Analysis of Written Errors by Form Three Secondary School Students Learning English as a Foreign Language in Kilimanjaro

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Abstract

This study analysed errors made by Form Three students in community government secondary schools in Kilimanjaro. The study used purposive sampling to select 22 secondary schools from which 162 students' written texts were collected for data analysis. The researchers read the written texts; and then, identified, classified and quantified errors based on linguistic and surface taxonomies, including the mechanics ones. Findings showed that syntactic errors were most prevalent, followed by mechanics errors. Morphological and lexical-semantic errors were the least recurring. Student respondents added or omitted an element or used a wrong form that resulted in incorrect usage of verb tense, subject-verb agreement, to-infinitive, participles, articles, pronouns and prepositions. Among the major causes of the errors were first language transfer and imperfect mastery of English itself. Thus, teaching strategies that would help students attend the errors meaningfully in writing classes are required for learners of English as a foreign language in Tanzania.

Keywords: *Errors, foreign language, interlingual, intralingual, writing*

Introduction

English language learners in Tanzania make errors in their writing tasks, similar to the other learners of English as a Foreign Language (FL). In Tanzania, learners are required to acquire writing skills in their ordinary secondary school education. They are expected to write different genres through a process approach as stipulated in the 2005 English syllabus (MOEC, 2005). However, these learners lack adequate vocabulary and grammar because Kiswahili is a common language in their daily communication (Telli, 2014; Yogi, 2017). Moreover, English might be their third or even fourth language taught in schools (Upor, 2009; Yogi, 2017). Furthermore, most (99.1%) Tanzanian children

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attend Kiswahili medium primary schools, while only 0.9% attend English medium schools (Telli, 2014). Upon graduating, the pupils join secondary schools where English becomes the medium of instruction. However, these learners are not given wide chances to practice speaking the language both in and outside schools. Hence, learners have a limited environment in which they can produce the language and gain more input for language growth (Nunan, 2015). Consequently, the learners write their texts with inappropriate mechanics, vocabulary and grammar. Thus, errors become inevitable in their writing tasks.

Accordingly, studies on errors in English as an FL have also been done in Tanzania. Mapunda and Mafu (2014) and Msuya (2013) focused on errors made by first-year university students whereas Ismail (2018) studied errors made by certificate students of law. These studies reported that students made numerous errors in written tasks, notably in verb tenses, wrong choice of vocabulary, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, spelling, articles, pronouns and capitalisations. Similarly, Manyasa (2021) noted that written morpho-syntactic errors among university learners of French in Tanzania.

Besides, there are few studies on error analysis at secondary school levels in Tanzania. For instance, while Shigini (2020) analysed errors made by Advanced Level students in Kilimanjaro region, Sebonde and Biseko (2013) studied morpho-syntactic errors by Form Three students in their writing and speaking in Dodoma region. Mohamed and Msuya (2020) investigated the phonological errors by learners of English as an FL by Kimakunduchi speakers in Zanzibar. Nevertheless, Shigini's (2020) study was limited to only one secondary school, and Sebonde and Biseko (2013) focused only on morpho-syntactic errors. Mohamed and Msuya (2020) focused on phonological errors. As such, little is known about errors made by secondary school students at the Ordinary Level. Thus, a study that aims to establish errors made by Ordinary Level secondary students in their writing tasks is worth conducting. Moreover, a study involving learners of English as an FL at the lower level will provide a broader understanding of pedagogical interventions that might suit a Tanzanian context.

Therefore, based on error analysis and interlanguage theories, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

(i)   What types of errors are made by O-Level secondary school students in their writing tasks?
(ii)   What are possible sources of errors made by O-Level secondary students in their written essays?

Methodology
Research Design and Area of Study

The mixed-methods approach was used to collect the data which were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The study was conducted in all six districts of Kilimanjaro region. The region was chosen because it has many government and private secondary schools. Also, it ranked number one in the general performance of 2017 and 2018 national form four examination results (necta.go.tz). However, the performance in English subject was generally not very good national wide, and Kilimanjaro region's performance was no exception. This is evidenced by the performance of 30 randomly-selected ward secondary schools in Kilimanjaro in the 2017 national Form Four English examination results whereby out of 3002 learners, 0.36% scored A, 4.8% B, 29% C, 31.1% D and 34.8% scored F (necta.go.tz).

