UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

INVESTIGATING THE CONCORD PROBLEMS OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF GHANA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, TAMALE.
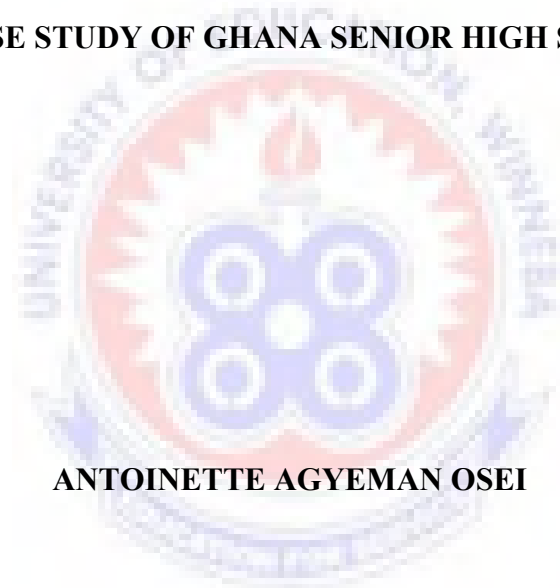
ANTOINETTE AGYEMAN OSEI

2018

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ANTOINETTE AGYEMAN OSEI

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A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS, FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF EDUCATIONI IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE DEGREE.

AUGUST, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Antoinette Agyeman Osei, declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: ……………………..……………………………………………………..

DATE: ……………………………………………………………………………………….

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTEY

SIGNATURE: ……………………………………………………………………

DATE: ..……………………………………………………………………………

ACKNOELEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God and my family, especially, my supportive, caring and loving husband, Joseph Charles Osei and my lovely children.

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ABSTRACT

Studies indicate that the major area of students' writing problems in English language relates to the violation of English language concord rules. Concord rules are taught at all levels of education in Ghana, but sadly, most Senior High School students have great challenges in making their sentences concordant. The students of Ghana Senior High school, Tamale, are no exception. The study sought to identify the peculiar concord problem areas of Ghana Senior High School students, to examine the possible factors that account for those errors and to identify appropriate strategies that will assist the students to overcome their concord errors. The instruments used for the data collection were; observation, interview and objective test. These were analysed using qualitative design. The findings revealed that the students make all kinds of concord errors particularly subject- verb concord errors, determiner – noun concord errors, verb -verb concord errors, invented subject – verb concord errors and shifts in constructions concord errors. The findings also revealed that the most challenging category of concord for the respondents is subject-verb concord. It revealed that teachers, students and L1 interference are the factors that account for these errors. Suggestions and recommendations were given in the concluding chapter for the way forward. It relates to the involvement of policy makers, teachers of English, students, curriculum designers and textbooks writers. It is hoped that if these suggestions are implemented, students will eventually overcome their concord challenges and make their sentences concordant.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0   Background to the Study

Ghana is a multilingual country with English language as the medium of communication. The language is used in politics, government administration, law, mass media, commerce and education. Consequently, every facet of the country's life depends largely on the English language. It is the most widely spoken and taught language in the world. In Ghana, English is seen by a Ghanaian child as the medium of instruction at all levels of education. The success in education at all levels of the educational ladder depends on the individuals' proficiency in the English language. It is for this and other reasons that English language has become a major subject of study in Ghanaian schools. Also, English is the most widely used language for international communication as well as most commonly used to communicate on the internet. Therefore, it is a fact that an individual's success in any form of education and training depends on his/her ability to understand and use the English language effectively and efficiently.

As English language is a service language in Ghana, it is mandatory for every Ghanaian student to learn and speak it fluently. Being a lingua franca, it is taught as a core subject in Ghanaian schools. With the exception of French and Ghanaian languages, all other subjects are studied and examined in English language. A grade in English language will determine a student's next level of education on the educational ladder, from JHS to the tertiary institution. A good pass therefore depends on students' good understanding of the concept of concord and their in-depth understanding and knowledge of English grammar. Palmer (1990) opines that grammar is the central part of a language and that knowledge in grammar is very necessary in the life of any educated person. Palmer's view is that the grammar of every language is crucial to its learners. Students' ability to write or speak English language that will be devoid of

concord errors is central to the use of the English language itself. My interactions with students and colleague teachers reveal that the use of concord is a challenge, starting from the basic to the tertiary level. Students' performance in the English language at WASSCE over the years is alarming. For instance, in Ghana Senior High School in Tamale, the best grade for English in 2017 was C4. Most of them had C6 and D7. This performance reveals that the students are not competent in the language.

The subject and the verb can agree in different ways in English sentences. Concord rule deviances tend to make it difficult for students to keep track of them and also tend to bring out negative responses from non-native speakers and hearers alike. Thus, if learners are not assisted to understand the principles of how language operates as regards the arrangement of words in a sentence, they would lack linguistic and communicative competence. It is for this reason that classroom teachers need to know the errors learners commit and why they commit those errors. The errors are analysed to enable them devise appropriate strategies to overcome them. It is also an undeniable fact that good writing stems from adequate familiarity with the grammatical components of a language.

