

Slips of the Tongue in EFL Spoken Production: A Multilingual Analysis Across Age, Gender, and Speech Setting

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Abstract

EFL learners in Indonesia, who typically speak a local mother tongue and Bahasa Indonesia as the national language due to the country's linguistic diversity, often face additional challenges when speaking English—classified as a foreign language—leading to an increased likelihood of slip-of-the-tongue (SOT) errors. This descriptive qualitative study aims to identify the types and frequencies of SOT produced by Indonesian multilingual speakers in EFL spoken production and to investigate whether SOT occurrence is influenced by age, gender, and speech settings (prepared vs. unprepared). Twelve participants were divided into two age groups (13–19 and 20–35), consisting of three males and three females. Data from recorded readings and interviews were transcribed and analyzed, revealing 250 total SOT occurrences. The findings show that all eight SOT types proposed by Carroll (2007) were present, with substitution as the most frequent (79 instances), followed by deletion (65), anticipation (36), perseveration (23), addition (20), exchange (15), and shift and blend as the least frequent (7 each). The 13–19-year-old group produced more SOTs overall than the 20–35-year-old group, while females produced more SOTs than males. Regarding speech settings, the younger group (13–19) generated more SOTs in prepared speech, whereas the older group (20–35) produced more unprepared speech. The prominence of specific SOT types suggests that future research should explore how juggling multiple linguistic systems shapes speech production and error patterns.

Keywords: slip of the tongue, multilingual speakers, EFL spoken production, English as a foreign language.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is renowned for its rich linguistic diversity, with over 700 local languages spoken across thousands of islands (Kohler, 2019). Traditionally, each region has its mother tongue—such as Javanese, Sundanese, or Balinese—which serves as the primary means of communication within local communities (Hamied, 2012; Dewi, 2014; Musgrave, 2014; Bonafix & Manara, 2016). At the national level, Bahasa Indonesia unites people from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, functioning as the official language in

government, education, and media (Fitriati & Rata, 2020; Zein, 2020). Within this highly multilingual environment, English stands out as a crucial foreign language, gaining increasing importance due to globalization and its status as a lingua franca in various professional fields (Hult, 2017). English is typically introduced as a compulsory subject in Indonesian schools starting from secondary education (Lauder, 2020). However, despite formal classroom instruction, many learners struggle to achieve high proficiency (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018), partly because English remains primarily confined to academic contexts rather than daily usage (Hibatullah, 2019), thereby posing unique challenges for speech production and fluency.

One area where these challenges become especially evident is in slip-of-the-tongue (SOT) errors—unintentional deviations in spoken language that occur when a speaker's intended utterance is disrupted by involuntary sound substitutions, omissions, or rearrangements (Mu'in et al., 2017; Van Ha et al., 2021). Furthermore, Carroll's (2007) classification of SOT errors provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities of speech production, particularly within language learning contexts. These errors include anticipation errors, which occur when a linguistic element that should appear later in the utterance is produced prematurely, often due to the early activation of future components in both declarative (knowledge-based) and procedural (performance-based) processing (Bovolenta & Marsden, 2021). Perseveration errors involve the unintended repetition of a sound or word already spoken, reflecting lingering activation from prior speech segments (Zulaihah & Indah, 2021). Substitution errors are characterized by replacing a target word or morpheme with another phonologically or semantically similar, indicating confusion or competition during lexical retrieval (Al-Hamzi et al., 2021). Blends occur when two competing linguistic options are simultaneously activated and unintentionally fused into a single output (Rezai & Heshmatian, 2013). Lastly, shifts involve displacing a linguistic element from its correct position, disrupting the sentence's grammatical structure (Safrida & Kasim, 2016).

Classic examples include substituting “a bowl of tea” for “a cup of tea,” or swapping phonemes—such as saying “shug” instead of “mug”—which reflect momentary lapses in speech planning and production. Although such errors can occur in any language, EFL learners are particularly prone to them due to limited automaticity and the cognitive burden of managing multiple linguistic systems simultaneously (Gillis-Furutaka, 2015; Ehrensberger-Dow et al., 2020; Gallo et al., 2021). These slips are further exacerbated by learners' incomplete mastery of phonological rules and limited exposure to authentic language use (Al-Hamzi & Musyahda, 2022; Pravitasari et al., 2021). Additionally, anxiety or self-consciousness—factors commonly associated with second-language speaking—can further intensify the occurrence of such speech errors (Hakim, 2019). Moreover, as Suhono (2017) and Almuslimi (2020) emphasize, identifying errors and SOT patterns can help educators pinpoint where learners might experience heightened cognitive load, enabling more focused interventions and teaching strategies.

