model, suggests that different speech units, such as concepts, words, and sounds, can interact bidirectionally across semantic, lexical, and phonological levels to produce language (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2020). Meanwhile, William (2023) explained that speech errors increase under cognitive load and often co-occur with hesitation phenomena, which further aligns with this, as does Kim’s (2022) emphasis on the impact of fluency errors on the effectiveness of global communication.

Lexical and Syntactic Errors Affecting Completeness

The challenges related to sentence completeness, specifically unfinished sentences, apparent “word forgetting,” and inappropriate verb choices, highlight difficulties in maintaining a coherent linguistic plan and accessing the precise lexicon under communicative pressure.

The examples like “the concept of this cafe is” and “this boutique present” demonstrate a breakdown in sustained syntactic planning, where the initial grammatical frame is initiated but cannot be completed with the necessary lexical and semantic content. From Dell’s spreading activation model perspective, “forgetting the word” occurs when the activation of the target lexical item is insufficient to reach the selection threshold, or when competing, non-target items interfere. This results in the speaker being unable to retrieve the specific word needed to complete their thought, leading to an abrupt halt or a change in sentence trajectory. Similarly, inappropriate verb choices “Our marketing strategy *make* customers aware,” instead of “makes” or “raises awareness”; “We are *give* a special discount,” instead of “are giving” or “will give” can be attributed to the selection of a semantically related but grammatically or stylistically incorrect

lemma. This signifies a challenge in lexical discrimination, particularly crucial in the specialized domain of business English where precise terminology and formal register are expected.

The findings of this study resonate with the broader psycholinguistic framework by Dardjowidjojo in his seminal work. Dardjowidjojo in Ariyoga (2018) consistently emphasizes that psycholinguistics fundamentally studies the intricate mental processes underlying all aspects of human language use perception, comprehension, and, most pertinently here, production. He highlights the complex interplay between abstract linguistic knowledge (competence) and its actual realization in communication (performance). From Dardjowidjojo’s the errors reflect the learner’s ongoing dynamic struggle to effectively manage the rapid, multi-staged processes of conceptualization, linguistic formulation, and articulation in a foreign language. Therefore, this finding clearly shows that students lean heavily on their phones when speaking. It means that even if students prepare their material well or memorize phrases, they are not yet ready to speak spontaneously and fluently in a business setting. Their speech is not natural or automatic instead, they are reconstructing it on the spot, often relying on conscious effort and their phones when they cannot remember what to say.

CONCLUSION

This descriptive qualitative study identified and described the various speech errors that emerged from the sixth-semester students of English Department of the State University of Manado during their business plan presentations in the classroom. The systematic analysis, based on audio-visual recordings and observations, reveals consistent linguistic hurdles, including grammatical inaccuracies such as subtle misuses of 'to be' and unintended redundant auxiliary verbs, alongside pervasive disruptions to fluency, including frequent pauses, hesitations, false starts, and self-interruptions. The students experience difficulties with lexical and syntactic completeness, including unfinished sentences, word retrieval problems, and less precise verb choices, as well as their reliance on mobile phones as a compensatory strategy. Collectively, the students' speech errors reflect their dynamic interlanguage development, highlighting the disparity between their explicit linguistic knowledge and ability to apply it effortlessly in spontaneous oral communication, consistent with psycholinguistic models of speech production and language acquisition.

RECOMMENDATION

This study clearly shows that students struggle with English presentations. The lecturer needs to adjust their approach to teaching English to help students speak more fluently, resolve communication issues on the spot, and utilize business English effectively. This will make students much better prepared for their careers. Otherwise, English teaching should focus on helping students speak naturally without relying on scripts. The student needs lots of practice in pretend business conversations, improvising, and feeling confident handling language challenges, without needing help. This approach prepares them for the demanding communication needs of global business and public relations.

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