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An Error Analysis of Korean University Students' English Summary Writing

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While EFL students' writing in relation to error analysis has been an area of interest to academics in the EFL field, recently, a number of studies have been conducted regarding summary writing in particular, which can be a common feature in higher education and academic writing. This study identifies the predominant types of errors found in summaries written by Korean EFL university students, and compares and contrasts error patterns identified between high and low proficiency English learners. For this study, 128 summaries of English news articles written by 16 participating university students were analyzed based on error analysis categories adapted from Ferris (2002) with *AntConc3.4.4.*(http://www.laurenceanthony.net/). The results indicate that syntactic items were the most problematic areas for students in summary writing, followed by issues with morphology and lexis. While students in the high proficiency group had a lower frequency of errors in each category, they made more errors in a number of subcategories including verb tense, verb form, and determiners. The findings of this study indicate that, in relation to summary writing, higher proficiency students are prone to making such errors as a result of increased paraphrasing and complex sentence production, while lower proficiency students tend to produce simpler sentences.

[error analysis/English summary writing/morphological errors/lexical errors]

I. INTRODUCTION

In higher education delivered at universities and colleges, English has been the primary global medium of formal learning and for the storing of scholarly data (Brumfit, 2004). As exposure to the English language at universities is increasing, English writing abilities, in particular, are often essential for the completion of academic coursework at universities, in the form of essays, reports, research papers, and in examinations. Accordingly, the development of learners' writing skills in L2 arguably plays a

significant factor in university education (Jordan, 1997). At the same time, however, writing in English, can be a highly problematic area for L2 learners (Kroll, 1993).

Summarization, in which students read texts and incorporate information from those texts into their own written products (Segev-Miller, 2004), has been considered an effective tool for the development of both writing and reading skills (Karbalaei & Rajyashree, 2010; Sjostrom & Hare, 1984). It is a common feature of academic writing, especially with regards to note-taking, research, and as a writing genre itself (Spack, 1988). Taylor and Beach (1984) also identified the positive effects of summarization on students' writing as well as comprehension.

Accordingly, identifying and correcting errors as an EFL writing activity has also been considered an important component of the teacher's instructional role in order to enhance student's writing skills (Cha, 1990; Cho & Lee, 2015; Kim & Joo, 2010). According to Cha (1990, p.140), "the language teacher who knows the types of students' errors is much better equipped to deal with them, both in terms of prevention and correction, than the one who does not". Although there is some disagreement with regards to the attitudes and approaches toward student errors (Ferris, 2002), it would not be unreasonable to suggest that teachers should be able to identify students' errors and provide correct alternatives at the very least.

Given the overall importance of error feedback, numerous studies have aimed to identify errors primarily in essay writing by EFL university students (Han, 2014; Kim, 1998; Nelson & Chun, 2008). In contrast to essay writing, research on errors found in L2 summary writing has been somewhat limited. The wide-ranging genres of essay writing arguably mean that, without a study focusing on errors specifically relating to summary writing, it could be difficult to focus on the development of summary writing skills effectively. Accordingly, one might then argue that it would be beneficial to compare the types of errors found in EFL students' summaries to those found in essay writings. Such error analysis might assist L2 learners in the rewriting and paraphrasing of contents they read more effectively. The comparison and contrast of any error patterns between the summaries of high and low proficiency English learners could be said to be helpful for teachers in the development of level-appropriate guidelines for the teaching of summary writing specifically, and for students in the development of their academic writing skills. In order to allow for the development of such guidelines, two research questions must first be answered:

1. Which grammatical errors are more commonly found in Korean university students' summaries when compared to essay writings?
2. What, if any, are the differences in patterns of errors between summaries and essays written by students with high and low English proficiency?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following section will present previous studies of summary writing in ESL/EFL education, and will discuss and review prominent literature on error analysis published in the field.

1. Summary Writing

According to Kirkland and Saunders's (1991) study, summary writing involves constant consideration of the text itself, the paper being written, and the requirements of the assignment—rereading, rewriting, and continually reflecting on and comparing aspects of these elements. Brown, Day, and Jones (1983), who studied planning skills for summary writing among students of different age groups also indicate that "the ability to work recursively on information to render it as succinctly as possible requires judgment and effort, knowledge, and strategies, and is, therefore, late developing" (p. 968). Taking this into consideration, summary writing might be said to be a skill that takes time and effort to develop effectively.

Generally, summary writing has been utilized in the EFL language classroom as a form of reading and writing integrated instruction. A number of researchers have demonstrated how summarizing tasks can improve both writing and reading skills (Sjostrom & Hare, 1984; Taylor & Beach, 1984). For instance, Sjostrom and Hare (1984) found that an experimental group that received summarization training became significantly better at writing main ideas and summarizing more efficiently than the control group that did not receive such training. In addition, according to Taylor and Beach (1984), instruction in summarization, which emphasized text structure, had indirect positive effects on the writing competence of students as well as direct effects on their reading competence and retention of information.