Several studies have explored the slip of the tongue (SOT) phenomenon from different perspectives and in diverse communicative contexts. Zulaihah and Indah (2021) examined SOTs in Barack Obama's interviews on *The Axe Files*, identifying multiple error types including anticipation, perseveration, substitution, transposition, blend, and haplology, with substitution emerging as the most dominant. They further noted that

cognitive difficulty, situational anxiety, and social context were significant contributing factors, emphasizing that even highly proficient speakers are not immune to speech errors. Similarly, [Naibaho et al. \(2019\)](#) investigated SOTs in academic presentations by English Education students at Bengkulu University. They found six types—anticipation, perseveration, exchange, substitution, addition, and deletion—with substitution again being the most frequent. In a related context, [Khoerunnisa et al. \(2023\)](#) identified pauses (silent and filled) and three types of slips (anticipation, transposition, and perseveration), which were attributed to factors such as fatigue, nervousness, lack of vocabulary mastery, and habitual speech patterns. Focusing on the frequency and classification of broader speech errors, [Pravitasari et al. \(2021\)](#) analyzed English speech among university students using a psycholinguistic framework, revealing that slip of the tongue accounted for 20.1% of the total 336 errors observed. This supports the claim that SOTs are a common challenge in spontaneous L2 speech, even when compared with other phenomena like pauses, repeats, or interjections. [Rezai and Heshmatian \(2013\)](#) investigated morphological speaking errors among Iranian EFL learners across proficiency levels and genders, expanding beyond phonological or lexical slips. They found misselection to be the most frequent error type and highlighted the influence of gender [on](#) error patterns.

While previous studies have examined slip-of-the-tongue (SOT) phenomena in various contexts—such as political discourse, student presentations, and classroom settings—they have primarily focused on native speakers or monolingual and bilingual EFL learners. Although these studies identified common error types, they often overlooked the influence of individual factors such as age, gender, and speech setting. Research involving multilingual speakers, particularly Indonesians, remains limited, and the impact of multilingualism on speech error production is still underexplored. This study addresses that gap by investigating the types, frequency, and contributing factors of SOTs among Indonesian multilingual speakers. Its novelty is examining how age, gender, and prepared versus unprepared speech influences SOT production through a psycholinguistic lens. The objective is to offer a more contextualized understanding of how multilingual individuals experience and manage speech errors in English.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the types and influencing factors of slip-of-the-tongue (SOT) occurrences among Indonesian multilingual speakers. A qualitative approach is appropriate for this research because it allows for an in-depth examination of naturally occurring speech patterns and the contextual factors surrounding speech errors, which are best understood through detailed, descriptive analysis ([Creswell, 2012](#); [Merriam, 2016](#)). Through observation and semi-structured interviews, the study seeks to interpret participants' spoken performance in both prepared and unprepared settings, focusing on how variables such as age, gender, and multilingual background may influence the production of SOTs. These methods are commonly used in qualitative research to capture rich, context-sensitive data and gain insight into complex language behaviors ([Lichtman, 2023](#); [Dörnyei, 2007](#)).

This study utilized the Language History Questionnaire (LHQ3) to support participant selection and provide contextual understanding. Rather than serving as a tool for statistical measurement, the LHQ3 was used descriptively to collect detailed information about

participants' linguistic backgrounds, including age, gender, language proficiency, and language use patterns. Adapted from Li et al. (2020), LHQ3 features automated scoring and customizable modules; however, in this qualitative study, the data were interpreted narratively to support a deeper analysis of each participant's language behaviour. After distributing the questionnaire, 12 out of 17 respondents met the eligibility criteria. These selected participants were multilingual speakers who used at least three languages: a local language as their mother tongue, Bahasa Indonesia as the national language, and English as an additional language. All participants were within the age range of 13 to 35 years and were further categorized into two age groups: 13–19 years and 20–35 years, with each group consisting of three males and three females.

