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The Impact of Task Type on Advanced EFL Learners' English Verb Usage*

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The purpose of this study was to investigate advanced EFL learners' errors with verb usage in terms of types and frequency, and examine the impact of task type on English verb usage. The participants were 36 college students, aged 21-28 years, with varying majors. All the identified errors in the corpus were assorted into auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs and then given a comparative analysis with regard to two different tasks (i.e. letter writing and descriptive writing). The results showed that task type failed to make a strong impact on English verb usage. Concerning auxiliary verbs, the omission errors were the most common (54.7%) in letter writing, while the omission errors and the misformation errors occurred at the same frequency rate (42.4%) in descriptive writing. As for lexical verbs, the misformation errors were the most dominant both in letter writing and descriptive writing (64.4% vs. 65.8%). The confusion between transitive and intransitive verbs brought about preposition omissions in prepositional verbs. Among the subcategories of misformation errors, improper elements exhibited the highest frequency in both tasks (56.3% vs. 50.4%). Due to lack of confidence, the participants avoided using prepositional verbs and progressive and/or perfective aspects.

[EFL writing/error analysis/advanced level/task type]

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a complicated and ongoing process. Becoming an effective EFL writing teacher requires a clear understanding of what is entailed in EFL writing. For EFL learners,

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it is always challenging to create an extended piece of writing with coherence and accuracy. It could be argued that many native speakers of English also strive to acquire this skill. Even after EFL learners have gained basic knowledge of global aspects of writing (e.g., organization and coherence), they still struggle with the rules of grammar (i.e. accuracy). Due to lack of confidence, some EFL learners are reluctant to write in that writing is perceived to be difficult and boring. Such negative attitudes lead to disengaging themselves from the writing process. In order to implant positive perspectives in those learners, teachers should indicate that nobody's written work is flawless, and that the goal of writing is primarily to convey one's ideas and thoughts (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Chin, 2007; Gebhard, 2000; Nunan, 1999; Silva, 1990).

In the process of writing, it is inevitable that EFL learners generate errors. Errors should be distinguished from mistakes. Mistakes are similar to slips of the tongue. A learner can identify a mistake and correct it when required. Errors, meanwhile, are observable deviations from the target language norms, disclosing the learner's interlanguage competence. Errors are systematic. In other words, they arise repeatedly but a learner is not able to identify them on his/her own. Errors are derived from many different sources (e.g., interlingual errors from L1 transfer, intralingual errors within the target language, affective factors, and transfer of instruction) (Brown, 1994; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Odlin, 1989). Corder (1984) points out that errors help teachers understand the complexity of language learning and procedures the learner undergoes. The making of errors is viewed as a means that learners employ in the process of language learning. Through doing error analysis, teachers are better able to understand the learners' state of knowing the target language and what is left for them to learn and determine how to arrange teaching time in class (Ellis, 1996).

There have been a number of studies on error analysis targeting adult EFL writers (Chin, 2013; Cho & Yoo, 2012; Choi & Yoo, 2012; Lee, 2007; Yu & Yoo, 2010). Learners' errors could vary according to given tasks. Previous studies were, however, mostly conducted using a single task; findings regarding task type effects on errors seemed to be rare. Thus, the present study aims to investigate the impact of task type on EFL learners' written errors focusing on English verb usage. The specific research questions addressed in the present study are as follows:

(1) What kinds of written errors do advanced level EFL learners make in terms of English verb usage?
(2) How does task type influence advanced level EFL learners' English verb usage?
(3) What are the differences and similarities between letter writing and descriptive writing among the errors made?

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With regard to procedures for error analysis, first, data has to be collected in that either written or oral data could be employed as a medium. In general, error analysis studies have not paid sufficient attention to learner speech; oral data is rarely used. Moreover, the bulk of the studies have used cross-sectional sample collection rather than longitudinal sample collection. Concerning the manner, naturalistic samples of learners' errors are more preferable than the ones elicited in a classroom setting. Nevertheless, data on error analysis is mostly drawn from exam papers performed in class (e.g., translation or composition). Second, errors in the corpus are to be identified such as subject-verb disagreement (i.e. singular verb form with plural subject). Then, identified errors need to be classified and quantified. After the source of an error is analyzed, remediation, which provides pedagogical intervention according to an error type's sort and frequency, is implemented as the final step (Ellis, 1996; Gass & Selinker, 1994).

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) presents a surface strategy taxonomy as a classification of errors: (1) omission errors refer to "the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance" (p.154) (e.g. *He crying*); (2) addition errors refer to "the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance" (p. 156) (e.g. *They didn't came home*); (3) misformation errors refer to "the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure" (p. 158) (e.g. *She taked the ticket*); and (4) misordering errors refer to "the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance" (p. 162) (e.g. *She doesn't know what is that*).

Adopting the surface strategy taxonomy, there have been previous studies on error analysis which targeted Korean EFL learners. Yu and Yoo (2010) examined prepositional verb errors made by college EFL learners' essays according to five categories: (a) preposition omission, (b) wrong prepositions, (c) preposition addition, (d) misordering, and (e) others. The results revealed that preposition omission was the most common (54%), followed by wrong prepositions (18%), while misordering did not occur. Yu and Yoo indicated that the inability to discern transitive verbs from intransitive verbs gave rise to preposition omission and preposition addition. Likewise, Cho and Yoo (2012) explored verb errors retrieved from college EFL learners' essays and found that misformation occurred most frequently (60.6%), while misordering was the least common (3.4%) and that a large number of errors were made in relation to *be* and *have* both as the lexical and auxiliary uses. Within the sub-categories of misformation, the agreement errors were the most salient (51.9%). Cho and Yoo conjectured that this finding was drawn from L1 transfer in that grammatical person does not affect the conjugations of Korean verbs.

On the other hand, Yoon (2012) analyzed the types of grammar errors produced in college learners' TOEIC speaking test part 5. Unlike the findings of Cho and Yoo's study,

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Yoon discovered that omission was the most common (74.9%), followed by misformation (19.9%). Misordering, meanwhile, was the least common (1.7%). Within the categories of omission, articles were the highest at 29.9%. Yoon presumed that different task types between the two studies led to different findings. While Cho and Yoo employed essay writing, Yoon employed the TOEIC speaking test in that the learners in her study were likely to be under time pressure. Given the 60 seconds of test time on the TOEIC Speaking test part 5, the learners could not afford to correct their errors or might have ended up with omission as one of their strategies.

