



ISSN: 2230-9926

Available online at <http://www.journalijdr.com>

IJDR

International Journal of Development Research
Vol. 15, Issue, 10, pp. 69285-69290, October, 2025
<https://doi.org/10.37118/ijdr.30198.10.2025>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

DIFFICULTIES, COMMON ERRORS, AND SOLUTIONS IN LEARNING MONGOLIAN AMONG FOREIGN STUDENTS

Erdenesan Dashdamba¹, Ankhiluun Otgonbayar², Byambatsetseg Chuluun³, Yanjinkham Jigdengombo⁴ and Ariunbold Uureg⁵

¹Associate professor (Ph.D) of Department of Mongolian Language, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mongolian National University of Education; ²Lecturer (MA) of Department of Mongolian Language, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mongolian National University of Education; ³Lecturer (Ph.D) of Department of Mongolian Language, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mongolian National University of Education; ⁴Lecturer (Ph.D) of Department of Mongolian Language, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mongolian National University of Education; ⁵Associate professor (Ph.D) of Department of Mongolian Language, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mongolian National University of Education

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 29th September, 2025
Received in revised form
10th September, 2025
Accepted 24th October, 2025
Published online 30th October, 2025

Key Words:

Mongolian as a Second Language, Foreign Learners, Error Analysis, Morphological and Phonological Errors, Vowel Harmony, Case Markers, SLA Pedagogy.

*Corresponding author:
Erdenesan Dashdamba

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the difficulties encountered by foreign students learning Mongolian and identifies common linguistic errors through empirical observation and analysis. The study employs practical research methods such as classroom observation, test paper analysis, and focus group interviews with students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, including Kalmyk, Buryat, Russian, Chinese, Inner Mongolian, Korean, and Japanese learners. Findings indicate that the most frequent challenges in Mongolian language acquisition relate to listening comprehension, pronunciation, and grammatical competence. The paper further proposes pedagogical strategies for addressing these difficulties. The significance of this study lies in examining the current state of Mongolian language instruction for non-native learners, its alignment with modern theories of second language acquisition, and its contribution to promoting the global dissemination of Mongolian language and culture.

Copyright©2025, Erdenesan Dashdamba et al. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Erdenesan Dashdamba, Ankhiluun Otgonbayar, Byambatsetseg Chuluun, Yanjinkham Jigdengombo, Ariunbold Uureg. 2025. "Difficulties, common errors, and solutions in learning mongolian among foreign students". *International Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 15, Issue, 10, pp. 69285-69290, October, 2025.

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary world, the borderless environment created by the internet, along with the expansion of international exchanges in tourism, trade, and education, has led to a steady increase in the number of learners studying Mongolian language and culture. This study classifies and analyzes the common errors made by foreign students based on their performance in the four core language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Among these, pronunciation emerges as one of the most crucial yet problematic aspects of second language acquisition. One of the most frequent difficulties for foreign learners lies in the accurate articulation of Mongolian phonemes. The significance of correct pronunciation does not necessarily mean speaking like a native Mongolian speaker, but rather developing intelligibility, the ability to comprehend Mongolian speakers and be understood clearly in return. To improve pronunciation, it is essential to teach students articulatory awareness, or how sounds are produced,

and to provide them with practice in pronouncing words that contain the target sounds. Mastering phoneme articulation positively affects the learner's ability to read aloud fluently, comprehend spoken input, and produce intelligible speech. Thus, improvement in pronunciation directly enhances reading, writing, and listening skills as well.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted at the Mongolian National University of Education (MNUE) among international students of various linguistic backgrounds, including Russian, Kalmyk, Buryat, Japanese, Chinese, and Inner Mongolian learners. Data were collected through classroom observation, analysis of examination papers, and error analysis of written and spoken language samples from students at both the beginner and intermediate levels.

The learners' errors were classified and analyzed according to the major linguistic subsystems of Mongolian:

- Orthographic errors
- Morphological errors
- Syntactic errors
- Stylistic errors
- Phonological (pronunciation) errors

Since this study does not focus on phonetic analysis, the spoken Mongolian data were transcribed using standard Mongolian Cyrillic orthography. This approach allows the examples to remain accessible and representative of natural speech without requiring detailed phonetic notation. English translations are provided below each excerpt for clarity.