In order to improve the transfer effects of summarizing on writing abilities as suggested above, a number of studies have examined the summarizing behaviors of writers with regards to overall L2 proficiency (Brown & Day, 1983; Johns, 1985). Brown and Day (1983) compared the summarization skills of junior college students and four-year college students. The results showed that four-year college students wrote better summaries and used summary rules more efficiently than junior college students. Johns (1985) examined the summarization skills of ESL students in the United States. She compared three groups with varying levels of ability: underprepared university students, mainstream university students, and senior or graduate students who enrolled in a class for prospective ESL teachers. She found that the underprepared university

students made fewer combinations of idea units and fewer generalizations, and used more words to produce less information than the other two groups.

A number of studies have examined Korean EFL students' summarization performance in terms of L2 proficiency. Oh (2007) found that language proficiency influenced paraphrasing. Lower proficiency groups copied more often, while higher proficiency groups paraphrased more. According to Kim (2009), language proficiency plays an important role in understanding EFL students' decisions to use copying strategies appropriate to their skill levels. Kim (2015) also found similar results, further supporting the findings of Oh (2007) and Kim (2009). Kim (2015) compared instances of paraphrasing in the summaries of two low L2 proficiency groups. Kim's findings indicated that students who were of novice English proficiency used significantly more exact copies and near copies, while those of low English proficiency undertook significantly more moderate revision.

As seen above, language proficiency has a significant effect on L2 learner's summarization performance as well as the summarizing behavior. It might then be assumed that the errors made by L2 learners of different proficiencies would also vary based on their summarization performance and behavior. This being the case, one might argue that instruction taking into consideration common errors, in summary writing might be given more effectively if done so according to level; thus validating a study of such errors by comparing different L2 proficiencies.

2. Error Analysis and Previous Studies

L2 learners' errors have been considered as evidence of the language learning development. Corder (1967) first pointed out the significance of errors in the language learning process and introduced the idea that learners' errors are a necessary part of linguistic development and that errors are important because they may represent the discrepancy between the grammar of the learner's developmental competence and that of the target language. Selinker (1992) also argues that, for learners themselves, errors are 'indispensable.' In their interlanguage development, since the making of errors can be considered as a device the learner uses in order to learn language. According to Xu (2004), errors provide evidence for a much more complex learning process, where the learners are considered as an active participant in the formation of hypotheses regarding the L2 rules. As such, the analysis of learner errors can be seen to be a valuable resource for the analysis of students' needs and performance.

Along with increasing such interest in learner's errors, the various types of errors in both lexis and syntax, such as verb, phrase, word form, preposition, and sentence

fragments have been identified. Lennon (1991) identified a number of different categories for the description of errors that include errors of addition, omission, substitution and ordering, levels of language, whether errors are global or local, domain and so on. Ferris (2002) provided further subdivided error categories based on linguistic aspects that include morphological errors (verb tense, verb form, subject-verb agreement, determiners, and noun endings), lexical errors (word choice, word form, informal usage, idiom error, and pronoun error), syntactic errors (sentence structure, run-ons, fragments), mechanical (punctuation and spelling) errors, and miscellaneous ones. Doolan and Miller (2012) selected error types based on prevalence and reliability of identification, which include wrong words, verb errors, fragments, prepositional phrases, determiners, and subjects and verbs. Hussain, Hanif, Asif, and Rehman (2013) also classify errors into 19 categories at all levels including punctuation, syntax, and lexicon. Among these error types, grammatical errors include verbs, prepositions, subject omissions, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, articles, and negation, which are the most common errors among Pakistani students.

Based on such error types in lexis, syntax and punctuation, many studies have analyzed English learners' errors. Kato (2006) compared errors made by different years of Japanese high school students. Syntactic errors (29%), lexical errors (21.3%), morphological errors in nouns (17.9%), mechanical errors (17.7%), and morphological errors in verbs (14.4%) composed all errors made. The most common errors observed in first year essays were lexical errors (24%), of which word choice was the most common. In comparison, Syntactic errors comprised the most errors in second year essays (35.2%), with sentence structure being the most prevalent in third year essays (31.1%). In Abushihab's (2014) study, 20 Turkish EFL university students' English essays were analyzed. The results showed that the majority of errors made related to articles and prepositions. The researcher claimed that such grammatical errors occurred as a result of the negative transfer from L1, and the different word order system between English and Turkish. It was noted that students may have made the most errors in article use because the Turkish language has no definite article. Preposition errors were claimed to have been made because in Turkish, prepositions appear in the form of suffixes attached to words, while in English they appear as separate words. Such error analysis could be said to highlight the prevalence of certain forms of errors by speakers of different languages.

Many studies have also analyzed the errors of EFL Korean learners. Kim (1998) investigated errors in high school students' free writings to develop a computerized error analysis program. The results found that determiners and articles were the most problematic areas, followed by awkward expressions and incorrect verb complements. Cha (2004) identified the written errors of Korean university students, also concluding

that determiners and verbs were the most common error types. Jung's (2009) error-tagged learner corpus-based investigation of error patterns in Korean university students' writing identified verb tense and the omission of articles as being the most common of morphological errors. In the lexical category, word choice was the most erroneous. The most problematic area in the syntactic category was sentence structure. In Jung's study, it was noted that these errors were affected by the argumentative/persuasive genre and topics of the essays. In light of this, one might expect that the multitude of source texts on which summary writing might be based could present a challenge to L2 learners in utilizing determiners and verbs appropriate to topic-based vocabulary correctly.

