

# Rethinking Taxonomy for Analyzing EFL Learners' Errors

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EA(error analysis) is significant in SLA research since it attempts to investigate learner language in order to discover how learners acquire an L2. And the attempt to discover more about L2 acquisition through the study of errors was motivated by a desire to improve pedagogy. Based on the fact that studying learners' errors is very important in order to understand the nature of the language learning process and to improve pedagogy, many EA studies have been done so far, but at the same time, problems of classifying errors (i.e., taxonomy used for error analysis) are also found in the previous research. The present study suggests that some parts of taxonomies employed for the previous EA studies are illogical and generated from the native speakers' or researchers' perspectives. The present study aims at (i) examining linguistic category taxonomies used for classifying errors in the previous studies to discuss parts that should be reconsidered; and (ii) on the basis of the discussions, providing a more learner-oriented taxonomy for analyzing EFL learners' errors. The linguistic category taxonomy, divided into three categories (i.e., morphology, syntax, and others), is provided with specific examples.

**Key words:** error analysis, learner language, linguistic category taxonomy

## 1. Introduction

Interlanguage, a term coined by Selinker (1972) refers to the systematic knowledge of an L2, which is independent of both the learner's L1 and the target language. It is used to refer to both the internal system that a learner has constructed at a single point in time and the series of interconnected systems that characterize the learner's progress over time. Various alternative terms to 'interlanguage' have been used. Nemser (1971) uses 'approximative system' while Corder refers to 'Idiosyncratic dialect (ID)' (Corder 1971a) in the paper entitled 'Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis' and 'transitional competence' (Corder 1967) to mean the same basic idea. For Corder, an ID is 'a spe-

cial sort of dialect', special in that while some of its rules are held in common with speakers of other dialects of the TL, these are too few to ensure interpretability of the learners' utterances by others. For example, learners of any given FL who share the same L1 and have been taught under similar conditions with the same texts and syllabus speak the same social dialect of that FL. Interlanguage theory, the starting point for discussion of the mental processes responsible for L2 acquisition, is closely related with and informed by the research that investigates learner's errors and the general pattern of L2 development. Throughout the history of SLA research, one of the first ways in which researchers tried to investigate L2 acquisition was through the analysis of learner errors (Ellis, 1994, p. 19).

EA is significant in SLA research since it attempts to investigate learner language in order to discover how learners acquire an L2. Also, many of the researchers who carried out EA in the 1970s continued to be concerned with language teaching. Indeed, the attempt to discover more about L2 acquisition through the study of errors was itself motivated by a desire to improve pedagogy. Based on the fact that studying learners' errors is very important in order to understand the nature of the language learning process and to improve pedagogy, many EA studies have been done so far, but at the same time, problems of classifying errors (i.e., taxonomy) are also found in the previous research. Some researchers (e.g., Kim, 1997) performed EA studies on the basis of nine grammatical categories suggested by Duskova (1969); i.e., grammatical form,<sup>1)</sup> articles, tense, word order, structure, vocabulary, auxiliaries, prepositions, and others. Shin (2002) analyzed the errors dividing them into three categories; i.e., grammatical errors, semantic errors, and awkward expressions whereas Kim (1990) classified the errors into the nine syntactic classes of English; i.e., finite verbs, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, articles, pronouns including genitive construction and wrong word, nouns including wrong number, word order, and specific expressions of English including negative yes-no questions. That is, most previous studies classified all the errors into one broad category, which is 'grammatical errors'<sup>2)</sup>, instead of sub-classifying errors into 'morphologic errors' and 'syntactic errors'. For instance, let's compare the errors found in "*It's my father favorite thing*" and "*She discusses problems with she's coach*". Shin (2002) treated the two errors

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1) They are subcategorized into S-V agreement, plural nouns, 3rd person singular, irregular verbs, possessives, comparatives, progressives, etc.