Orthographic Errors

Errors due to writing words phonetically

Many foreign learners tend to spell Mongolian words based on their pronunciation rather than standard orthography. For example:

- *Би хичээлдээ автобусаар явадгүй* instead of *Би хичээлдээ автобусаар явдаггүй* ('I don't go to class by bus')
- *Лаваг гарагт номын санд сууна* instead of *Лхагва гарагт номын санд сууна* ('I will study in the library on Wednesday')

This type of error occurs because learners transcribe speech sounds directly, failing to recognize the difference between spoken and written forms in Mongolian.

Errors involving the omission or combination of suffixes

Learners often omit or merge case and verb suffixes due to inadequate knowledge of Mongolian morphology. For example:

- *Би багшийгаа гэртэн зочилсон* (incorrect) instead of *Би багшийнхаа гэрт нь зочилсон* ('I visited my teacher's house'). Here, the learner has omitted the genitive case-ийн and merged *гэрт нь* ('at his/her home') into *гэртэн*.

Grammatical spelling errors

Common examples include:

- *Би нэг цагын дараа байрандаа очно* (incorrect: *цагын*) → correct: *цагийн*
- *Би Монголд амьдрхыг хүсдэг* (incorrect: *амьдрхыг*) → correct: *амьдрахыг*

These reflect limited understanding of vowel harmony, elision rules, and the discrepancy between orthographic and phonetic representations in Mongolian. Such spelling problems are influenced not only by the internal complexity of Mongolian orthography but also by interference from the learner's first language (L1) and the lack of contrastive awareness in sound-to-letter correspondence.

Morphological Errors

Confusion of case endings

Learners frequently substitute one case marker for another. Examples:

- *Би ээжийн хийсэн хоолонд амтархан идсэн* → should be *хоолыг*
- *Би тэр хүний харж байна* → should be *хүнийг*

These illustrate confusion between genitive, dative, and accusative cases. Such errors arise when learners fail to interpret the semantic and syntactic role of the noun phrase.

Incorrect use of zero (Ø) forms

For instance, foreign learners often produce utterances such as *Би автобусаар хүлээсэн* ('I waited by bus') or *Би дэлгүүр рүү явсан* ('I went to the shop'). In the Mongolian language, there are eight basic cases: nominative, genitive, dative-locative, accusative, ablative, instrumental, comitative, and directive. Each of which can appear in a zero form depending on syntactic function.

In the examples above, the nouns *автобус* ('bus') and *дэлгүүр* ('shop') appear in zero case forms, where the meanings of direction or destination are distinguished only by syntactic relations. Such errors typically occur because the learners' first languages do not encode case relations through zero morphemes or equivalent inflectional alternations. Furthermore, some Mongolian lexical roots undergo irregular case alternations, which must be learned and memorized individually. For example, learners often say *Миний Монголд ирээд удсан* ('My have been long in Mongolia') or *Битэй хамт сургууль руу явсан* ('Went to school with i'), both of which show incorrect morphological inflection. According to The Great Explanatory Dictionary of the Mongolian Language (2000), when the first-person singular pronoun *би* ('I') is declined across the eight case forms, it alternates between the roots *ми-* and *на-*, as follows: *би, миний, надад, намайг, надаас, надаар, надтай, над руу* ('I, my, to me, me, to me, from me, by me, with me, toward me').

Thus, the correct forms of the sentences above should be *Би Монголд ирээд удсан* ('I have been in Mongolia for a long time') and *Надтай хамт сургууль руу явсан* ('Went to school with me'). These types of morphological errors reflect the complexity of Mongolian inflectional morphology, the polysemy of case functions, and the cognitive interference between the learner's native language system and the Mongolian grammatical structure.

Errors in possessive case: For example, in response to the question "*Чи хичээлээ юун дээр бичсэн бэ?*" ('What did you write your lesson on?'), a learner might answer "*Би дэвтэрт бичсэн*" ('I wrote in notebook'), or in response to "*Чи өчигдөр юу хийсэн бэ?*" ('What did you do yesterday?'), a learner might say "*Би найзад очсон*" ('I went to a friend'). It is necessary to correctly use the possessive relationship which indicates the syntactic relationship between the possessor and the possessed entity, while simultaneously highlighting the specific item among a set of similar objects (Unurbayan, 2020, p. 45). Therefore, the grammatically correct forms are "*Би дэвтэртээ бичсэн*" ('I wrote in my notebook') and "*Би найзындаа очсон*" ('I went to my friend's [place]').