In addition, prior research examining EFL writing by learners of varying proficiency levels found that the different levels exhibited different error patterns in relation to frequency and types. In Jeon's (2013) study, low level learners produced more errors than high level ones in most error categories, and that their frequency decreased among both high and low level learners as their English proficiency increased. Supporting Jeon's findings, the results of Lee's (2014) study indicated that the low proficiency group produced more errors in all categories. Although errors relating to verbs, articles, and prepositions were the most common made by both groups, their frequency differed greatly. Lee proposed that the commonality of such errors might be due to the concept that the lesser the gravity of the error (i.e., articles, prepositions), because of its transparency, the more difficult the acquisition of the rule is. Accordingly, even high-proficiency students were prone to making such errors, although they were more complicated and occurred in more complex contexts (i.e., tense). It was also noted that the largest gaps between the groups, in terms of frequency, related to fragments, word order, and the omission of subject/ objects. This might arguably be said to be expected, given that these are errors that can obscure meaning and interfere with communication; providing a feasibly greater challenge for lower-proficiency levels than higher ones.

These studies suggest that the errors commonly found in essay writing can be attributed to numerous factors, including L1, varying writing assignments, and different levels. It is not clear, however, whether or not such errors are common to summary writing, and if there is any correlation between the causes of any apparent error patterns in summary and essay writing. As such, this study aims to investigate patterns of errors prevalent in Korean university students' summaries. In order to do so, the overall frequency and patterns of errors found in 128 summaries written by classes of low and high proficiency English students from one university in Korea were analyzed according to error categories adapted from Ferris (2002).

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Participants

The participants in this study were 24 freshman students from an English reading course worth 3 credits at a university in Chungju, Korea during the second semester. All participants majored in English. The class met for three hours each week over the semester. Out of the 24 students who agreed to participate, 8 were excluded from the data analysis due to their frequent absence or failure to complete assigned tasks. Thus, the results are based on data gathered from 16 students (12 males and 4 females). The English proficiency level of the students was generally intermediate, according to an average TOEIC score of 503.96. These scores are based on a mock test conducted at the university at the beginning of the semester. With regards to the background of the students, only two had previous experience in summarizing in English after reading an English passage, while 14 students responded that they had never done so. Eight students were assigned into a high proficiency group, while the other eight were assigned to a low proficiency group, according to the results of an essay writing test conducted at the beginning of the semester.

2. Research Instruments

1) Reading Materials

English news articles were selected from a reading textbook entitled 'Reading the News' (Sharma, 2007) produced by the International Herald Tribune. This book is a one –volume edition and consists of 5 sections; news and features, opinion, business, lifestyle, and arts and entertainment that include 20 articles in total. It aims to help students to improve their ability to read newspapers in English and prepare them for TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS exams. Eight articles were chosen in total from this book, and in each lesson, key vocabulary terms and expressions from an article to be read in the following class were handed out and students were required to learn them. The topics and titles of readings utilized from 'Reading the News' are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Topics and Titles of Readings

No.	Topics	Readings
1	News and Features	A hunger for English lessons
2		Secret wealth vs. "for richer, for poorer"
3	Opinion	Women's work/ The wages of equality: A world of unfinished business
4		Chances a low-fat diet will help? Slim and none
5	Lifestyle	The name game: Can anyone famous be a designer?
6		Stressed executives flee the pressure
7	Arts and Entertainment	Film: The audience speaks Spanish but not at the multiplex
8	Technology, Science, and Health	Is Internet auctioneer an arena for criminals?

2) Students' Summaries

The participants were required to write summaries of the articles after every lesson. Each participant submitted eight summaries in total. 128 summaries in total were collected and used for analysis. The B4-size paper was reserved for summary writing and a strict regulation on summary length was not imposed. The lack of restriction on summary length was based on a number of studies which revealed that students included only the most important information in summaries when they were allowed to use as little as 20 words or 40 words (Brown, Day, & Jones, 1983; Hidi & Anderson, 1986). Therefore the students were only told to use half to two-thirds of the given space. As a result, the word length of the collected summaries varies, ranging from 61 words to 180 words with a total of 11,612 tokens (total number of words) with 1,728 types (different word forms) and 883 sentences.