2) Other researchers (e.g., Kim, 1990) call it 'Syntactic classes'.

as the same ('grammatical errors ><sup>3)</sup> errors in using case'). However, they should be treated differently the former should be put into 'syntactic errors > NP > determiners > use of possessive > omission' since the learner did not show any evidence that s/he has the syntactic knowledge whereas the latter should be put into 'morphologic errors > possessive case incorrect' since s/he made an error after trying to attach a morpheme. Another example is found in using articles. Compare the two sentences, "*The instructor is \_\_\_ person who is \_\_\_ host in the MBC radio morning program.*" and "*I had a chat for more than a hour.*" Shin (2001) put the two into the same category (i.e., errors in NP > article errors). However, the first sentence should be put into 'syntactic errors > NP > determiners > use of indefinite articles > omission' whereas the second one belongs to 'morphologic errors > indefinite article incorrect' since the learner made an error after trying to attach a morpheme. This will be discussed in the next section in detail.

The present study suggests that some parts of taxonomies used for the previous studies are illogical and generated from the native speakers' or researchers' perspectives. This will be discussed focusing on the following morphologic vs. syntactic errors, errors in verb usage, and errors in use of vocabulary. After linguistic category taxonomies used for previous EA studies are reviewed and criticized, a more learner-oriented taxonomy for analyzing EFL learners' errors is suggested divided into three categories (i.e., morphology, syntax, and others).

## 2. Discussions

In this section, linguistic category taxonomies used for the previous EA studies are reviewed to point out parts that need to be reconsidered. This will be discussed focusing on morphologic vs. syntactic errors, errors in verb usage, and errors in use of vocabulary. Depending on the viewpoint, there are many controversial parts in classifying errors. They are explained with specific examples in the followings.

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3) ">" indicates "subcategorization".

## 2.1. Morphologic vs. Syntactic Errors

Many EA studies (Shin, 2002; Shin, 2001; Kim, 1990) did not distinguish morphological errors from syntactic errors. The errors found in the following examples look superficially alike but they are different in nature.

First of all, in relation to using possessives, compare the two sentences (taken from Shin, 2002, p.41):

- (1) It's my father favorite thing.
- (2) Jennifer discusses problems with she's coach.

Shin (2002) and other researchers (e.g., Kim, 1990) put these kinds of errors into the same category (i.e., grammatical errors > errors in using 'case'). However, they should be treated differently; example (1) should be classified into 'syntactic errors > NP > determiners > use of possessive > omission' whereas example (2) into 'morphological errors > possessive case incorrect'.

Secondly, in relation to using articles, many researchers classified the errors found in the following pairs into the same category (i.e., syntactic errors > errors in articles):

- (3) There was \_ fire last night. (taken from Jong, 1993, p. 30)
- (3a) He is an honest man (taken from Jong, 1993, p. 31)
- (4) It is too good \_ chance to be lost. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 34)
- (4a) I have a American friend here. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 34)
- (5) I had \_ lesson yesterday. (taken from Kim, 1983, p. 29)
- (5a) I am an European. (taken from Kim, 1983, p. 28)

However, they should be treated differently. The first example in each pair listed above should be treated as 'a syntactic error' and the second example as 'a morphological error'. In other words, in sentences, "*I want to be \_ international lawyer.*" and "*I want to be a international lawyer.*", the former belongs to 'syntactic errors > NP > determiners > use of indefinite articles > omission' whereas the latter belongs to 'morphological errors > indefinite article incorrect'.

In sum, as we have seen in the examples provided above, only when a

learner makes errors after trying to attach morphemes (e.g., *womens*, *a international lawyer*, *she's favorite food*), i.e., when errors are concrete or 'transparent', they should be considered to be morphological errors. Otherwise, the errors should be categorized into syntactic errors.

Similarly, there are some controversial parts in deciding where errors belong. That is, depending on the viewpoint, one phenomenon can be put into a different category. Take a look at the following examples:

- (6) There were always friend beside me.
- (6a) I like to depend on to other person.
- (6b) I have many strong point.

The errors found in (6)~(6b) can be classified into either a morphological error (> plural marker omission) or a syntactic error (> substitution of singulars for plurals). There are other examples in the similar case.

