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CROSS-LINGUISTIC ERROR PHENOMENA IN ENGLISH RESEARCH WRITING OF UKRAINIAN AUTHORS: LEXICAL AND ORTHOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

The increasing dominance of English as the primary language of international scholarly communication presents significant challenges for exophonic authors. Research writing is inherently challenging due to the complexity of linguistic, cognitive, and disciplinary factors involved. Addressing this issue requires careful consideration of the code-switching context, in which cross-linguistic effects – particularly native language interference – are especially salient.

This study investigates language deviations in English academic texts produced by Ukrainian authors, with a specific focus on lexical and orthographic accuracy as error-prone domains shaped by L1 interference and code-switching effects, particularly in research writing of Ukrainian scholars. The research is grounded in an error analysis framework that accounts for both inter- and intralingual sources of deviation. Lexical errors are examined in terms of inappropriate word choice, false cognates, semantic transfer, and restricted collocational patterns, while orthographic analysis concentrates on spelling inconsistencies, punctuation misuse, and the representation of proper names, especially Ukrainian toponyms.

Special attention is given to the influence of a third language – Russian – which further complicates orthographic accuracy due to the lack of a unified standard for the English rendering of many Ukrainian proper nouns. The findings demonstrate that deviations from Standard English are not random but systematically reflect structural and functional differences between the native (Ukrainian), intermediary (Russian), and target (English) languages. Lexical and orthographic errors emerge as the most persistent categories, revealing deeply rooted cross-language effects.

The study underscores the relevance of targeted error analysis as a diagnostic and pedagogical tool. A detailed understanding of the mechanisms underlying lexical and orthographic mistakes can enhance linguistic awareness among academic writers and educators, contribute to more effective writing instruction, and ultimately support Ukrainian scholars in meeting the conventions of international academic discourse.

Key words: *academic writing, exophonic authors, L1 interference, inter- and intralingual factors, linguistic deviations, orthography.*

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**ЯВИЩА КРОС-ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИХ ПОМИЛОК У АНГЛОМОВНОМУ
НАУКОВОМУ ПИСЬМІ УКРАЇНСЬКИХ АВТОРІВ:
ЛЕКСИЧНИЙ ТА ОРФОГРАФІЧНИЙ АСПЕКТИ**

Зростаюче домінування англійської мови як найбільш універсального засобу міжнародної наукової комунікації зумовлює низку системних викликів для авторів, чиєю рідною мовою не є англійська. Академічне письмо характеризується високим рівнем складності, що пояснюється взаємодією лінгвістичних, когнітивних та дисциплінарно-специфічних чинників. У цьому контексті особливої актуальності набуває урахування так званого явища коду-перемикання, що у свій спосіб символізує перехресну інтерференцію однієї мовної системи в іншу, зокрема рідної мови в цільову (іноземну). У запропонованому дослідженні здійснено аналіз мовних відхилень в англomовних академічних текстах українських авторів, з особливим акцентом на лексичний та орфографічний аспекти як найбільш піддатливим до інтерференції рідної мови сферам наукового письма.

Методологічну основу дослідження становить підхід до аналізу потенційних помилок міжмовного та внутрішньомовного походження, що передбачає урахування відхилень від норм стандартної англійської мови в наукових текстах українських авторів у сферах біологічних, екологічних та медичних наук. У статті наводяться приклади та класифікуються помилки за відповідними мовними категоріями.

Лексичні помилки аналізуються з огляду на неналежний добір одиниць вокабуляру, семантичне перенесення та помилкове розуміння колокаційних моделей. Орфографічний аналіз зосереджено на виявленні непослідовностей у написанні, порушень пунктуаційних норм і специфіці передачі власних назв, зокрема українських топонімів. Особливу увагу приділено впливу третьої мови – російської, – який додатково ускладнює дотримання орфографічної норми через брак уніфікованого стандарту англomовної транслітерації значної кількості українських власних назв.

