



COMMON ENGLISH ERRORS

when a learner's first language is Korean

Common language errors can vary a lot according to the first language of the learner. When teaching English as a second language to South Korean students, it is common to spot the following mistakes in a learner's grammar and vocabulary.

Words learners most typically spell incorrectly

Learners tend to omit the *n* in words like *government* and *environment*.

- **government** (for example, spelled **goverment**)
- **environment** (for example, spelled **enviroment**)
- **convenient** (for example, spelled **convinient**)
- **modern** (for example, spelled **mordern**)
- **attendance** (for example, spelled **attendence**)
- **recommend** (for example, spelled **recommand**)
- **restaurant** (for example, spelled **resturant**)
- **accommodation** (for example, spelled **accomodation**)
- **nowadays** (for example, spelled **nowdays**)
- **different** (for example, spelled **diffrent**)

Not remembering all the determiners

Determiners include words like *the*, *a/an*, and also *my*, *your*, *their*, etc. Determiners are a major problem for languages in the Eastern Hemisphere which tend not to use a word like *the*.

- There is **a** new coach service to get to Lampton you can use instead of taking **the** train from London.
- I have a TV with **a** video recorder which I bought last year.

Korean speakers are the most likely to add unnecessary determiners to a sentence.

- We walked to **the** Durham Castle and went shopping.

Key: errors in **red**, corrections in **blue**.



Use of the wrong preposition in a particular context or phrase

Preposition errors may depend on the verbs, nouns or adjectives (shown in bold) used either before or after the preposition, so there are a lot of patterns to learn. The most frequently underused prepositions are *in*, *for* and *on*.

- The **reasons** **of** **for** unemployment may be different from country to country.
- The graph shows the **change** **of** **in** TV advertising income.
- 10% of students reside in the boarding house **in** **on** the **campus**.

Use of the wrong verb in a particular context or phrase

The most frequent verbs that Korean speakers tend to miss out are forms of *have*: *has*, *have* and *had*.

- During this century, scientific technology **is** **has** developed.
- All age groups **attending** **going to** the cinema have increased.
- I **wish** **hope** I can help you with your project.

Confusion between verb tenses

The most common errors are made with modals and present/past confusions.

- You must be excited about coming to Korea. I know it **would** **will** be quite different from other countries you've visited.
- The hotel where we stayed **is** **was** very clean.
- We decided to go down as quickly as we **can** **could**.

Key: errors in red, corrections in blue.