LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES FOR EXPRESSING SIMPLE NEGATIVE SENTENCES IN ENGLISH AND VIETNAMESE

Nguyen Thi Ngoc Vy

University of Phan Thiet, Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

Abstract: *This study investigates linguistic strategies for expressing simple negative sentences in English and Vietnamese, aiming to identify structural similarities and differences and the common errors made by Vietnamese EFL learners. Mixed–method was used in the form of corpus analysis, 30 high–school student questionnaires, and semi–structured interviews (n=6). The qualitative insights were used to understand the perception and challenges of learners whereby quantitative data were obtained through descriptive statistics, correlation, and t–tests. The results show that Vietnamese students tend to take over the L1 patterns and apply them to English, leaving out or inappropriately applying auxiliaries (do/does/did), changing position of not, and mixing different forms of no, not and none. There was a gap between understanding and proper use as recognition tasks were not as difficult as production. As both quantitative and qualitative findings indicate, the primary sources of difficulty are cross–linguistic interference and structural complexity. Pedagogically, the paper highlights the necessity of explicit contrastive teaching in order to decrease transfer error and acquire higher accuracy in the negation of English.*

Keywords: *contrastive analysis, cross–linguistic interference, EFL learners, English, negation, simple negative sentences, Vietnamese*

INTRODUCTION

Negation is not merely a grammatical device but a fundamental linguistic strategy through which speakers express denial, contradiction, or non–existence of events, actions, and states. The English language uses auxiliary verbs with the negative marker *not* to form negations as seen in *She does not go to school.* In contrast, Vietnamese relies primarily on preverbal negative particles such as *không*, *chưa*, or *đừng*, which precede the main verb and do not require auxiliaries (Diệp, 1989). These structural differences highlight how the two languages conceptualize negation through distinct syntactic and semantic mechanisms.

The different negation systems between Vietnamese and English cause Vietnamese students to make interference errors when learning English. The direct application of Vietnamese sentence structures to English results in incorrect sentences like *She* not go to school because students omit auxiliaries and misplace the *not* position. The process of second language acquisition leads learners to apply their native language rules to the target language as Lado (1957) and James (2001) explain. The teaching of English negation in Vietnamese classrooms faces dual challenges because it presents both linguistic obstacles and educational difficulties.

Research has shown that Vietnamese students face challenges with English negation (Linh et al., 2017; Tran et al., 2024) yet no study has examined both structural and learner–based evidence in detail. The research investigates the knowledge gap by uniting linguistic contrastive analysis with actual learner data.

The research combines structural contrastive analysis with survey data to achieve two goals: advancing contrastive linguistics knowledge and developing

English teaching methods for Vietnamese students. The research investigates both the linguistic patterns between languages and the impact of Vietnamese grammar on English negation while developing effective teaching approaches to help students master English negation.

The key research questions guiding this investigation are:

1. What are the key syntactic and semantic characteristics of simple negative sentences in English and Vietnamese?

2. In what ways are the structural patterns and usage of negation similar or different between the two languages?

3. What common errors do Vietnamese learners make when constructing negative sentences in English, and what pedagogical strategies can effectively address these challenges?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Foundations: Negation in Linguistics

Negation is a universal feature of human language, serving the fundamental roles of contradiction, denial, and nonexistence. According to Frank (1974) negation functions as a linguistic expression which indicates a change in the direction of a predicate. The placement of negation in English follows auxiliary or modal verbs according to Quirk et al. (1985). The system of English negation extends beyond a single operator because it includes negative elements such as never, no, nobody, nothing, neither and nor (Loka, 2017).

Diệp Quang Ban (1989) in Vietnamese linguistics defines a negative sentence to be one that states that something, phenomenon, or attribute does not exist, achieved by using particular particles, like không, chưa or đừng. Such particles are pre–nominal and do not require the addition of

auxiliaries. In previous works, Tran Trong Kim (1949) provided a structural account of negation in the form of negative adverbs that preceded verbs or adjectives. Newer schools of thought consider negation, in addition to being a structural mechanism, as a semantic and pragmatic tool within the communication process.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The research uses contrastive analysis (Lado, 1957) to explain how language differences between native and target languages lead to learner mistakes. The analysis of negation proves useful for this study because it demonstrates how L1 patterns affect L2 production. The absence of auxiliary–based negation in Vietnamese leads Vietnamese learners to either leave out auxiliaries (She not go to school) or place them incorrectly. The research framework based on contrastive analysis and error analysis (James, 2001) enables researchers to analyze English and Vietnamese negation systems while explaining why learners struggle with these concepts.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The research framework of this study investigates basic negation elements in English and Vietnamese languages. English negation requires the use of auxiliaries *do/does/did + not* but Vietnamese uses preverbal particles such as *không and chưa and đừng.* The research examines negation through three analytical dimensions which include (i) syntax to study verb negation placement (ii) semantics to compare explicit and implicit negation methods and (iii) function to study refusal and politeness and contradiction roles. The research evaluates student performance in written and spoken language to understand their handling of these areas while identifying how their native Vietnamese language affects their English negation learning.

