

Phono-syntactic error pattern analysis in impromptu speaking among English learners: a content analysis

Angelie V. Temario¹, Harold John U. Mamites¹, April Jane G. Sales², Marcelina S. Deiparine²

¹College of Arts and Sciences, Cebu Technological University, Argao Campus, Cebu City, Philippines

²Faculty of College of Arts and Sciences, Cebu Technological University, Argao Campus, Cebu City, Philippines

Article Info

Article history:

Received Feb 9, 2026

Revised Jun 7, 2026

Accepted Jun 26, 2026

Keywords:

Content analysis

English language learners

Error analysis

Impromptu speech

Phonological errors

Syntactical errors

ABSTRACT

Second language learners, particularly Filipino learners of English, often experience linguistic difficulties in producing accurate phonological and syntactic forms, especially during spontaneous speaking tasks. This study examines the dominant phono-syntactic error patterns found in impromptu speaking performances and explores their pedagogical implications using Corder's error analysis framework. Employing a qualitative descriptive research design, the study analyzed recorded impromptu speaking performances of 36 Bachelor of Arts in English Language (BAEL) students. The analysis revealed that in the phonological aspect, segmental errors were more prevalent than suprasegmental errors, with vowel substitution emerging as the most frequent error type, accounting for 22 errors (57.1%). In the syntactic aspect, misformation was identified as the most dominant error category, with 164 errors (54.88%). These findings suggest that while learners demonstrate emerging grammatical awareness, they still encounter difficulties in maintaining phonological and syntactic accuracy during spontaneous speech production. The study highlights the importance of integrating pronunciation and grammar instruction within communicative speaking activities. Furthermore, impromptu speaking tasks serve as an effective diagnostic tool for identifying learners' linguistic challenges and guiding instructional strategies aimed at improving spoken language proficiency.

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Corresponding Author:

Marcelina S. Deiparine

Faculty of College of Arts and Sciences, Cebu Technological University, Argao Campus

Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines

Email: mercysarte32@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

English language learners are expected to be fluent speakers who can use the language effectively, especially in real-time communication. Sabat [1] pointed out that fluency is shown when a speaker smoothly delivers speech without delay or hesitation, expresses thoughts and ideas coherently, and produces accurate utterances regardless of time constraints. Moreover, English programs aim to cultivate students' proficiency and mastery of oral communication through impromptu speaking. Impromptu speaking involves delivering a speech without prior planning [2]. Students who engage in and practice impromptu speaking regularly enhance their speaking abilities, including vocabulary use and coherence [3]. In this regard, the Bachelor of Arts in English Language (BAEL) underscores the importance of impromptu speaking and practical communication skills for students in the program.

Yet, although impromptu speaking improves fluency in oral communication, students still struggle to speak spontaneously in their second language. Spontaneity is the natural characteristic of impromptu

speaking, and this limits the time a speaker has to organize and prepare their ideas, which is frequently the primary reason for overlooking the phonological and syntactic aspects while delivering the speech. This has a significant effect on phonological and syntactic accuracy and is often viewed as a challenge by second-language learners, particularly in unplanned speaking situations. Students' difficulties in effectively delivering their thoughts in a second language result in phono-syntactic errors. Thus, there is an indication that the native language, or first language, significantly affects how students perform in spontaneous speech [4]. This significantly recognizes the individual difficulties the students encounter in acquiring a non-native language. Momongan *et al.* [5] indicated that prevalent phonological errors among Cebuano-Visayan students are related to segmental and suprasegmental aspects. Additionally, Raymundo [6] identified that the most frequently encountered spoken language errors among students are mostly syntactic, particularly in verbs, prepositions, articles, pronouns, conjunctions, word structure, nouns, and noun phrases. This highlights the difficulties Filipinos frequently encounter in learning and using a non-native language, particularly English, for practical communication, which explains why errors in spontaneous speech are evident.

While there are existing studies that analyze errors, particularly in the Philippines, they are mainly focused on analyzing written outputs. There is a limited study that investigates and analyzes phono-syntactic patterns of error in impromptu speaking. Most existing studies focus on either phonological or syntactic errors separately, and few integrate both linguistic dimensions in spontaneous oral communication. This study examines phonological and syntactic errors concurrently in impromptu speaking to provide an integrated account of learners' language performance in real-time communication, highlighting how fluency demands, vowel instability, and partial grammatical control collectively shape learners' spontaneous language performance. Thus, this study analyzes the phonological and syntactical errors made by BAEL students in their impromptu speaking activity. Specifically, it aims to answer the following research questions:

- What phonological and syntactic errors occur in impromptu speech performance among BAEL students?
- Which type of phonological and syntactical errors occur most frequently in impromptu speaking?
- What pedagogical implications can be derived from the identified phono-syntactic error patterns?