- (7) As the Bible say...
- (7a) He study hard.

The errors in (7) and (7a) can be classified into either a morphological error (> 3rd person singular verb omission) or a syntactic error (> VP > S-V disagreement).

In relation to using plural markers shown in (6)~(6b), let's take a look at more examples taken from Shin (2001, p. 89):

- (8) My mom is prettier than all womens.
- (8a) I had to memorize many idiom.

Shin (2001) put the errors found in (8) and (8a) into the same category.<sup>4)</sup> However, they are not the same errors; (8) should be put into 'morphological errors > plural makers incorrect', but (8a) into 'syntactic errors > number > substitution of singulars for plurals'.

In relation to (7) and (7a), look at more examples taken from R. Politzer and A. Ramirez (1973, p. 148~149):

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4) errors in L2 morphology > errors in NP > errors in plural marker -s

- (9) The bird help man.  
 (9a) You be friends.  
 (9b) The apples was coming down.

R. Politzer and A. Ramirez (1973) put (9) into a morphological error (> 3rd person singular verb incorrect) whereas they put (9a) and (9b) into syntactic errors (> VP > agreement of subject and verb). However, it seems to be an inconsistent idea. The errors found in the examples (9)~(9b) should be treated as the same because they all failed to obey the rule of S-V agreement (i.e., syntactic errors).

Unfortunately, it is not always easy to define the error types of the above cases since researchers can hardly figure out the mental/psychological process of the learners. One solution is for the researchers to interview each subject individually in order to find out his/her syntactic knowledge. Alternatively, researchers need to establish a principle and then apply it consistently when classifying errors. In the examples of (6)~(6b) and (7)~(7a), learners do not provide any piece of evidence indicating that they have the syntactic knowledge of each grammar point. Therefore, it is claimed that the error types found in (6)~(6b) and (7)~(7a) should be classified into 'a syntactic error' according to what I call '*transparency principle*', i.e., "Only when the errors are concrete or *transparent*, they are considered to be morphological errors. Otherwise, they belong to syntactic errors. Compare the examples in (6)~(6b) and (7)~(7a) with the errors found in the following:

- (6c) There were always friendes..  
 (7b) As the Bible saves..

In (6c) and (7b), the errors are quite concrete and transparent. We can see that the learner is aware of the syntactic knowledge (e.g., 'There were' is followed by a plural noun.) but s/he fails to correctly use it. Therefore, they should be categorized into morphological errors. That is, according to "*transparency principle*", the errors superficially alike should be treated differently; syntactic errors for (6)~(6b) and (7)~(7b), but morphological errors for (6c) and (7b). Take a look at another example. Let's say a learner produced the following six sentences in relation to use of 'plurals' in a single presentation.

- (10) Teaching is one of my favorite things  
 (10a) Now I think about those days

(10b) College taught a lot of things.

(11) I respect teacher all over the world;

(11a) I like to depend on to other person

(11b) There were always friend aside me.

The errors found in (11), (11a), and (11b) should be considered syntactic errors (> NP > number > substitution of singulars for plurals) since s/he correctly attached a morpheme in a few instances of usage of it (i.e., things, not *thingses* in (10); days, not *dayes/daies* in (10a); things, not *thingses* in (10b)), which means s/he is aware of the rules for attaching plural morphemes.

In conclusion, the kind of errors shown in the above examples (e.g., (1)~(7)) can be called '**a weak form of syntactic error**<sup>5)</sup>' since they are situated in the marginal position. 'The marginal position' here means they could be classified into either a morphological error or a syntactic error depending on the viewpoint. In contrast, other types of syntactic errors will be called '**a strong form of syntactic error**' (e.g., I love sing a song.) since they are not controversial in deciding their category.<sup>6)</sup> That is, only when a learner makes errors after trying to attach morphemes, or when errors are *concrete/transparent*,<sup>7)</sup> (e.g., *mans* for men, *breaked* for broke, *studys* for studies), they should be considered 'morphological errors'.

## 2.2. Mis-selection of the Object Type

Let's take a look at several examples taken from previous EA studies.

