

## **Analysis of Common Writing Errors in Non-Persian Speakers (A Case Study of Written Texts at General Level in Persian Language Center of Imam Khomeini International University of Qazvin)**

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### **Abstract**

Written texts are part of language production skills that can well measure the writing ability of foreign language learners. Writing errors are important because of the fact that the students have enough time to write and review their written texts, and more research can be done on them. In addition, written texts can measure the writing competence of non-Persian language learners. It is also a criterion for assessing teaching methods, content and evaluation methods for language teaching centers. About analyzing and evaluating errors of non-Persian language learners and different nationalities, valuable studies have been done so far, but a study that examines the common language errors of learners is rare. It is important to identify the common mistakes of non-Persian language learners with different nationalities, because of the benefits to educational planning, provision of educational content, and coherence in the choice of teaching methods by instructors.

This article reviews the errors of foreign language learners based on the error analysis branch, which is a subset of applied linguistics. This research analyzes the spelling and vocabulary errors among the learners of Persian as a Second Language in Imam Khomeini International University. As one of the key means of assessing the efficiency of teaching and improving the learning experience, error analysis can help identify the flaws of the teaching system and the weaknesses of students in relation to different learning skills. Many researchers have emphasized the importance of errors. One of the pioneers of language error analysis is Corder. In his

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article in 1967 “The significance of Learner’s Errors”, he reviewed the errors from three perspectives:

“They [Errors] are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning.” (Corder, 1967, p. 167) Through the error analysis approach, researchers can identify and categorize students’ errors and propose appropriate teaching materials and methods that can resolve those errors.

This research analyzes the written errors of the basic level (general) of the language learners at Imam Khomeini International University. For the present study, we randomly chose 100 texts (including compositions and descriptions of pictorial narratives) written by the basic level students. The learner nationalities were Azerbaijani, Burundi, Kenyan, Syrian, Iraqi, Mali, Chinese, and Nigerian. The age of the students was between 18 and 26 years, and in the research, component of gender did not affect. This group had 320 hours of Persian language teaching (including the books like *Let’s Learn Persian 1*, *Let’s Learn Persian 2* and *Listening Comprehension*) at Persian Language Center of Imam Khomeini University. All the errors in the test, including grammatical, lexical and spelling mistakes, were examined. In studying and categorizing errors, errors are not categorized as minor or major and all the errors in this research have been studied with a degree of importance.

Our analysis indicates that spelling and vocabulary errors are most common among the students in this study. While vocabulary errors are caused by the students’ lack of familiarity with and incomplete learning of the target language (Persian), spelling errors are the outcome of their poor listening skill, inability to recognize vowels and semivowels, and weakness of visual memory. Students except in a language that they have a lack of knowledge and inability to communicate, just simply use their reserves. At levels two and three, they are somehow confronted with the problem of using or not using proper words. This problem appears in two areas of precise understanding of the word and its proper application in the context. The most difficult lexical and intercultural problems of learners was their return to mother tongue. They used the first-language patterns to use the second language. The biggest problem of language learners in the lexical and intercultural section was their return to mother tongue patterns. They used the first-language patterns to use the second language. Also, their lack of knowledge of the role and use of words and expressions affected the errors. A surprising finding in our study is that despite the students’ familiarity with the Persian alphabet and vocabulary, Arab speaking learners, who were the majority of the learners, had more errors than the others. Our further analysis reveals that the sheer volume of errors among these learners is associated with teaching methods, selection of syllabus, and also rating of teaching materials.

**Keywords:** Writing error analysis, Teaching Persian language, Second language, Spelling error, Vocabulary error.