The target population comprised Form Three learners of English from 331 secondary schools in the region. Of this total number of schools, 218 schools were community government secondary schools which were purposefully used to have student respondents with an almost similar background of English input they had been exposed to. Based on Dörnyei (2011) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) submission that 1%-10% suffices for a survey study, 10% (22) of these schools was used as a sample size. The 22 schools were selected through a systematic sampling from the six districts of Kilimanjaro region. Furthermore, simple random sampling was used to select eight students from each school making a total of 176 Form Three learners. The form three class was purposefully selected because students of this class did not have national examinations and had already spent two years learning English as a subject.

Having been granted research permission from regional and district levels, the researcher obtained consent from the schools' administration and the student respondents. Then, the researcher collected 176 marked students' written texts for error analysis based on Gass and Selinker (2008) error analysis procedures. First, errors were identified and classified in linguistic taxonomies with their sub-linguistic elements, including the surface taxonomies and mechanics as indicated by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). Then, errors were quantified to obtain the frequencies and percentages of each error. The researcher then analysed the possible source of errors following interlingual and intralingual frameworks.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion of the data analysis obtained from 162 students' written texts. The results indicated that the

students made numerous written errors which either resulted from first language transfer or inadequate mastery of the target language.

Students' Errors in their Writing Tasks

Analysis of students' written texts found that the student respondents made errors in syntax, morphology, and lexical semantics, whereas the mechanics errors were in orthography and punctuation. The differing prevalence of these errors is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Overall Errors in Students' Essays/Written Texts (n=2,400)

Types of errors	F	%
Syntactic errors	1,145	48
Mechanics errors	710	30
Morphological errors	392	16
Lexical-semantics errors	153	6
Total	**2400**	**100**

The results show that syntactic errors were the most prevalent at the frequency of 1,145 (48%) out of 2,400 errors identified from 162 students' written texts. Mechanics errors ranked second with 710 (30%) frequency, followed by 392 (16%) frequency of morphological errors. Finally, the category with the least occurrences was lexical-semantics errors, with 153 (6%) occurrences. The results suggest that most respondents faced difficulties in learning English syntax. Table 2 summarises the frequencies of syntactic errors.

Table 2: Syntactic Errors

Types of syntactic errors	f	%
Verb errors	784	68
Noun Phrase errors	200	18
Preposition errors	113	10
Pronoun errors	48	5
Total	**1,145**	**100**

Table 2 indicates that the most prevalent errors in syntax were in verbs followed by those in noun phrases. From 1,145 syntactic errors, 784 (68%) were verb errors, while 200 (18%) were noun phrases. In addition, preposition errors came third, 113 (10%), and the least frequent were pronoun errors, 48 (5%). According to interlanguage theory, Foreign Language (FL) learners develop their system, which belongs to neither the L1 nor the L2 at a certain time in their course of learning before achieving the native speakers' proficiency (Selinker, 1972). So, the data imply that many students were still developing their interlanguage for the needed competence in communicating in English by using verbs, nouns, prepositions and pronouns.

Verb Errors

Verb errors were the most prevalent in syntactic errors. These errors appeared in the usage of verb tense and aspect, subject-verb agreement, verb forms - 'to infinitive', 'participles' and 'modal auxiliaries' through the use of surface strategies like addition, omission and misinformation. For instance, out of 784 verb errors, 570 (73%) were incorrect uses of tenses, 183 (23%) were subject-verb agreement errors, and 31 (4%) were errors on infinitives, participles and auxiliaries. Additionally, from 162 frequencies of incorrect use of auxiliary verb(s), 113 (70%) auxiliary verbs were erroneously added while 49 (30%) were erroneously omitted, as demonstrated in Example 1.

Example 1

(a) Addition of an Auxiliary Verb

Erroneous Expressions	*Correct Expressions*
I **was** started standard one…	I **started** standard one…
In that day I **was saw** many students and...	In that day, I **saw** many students and...

(b) Omission of an Auxiliary Verb

I working at travelling sales.	I **was** working on travelling sales.
Albino should prevented from these…	Albino should **be** prevented from these…

Furthermore, some students made misinformed errors in 153 contexts that required expressions of past simple tense, but they used a bare infinitive at the frequency of 127 (83%), as illustrated in Example 2.