Choi and Yoo (2012) scrutinized the errors on V-*ing* forms in their corpus based study which comprised of college freshmen essays. V-*ing* forms were classified into present participles, gerunds, and unclear cases based on their functions. The results revealed that a total of 292 errors regarding V-*ing* forms occurred; 137 were related to use of participles and 138 to use of gerunds. Moreover, within the categories of present participles and gerunds, the use of a present participle without a main verb (64.2%) (e.g. *I looking for the meaning of the building's name*) and inappropriate use of *to*-infinitive (66.7%) (e.g. *Therefore, we try to changing our college's image*) were the most highest, respectively.

Prior to planning writing instruction, it is of importance to probe into the influence of task type on learners' error type. Lococo (1976) demonstrated that the task given to L2 learners in collecting samples had an impact on the proportion of error types. For instance, 44 percent of intralingual errors were found in the free composition task, while 39 percent in picture description and 25 percent in translation. Lococo concluded that low percentage of intralingual errors in the translation task could be attributed to the participants' perception of the task. They might have believed that the translation task was to examine their knowledge of the target language rules and to perform its applicability rather than to communicate their ideas and thoughts.

Kang (2008) investigated how L1 transfer affected EFL learners' use of articles in terms of proficiency level, task type, and article type. The subjects were divided into low, intermediate, and advanced levels and directed to perform two tasks which were oral production (i.e. picture description) and essay writing. The results showed that low level learners produced interlingual errors from L1 transfer more often than learners with higher levels. With regard to task type, the learners across the proficiency levels used articles more correctly in the writing task than in the oral production task. Kang ascribed this finding to the varying degrees of monitoring available to the given tasks. That is, regardless of proficiency level, the learners were better able to strictly monitor their use of articles in the writing task than in the oral production task. As for article type, the definite article occurred more frequently and more accurately than the indefinite article in both tasks across the proficiency levels.

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Using picture description task, Chin's (2001) study also focused on determining what proportion of the spoken errors in a corpus was L1 transfer as opposed to intralingual. The subjects were 33 college freshmen who were non-English majors. The total of 1214 errors were classified into six general groups. Chin reported that the noun phrase group produced the most errors (45.2%), followed by the verb phrase group (26.3%). Within the sub-categories in the noun phrase group, misuse of articles was the highest (76%). It is noteworthy that 390 of the total errors arose from L1 transfer, accounting for 32%. In terms of the plausible factors for the transfer errors, Chin pointed out L1 grammatical features and word for word translations.

Subsequently, Chin (2013) examined the impact of L1 transfer on EFL learners' written errors and also looked into error gravity by native English speakers in terms of communication. The subjects were 39 low level college freshmen and the errors in the corpus were retrieved from their writing task (i.e. letter) in class. Adapting Chin's (2001) classifications, the total of 1308 errors were divided into six general groups. The results showed that verbs yielded the most errors (33.1%), followed by nouns and noun modifiers (30.7%), which were different from Chin's (2001) findings. Overall, 329 of the total errors were derived from L1 transfer, accounting for 25.2%. Compared to Chin's (2001) study, this finding showed that L1 transfer could be more influential on oral task than on written task. Regarding error gravity, the frequency rate of each error category was not necessarily in direct proportion to its gravity.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants in the present study were 36 college students, aged 21-28 years, with varying majors (e.g., mechanical engineering, social welfare, law, etc.) at a university located in Gyeongsang province: specifically, 12 sophomores, 18 juniors, and 6 seniors. The 36 participants consisted of 19 females and 17 males enrolled in an English grammar class which was one of the electives in the Outstanding English Proficiency Certificate Program at the university. This study was targeted at the advanced level students. Thus, during the second week of the fall semester in 2012, the researcher administered an in-class proficiency test in order to pinpoint advanced level students who were to participate in this study. The proficiency test comprised of 50 questions that covered vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension which were abstracted from *Hackers TOEIC Reading* (Cho, 2008). Originally, there were 45 students in the class. However, the nine students who scored lower than 30 out of the total points of 50 were excluded from the corpus. The data

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pool showed that the 36 participants had a mean score of 43 (range = 38-49 correct answers).

2. Writing Tasks

As the first writing task, the participants were directed to write an English letter to their close friend during the fourth week of the fall semester in 2012. The class was a two hour block, with the first hour spent on brainstorming in order to help the participants formulate ideas and interests in pursuance of developing their letters. The participants came up with a variety of topics to share with the whole class such as job-hunt, diet, grades, stress, and sports. After the brainstorming session, a ten minute break was taken. During the second hour of the class, the researcher asked the students to write their letter on their own (Chin, 2013).

The second writing task was implemented during the ninth week. The participants were given a postcard and were asked to describe the postcard in their own words. The postcard showed Times Square which is noted as a center of New York City's entertainment district. On the said postcard, Times Square was full of people, vehicles, skyscrapers, and signs. Thus, the researcher expected that the participants could find a lot of information to describe. For the sake of motivation, the participants were permitted to use their own imagination in describing the postcard. Regarding the rules for both the first and second writing tasks, the participants were given 50 minutes and were required to write one full page on an A 4 sized paper. Accordingly, completing only half of a page would not be acceptable. In order to assess their true writing skills, reference materials such as on- or off-line dictionaries were not allowed (Chin, 2013).

3. Data Analysis

Like the previous studies (Cho & Yoo, 2012; Yoon, 2012; Yu & Yoo, 2010), this study adopted the surface strategy taxonomy (Dulay et al., 1982) in analyzing the errors collected from the corpus of the two writing tasks. Along with the researcher, two native English speakers were involved in this process. Both of them were American females who were on the teaching staff at the university of the participants, achieved TESOL certificates, and had more than 5 years of teaching experience.

It is of importance to note that all the verb errors in the corpus were divided into two general groups: auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs. Auxiliary verbs were subdivided into primary (i.e. *do*, *have*, and *be*) auxiliaries used as operators and modal auxiliaries (i.e. *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would* and *must*). Meanwhile, lexical verbs comprised of single word verbs and prepositional verbs. Prepositional verbs are

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differentiated from phrasal verbs. That is, the preposition in a prepositional verb must precede its complement (e.g. *They called on the man.*). Phrasal verbs could be divided into transitive and intransitive. Regarding most transitive phrasal verbs, the particle can either precede or follow the direct object (e.g. *They turned the light on.* vs. *They turned on the light.*) (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973). In this study, however, phrasal verbs were included in the category of prepositional verbs.