This study highlights the specific linguistic demands of impromptu speaking, especially the real-time cognitive processing needed for spontaneous oral communication, and examines how these conditions contribute to phonological and syntactic errors among English language learners. Previous research in the Philippines has largely neglected these integrated phono-syntactic patterns in unplanned speech, focusing primarily on written language or on isolated linguistic aspects. By exploring the challenges of spontaneous speaking, this research underscores the ongoing need to improve both pronunciation accuracy and grammatical control in English as a second language (ESL) instruction. In an academic and professional environment where effective oral communication is crucial for participation, collaboration, and career readiness, the ability to deliver accurate, coherent speech under time pressure is increasingly important. Overall, this study timely investigates how the contexts of impromptu speaking create phono-syntactic difficulties and seeks to offer practical insights for improving pronunciation training, grammar-focused strategies, and communicative curricula.

2. METHOD

2.1. Design

This study used a qualitative design, specifically content analysis, to examine the phonological and syntactic errors in BAEL students' impromptu speaking performances. Content analysis allowed the researchers to identify, classify, and quantify recurring error patterns. According to Luo [7], this method helps detect patterns in recorded conversations by coding concepts and analyzing their frequency and significance. Although qualitative in nature, the study also used frequency counts and percentages to describe the occurrence of errors. These numerical data were used only to illustrate patterns, not to produce statistical generalizations [8]. Through this, the researchers were able to pinpoint the significant errors students made in impromptu speeches.

2.2. Environment

The study's data were collected at a state university in the Philippines. The campus offers a BAEL program in the Department of the College of Arts and Sciences, which develops students' linguistic, research, and critical thinking proficiency. This institution is dedicated to providing quality education and leading in producing globally competent learners.

2.3. Participants

The participants in this study were 36 second-year students enrolled in the BAEL program. They were selected through purposive sampling based on their active engagement in impromptu speaking, which

aligns with the study's objectives. At this stage, students are exposed to complex language structures and are likely to exhibit phonological and syntactic errors due to the real-time demands of spontaneous speech [9].

To ensure validity and reliability, expert validation was employed. The coding scheme and sample analyses were reviewed by field experts, particularly the research panelists, to ensure accuracy and consistency in error identification. All 36 speeches were analyzed for phonological errors. For syntactic analysis, 15 speeches were selected due to the intensive nature of structural coding and the attainment of data saturation, where no new error categories emerged [10]. Some recordings were excluded due to inconsistent speech flow and excessive fillers, which limited analyzable sentence structures. This ensured that only coherent samples were included, consistent with qualitative research standards prioritizing depth over quantity.

2.4. Instrument

Several instruments were utilized in this study. The primary instrument of the study was the researchers themselves. Researchers are often considered instruments, as they can serve as a primary means of collecting and analyzing data [11]. In the context of the study, the researchers collected the impromptu speeches through audio recording. The second instrument was Notta. It is an application that can transcribe audio formats into text. Using the tool helped the researchers efficiently convert the recorded impromptu speaking data into written text for data analysis. Lastly, the researcher utilized Grammarly. It is a language checker tool that analyzes written work and detects errors in grammar, spelling, and sentence structure.

2.5. Data gathering procedure

Right after the school authorities approved the request to conduct the study, the researchers began the data gathering from second-year BAEL students. Afterward, the researchers approached a specific professor to request collaboration and consent to conduct an impromptu speech activity in their class. Simultaneously, the researcher attended the professor's class for four sessions to conduct observations and collect data. Moreover, the researcher explained the study to the participants, obtained informed consent, and assured them that their voluntary participation would be kept confidential. All students in the section were invited to participate in the impromptu speech activity. This allowed the researchers to obtain a variety of spontaneous speech samples. At the same time, the study established an exclusion criterion to obtain valuable samples and achieve satisfactory findings. This includes: i) the speech that is shorter than 25 seconds will be excluded to guarantee that the samples are substantial and sufficient for the analysis; ii) the speech that is far from what is the context was omitted to maintain the relevance to the intended linguistic analysis; and iii) to focus on phono-syntactic errors, speeches that use excessive code-switching beyond occasional word was excluded. Right after, the recording of the students' impromptu speaking performances began. The recording was made during a regular class, which allows for capturing an authentic experience of language use. The recording was transcribed digitally for data analysis.

2.6. Data analysis

The data was analyzed using Corder's error analysis model [12]. Corder's error analysis model has six stages to analyze data: i) collection of data samples; ii) identification of errors; iii) classification of errors; iv) quantification of errors; v) disclosure of errors; and vi) evaluation of errors. For the first analysis stage, the students' impromptu speaking audio recording was uploaded to Notta for transcription. The transcribed text was thoroughly reviewed to ensure it closely matches the recorded impromptu speech. Grammarly was used to identify language errors in the transcribed text, while manual identification, along with Tophonetics and an IPA chart, was used to identify phonological errors. Next, the researchers categorized common types of errors and determined how frequently they occur. The identified phonological errors were classified based on James's phonological error taxonomy [13]. It has two main categories: segmental and suprasegmental errors. Subsequently, the syntactic errors were categorized according to the surface strategy taxonomy [14]. They classified errors into four categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Additionally, the categorization was tabulated, thoroughly explained, and evaluated, alongside the results and discussion. Finally, a conclusion was drawn from the study's findings and the researchers' recommendations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Phonological errors

Phonological error analysis was conducted first, requiring a careful examination of participants' impromptu speech from the audio recording. Each speech was carefully reviewed to identify phonological errors, and throughout the analysis, it was determined that students committed segmental and suprasegmental errors during the impromptu speech activity. The researchers identified 14 segmental errors and 8 suprasegmental errors. Table 1 shows the specific errors at the segmental level.