Example 2
Misinformed Errors in Irregular Verbs in Simple Past Tense

Erroneous expressions	*Correct expressions*
At that time, I **have** sixteen years old. When I reach I **meet** many people…	At that time, I **was** sixteen years old. When I **reached** there, I **met** many people…

In contexts that required the students to use other tenses apart from simple present and simple past, the students used a tense that did not fit the context, at a frequency of 26 (17%) resulting in the inconsistency of verb tenses. Example 3 shows some contexts.

Example 3
Inconsistency of Verb Tenses

Erroneous Expressions	*Correct Expressions*
One day Mwajuma's mother **was buy** a good pen for Mwajuma. The next day Mwajuma **going to** school with it…	One day Mwajuma's mother **bought** a good pen for Mwajuma. The next day Mwajuma **went** to school with it…

Some students made misinformed errors by either using a wrong morpheme or omitting some morphemes. This resulted in subject-verb agreement errors. Out of 784 verb errors, 183 (23%) were subject-verb agreement errors, whereby 128 (70%) occurrences appeared in main verbs used in affirmative sentences expressing simple present tense. Some instances with a frequency of 55 (30%) were errors in subject-verb agreement on primary auxiliary verbs used in interrogative and negative sentences. They also included the use of the passive voice that marked the simple present tense and progressive/perfective aspect. Instances of subject-verb agreement errors are presented in Example 4.

Example 4
Misinformed Errors

Erroneous Expressions	*Correct Expressions*
The writer **have been shown**…	The writer **has shown**…
We see that Oyah **give** her…	We see that Ayah **gives** her…

Besides, some respondents made misinformed errors using an incorrect form of 'to infinitive' verbs by either adding 'ed' or 'ing' to the verb or using an irregular form of a verb for the simple past. In addition, some respondents failed to apply participles rule as well as marked tense in a verb phrase with modal auxiliaries. Such verb errors were at a frequency of 31 through which 25 (80%) were errors of 'to infinitive', 4 (13%) were of modal auxiliaries, and 2 (6%) were of participles as is evident in Example 5.

Example 5
Misinformed Errors

(a) Wrong Form for 'to infinitive'	*Correct Form for 'to infinitive'*
I wrote this letter to **invited** you…	I write this letter to **invite** you…
She went to **gave** all people…	She went to **give** all people…
(b) Tense Marked with a Modal Auxiliary	*Correct Modal Auxiliary*
Me I **can't married**…	I **cannot get married**…
They **may caused** the...	They **may cause** death
(c) Wrong Usage for participles	*Correct Form for 'to participles*
We started to dancing…	We started **dancing…**

| ...avoid **stay in** group of people | ...avoided **staying in** a group of people. |

The findings suggest that the student respondents had not yet mastered the usage of English verbs, similar to other students of English as an FL. For example, in the list of fifteen common errors among learners of EFL listed in order of frequency by Ferris (2014), errors in verb tense ranked third, verb form fifth and subject-verb agreement twelfth. Likewise, the findings are consistent with those of Amara (2018), which indicated that errors in verb tense ranked second with a percentage of 11.6%, and those on subject-verb agreement ranked third with of 10.9% among the Algerian learners of EFL at the university level. Thus, the findings echo Gentner's (2006) postulation that learners of English learn verbs late because of the complexity and variability of morphological system and semantics possessed by verbs.

Noun Phrase Errors

The respondents committed errors in noun phrases too. Out of 1,145 syntactic errors, 200 (18%) were noun phrase errors. Noun phrase errors occurred when students omitted or added articles, substituted the article 'a' with the article 'the' or vice versa, had a co-occurrence of determiners in the noun phrases, and double marked a headword functioning as a subject or omitted it from a sentence. Out of 200 noun phrase errors, 78 (39%) were errors of the double marking of a headword in a noun phrase functioning as a subject and 54 (27%) were article omission errors. Furthermore, 48 (24%) were omission errors of a headword in noun phrases functioning as a subject in a sentence, while 10 (5%) were of articles addition and 10 (5%) were of co-occurrence or substitution of the article 'a' with the article 'the' or vice versa. The findings are exemplified in Examples (6), (7) and (8).

Example 6
(a) Errors of Addition of a Headword in Noun Phrases Functioning as a Subject

Incorrect Noun Phrase	*Correct Noun Phrase*
….but bondo women **they** must…	….but Bondo women must…
This **character she do not** want…	This **character does** not want…

(b) Errors of Omission of a Subject in Some Clauses

Incorrect Noun Phrase	*Correct Noun Phrase*
If continue with my studies,	If I continue with my studies.
Am vomiting and also am headache.	I am vomiting and I have a headache.