3) Error Categories

In order to mark errors, error categories adapted from Ferris (2002) were utilized. These categories were selected as being "fairly representative of what researchers, teachers, and textbook authors have found and emphasized in giving error feedback to ESL writers" (Ferris, 2002, p. 51). A pilot analysis of 6 sample summaries was conducted according to these error categories. During the pilot analysis, errors in informal usage, i.e. the use of informal transitional expressions or other inappropriate casual register and idioms, namely errors in the use of idiomatic expressions were rarely noted, as is in line with the findings of a study by Ferris, Chaney, Komura, Roberts, and Mckee (2000) on the common errors made by ESL students. As a result, informal usage

and idiom errors (Ferris, 2002) were deleted from the error categories. Taking into consideration the proficiency level of the students and the focus of this study on morphological, lexical, and syntactic errors, mechanical errors of punctuation and spelling were seen to be of less significance, and thus were not included in the analysis. These error categories can be found in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2

Description of Error Categories and Codes Used in This Study

Error Type		Code	Description
Morphological Errors			
Verbs	Tense	VT	Include missing or erroneous verb tense markers and modals when they clearly mark tense.
	Subject-verb agreement	SV	Includes error in either noun or verb form leading to Lack of agreement in number.
	Form	VF	Includes errors in formation of the verb phrase not specific to time or tense markings, such as ill-formed passives, conditionals, subjunctives, and misuse of modals, infinitives, and gerunds.
Nouns	Determiners	DET	Includes errors involving unnecessary, missing, or wrong article or determiner.
	Noun endings (Plural/possessive)	N	Includes missing, unnecessary, or ill-formed plural or possessive markers.
Lexical Errors		Code	Description
Word choice		WC	Includes wrong, unclear meaning or words in context, along with verb, auxiliary, modal, and relative pronoun.
Word form		WF	Includes all non-verb related errors in which the word is in the wrong lexical category for the context.
Pronoun error		PR	Includes pronouns that do not agree in number or case with referent or that have no apparent antecedent. Includes only personal pronoun reference.
Syntactic Errors		Code	Description
Sentence structure		SS	Includes missing and unnecessary words, word order, and other hard-to-classify problems related to syntax.
Run-on		RO	Includes run-on sentences and two or more independent clauses with no punctuation or conjunction to separate them.
Fragment		FRAG	Includes dependent clauses standing alone as sentences or clauses missing a subject or verb.

(Adapted from Ferris, 2002)

Having identified the error categories selected for analysis, it would be appropriate to discuss the procedure followed for data collection.

3. Data Collection Procedure

Classes focused on reading and met for three hours every week in the fall semester of 2012. At the beginning of the semester, students were asked to write an essay entitled 'Describe your favorite books' in order to identify their initial writing levels. Based on Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey's (1981) ESL composition profile, these essays were evaluated by two native speakers, one of whom is from the U.S. with an M.A. in English and approximately eight years of teaching experience. The other rater, from England, has been an English language teacher in Seoul for over ten years and has taught high school students and young adults English reading, writing, and conversation. So as to allow for a comparison of the effects of summary writing on higher and lower proficiency L2 learners, the participants were split into two groups of high and low proficiency, according to their results. The half of the students with scores higher than the average of 70.94 were assigned to the high level group, with the cut-off scores being 71-87, while the other half were assigned to the low level group, with scores ranging from 57-68.

On the first day of the course, the students were provided a sample summary and taught how to summarize by the instructor after they read articles. For the remainder of the semester, students were required to write summaries of the articles for 20 minutes during the class and to submit them at the end of each lesson. Eight summaries were collected from each student.

4. Data Analysis

After all summaries were collected, errors were identified by the researcher and a native speaker. To increase the reliability of error identification, a native speaker with ten years of experience teaching English in Korea was first trained in the identification and coding of errors according to the selected categories. In the interest of consistency and balance, the inter-rater reliability was evaluated through Pearson correlation. The Pearson correlation coefficient was .881 (p<0.05), indicating a strong positive correlation between the two raters.

After all errors were identified and coded, a freeware corpus analysis toolkit, *AntConc3.4.4* (http://www.laurenceanthony.net/), was used to identify each type of errors. Figure 1 presents a sample of the results of *AntConc3.4.4.*indicating errors made in regard to sentence structure (SS). Having introduced and detailed the methodology and procedures followed for the analysis, the results and findings will now be presented and discussed.

FIGURE 1

A Sample Screenshot of the Results of Analysis Using *AntConc3.4.4.*



IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the following sections, the overall frequencies of morphological, lexical, and syntactic errors are presented. A comparison of error patterns identified between proficiency levels in these areas follows.

1. Overall Frequency of Errors

A total of 1,587 errors were identified in the students' summaries. The errors were then categorized as morphological, lexical, or syntactic. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of each error type.