Отримані результати свідчать, що зафіксовані відхилення від норм стандартної англійської мови мають не випадковий, а системний характер і відображають структурно-функційні розбіжності між рідною (українською), проміжною (російською) та цільовою (англійською) мовами. Лексичні та орфографічні помилки виявляються найбільш стійкими категоріями відхилень, що свідчить про глибокі міжмовні впливи.

Дослідження підтверджує доцільність застосування цілеспрямованого аналізу помилок як ефективного діагностичного й педагогічного інструменту. Детальне осмислення механізмів виникнення лексичних та орфографічних помилок сприяє підвищенню мовної рефлексії академічних авторів і викладачів, оптимізації навчання академічного письма та, зрештою, забезпечує кращу відповідність наукових публікацій українських дослідників вимогам міжнародного академічного дискурсу.

Ключові слова: академічне письмо, автори-екзофони, інтерференція L1, міжмовні та внутрішньомовні чинники, відхилення від лінгвістичної норми, орфографія.

Relevance of the research problem. Communicating research effectively in a non-native language and ensuring its accessibility to an international scholarly audience requires the

production of a linguistically and rhetorically sound academic text. This process is shaped by the interaction between writing accuracy and the broader code-switching environment reachable

by exophonic authors. The global dominance of English as the primary medium of publication in indexed academic journals further amplifies the linguistic and communicative demands placed on non-native researchers. Academic publishing, understood as a cognitively complex and evaluative activity, presupposes compliance with rigorous conventions governing both the quality of content and the formal standards of its presentation. As a result, cross-linguistic academic communication has evolved into an increasingly competitive and challenging domain.

Academic English is governed by established norms that regulate the organization, development, and presentation of scholarly ideas. These norms aim to ensure a culturally neutral mode of expression while simultaneously aligning with internationally recognized academic writing conventions (Bailey, 2015; Yakhontova, 2009, 2020; Zhao, 2017). However, the alternation between linguistic systems, commonly manifested through code-switching, frequently gives rise to various forms of language misuse (Declerck et al., 2016; Ellen, 2019; Wang, 2003). Such deviations are often reinforced by L1 interference, which has been widely identified as a major source of linguistic inconsistency in L2 academic writing (Danzak, 2011; Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015; Kazazoğlu, 2020; Marita & Jufriзал, 2020; O'Leary, 2022; Von Grebmer Zu Wolfsthurn et al., 2021; Yuniswati, 2017).

Investigating these language-related difficulties and examining the nature and origins of writing errors in academic texts therefore represents a relevant and necessary area of inquiry. Of particular importance is the systematic analysis of deviations from Standard English in scholarly writing of Ukrainian authors, who have shown a marked increase in publishing activity in English-language journals over the past decade. Gaining deeper insight into these deviations can contribute to a better understanding of cross-linguistic influence in academic discourse and support more effective strategies for improving writing accuracy among exophonic researchers.

Literature review. The expanding role of English as a global medium for scholarly communication has long contributed to the development and dissemination of knowledge across disciplines. Consequently, research addressing the complexities of academic writing has been widely recognized as a central component of language performance

and academic literacy (Bailey, 2015; Ellen, 2019; Swales & Feak, 2012; Zhao, 2017). Writing in English in educational and professional contexts has gained increasing importance while remaining a cognitively demanding process that requires sophisticated linguistic integration and analytical control (Crossley, 2020; Declerck et al., 2016; Nawal, 2018).

In response to these challenges, the present study draws on several interconnected research domains relevant to its analytical focus. Central to this inquiry is the examination of key components of academic writing within the framework of code-switching and first-language interference, both of which continue to account for a substantial proportion of linguistic inadequacies observed in the written output of exophonic authors. Investigating these domains enables a more systematic understanding of the mechanisms underlying language deviation in academic discourse.