Errors in Using Verb Suffixes (Voice affix, Aspect suffix, Adjective Connecting Suffix, Subordinating Conjunctive Suffix, Finite Tense Suffix, Postfix in Person)

Foreign learners often make errors in using verb tenses correctly. For example: "*Би маргааш ажилласан*" ('I worked tomorrow') or "*Энэ ном унидаг байна*" ('This book reads [is reading]').

Verb forms express tense and aspect, such as present, past, habitual, and future, but learners often find it difficult to determine which form to use in a given context. This difficulty arises because Mongolian has numerous and nuanced tense forms, while the learner's native language may lack similar distinctions or may differ significantly in tense usage. Therefore, it is important not only to present Mongolian tenses in a comparative table but also to encourage learners to relate them to the tense system of their own native language for better understanding.

Syntactic Errors: Foreign learners' syntactic patterns often reflect L1 word order transfer and conceptual sequencing that conflict with Mongolian SOV typology.

Misplacement of word sequence

Examples:

- *Би хийсэн дасгал* ('I made exercise') → should be *Би дасгал хийсэн* ('I did the exercise')
- *Тэр дэлгүүрт орсон шинэ хувцас авсан* → should be *Тэр дэлгүүрт орж, шинэ хувцас авсан*.

The incorrect structures stem from transferring SVO word order (e.g., English or Chinese) into Mongolian.

Omission of word combination or not transforming coordinate parts

Examples:

- *Хичээл дууссан, байртай ирсэн* → should be *Хичээл дуусаж, байрандаа ирсэн*.
- *Монгол хоол амттай, дуртай* → should be *Монгол хоол амттай тул дуртай*.

Code-mixing and insertion of foreign elements

Examples:

- *Монгол in монгол хэл сурч байна*
- *Ирэх 7 хоногт би Солонгос хэл заана. and миний монгол хэл дууссан and ангийн найзтайгаа уулзсан*.

When learners do not know certain Mongolian verb forms or words, it is common for them to **directly substitute English words or structures** which are their most familiar foreign language into Mongolian sentences, as illustrated in the examples above.

Stylistic Errors

Misuse of polysemous words: In Mongolian, a single word can have multiple meanings. Foreign students often do not know how to use these different meanings in the appropriate context, which frequently leads to errors. For example: "*Би даваа гарагт хэлний бэлтгэлийн хичээлд орсон*", "*Амралтын өдөр гэртээ суусан*", and so on. To make the sentences correct, they can be rephrased as: "*Би даваа гарагт хэлний бэлтгэлийн хичээлд суусан*", "*Амралтын өдөр гэртээ байсан*", "*Амралтын өдөр гэртээ амарсан*", or "*Амралтын өдрийг гэртээ өнгөрөөсөн*".

Errors of including spoken-language words in written texts: "Spoken language contains certain words that do not appear in formal written language. For example, the written word *төгрөг* ('currency') may appear in speech as *янчаан*, *цаас*, *к*, or *мөнгө*; *хүмүүжилгүй* ('ill-mannered') as *тархигүй*, *зүггүй*, *дэггүй*; and *хичээх* ('to try/strive') as *мачийх*, *мэрийх*, or *гүрийх*" (Yanjinlham, J., 2025). Occasionally, such spoken-language words are mistakenly included in written texts. For example: "*Би гар утас ухдаг*", "*Энэ ном хорин к*", etc.

Let us examine an excerpt from a student in Onguud Banner, Ulaanhad City, Inner Mongolia, China:

"...МУБИС-ийн НХУС-ийн Монгол хэлний бэлтгэл ангид нэг жилийн хугацаатай суралчав. Одоо МБИС-ийн сэтхил содлооч мэргэжлийн ангид магистараар суралчхаар байна. Би эх хэлний бэлтгэлд суралчсан хугацаанд кирил үсгийг урсум уншиж, сайн бичих чадварыг эзэмшсэн. Миний МУБИС-д суралчсан нэг жилийн хугацаанд багшиар минь хичээлээ сайн заадаг, сурагчиддаа харуулалтай, эелдэг дотнуу байсан. Хичээлийн гаднах хүдэлгээн бас гоё байлаа. Надад маш ханумжитай санагдлаа. Хятадын хашианд хорьсон хурга шиг сургалтыг бодвол энд заах уур амьсгал тайван тохь тухтай байдаг..."