TABLE 3

Overall Frequency of Errors

Error Type <Morphological Errors>		Number of Examples	Percentage (%)
Verbs	Tense	57	3.59
	Subject-verb agreement	104	6.55
	Form	47	2.96
	Total	208	13.1
Nouns	Determiners	252	15.88
	Noun endings (Plural/possessive)	204	12.85
	Total	456	28.73

(Continued)

TABLE 3 (Continued)
Overall Frequency of Errors

Error Type	Number of Examples	Percentage (%)
<Morphological Errors>		
<Lexical Errors>		
Word choice	291	18.34
Word form	83	5.23
Pronoun Error	29	1.83
Total	403	25.39
<Syntactic Errors>		
Sentence structure	467	29.43
Run-on	15	0.95
Fragment	38	2.39
Total	520	32.77

As can be seen in Table 3, syntactic, or structural (32.77%) items constituted the highest number of errors, the vast majority of which were errors in sentence structure, in line with Ferris et al.'s (2000) studies, which also noted that syntactic errors are particularly problematic for EFL students in writing. This could be said to contrast somewhat with the results of prior studies conducted in a Korean context (Jung, 2009; Kim, 1998; Lee, 2004), whereby morphological or lexical errors were found to be more common than syntactic ones in Korean university students' writings. It should be noted that in the context of summary writing, a significant number of vocabulary terms appropriate for inclusion in the summaries were included in the source texts themselves. This could potentially result in a decrease in the number of morphological or lexical errors made.

The second most common type of error related to noun use (28.73%) including determiners and noun endings. The third largest error type was lexical (25.39%), and largely consisted of errors in word choice.

With regards to the subcategories of errors made, sentence structure (29.43%) was the most common type of error students made in summary writing, followed by word choice (18.34%) and determiners (15.88%). A more detailed breakdown and discussion of each error category follow.

1) Morphological Errors

Morphological errors include subcategories of determiner errors and noun endings, and verb tense, verb form, and subject agreement. Examples of morphological errors and the original texts from the articles on which they are based are presented in Table 4 so as to allow for a better understanding of the errors themselves.

TABLE 4
Examples of Morphological Errors

Type of Morphological Error		Example *(Original Text from the Article)*	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Nouns	Determiners	It is Ø very important thing. [student's own summary]	252	39.75
	Noun Endings	In Sweden, women's ***wage*** are high. *(In Sweden, they were 2.2 times as high and in France and Germany three times as high.)*	204	30.72
Verbs	Subject-verb Agreement	A timid junior high school student ***speak*** Korean mistakenly in the English village. *(A timid junior high school student, stood before her American teacher fidgeting.)*	104	15.66
	Tense	Modern society ***got*** many problems. [student's own summary]	57	8.58
	Form	They spend too much money for their children ***improving*** speaking. *(Parents are paying an estimated 10 trillion won a year to help their children learn English at home or abroad.)*	47	7.08

As is evident in Table 4, noun errors comprised a significantly higher number of morphological errors than verbal ones with errors in determiner use and noun endings constituting 37.95% and 30.72% of all found, respectively. One might argue that the students seem to experience more difficulty in the use of appropriate determiners (in particular, the omission of articles) than correct subject-verb agreement, tense, and form when paraphrasing or condensing while summarizing. The lack of definite articles in the Korean language and a resulting negative transfer from L1 might be seen to play a contributive factor here, in line with the findings of Abushihab's (2014) study. Such negative transfer from L1, particularly with regards to L1 and L2 differences in certain singular and plural forms, might also be seen to contribute to the number of errors made with noun endings.

In the category of verb errors, students made the most errors in subject-verb agreement (15.66%). The second most frequent form of verb errors related to tense (8.58%) and a relatively similar number of verb form errors occurred (7.08%). Compared to Cha's previous study (2004), which indicated that verbs were one of the most common error types, verb tense and verb form errors were identified somewhat infrequently in this study. Compared to the verb errors made in students' essay writing, this result might arguably stem from lexical borrowing on the part of the students from the articles they read, resulting in fewer errors in verb use.

2) Lexical Errors

Lexical errors were composed of the subcategories of word choice, word form, and pronoun errors. The distribution of the aforementioned errors can be seen in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Examples of Lexical Errors

Type of Lexical Error	Example *(Original Text from the Article)*	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Word Choice	Mediterranean diet is ***scope***. *(The Mediterranean diet has not been subjected to a study of this scope.)*	291	72.21
Word Form	This is ***danger***. [student's own summary]	83	20.6
Pronoun Error	Duan Brozek found ***their*** product. *(When Duan Brozek heard the prices for his company's plasma-screen televisions on eBay, the Internet auction site, his first reaction was, "WowWee.")*	29	7.2

The majority of errors in the lexical category were related to word choice (72.21%). These were followed by word form errors (20.6%) and pronoun errors (7.2%), respectively.

Errors in word choice were categorized as words selected having the wrong, unclear meaning or being used in the wrong context, along with errors in verb, auxiliary, modal, and relative pronoun use. This was the second most problematic subcategory in summary writing for students as can be seen in table 5 above. This finding is in line with those of other studies in Korea conducted on the error analysis of essay writings, whereby word choice was one of the most problematic subcategories (Cha, 2004; Jung, 2009; Kim, 1998). Word choice errors are "pervasive and troubling error types" (Ferris, 2002, p.99) in that they have no rules students can apply to. In the students' summary writing, awkward expressions or incorrect words were frequently used. In particular, word choice errors occurred when students summarized long paragraphs in their own words even though ideal vocabulary terms originally appear in the articles themselves; a number of examples of which are presented below.

(1) Some countries ***admit (-> praise)*** the role of women's participation in society.
(2) This article says Korean must ***solve (-> overcome)*** the fear of speaking in English to foreigners.
(3) Korea has ***a little (-> a few)*** natural resources.

