The present study investigates and identifies the types of grammar errors that 84 Korean EFL (KEFL) learners made when they took the TOEIC Speaking test part five and compared the results with the previous studies. The 84 undergraduates participated and two native speakers of English analyzed the data. The data were classified into the taxonomy of four surface strategies: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Errors of omission were the highest consisting of 74.9%, followed by those of misformation at 19.9%, addition at 3.5%, and misordering at 1.7%. The findings had a difference from the previous studies adopted for comparison. The error frequencies were very different from those observed in writing, or interview tasks in the previous studies. Errors of misformation were the highest, followed by those of omission. This difference was considered to be caused by the short test taking time, and the task itself. The KEFL learners were unlikely to try to correct their errors within the limited time since very few self-corrections were observed in their spoken answers. This study suggests that explicit grammar instruction and correction are needed to teach speaking.

I. INTRODUCTION

Many of the Korean colleges and universities have recently adopted job-related English subjects such as TOEIC, TOEIC Speaking, English presentation, etc. as a general English course.

Most college and university students in Korea have been required to obtain some level of English proficiency. This explains why the scores of TOEIC, TOEFL, or other standardized tests are one of the graduation requirements. Also, a subject that is related to testing speaking such as the TOEIC Speaking test has been more adopted as a general English course in the secondary educational environment. It was reported that the number of the TOEIC Speaking test takers in Korea was over 250,000 and about 1,000 companies
adopted it as one of the job requirements in 2011\(^1\). This implies that speaking ability has been required more in educational and vocational environment.

However, since Korean college students are EFL learners, there are some constraints to acquire native-like L2 proficiency. In addition, although no studies on the TOEIC Speaking test have been done at the college and university level, there are lots of strategy books and materials. At the same time, there are very few teaching manuals or guide lines which deal with details of evaluation criteria. Among them, grammar is one of the constraints. This is because job-related English classes generally focus on the strategy, and there is not enough time that allowed students to practice formats and to get feedback from them.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze and identify the grammar errors that the KEFL learners in the present study made when they took the TOEIC Speaking test part 5 as a final exam.

The studies on error types in the TOEIC Speaking test have not been reported yet. Also, most of the studies on learner errors have largely focused on writing, but not on speaking. This study is expected to be applied to other studies hereafter: errors while speaking or giving a presentation in second/foreign languages. In addition, since more colleges and universities are likely to adopt TOEIC Speaking as a general English course, this study will propose teachers how to teach students, and what parts they should emphasize. The followings are research questions to be addressed:

1. What are the grammatical errors that the KEFL learners made in the TOEIC Speaking test and what errors are the most frequent in the category of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering?
2. What are the differences and similarities between the errors in speaking and those in writing?

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Error Analysis

From the late 1960s the errors that language learners make have been considered as a naturally occurring by-product in the process of language acquisition, not as a language which is full of ungrammatical mistakes (Brown, 2007). Therefore, errors are distinguished from mistakes by their definitions. While mistakes are considered as errors

\(^1\) http://www.imaeil.com/sub_news/sub_news_view.php?news_id=74551&yy=2011
of performance, errors can be defined as a lack of linguistic knowledge, and they are systematic (Corder, 1981). “Errors cannot be self-corrected until further relevant (to that error) input (implicit or explicit) has been provided and converted into intake by the learner. In other words, errors require further relevant learning to take place before they can be self-corrected double quotation (James, 1998, p. 83).

The language system which a learner uses can be figured out by observing the learner errors, and they are very important in the followings. First, learner errors let a teacher know how far the learner has approached the goal and what to teach when moving on to the next step. Second, learner errors provide a researcher with the evidence of how a language is learned, and what types of strategies the learner has been using. Third, errors are inevitable to a learner himself/herself because the learner uses the errors as a tool to achieve target language proficiency (Corder, 1981).

Therefore, the importance of error analysis has contributed to converting the focus on a teacher-centered teaching and materials development to language learners.

2. Surface Strategy Taxonomy

“A surface strategy taxonomy highlights the ways surface structures are altered: Learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones; they may misform items or misorder them” (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982, p. 150). Thus, the data in this study were classified into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Omission errors can be explained as the missing necessary morphemes to exist in a well-formed utterance. Dulay et al. (1982) divided the morphemes into two kinds: content and grammatical morphemes. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs are content morphemes which present the meaning of a sentence. The examples of content morphemes are presented in (1).