This student is proficient in speaking Mongolian and has fully mastered Mongolian script. Students with a background in vertical Mongolian script tend to make several common types of errors:

- Writing the throat *z* as the tongue *z*.
- Writing *ч* as *ц*, i.e., using the voiceless soft consonant.
- Writing word roots according to their regional dialect.
- Errors with the first variant of the dropping vowel.
- Frequently vocalizing the final vowel *а/э/* or the *у* vowel before a final consonant in Mongolian script (e.g., *эхэ*, *нигэ*, *хара*, *боду*, *нэмэ*). This often leads to mistakes when adding suffixes to the word root. For example, writing *үзэнэ* as *үзнэ*, or *нэмэж* as *нэмж*.
- Writing the past tense *-сан*⁴ form according to Mongolian script rules.
- Writing words with the structure long vowel + consonant + vowel using the "apex²" incorrectly.

These types of errors are common and indicate areas that require careful attention when teaching students familiar with vertical Mongolian script.

Pronunciation Errors

A major phonological challenge for foreign learners is the discrepancy between written and spoken forms. Examples:

- *баярлаа* → correct: *баярлалаа*
- *эмээлээ* → correct: *эмээлэлээ*
- *эмлэг* → correct: *эмнэлэг*

Learners tend to pronounce words as written, without applying rules of assimilation, elision, or gemination typical in Mongolian phonology. Additionally, some substitute *ж* for *з*, e.g., *үзэж* pronounced as *үжэж*, due to L1 phonemic inventory constraints.

DISCUSSION

The teaching of Mongolian as a second language (L2) to foreign learners aligns with several foundational principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory. According to Saville-Troike (2005), SLA refers both to the study of individuals and groups learning a language after acquiring their first language, and to the process of learning that language. Nunan (2010) similarly defines SLA as the processes through which one acquires additional languages beyond their first. Betti (2021) emphasizes SLA as both the process of acquiring a second language and a scientific discipline devoted to studying that process, while Hoque (2017) highlights its primarily subconscious nature occurring within communicative contexts. Historically, SLA research transitioned from behaviorist and structuralist models to multiple competing theories in the 1990s (VanPatten & Williams, 2014). Early approaches, such as the Audio-Lingual Method, drew heavily from behavioral psychology and structural linguistics, particularly in the United States (Castagnaro, 2006). Krashen's Monitor Theory (VanPatten & Williams, 2014) further shaped L2 pedagogy, proposing that comprehension of meaningful input drives acquisition and that innate linguistic faculties interact with instructional contexts to explain variability in learning outcomes. These theoretical insights underpin the methodological approaches observed in Mongolian L2 classrooms. Empirical observations indicate that Mongolian L2 learners exhibit errors influenced by their first language (L1) phonology, orthography, and grammatical systems. For instance, Buryat, Khalkha, and Tuvan learners demonstrate relatively fewer difficulties with Cyrillic orthography, whereas students with backgrounds in Inner Mongolian or Chinese face considerable challenges, often requiring extended practice in grapheme recognition and correct letter combination (Saville-Troike, 2005; Betti, 2021). Instructional methods have therefore emphasized scaffolded learning, gradually progressing from basic reading and writing tasks to more complex syntactic