Table 1. Segmental errors of English language learners

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Themes	Sub-category	Word	Erroneous utterance	Accurate utterance	%	Total (%)			
Segmental	Vowels	/ə/ vs /ɒ/	Communication	/kə,mju:ni'keɪʃən/	/kə,mju:ni'keɪʃən/	12.5	57.15		
		/ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/	Incorporate	/ɪn'kɔ:p.pɒ.rɪt/	/ɪn'kɔ:pə.reɪt/	12.5			
		/ɑ/ and /oo/	Audience	/oo.di.əns/	/ədɪəns/	12.5			
		/ju:/ vs /u:/	News	/nju:z/	/nu:z/	12.5			
		/ə/ vs /e/	Different	/ˈdɪf.rent/	/ˈdɪf.rənt/	12.5			
		/e/ vs /ə/	Consequences	/ˈkən.sə.kwənsɪz/	/ˈkən.sə.kwənsɪz/	12.5			
		/æ/ vs /ə/	Abide	/ˈæb.aɪd/	/əˈbaɪd/	12.5			
		/ɪ/ vs /e/	Dilemmas	/ˈdɪ.li.məz/	/dɪˈle.məz/	12.5			
		Consonants	/tʃ/ vs /θ/	Through	/tʃru:/	/θru:/		16.7	42.85
			/tʃ/ vs /t/	Truly	/ˈtʃru:li/	/ˈtru:li/		16.7	
	/s/ vs /z/		Person	/ˈpɜ:.zən/	/ˈpɜ:.sən/	16.6			
	/i/ vs /eɪ/		Street	/streɪt/	/stri:t/	16.6			
	/f/ vs /p/		Important	/ɪmˈfɔ:.tənt/	/ɪmˈpɔ:.tənt/	16.6			
	/d/ vs /ð/		That	/dæt/	/ðæt/	16.6			
	Total					100			

3.1.1. Segmental errors

Segmental errors are errors in phonology, specifically in the pronunciation of individual speech sounds in the English language, specifically vowels and consonants. To systematically present the identified segmental phonological errors, the specific vowel and consonant substitutions observed in the participants' impromptu speeches are summarized in Table 1. The table lists the erroneous utterances, their accurate International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcriptions, and their corresponding percentages to illustrate the distribution of segmental deviations. To further contextualize the identified segmental deviations, a comparative analysis between Philippine English (PE) and General American English (GAE) phonological features is presented in Table 2. This table highlights systematic phoneme substitutions and articulatory tendencies that may explain the participants' observed pronunciation patterns.

a. Vowel substitution and central vowel instability

One of the most recurrent segmental patterns in the participants' impromptu speech is vowel substitution, particularly involving central and low vowels. A prominent example is the replacement of the mid-central vowel /ə/ with the open-back rounded vowel /ɒ/, as in communication pronounced /kə,mju:ni'keɪʃən/ instead of /kə,mju:ni'keɪʃən/. Although schwa occurs in an unstressed syllable, substituting it with a more prominent vowel alters the rhythmic pattern of the word and may reduce its recognizability in rapid speech. Derwing and Munro [15] noted that non-native learners frequently struggle with central vowels such as /ə/, especially when such vowels are absent in their first language. In Cebuano-Visayan, the lack of a true schwa encourages substitution with more familiar vowel sounds. Deiparine [16] further emphasized that wider phonological gaps between the native and target language increase negative transfer. Similarly, Momongan *et al.* [5] observed that Filipino/Cebuano English speakers frequently exhibit vowel centralization and substitution in spontaneous speech. The persistence of schwa substitution suggests that learners may not have fully internalized English stress-timed rhythm and vowel reduction patterns. Pedagogically, this highlights the need for explicit instruction in central vowel production and reduced vowel recognition within authentic speaking tasks. If unaddressed, continued vowel instability may not cause communication breakdown but could gradually influence listener perceptions of fluency, precision, and academic competence in formal discourse.