(1) a. So, I can check in another reservation (opening).
   b. After I (looked) into the situation.
   c. So you want want to check the reservation and (book) another (room) because.
   d. But you can’t find your name the reservation list. I’m sorry but we can’t you’re your name (either). But I will find I check the list (again).
   e. Fortunately there’s one room (available).

In (1a) “opening” and “room” in (1c) are nouns. “Looked” in (1b) and “book” in (1c) are main verbs in each sentence. “Either” and “again” in (1d) are adverbs. In (1e) “available” is an adjective. The examples in (1) carry their own meanings in each sentence. Therefore, the words in the brackets are content morphemes because they play the main
part of the meaning in the sentences. Without them, it is hard to understand what the entire sentences mean.

Grammatical morphemes, which are function words to carry only a small part of the meaning of a sentence, include articles, auxiliaries and modals, verb and noun inflections, prepositions, conjunctions, and personal pronouns. According to Dulay et al. (1982), “Mary president new company” (p. 154) can be understood without “is the of the” (p. 154), but it cannot be plausible vice versa. Addition errors “must not appear in a well-formed utterance” (p. 156). In (2) the definite article “the” and the personal pronoun “your” are used at the same time. However, those determiners are not allowed to use more than two in English sentences.

(2) I get the your problems.

Misformation errors are defined as “the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure” (p. 158). In (3), the underlined word “want” is the right example of misformation error. Since the main verb “said” in the main clause regulates the past tense, the verb “want” in the subordinate clause must be parallel to that in tense.

(3) You said that you want to check your reservation.

Misordering errors are defined as “the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance” (p. 162). Its example is in the sentence (4).

(4) Please call back us.

In (4), the underlined “call back us” is misarranged. Because “call back” is a phrasal verb, a pronoun must be placed between a verb and a preposition or an adverb, not at the end of a phrasal verb.

3. The TOEIC Speaking Test

Language learners are not likely to use their interlanguage in a formal educational setting, and “the greater part of interlanguage data in the classroom is produced as a result of formal exercises” (Corder, 1981, p. 68). In other words, language learners can make more errors when they speak in a natural situation than in a formal setting. This is considered as a matter of control since a formal setting such as the TOEIC Speaking test can control test takers with its test format.

According to Hughes (2002), every kind of spoken languages is transient. Although a
Grammar Errors in Korean EFL Learners’ TOEIC Speaking Test

person says something at a particular place and time, it can never be reduplicated however it may be recorded. Also, learners are vulnerable to errors more in a natural setting since speech is unplanned, context dependent, and dynamic.

“The TOEIC Speaking Test is designed to measure a person’s ability to communicate in spoken English in the context of daily life and the global workplace”2. Its evaluation criteria include pronunciation, intonation, stress, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, relevance and completeness of content. Also, the test takers range from very capable speakers to speakers of limited ability.

It is composed of 6 parts of 11 questions. Each part deals with tasks such as two questions of “read a text aloud” in part 1, one question of “describe a picture” in part 2, three questions of “respond to questions” in part 3, three questions of “respond to questions using information provided” in part 4, one question of “propose a solution” in part 5, and one question of “express an opinion” in part 6. It takes 20 minutes to take a test, and it is a computer-based test. Scaled score is from 0 to 200 and divides into 8 levels of proficiency.

In this study, only part 5 was used to analyze the data. The following reasons describe why part 5 was chosen to be analyzed. Part 5 consists of one question, and the level of difficulty is rather high. First, test takers have to summarize the problem after they listen to a narration which lasts 30 to 45 seconds. They should not take notes while they are listening to the narration. Then, they have to suggest a solution to the problem according to the test format. The test taking time of the other parts is from 15 seconds to 60 seconds. It takes 60 seconds to take part 5, which has a lot of data to analyze, compared to the other parts. The words that the KEFL learners in this study spoke were about 84 words on average for 60 seconds. Therefore, part 5 had a lot of data to be analyzed in the present study.

4. Previous Studies

Many studies on learner errors have been conducted in writing, but there are few studies on speaking. However, there are no studies on the errors from the TOEIC Speaking test. Even among the studies on speaking, there are only a few studies on adult learners’ errors.