(12) I hope advised many people and I hoped help many people. (taken from Kim, 2002, p. 29)

(13) I want you \_ to America. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 35)

(14) He knows to drive a car. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 35)

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5) Some scholars (e.g., Pica, T., personal communication, August 20, 2004) call this kind "morpho-syntactic errors".

6) That is, everybody agrees with the idea that it belongs to a syntactic error, not a morphological error.

7) Called "transparency principle" by the author.

Kim (2002) put the errors found in (12) into ‘Serial verb construction’ category, and Park (1996) put the errors shown in (13) and (14) into ‘To infinitive’ category. However, the errors shown in (12)~(14) are more closely related with ‘the use of verbs’. Compare the following two sentences:

(15) My hobbies are collecting jeans and sing a song.

(16) I love play with my friends..

The error type found in the above two sentences looks similar. Nevertheless, the error shown in (16) should be categorized into an error in VP (i.e., verb usage > use of transitives > mis-selection of the obj. type)<sup>8)</sup> whereas the error found in (15) is considered an error in NP (i.e., nominalization). This decision has been made based on the assumption that the error in (16) is closely related with the usage of a transitive verb, similar to “I enjoy to play the piano.”

### 2.3. Attachment of a Preposition to Vt

In previous EA studies, many researchers put the following errors into prepositions:

(17) She thought she would never marry with man who had red cheeks.  
(taken from Kim, 2002, p. 58)

(18) Everybody could survive from that crash. (taken from Kim, 1997, p. 53)

According to the researchers, the learners made errors by adding a preposition, and therefore they were categorized into errors in prepositions. Then, let us take a look at the following pairs of examples:

(19) She discusses about her records. (taken from Shin, 2002, p. 44)

(19a) Say it with him. (taken from Shin, 2002, p. 44)

(20) I married to her. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 32)

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8) In EFL classes, the learners are usually informed that “love” is a verb that takes either ‘~ing’ or ‘to infinitive’ as an object.

(20a) I got married with her. (taken from Park, 1996, p. 32)

(21) I married with her. (taken from Kim, 1983, p. 13)

(21a) I was going on a road. (taken from Kim, 1983, p. 14)

The researchers put all the errors found in (19)~(21a) into the same category, i.e., preposition errors.<sup>9)</sup> However, the two examples in each pair should be treated differently since the first one in each pair is closely related with the usage of the verb. In a grammar instruction, EFL learners are usually informed that a transitive verb does not take a prepositional phrase. That is, in producing the first sentence of each pair, the learners rely more on their grammatical knowledge of 'verb usage' than on 'prepositions'. In other words, errors found in (19), (20), and (21) are not connected with the learners' knowledge of prepositions. Therefore, errors found in (19), (20), and (21) should be categorized into 'VP > verb usage > use of transitive verbs > attachment of a preposition to Vt' while errors found in (19a), (20a), and (21a) should belong to 'prepositions'. Another example of this kind is found in "I would like to in-roduce about my family.", which many Korean EFL learners frequently produce<sup>10)</sup>. In the similar context, the error found in "They advised \_\_\_." should be put into 'VP > use of transitive verbs > omission of the obj.', not an error in 'pronouns > omission'.

In sum, mis-selection of the object, type, attachment of a preposition to Vt, and omission of the object explained above are all subcategories of "use of transitive verbs".

#### 2.4. Overextension of the Meaning of *verb be*

EFL learners frequently make 'be-related errors'. Look at the following examples taken from Korean EFL classes:

(22) My dream is a teacher. (to mean "is to be/become")

(23) My family is five members. (to mean "consists of")

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9) Subcategorized into 'addition' for (19), (20) and (21), and 'incorrect use' for (19a), (20a) and (21a).

10) Caused by L1 transfer, they consider English verbs, 'introduce', 'discuss', etc. to be intransitives. That makes them add a preposition after the verbs.