The data sources for this research include recorded readings and interviews focusing on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) spoken production. For the prepared speech task, participants were asked to record themselves reading an article titled "*An honest conversation: How storytelling can make a positive impact on yourself and others*". (Lukman, 2024), published in *The Jakarta Post*. Spontaneous interviews were conducted to collect unprepared speech data without providing participants with the list of questions in advance. The interview prompts were adapted from IELTS Speaking Part 1, which is widely used to assess general spoken proficiency on familiar topics such as hometown, family, and hobbies (Weir, 2005; Taylor, 2011). Although the questions were straightforward, participants were instructed to provide extended responses using clear reasoning, relevant examples, and detailed explanations—an approach aligned with effective elicitation techniques in spoken language research (Dörnyei, 2007). They were also encouraged to use a range of vocabulary, phrases, and grammatical structures to enhance the quality of their EFL spoken output. Audio recordings were made using a mobile phone recorder, a common and practical tool in qualitative linguistic research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The free web application oTranscribe was used for transcription, and the audio was slowed down during the process to improve transcription accuracy.

In analyzing slips of the tongue, utterances were categorized as SOTs when the speaker immediately attempted to self-correct an error—an indication of real-time monitoring during speech production. However, because slips of the tongue often occur unconsciously, they were also identified when a speaker mispronounced a word in one instance but produced it correctly in another. For example, if a participant said "strorytelling" in one paragraph but accurately said "storytelling" elsewhere, the initial error was classified as a slip of the tongue. In contrast, errors consistently repeated throughout the entire reading or conversation were not categorized as tongue slips. Instead, such patterns were interpreted as reflecting vocabulary or grammatical competence gaps rather than momentary processing failures. These criteria identified the types and frequencies of tongue slips in the participants' spoken English. The analysis then examined how age, gender, and speech setting (prepared vs. unprepared) influenced the production of these speech errors.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Types of Slips of the Tongue in EFL Speech

The data were analyzed and grouped into seven categories of speech errors: shift, exchange, anticipation, perseveration, addition, deletion, substitution, and blend. These

categories helped systematically identify and interpret the various linguistic disruptions during spontaneous speech.

Table 1. Shift-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	Back again, <i>it's depend..</i> it depends.	Back again, it depends.
2	My mother. My mother is a teacher. <i>She's teach</i> in Sen Junior high school.	She teaches in a junior high school.
3	When he joined a company <i>calleds chlumberger</i> as a fresh graduate.	...a company called Schlumberger...
4	<i>It make</i> me feels happy.	It makes me feel happy.

The first type of slip of the tongue identified in the findings is Shift. A shift occurs when a linguistic unit is removed from its original position and appears incorrectly in another part of the utterance. This misplacement typically results in syntactic or morphological errors that affect the sentence's grammatical structure. The findings show that participants occasionally produced utterances where auxiliary verbs, verb inflexions, or word endings were dislocated. For instance, in "*It's depend.. it depends*," the speaker initially inserts an unnecessary auxiliary ("it's"), followed by a self-correction, revealing confusion in verb phrase construction. Another case, "*She's teach in Sen Junior high school*," shows a misused contraction where "She's" is inappropriately paired with the base verb "teach," rather than the correct third-person singular form "teaches."

Table 2. Exchange-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	...storytelling in the context of leadership <i>lores</i>leadership roles.
2	...to quit instead of <i>contuniing</i> what would eventually...	...continuing what would eventually...
3	...storytelling and <i>dealership</i> : how to influence your team.	...storytelling and leadership...
4	Within a <i>nattarrive</i> that will ultimately determine...	Within a narrative...

As shown in the data, exchange slips were evident in the spontaneous speech of multilingual EFL speakers. For example, in "*...storytelling in the context of leadership lores*," the final sounds of the words "roles" and "lores" appear to have been transposed, leading to a semantic distortion. Similarly, "*contuniing*" in "*...to quit instead of contuniing*..." demonstrates an internal rearrangement of sounds or syllables within the word "continuing," a common characteristic of exchange errors. Other examples, such as "*storytelling and dealership*" (instead of "leadership") and "*nattarrive*" (instead of "narrative"), suggest phonological exchange at the syllabic or word-initial level. These slips may result from the speaker's cognitive load while attempting to retrieve complex vocabulary or from interference between phonetically similar words.

Table 3. Anticipation-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	A self-described stoly storyteller.	A self-described story storyteller.
2	This condundrum was answered.	This conundrum was answered.
3	Family is my ofther half .. other half.	Family is my other half.
4	But it's not what .. like what people think.	It's not like what people think.