A substantial body of scholarship has examined academic writing as a genre governed by clearly defined conventions related to content, organization, and stylistic appropriateness. Researchers such as Bailey (2015), Swales & Feak (2012), and Yakhontova (2009, 2020) emphasize that academic texts are characterized by a formal register, explicit communicative purpose, precision, and the avoidance of colloquial features. Additionally, effective academic writing presupposes the use of discipline-appropriate vocabulary, logically structured argumentation, evidence-based reasoning, and coherent conclusions, all of which are essential for successful scholarly publication.

Parallel to genre-based research, numerous studies have focused on deviations from normative language use in academic writing. Scholars including Mansoor & Salman (2020), Mickan et al. (2020), and Von Grebmer Zu Wolfsthurn et al. (2021) highlight that writing quality is influenced not only by linguistic competence but by task complexity, lexical demands, and translation-oriented strategies. These strategies are often shaped by writers' metalinguistic awareness and conceptual frameworks rooted in their first language, rather than by their proficiency in the target one (Crossley, 2020; Kanwal, 2025; Rahimi, 2025).

A growing consensus in the literature suggests that avoiding native-language interference in second-language writing is largely unattainable, particularly in linguistically vulnerable areas

(Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015; Kazazoğlu, 2020; Kryzhanivska et al., 2024; Von Grebmer Zu Wolfsthurn et al., 2021; Yuniswati, 2017). This phenomenon, commonly described in terms of cross-linguistic influence or language transfer, is regarded as a primary source of structural and functional deviations in the target language. Such interference is typically attributed to contrasts and overlaps between linguistic systems, the writer's background knowledge, levels of language proficiency, and discrepancies between corresponding grammatical and lexical structures.

Within this framework, error analysis emerged as a particularly productive approach to examining the impact of first-language interference on academic writing. Drawing on extensive empirical research (Danzak, 2011; Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015; Kozolup et al., 2023; Kryzhanivska et al., 2024; Marita & Jufriзал, 2020; Yuniswati, 2017), scholars generally distinguish between inter- and intralingual origins of error. Although classifications vary across studies, commonly identified error types include inaccuracies in word formation, selection and omission, misordering, punctuation and capitalization errors, inappropriate verb and preposition use, subject-verb disagreement, faulty tense and aspect choice, and sentence-level structural deficiencies. These errors are frequently linked to reliance on bilingual dictionaries, literal translation practices, limited syntactic competence, or insufficient mastery of academic writing conventions such as clarity, conciseness, objectivity, and formality.

Despite the breadth of international research in this area, studies specifically addressing Ukrainian language interference in English academic writing remain relatively limited. Existing work is largely confined to a small number of publications by Yakhontova (2020), Kozolup et al. (2023), and Kryzhanivska et al. (2024), which document recurring error patterns in texts produced by Ukrainian and other Slavic authors. These studies provide valuable insights but also highlight the need for further systematic investigation.

Given this gap, there is a clear demand for a more comprehensive examination of the challenges Ukrainian authors encounter as a result of native-language interference and language-specific deviations in scholarly writing. Addressing these issues may contribute to a deeper understanding of cross-linguistic interaction in academic discourse.

Accordingly, the present study aims to elucidate the relationship between the native (Ukrainian) and target (English) languages by offering a detailed analysis of the nature and sources of errors arising in English-language research writing. The scope of the investigation is intentionally limited to those levels of written production where cross-linguistic effects are most salient.

A systematic examination of language-related difficulties in academic writing necessitates reference to core levels of written production: *syntactic* (grammatical and sentence-structural features), *textual* (stylistic conventions, paragraph organization, and cohesion), *lexical* (vocabulary-related issues), and *orthographic* (spelling, punctuation).

The language material comprises 50 research manuscripts submitted by Ukrainian authors to the journal *Biology Studies* between 2021 and 2023. The study adopts a mixed-method research design combining descriptive qualitative and descriptive quantitative approaches. Content analysis serves as the primary data collection technique. The analytical procedure involves identifying errors, verifying deviations from Standard English norms, classifying error types, and tracing their possible connection to L1 interference.