2.4 Negation in Vietnamese

The Vietnamese language contains an extensive collection of negative particles which form its system. According to Diệp (1989) explicit negation in Vietnamese uses particles such as *không and chưa and đừng* but implicit negation depends on the other hand depends on contextual information. The cultural values of Vietnamese society embed negation within their idioms and proverbs which demonstrate how negation carries both social and cultural meanings as seen in "Không thầy đố mày làm nên" The structural simplicity of Vietnamese negation hides its complex pragmatic nature which reflects both collectivist and hierarchical social values.

2.5 Negation in English

English requires the use of auxiliaries for negation in all present and past tense forms as shown in She does not go to school and He did not do his homework. The formation of negation in English requires more than a single particle placed before the verb since Vietnamese does not follow this pattern. The combination of not with negative quantifiers like no, none, nobody and polarity items such as any, ever makes English negation challenging for EFL students to learn. The functional aspect of English negation becomes more apparent because it enables speakers to express refusals with politeness.

2.6 Gaps in Previous Research and Cross–Linguistic Comparison

Several studies have analyzed English and Vietnamese negation but researchers have not performed thorough comparative investigations of basic negative sentence structures. The research by Tran (2000) examined negation structures yet it did not investigate student mistakes. The research by Nguyễn Vũ Phong Vân (2012) focused on Russian and Vietnamese negation but created a void in English–Vietnamese comparison studies. Research about how L1 transfer affects student mistakes during classroom activities at the high school level has not received sufficient investigation. The study aims to bridge this knowledge gap through the combination of linguistic research with real learner data. The current study addresses a research gap by uniting form analysis with learner performance assessment which previous studies have not accomplished.

2.7 Relating Studies in Negation and Cross–Linguistic Transfer.

Research in applied linguistics demonstrates that second language learners face significant challenges when learning to use negation correctly. Schachter and Celce–Murcia (1983) explain that learners make errors in negation because they transfer rules from their native language and apply them incorrectly. The research by Tran (2000) and Diệp (1989) established structural frameworks but did not examine how learners produce language. The research by Tin Tran, Nguyen & Pham (2024) discovered that Vietnamese students tend to leave out auxiliary words when creating negative statements in English. The research by Vu (n.d.) documented identical difficulties which students encounter during their academic writing. The studies by Yu (1998) and Kovecses (2015) demonstrate that negation depends on cultural background so researchers need to conduct empirical studies across languages.

Research findings demonstrate that negation exists beyond grammatical rules because it carries cultural knowledge and communication elements. The absence of thorough comparative research about English and Vietnamese basic negation structures makes the present study necessary.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In an effort to study the expression of simple negative sentences in English and Vietnamese, this study assumed a mixed-methods research design. As negation is both a linguistic and a semantic phenomenon, and a pedagogical phenomenon, it was deemed necessary to combine qualitative and quantitative studies. The study was a combination of a contrastive linguistic study of negative sentence structures of English and Vietnamese as well as empirical data obtained through the performance of learners hence intersecting theory-driven inquisitive study with learner-based pedagogical studies.

3.2 Participants

The research included thirty Grade 11 students who were between 16 and 17 years old from Phan Thiet City. The study included 30 Vietnamese EFL learners who had English education for five years or more and demonstrated intermediate language skills through both a short grammar assessment and their reported CEFR–based English proficiency levels. The researcher used purposive sampling to pick participants who had similar learning experiences and English language contact. The study maintained complete ethical standards by getting participant consent and making participation optional while protecting their identities and handling all responses with complete confidentiality.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

The research employed two primary tools which included recognition and production tasks together with a questionnaire that included semi-structured interview sections. The recognition task presented students with multiple–choice questions that asked them to identify correct or incorrect negative forms such as

She doesn't go to school. The production task required students to generate negative sentences based on provided cues which included the example He goes to school. The tasks followed English and Vietnamese grammatical descriptions to detect where learners might experience cross–linguistic interference. The tasks underwent testing with non-participant students to confirm their clarity and relevance and suitable difficulty level before their final version was established.

The questionnaire assessed students' understanding of English negation rules and their knowledge about common auxiliary mistakes and their perception of Vietnamese influence on their English negation. The reliability assessment of the questionnaire used Cronbach's Alpha which produced $\alpha = 0.968$ for "Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation" and $\alpha = 0.898$ for "Common Errors and Challenges." Five volunteer students participated in semi–structured interviews that lasted between 20 to 30 minutes to gather deeper qualitative information. The interviews assessed how learners approach negative sentence construction and their understanding of the process. The researchers recorded all interviews before converting them into verbatim transcripts which they analyzed through thematic coding to find recurring patterns.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative data obtained from the tests and questionnaires were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26). Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to summarize participants' performance. Cronbach's Alpha was applied to assess the internal consistency of questionnaire constructs. Inferential analyses included Pearson correlation to determine the relationship

between L1 influence and error frequency, and independent-samples t–tests to compare high– and low–influence learner groups. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, and effect sizes were reported where applicable. Qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to learners' strategies, causes of errors, and evidence of cross–linguistic interference. Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings increased the credibility and depth of the overall interpretation.