The findings in Table 3 show that EFL speakers occasionally produced incorrect forms where an element of the upcoming word influenced the beginning of the current one. For instance, in "*A self-described stoly storyteller*," the syllable "stoly" appears to anticipate the following word "storyteller," resulting in a blend of the two. Similarly, "*condundrum*" reflects the influence of the nasal consonant "n" too early in the word "conundrum," causing a phonological alteration. Another instance, "*ofther half*" instead of "other half," demonstrates the early activation of the "th" sound, which was meant for the word "other," but was affected by the following word "half." Additionally, "*what.. like what people think*" shows the early anticipation of the structure "like what," though it momentarily appears as a disordered phrasing.

Table 4. Perseveration-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	... withwin within...	...within...
2	Ahmad is one thinks that...	Ahmad is one of the opinion that...
3	This conundrum was a co answered.	This conundrum was answered.
4	Very often because is live with my family.	Because I live with my family.

As shown in Table 4, several EFL participants produced utterances where previously used linguistic material persisted in the following words or structures. For example, in "*withwin within*," the syllable "with-" appears to have been carried over and inserted again, disrupting the intended word "within." Similarly, "*Ahmad is one is of the opinion*" demonstrates the repetition of the auxiliary verb "is," likely due to the influence of the prior clause "*Ahmad is one*," which interfered with the formulation of the next part of the sentence. Another example, "*a co answered*" in "*This conundrum was a co answered*" reflects the lingering activation of the article "a," which inappropriately attaches to the word "answered," leading to a malformed structure. Likewise, in "*because is live with my family*," the verb "is" is incorrectly repeated instead of switching to the first-person pronoun and verb "I live."

Table 5. Addition-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	Ahmad reminisnced on the beginnings of his career.	Ahmad reminisced on the beginnings...
2	He was not suistable for the company.	He was not suitable...
3	So, they won't be settress because of the work.	They won't be stressed...
4	Always happly every time.	Always happy every time.

Furthermore, several addition slips were produced by EFL speakers, resulting in non-standard forms. For example, "*reminisnced*" in "*Ahmad reminisnced on the beginnings of his*

career" includes an unnecessary "n" sound that alters the correct form "reminisced." This may reflect interference from similar-sounding verb forms or internal confusion during articulation. Similarly, "*suistable*" in "*He was not suistable*" is a distorted version of "suitable," where the added "s" sound disrupts pronunciation and lexical recognition. The word "*settress*" in "*they won't be settress because of the work*" adds a redundant syllable to "stress," possibly due to an attempt to modify the word for emphasis or clarity, resulting instead in an incorrect form. Likewise, "*happly*" in "*Always happly every time*" illustrates an addition of a vowel-consonant combination, creating a blend of "happy" and "happily," although grammatically neither fits in that context.

Table 6. Deletion-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	...the monthly <i>invition</i> -only Knowledge Series...	...invitation-only Knowledge Series...
2	I had two <i>koies essentlly</i>two choices essentially...
3	...win friends and <i>fluence</i> people.	...influence people.
4	They usually become <i>an.. bu.. busiesman</i>a businessman.

In the current data (Table 6), deletion slips are clearly observed in several utterances. For instance, in "*the monthly invition-only Knowledge Series*," the word "invitation" is missing the syllable "-ta-," resulting in the incorrect form "invition." This type of error is widespread among learners dealing with longer or less familiar academic vocabulary. Similarly, in "*I had two koies essentlly*," the intended word "choices" is pronounced as "koies," with the initial /ch/ sound being dropped—likely due to uncertainty in pronunciation or hurried speech. Another case, "*...win friends and fluence people*," shows that the prefix "in-" from the word "influence" is omitted, affecting the meaning and comprehensibility of the sentence. Lastly, "*busiesman*" in "*They usually become an.. bu.. busiesman*" lacks the internal "-ness-" segment of the word "businessman," causing it to sound truncated and incorrect.

Table 7. Substitution-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	She <i>must to</i> wake up in the morning.	She has to wake up...
2	My father when he <i>did di he died</i>when he died.
3	I would <i>see at</i> the...	I would set the...
4	How to <i>inpair</i> and influence your team.	How to inspire and influence...