constructions, consistent with SLA recommendations for graded input and comprehensible output (Swain, 1985; Ellis, 2008). Phonological awareness and vowel harmony are critical instructional components. For example, Mongolian vowels and consonant distinctions (e.g., a-e, o-u, g-h, ts-ch) must be explicitly taught, particularly to students from non-Altaic L1 backgrounds (VanPatten & Williams, 2014). Misalignments in vowel harmony and the use of long versus short vowels correspond to typical L1 transfer errors, highlighting the importance of integrating phonological instruction with orthographic practice (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Pedagogical strategies employed in Mongolian L2 classrooms reflect a synthesis of traditional and communicative approaches. Writing exercises, paired reading, and oral practice correspond to communicative SLA principles emphasizing meaningful interaction and the negotiation of comprehension (Long, 1996; Krashen, 1982). Listening comprehension is enhanced by exposure to varied speech registers and speaker types, following recommendations from contemporary L2 listening pedagogy (Vandergrift, 2007; Rost, 2011). Reading materials are selected not only for lexical richness but also for cultural relevance, echoing principles of content-based instruction (Snow, 2001; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). Oral tasks are grounded in familiar contexts to foster motivation and scaffold learner output (Nation, 2001; Nation & Newton, 2009). Comparatively, Mongolian L2 teaching methods exhibit both similarities and differences with international L2 practices. Like Western grammar-translation classrooms, explicit grammar instruction is included (Cook, 2016; Coleman, 1996). However, these are complemented by communicative and task-based methods, aligning with modern SLA-informed pedagogy emphasizing interactive input, output, and error feedback (Ellis, 2003; Willis & Willis, 2007). The inclusion of culturally meaningful texts, interactive speaking tasks, and structured listening activities corresponds to a content-based approach widely practiced in ESL and EFL instruction globally (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003; Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

In conclusion, Mongolian L2 instruction demonstrates a deliberate integration of SLA theory with practical teaching methods. The alignment with Krashen's Monitor Theory, communicative principles, and phonological and orthographic scaffolding illustrates a sophisticated approach tailored to learner L1 backgrounds. This comparative discussion underscores the importance of balancing explicit grammar instruction with interactive, culturally relevant tasks to promote comprehensive L2 development, a strategy consistent with international best practices in SLA research and foreign language pedagogy.

RESULTS AND METHODOLOGICAL

Implications

This section discusses key areas that both Mongolian language learners and teachers should pay greater attention to, based on the analysis of common errors among foreign students.

Teaching the phonetic characteristics of Mongolian through articulatory awareness. When introducing the distinctive phonetic features of Mongolian, teachers should employ articulatory explanations and visible mouth movements. Learners cannot pronounce what they cannot perceive; therefore, minimal pairs of similar vowels and consonants must be taught through concrete visual demonstration. The teacher's mouth movement plays a vital role. For instance, Japanese students often experience great difficulty distinguishing and pronouncing /l/ and /r/, while Inner Mongolian students struggle with sounds such as /ts-ch/, /z-j/, and /d-t/. When teaching the /l-r/ contrast, using a mirror is effective. Students can observe their own articulation and compare it with the teacher's.

Practicing vowel distinctions with Kalmyk and Buryat students. Kalmyk and Buryat students often have trouble distinguishing vowel length and the position of reduced vowels. To overcome this, the teacher can design interactive listening exercises.

For example, writing two columns of words on the board and having students identify which column's word they hear. This develops both auditory discrimination and articulation. Gradually, teachers can hide their mouth movements (e.g., by reading behind a book) to further strengthen the students' listening comprehension. Example words:

<i>ав</i>	<i>хана</i>	<i>зах</i>
<i>аав</i>	<i>хаана</i>	<i>заах</i>

Teaching voiced and voiceless consonants to Inner Mongolian students. Inner Mongolian students require explicit instruction on Mongolian's voiced, voiceless consonant pairs such as *b-p*, *v-f*, *g-kh*, *d-t*, *z-p*, *ts-ch*, and *s-sh*. Teachers can have students place their hands on their throats to feel vocal cord vibration. Through this tactile exercise, they can physically perceive the difference between voiced and voiceless sounds. Teachers should also demonstrate how a voiced consonant like *g* becomes voiceless (as *kh*) when followed by a voiceless sound. For example:

<i>g-kh</i> : <i>амтлагч, эгч, багш;</i>
<i>v-f</i> : <i>явсан, авсан, тавьсан, дэвтэр, давс, хувцас, давхар;</i>
<i>d-t</i> : <i>мэдсэн, идсэн;</i>
<i>z-ts</i> : <i>үзсэн.</i>

Frequent reading and pronunciation practice with such word lists helps improve articulation and reading fluency.