In this study, Chin’s (2001), and Noh’s (2010) studies were adopted to compare, analyze, and identify errors in the KEFL learners’ speech production. Cho and Yoo’s (2011) study was also considered as comparing what types of error differences there are between writing and speaking tests.

Chin (2001) investigated what types of errors that were made by the low level of 33 freshmen at a university and by what criteria the native speakers of English judged their productions. The testing tool was a photo description. The results presented that L1 transfer had 32% of the errors. There were most errors in the use of articles (225), followed by errors in the use of noun forms (119). Transfer errors included L1 grammatical features and word for word translations. Lastly, omission was considered as an intralingual error.

Noh (2010) selected the participants whose English proficiency was in a steady state. They were 12 female tour guides who specialized in English and worked at tourism for more than 10 years. Her study was conducted by an interview. Their productions were analyzed by the three English native speakers. The errors were classified as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering ones.

The results revealed that misformation errors were 45% of all the errors, followed by omission errors (28.2%), addition errors (18.1%), and misordering errors (8.7%). Among misformation errors, there were more errors in semantic than grammatical errors, among them, prepositions had the most errors, followed by determiners, and parts of speech. Subjects, main verbs, and content words were omitted. In case of addition errors, unnecessary content words were added.

In Cho and Yoo’s corpus-based study (2012), Korean college students’ essay writing was investigated on the types and frequencies of verb errors. Their study adopted Dulay et al.’s surface strategy taxonomy (1982), and classified the errors into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors. The study results showed that errors of misformation were the highest at 60.6%, followed by those of omission at 25.5%, addition at 10.5%, and misordering at 3.4%.

The present study adopted the surface strategy taxonomy of Dulay, et al. (1982) and classified the KEFL learners’ errors into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Subjects

The KEFL learners in this study were 84 undergraduate students, consisted of 42 males and females at a university in Incheon. They consisted of 11 freshmen (13%), 6 sophomores (7%), 16 juniors (19%), and 51 seniors (61%).

Their majors were humanities, natural science, social science, engineering, information & technology, management, PE, northeast Asian economics & commerce, and urban
Although the data used in this study were abstracted from the TOEIC Speaking test, there were only three of the KEFL learners that previously took the TOEIC Speaking test, which could not be adopted as a pretest. Instead, the TOEIC test score was adopted as a tool for measuring their English proficiency. The KEFL learners were asked to present their TOEIC test scores valid for two years. Their scores ranged from 455 to 965 on the TOEIC Test. There were 10 students that scored above 900 (12%), 20 students scored above 800 (24%), 24 students that scored above 700 (28%), 25 students that scored above 600 (30%), 4 students that scored above 500 (4.8%) and 1 student that scored above 400 (1.2%). Hence, the average TOEIC test score was 690.

2. Data Collection

The data used in this study were collected during the spring semester in 2012. The 84 KEFL learners in this study were the students who took a TOEIC Speaking course as one of the electives. It was a 16-week course and it took 32 hours to finish the course. During the semester, all the 6 parts of the TOEIC Speaking test were taught by the researcher. Of the 6 parts, only part 5 was chosen for this study. Part 5 was adopted for the analysis because part 5 is the most difficult part and has the longest answering time (60 seconds) compared to the other parts.

According to the ETS® Examinee Handbook of Speaking and Writing, part 5 is one Propose-a-Solution question on the TOEIC Speaking Test. Test takers will hear a telephone message which will describe a problem and last 30 to less than 45 seconds. After listening to the message, 30 seconds will be given to the test takers to prepare. Then the test takers will respond for 60 seconds as if there is a person who is in charge of the problem and receiving the message. The answer should include the summary of the problem and solution.

In this way the KEFL learners in the present study took the test at a time as their final exam, and the test was taken with the KEFL learners’ own cell-phones which had a recording function. After they listened to the recorded voice message from the test material in Appendix A, their answers were recorded on the cell phones. After finishing the test, they sent the mp3 files to the researcher. All the files were transcribed and analyzed for the study. The test material that was used in this study was abstracted from a book written by Kim (2010).