As presented in Table 7, substitution errors in this study demonstrate how learners may select incorrect forms due to similarities in sound, structure, or meaning. For example, "*She must to wake up in the morning*" substitutes "must to" for the grammatically correct "has to." This reflects a common confusion among EFL learners between modal verbs and semi-modals, likely influenced by literal translation or overgeneralization of modal rules. In the utterance "*My father when he did di he died*," the speaker begins with "did," then corrects to "died," suggesting that two closely related verbs (in form or sound) were competing for selection. Similarly, "*I would see at the...*" substitutes "see" for the intended verb "set," likely because of partial phonological similarity or uncertainty in vocabulary usage. Finally, "*How to inpair and influence your team*" shows the substitution of "inpair" for "inspire," which may

be due to phonological similarity. However “inpair” is a non-existent form in English. This type of error reveals a disruption in lexical access and phonological encoding.

Table 8. Blend-type slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production

No.	Errors	Intended Sentence
1	<i>Hever</i> , and I have experienced this myself.	However, I have experienced...
2	<i>I've</i> I have a hobby which is biking.	I have a hobby...
3	I always <i>swatch</i> people running in my area.	I always see/watch people...
4	Stay at <i>haome</i> and be a kindest wife.	Stay at home...

As shown in Table 8, blend-type slips were found in the speech of multilingual EFL speakers, often producing hybrid forms that do not exist in standard English. For example, “Hever” in “*Hever, and I have experienced this myself*” is likely a blend of “however” and “ever,” with “however” being the intended word. Similarly, “*I’ve I have a hobby*” results from the blending (and repetition) of the contracted form “I’ve” and the complete form “I have,” reflecting hesitation or uncertainty in choosing between formal and informal phrasing. The error “swatch” in “*I always swatch people running in my area*” appears to be a blend of “see” and “watch,” two semantically and phonetically related verbs. This suggests that the speaker may have been undecided on which word to use and produced a hybrid instead. Finally, “haome” in “*Stay at haome and be a kindest wife*” combines elements of “home” and possibly “house,” indicating interference between similar concepts or sounds during articulation.

Distribution of slips of the tongue

This section presents the quantitative distribution of slips of the tongue identified in the speech of multilingual EFL speakers. The data are categorized based on three key variables: age, gender, and speech setting (prepared vs. unprepared).

Table 9. Distribution of slips of the tongue by age, gender, and speech setting

Variable	Category	Number of Slips
Age	13–19 years old	138
	20–35 years old	112
Gender	Male	114
	Female	136
Speech Setting	Prepared	149
	Unprepared	101

Table 9 presents the distribution of tongue slips according to three key variables: age, gender, and speech setting. The total number of recorded slips across all participants was 250. Participants aged 13–19 years old produced 138 slips, whereas those in the 20–35 age group produced 112 slips. This indicates that younger speakers are more prone to making tongue slips, reflecting less exposure to English, less developed cognitive control, or lower proficiency in managing spontaneous speech. When categorized by gender, female participants produced more slips (136) than male participants (114). This difference reflects verbal risk-taking, speech length, or interactional style differences. Regarding speech setting, more slips occurred during prepared speech (149) than in unprepared speech (101). Although unprepared speech is typically more spontaneous, the higher frequency of errors

in prepared contexts reflects the pressure of delivering memorized or semi-scripted content, where speakers often struggle to align planned language with real-time articulation.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that a total of 250 slips of the tongue were identified in the data. These were categorized into seven types: substitution (79 instances), deletion (65), anticipation (36), addition (32), exchange (13), perseveration (11), blend (7), and shift (7). A substitution was the most frequent and dominant error produced by multilingual speakers in EFL spoken production. This finding is consistent with Naibaho (2018), who reported that six out of eight slip types—anticipation, perseveration, exchange, substitution, addition, and deletion—occur in student presentations. Similarly, Daud and Mustofa (2018) found substitution to be the most common type of error in EFL classroom settings. Substitution occurs when a speaker unintentionally replaces one linguistic unit with another. Its frequent occurrence may be linked to the fact that English is not the participants' native language, which requires them to mentally process vocabulary and grammatical structures during speech production (Dandee & Pornwiriya, 2022; Asaei & Rahimi, 2020). Under time pressure or during rapid speech, incorrect words may be retrieved, leading to substitution errors. As noted by Kashinathan and Aziz (2021) and Wong et al. (2021), such errors are often unconscious. They are commonly triggered by limited vocabulary access and cognitive constraints during real-time language use.