Reinforcing pronunciation through minimal pair practice. After learners can correctly produce and perceive individual phonemes, teachers should introduce minimal pairs that differ by one sound: *харх-харах, хонх-хонох, зам-жам, тэр-дэр, цонх-цунх*. These can be practiced through pictures and listening drills, which engage visual and auditory learning simultaneously.

Teaching writing as a foundation for speaking. Writing supports spoken production. When teaching foreign students to write in Mongolian, it is important in the initial stage to help them master clear and neat writing in Cyrillic script. Students who speak Buryat, Kalmyk, Tuvan, or Russian generally face fewer difficulties in writing with Cyrillic letters, whereas Mongolic-speaking students from Inner Mongolia and Chinese students encounter significant challenges. For these students, who are accustomed to writing in traditional Mongolian script, mastering each Cyrillic letter and learning to connect them correctly requires considerable time. During the process of learning to produce legible writing in Cyrillic, students also develop the ability to compose short texts based on the vocabulary, conjunctions, and grammatical knowledge covered in class. Teachers can further support this by correcting students' writing while simultaneously discussing grammar, word choice, and sentence structure, thereby helping them improve their writing skills interactively.

Addressing writing errors specific to different ethnic groups. The types of errors that students make in writing vary significantly across different nationalities. For instance, it is particularly important to teach Kalmyk and Buryat students the correct functions of the reduced vowel in Mongolian. The reduced vowel in Mongolian serves multiple functions: distinguishing proper nouns from common nouns (e.g., *Дархан-дархны*), differentiating the root "n" from the word-final "n" (e.g., *сан-сана*), distinguishing the guttural "g" from the linguistic "g" (e.g., *бага-баг*), and differentiating the adjectival connective suffix "x" from other occurrences of "x" (e.g., *хонох-хонх*). Explicitly teaching these distinctions based on the students' native linguistic background represents a critical step toward developing accurate spelling skills. A common error among Kalmyk and Buryat students involves omitting the reduced vowel due to incomplete mastery of the vowel and certain consonant rules (ᠮᠤᠯᠤᠯ, 1997, 1997, 1997). Examples of such errors include writing *самбр* instead of *самбар*, *зург* instead of *зураг*, *үзг* instead of *үзэг*, and *дэвтр* instead of *дэвтэр*. Students from China can be classified into three groups: the first group is proficient in writing and speaking Mongolian using the traditional script; the second group can speak

basic Mongolian but cannot read or write in traditional Mongolian script; and the third group has received education in Chinese and possesses minimal knowledge of Mongolian. For these students, teaching Mongolian requires differentiated instructional strategies. Instruction progresses gradually from simpler to more complex tasks to develop reading, writing, and speaking skills in a stepwise manner, tailored to each group's linguistic background and prior knowledge.

7. Regarding students from Inner Mongolia, several challenges in vowel harmony, long vowels, and the pronunciation and writing of phonetically similar letters influenced by regional accents have been observed. It is particularly important during the initial lessons to explicitly teach how vowels and consonants correspond, for example, А-Э, О-У, Ө-У, Г-Х, Т-Д, С-Ш, Ц-Ч, З-Ж, and Б-В, depending on their position and stress, to ensure correct vowel placement in words. It is crucial for these students to fully internalize the rule of Mongolian vowel harmony, whereby a back vowel is followed by a back vowel and a lax vowel by a lax vowel. In traditional Mongolian script, words such as *номлах* (to read), *сурууцах* (to study), and *нөхцөл* (condition) are written and read in accordance with these rules. A common error occurs when students mix lax and back vowels within a single word, reflecting a lack of awareness of the distinct orthographic rules between the traditional script and the Cyrillic system.

Among Inner Mongolian students, the phenomenon of writing a back vowel after a lax vowel and vice versa occurs quite frequently, especially when an affix is attached to a disyllabic or polysyllabic root. With regard to Inner Mongolian students, errors are often observed in writing nominal suffixes, such as plural, case, and possessive where the suffix is either written separately from the stem, incorrectly attached, or in violation of vowel harmony rules. These errors are attributable to orthographic conventions of the traditional Mongolian script. For example, the case suffix may be directly attached to the base form of the noun (*сургуульийн* instead of *сургуулийн*), a nominal suffix may be written separately (*хүмүүс тай* instead of *хүмүүстэй*), vowel harmony may be violated (*болвсрэл* instead of *боловсрол*, *хүсэлтай* instead of *хүсэлтэй*), and errors involving the use of stressed and unstressed vowels also occur.