(24) Blue is cool and pink is pretty. (to mean “looks”)

Previous EA studies (e.g., Kim, 2002) classify the error found in “My dream is a teacher.” into ‘a syntactic error > to-infinitive’. However, errors shown in examples (22), (23), and (24) are more related with semantics than syntax. In (22)~(24), no syntactic errors are found. These kinds of errors are caused by overextending the meaning of *verb be* and therefore, they should be treated as semantic errors. These types of errors are committed by direct translation from L1 to L2 (L1 transfer). Influenced by the habit of their L1 use, the learners tend to extend the meaning of L2 vocabulary. Therefore, errors in (22)~(24) should be categorized into semantic errors > overextension of the meaning of *verb be*.

## 2.5. Mis-selection of Vocabulary/Phrases

The following errors are also frequently found in self-introduction in the EFL classrooms.

(25) I have one brother and no sisters: I’m the oldest daughter.  
(to mean “older child”)

(26) I have four family. (to mean “family members”)

In the two sentences above, the learner seems to fully understand the syntactic structure. In example (25), the learner mis-selected vocabulary by directly translating from L1 to L2. Some researcher might classify example (26) into ‘a syntactic error > omission of major constituents (head noun)’. However, errors of these kinds should be put into ‘semantic errors’ since this error is caused by misunderstanding the meaning of the word ‘family’. It is assumed that the learner regards the word ‘family’ as including the meaning of ‘family members’ (L1 transfer).

## 2.6. Parts of Speech Mis-selected

Let’s take a look at the following examples. They are also related with ‘use of vocabulary’:

(27) That’s why I decided to choice this dept.

(28) I graduated from Y Industry high school.

In the above examples, the learner is well aware of the meaning of the words. Therefore, they are not semantic errors. However, they are still related with 'use of vocabulary'. In (27), the learner committed an error by confusing 'choose' with 'choice'. Many EFL learners tend to think that 'choice' is a verb, not a noun. Therefore, this error should belong to 'use of vocabulary > parts of speech mis-selected'.

In sum, sections 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6, (i.e., overextension of the meaning of *verb be*, mis-selection of vocabulary/phrases, and parts of speech mis-selected) are all related with 'use of vocabulary', and the first two are sub-categories of 'semantic errors'.

### 3. Conclusions

As we have seen in the examples of the previous section (2. Discussions), many EA studies have employed taxonomies generated from the researchers' or native speakers' perspectives. That is, in many EA studies, errors are classified superficially, ignoring the nature of the errors. Based on the discussions section, a *more learner-oriented linguistic category taxonomy* is suggested in this section divided into three categories; morphology, syntax, and others.<sup>11)</sup>

Table 1 illustrates types and examples of morphological errors. As already explained in Discussions section, when errors are concrete or "**transparent**", they are considered morphological errors. Otherwise, the errors are put into syntactic errors. The first example shown in Table 1 (i.e., I want to be a international lawyer.) is categorized into 'a morphological error > indefinite article incorrect > a/an used for an/a' in the present study. However, some researchers might prefer to put this type of error into "a morpho-phonemic error" since it is closely related with 'phonetics' (the relationship between a letter and sound).

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11) All the examples shown in Table 1, 2, and 3 are taken from Korean EFL classes the author taught in Spring, 2004. Error types that do not have examples in the right-hand column indicate that the learner samples of the error types were not identified in the classes during the period.

Table 1. Linguistic Category Taxonomy: Morphology

linguistic category and error type	example of learner error
1. article incorrect (1) a used for an (2) an used for a	I want to be a international lawyer.
2. Possessive case incorrect	<u>She's</u> favorite food is Kimchi
3. Third person singular verb incorrect	
4. Simple past tense incorrect	
5. Past participle incorrect	I'm convinced that the person who has <u>in-</u> <u>fluences</u> me most is my loving parents.
6. Comparative/superlative incorrect	He is <u>more bright</u> than me.
	I'm the <u>intelligentest</u> .
7. Plural markers incorrect	<u>mans</u>