Example 7
Errors of Omission of an Article in a Noun Phrase

(a) Incorrect Use of an Article	Correct Use of an Article
…do national examination…	…sat for **the** national examination…
Remi was not telling Jane truth.	Remi was not telling Jane **the** truth.

(b) Errors of Addition of an Article in a Noun Phrase

Erroneous Expression	Correct Expression
Tanzania has **a** short people	Tanzania has short people
I hope all is fine at **the** home.	I hope all is fine at home.

Example 8
Errors of Co-occurrence of Determiners in a Noun Phrase

Erroneous Expression	Correct Expression
…for the post of **an a** receptionist in…	…for the post of **a** receptionist in…
The following are **those some** character…	The following are **those** characters…

The results indicate that many respondents made errors in noun phrases. Such findings suggest that the respondents had a severe challenge in showing the subject of their sentences and using articles. The results correspond with Ismail (2018), Sebonde and Biseko (2013) and Shigini (2020) whose findings indicated that Tanzanian students at different levels of education made errors of various types, including those related to the usage of articles.

Pronoun Errors

The respondents also made pronoun errors in their written texts. Of 1,145 syntactic errors, 48 (5%) were pronoun errors. The data in Example 9 show the contexts where pronoun errors occurred.

Example 9
Misinformed Errors

Erroneous Expression	Correct Expression
…when he drinking alcohol and start to beat **their** children…	…as he was drunk, he started beating **his** children…
…told my sister to start prepared **ourself**	…told my sister to start preparing **herself**.

The data show that the students failed to use pronouns correctly in indicating reference with its antecedent in terms of person, gender, number, and case. Such findings suggest that the students were challenged when using English pronouns. These findings align with Amara (2018) whose study indicated that the respondents made pronoun errors at a frequency of 52 (7.3%) out of 711 errors. Sebonde

and Biseko (2013) reported pronoun errors ranked third with a frequency of 73.

Preposition Errors

Prepositions were the other area of syntactic errors observed in students' written texts. Of 1,145 syntactic errors, 113 (7.9%) were prepositions errors. Students made preposition errors by omitting a preposition or adding an unnecessary preposition, or using a wrong preposition. Refer to Example 10.

Example 10
(a) Errors of Addition

Incorrect	*Correct*
He did not attend **for** school…	He did not attend school…
English is the among of language…	English is among the languages…

(b) Errors in Wrong Use of a Prepostion

I live **at** Moshi. I am a girl **at** 15 years…	I live **in** Moshi. I am a girl **of** 15 years...
At Sunday **on** 90 minutes…	**On** Sunday **for** 90 minutes…
I started education **at** that month January	I started my education **in** January

(c) Errors of Omission

From one person another...	From one person **to** another…
The increases the number street children...	The increase in the number **of** street children...

The findings indicate that the students tended to omit, add or substitute prepositions in their written texts. Hence, the findings imply that the students were struggling to acquire the usage of prepositions in English. Such findings concur with Mapunda and Mafu (2014) who reported improper use of prepositions as a common phenomenon by their respondents. Likewise, Msuya (2013) found errors in the use of prepositions as leading errors with a frequency of 17 (18%) among EFL first-year students. Manyasa (2021) also indicated that learners of French in Tanzania made errors in the use of prepositions.

Mechanics Errors

Mechanics errors were the second most prevalent errors with a frequency of 710 (30%), of which punctuation errors had 379 (53%) frequencies while orthographic (spelling) errors were at 331 (47%) frequencies.

Orthographic Errors

The respondents made orthographic errors by adding or omitting a letter(s) in English words, including using a wrong letter(s) that resulted in misinformed errors. Out of all 331 orthographic errors, 57 (17%) were addition, 92 (28%) were omissions, and 182 (55%) were misinformation. Data in Example 11 show misspelt words with their surface strategy employed by the respondents in their written texts.