To complete this study with all due relevance, it makes sense to reveal all possible language areas vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence in research writing of Ukrainian authors. The research **aims to** explore the nature of inappropriate lexical and orthographic uses, and their inter- and intralingual origins by identifying and interpreting deviations from Standard English in scholarly research writing produced by Ukrainian authors in the fields of life, environmental, and medical sciences submitted for publication to a scholarly journal by non-English speaking writers. The errors are exemplified and classified according to the type of language misuse and its origin. The analysis focuses on key aspects of writing assessment related to appropriate lexical accuracy (word choice, false cognates, phraseology, semantic transfer, and restricted collocational patterns), and orthography (spelling inconsistencies, punctuation misuse, and the representation of proper names, especially Ukrainian toponyms). Additionally, an attempt has been made to trace any possible connections of these misuses to authors' first language interference.

Results and discussion. Methodological framework and analytical procedure of this research is relied upon a good tradition of a mixed-method research design that integrates descriptive qualitative and descriptive quantitative approaches. The qualitative component is aimed at examining the nature and quality of language use within a defined corpus of academic texts, whereas the quantitative component addresses the frequency and distribution of identified error types (Dawson, 2009). As part of the qualitative methodology, content analysis was employed as the principal data collection technique. This method enables systematic examination of written material through the identification, documentation, and interpretation of linguistic features present in the selected texts.

The manuscript analysis focused on identifying deviations from established norms of Standard English and from conventional features of English academic discourse. The analytical procedure comprised several successive stages: (1) detection and marking of language deviations; (2) verification of each instance against normative standards of English; (3) categorization and systematization of errors for subsequent discussion; and (4) interpretation of potential links between identified deviations and the authors' first-language background. Following the qualitative analysis, the findings were summarized using descriptive statistical techniques in order to determine recurrent error patterns and to gain insight into the underlying causes of writing difficulties encountered by non-native English authors (Dawson, 2009). The analysis addressed selected dimensions of writing assessment, including lexical choice, phraseology, punctuation, and spelling accuracy.

Previous findings (Kozolup et al., 2023 and Kryzhanivska et al., 2024) reveal several language areas that may hinder effective communication of research outcomes to the international academic community. At the textual level, major challenges include flawed paragraph organization and excessive verbosity influenced by Ukrainian academic writing conventions. At the syntactic level, recurrent deviations involve non-canonical word order, improper clause construction, and overly complex sentences characterized by clause accumulation, misplaced modifiers, inappropriate collocations, all of which negatively affect readability. Among grammatical errors are missing predicates, subject-verb disagreement, incorrect verb forms, and the

misuse of articles, pronouns, demonstratives, and quantifiers.

Overview of lexical and orthographic findings. The examination of the corpus revealed that lexical inaccuracies constitute the most frequent category of deviation, largely resulting from loan translation, imprecise lexical selection, and a restricted range of academic vocabulary. Orthographic deviations, while less numerous, were associated with inconsistent spelling practices, particularly in relation to proper names, capitalization conventions, and the alternation between British and American spelling norms. The distribution and nature of these errors indicate the combined influence of interlingual and intralingual factors, with first-language interference playing a notable role.

At the lexical level, academic vocabulary appears to be particularly susceptible to cross-linguistic transfer. The analysis uncovered numerous instances of inappropriate word selection, non-standard collocations, and formulaic expressions shaped by semantic and structural patterns of the authors' native language. These deviations frequently reflect reliance on first-language conceptual frameworks during the writing process.

A substantial proportion of lexical errors can be attributed to loan translation. Although borrowing and calquing are common outcomes of language contact, the instances observed in this study represent context-specific, non-conventional formations produced through direct replication of L1 patterns. Drawing on Meriläinen et al. (2016), these cases can be classified as either semantic copying – where meaning components of a lexical item are transferred from L1 – or combinational copying, which involves the replication of phraseological or syntactic structures. Additionally, some lexical deviations align with manifestations of code-switching, understood here as unintended insertion of L1-based lexical items into English discourse, as opposed to deliberate language alternation (Treffers-Daller, 2009).