With regard to auxiliary verbs, first, the omission errors referred to the absence of necessary auxiliaries which made a verb phrase ungrammatical or awkward in the context. Second, the addition errors referred to the addition of unnecessary auxiliaries to a verb phrase. Third, the misformation errors referred to the wrong forms of auxiliaries. Fourth, the misordering errors referred to the incorrect placement of auxiliary verbs. As for lexical verbs, first, the omission errors referred to the absence of either a single-word verb or a preposition in a prepositional verb. Second, the addition errors referred to the addition of an unnecessary item such as a single-word verb or a preposition which made a verb phrase ungrammatical or awkward in the context. Third, the misformation errors referred to the wrong forms of lexical verbs. Fourth, the misordering errors referred to the incorrect placement of lexical verbs.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Auxiliary Verbs

As shown in Table 1, the participants produced a total of 64 errors in letter writing and a total of 33 errors in descriptive writing. In other words, the total errors involving auxiliary verbs in letter writing were almost twice as many as the amount of total errors in descriptive writing. In letter writing, the omission errors (54.7%) occurred most frequently, followed by the misformation errors (32.8%), the addition errors (10.9%), and the misordering error (1.6%). On the other hand, in descriptive writing, the omission errors and the misformation errors exhibited the same frequency (42.4%), followed by the addition errors (12.1%) and the misordering error (3.0%). It is notable that the misordering error occurred only one time in both tasks.

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TABLE 1

Error Types of Auxiliary Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Omission	35	54.7	14	42.4
Addition	7	10.9	4	12.1
Misformation	21	32.8	14	42.4
Misordering	1	1.6	1	3.0
Total	64	100	33	100

1) Omission

Regarding letter writing, out of a total of 35 omission errors, 19 involved modal auxiliaries. In more detail, *will, can, should, would* were omitted in that *will* was found to be the most common (10 tokens), followed by *can* (5 tokens), *should* (3 tokens), and *would* (1 token). The remaining 16 errors involved primary auxiliaries. Specifically, the majority of errors involved the omission of the auxiliary *be* (14 tokens), while the omission of the auxiliaries *do* and *have* occurred only one time, respectively. As for descriptive writing, out of a total of 14 omission errors, the majority were related to the omission of the primary auxiliary *be* (12 tokens), while the other 2 tokens were shown to be the omission of the modal auxiliary *can*. In short, *be* and *can* were the only auxiliary verbs that were omitted. It is important to note that unlike letter writing, the omission of the auxiliary *will* did not occur in descriptive writing. This finding might be due to the nature of the task. That is, while describing what's happening on the postcard, the participants were more likely to use "present progressive aspect form." Furthermore, the modal auxiliary verb *will* might not be as necessary or as commonly used as other auxiliary verbs. In fact, in descriptive writing, the omission of the auxiliary *be* mostly occurred before *-ing* participles (i.e. progressive aspect) as seen in (5). All in all, the participants challenged themselves to employ a variety of auxiliary verbs in letter writing, while they relied only on *be* and *can* in descriptive writing. The examples below demonstrate each case of the auxiliary verb omission errors:

(1) I (will) give you one hint.
(2) We (can) buy delicious food.
(3) You (should) put on warm clothes.
(4) I (would) like to become a scientist.
(5) He (is) wearing an orange shirt.
(6) I (was) surprised at your leadership.

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2) Addition

The addition errors revealed that auxiliary verbs were unnecessarily added not only before the base form of a lexical verb but also before the past tense form of it as in the case of (11). Out of a total of 7 addition errors in letter writing, the modal auxiliaries *will* (3 tokens) and *may* (1 token) and the primary auxiliary *be* (3 tokens) were found. It is noteworthy that as in the omission errors, *will* and *be* occurred most frequently in the addition errors. Out of a total of 4 addition errors in descriptive writing, the modal auxiliary *would* (1 token) and the primary auxiliary *be* (3 tokens) were discovered. Thus, it was shown that addition errors occurred less frequently than omission errors. Among the auxiliary verbs, *be* was added most frequently in both writing tasks. The examples below demonstrate each case of the auxiliary verb addition errors:

(7) Until you may return to Korea, take care.
(8) When you will go out of there, you can find the building.
(9) I am still remember this place.
(10) A blue bus is consist of two floors.
(11) Other companies such as Coca Cola would paid for advertising.

3) Misformation

As displayed in Table 2, the misformation errors of auxiliary verbs were subcategorized into (1) word choice, (2) misuse of tense, and (3) disagreement. In letter writing, word choice (47.6%) exhibited the highest frequency, followed by misuse of tense (42.9%) and disagreement (9.5%). In descriptive writing, word choice (42.8%) also occurred most frequently, while misuse of tense and disagreement showed the same frequency (28.6%). In short, word choice errors were the most dominant in both tasks.

TABLE 2

Misformation Errors of Auxiliary Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Word Choice	10	47.6	6	42.8
Misuse of Tense	9	42.9	4	28.6
Disagreement	2	9.5	4	28.6
Total	21	100	14	100

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(1) Word Choice

Word choice errors addressed the auxiliaries which were grammatically correct but inappropriate in the given context. In letter writing, there were 5 tokens of the primary auxiliaries (i.e. *do* and *be*) and anther 5 tokens of the modal auxiliaries (i.e. *could, will,* and *must*). In descriptive writing, there were 2 tokens of the primary auxiliary (i.e. *do*) and 4 tokens of the modal auxiliaries (i.e. *would, should, will*, and *can*). It should be noted that the primary auxiliary *have* was not found either in letter writing or in descriptive writing. Meanwhile, the auxiliary verbs *do* and *will* were discovered both in letter writing and descriptive writing.

While (12a) necessitated the use of the modal auxiliary *can*, (12b) required the use of the modal auxiliary *will*. While (12d) necessitated the use of the modal auxiliary *must*, (12f) required the use of the modal auxiliary *should*. (12c) and (12e) required the use of the primary auxiliaries *did* and *have*, respectively.