Example 11
(a) Addition Errors

Wrong Spelling	*Correct Spelling*
So, this brings **disiunity** among people.	So, this brings **disunity** among people.
Supersitition is poor believes of people in…	**Superstition** is a poor belief of people in…
I am **writting** this letter to apply for the post...	I am **writing** this letter to apply for the post…

(b) Omission Errors

Wrong Spelling	*Correct Spelling*
The first day **wich** I was arrive in that school,	The first day **which** I arrived in that school,
So, at my **firt** day in school i didn't get any…	So, at my **first** day in school I didn't get any…
She shown as the one who force her **dauther…**	She is shown as the one who forced her **daughter…**

(c) Misinformation Errors

Wrong Spelling	*Correct Spelling*
She/he will be **awere** with any thing.	She/he will be **aware** of anything.
Most of the **reach** people engage themselves…	Most of the **rich** people engage themselves…
I am **hear** confidently to support the motion…	I am **here** confidently to support the motion…
Most of the developing countries **where** colonized...	Most of the developing countries **were** colonised…

The data on spelling errors show that many respondents had problems perceiving and producing English orthography, which resulted in misspelt English words. Moreover, many respondents seemed to spell words as they pronounced them; as a result, they had confusion about connecting phonemes into graphemes. Hence, these spelling errors suggest that the respondents could not communicate effectively with readers, resulting in either a failure to comprehend the written texts or

misconceiving the information. These findings support Ferris (2014) and Mohammadi and Mustafa (2020) who reported spelling errors being among other common errors made by learners of English as an FL.

Punctuation Errors

The respondents made punctuation errors at a frequency of 379 (53%) out of 710 (30%) mechanics errors. Table 3 summarises the frequency of occurrences and the percentage of punctuation errors.

Table 3: Punctuation Errors

Mechanics errors [Punctuation]	f	%
Omission of a full stop	113	29.8
Wrong use of a semicolon	110	29.0
Use of a small letter instead of a capital letter	104	27.4
Use of a capital letter instead of a small letter	35	9.3
Omission of a comma	15	4.0
Deletion of a question mark	2	0.5
Grand-total	379	100

Table 3 shows the most prevalent errors in punctuation were in the omission of a full stop with 113 (29.8%) frequencies followed by a wrong use of a semicolon at 110 (29.0%) frequencies and the use of a small letter instead of a capital letter which had the frequency of 104 (27.4%). The errors with the least frequency were using a capital letter instead of a small letter, omission of a comma and deletion of a question mark. Such findings are evident in Example 12.

Example 12

(a) "*There is a lot of an accident occur in our street **road this** is because there is no road **sign for example zebra** cross traffic light…*

(b) "*Soil **erosion; Is** the physical removal of soil by the agents…*

(c) "*Shortage **of life: Now day** people live in short **time, this is** because of…*

(d) *Firstly; HIV and AIDS was invented by a scientist. **W**ho was a man and **S**upport economic projects in rural areas:*

The findings indicate that respondents had problems in writing with appropriate conventions of punctuation, specifically in the usage of full stops, semicolons, colons and capitalisation. Many respondents could not mark the end of their sentences; as a result, they made run-on errors by omitting full stops from their sentences. As such, readers may misconceive the content of written texts. Similar findings were reported by Shigini (2020) who showed that errors of capitalisation were the most prevalent with a frequency of 232 (41%) out of 570. Moreover, in Msuya's (2013) study, it was reported that errors of capital letters were dominant with 53% out of 75 orthographic errors.

Morphological Errors

The respondents also made errors in English morphology by deviating from the rules of inflection and derivation in English words, as summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Morphological Errors

Types of morphological errors	f	%
Inflectional Errors	339	86
Derivational Errors	53	14
Total	**392**	**100**

The results in Table 4 indicate that out of 2,400 errors, 392 (16%) were errors in morphology, of which 339 (86%) were errors in inflection and 53 (14%) in derivation. Thus, the inflectional errors were the most prevalent morphological errors.

Inflectional Errors

The respondents failed to use inflections to express grammatical functions and meanings indicated by a verb or a noun. Hence, the respondents could not mark tense, aspect, number and case appropriately, either by adding or omitting an inflectional morpheme from the lexeme as summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Inflectional Errors

Verbal inflectional errors	f	%
Omission of 's' in a verb in simple present tense 3rd person singular	122	62
Addition of 's' in a verb in simple present tense 3rd person plural	6	3
Omission of 'ed' in a regular verb in simple past	35	18
Addition of 'ed' in an irregular verb in simple past	6	3
Omission/addition of 'ed' in past participle	6	3
Addition of 'ing' in a verb that either expresses simple present tense or simple past	22	11
Total	**197**	**100**
Nominal inflectional errors		
Omission of 's' plural marker in regular count nouns	101	71
Addition of 's' plural marker in non-count nouns and irregular count..	17	12
Addition of 's' plural marker in irregular nouns	17	12
Omission of 's' or (s') or (') marking genitive case	7	5
Total	**142**	**100**