Types and examples of syntactic errors are shown in Table 2. Especially in the present study, 'use of transitive verbs' is sub-categorized into 'mis-selection of the obj. type', 'attachment of a prep. to Vt.', and 'omission of the obj'. Classification shown in (2) a in Noun Phrase in Table 2 might be controversial depending on the viewpoint. When a countable noun refers to subjects in general, it is supposed to have either an article before it or a plural maker at the end of it (e.g., "An orange is a fruit of oriental origin." or "Oranges are a fruit of oriental origin."). When a countable noun, which refers to subjects in general, contains neither one (e.g., I like watching movie.), it is considered to be 'an error in determiners > omission of an article' in the present taxonomy. Similarly, when a student makes double marking (e.g., I hope to make a good friends here.), it is also treated as an error in articles (> addition of an article). This decision has been made based on the fact that in the grammar instruction, the students are usually told that "a is the article to use in general statements" (e.g., Firsten & Killian, 1994, p. 72) and "the zero article is used when a countable noun that takes a in the singular is made plural." (e.g., Firsten & Killian, 1994, p. 68).

Table 2. Linguistic Category Taxonomy: Syntax

linguistic category and error type	example of learner error
1. Noun Phrase (1) Omission of major constituents a. Head noun  b. Subject	I have far more ____ to go. My family consists of four ____. And ____ am going to study hard.

linguistic category and error type	example of learner error
<p>(2) Determiners</p> <p>a. Use of indefinite articles (omission, addition)</p> <p>b. Use of definite articles (omission, addition)</p> <p>c. Substitution of 'a'('the') for 'the'('a')</p> <p>d. Substitution of definite article for possessive pronoun</p> <p>e. Use of possessive with the article</p> <p>f. Use of possessive(addition, omission)</p> <p>(3) Nominalization</p> <p>(4) Number</p> <p>a. Substitution of singulars for plurals</p> <p>b. Substitution of plurals for singulars</p> <p>(5) Use of sub. &amp; obj. pronouns</p>	<p>I was ___ very bad student.</p> <p>I hope make <u>a good friends</u> here.</p> <p>In <u>the</u> high school, my favorite place...</p> <p>He is the tallest one in <u>the</u> family. (my)</p> <p>For <u>my</u> money.. (For money)</p> <p>I love ___ family.</p> <p>My hobbies are singing and <u>dance</u>.</p> <p>I have many strong <u>point</u>.</p> <p>I play bowling with my <u>boyfriends</u> once a week.</p> <p>I spend my evenings playing <u>it</u>. (referring to 'computer games'.)</p>
<p><b>2. Use of prepositions</b></p> <p>(1) Omission/addition</p> <p>(2) Misuse</p>	<p>My birthday is July 25th <u>in</u> 1985.</p> <p>I like to depend on <u>to</u> other persons.</p> <p>I've been lazy <u>on</u> that. (with)</p>
<p><b>3. Verb Phrase</b></p> <p>(1) Omission of verb</p> <p>(2) S-V agreement</p> <p>a. Disagreement of subject and number</p> <p>b. Failure to attach '-s'</p> <p>(3) Mis-selection of tense</p> <p>(4) Verb usage</p> <p>a. Use of transitive verbs</p> <p>- attachment of a preposition to Vt.</p> <p>- omission of the obj.</p> <p>- mis-selection of the obj. type</p> <p>b. Use of causative verbs</p> <p>c. Voicing</p> <p>(5) Addition of an unnecessary verb to the main verb</p>	<p>If I were a teacher, I _ frequently _ angry.</p> <p>My parents <u>is</u> generous.</p> <p>As the Bible <u>say</u>... (says)</p> <p>I <u>am living</u> in Kangbuk, Seoul. (live)</p> <p>I would like to introduce <u>about</u> my family.</p> <p>They advise ___. (me)</p> <p>I hope <u>make</u> a good friend.</p> <p>I love <u>play/to playing</u> with my friends.</p> <p>I will complete my own poem about my life that can <u>make people's sympathies</u>.</p> <p>I <u>admit</u> into Shinhung university in 2004.</p> <p>I <u>am</u> graduated from Y high school</p> <p>They <u>are</u> always listen to my problem and advice.</p> <p>I'd guess his face is smaller than mine.</p>
<p><b>4. Word Order</b></p>	<p>I live here <u>still</u> now.</p>