Moreover, deletion emerged as the second most frequent type of slip of the tongue in this study, with 65 instances. Unlike substitution, which involves replacing one unit with another, deletion reflects a breakdown in the ability to access or maintain specific linguistic elements in the mental speech plan—often resulting in omitted syllables, morphemes, or entire words (Alzinaidi & Latif, 2019; Wu et al., 2021; Wong et al., 2019). The prominence of deletion in the findings reinforces the notion that both deletion and substitution stem from the same underlying challenge: the difficulty of coordinating multiple aspects of language production, including content, form, and fluency (Bulté et al., 2024). The cognitive load involved in this coordination is particularly evident among second language users, who simultaneously manage real-time vocabulary access, syntactic structuring, and speech planning. Interestingly, while (Detrianto, 2018 as cited in Zulaihah & Indah, 2021) identified deletion as the most dominant error type in student presentations and Naibaho (2018) noted its frequent occurrence, this study found substitution more prevalent. The relative frequency of these two error types appears to depend on the speaking context and task demands.

On the other hand, shift and blend errors were the least frequent in this study, with only seven instances each. Their rarity suggests that these types of slips involve more complex disruptions in mental processing—such as transferring a linguistic unit from one location to another (shift) or unintentionally merging two distinct units (blend)—which are less common in everyday EFL speech (Alhaisoni et al., 2015). This supports the view that intricate planning errors are less likely to occur than straightforward issues such as lexical retrieval or omission (Safrida & Kasim, 2016). These findings align with research by Hanifa (2018) and Sun (2022), who identified cognitive difficulty, situational anxiety, and social pressure as key factors influencing speech production. In this study, participants—being non-native speakers—may have experienced cognitive strain when retrieving vocabulary or constructing grammatically accurate utterances. Additionally, the formal nature of the

interview and the expectation to perform well likely increased their anxiety, which can interfere with speech planning and delivery ([Constantin et al., 2021](#)).

Furthermore, a clear difference was observed in the number of slips of the tongue produced by the two age groups. The younger group (13–19 years old) produced 138 slips, whereas the older group (20–35 years old) produced 112 slips, indicating that younger participants were more prone to speech errors. This supports the findings of [Altıparmak and Kuruoglu \(2014\)](#), who also reported a higher frequency of slips among younger speakers. According to [Agustin-Llach and Jiménez-Catalán \(2018\)](#), younger learners tend to produce more speech errors, rely more on cognates, and exhibit more significant lexical inconsistency than adults—likely due to ongoing language development and less developed cognitive control. When analyzed by gender, female participants produced 136 slips, while male participants produced 114. This result contrasts [Citra and Jufrizal \(2020\)](#), who found that male students committed more slips, attributing their errors to cognitive difficulties, particularly in retrieving appropriate vocabulary. Similarly, [Maldini and Indah \(2020\)](#) observed that male debaters produced more slips than females in competitive speaking contexts.

Several factors could influence the higher number of errors among female participants in the present study. One possibility is that female participants experienced more significant anxiety or self-consciousness, especially regarding the potential for misreading or mispronouncing words during the interview. Such emotional factors may have disrupted their speech planning and contributed to the increased occurrence of slips ([Mylopoulos, 2021](#)). This study showed that more tongue slips occurred during prepared speech (149 instances) than unprepared speech (101 instances). This finding appears to contrast with the study by [Alghonaim \(2021\)](#), who found that speech errors are more common in spontaneous or unprepared speech, as such contexts require speakers to plan their utterances mentally in real-time. Errors often arise when the spoken output fails to align with this internal plan ([Sayogie & Adbaka, 2022](#)).

CONCLUSION

This study explored slips of the tongue in EFL spoken production, analyzing 250 errors across age, gender, and speech settings. The substitution was the most frequent type, followed by deletion, indicating common lexical and grammatical processing challenges among multilingual speakers. Younger participants (13–19 years old) produced more slips than older ones, suggesting that language development and proficiency affect fluency. Female participants produced more slips than males, possibly due to longer speech duration and higher anxiety levels during interviews. Surprisingly, more errors occurred in prepared speech than in unprepared speech. This supports the idea that over-monitoring and anxiety in formal settings can disrupt speech, as explained by the Vicious Circle Hypothesis. Slips of the tongue are influenced by age, gender, speech context, and psychological factors such as anxiety and cognitive load. These findings highlight the importance of supporting fluency development and reducing pressure in EFL speaking contexts. However, this study was limited by its small sample size and focus on only two age groups in interview-based speech settings. It also did not account for individual English proficiency or directly measure psychological factors like anxiety. Future research should involve larger, more diverse samples, include different proficiency levels, and explore varied speaking contexts. It is also

recommended to investigate the role of anxiety and confidence using appropriate psychological tools to better understand their impact on speech errors.

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