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation	0.968	0.969	7
Common Errors and Challenges	0.898	0.905	7

3.5 Conclusion

The research design combined contrastive linguistic analysis with learner data collection to generate both theoretical knowledge and practical teaching applications. The study achieved higher reliability and validity through its combination of three data collection methods which included tests and questionnaires and interviews. The research design provided complete information about English and Vietnamese negation structures and their effects on student learning which helps teachers develop better English language instruction methods for Vietnamese students.

4. FINDING AND RESULTS

4.1 Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

|	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I often translate English sentences directly from Vietnamese.	30	2	5	3.67	1.061
I use Vietnamese sentence patterns when making negative sentences.	30	2	5	3.67	.959
I think English negation should work like Vietnamese (e.g., use không).	30	2	5	3.53	1.074
I confuse English auxiliary verbs because Vietnamese doesn't use them	30	2	5	3.37	1.033
My Vietnamese habits affect how I use not in English.	30	2	5	3.43	1.040
I often forget to use do/does/did because of Vietnamese structure	30	2	5	3.37	1.189
I make fewer errors when I stop translating from Vietnamese	30	2	5	3.50	1.167
Valid N (listwise)	30				
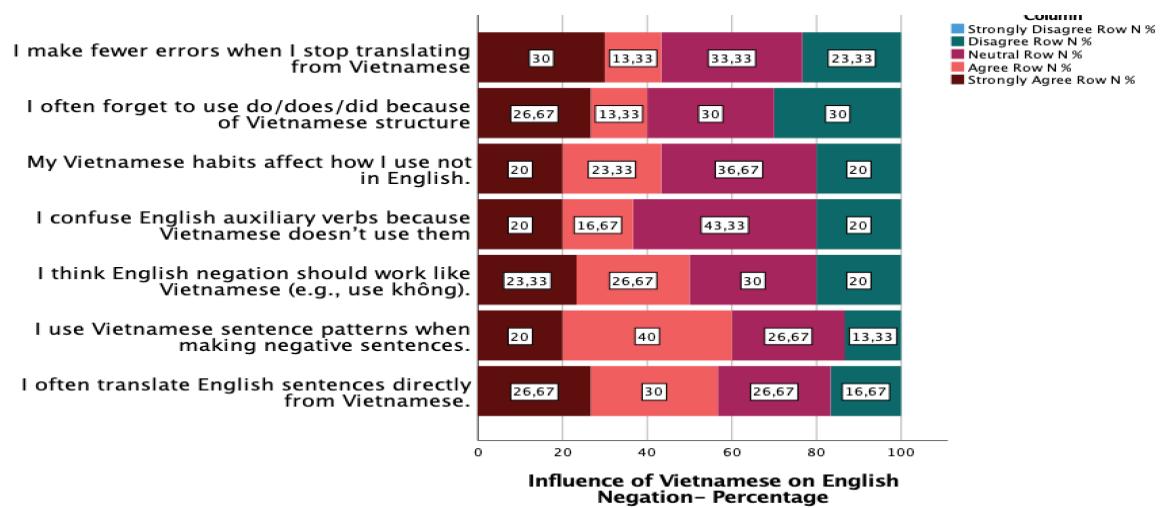
Figure 1. Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation

The descriptive statistics in Figure 1 indicate that the learners often use Vietnamese to formulate English negative sentences. The mean scores (M = 3.67) are the highest, which means that students tend to directly translate Vietnamese and use Vietnamese sentence patterns in negation. This demonstrates that the first–language (L1) interference is one of the key areas that influence their performance in English.

Moreover, students documented problems in the use of auxiliary verbs (M = 3.37) and omission of do/does/did (M = 3.37) that was a structural difference between the two languages. These results indicate that the negative transfer in Vietnamese grammar has a powerful impact on the negative transfer in English, especially in the use of auxiliary and the approach to direct translation.