A related substitution appears in incorporate, produced as /ɪn'kɔ:pə.ri:t/ instead of /ɪn'kɔ:pə.ri:t/, where /ɔ:/ is replaced by /ɜ:/. Such shifts may arise under cognitive load during impromptu production, reinforcing the interaction between phonological knowledge and processing constraints. In audience, mispronounced as /ˈoʊdiəns/ instead of /ˈædiəns/, the substitution of /ɑ/ with /oʊ/ alters a key discourse word in public speaking. Marelita and Ifanti [17] observed that vowel substitution among English as a foreign language (EFL) learners is often influenced by first-language interference or hypercorrection. Because the word "audience" frequently functions as a discourse anchor in presentations, its mispronunciation may momentarily shift attention from message to form. Repeated inaccuracies in salient academic vocabulary may subtly weaken perceived authority, credibility, and professional presence in formal speaking contexts.

b. Diphthong-monophthong confusion and orthographic influence

Confusion between diphthongs and monophthongs was evident in the word "news", articulated as /nju:z/ instead of /nu:z/. This deviation may stem from reliance on orthographic cues rather than phonological rules during spontaneous speech, Kamarudin and Kamal [18]. English spelling inconsistencies can therefore reinforce inaccurate vowel realization. Similarly, street was pronounced /streɪt/ rather than /stri:t/, reflecting confusion between /i/ and /eɪ/. This substitution can result in lexical ambiguity with straight. Bohn [19] noted that L1 phonological patterns strongly influence second-language vowel perception and production. Unlike errors that merely affect rhythm, diphthong-monophthong confusion can alter semantic meaning.

In spontaneous academic discourse, such substitutions may compromise clarity when key lexical items are involved. Persistent vowel ambiguity may therefore affect not only intelligibility but also the accuracy of message transmission in instructional or professional settings. In dilemmas, produced as /'dɪ.lɪ.məz/ instead of /dɪ'le.məz/, confusion between /ɪ/ and /e/ alters stress placement and vowel prominence. This type of error can obscure which syllable carries informational focus, reducing message salience [20]. When vowel substitution interferes with stress placement, it may affect how arguments, contrasts, or explanations are perceived. In impromptu speaking, where speakers rely on stress to highlight key points, such deviations can weaken rhetorical effectiveness and listener engagement.

Table 2. Comparative table for segmental errors: PE utterances vs GAE

Phoneme class	PE	GAE	Notes
Central vowels/schwa	/ʊ/, /ɛ/, /æ/	/ə/ (Schwa, the unstressed vowel)	The PE lacks the reduced vowel sound, specifically schwa, leading to the substitution of full vowel sound (/ʊ/, /ɛ/, /æ/) due to the influence of L1 that follows letter-to-sound mapping.
Back/rounded	/ɜ:/ and /oo/	/ɔ:/ and /ɑ/	Substitution of the GAE vowels /ɔ:/ and /ɑ/ with more familiar native (PE) centralized vowel /ɜ:/ or diphthongs /oo/.
Monophthong/diphthong	/ju:/ and /ei/	/u:/ (High-back monophthong) and /i/ (High-front monophthong)	This illustrates a confusion of PE speakers between the use of GAE monophthongs and diphthongs
Lax vowels	/ɪ/	/e/	Shows a difficulty with nuanced contrast between similar lax vowels that disrupts the intended rhythm
Interdental fricatives	/tʃ/ and /d/	/θ/ (Voiceless interdental fricative) and /ð/ (Voiced interdental fricative)	The absence of the interdental fricatives in PE results in the substitution of more familiar sounds like /tʃ/ or the alveolar stop /d/
Sibilants	/z/	/s/	The uncontrolled voicing error in which the voiceless /s/ is substituted with the voiced counterpart /z/
Stops/affricates	/tʃ/ and /f/	/t/ (Voiceless alveolar stop) and /p/ (Voiceless bilabial stop)	There is an evident substitution of /t/ with /tʃ/ that implies that there is a coarticulation and assimilation of sound. Also, the change of manner and place articulation in /p/ to /f/ (plosive -> fricative; bilabial -> labiodental)

Note. Adapted from “Cebuano-Visayan Interference and Word Articulation of English Phonology Learners” by Deiparine [16]

c. Weak vowel reduction and rhythm disruption

The absence of weak vowel reduction was observed in different (/ˈdɪf.rənt/ instead of /ˈdɪf.rənt/) and consequences (/ˈkən.sə.kwənsɪz/ instead of /ˈkən.sə.kwənsɪz/), where full vowels replaced schwa in unstressed syllables. This pattern reflects a more syllable-timed rhythm. Sawanakunanon [21] noted that many Southeast Asian languages favor syllable-timed rhythm, limiting vowel reduction. Eden [22] explained that spelling often reinforces full vowel production, while Dita and de Leon [23] observed that Filipino speakers tend to retain acoustically salient vowels in unstressed syllables. This means that the absence of vowel reduction typically does not result in misunderstanding; however, it alters the natural rhythm of English and may increase listeners' processing effort. Over time, rhythm-related deviations may influence perceptions of fluency and naturalness, particularly in academic presentations where speech flow contributes to persuasive delivery and audience engagement. Similarly, in abide, pronounced /ˈæb.aɪd/ instead of /əˈbaɪd/, substitution of /æ/ for /ə/ reflects a preference for more prominent vowel articulation. This implies that persistent realization of full vowels in unstressed positions may contribute to a heavier speech quality. While intelligibility remains largely intact, cumulative disruption of rhythm may subtly reduce communicative efficiency and perceived linguistic control.