3. Data Analysis

Like Cho and Yoo’s study (2012), surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982) was
adopted to analyze the KEFL learners’ production errors. Although they considered only verb errors in essay writing task, all the grammatical errors in speaking task were analyzed and considered for this study.

Two native speakers of English analyzed the data and were paid for this study. Both of them are female American. One of them is a 25-year-old English instructor, who majored business management, at a language institute in Seoul and she has lived in Korea for three years. The other is a 38-year-old English instructor, who majored English, at an English camp in Kyonggi province. They both are college graduates, and the latter has been studying her master’s course work. They were asked to correct the errors for analysis and description.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Error Types of Grammar in the KEFL Learners’ Production

In the 84 data, the KEFL learners’ various speech production errors were investigated. As shown in Table 1, omission errors of the total 231 errors were the highest at 74.9%, followed by those of misformation at 19.9%, addition at 3.5%, and misordering at 1.7%.

Among omission errors, the highest percentage of errors was in articles at 29.9%, followed by prepositions at 15.6%, auxiliaries and modals at 8.2%, noun inflections at 6.5%, verb inflections at 4.3%, others at 3.9%, personal pronouns at 3.5%, and conjunctions at 3%.

Among misformation errors, the highest percentage of errors was in prepositions at 6.9%, followed by tense at 6.5%, word choice at 4.3%, passive voice at 1.3%, and articles at 0.9%.

Compared to Cho and Yoo’s study (2012), there were some differences. Their study observed only verb errors, which occupied over 60% of all the errors in writing. However, the verb errors considered in this study were 26.4% (61 tokens) of the total errors (231 tokens). In other words, 73.6% of all the errors overwhelmed the verb errors in this study. Table 2 shows verb errors in speaking.
TABLE 1
Grammatical Error Types of the KEFLs’ Speaking Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>74.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliaries &amp; Modals</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Pronouns</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun inflections</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb inflections</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misformation</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive voice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Choices</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misordering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2
Verb Errors of the KEFLs’ Speaking Production

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misformation</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>45.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misordering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Auxiliaries and modals, verb inflections, and two of “others” were considered as verb omission errors in this study. In Table 2, omission errors in verbs were 50.8%, and they were 25.5% in Cho and Yoo (2012). The reason why the omission errors that were made in verbs in this study were twice as many as those in Cho and Yoo’s (2012) may be explained by time constraints. Because there was a time limit of 60 seconds, the KEFL
learners in this study seemed not to have enough time to correct their errors. Meanwhile, including icebreaking conversation of Noh’s (2010) study, interviewing time took 30 to 40 minutes. Also, in Cho and Yoo (2012) it took 50 minutes to write an essay. Considering these findings, the test time of the present study was 30 to 50 times as little as that of the other two studies.

There were no addition errors in the present study, but there were 10.5% of them in Cho and Yoo (2012). Although 45.9% were misformation errors in the present study, 64% of them were in Cho and Yoo’s study (2012). Passive, tense, and some of the word choices were considered as misformation errors in this study. Compared to omission errors, when speaking, the KEFL learners made almost the same amount of omission and misformation errors.

Misordering errors were 3.3% (2 tokens) of all the errors in this study and 3.4% (23 tokens) in Cho and Yoo’s study (2012). There is a little similarity between the two studies according to their frequency. As presented in the examples of (4) in chapter 2, there were no errors which influenced the meaning of the sentence. In both studies, there were no misordered subjects and verbs, nor verbs or objects.

1) Omission

In this study, 96% of the omission errors that the KEFL learners made were in grammatical morphemes, and 4% of them were in content morphemes. While “others” of the omitted items were counted as content morphemes, the rest of them were considered as grammatical morphemes. Language learners are likely to omit grammatical morphemes a lot more than content morphemes (Dulay et al., 1982).

The omitted items in the data are presented in Table 3. The highest percentage of omission errors in articles (40%), followed by prepositions (21%), auxiliaries and modals (11%), noun inflections (8.6%), verb inflections (5.8%), others (5%), personal pronouns (4.6%), and conjunctions (4%).
TABLE 3
Omitted Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliaries &amp; Modals</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Pronouns</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun inflections</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb inflections</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4 the KEFL learners omitted the definite article “the” by 13% more than the indefinite ones. The examples are shown in (5) and (6).