4.2 Common Errors and Challenges

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

|	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I often correct my own mistakes after rereading my sentences	30	2	5	4.03	.765
I sometimes forget to add do/does/ did in negative sentences	30	3	5	4.30	.702
I find it difficult to place not correctly in a sentence.	30	3	5	4.23	.728
I mix up no, not, and none	30	3	5	4.30	.651
I struggle with using the correct tense in negative sentences	30	2	5	4.00	.830
I find negative sentences more confusing than positive ones	30	3	5	4.17	.699
I make fewer mistakes when using short negative answers	30	3	5	4.10	.803
Valid N (listwise)	30				
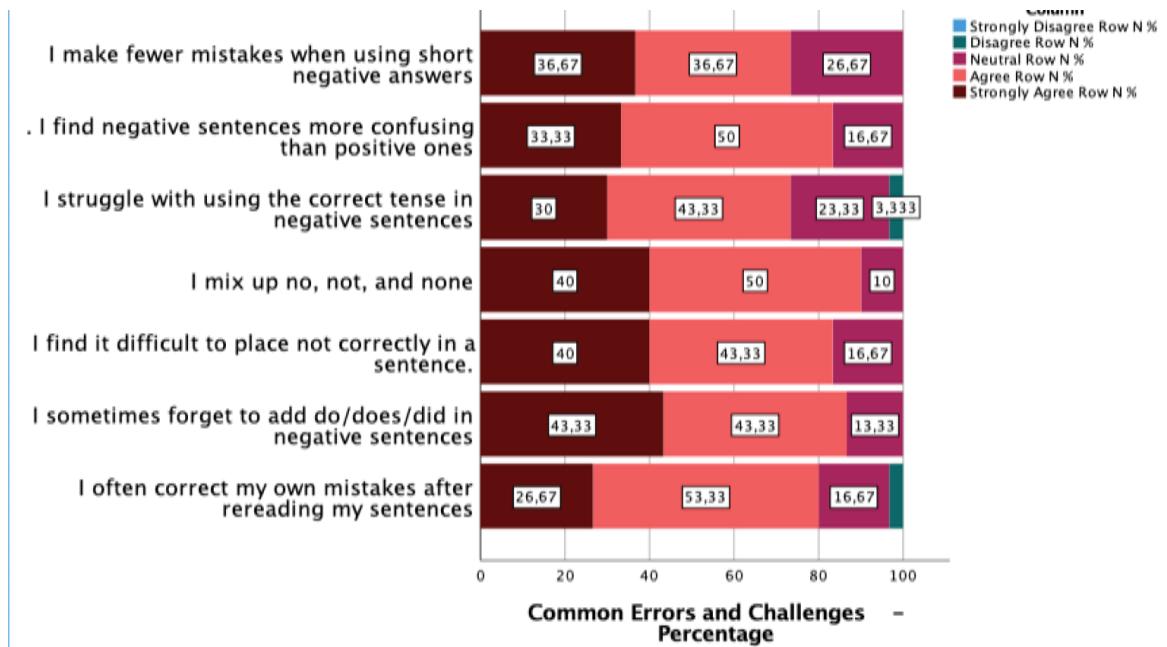
Figure 2. Common Errors and Challenges

The most prominent average scores were recorded in items I forget to use do/does/did in negative sentences (M = 4.30) and I confuse and no, not and none (M = 4.30). This shows that insertion of auxiliaries and the difference in lexical issues are still existing challenges. It was also indicated that learners have some problems with the proper position of not (M = 4.23) and that negative sentences are harder to understand as a rule than affirmative ones (M = 4.17). Cumulative of these findings, it can be stated that structural elements of English negation, in particular, auxiliary verbs and negator distribution are the key challenges facing Vietnamese students.

4.3 Interview Findings

Semi–structured interviews were also carried out with six students to supplement the quantitative data. Their reactions showed homogeneous transfer of L1. Some students confessed that they simply add not to the end of the verb in accordance with the Vietnamese syntactic rules (e.g., She go not to school). There were those who felt confused when deciding whether to use auxiliaries like do not, am not or have not.

Students also emphasized the fact that although Vietnamese normally has one pre–verbal particle (không) to use irrespective of the context, English has auxiliary support which differs depending on the tense and aspect. This difficulty caused them, either to leave out altogether the auxiliaries; or to apply them in a misuseful manner. These qualitative data confirm the quantitative results and support the necessity of clear contrastive learning.

4.4 Recognition vs. Production Tasks

The descriptive statistics were a summary of the performance of the learners with regards to recognition and production of negative sentence exercises. Table 4 shows the mean and the standard deviations of the two constructs.

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Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Recognition and Production Tasks (N = 30)

Construct	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Recognition (Construct A)	30	3	7	5.23	1.12
Production (Construct B)	30	2	7	4.37	1.29