It appears that in the process of summary writing, a number of students attempt to use words without knowing the precise meaning of the word or being aware of the appropriate context in which it should be used. One might say that such use of awkward expressions or incorrect words is reflective of the rote memorization of words without consideration of their actual use.

3) Syntactic Errors

Syntactic errors are composed of three subcategories, namely sentence structure, run-ons, and fragments. The distribution of such errors can be seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6
Examples of Syntactic Errors

Type of Syntactic Error	Example *(Original Text from the Article)*	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sentence Structure	This affects to economy badly. *(That could spell big trouble for a global economy struggling to shake off the past and cope with the challenges of the future.)*	467	89.81
Fragment	So many celebrities having appeared in fashion's front rows. *(Celebrities, having appeared in fashion's front rows and competed in the rarefied world of designer fragrances, are now moving onto the runways.)*	38	7.31
Run-on	Such behavior is perfectly legal, concealing financial status from a partner is hardly a new strategy. *(Such behavior is perfectly legal……but concealing financial activities from a spouse is hardly a new strategy.)*	15	2.88

As is presented in Table 6, the majority of errors made related to sentence structure (89.81%), which include missing and unnecessary words, errors in word order, and other hard-to-classify problems related to syntax. This was also the most problematic subcategory in summary writing for students. With regards to errors in sentence structure, students had a number of issues in paraphrasing and introducing examples in the articles. Specific examples of such errors follow.

(4) The low-fat diet *effect* on the risk of getting cancer or heart disease.
(5) In this article, there are several examples *are* given related to women's working levels and wages in the work force.
(6) Example, there is *each nation's wages discrimination.*

Many students missed words or added unnecessary words as can be seen in (4) and (5). Word order errors, such as in that of (6), also took place frequently and may be attributed, in the case of lower proficiency English students, to the difference in L1 and L2 word order, with sentences in Korean following a pattern of Subject-Object-Verb. These errors, when paired with a lack of experience in paraphrasing on the part of the student, might perhaps not be unexpected.

Errors made with fragments (7.31%) can be categorized as dependent clauses standing alone as sentences or clauses missing a subject or verb, (e.g. as a result of omitting a part of an original sentence, as can be seen in Table 6). Run-ons (2.88%) refer to sentences of two or more independent clauses with no punctuation or conjunction to separate them due to the combining of two separate sentences. Both errors made with fragments and run-ons were less common than those made in sentence structure.

As mentioned above, these results appear to indicate that sentence structure is the most problematic areas in EFL summary writing in comparison to EFL writing in general. In the following section, error patterns of students with high and low English proficiencies will be discussed.

2. Comparison of Error Patterns by English Proficiency Levels

Error patterns of students with high and low English proficiencies were compared and contrasted for similarities and differences. Eight students were selected from each group according to the results of the writing test undertaken at the beginning of the semester. The high proficiency group utilized more tokens in the test (465 sentences, 6,301 tokens, 1,337 types, with a type-token ratio 0.21). The low proficiency group, on the other hand, comprised 418 sentences (5,311 tokens, 1,164 types, with a type-token ratio 0.22). Errors made by students of high and low proficiency groups are presented in Table 7.

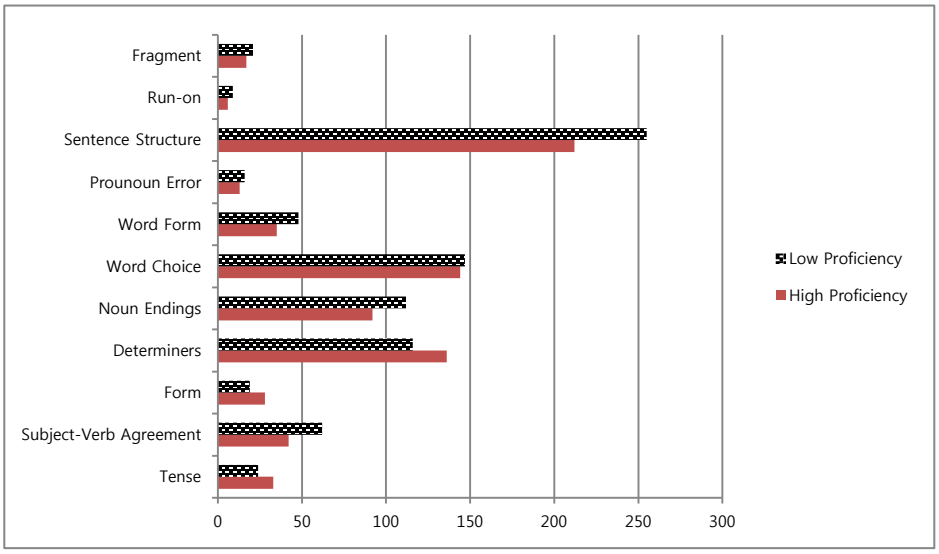
TABLE 7
Comparison of Errors across Categories

Level	Morphological Errors (Verb Errors / Noun Errors)	Lexical Errors	Syntactic Errors
High	331 (103 / 228)	192	235
Low	333 (105 / 228)	211	285

As shown in Table 7, the high proficiency group (HP) had a lower frequency of errors in each category, although they produced more sentences when compared to the low proficiency group (LP). This result is in the line with the findings of Jeon's (2013) and Lee's (2012) studies, which found that low level English learners produced more errors than high level English learners in most error categories.