TABLE 4
Omitted Items: Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite Articles</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite Articles</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Articles

In (5), the indefinite article “a” must be placed at the beginning of a noun group “free reservation coupon,” but a KEFL learner in (5) failed to attach “a” to the sentence. Also, the definite article “the” must be used at the beginning of a noun group “customer service department,” but a KEFL learner failed to use it in (6).

In (5), the indefinite article “a” must be placed at the beginning of a noun group “free reservation coupon,” but a KEFL learner in (5) failed to attach “a” to the sentence. Also, the definite article “the” must be used at the beginning of a noun group “customer service department,” but a KEFL learner failed to use it in (6).

In the study of Koo (2008), the KEFL learners omitted the definite article “the” (51%) slightly more than the indefinite article “a(n)” (49%). Learners whose language systems do not or rarely have articles are more likely to omit articles. This may be because of negative transfer. Therefore, it is difficult for learners to learn and use English articles. Also, KEFL learners make omission errors more than misformation errors in articles (Lee, 2006).
(2) Auxiliaries and modals

As shown in Table 5, the KEFL learners omitted auxiliaries (57.9%) more than modals (42.1%) by 15.8%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5</th>
<th>Omitted Items: Auxiliaries &amp; Modals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliaries</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modals</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, Table 6 shows the details of them; “have” and “will” were omitted at 31.6% each, followed by verb “be” (21%), “could” (10.5%), and “do” (5.3%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6</th>
<th>Omitted Items: Auxiliaries &amp; Modals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Auxiliaries such as “have,” “are,” “do” present verb tense, and voice. A KEFL learner both omitted “have” in (7a) and failed to match its present tense verb to its past tense form. The subordinate clause must be the passive order but it was spoken in the active form in (7b). The auxiliary “do” was underused in a negative sentence in (7c).

(7)  
    a. You had a book but you (have) not check.
    b. I hope you (are) satisfied with this arrangement.
    c. If you (do) not mind that you want to change the booking.

As seen in (8a), the modal “will” which is used to make statements about the future was omitted. Since a customer is complaining about the reservation, and a clerk is about to give a kind of a coupon as compensation, “will” should have been used.
The modal “could” is used to talk about possibility in the present or in the future. Here in (8b) it was the KEFL learner’s original intention that a customer is wondering if a clerk could change the date. Although the KEFL learners had to respond to the customer as if they were a hotel clerk, their omission of the modal “could” is considered as a lack of grammatical knowledge. The KEFL learners who made the omission errors of “could” were likely to think of “could” as ability in the past, not as possibility.

(8)  
   a. We (will) offer you a 10% coupon.  
   b. You wonder if you (could) change the date.

(3) Conjunctions

The omitted conjunctions were the relative pronoun “that” and the noun clausal conjunction “if”. As presented in Table 7, “that” was omitted at 14.3% and “if” was omitted at 85.7%. As the subject of the defining relative clause, “that” should be in front of the verb “has” in (9a). As the conjunction of the subordinate clause, “if” must be introduced in (9b).

(9)  
   a. But fortunately there is one room (that) has been canceled.  
   b. I want to let you know (if) you will get reservation or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omitted Items: Conjunctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) Prepositions

Table 8 shows various kinds of preposition omission errors that the KEFL learners made.
As presented in the example (10), the preposition “about” is used when people mention what someone is saying, writing, or thinking. However, five KEFL learners omitted “about” about some information.

(10)   a. I heard (about) your information.
        b. So I send e-mail (about) this information.
        c. I let your secretary know (about) your reservation circumstance.

The preposition “at” is used to talk about the position of something, or about the place where something happens. In (11), in front of telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, or small places there must be the preposition “at.”

(11)   a. Please call me back (at) 555-333.
        b. You have reservation (at) our hotel.

The preposition “for” has several meanings, but six KEFL learners in this study used “for” as two kinds in (12). In (12a), it is used to mean “because”, and many of the KEFL learners omitted “for” in a sentence “I’m sorry” in most cases. In (12b), “for” is used to have something or benefit from it.

(12)   a. I’m sorry (for) inconvenience.
        b. So, we can book it (for) you at the that day.
The preposition “from” is used to say what the source, or the origin is. The sentence in (13) had to be spoken in the TOEIC Speaking test format. Therefore, all the KEFL learners were required to answer “This is ‘someone’ from the department.” However, three KEFL learners omitted it.