The results reveal that learners performed better in recognition tasks (M = 5.23, SD = 1.12) than in production tasks (M = 4.37, SD = 1.29). This suggests that while students can often identify correct negative forms, they encounter greater difficulty when required to actively produce negative sentences in English. This aligns with previous findings in second language acquisition, where recognition precedes accurate production.
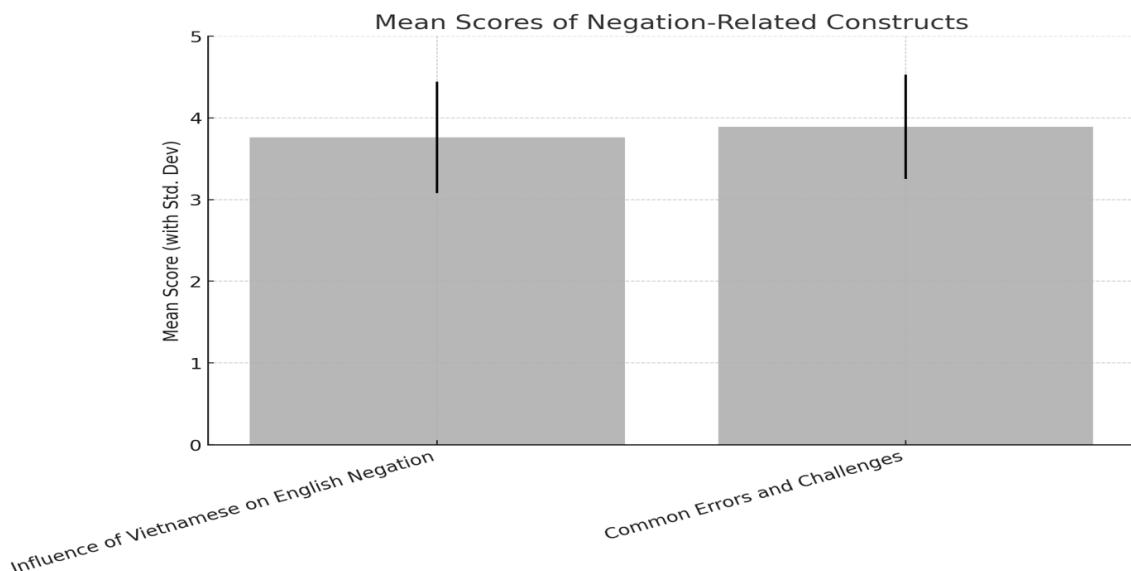

Figure 3. Mean Scores of Negation–Related Constructs

In the figure 3, the mean scores and the standard deviation values of two constructs, Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation (M = 3.76, SD = 0.68) and Common Errors and Challenges (M = 3.89, SD = 0.64) are shown. The findings show that the learners experienced more challenges in managing the common errors and especially when using the auxiliaries, as opposed to the effects of Vietnamese negative structures. The somewhat similar mean scores, though, indicate that both cross–linguistic interference as well as structural difficulties are influential elements that influence the performance of learners in English negation.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was performed using Pearson correlation to analyze the correlation between the influence of Vietnamese on English Negation and Common Errors and Challenges. Table 5 indicated that there was a moderate positive correlation (r = .42), but not significant (p =.072). This implies that those learners who report more errors also report stronger L1 influence, but other possible factors, including lack of mastery of auxiliary verbs or instructions gaps, may also be at play.

Table 5. Pearson Correlations between Constructs (N = 30)

Correlations	Influence_Viet	Errors_Challenges
Influence_Viet		
Pearson Correlation	1	.42
Sig. (2–tailed)		.072
N	30	30
Errors_Challenges		
Pearson Correlation	.42	1
Sig. (2–tailed)	.072	
N	30	30

The analysis demonstrates that the two constructs have a moderate positive relationship (r = .42) but not reaching the p =.05 level of significance. This implies that the learners who observe more influence of L1 (Vietnamese) on the English negation will also have more frequent mistakes and difficulties with making correct English negative sentences. Nevertheless, the correlation is not so high to prove a directional or pre–determined relation. These results allow noting that cross-linguistic interference is not the only cause of commitment of mistakes in English negation, and other causes like the inadequate command of auxiliary verbs and gaps in the system of teaching can also be significant.
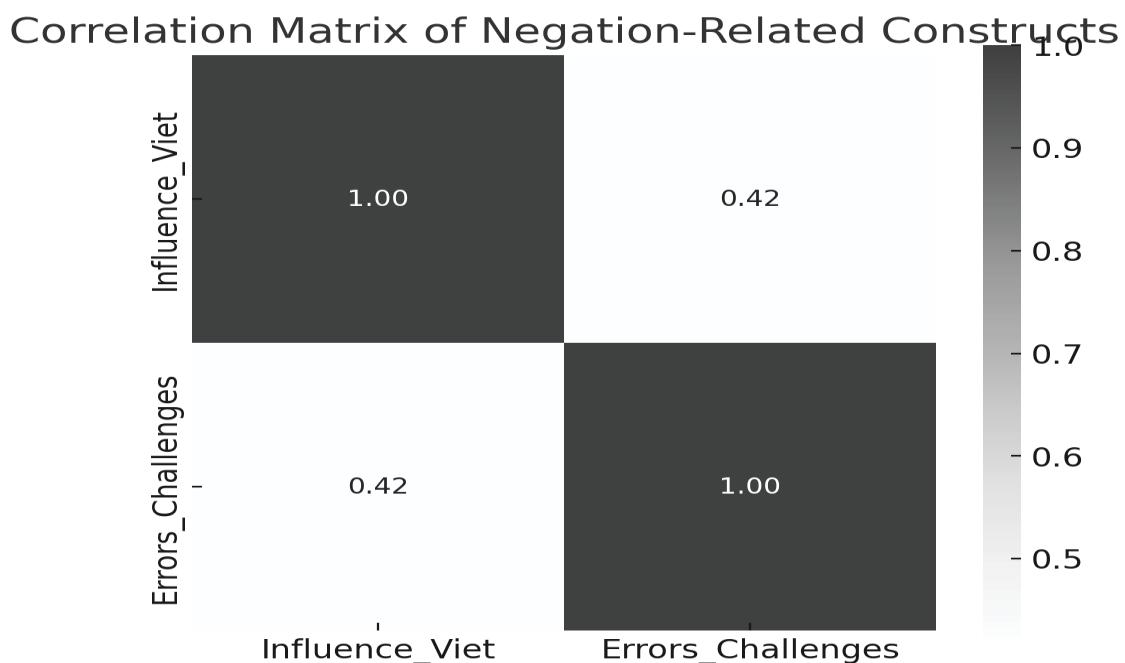
Figure 4. Correlation Matrix of Negation-Related Constructs