When teaching Mongolian case suffixes to foreign language learners, it is highly important to introduce personal pronouns inflected for case together with verbs that govern a specific case, as this helps learners understand the syntactic function and semantic distinctions of each case. For instance, the comitative case in Mongolian answers the questions *хэнтэй* ("with whom") and *юутай* ("with what"), and primarily expresses the meaning of "together with." Certain verbs, such as *танилцах* ('to get acquainted'), *ярих* ('to talk'), and *уулзах* ('to meet'), require their preceding noun phrase to take the comitative case. However, in English, these verbs govern the accusative case, which often leads to one common type of error among learners, case confusion caused by cross-linguistic interference.

When teaching vocabulary to foreign learners of Mongolian, it is essential to build upon the grammatical knowledge that students have already acquired. A variety of active learning techniques should be creatively employed to explain new lexical items. For example, instructors may use visual aids such as pictures, demonstrate actions denoted by certain verbs through physical performance, and have students perform the same actions themselves. Teachers should also relate new words to those students already know by forming collocations, or explain unfamiliar words using previously learned synonyms. To reinforce vocabulary acquisition, gap-filling exercises can be used to assess learners' comprehension of newly introduced words. Moreover, teaching synonyms and antonyms provides an effective way to expand students' vocabulary range.

Developing accurate pronunciation, a rich vocabulary, the ability to use various word forms appropriately, and applying grammatical knowledge in oral communication is a complex process that requires extensive practice. To improve students' speaking skills, relying solely on writing exercises is less effective than engaging them in multiple, diverse oral activities. Creative exercises such as having

students read in pairs, swapping pairs, or reading in a back-to-back formation can enhance engagement and learning outcomes. Selecting topics relevant to students' daily lives encourages meaningful speaking practice. During oral activities, instructors should observe and take notes on students' speech, providing feedback at the end of the session. This includes correcting pronunciation, explaining unfamiliar grammatical structures, and analyzing the content of students' speech. If students speak slowly, repeating their sentences aloud can help increase speaking fluency. During speaking practice, it is important for teachers to guide rather than immediately correct errors, using supportive questions to maintain the flow of conversation. Teachers can also share their impressions of a student's speech with the class, allowing students to perceive how their speech is received by others and to self-assess. Recording students' oral performance for later feedback is also recommended. Assignments encouraging speaking at home can further reinforce skills. Topics may include "My Room," "A Day in My Life," or "My Family." Tasks can involve describing family members using pictures, which not only engage the student personally but also encourage peer interaction and participation in discussion. Such activities make oral practice both meaningful and enjoyable, fostering active communication in the target language.

To develop students' listening skills, it is recommended to employ a variety of modern teaching methods. Students should be exposed to recordings of diverse speakers, including males, females, children, and the elderly. The listening materials should be rich in genre and content, covering topics such as history, society, folktales, legends, television programs, and public announcements. During initial listening activities, it is advisable not to play a recording more than twice. After students review and correct their responses, the recording may be replayed for further reinforcement. Since spoken Mongolian is often highly condensed compared to its written form, listening exercises can also be conducted outside the classroom. Teachers may provide students with audio recordings or mobile-based listening tasks related to the lesson topic. Written transcripts can also be distributed. While listening, students are encouraged to note unfamiliar words and expressions, pay attention to pronunciation, and observe how condensed words are articulated. To further enhance listening skills, instructors can deliberately omit certain words from the written transcript, requiring students to fill in the missing words during subsequent listening. This method strengthens both comprehension and auditory discrimination. Effective listening exercises should be conducted step by step in each lesson, using materials that are appropriate to the students' proficiency level, with clear expressions, short texts, and focused themes. By gradually increasing difficulty from simple to more complex content students can systematically improve their listening ability. It is important to note that the primary purpose of reading materials is to introduce students to new vocabulary in context, rather than to encourage rote memorization. Reading significantly supports comprehension in Mongolian by exposing learners to a rich lexical repertoire, compound structures, idiomatic expressions, and cultural concepts. Teachers should select reading materials that align with the students' language proficiency and interests, ensuring a variety of topics are represented in the reading list. Students should not be required to look up every unfamiliar word in a dictionary. Instead, they should focus on identifying words and expressions that appear repeatedly, as well as key terms necessary for understanding the text. To assess comprehension, teachers may ask students to create sentences using selected vocabulary or to answer questions related to the text. Additionally, students' understanding can be evaluated through brief oral summaries or retellings, which provide insight into how well they have grasped the content. By carefully selecting appropriate reading materials and employing targeted comprehension activities, teachers can effectively develop both linguistic knowledge and cultural understanding in learners of Mongolian.