However, in this case, the difference in the number of morphological errors was minimal (HP-331, LP-333). So as in order to investigate the differences between the two groups in depth based on these results, the errors made by each group were subcategorized and compared. Errors made by students of high and low proficiency groups are presented in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
Comparison of Errors between Groups



1) Morphological Errors

As is illustrated in Figure 2, the low proficiency group produced more errors in both the lexical and syntactic categories. Within the lexical category, the number of word form errors indicates the greatest difference between the two groups (HP-35 errors, LP-48 errors). Students in both groups made a similar number of errors in word choice (HP-144 errors, LP-147 errors) and pronoun errors (HP-13 errors, LP-16 errors). Within the syntactic category, high proficiency students made fewer errors in sentence structure (HP-212 errors, Low-255 errors). The biggest gap between the two groups was found to relate to sentence structure. At the same time, however, little variation was found in the number of errors in sentence run-ons (HP-6 errors, LP-9 errors) and fragments (HP-17 errors, LP-21 errors) by each group.

However, the students in the high proficiency group made more errors in a number of subcategories including verb tense (HP-33 errors, LP-24 errors), verb form (HP-28

errors, LP-19 errors), and determiners (HP-136 errors, LP-112 errors). Based on the findings of Oh's (2007) and Kim's (2009) studies, a higher percentage of textual borrowing from the low proficiency group could arguably be one of the possible causes of this result. That is to say, when lower proficiency students face difficulty in formulating their own summaries, they more commonly resort to the copying of expressions, and in some cases, full sentences from the source text, when compared to higher proficiency students. Furthermore, in order to further investigate why more errors were identified in the summaries of the high proficiency group in terms of verb tense, verb form, and determiners, the error patterns of each group were compared. Examples of common errors of verb tense, verb form, and determiners made by each group were identified and are presented in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8

Examples of Verb Tense, Verb Form, Determiner Errors

Verb Tense	Low-Proficiency Group	①In the past, common salary men **can [VT**] not talk about rest. (Summary 1-6) ②Executives in their late 20s to early 30s **has traveled [VT]** during last vacation to take time out before starting work. (Summary 4-6)
	High-Proficiency Group	③Long time ago, vacations were only for old people who **receive [VT]** money after they **leave [VT]** jobs. (Summary 13-6) ④Nowadays, wave of young stressed out executives in their late 20s to early 30s **had [VT]** joined the 16 to 24 years-old , who **were traveling [VT]** around the world in the "gap year", as the last chance to take time out before starting work. (Summary 11-6)
Verb Form	Low-Proficiency Group	⑤Many people use E-Bay. E-Bay **continue [VF]** to develop. (Summary 3-8) ⑥They should **raising [VF]** their baby. (Summary 1-3)
	High-Proficiency Group	⑦There **are [VF]** a lot of contradiction whether eBay is responsible or not for letting people **to sell [VF]** stolen properties. (Summary 15-8) ⑧Big corporate in the world are trying **fire [VF]** women's workers who**'s [VF]** on parental leave. (Summary 14-3)
Deter-miners	Low-Proficiency Group	⑨**[DET] Spanish-language** is so specialized. (Summary 1-7) ⑩**[DET] movie** is much professional and difficult for audience. (Summary 3-7)
	High-Proficiency Group	⑪In fact, **[DET] Hispanic population** is increasing but **[DET] movie market** isn't. (Summary 11-7) ⑫ Francisca Schweitzer said that it is impossible to succeed in [**DET] movie industry** with **[DET] Spanish** movie. (Summary 14-7)

In looking in more detail at the errors made in students' summaries a number of differences between the two groups are notable. Several errors in verb tense use by students in the high proficiency group could be said to have occurred due to the greater

use of relative clauses when summarizing paragraphs and in more complex sentences. This may have resulted in such errors as can be seen in sentences ③ and ④ above. On the other hand, the students in the low proficiency group used less complex sentences, as is evident in sentences ① and ②. This result seems to be in line with Johns' research (1985) which found that higher proficiency students produced more combinations of idea units and more generalizations in summary writing.

In the subcategory of verb form, a higher number of errors were also made by the high proficiency students, potentially as a result of more complex sentences including dependent clauses as well as independent clauses and more than two verbs, such as can be seen in the examples above, and also as a result of the use of incorrect verb forms. Sentence ⑦ from the high proficiency group should have included the infinitive form of the verb as the previous verb 'let', and sentence ⑧ required 'fire' to be 'to fire' in order to compliment the main verb ' try'. In contrast, sentences ⑤ and ⑥ from the low proficiency group comprised singularly of errors in main verb use.