(12) a. I will work during the weekend.
b. It must be very interesting.
c. I couldn't think of that.
d. New York city should have a high population.
e. My English skills are improved.
f. How much money do I save?

(2) Misuse of Tense

In letter writing, there were 6 tokens of the primary auxiliaries *do* and *be* and 3 tokens of the modal auxiliary *can*. There was only one case which required the past tense form of the auxiliary verb to be changed into present tense. The remaining 8 tokens needed auxiliary verbs to be changed from present tense to past tense. In descriptive writing, there were 2 tokens of the primary auxiliary *be* and another 2 tokens of the modal auxiliaries *will* and *could*. It should be noted that when using verb tenses, the participants made errors in all tenses (i.e. future, present, and past).

In (13a), the main verb used the past tense *thought*, but the *that*-clause used the present tense *can* which was against the rules of tense agreement. Thus *can* must be replaced with *could*. Likewise, in (13b), since *if*-clause used the past tense *were*, *will* in the main clause must be replaced with *would*. In (13c) and (13d), the adverbial phrases *last night* and *yesterday* required both sentences to use the simple past tense forms of the auxiliary verbs *did* and *was*, respectively.

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(13) a. I thought that you can teach me everything.
b. If I were you, I will help him.
c. Do you study last night?
d. This picture is taken yesterday.

(3) Disagreement

This category addressed disagreement in which an auxiliary verb form failed to correspond with its subject in terms of grammatical person and/or number. There were 2 tokens in letter writing and 4 tokens in descriptive writing. Regarding the examples below, the subject *You* in (14a) was second person, so the modal auxiliary *have* must replace *has*. The subject *They* in (14b) was third person plural, so the primary auxiliary *do* must replace *does*. On the other hand, the subject noun phrase *The building* in (14c) was third person singular, so the primary auxiliary *has* must replace *have*. On the other hand, the subject noun phrase *Two guys* in (14d) was third person plural, so the primary auxiliary *are* must replace *is*. It is noteworthy that the case of (14d) occurred 3 times in descriptive writing, while no token was found in letter writing.

(14) a. You has gone.
b. They doesn't tell me the truth.
c. The building have been restored
d. Two guys is walking together.

4) Misordering

Only 1 token occurred both in letter writing (15a) and descriptive writing (15b). It was conjectured that most participants did not have much difficulty figuring out where to put an auxiliary verb in a sentence. (15a) demonstrated the case of subject-verb inversion in that the modal auxiliary *should* was incorrectly placed before the subject *I* in the declarative sentence. In (15b), the primary auxiliary *is* should have preceded the adverb *also* in the declarative sentence. No token of misordering was, however, found either in *yes-no* questions or *wh* -questions.

(15) a. I don't know who should I choose.
b. New York also is known for fashion.

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2. Lexical Verbs

As presented in Table 3, the participants generated a total of 284 errors in letter writing and a total of 193 errors in descriptive writing. Thus, the amount of total errors that occurred in letter writing was approximately two-thirds more than the amount of errors that occurred in descriptive writing. In both tasks, the misformation errors (64.4% vs. 65.8%) occurred most frequently, followed by the omission errors (27.8% vs. 26.4%). In letter writing, the addition errors and the misordering errors revealed the same frequency (3.9%), while in descriptive writing, the addition errors (5.2%) occurred twice as often as the misordering errors (2.6%).

TABLE 3

Error Types of Lexical Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Omission	79	27.8	51	26.4
Addition	11	3.9	10	5.2
Misformation	183	64.4	127	65.8
Misordering	11	3.9	5	2.6
Total	284	100	193	100

1) Omission

The omission errors were subdivided into main verbs (i.e. single word verbs) and prepositions in prepositional verbs (Cho & Yoo, 2012). It is of importance to note that the group of main verbs included *be*, *do*, and *have* which functioned as lexical verbs. Table 4 shows that in both writing tasks, the omission of prepositions in prepositional verbs (72.2% vs. 62.7%) occurred tremendously more than the omission of main verbs (27.8% vs. 37.3%).

TABLE 4

Omission Errors of Lexical Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Main Verbs	22	27.8	19	37.3
Prep. in Prep. Verbs	57	72.2	32	62.7
Total	79	100	51	100

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Regarding the omission of the main verbs, of the 22 tokens in letter writing, 11 verbs (i.e. *have, see, get, use, be, go, take, do, work, come,* and *grow*) were found. In more detail, the verb *be* (10 tokens) was omitted most frequently, followed by the verb *take* (2 tokens) and the verb *do* (2 tokens). Meanwhile, of the 19 tokens in descriptive writing, 3 verbs (i.e. *be, go*, and *feel*) were found in that the omission of the verb *be* (17 tokens) was again the most frequent. In short, the omission of the verb *be* demonstrated the highest frequency in both tasks.

As presented in (16a), the omission of the verb *be* most typically occurred before an adjective which functioned as a subject complement. Likewise, the linking verb *feel* was also omitted before the complement *sleepy* in (16b). These findings seemed to be derived from negative L1 transfer. That is, in Korean, "Subject + Adjective" can function as a complete sentence; a verb is not required in that structure. In (16c), the omission of the main verb *grow* made the sentence ungrammatical. In other words, *more and more* is an adverb, so it cannot function as a subject complement. This example might be due to literal translations. Errors like the case of (16d) which consisted of "Subject + Auxiliary Verb +(main verb omission) + Noun Phrase" were more dominant than errors like the case of (16e) which consisted of "Subject + (main verb omission) + Noun Phrase." The case of (16d) seemed to result from the failure to understand that auxiliary verbs cannot function properly without being followed by main verbs. The case of (16f) required two lexical verbs *eat* and *go,* but *go* was omitted. Thus, both "delicious food" and "shopping" functioned as the objects of *eat,* which made the sentence awkward.

(16) a. I (am) sorry for you.
b. They (feel) sleepy during the afternoon.
c. Your popularity is (growing) more and more.
d. I couldn't (do) it.
e. I (took) the TOEIC last month.
f. People will eat delicious food and (go) shopping.

Concerning the omitted prepositions in prepositional verbs, 12 prepositions (i.e. *to, for, about, in, with, of, on, at, into, from, up,* and *out*) in letter writing and 9 prepositions (i.e. *to, for, about, like, with, of, toward, in,* and *on*) in descriptive writing were found. In short, 7 prepositions (i.e. *to, for, about, with, of, in,* and *on*) were omitted in both tasks. To be more specific, *to* (18 tokens vs. 9 tokens) exhibited the highest frequency, followed by *for* (11 tokens vs. 7 tokens) and *about* (6 tokens vs. 6 tokens) in both tasks. The fact that the omission of *to* was the most dominant was consistent with the findings of Yu and Yoo's (2010) study.