CONCLUSION

The article synthesizes the observations and findings obtained from a study conducted to identify common errors made by foreign learners

of Mongolian. The results indicate that, in addition to pronunciation errors, the most frequent mistakes involve the incorrect use of grammatical morphemes. The main reason for this is that Mongolian is an agglutinative language, and its morphological characteristics influence learners' performance. For teachers instructing foreign students of Mongolian at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels, it is necessary to innovate teaching methodologies and to select methods that best correspond to learners' individual learning styles. When teaching Mongolian to foreign learners, particular emphasis should be placed on developing proficiency and habit in the use of case markers, especially the genitive case markers, as these require careful explanation and consistent practice. In Mongolian, the determiner and modified elements follow a fixed syntactic order. For instance, a genitive noun phrase comes first, followed by numerals, adjectives indicating size or quantity, adjectives expressing quality, and finally adjectives denoting material. For example, it is correct to say *номын хоёр том сайхан модон тавуур* ("two large beautiful wooden bookshelves"). Buryat and Kalmyk students often make errors in this word order, so it is advisable for teachers to provide additional exercises to reinforce correct usage. Teachers should also pay attention to explaining the syntactic structure of Mongolian in comparison with that of English. In particular, they should clarify the differences in information structure, such as the placement of theme and rheme, as well as distinctions in sentence structure between Mongolian and English (and other languages). Developing various methodological approaches to make these contrasts explicit would be beneficial.

REFERENCES

- Unurbayan, Ts., Jumdaan, L., & Purev-Ochir, B. (2020). *Contemporary Mongolian Language II*. Ulaanbaatar: Bit Press.
- Yanjinkham, J. (2025). *A Study of Sentence Structure in Spoken Mongolian*. Ulaanbaatar.
- Betti, M. J. (2021). *Second-Language Acquisition*. Preprint, Department of English, University of Thi-Qar. ResearchGate.
- Brinton, D. M., Snow, M. A., & Wesche, M. (2003). *Content-based second language instruction*. University of Michigan Press.
- Castagnaro, P. (2006). *Language teaching in the USA: History and methods*. Routledge.
- Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). *The CALLA handbook: Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach*. Addison-Wesley.
- Coleman, J. A. (1996). *Studying languages: A survey of European universities*. Multilingual Matters.
- Cook, V. (2016). *Second language learning and language teaching* (5th ed.). Taylor & Francis.
- Coyle, D., Hood, P., & Marsh, D. (2010). *CLIL: Content and language integrated learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Hoque, M. E. (2017). An introduction to the second language acquisition. In *Language Acquisition* (pp. 1–23). Education and Development Research Council.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How languages are learned* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Long, M. H. (1996). *The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition*. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition* (pp. 413–468). Academic Press.
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge University Press.
- Nation, I. S. P., & Newton, J. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL listening and speaking*. Routledge.
- Nunan, D. (2010). Second language acquisition. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 87–92). Cambridge University Press.
- Rost, M. (2011). *Teaching and researching listening* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Saville-Troike, M. (2005). Introducing second language acquisition (Chapter 1). In *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 1–6). Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, M. (1985). Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development. In S. Gass & C. Madden (Eds.), *Input in second language acquisition* (pp. 235–256). Newbury House.
- VanPatten, B., & Williams, J. (2014). Early theories in SLA. In B. VanPatten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition: An introduction* (pp. 17–25). Routledge.
- Vandergrift, L. (2007). *Extensive listening practice and input enhancement using mobile phones: A case study*. TESL-EJ, 11(2), 1–15.
- Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). *Doing task-based teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Snow, M. A. (2001). *Content-based and immersion models for second and foreign language teaching*. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed., pp. 303–318). Heinle & Heinle.