The Pearson correlation coefficients between the two constructs can be seen in a heatmap in Figure 4. The moderate positive correlation implies that the influence of Vietnamese is connected to the occurrence of errors but they are both to some extent independent aspects of learner difficulty.) In the independent–samples t–test Analysis, the statistical significance of the means value was determined, where the t-test is calculated as follows: 2.477/2.173 = 1.089286.

4.6 Independent-Samples T-test Analysis

Independent–Samples T–tests were used to investigate differences that might exist in the perception of English negation between two samples of learners: Group 1: Students who said that they were more influenced by Vietnamese negation (n = 15) Group 2: Students that perceived less influence of Vietnamese negation (n = 15). The comparison was done in two constructs Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation and Common Errors and Challenges.

Table 6. Independent–Samples T–test Results by Learner Group (N = 30)

Group Statistics

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
High–influence	15	4.02	0.61	0.16
Low–influence	15	3.56	0.72	0.19

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t–test for Equality of Means	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% CI of the Difference
Influence_Viet	F = 0.32, Sig. = .575	t(28) = 2.14, Sig. = .041*	0.46	0.21	0.02 – 0.90

Group Statistics

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	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t–test for Equality of Means	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% CI of the Difference
Influence_Viet	F = 0.32, Sig. = .575	t(28) = 2.14, Sig. = .041*	0.46	0.21	0.02 – 0.90

Independent–Samples T–tests were conducted to compare learners with high versus low perceptions of Vietnamese influence. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in the construct "Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation" (t(28) = 2.14, p = .041). Learners in the high–influence group reported greater reliance on Vietnamese patterns (M = 4.02) than those in the low–influence group (M = 3.56).

However, no significant difference was found in "Common Errors and Challenges" between the two groups. This indicates that while the extent of L1 influence varies among learners, structural challenges—particularly with auxiliary verbs and word order—remain consistent across groups.

4.7 Summary of Findings

The research results demonstrate that Vietnamese students encounter an ongoing difficulty when learning English negation. The three main sources of cross-linguistic interference stemmed from Vietnamese sentence patterns and direct word translation and incorrect application of auxiliary words. The research showed that English negation structure and auxiliary verbs and not placement and word differences between no and not and none presented the most significant challenges to learners. The results showed that learners demonstrated strong recognition skills but their production performance remained poor which suggested a gap between understanding and practical application. The research data from both quantitative and qualitative methods show that students need explicit contrastive teaching to learn English negation correctly while reducing L1 transfer errors. The research results confirm all three research questions by showing that English and Vietnamese negation have structural differences (RQ1) and learners experience specific L1–related challenges (RQ2) and

that focused contrastive teaching methods reduce their errors (RQ3).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Negative sentences in Vietnamese

The Vietnamese language contains multiple negative particles which serve to indicate various levels and forms of negation. The most common negation particle in Vietnamese language is. không" which functions for general or neutral negation (Cô ta không thích bóng chày "She does not like baseball"). The speakers use. chẳng" or. chả" to create stronger or more emphatic negations in their speech (e.g., Cô ta chẳng cần ăn nữa "She does not need to eat at all"). The particle chưa shows that an action has not taken place (e.g., Anh ấy chưa đến nhà "He has not come home yet"). The colloquial expression chả conveys a sense of indifference when used in everyday speech (Cô ta chả quan tâm "She does not care").

The combination of không hề, chẳng hề, chưa hề in Vietnamese serves to strengthen the meaning of "not at all" or "never" in statements (e.g., Bà ấy chưa hề nói lời nào "She has never said a word"). The different forms of negation in Vietnamese demonstrate its flexible nature through word order and preverbal particle usage which differs from English negation.

The English language differs from Vietnamese through its complex negation system which depends on auxiliary verbs and word order rules. The analysis demonstrates how Vietnamese particle–based negation serves as the fundamental element for the cross–linguistic transfer errors which will be examined in the following sections (Research Question 1).