As shown in (17a), the omission of *to* was committed most frequently in the structure of

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"*go* to + NP." Errors of (17b) and (17f) seemed to arise from literal translations. Meanwhile, the participants appeared to be unaware that some lexical verbs can function either as transitive verbs or intransitive verbs depending on the context. For instance, the verb *prepare* does not require a preposition when used as a transitive verb like "*I will prepare a report.*" However, *prepare* in the case of (17c) was used as an intransitive verb in which the preposition *for* was necessary. Likewise, the omission of *in* in (17e) seemed to be influenced by the perceived structure of the sentence like "*I believe you*" in which *believe* is used as a transitive verb. Thus, the fact that the verb *believe* does not always require a preposition to function suitably might have given rise to the case of (17e). The case of (17d) might be due to the confusion with the transitive verb *tell* which does not necessitate a preposition (e.g. *Tell the truth*). As for definitions, *talk* and *tell* can carry the same meaning. Hence, the participants might have inferred that the verb *talk* can function properly without having a preposition as the verb *tell* does. All in all, the omission errors of prepositions in prepositional verbs appeared to result from the inability to differentiate intransitive verbs from transitive verbs, which supported Yu and Yoo's (2010) claims.

(17) a. We'll go (to) the Philippines.
b. She wants to listen (to) your song again.
c. I need to prepare (for) my future job.
d. Let's talk (about) our memories.
e. Believe (in) yourself.
f. I want to go (on) a picnic.

2) Addition

The addition errors were also subdivided into main verbs (i.e. single word verbs) and prepositions (Cho & Yoo, 2012). As presented in Table 5, in letter writing, no token was found in the addition of main verbs, while 11 tokens were found in the addition of prepositions. The 11 tokens comprised of 4 prepositions (i.e. *to, about, like,* and *up*) in that *to* (5 tokens) was the most frequent, followed by *about* (3 tokens), *like* (2 tokens), and *up* (1 token). In descriptive writing, 1 token was found in the addition of the main verb as presented in (18a), while 9 tokens were found in the addition of prepositions. The 9 tokens comprised of 3 prepositions (i.e. *like, to,* and *about*) in that *like* (5 tokens) was the most frequent, followed by *to* (3 tokens) and *about* (1 token). In short, the addition errors of *to, about,* and *like* were found in both tasks.

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TABLE 5
Addition Errors of Lexical Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Main Verbs	0	0	1	10
Prepositions	11	100	9	90
Total	11	100	10	100

In (18b), *to* seemed to be added because *somewhere* was considered to be a noun, not an adverb. Meanwhile, the addition of *to* in (18c) demonstrated that the transitive verb *visit* was regarded as an intransitive verb. The addition of *about* in (18d) showed that the transitive verb *tell* was also regarded as an intransitive verb. Thus, like the omission errors of prepositions, the addition errors of prepositions seemed to be caused by the inability to make a distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, which concurred with the findings of Yu and Yoo (2010). In (18e), *like* was added before the adjective *busy*, while in (18f), *up* was added before the adverb *there*. These two errors may have stemmed from the failure to understand that a preposition must be placed before NP; an adjective or an adverb cannot be preceded by a preposition.

(18) a. New York City has many people who are come from different countries.
b. A man who has blonde hair is going to somewhere.
c. Foreigners want to visit to Korea.
d. I want to tell about something new.
e. They look like busy.
f. Let's meet up there.

3) Misformation

Adapted from Cho and Yoo's (2012) study, the misformation errors of lexical verbs were subcategorized into (1) improper elements, (2) misuse of tense and aspect, (3) disagreement, and (4) conjugation (see Table 6). Both in letter writing and descriptive writing, improper elements (56.3% vs. 50.4%) occurred most frequently, followed by misuse of tense and aspect (35.5% vs. 26%), disagreement (6.6% vs. 21.3%), and conjugation (1.6% vs. 2.3%).

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TABLE 6

Misformation Errors of Lexical Verbs

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Improper Elements	103	56.3	64	50.4
Misuse of Tense and Aspect	65	35.5	33	26
Disagreement	12	6.6	27	21.3
Conjugation	3	1.6	3	2.3
Total	183	100	127	100

(1) Improper Elements

This category was divided into six subcategories: word choice, prepositions in prepositional verbs, gerunds, infinitives, participles (i.e. *-ing* & *-ed*), and voice (i.e. passive & active). As shown in Table 7, in letter writing, word choice (53.4%) revealed the highest frequency, followed by prepositions in prepositional verbs (13.6%), infinitives (12.6%), participles (11.7%), gerunds (6.8%), and voice (1.9%). In descriptive writing, word choice (62.5%) also occurred most frequently, followed by participles (17.2%), infinitives (7.8%), prepositions in prepositional verbs and voice (both 4.7%), and gerunds (3.1%).

TABLE 7

Improper Elements

	Letter Writing		Descriptive Writing	
	Tokens	%	Tokens	%
Word Choice	55	53.4	40	62.5
Prep. in Prep. Verbs	14	13.6	3	4.7
Gerunds	7	6.8	2	3.1
Infinitives	13	12.6	5	7.8
Participles (*-ing* & *-ed*)	12	11.7	11	17.2
Voice (Passive & Active)	2	1.9	3	4.7
Total	103	100	64	100

① Word Choice

This subcategory covered the lexical verbs which were not appropriate in the given context. In letter writing, 55 tokens were drawn from 30 verbs: *be, wish, elect, get, become,*

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go, make, want, send, gather, keep, think, meet, play, transfer, see, long, hear, have, hope, give up, appraise, take, look, end, test, talk, remind, serve, and initiate. In more detail, *get, make,* and *take* were the 3 most frequently misused lexical verbs (6 tokens, respectively), followed by *be* (4 tokens), and *go* and *have* (3 tokens, respectively). In descriptive writing, 40 tokens were drawn from 20 verbs: *take, place, watch, fly, hang, seem, trip, make, have, work, wear, be, expect, send, go, activate, put, cross, know,* and *stand*. To be more specific, *have* and *be* were the 2 most frequently misused lexical verbs (4 tokens, respectively), followed by *make* and *take* (3 tokens, respectively). In short, the lexical verbs *be, have, make, take, send,* and *go* were shown to be misused both in letter writing and descriptive writing. The examples below covered most frequently misused lexical verbs from each writing task. In (19a), *take* was used instead of *ride*, while in (19b), *get* was used instead of *wear*. In (19d), *have* must be replaced with *catch*. On the other hand, *make* in (19c) and *are* in (19e) must be replaced with *have*.