Table 5 indicate that errors of omission of 's' marking 3rd person singular in simple present tense and omission of 's' plural marker in

regular count nouns occurred in high frequencies of 101 (71%) and 122 (62%) respectively compared to other inflectional errors. The results also show that the respondents fairly made inflectional errors by omitting 'ed' from a regular verb in the simple past, adding 'ing' to a verb that either expresses a simple present or simple past tense, and adding 's' plural marker to irregular nouns. The results imply that marking the third person in simple present tense and plural in nouns were more challenging morphemes to learn for the students in reference. These verbal inflectional errors are exemplified in Examples (13), (14), (15) and (16).

Example 13
Students' Errors on Tense Markers in Simple Present Tense

Error Type	*Erroneous Expressions*	*Correct Expression*
(a) 's' omission		
	The person who **get** HIV…	The person who **gets** HIV…
	She **want** to see…	She **wants** to see…
(b) 's' addition		
	Many people like parents **wants**…	Many people like parents **want**…
	Many womens **sells**…	Many women **sell**…

Example 14
Students' Errors on Tense Marker 'ed' in Simple Past

Error Type	*Erroneous Expressions*	*Correct Expressions*
(a) 'ed' omission		
	After that the MC he **welcome** the…	Afterward the MC **welcomed** the…
	On that day we **celebrate** a lot...	On that day, we **celebrated** a lot…
(b) 'ed' addition		
	I **worked** up early in the morning.	I **woke** up early in the morning.
	All student we **choosed** to continue...	All students **chose** to continue…

Example 15
Students' Errors of Omission 'ed' in Past Participle

Error Type	*Erroneous Expressions*	*Correct Expressions*
'ed' omission		
	It has **cause** many water in the…	It has **caused** much water in the…
	African culture is **judge** by…	African culture is **judged** by a …

Example 16
Students' Errors on 'ing' Addition

Error Type	*Erroneous Expressions*	*Correct Expressions*
'..ing' addition		
	This problem **tending to** be…	This problem **tends to** be…
	I am **caming to school**…	I **came to school**…

The results of verbal inflection errors show that many respondents made errors in the usage of 's' in marking tense, person and number in the simple present tense. Also, errors were made in using 'ed' as the marker of the simple past. The results suggest that the respondents had not yet mastered the inflectional rules. Similar findings were reported by Wee, Sim, and Jusoff (2010) who found omission as the most dominant type of error in the verb-form whereby out of 141 (46%) errors of omissions, 65 occurrences were omission of 's' from a verb form and 13 occurrences were 'ed' omission. Moreover, Akande (2003) reported that his subjects omitted the third person concord marker, 's' with a percentage of 12.62% out of 206 occurrences and the past tense marker 'ed' had a percentage of 10.81% out of 2313 occurrences of all errors.

The student respondents also made errors in nominal inflection. They could not mark numbers and genitive cases in nouns, as evident in Example 17.

Example 17
Errors of 's' Plural Marker in Nouns

Error Type	*Erroneous Expression*	*Correct Expression*
a. Omission of 's' Plural Marker		
	Among this **parent** who come in…	Among these **parents** who have come...
	Order for 20 **copy** of English **Book**…	Order for 20 **copies** of English **Books**…
b. Addition of 's' Plural Markers		
	Peoples who do not…	**People** who do not…
	..there were hundreds of **mans** and **womans**.	…there were hundreds of **men** and **women**.
c. Misinformed Errors		
	Aston Villa **player's** defeated a Machester…	Aston Villa **players** defeated Manchester…
	Juliett and her **parent's** when…	Juliett and her **parents** when…

The results indicate that some students made errors of omission or addition of the 's' plural marker from nouns. The students added the 's' plural marker to a noun or used a wrong determiner, including omitting the 's' plural marker. Such errors suggest that the development of the rule of agreement in noun phrases among students was low since they could not mark number concord in noun phrases. These findings concur with Ismail (2018) in whose study a quarter of sampled subjects made errors of disagreement between determiners and nouns. Shigini (2020) reported that students in advanced secondary schools made errors in singular/plural with 80 out of 462 occurrences of all grammatical errors.