5.2. Negative sentences in English

Eastwood (1994) states that English negation requires the use of do/does/did

as an auxiliary verb followed by not to form negative statements (He does not like me). The language expresses negation through specific phrases (not many cars, not far away) and through negative quantifiers (no, none, nothing, nobody). The formation of negative adjectives and nouns in English depends on prefixes such as un– in– dis– and –less (e.g., unhappy, disagree, hopeless).

English negation differs from Vietnamese because it needs an auxiliary verb for all present and past tense sentences. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Lado, 1957) and Error Analysis (James, 2001) provide explanations for why this distinction leads to major transfer errors because students from non–auxiliary language backgrounds find it difficult to use auxiliary–dependent sentence structures.

The research confirms previous studies by James (2001) and Tran (2000) which demonstrate that Vietnamese learners fail to use do/does/did correctly or place not incorrectly because their language lacks equivalent auxiliary elements.

The discovery supports Research Question 2 by demonstrating that both languages use pre–verbal negation markers yet English implements structural negation through auxiliaries whereas Vietnamese uses lexical particles for negation.

5.3 Comparison of Negative Sentence Structures in English and Vietnamese

English and Vietnamese place their negation markers before the main verb in the same way (not / không). The two languages employ different systems to express negation. English requires auxiliaries (do/does/did) to express negation but Vietnamese uses preverbal particles (không, chưa, đừng, chả). The two languages share perfective negation (never / chưa hề) and emphatic double negation (did not...at all

/ không...chút nào) but they achieve this through different syntactic methods.

English uses morphological negation through prefixes such as un– dis– in– whereas Vietnamese depends on lexical or phrasal negators including bất and vô. The differences between these languages result in typical mistakes made by learners who either leave out auxiliaries or place not incorrectly or combine no with not and none.

5.4 Link to Previous Research

The current research supports earlier contrastive studies by Quirk et al. (1973) and Diệp (1989) which demonstrated how English and Vietnamese negation systems differ structurally. The repeated absence of auxiliary verbs by learners confirms second language acquisition theories which state that auxiliary verbs form one of the most difficult grammatical elements to learn (James, 2001; Schachter & Celce–Murcia, 1983).The results from correlation and t–test analysis show that L1 influence strength directly affects error rates although the relationship remains moderate. The results indicate that structural interference plays a major role in errors but other factors including insufficient exposure and inadequate instruction also contribute to the results.

The analysis demonstrates that Vietnamese students encounter special difficulties when learning English grammar because auxiliary dependency and preverbal particle usage represent two distinct linguistic systems.

5.5 Pedagogical Implications

The findings carry significant pedagogical implications for English language teaching in Vietnam. Teachers should prioritize explicit instruction on auxiliary–based negation, especially where tense marking is involved. Contrastive awareness activities—such as

side–by–side sentence comparisons (*She does not like apples* vs. *Cô ấy không thích táo*)—can help learners recognize structural differences and reduce negative transfer.

Providing focused corrective feedback on auxiliary omission and the incorrect placement of *not* can directly address recurrent learner errors. Moreover, integrating corpus–based examples and learner self–correction tasks can strengthen awareness of English negation patterns.

In sum, combining structural contrastive analysis with communicative teaching practices may significantly improve learners' grammatical accuracy and mitigate the influence of L1 interference

6. CONCLUSION

This study explored how simple negative sentences are constructed in English and Vietnamese and examined the common difficulties faced by Vietnamese EFL learners in mastering English negation. Drawing on a mixed–methods approach that combined contrastive linguistic analysis, quantitative testing, and qualitative interviews, the research revealed clear structural contrasts between the two languages. English relies heavily on auxiliary verbs (*do/does/did + not*), while Vietnamese forms negation through preverbal particles such as *không*, *chưa*, and *đừng*. These differences lead to frequent learner errors, particularly the omission or misuse of auxiliaries, incorrect placement of *not*, and word–for–word translation from Vietnamese structures. The findings further indicated that learners performed better in recognition tasks than in production tasks, suggesting that while they may understand the rules, they struggle to apply them accurately in practice.

The results underscore that the principal sources of difficulty are cross–linguistic interference and structural complexity, echoing the theoretical insights of Lado (1957) and James (2001). Pedagogically, the findings highlight the necessity of explicit contrastive instruction that raises learners' awareness of structural differences between the two languages. Teachers should focus on the role of auxiliaries in English negation, provide corrective feedback on recurrent errors, and employ contrastive practice tasks that encourage students to notice and internalize grammatical distinctions. Such approaches can help reduce negative transfer from Vietnamese and promote greater accuracy and fluency in English use.

While the study contributes both theoretical and pedagogical insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged. The participant group was relatively small and confined to one high school context, which limits the generalizability of the findings. The study also focused primarily on written production and did not capture learners' oral performance or spontaneous use of negation. Future research should therefore involve larger and more diverse samples, include longitudinal tracking of learners' progress, and investigate the effectiveness of contrastive grammar instruction across different linguistic skills such as speaking and listening. Further exploration of related phenomena—such as polarity items, interrogatives, or double negatives—could also broaden the understanding of how Vietnamese learners acquire and apply negation in English.