(19) a. There is a man who is taking a bike.
b. Get your warm clothes.
c. You can make a party.
d. You should not have a cold.
e. You are a runny nose.

② Prepositions in Prepositional Verbs

This subcategory addressed the errors in which prepositions were misused for prepositional verbs. In letter writing, 14 tokens were drawn from 7 prepositions: *to, in, with, about, out, for*, and *at*. In more detail, *to* (4 tokens) was shown to be the most frequently misused preposition, followed by *in* (3 tokens) and *with* and *about* (2 tokens, respectively). On the other hand, in descriptive writing, 3 prepositions *in*, *on*, and *for* were misused just one time, respectively. To sum up, the prepositions *in* and *for* were found to be misused for prepositional verbs in both tasks.

In order to be suitable for the preceding verbs, *to* in (20a) must be replaced with *on*, while *in* in (20b), *with* in (20c), and *on* in (20e) must be replaced with *to*. Moreover, *about* in (20d) must be replaced with *of*, while *for* in (20f) must be replaced with *from*.

(20) a. I will concentrate to our team.
b. She traveled in New York.
c. He got married with her.
d. Take care about yourself.
e. There is a steel rod that many national flags are attached on.
f. He graduated for the same university.

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③ Gerunds

The subcategory of gerunds comprised of the errors in which gerunds were not used when necessary or used inappropriately. There were 7 tokens in letter writing and 2 tokens in descriptive writing. In (21a), the verb *dislike* should take the gerund as a direct object. Thus, *-ing* should be added to the verb *clean* (i.e. *cleaning*). The case of (21b) showed that the sentence failed to use parallel structure in that an infinitive and a gerund were mixed. The whole sentence followed the pattern of "it (anticipatory subject) + be + adjective + infinitive." Therefore, the gerund *traveling* must be replaced with *travel*. The gerund *telling* in (21c) was also incorrect in that an infinitive (i.e. *to tell*) should have been used in order to modify the noun phrase *a lot of stories*. The case in (21c) seemed to be caused by erroneously treating *to* as a preposition which required a gerund as an object. On the other hand, the verb *study* in (21d) must be replaced with the gerund *studying* in order to function as the object of the preposition *at*.

(21) a. I dislike clean the room.
b. It's nice to go on a picnic and traveling.
c. I have a lot of stories to telling you.
d. She is good at study languages.

④ Infinitives

The subcategory of infinitives covered the errors in which *to*-infinitives were used in place of gerunds or bare infinitives were used in place of *to*-infinitives. There were 13 tokens in letter writing and 5 tokens in descriptive writing. In (22a), the verb *recommend* should take the gerund object, so *to go* should be replaced with *going*. It is of importance to note that the case of (22a) occurred most frequently both in letter writing (7 tokens) and descriptive writing (3 tokens). In (22b), the main verb *hope* should take a clause as an object in the given context. Thus, the infinitive *to meet* cannot come after the subject pronoun *you*. In order to function as the verb in the object clause, the infinitive *to meet* should be replaced with the bare form *meet*. The case of (22b) seemed to be drawn from the structure in which a *to*-infinitive clause occurs as a direct object (e.g. *I expect him to come*) (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973). Meanwhile, the bare infinitive (i.e. *have*) in (22c) must be replaced with a *to*-infinitive (i.e. *to have*) because the verb *tell* should take a *to*-infinitive as a direct object. This error may be due to lack of grammatical knowledge that only causative verbs (i.e. *have, let,* and *make*) take a bare infinitive in their infinitive clause (e.g. *She made him clean the room*). In (22d), the verb *want* should take a *to infinitive,* not a *bare infinitive*, as an object so that *to help* must replace *help*. In (22e), the bare infinitive (i.e. *hear*) must be replaced with a *to*-infinitive (i.e. *to hear*) in order to function as an

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adjective complement; the adjective phrase (i.e. *very sorry*) must be followed by a to-infinitive clause (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973).

(22) a. I recommend to go there.
b. I hope you to meet a good guy.
c. He told me have a big goal.
d. I want help her.
e. I am very sorry hear that.

⑤ Participles

The subcategory of participles comprised of the errors in which present participles (V-*ing)* or past participles (V-*ed)* were misused or were not used when necessary. There were 12 tokens in letter writing and 11 tokens in descriptive writing. In (23a), the present participle *interesting* was used in place of the past participle *interested.* In (23b), the bare form of the lexical verb *major* should be replaced with a present participle form *majoring* because the sentence intended to take a present continuous tense which described the situation in progress. The sentence in (23c) was written in the passive voice with the simple past tense, while the sentence in (23d) was written in the present perfect tense. Therefore, the past form *wrote* in (23c) and the bare form *see* in (23d) must be replaced with the past participle forms *written* and *seen*, respectively. Because of the adverb of frequency *usually* in (23e), the sentence should take the simple present tense that describes "habits." Thus the present participle *wearing* should be replaced with the bare form *wear*. In (23f), the verb *go* should take the present participle as an object. Thus, *-ing* should be added to the verb *ski* (i.e. *skiing*). In (23g), however, the present participle *hanging* was misused because the verb *go* should take the infinitive of purpose (i.e. *to hang*) in that context. It should be noted that the case of (23a) occurred most frequently both in letter writing (5 tokens) and descriptive writing (3 tokens). This finding could result from the failure to understand that present participles function differently from past participles. It is noteworthy that the case of (23d) was found only in letter writing, while the case of (23e) was found only in descriptive writing.

(23) a. I am interesting in politics.
b. She is major in history.
c. The letter was wrote by you.
d. We have not see each other.
e. I usually wearing those casual clothes.
f. I want to go ski.
g. I have to go hanging the Korean flag.