Semantic calques were particularly evident at the level of individual lexical items. In many cases, authors selected dictionary equivalents for Ukrainian words without considering English-specific usage constraints or collocational patterns. Frequently misapplied items included verbs and nouns with broad semantic ranges, such as establish, sign, and related derivatives. Further

examples of semantic transfer include expressions such as based on the received data, the research ... witnesses, and staying on a diet. While such usages rarely obscure meaning entirely, they compromise stylistic naturalness and precision. Other recurrent lexical confusions involved near-synonymous pairs (different vs. various), functionally distinct verbs (occupy vs. constitute), and part-whole relations (contain vs. include), reflecting insufficient differentiation of semantic scope.

Combinational copying emerged as another dominant pattern, particularly in the construction of collocations and fixed expressions. Authors frequently transferred phraseological structures from Ukrainian into English, resulting in hybrid constructions that deviate from conventional English usage. Prepositional phrases were especially affected, with numerous instances reflecting literal translation of Ukrainian syntactic models (e.g., in four times, on this time, in the limits of). In contrast, certain preposition-related errors were intralingual in nature and appeared to stem from incomplete mastery of English prepositional usage rather than from direct L1 influence.

Beyond prepositional structures, the corpus also contained extended phraseological constructions derived from literal translation of Ukrainian academic conventions. Expressions such as against the background, under the conditions of, and the material collection was realized by exemplify this tendency and contribute to stylistic verbosity and reduced idiomaticity, characteristics often associated with Ukrainian scholarly prose.

Although direct lexical code-switching is uncommon due to the typological distance between Ukrainian and English, deviations were observed in the use of internationalisms – lexical items shared across languages but differing in meaning or usage. Instances such as perspective bioindicators or it is a perspective to use illustrate semantic shifts influenced by Ukrainian usage. A related phenomenon involves the transfer of native orthographic conventions to international compound nouns, as in medico-biological problem.

Orthographic deviations identified in the corpus were relatively limited in number and fell into several broad categories: inconsistency in spelling standards (British vs. American), spelling of geographical names, capitalization errors, and sporadic spelling mistakes. With respect to orthographic standards, occasional shifts between

British and American spelling were observed, despite a general preference for American English.

The spelling of Ukrainian toponyms warrants particular attention, as this domain reflects interference from an additionally imposed linguistic system – Russian. Instances such as Kiev and Kharkov suggest reliance on Russian-based transliteration norms by some authors. Furthermore, the lack of a universally accepted English-language standard for Ukrainian geographical names has resulted in parallel spellings (e.g., Polissia/Polissya, Podillia/Podillya, Upper Pobuzhzhia/Verkhnie Pobuzhzhia), contributing to inconsistency across texts. Addressing this issue would require the development of a comprehensive reference resource for Ukrainian toponyms in English. Capitalization errors were most frequently associated with geographical terminology in compound proper names (the Vorskla river, the Transcarpathian lowland). Conversely, instances of unjustified capitalization were noted in references to chemical elements and substances. Additional orthographic deviations include commonly confused word pairs (than/then, data/date) and isolated spelling inaccuracies. Notably, errors involving specialized scientific terminology were rare, indicating a relatively high level of disciplinary lexical competence among the authors.

The analysis of the examined texts revealed a range of deviations from Standard English, along with a limited number of instances of inappropriate use of English academic style. All identified deviations were systematically categorized and summarized in Table 1.