In addition, the findings of inflection errors in the present study somewhat reflect Brown's (2001) findings that inflectional morphemes like 's' as third person tense marker and 'ed' marker of the simple past tense are acquired late compared to 'ing' participle and 's' plural. The respondents seemed to commit many errors of 's' third-person singular in the simple present but fairly in 'ed' past marker in regular verbs and committed few errors in using the 'ing' participle. With such findings, the present study confirms that the respondents were still developing their interlanguage to reach the target-like proficiency.

Derivational Errors

Vocabulary development, in one way, means the learner's ability to derive new words or new meanings from the existing ones through the process of affixation. However, some respondents made errors related to derivation, as summarised in Table 6.

Table 6: Derivational Errors

Substituted word category errors	f	%
A noun instead of a verb	26	49
A noun instead of an adjective	7	13
An adverb instead of an adjective	6	11
An adjective instead of an adverb	5	10
A wrong noun	5	10
A verb instead of a noun	4	7
Grand Total	**53**	**100**

Errors of verbs that were substituted with nouns were most prevalent at the frequency of 26 (49%) followed by adjectives erroneously substituted with nouns at the frequency of 7 (13%) in Table 6. The results also indicate that respondents could not derive adjectives, adverbs and nouns in sentence constructions. Such errors are presented in Example 18.

Example 18
Substitution Errors

Incorrect Derivation	*Correct Derivation*
Many women **death** because of this…	Many women **die** because of this…
Betrayal have been showed many people have to **betrayal** his society...	Betrayal has been showing, many people have to **betray** their society...
I am **health**.	I am **healthy**.
I am a **Tanzania** girl.	I am a **Tanzanian** girl.
…they are fight for **develop** their country like….	..they are fighting for the **development** of their country like….

The derivational errors indicate that the respondents partly possessed the knowledge of the core meaning of the vocabulary used, but they had not fully mastered the knowledge of derivation. For example, the respondents failed to derive a word that would fit the context resulting in ill-formed sentences. Such findings correspond with Msuya (2013) that his respondents used zero derivation instead of applying appropriate affixes. Mapunda and Mafu (2014) found that their respondents used some suffixes and adjectives that did not fit the context.

Lexical Semantic Errors

James (1998) points out that knowing vocabulary means the ability of a learner to possess knowledge about morphology, spelling, pronunciation and meaning, including the knowledge of how a word is used in a given context. James (1998) adds that knowing vocabulary also means knowing denotations, connotations, collocations, constrained contexts, and the ability to use the number of words in daily communication. However, some respondents made errors in lexical semantics. Out of 2,400 overall errors, 153 (6%) were misinformed errors on lexical semantics, as displayed in Table 7.

Table 7: Misinformed Errors in Lexical Semantics

Misinformed errors	f	%
Verb choice/form	84	55
Noun choice/form	37	24
Adverb choice/form	17	11
Adjective choice/form	15	10
Total	**153**	**100**

Table 7 shows misinformed verb errors had the highest frequency of 84 (55%) followed by misinformed noun errors with a frequency of 37 (24%). The misinformed adverb and adjectives errors were the least recurring at the frequency of 17 (11%) and 15 (10%), respectively. The findings

suggest that the respondents' mastery of vocabulary was still low, as evidenced in Example 19.

Example 19
Misinformed Errors

(a) *Errors in verb choice/form*	*Correct verb choice/form*
It **enable** student **to leave at** school	It **made the** student **quit** school
How **do you do** in the body…	How **do you feel now**…
(b) *Errors in noun choice/form*	*Correct noun choice/form*
Education should be given to **mass media**.	Education should be given to the **mass.**
..is when a student is punished by their teachers it can cause **accident…**	is when a student is punished by their teachers, it can cause **injuries**...
(c) *Errors in adverb choice/form*	*Correct adverb choice/form*
I study **good**.	I study **well.**
There is the **farthely** point.	There is an **additional** point.
(d) *Errors in adjective choice/form*	*Correct adjective choice/form*
This is the **secondly** point...	This is the **second** point...
There are culture for the **small** people to greet the **largely** people…	There is a culture for the **young** people to greet the **elder**ly/**older** people…

The lexical-semantics errors show that students committed misinformation errors of lexical semantic on content words. The findings suggest that the respondents had developed some English vocabulary but could not use the appropriate words in some contexts in their expressions. The same was reported by Seitova (2016) that the 6th-grade students of Kazakhstani made errors with the wrong choice of words with a frequency of 23 (12.9%) out of 177 overall errors. Thus, the present study findings denote that lexical semantics both in form and meaning to some respondents were still low for meaningful communication.