linguistic category and error type	example of learner error
<b>5. Some Transformations</b> (1) Negative transformations (2) Question transformations (3) "There" transformation	I <u>haven't</u> an English name.
<b>6. Conjunctions</b> (1) Omission (2) Unnecessary use/addition  (3) Mis-selection	It's only been one week <u>attending school</u> . <sup>12)</sup> My hobbies are listening to music, <u>and</u> reading a book, <u>and</u> watching television and eating.
<b>7. Relative clauses</b>	Why I take this English Interpretation is I like English... <sup>13)</sup>
<b>8. Omission of S-V in the 2nd clause</b>	I think __ attractive language. (it's an)
<b>9. Comparatives and superlatives</b>	He has <u>good</u> body shape than me. (better)
<b>10. Participial constructions</b>	I love playing the guitar <u>with sing</u> . (singing)

Finally, Table 3 illustrates other error types and their examples that belong to neither morphological nor syntactic errors. Interestingly, as already stated in Discussions section, many Korean EFL learners make errors in relation to the use of *verb be* (See semantic errors, Table 3). They tend to over-extend the meaning of *verb be*, which is caused by direct translation from their L1 to L2. This kind of error should be categorized into semantic errors, not syntactic errors, since their syntactic knowledge is not problematic in the sentences. Including 'overextension of the meaning of *verb be*', 'mis-selection of vocabulary/phrases' and parts of speech mis-selected' are all related with use of vocabulary. Among them, the first two (i.e., 'overextension of the meaning of *verb be*', and 'mis-selection of vocabulary/phrases') belong to semantic errors.

12) The full sentence was "It's only been one week attending school, but continuously I'm going to try hard to learn a lot of things." Here, the learner tried to mean "It's only been one week since I started attending school ...". Therefore, she omitted a conjunction which has the meaning of "continuously from then" i.e., "since". That's why this sentence is put into an error in 'Conjunctions'.

13) This sentence shows that the learner is not aware of how to use a relative clause including "why". In English lessons, the learners are usually informed that a precedent is needed before a relative pronoun/adverb (e.g., which/why) and "why" occurs with because/that. Here, she tried to mean "The reason why I take English is that/because I like English..." Therefore, this sentence is classified into an error in 'Relative clauses'.

Table 3. Linguistic Category Taxonomy: Others

linguistic category and error type	example of learner error
<b>1. Misuse of vocabulary</b>	
(1) Semantic errors	
a. Mis-selection of vocabulary/phrases	I'm the oldest <u>daughter</u> .(child) I have four <u>family</u> . <sup>14)</sup> (family members)
b. Overextension of the meaning of <i>verb be</i>	My dream <u>is</u> a teacher. (to become)
(2) Parts of speech mis-selected	My family <u>is</u> five members. (consists of) I graduated from Y <u>Industry</u> high school. That's why I decided to <u>choice</u> this dept
<b>2. Simple omission of words/phrases</b>	I am 152cm ____ . (tall)
<b>3. Simple addition of unnecessary words</b>	I love music, especially singing <u>myself</u> .
<b>4. Awkward expressions</b>	I'm going to try hard to learn a lot of things and <u>make them into my knowledge</u> . (become knowledgeable)

Many EA research has been carried out so far to discover more about L2 acquisition and to improve pedagogy. However, in many studies, errors are classified superficially. In other words, errors superficially alike are put into the same category without considering the nature of the errors or the learner internal process of making the specific error. Therefore, after EFL/ESL learning processes are taken into account, a more 'learner-oriented' taxonomy for error analysis is required to be employed for the future EA studies.

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14) In "I have four family" to mean "I have four family members.", the sentence can be classified into either 'A syntactic error(omission of major constituents)' or 'Others (semantic errors)'. In the present study, this kind of error is classified into the latter category since the learner seems to fully understand the syntactic structure in the case. It is assumed that the learner misunderstands the meaning of 'family'.

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