d. Consonant substitution and articulatory constraints

Substitution of interdental fricatives was evident in through, pronounced /tʃru:/ instead of /θru:/. Saavedra [24] explained that /θ/ is absent in many Philippine languages, prompting replacement with more familiar articulations. Similarly, substitution of /ð/ with /d/ reflects a common feature of PE phonology [25]. This entails that although such substitutions may not severely impede intelligibility in local contexts, increasing global communication demands may require greater phonemic precision. Persistent interdental substitution may influence international comprehensibility and professional perception in cross-cultural settings. Voicing alternation in person (/ˈpɜː.zən/ instead of /ˈpɜː.sən/) reflects uncontrolled sibilant voicing [26], while coarticulation effects were observed in truly (/ˈtʃruː.li/ instead of /ˈtruː.li/) [27]. Additionally, important was pronounced /ɪmˈfɔː.tənt/ instead of /ɪmˈpɔː.tənt/, reflecting L1-influenced phoneme substitution, suggesting that consonant substitutions may require listeners to rely on contextual inference, increasing cognitive load during spontaneous discourse [28]. While individual instances may seem minor, repeated articulatory deviations can subtly affect perceived precision, confidence, and professionalism, particularly in academic or formal speaking environments.

3.1.2. Suprasegmental errors

Suprasegmental refers to the external features of speech sounds such as stress, pitch, rhythm, and intonation. In the context of impromptu speaking error analysis, suprasegmental errors involve mistakes in the use of these features, particularly stress, and can affect how understandable a word is. Yurtbasi [29], stated that misplacing stress on a syllable or phrase in a sentence can cause misunderstanding of a language, in this case, English. This makes words very difficult to comprehend because of that one incorrectly stressed syllable, causing a communication breakdown and misunderstanding. Table 3 demonstrates that all identified suprasegmental errors were related to misplaced word stress, with each item contributing equally to the total percentage. This uniform distribution suggests that stress placement remains a consistent challenge among English language learners in impromptu contexts.

Table 3 shows the suprasegmental errors committed in impromptu speaking by English language students. The audio recordings revealed several instances in which stress was placed on the wrong syllable or was inconsistently applied. Examples of words include man-DATE instead of MAN-date, hon-ES-ty instead of HON-es-ty, man-NER instead of MAN-ner, IN-for-ma-tion instead of in-for-MA-tion, re-spect-FUL instead of re-SPECT-ful, DI-lem-mas instead of di-LEM-mas, DI-verse instead of di-VERSE, and cri-TIC instead of CRI-tic. A word usually has a syllable that needs to be emphasized. Lasi [30] also mentioned that every English multi-syllabic word has a syllable that receives the main stress, and this stressed syllable gets special attention, standing out from other syllables because it represents the peak of information in the thought group. These suprasegmental errors may be linked to the participants' unfamiliarity with the natural stress patterns of English words.

Table 3. Suprasegmental errors

Themes	Sub-category	Word	Erroneous utterance	Accurate utterance	%	Total (%)
Suprasegmental	Word stress	Mandate	man-DATE	MAN-date	12.5	100
		Honesty	hon-ES-ty	HON-es-ty	12.5	
		Manner	man-NER	MAN-ner	12.5	
		Information	IN-for-ma-tion	in-for-MA-tion	12.5	
		Respectful	re-spect-FUL	re-SPECT-ful	12.5	
		Dilemmas	DI-lem-mas	di-LEM-mas	12.5	
		Diverse	DI-verse	di-VERSE	12.5	
		Critic	cri-TIC	CRI-tic	12.5	
		Total				100

3.2. Syntactic errors

After the phonological error analysis, 15 speeches were chosen for syntactic error analysis. Through the lens of Corder's model, each speech was carefully analyzed, errors were identified, and then classified according to the surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay *et al.* [14]. A total of 164 syntactic errors were identified. In addition, the researchers created specific subcategories to provide a more detailed and organized distinction of the mistakes. Table 4 reveals the syntactic errors made by English language students. Following thorough and careful analysis, the researchers identified that the most common type of error was misformation. As presented in Table 4, misformation errors accounted for the highest proportion of syntactic errors, followed by addition and omission, while misordering occurred least frequently. This distribution suggests that learners struggle more with selecting and forming appropriate grammatical structures than with word order placement during spontaneous speech production.

3.2.1. Misformation

Misformation errors are characterized by the use of a wrong form of a structure or morpheme, making a sentence or utterance syntactically incorrect. Misformation errors were the most common among English learners in impromptu speaking [14]. Different subcategories of misformation errors were labeled, suggesting that this type of error manifests in various ways depending on the learner. In the study by Mammeri [31], a learner with limited mastery of syntax often encounters problems with word order, article usage, and verb formation, as seen in the analyzed speeches. These can be seen in Table 5.