Sources of Errors among the Studied Students
The respondents made errors resulting from L1 (interlingual) and L2 (intralingual). Interlingual errors occurred when the student respondents transferred the L1 to learning L2. For example, most Kiswahili syllables are open, and there are very few syllables with consonant clusters. Thus, some respondents added or omitted a grapheme to break or reduce the number of consonant clusters in English words like, in *disiunity* for *disunity, wich* for *which* to mention a few. Some of them transferred the knowledge of one-to-one correspondence between phonemes and graphemes in Kiswahili to spell English words, as evident in *awere* for *aware.* These findings concur

with Mapunda and Mafu (2014) who reported that the spelling errors of their respondents were a result of mother tongue phonological interference.

Some syntactic errors were also caused by L1 transfer, as exemplified by *this character she do not want...* Letsholo (2004) points out that Kiswahili allows a co-occurrence of an overt subject, which is in a form of a lexical morpheme or a contrast pronoun separated from the verb, with a subject marker in the form of a bound morpheme attached to a verb. The subject marker attached to the verb agrees with its referent to form a grammatical sentence in Kiswahili. Furthermore, the free lexical morpheme or contrast pronoun can be deleted without leading to an ungrammatical sentence in Kiswahili. However, deleting a subject maker would lead to an ill-formed sentence in Kiswahili. Such difference between English and Kiswahili contributed to some written syntactical errors among the students, as is evident in *her husband **he** show...* and in *..but Bondo women **they** must..* These findings echo Fatemi, Mahdinezhan, Etemadi, & Khorashadizade (2014) that some of the Iranian learners of English as a foreign language tended to delete subjects in English sentences because their L1 allows a pro-drop. Mitkovska and Bužarovska (2015) showed that Macedonian speakers whose L1 is a pro-drop language also omitted or made double pronominal subjects.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Thompson and Schleicher (2001), Kiswahili has no article. Thus, the student learners in the current study seemed to transfer the knowledge previously acquired in Kiswahili to learn English as an FL. Most students deleted an article but few added an article as evidenced in *..with infected person..* and *Remi was not telling Jane truth,* respectively. Such findings correspond with Kimambo (2016) and Master (1988), who reported that learners whose L1 lacks articles tend to delete articles when learning English as a second language.

Moreover, students committed intralingual errors in their written texts as evidenced by errors of rule overgeneralisation in using plural marker 's' to irregular nouns as in *mens, and womens* and used 's' tense marker and person marker in the simple present tense in a context that does not fit it like in *Many women sells, many people like parents wants,* to mention but a few. Besides, some students made errors of ignorance of rule restrictions when they failed to observe the limits of existing structures. Some students seemed to lack knowledge of using modal auxiliaries by marking tense on lexical verbs as in *they may caused,* similar to, *to-infinitive; she went to gave all people*, and in the tense marking using auxiliary verbs; *1 was do national examination.*

Some respondents made errors of incomplete application of rules like in: *It has cause many water in the…*, and *African culture is judge.* These sentences suggest that the respondents had already acquired a present tense in perfective aspect and that a passive voice should carry an auxiliary verb(s), but they could not make a past participle of a lexical verb.

Conclusion
The error analysis of the present study showed that Form Three students in secondary schools in Kilimanjaro face severe challenges in composing free-error sentences. The students made numerous errors where syntactic errors were the most prevalent followed by those of mechanics. The syntactic errors mainly occurred in verbs followed by those of noun phrases. Besides, verb and noun errors were again extended in morphological errors through inflectional errors. Some errors occurred because of L1 transfer, but some resulted from English learning. Although students' errors inform teachers about the progress that students make in learning, the amount and diversity of errors made by the students of the present study raise questions about the appropriateness of pedagogical practices in English lessons in Tanzania. Accordingly, the students' errors urge for pedagogical interventions in teaching writing skills that would accommodate language forms in meaningful contexts. If the learning environment favours implementation of the process approach, the learners may have chances to frequently attend the form, which may lead learners to notice the gap that may further their learning process.

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