(13) This is Rosa (from) ABC hotel customer service.

The preposition “in” is used to say where someone or something is. The omitted “in” in (14) should have been put in front of a place.

(14) I’m look for other room, (in) other hotel.

The two cases of the omitted “of” in (15) were considered as a lack of linguistic knowledge as well. The adverbial conjunction “because” has to be used with a sentence, not a noun phrase.

(15) This problem occurred because (of) our company’s computer error.

As seen in (16), the preposition “on” was omitted mostly in “on the list”, which is considered as L1 transfer. Most of the KEFL learners did not use “list”, and they mentioned “reservation” only. However, to make the sentence understandable, it needs “on the list.”

(16) But you can’t find your name (on) the reservation list.

The KEFL learners had to use one of the several forms of receiving a customer’s message. The omitted preposition “regarding” in (17) is also considered as a lack of linguistic knowledge.

(17) I receive your message (regarding) the problem.

The preposition “with” was omitted once in (18), and only one KEFL learner used this utterance as an answer. It seemed that “have been through” was intended to be “have gone through.”

(18) I’m sorry you have been through (with) this problem.
(5) Personal pronouns

The personal pronouns “it,” “you,” “I” were omitted. In (19a) the objective “it” were omitted, which is considered as L1 transfer. In (19b) the omitted “you” seems to be related to using dative verbs. As some of the cases were the same as (19c), more than two items were omitted at the same time. In (19d), main clause subject “I” was omitted. The participle “hearing” can be abstracted when the main clause subject and the subordinate clause subject must be the same.

(19)  a. And I’ll book (it) for you.
       b. I’ll recommend (you) another hotel available.
       c. I can introduce (you to) another hotel.
       d. After hearing your message, and (I ) found that my staff made a mistake.

(6) Noun inflections

In (20) a word “question” is a countable noun, which needs the article “a” for a singular form or the plural “-s” for a plural form.

(20)  If you have any more question(s), please call back same number.

(7) Verb inflections

As presented in (21), the past tense suffixes were omitted, and in both examples the subordinate clause tense did not agree with the main clause tense.

(21)  a. I hear(d) that you did reservations on our hotel.
       b. You book(ed) your room two weeks ago.

(8) Others

Other omissions were mentioned in chapter 2 and the examples were presented in (1). Except for the examples in (1), “to-infinitive” was omitted, too. (22a) is considered as L1 transfer, but (22b) is thought to be a lack of linguistic knowledge.

(22)  a. If you have any more request (to make), please do not hesitate to call.
       b. You will get it (to) stay in a hotel on time.
2) Addition

According to Dulay et al. (1982), “addition errors usually occur in the later stages of L2 acquisition, when the learner has already acquired some target language rules” (p. 156). There are three kinds of addition errors: double markings, regularizations, and simple additions, and they “have been observed in the speech of both L1 and L2 learners” (p. 156). However, all the addition errors that the KEFL learners in this study made were simple additions.

(23a) and (23b) are the examples of redundant use. In (23a), the adverb “immediately” has no comparative form. In (20b) both “time” and “season” cannot be used together at the same time in one clause because they have the same meaning in terms of “time.” In (23c), (23d), and (23e) “no,” “the,” and “your” are the quantifiers which cannot be used at the same time in one clause. However, (23d) and (23e) are a bit different from the rest of the examples. As seen in (23d) and (23e), many of the KEFL learners used fillers, and self-corrections. Although fillers were not considered in this study, self-corrections were considered. When speaking, the KEFL learners seemed to try to correct their errors, but they were considered as errors.

(23)  

a. I’m gonna confirm your reservation very immediately.  
b. We are facing the long time holiday season.  
c. There is no your name.  
d. But the your name is not in the hotel.  
e. I get the your problems.

3) Misformation

The misformation errors in this study were 19.9% of the total errors. Table 9 shows that the highest percentage of errors was in prepositions (34.8%), followed by tense (32.6%), word choice (21.7%), passive voice (6.5%), and articles (4.4%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Misformed Items</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive voice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Choice</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1) Passive voice

In (24a), “suffer” is an intransitive verb and cannot be used as a passive form. In (24b) since the personal pronoun “you” is a subject, the transitive verb “book” must be used as an active form, which is considered as a lack of linguistic knowledge.