The utterance "...as a speaker, having the transparency of being open to others..." is not structurally correct in English. Here, the speaker formed an awkward noun phrase "having the transparency of being open", and it is grammatically awkward and redundant, considering that the word transparency means "being open or honest" [32]. The correct sentence should be "...as a speaker, being transparent and open to others..." as it provides a natural flow, and the use of the adjective form + being directly describes the action. In the utterance "...his or her cultural background...", the speaker used the noun "culture" instead of its adjective form "cultural" to complement the word "background", making the utterance ungrammatical. Aside from that, the utterances "...reduces conflict in a way that it fosters honesty..." and "...strengthens that personality or

even the confidence of some...” show incorrect word forms. The verb “foster” in the third example is incorrectly used when the correct form should be “fosters” to complement its subject and the object, which is “honesty”. In the fourth utterance, the speaker used “confident” instead of the correct noun “confidence”. This implies that the speakers did not correctly apply the appropriate inflectional and derivational forms of specific words. These mistakes affect the clarity and grammar of their utterances, especially since speakers tend to overlook accuracy and English grammar in impromptu or spontaneous speech [33]. There is also a significant number of misinformation errors in preposition use, totaling 28 errors. Harefa and Laoli [34] noted in their study that prepositional errors are a frequent difficulty for learners who do not always follow English rules, suggesting that English learners should practice extensively and learn to follow these rules.

Table 4. Syntactical errors

Classification	Sub-category	Frequency	Sample erroneous line	Sample correct line	%	Total
Misformation	Wrong structure used	11	...as a speaker, having the transparency of being open to others...	...as a speaker, being transparent and open to others...	12.22	90% (54.88)
	Wrong word choice	12	...It is very important to have ethical...	...It is essential to have ethical...	13.33	
	Wrong article used	3	...transmitting an communication, I think...	...transmitting a communication, I think...	3.33	
	Wrong word form	24	...ways, how ethicized communication...	...ways, how ethical communication...	26.66	
	Wrong preposition used	28	...evoke to one person...	...evoke in one person...	31.11	
	Wrong verb form	14	...sentences when we interact with people...	...sentences when we are interacting with people...	15.55	
	Wrong connector phrase	2	...holistic when it comes to in our messages...	...holistic in our messages...	2.22	
	Wrong pronoun use	2	...businesses who try to collaborate...	...businesses that try to collaborate...	2.22	
	Wrong adverb choice	2	...him what is truly ...	...him what is truly true	2.22	
	Voice error	1	...So, ethical communication can be taught...	...Somebody can teach ethical consideration...	1.11	
Addition	Unnecessary element	9	So, it has to do with the message...	It has to do with the message...	15.25	59% (35.95)
	Unnecessary linking word	1	...ideas, and also emotions...	...ideas, and emotions...	1.69	
	Redundant structure	7	...and it has to do with the emotions...	...and the emotions...	11.86	
	Unnecessary phrase	10	...communication that we can get the...	...communication we can get the...	16.95	
	Unnecessary adjective	1	...and different ethical standards...	...and ethical standards...	1.69	
	Unnecessary connector phrase	3	...it means it is during those...	...it means that during those...	5.08	
	Extra preposition phrase	2	...will change for who I am...	...will change who I am...	3.39	
	Unnecessary pronoun	3	...communication it a meaningful...	...communication is a meaningful...	5.08	
	Unnecessary adverb	1	...not truly really relevance...	...not truly relevance...	1.69	
	Unnecessary article	17	...what the others are doing so that...	...what others are doing so that...	28.89	
Omission	Missing article	3	...talking to friend from different...	...talking to a friend from a different...	27.27	11% (6.70)
	Missing clause	1	...information that doesn't work that way ...	...information that doesn't work that way if I ever come across it...	9.09	
	Missing pronoun	1	...and avoid who are not ethical...	...and avoid those who are not ethical...	9.09	
	Missing auxiliary verb	2	...ethical communication always be politically correct."	...ethical communication should always be politically correct."	18.18	
	Missing preposition	4	...is a way of adhering the proper way...	...is a way of adhering to the proper way...	3.64	
Misordering	Wrong word placement	3	... Now, and also emotional intelligence...	...Now, emotional intelligence also...	75	4% (2.44)
	Misordered phrase	1	...integrity, and as well respect...	...integrity, and respect as well...	25	
Total						100%

Table 5. Examples of misinformation errors

Utterances with misinformation errors	Corrected utterances
...as a speaker, having the transparency of being open to others...	[...as a speaker, being transparent and open to others...]
...his or her culture background...	[...his or her cultural background...]
...reduces conflict in a way that it foster honesty...	[...reduces conflict in a way that it fosters honesty...]
...strengthen that personality or even the confident of some...	[...strengthen that personality or even the confidence of some...]