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⑥ Voice

The subcategory of voice covered the errors in which passive voice was used in place of active voice and vice versa. There were 2 tokens in letter writing (i.e. 24a and 24b) and 3 tokens in descriptive writing (i.e. 24c, 24d, and 24e). The verbs in sentences (24a), (24c), and (24d) should be changed from the passive voice to the active voice. Thus, the correct forms are the following: My mind *won't change*; The flags *are waving* in the air; and Several flags *are blowing*. In contrast, the verbs in sentences (24b) and (24e) ought to be changed from the active voice to the passive voice: Now I *am relieved;* and The cars *are arranged* in rows. It should be noted that the passive voice sentences (24b) and (24e) demonstrated the case of "by + agent" omission.

(24) a. My mind won't be changed.
b. Now I relieve.
c. The flags are being waved in the air.
d. Several flags are being blown.
e. The cars arrange in rows.

(2) Misuse of Tense and Aspect

This category covered the errors of the present and past tenses in relation to the progressive and perfective aspects. As shown in Table 6, there were 65 tokens in letter writing. In more detail, errors concerning the simple tense were dominant (49 tokens); there were only 16 tokens concerning the aspect. Meanwhile, there were 33 tokens in descriptive writing. There were more than twice as many errors regarding the aspect (23 tokens) as there were regarding the simple tense (10 tokens). This finding could be due to the "nature" of the descriptive writing task. That is, since the participants were asked to describe what was occurring on the postcard at that moment, they were more likely to have to express actions or situations in progress where the use of the progressive aspect was required. Nevertheless, they often ended up with the simple present or past tense, avoiding the use of the progressive aspect. Moreover, both in letter writing and descriptive writing, the perfective aspect which seemed to be more challenging was employed less frequently than the progressive aspect. Noticeably, in both writing tasks, the tokens regarding the perfective aspect occurred fewer times than the tokens regarding the progressive aspect.

In (25a), the noun phrase *the last time* clarified that the intended tense of the verb *send* was the simple past *sent*. In contrast, in (25b), the simple present tense form of the verb *call* in the main clause required the simple past tense form of the verb *finished* in the subordinate clause to be replaced with the simple present tense form *finish*. It is of importance to note that both in letter writing and descriptive writing, the case of (25a) in

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which the present tense form of a verb was used in place of the past tense form occurred more frequently than the case of (25b) in which the past tense form of a verb was used in place of the present tense form. In other words, the participants tended to simply rely on the simple present tense form of a verb, most likely because determining the proper use of other tenses would have required considerably more effort. Concerning the error of (25c) which was found in descriptive writing, the simple present form of the verb *wear* needed to be replaced with the present progressive form *is wearing* because the task was to describe instantaneous actions or situations which were "happening" on the postcard at that exact moment. In (25d), the adverbial phrase *last night* and the modal auxiliary *may* clarified that the simple present form of the verb *drink* was used in place of the present perfective form *have drunk*.

(25) a. I don't remember when was the last time I send you an email.
b. After you finished the report, call me.
c. The Asian man wears a suit.
d. You may drink last night.

(3) Disagreement

This category addressed the errors in which the verb form failed to correspond with its subject in terms of grammatical person and/or number. Out of a total of 12 tokens in letter writing, 8 of them were drawn from the sentences in which the subject was the third person singular. Additionally, there were 3 tokens in that the subject was the first person plural and only 1 token in that the subject was the second person singular. On the other hand, out of a total of 27 tokens in descriptive writing, 26 of them were drawn from the sentences in which the subject was the third person singular or plural. There was only 1 token with the first person singular subject, but no token was found with the second person subject. As for the reason of this finding, it was conjectured that since descriptive writing was literally to describe what was happening on the postcard showing Times Square in New York City, the participants might have ended up mostly using the third person as the subject. In other words, descriptive writing was not empathy based, so the participants seldom employed the first or second person as the subject unless they tried to express their own emotions or thoughts. Accordingly, the disagreement errors regarding the first and second person subjects were less likely to occur in descriptive writing than in letter writing.

Both (26a) and (26b) showed the case of "overgeneralized third person ending" (Littlewood, 1995, p. 24). That is, the third person singular inflection rule (i.e. *V-s* form) was applied to the first person plural subject *we* and the second person singular subject *you*, respectively. In (26c) and (26d), the forms of the verb *be* were used reversely. This finding

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seemed to be caused by the inability to recognize the distinction between singular and plural past tense forms of the lexical verb *be* (i.e. *was* and *were*) which were to be determined by their subject in terms of grammatical person and/or number. Concerning (26e), the linear distance between the object *clothes* and the verb *shows* in the *that*-clause might have given rise to not using the third person plural verb form *show* (Cho & Yoo, 2012). Lastly, (26f) and (26g) revealed that the third person singular verb inflection did not occur with the third person singular subject.

In the opposite direction of those in (26a) and (26b), the error in (26f) showed the omission of the third person singular ending (i.e. *V-s*), which seemed to be due to overgeneralization in that the endingless form was applied to the third person singular subject. This finding might have stemmed from not knowing that "all grammatical persons take the same zero verbal ending except the third person singular in the present tense" (Richards, 1995, p. 48). It is interesting to note that in letter writing, the majority of the errors were found to be the case in (26f) (7 tokens); the cases in (26a) and (26b) occurred only three times. In contrast, in descriptive writing, the cases in (26a) and (26b) (9 tokens) occurred more than the case in (26f) (7 tokens).

(26) a. We looks similar to each other.
b. Maybe you likes him.
c. When we was in elementary school, we used to play together.
d. I were very happy.
e. They seem to wear clothes that suit their taste and shows their characters.
f. The better person become the president.
g. New York have good weather.

(4) Conjugation

This category covered the errors which included incorrect inflection forms of verbs. There were 3 tokens both in letter writing (i.e. 27a, 27b, and 27c) and descriptive writing (i.e. 27d, 27e, and 27f). The errors of (27a), (27d), and (27e) showed that the morpheme *-ed* was redundantly added to the past participle forms *born* and *built* of the irregular verbs *bear* and *build*. In (27b), *-ed* was added to the irregular verb *fight* in order to make its past tense form which was *fought*. In (27c), as the past tense form, *-ed* was added to the verb *hug* which was against the spelling rules for endings with verbs. That is, if the simple form of a one-syllable verb ends in one consonant after a vowel, the last consonant is doubled before *-ed* is added. Thus, *huged* should be replaced with *hugged*. Meanwhile, in (27f), the *y* was changed to *i* and -ed was added to the verb *fly* in order to make its past participle form. However, the correct past participle form is not *flied* but *flown*. All in all, the

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following errors demonstrated that in making past tense and past participle forms of verbs, regularization arose in that the spelling rules (i.e. *-ed* endings) with regular verbs were applied to those with irregular verbs, which supported the findings of Cho and Yoo's (2012) study.