(24)  a. The reason why you were suffered from this problem is.
      b. This is the hotel that you were booked the room.

(2) Prepositions

In (25a) instead of “that”, the preposition “about” had to be used. Mentioned in (25b), the preposition “with” was used instead of “on” in the expression of “on the list.”

(25)  a. I’m sorry that your message.
      b. But you couldn’t find your name with the list.

(3) Tense

In (26a) and (26b), since the main clause is the past tense, the subordinate clause must agree the present tense to the past tense. Tense is still difficult to the KEFL learners in this study.

(26)  a. You said that you want to check your reservation.
      b. I got a message from you and you have in trouble to get your room.

(4) Word choice

In (27a), an adjective “whole” was used instead of “fullest”, in which Korean learners of English make errors (Kosofsky, 1994). In (27b), a verb “take” was used instead of “book.” In (27c) and (27e), verbs “fixed” and “inform” were used instead of “confirmed.” In (27d), a noun “master” was used instead of “owner”. In (27f) “high” was used instead of “peak.” All the examples in (27) are considered as L1 transfer.

(27)  a. We still pay attention to restoring our database system with our whole effort.
      b. But you want to take a room.
      c. So I fixed your name the list.
d. I’m the master of this hotel.
e. But we couldn’t inform the your room.
f. As you know these days are the high season.

4) Misordering

As presented in (28), the main elements such as subjects, verbs, and objects were used in the correct order, but the underlined parts were not used in the correct order.

(28)  a. You had booked our from hotel in advance.
    b. I think it’s fault our hotel.
    c. You already have booked.

(28a) has to be “from our hotel,” (28b) has to be “our fault”, or “our hotel’s fault”, and (28c) has to be “have already.”

The grammar errors that the KEFL learners made were various and they made the same grammar errors as those in the previous studies (Chin, 2001; Cho & Yoo, 2012; Noh, 2010). The causes of the errors have much in common. There were most errors in function words because of L1 transfer that stems from the differences between two languages, Korean and English. Another is from a lack of linguistic knowledge. In educational settings, students are taught not to fear making errors, which was found more in communicative settings. However, their errors are unlikely to be corrected, which makes students lead to make or overlook errors. Simultaneously, it will not improve their linguistic knowledge, which could produce a lot more errors.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study investigated the grammar errors that the 84 KEFL learners made when they took the TOEIC Speaking test part 5 as a final exam. The result revealed that 30.4% of all the errors were grammatical errors, which can affect the test results negatively enough to improve KEFL learners’ English proficiency. In other words, if almost a-third of the errors are corrected, the spoken proficiency will be much more improved, and the score levels will go up at the same time.

As addressed in the introduction, this study aimed to investigate error types, its categorization, differences and similarities comparing the previous studies.

The types of grammar errors that the KEFL learners made were classified into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors. Among them, errors of omission were the
highest at 74.9%, followed by those of misformation at 19.9%, addition at 3.5%, and misordering at 1.7%.

The study results have both differences and similarities when compared to the previous studies. First, Noh (2010) adopted an interview as a research methodology, and the interview was conducted in a natural setting. Her study results showed that errors of misformation were the highest at 45%, followed by those of omission at 28.2%, addition at 18%, and midordering at 8.7%.

Second, in Cho and Yoo (2012), they observed only verb errors in Korean college students’ essay writing and adopted the same taxonomy. Their study results presented that errors of misformation were the highest at 60.5%, followed by those of omission at 25.5%, addition at 10.5%, and misordering at 3.4%.

Comparing the present study to Cho and Yoo (2012), the verb errors had a big difference. In the present study, errors of omission were the highest at 50.8%, followed by those of misformation at 45.9%, misordering at 3.3%, but there were no addition errors in the verb.

The differences between the two studies lie in several reasons. There were task differences which caused different results and findings among the studies. Noh (2010) adopted an interview, Cho and Yoo (2012) adopted essay writing, and the present study adopted the TOEIC Speaking test.