The predominance of misinformation errors suggests instability in learners' grammatical control, particularly in the application of inflectional and derivational forms during spontaneous speech. These errors indicate that while learners possess foundational knowledge of English structures, they struggle to consistently apply correct forms under real-time communicative pressure. Linguistically, this reflects partial internalization of grammatical rules, especially in morphology and prepositional usage. Communicatively, frequent misinformation may reduce naturalness, precision, and perceived proficiency, potentially affecting intelligibility and audience evaluation in formal or academic contexts. Pedagogically, the findings underscore the need for instructional approaches that strengthen automatic form selection through contextualized grammar practice, morphological awareness training, and fluency tasks that integrate accuracy-focused feedback. Addressing these vulnerabilities may enhance learners' structural control and overall communicative effectiveness in impromptu speaking situations.

3.2.2. Addition

Addition is an error that is the contrary of omission, which Ghorianfar *et al.* [35], citing Dulay *et al.* [14], defines as an add-on linguistic feature that should not be present in a well-constructed utterance. The study finds that addition errors accounted for the second-largest percentage of syntactic mistakes. English language learners often insert unnecessary words to sound more formal and fluent. That led them to add extra elements, which, in turn, resulted in unconscious redundancy. These are the usual elements learners tend to add: unnecessary elements, unnecessary linking, word-redundant structure, repeated redundant phrases, unnecessary relative pronouns, and unnecessary phrases. This is observed in these several sample utterances, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Example of addition errors

Utterances with addition errors	Corrected utterances
...So when it comes to ethical communication...	[...When we talk about communication...]
...when I'm translating my provision...	[...when translating my provision...]
...and it has to do with the emotions...	[...and the emotions...]
...in order for me to... in order for me to communicate...	[...in order for me to communicate...]
...communication that we can get the...	[...communication we can get the...]
...we use in order for us to uphold the integrity...	[...we use in order to uphold the integrity...]
...I will upload a content with...	...I will upload content with ...

Furthermore, the classroom usually encourages longer answers to expound on individual ideas and opinions, which may lead many speakers to use add-on words and repetition [36] unconsciously. Thus, it promotes concise, straightforward, and information-rich speech. The high occurrence of addition errors shows that learners prioritize fluency and elaboration over grammatical economy in impromptu speech. Although these errors may not distort meaning, unnecessary articles, connectors, and redundant phrases can weaken clarity, disrupt cohesion, and reduce efficiency. Linguistically, frequent additions reflect overgeneralization and compensatory strategies, indicating partial confidence in structure. Communicatively, redundancy may affect engagement and perceived fluency, especially in formal contexts where precision is valued. Pedagogically, this highlights the need to balance fluency with syntactic economy by encouraging concise, information-dense utterances and integrating accuracy-focused feedback to reduce redundancy while maintaining speech flow.

3.2.3. Omission

As Dulay *et al.* [14] stated, omission refers to the absence of critical grammatical elements, such as subjects, verbs, and articles, resulting in an incomplete or ungrammatical utterance/sentence. For example, such errors can be seen in Table 7. In the utterance "...when individual shows empathy...", which the article "an" is omitted before the word "individual". Similarly, the speaker of the utterance "...is a way of adhering the proper way...", omitted the preposition "to". The word "adhering", which is the present participle form of adhere, is a type of intransitive verb where it does not require a direct object. Instead, it requires the preposition "to" in order to connect to its complement, making it grammatically incorrect. Another example

is "...we must abide by the rules...", where the utterance is missing the preposition "by" after the verb "abide". In the study, 11 omission errors were identified, highlighting that this error was not common compared to other errors. Study by Zulfariati [37] stated that the omission of important elements causes the accuracy of the utterances to drop. This also suggests that while learners rarely omit linguistic aspects, they tend to commit to other areas, such as misforming words or adding unnecessary words, based on the analysis of the study.

Table 7. Examples of omission errors

Utterances with omission errors	Corrected utterances
...when individual shows empathy on other person...	[...when an individual shows empathy on other person...]
...is a way of adhering the proper way...	[...is a way of adhering to the proper way...]
...we must abide the rules...	[...we must abide by the rules...]

Although omission errors were infrequent, they still impact grammatical accuracy and sentence completeness. The absence of essential elements like articles and prepositions shows gaps in learners' control of function words, which are grammatically necessary but often subtle in meaning. This suggests learners may prioritize conveying meaning over structural accuracy in spontaneous speech. Communicatively, such omissions can affect clarity, cohesion, and perceived proficiency, especially in formal contexts. Even if meaning is understood, repeated omissions reduce precision and polish. Pedagogically, this highlights the need to reinforce awareness of function words and verb–preposition collocations in communicative tasks to improve grammatical completeness without sacrificing fluency.

3.2.4. Misordering

Misordering is an error that is formed through the wrong placement of linguistic elements in an utterance [14]. This case of error, where the words in an utterance are ordered incorrectly, is rare in the study yet and evident in its effects on communication fluency. The study finds two types of circumstances in which misordering is noticeable: the wrong placement of words and a misordered phrase. This is observed in these several sample utterances, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Examples of misordering errors

Utterances with misordering errors	Corrected utterances
...Now, and also emotional intelligence..	[...Now, emotional intelligence also...]
...integrity, and as well respect...	[...integrity, and respect as well...]