The analysis indicates that the series of deviations stem from both interlingual and intralingual factors. At the lexical level, the most recurrent deviations include various forms of loan translation, inappropriate lexical choices, and limited vocabulary range. These findings partially correspond with the results reported by Kanwal (2025), Kazazoğlu (2020), Rahimi et al. (2025), and Yuniswati (2017), who identify literal translation, inaccurate word choice, incorrect noun forms, flawed comparisons, cross-referencing issues, misordering, and omission as the most frequent categories of errors. At the same time, the present analysis suggests that the distribution and prominence of lexical errors may vary across linguistic and national contexts.

The prevalence of lexical deviations can be attributed to several interrelated factors, including

Table 1
Errors classification in the research manuscripts

№	Category /Aspect	Frequency, %
1	Text structure and style	13
2	Sentence structure	29
3	Grammar	26
4	Lexis	25
	• Loan translation	17
	• Code switching	2
	• Poor vocabulary	6
5	Orthography	7
	• British vs American spelling	1
	• Spelling of toponyms	2
	• Capitalisation	1
	• Random spelling mistakes	3
6	Total	100

insufficient command of target-language grammar and lexis, reliance on direct translation strategies, limited sensitivity to contextual constraints, and persistent first-language interference. These factors have likewise been emphasized as dominant sources of error in earlier studies (Declerck et al., 2016; Ellen, 2019; Kazazoğlu, 2020). In this respect, Ukrainian authors – similar to other exophonic writers – appear to rely on their native language as a cognitive framework for organizing and verbalizing ideas.

Spelling-related deviations constitute one of the least frequent error categories (7%), a tendency that can largely be explained by the widespread use of automated language-checking tools. Within this group, random spelling errors account for approximately 3%. The spelling of toponyms remains a particularly problematic area, largely due to inconsistencies and ambiguities in existing standardization practices. Additionally, the findings indicate a need for greater accuracy in the application of capitalization rules in English, as well as for consistent adherence to either British or American orthographic conventions, avoiding unmotivated switching between the two.

Conclusions and further research perspectives. The findings of the study have identified several language domains in which Ukrainian authors encounter persistent challenges in effectively communicating scientific ideas in English. These difficulties are primarily associated with a restricted repertoire of academic vocabulary, which may stem from insufficient training in academic writing in both the first and the target languages. Additionally, excessive verbosity emerges as a recurrent stylistic feature that impedes clarity and conciseness in

English research writing. The analysis further demonstrates that attempts to construct English expressions on the basis of native-language structural patterns frequently result in hybrid or non-native-like collocations. Such constructions combine features of both languages, and are therefore perceived as unnatural or stylistically inappropriate by native speakers of English. By contrast, a number of deviations, particularly the misuse of prepositions, can be attributed to intralingual factors, as they do not appear to arise directly from L1 transfer but rather from incomplete internalization of target-language norms.

At the orthographic level, the spelling of toponyms warrants particular attention, as it is often influenced by the presence of a third language, namely Russian. The lack of a single, consistently applied standard for rendering Ukrainian toponyms in English contributes to variability and controversy in their written representation, thereby increasing the likelihood of deviation in scholarly texts.

Taken together, the results provide further evidence of the complex cross-linguistic interactions between the first and target languages in the academic writing of exophonic authors. The observed deviations reflect the combined influence of interlingual transfer and intralingual development, and are often associated with the use of bilingual dictionaries, reliance on direct translation, transfer of national writing conventions, and limited proficiency in target language. These findings reinforce the view that L1 interference remains a significant, though not exclusive, source of error in English research writing of Ukrainian authors.

Finally, the study demonstrates that systematic error analysis offers valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by Ukrainian scholars in producing academic texts in English. Such insights have clear pedagogical implications, as the proposed classification of errors may be integrated into academic writing instruction and contribute to the development of targeted error-based pedagogy for both educators and practitioners.

Further research is warranted to explore error phenomena in additional domains and genres where academic writing is employed. Expanding the scope of investigation may yield benefits not only for the methodology of teaching English for academic purposes but also for applied studies of written discourse in professional and disciplinary contexts.

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