The differences between the two studies via oral/aural channel lie in the difference of the setting. Noh (2010) designed a natural setting such as an interview; the present study was conducted in a formal setting. To sum up, while misformation errors occurred more in natural settings than in formal settings, omission errors were more in formal setting than in natural settings. This is because of the features of formal settings like the TOEIC Speaking test which constrain time, place, content, and format.

Especially, in the case of the TOEIC Speaking test part 5, during the 60 seconds of test time the KEFL learners were unlikely to try to correct their errors or maybe omission was one of their test strategies. This opinion could be supported by the fact that the 84 KEFL learners in this study averagely spoke 84 words during the given 60 seconds. In Noh’ study (2010), it took about 10 minutes to interview the participants. If the time, when the interviewer and the participants had casual conversations before starting the interview, is counted, it almost took 30 to 40 minutes. Also, in Cho and Yoo’s study (2012) it took 50 minutes for the subjects to write essays.

In addition, the subjects who participated in the studies were varied: from Korean college freshmen, university undergraduates to Korean tour guides of English, which could cause one of the differences, such as age, gender, and English proficiency.

TOEIC Speaking as a general English course at colleges and universities is a subject of job-related English courses. More and more Korean undergraduates have chosen it as one
of the electives. Many colleges and companies have adopted it as one of the graduation qualifications, and the job qualifications each.

An implication drawn from this study is the importance of teaching grammar to monitor learners’ errors and be of help to their proficiency and understanding. Mentioned above, the fact that 30.4% of the utterances were grammar errors must not be overlooked.

However, most of TOEIC Speaking class focuses on its strategies and skills. Not only are the test formats important, but also the rest of evaluation such as grammar weighs heavily. Two credits for a semester are unlikely to provide students with enough time to learn all the strategies and skills and to practice speaking.

While conducting the present study, two other research questions have come up for further studies. First, it could be interesting to observe whether there are differences between the original transcripts of the test results and the self-corrected ones. Also, can KEFL learners perceive, identify, and correct the errors that they make? If so, what types of and how many errors can they identify and can they explain for what reasons they make such errors? Second, if grammar is instructed some part of class hours, is there improvement on speaking and scores? As speaking is a difficult task, even more difficult to low-level of proficiency learners, a need of explicit grammar instruction is demanded.

Sharwood-Smith (1981) also suggests that some degrees of explicitness and of elaboration in grammar teaching are needed. Teachers can use metalanguage of formal grammars as well as there are enough time and space to present the rules. In fact, the KEFL learners in this study were not taught English grammar explicitly during the class because there was not enough time to teach grammar. The TOEIC Speaking test class was a 2-credit course and 32 hours were not enough for them to learn and practice the testing strategies of the entire 6 parts with explicit grammar instruction.

The TOEIC Speaking test emphasizes the aspect of communication in spoken English in the context of daily life and the global workplace. However, a small part of grammar errors may affect the communication with other people when KEFL learners talk as non-native speakers of English.

In conclusion, KEFL learners are in the limited educational environment, where L2 exposure time is considerably limited. Additionally, a written form is a teaching tool, and teaching focuses on English for getting a job, study abroad, or entering a university. Therefore, syllabi and text materials should be designed to consider those limits.

REFERENCES


APPENDIX
The TOEIC Speaking test: Part 5 Listening Script and Model Answer
(Extracted from Kim, 2010)

Listening script
Hi, my name is Angela Keystone. I was just informed by your hotel that they never had a reservation under my name. I am a little confused because I had my secretary book a room for me two weeks in advance. I came to this city to attend a three-day seminar so it is important that I have a room. I contacted my secretary who confirmed with me again that she had booked the room and has receipts as proof. So I am hoping that something can be worked out in a timely fashion. Otherwise, I will be forced to book another hotel.

Model answer
Hello, Ms. Keystone. I am calling from the Blanca Hotel. First, I would like to apologize for any inconvenience we have caused you. I got your message saying that you had recently booked a room at our hotel, but when you arrived, there was no reservation. However, you are pretty sure that you had made a reservation. After looking into the situation, I found out that there was a problem with our booking system. So I am afraid your reservation was never processed. To compensate you, we would like to upgrade you to a suite of no extra charge for your three night stay. Once again, we are truly sorry for this and we hope you will enjoy your visit and stay.

Applicable levels: college level
Key words: error analysis, the TOEIC Speaking test, surface strategy taxonomy, job-related English

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