Moreover, an on-the-spot response to a question heightens the risk of misordering, as learners have to think and formulate a sentence in real time. That led learners to overlook the accurate syntactical patterns [38]. Thus, there is an increasing risk of misordering under time pressure due to limited planning time. Instruction should promote concise, information-dense turns and minimal-repair practice to help learners avoid such errors. Although infrequent, misordering reveals vulnerability in sentence organization during real-time speech, as learners may experience brief breakdowns in syntactic planning while balancing ideas and grammar. While meaning is usually preserved, these errors can disrupt speech rhythm and coherence, affecting perceived clarity and confidence in academic or professional contexts. Instructionally, this highlights the need to develop syntactic automaticity through structured drills, guided reformulation, and exposure to natural word order patterns to improve fluency and structural stability.

4. CONCLUSION

Speaking skills are essential for English language learners as they enable effective communication of thoughts, ideas, and opinions; however, difficulties and errors can affect the clarity and quality of speech. This study analyzed error types in impromptu speech among English language students at the phonological and syntactic levels, identifying 22 phonological errors and 164 syntactic errors. Phonological errors were classified into segmental and suprasegmental, while syntactic errors included omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Findings indicate that errors are influenced by L1 transfer and incomplete mastery of target-language structures.

The predominance of substitution errors in phonology and misformation errors in syntax suggests reliance on familiar linguistic patterns during real-time speech, where spontaneous production increases

vulnerability to structural deviations. These findings imply the need to strengthen pedagogical approaches in both phonology and syntax through targeted and structured activities. Instruction should emphasize proper articulation, clustered lessons with clear goals, and guided practice to support phonological development, while syntactic instruction should address learners' difficulties through enhanced curriculum design and strategies that build foundational and communicative competence. Despite its contributions, the study is limited by its focus on a specific learner and reliance on observable speech performance, excluding factors such as anxiety and other linguistic aspects like semantics and pragmatics. Nonetheless, it offers directions for future research and practice, including the integration of pronunciation drills, peer activities, and instructional materials to reduce errors, as well as further studies across different learner populations. Ultimately, errors should be viewed not merely as recurring issues but as opportunities for improving second language use in spontaneous speech.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The researchers sincerely extend their heartfelt gratitude to the participants who lend their time and effort. This greatly helps and contributes to the successful completion of this study.

FUNDING INFORMATION

This study did not receive any financial support for the publication.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

This journal uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT) to recognize individual author contributions, reduce authorship disputes, and facilitate collaboration.

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Angelie V. Temario	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Harold John U. Mamites	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
April Jane G. Sales	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marcelina S. Deiparine	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

Su : Supervision

P : Project administration

Fu : Funding acquisition

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest in working on this research.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available in a privately owned Google Drive of the authors. Data are available at <https://acesse.one/HzjMB> with the permission of the authors.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS



Angelie V. Temario    is a graduating student of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Program at the Cebu Technological University. She has demonstrated academic excellence and cognitive discipline through her educational journey. Beyond her academic success, she actively participates in extending her service to two organizations that enable her to contribute her time and skills towards promoting not just educational but also community-oriented activities. Her commitment to both academic and organizational undertakings indicates her dedication to personal growth, leadership, and service. She can be contacted at email: angelietemario@gmail.com; angelie.temario@ctu.edu.ph.



Harold John U. Mamites    is a graduating student pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in English Language, specializing in Linguistic Studies, at Cebu Technological University-Argao Campus. Throughout his academic journey, he has been dedicated to improving his language and research writing skills, which he integrates into academic and professional contexts. Currently, he lives in Looc, Argao, Cebu, together with his family and balances his studies with his work as a freelance transcriptionist and tutor. He can be contacted at email: haroldtruemamites@gmail.com.



April Jane G. Sales    holds a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in English with a concentration in Language from the University of San Jose Recoletos-Main Campus. She is one of the outstanding instructors of Cebu Technological University-Argao Campus who imparts her knowledge as resource speaker in various faculty trainings. She strives to contribute significant impact by focusing on the four-fold function of her university which are research, instruction, extension and production. She is instrumental in answering the quest of excellence in the 21st century academe. She can be contacted at email: apriljane.geralde@ctu.edu.ph.



Marcelina S. Deiparine    is an associate professor V at Cebu Technological University-Argao Campus. She is currently designated as Chair of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language Program. She is teaching Linguistics and Language Research. She has published research articles in Scopus-indexed and other peer-reviewed journals. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English, majoring in Applied Linguistics, as Magna Cum Laude. She took professional education units and passed the Board Licensure Examination for Teachers. She finished a Master of Arts in Education with a major in English Language Teaching at Cebu Technological University Main Campus and a Doctor of Philosophy in English with a concentration in Language at the University of San Jose Recoletos-Main Campus. She can be contacted at email: mercysarte32@gmail.com.