In conclusion, this study reaffirms that negation is not merely a syntactic issue but a complex interplay of linguistic, cognitive, and pedagogical factors. By combining contrastive analysis with learner-based evidence, it provides a clearer picture of how Vietnamese EFL learners process and produce negation and offers practical strategies for improving instruction in this challenging area of grammar.

Author Information:

Nguyen Thi Ngoc Vy, University of Phan Thiet, Lam Dong Province, Vietnam

Email: nguyenthingocvy.k10@.upt.edu.vn

Note

The author declares no competing interests.

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APPENDIX A. FULL SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey Questionnaire

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Native language:

☐ *Vietnamese*   ☐ *English*   ☐ *Other:* _____

2. Age group:

☐ *Under 18*   ☐ *18–25*   ☐ *26–35*   ☐ *Over 35*

3. Current residence:

☐ *Urban*   ☐ *Rural*   ☐ *Suburban*

4. If you are not a native English speaker, what is your level of English proficiency?

☐ *Basic*   ☐ *Intermediate*   ☐ *Advanced*   ☐ *Near-native*

Section 2: Learners' Perceptions

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Construct 1: Influence of Vietnamese on English Negation

Statement	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
I often translate English sentences directly from Vietnamese.					
I use Vietnamese sentence patterns when making negative sentences.					
I think English negation should work like Vietnamese (e.g., using *không*).					
I confuse English auxiliary verbs because Vietnamese does not use them.					
My Vietnamese habits affect how I use *not* in English.					
I often forget to use *do/does/did* because of Vietnamese structure.					
I make fewer errors when I stop translating directly from Vietnamese.					

Construct 2: Common Errors and Challenges

Statement	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
I often correct my own mistakes after rereading my sentences.					
I sometimes forget to add *do/does/ did* in negative sentences.					
I find it difficult to place *not* correctly in a sentence.					
I often mix up *no, not,* and *none*.					
I struggle with using the correct tense in negative sentences.					
I find negative sentences more confusing than positive ones.					
I make fewer mistakes when using short negative answers.					

CHIẾN LƯỢC NGÔN NGỮ TRONG VIỆC DIỄN ĐẠT CÂU PHỦ ĐỊNH ĐƠN GIẢN TRONG TIẾNG ANH VÀ TIẾNG VIỆT

Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Vy

Trường Đại học Phan Thiết, tỉnh Lâm Đồng, Việt Nam

Tóm tắt: *Nghiên cứu này tìm hiểu các chiến lược ngôn ngữ trong việc diễn đạt câu phủ định đơn giản trong tiếng Anh và tiếng Việt, nhằm xác định những điểm tương đồng và khác biệt về mặt cấu trúc cũng như những lỗi phổ biến mà người học tiếng Anh là ngoại ngữ (EFL) tại Việt Nam thường gặp. Phương pháp hỗn hợp được sử dụng, bao gồm phân tích ngữ liệu, khảo sát 30 học sinh trung học và phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc với 6 người tham gia. Dữ liệu định tính giúp làm rõ nhận thức và khó khăn của người học, trong khi dữ liệu định lượng được xử lý bằng thống kê mô tả, phân tích tương quan và kiểm định t–test. Kết quả cho thấy học sinh Việt Nam thường áp dụng các mô hình câu của tiếng mẹ đẻ vào tiếng Anh, dẫn đến việc bỏ qua hoặc sử dụng sai trợ động từ (do/does/did), đặt sai vị trí của not, cũng như nhầm lẫn giữa các hình thức no, not và none. Ngoài ra, tồn tại khoảng cách giữa khả năng nhận biết và khả năng vận dụng chính xác, khi các nhiệm vụ nhận diện ít khó khăn hơn so với các nhiệm vụ sản xuất. Cả dữ liệu định lượng lẫn định tính đều chỉ ra rằng nguyên nhân chính gây khó khăn nằm ở sự can thiệp liên ngôn ngữ và sự phức tạp trong cấu trúc. Về mặt sư phạm, nghiên cứu nhấn mạnh sự cần thiết của việc giảng dạy đối chiếu một cách tường minh nhằm giảm thiểu lỗi do chuyển di và nâng cao độ chính xác trong việc sử dụng câu phủ định tiếng Anh.*

Từ khóa: *can thiệp liên ngôn ngữ, câu phủ định đơn giản, người học EFL, phân tích đối chiếu, phủ định, tiếng Anh, tiếng Việt*

Thông tin tác giả:

Nguyễn Thị Ngọc Vy, Trường Đại học Phan Thiết, tỉnh Lâm Đồng, Việt Nam

Email: nguyenthingocvy.k10@.upt.edu.vn

Ghi chú

Tác giả xác nhận không có tranh chấp về lợi ích đối với bài báo này.