The students in both groups made the majority of determiner errors as a result of the omission of the articles 'the' and 'a'. This finding is in line with Lee's (2014) study, whereby even high-proficiency students were prone to making these errors, although they were more complicated and occurred in more complex contexts because these errors were in the "intermediate plateau" or even worse, fossilized" (p. 20). Such examples of the omission of articles in front of nouns produced by the high proficiency students, can be seen in sentences ⑪ and ⑫ in Table 8. In comparison, shorter sentences, as can be seen in sentences ⑨ and ⑩, were produced by the low proficiency students and thus provided fewer opportunities for the omission of articles. This finding also seemed to be in line with Jung's (2009) study, which noted that students in high proficiency groups produced the greatest number of errors by omitting 'the' from their writing.

These results indicate that the errors of verb tenses, verb forms, and determiners more frequently occurred in high proficiency level because of their use of more complex and compound sentences. This, in turn, could be said to indicate that high proficiency English learners are more skilled in using sentence structures and the vocabulary in the article more accurately to summarize when compared to the low level students. In contrast, they remain, at a similar level to the low proficiency group, relatively unskilled in the correct use of the verb tenses, verb forms, and determiners to paraphrase or reorganize contents for a summary.

V. CONCLUSION

The key findings of this study are summarized as follows. Among morphological,

lexical, and syntactic errors, the most common type of error was syntactic (32.77%), the vast majority of which were errors in sentence structure. These results could be said to differ from prior studies (Lee, 2004, Kim, 1998, Jung, 2009), which found that morphological or lexical errors were one of the most problematic in Korean university students' writings. The diverse nature of summary writing, whereby the sentences formed by the L2 learner might vary greatly depending on the content of the source text might be said to contribute to the significant number of errors made in sentence structure. The resulting need to adapt and utilize unfamiliar sentence structures might be seen to be challenging for the learner.

The second most common type of error relates to nouns, which lie within morphological errors (28.73%). They were more common than verbal ones because students made the most errors with the determiners related to the nouns. This finding seems to suggest that noun items are one of the most problematic areas for Korean students in summary writing, as was the case with EFL learners' essay writing (Ahn & Kang, 2015; Cha, 2004; Jung, 2009; Kim, 1998). It could be arguably said that students may experience more difficulty in utilizing appropriate determiners than using correct subject-verb agreement, tense, or form when summarizing due to of the lack of definite articles in the Korean language, and their arguably relative transparency when it comes to the comprehension of content.

The third largest error type was lexical (25.39%), and largely consisted of errors in word choice. Word choice was also the second most problematic subcategory in this study. This result is arguably indicative of a lack of the correct use of words in the correct context. This may be seen to result from a tendency for the rote memorization of words without consideration of context.

Perhaps surprisingly, in this study verb errors were found to be less frequent than noun errors, given that they were found to be one of the most common types of errors made by L2 learners in a number of previous studies (Cha, 2004; Kim, 1998; Lee, 2014). This could potentially be attributed to the extent of borrowing from source texts found in summaries; a factor less common, perhaps, in other genres of writing.

A comparison of error patterns found in the summaries of high and low proficiency students indicated that the high proficiency group had a lower frequency of errors in each category, while at the same time, producing more complex and compound sentences in terms of morphology, lexis, and syntax. Perhaps surprisingly, the students in the high proficiency group were found to have produced more errors in a number of subcategories including verb tense, verb form, and determiners. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that such errors might result from the students of a higher proficiency group producing a more significant number of combinations of idea units and more complex sentences (John, 1985; Oh, 2007). As a result of such sentences, more

opportunities for error could be said to have been afforded. At the same time, it is possible that a higher proportion of textual borrowing by lower proficiency students may have contributed to this result.

While this study has arguably drawn significant conclusions, it is not to say that it is not without its limitations. This study was based on a relatively small number of data. Ideally, such an investigation would look in more depth at the error analysis of different writing tasks on a greater scale, so as to measure more varied results.

According to the findings of other studies on errors in essay writing by Korean university students, as were discussed in chapter 2, morphological and lexical errors were found to be the most common, with determiner errors being particularly common. In the context of this study, however, it appears that sentence structure and word choice are the most problematic subcategories in summary writing. As such, it could be argued that specific instruction in sentence structure, synonyms, the awareness of precise meanings of words in context, and summarization techniques may be warranted. In practice, the instructor could identify the most common error patterns made relating to students' summaries of a source text, and to address them in the following lesson for future reference. Such instruction might better equip students to more effectively utilize the texts they read in order to combine, generalize, introduce examples, and paraphrase articles more effectively. It is also suggested that it may be beneficial for the data and findings of this study to be compiled into a database that might be used as a resource for EFL teachers to raise students' awareness of such errors in summary writing. Additionally, it would arguably be beneficial to give different instruction in summary writing according to the proficiency of the students. It might be helpful for higher proficient students to focus on errors they make when producing complex and combined sentences and for lower proficiency students to pay attention to sentence structure as well as to factors such as basic subject-verb agreement and noun endings.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Language: English
Applicable level: Tertiary

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