(27) a. My nephew was borned last year.
b. They fighted for money.
c. I huged them.
d. This is newly builted.
e. They are builted.
f. A flag is flied outside a window.

4) Misordering

Misordering which addressed the incorrect placement of lexical verbs arose in relation to adverbs, subject-verb inversion, and objects. There were 11 tokens in letter writing and 5 tokens in descriptive writing. In (28a), the verb *be* was incorrectly placed before the adverb *even* in the declarative sentence. In (28b), the subject *friendship* and the verb *is* were inverted in the *what*-clause of the declarative sentence. On the other hand, (28c) showed that the subject (*You*) and verb *(are*) inversion did not occur in the *yes-no* question. Finally, the verb *mastered* in (28d) failed to precede the object *Chinese* in the declarative sentence. All in all, the errors of misordering in declarative sentences were dominant both in letter writing (7 tokens) and descriptive writing (4 tokens); the errors of misordering in *yes-no* questions and *wh*-questions were found to be rare.

(28) a. We couldn't be even friends.
b. You taught me what is friendship.
c. You are so busy?
d. I Chinese mastered 3 months ago.

V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate advanced EFL learners' verb errors in terms of types and frequency and examine the impact of writing task type on English verb usage. All the identified errors in the corpus were grouped into auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs and then given a comparative analysis with regard to two different tasks (i.e. letter writing and descriptive writing). The results showed that task type failed to make a

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strong impact on English verb usage. By and large, both writing tasks yielded similar findings on error types and frequency. L1 transfer and overgeneralization were found to be the major factors that led to English verb errors. As for the omission errors, *be* as an auxiliary verb and a lexical verb and *to* as a preposition in prepositional verbs were the most frequent in both tasks.

Concerning auxiliary verbs, the omission errors were the most common in letter writing, while the omission errors and the misformation errors occurred at the same frequency rate in descriptive writing. In contrast to the omission errors, the addition errors rarely occurred in either task. Among the subcategories of the misformation errors, word choice revealed the highest frequency in both tasks. In short, the participants had most difficulty providing appropriate auxiliary verbs that could fit the given context; *do* and *will* were misused in both tasks.

As for lexical verbs, in letter writing and descriptive writing, the misformation errors were the most dominant, followed by the omission errors. The confusion between transitive and intransitive verbs brought about preposition omissions in prepositional verbs. Among the subcategories of the misformation errors, improper elements exhibited the highest frequency, followed by misuse of tense and aspect in both tasks as well. Subsequently, the errors of word choice accounted for more than half of all the errors of improper elements; *be, have, make, take, send,* and *go* were misused in both tasks. Moreover, the ability to distinguish the verbs followed by gerunds from the verbs followed by infinitives was yet to be developed.

It is noteworthy that although the participants were advanced EFL learners, they still avoided using prepositional verbs and progressive and perfective aspects that might be challenging. As alternatives, they frequently employed one word verbs and simple present tense, which was consistent with the findings of Chin's (2013) study that targeted low level EFL learners. Thus, it was conjectured that the advanced EFL learners still possessed a lack of confidence which gave rise to unwillingness to take risks. Even when they had the competence to apply a variety of complex verb forms, they seemed to be afraid of making errors when performing the written tasks.

Limitations of the present study should be acknowledged for future explorations. First, the targeted participants comprised of all advanced level EFL learners. Thus, the conclusions drawn from this research might not be applied to an EFL class of mixed levels. For the sake of comprehensive insight, this research might be replicated with EFL learners at varying proficiency levels (e.g. advanced, intermediate, and beginning) and given a comparative analysis. Second, this research examined the impact of two different writing tasks on a single part of speech usage (i.e. verb). It would be essential to investigate influences of oral task and written task on EFL learners' errors in terms of a variety of parts of speech (e.g. nouns, verbs, conjunctions, etc.). Findings of such replications might be

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able to provide more in-depth suggestions that could be implemented into the EFL community at large.

VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study suggest the following pedagogical implications for EFL classroom teachers. Misuse of English verbs frequently stemmed from literal translations in this study. Thus, verb instruction should not be conducted with a list of dictionary definitions isolated from context. In addition to a textbook, students should be exposed to a variety of types of authentic materials that could intrigue their interests such as fashion and sports. That way, they can naturally internalize English verbs within the context of surrounding discourse and learn to apply them to a meaningful context (Brown, 1994). In order to address a specific error category such as a progressive aspect, an illustrated passage may be introduced to choose the correct forms of the verbs provided in parentheses. A journal entry could be another option to practice locating and correcting mistakes in the use of present progressive verb forms.

Students should be informed that some lexical verbs may be followed by gerunds, infinitives, or both. A short list that separately presents the common verbs that take gerunds and the ones that take infinitives would be useful to confirm their understanding. As for gerunds, spelling rules for the base form of *Verb + ing* ought to be explained. With regard to review exercises, a set of sentences might be provided for students to complete, using gerund or infinitive forms (negatives when indicated) of the verbs in parentheses. In doing so, it is essential to include common expressions with prepositions that are often followed by gerunds (e.g. *approve of*).

Students' inability to differentiate intransitive verbs from transitive verbs could be an important issue to take into account. Moreover, misuse of prepositions in prepositional verbs (i.e. intransitive verbs) needs to be dealt with. Thus, explicit instruction might be required. For instance, teachers may present a list of common prepositional verbs with meanings in contexts. It is crucial to notify the differences between separable and inseparable prepositional verbs. Inseparable verbs refer to the two-word verbs which have the object after the preposition (e.g. *drop by*), while separable verbs refer to the two-word verbs that can have the object between the verb and the preposition (e.g. *hand in*). As a follow-up activity to check their knowledge, students might be invited to participate in authentic writing, using prepositional verbs, either individually or with peers. Additionally, writing a postcard or a text message to a friend outside of class might be a good choice.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: College

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