1.2   Statement of the problem

Concord has been observed to be difficult for students of Ghana Senior High School. They have difficulties constructing sentences in which the subject agrees with the verb, both in speech and in writing. This situation has also been observed by Heid, Dulay and Burt (1997). They note that students at the senior high commit concord errors across all the four key dimensions of concord: Subject-Verb, Verb-Verb, Noun-Pronoun and Point-of-time-past-Verb concord. They add that these errors range from proximity to grammatical concord, pronoun and its antecedent, to headword identification in complex noun phrases, the s-inflection to demonstrative pronouns, adjectives as headwords to two titles for one person and so on.

The conclusion drawn from the above revelation attests to the fact that the difficulties Ghana Senior High students have as regards the study and use of concord are a factor to their poor performance in core English language in the final year exams. The Performance of students in Ghana Senior High School regarding concord has been poor over the years. Usually the highest grade of the students is C4. If students continue to perform poorly due to concord errors, then this may affect their overall performance in the final exams, resulting in poor grades. In Ghana, one needs at least a C6 in English to move onto the next educational ladder. With such poor grades, the students are not likely to gain admission, and they may eventually become drop-outs. It is against this background that the researcher is investigating the underlying causes and using qualitative means.

1.3   Scope of study

This study is limited to Ghana Senior High School Form 3 students and how they apply English concord rules in their academic work. The study focuses on grammatical concord and exceptions to the rules of grammatical concord. These include national concord and proximity concord, determiner-noun concord, inverted subject-verb concord, noun-pronoun concord and verb-verb concord.

1.4   Objectives of the Study

The study seeks to:

1. Identify concord errors committed by students of Ghana Senior High School.

2. Examine the factors that account for the concord errors committed by the students.

3. Identify appropriate strategies that will assist the students to overcome their concord errors.

1.6   Research Questions

The research questions for the study are:

1.What concord errors are committed by students of Ghana Senior High School?

2. What factors account for the concord errors committed by students of Ghana Senior High School?

3. What appropriate strategies will assist the students to overcome their concord errors?

1.6 Limitations of the study

The major limitation of this study was how to get all the participants to sit for the test. Some of them were absent due to ill health and others were sports men who left for inter-zonal competition. Therefore, the total number of participants reduced to 170. At a point during the test, some participants wanted to leave even when they had not completed the test. They complained that the test items were too many. Therefore, administering the test took so much of my time.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

There are several aspects of the English language such as composition, reading comprehension, and Grammar. The researcher will investigate only grammar; thus, it studies only concord in English. The students of Arts "A", Science "B", Business "B" and Home Economics "A" were the target population for the study.

1.8 Significance of the study

The study will contribute to the existing literature on the grammar of English. The study evaluates the students' knowledge on the rules of concord and their application of those rules in language usage. It will be useful for curriculum developers to identify the areas that need much attention and come out with a comprehensive grammar book for the use of senior high schools. It will again help both teachers and students in their academic work. It will also serve as a reference material for English grammar teachers and the language users.

1.9   Organization of the study

The rest of the study is organised as follows:

Chapter 2 reviews the literature related to the study. Chapter 3 gives an overview of the methodology of the study. It describes the research design, population, sample and sampling technique, area of study, research instruments, and methods of data analysis. Chapter 4 deals with the analysis and interpretation of data and Chapter 5 discusses the summary of the findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter seeks to review related previous studies on the topic under discussion. It considers the significance of the literature to this present study and the guidelines it can give to the researcher in the analysis of data, findings and suggestions. The literature is reviewed under the following themes: the concept of errors, errors and mistakes, the notion of concord, types of concord, causes of concord errors, possible areas of concord errors, review of related studies, and conclusion. Literature review according to Kwabia (2006, p. 98) "is the process of accessing literature information from books, articles and archives sources on a particular subject". He explains that it is a statement that explains inter-relations in a phenomenon. Kwabia opines that it can be an idea or knowledge derived from an existing one and serve as a guide for doing fieldwork. He states that literature review brings to light when or where an event occurred, redefines the researchers' objective and gives guidelines with regard to data collection.

2.1   The concept of errors

The word *error* means a deviation from accuracy or correctness. In language, an error is seen as a deviation from standard language norm in grammar, syntax, pronunciation and punctuation. Corder (1974, p. 260) defines error as "the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning". This suggests that linguistic error is a systematic deviation from the norm of the language being learned which occurs repeatedly. The presence of errors indicates a student's inability to use appropriate grammatical structures, semantic and other linguistic units. This happens when one is learning a second language at a specific stage of learning; its abolition depends on the development of control over language elements. Richard (1971) believes that an error is not

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just the outcome of carelessness or forgetfulness but is characterized by systematic deviancy. Coder (1974) distinguishes between performance errors, which are violations of grammatical conventions and competence errors, which are consistent in an individual's speech or writing and indicate an internalized system different from that of a target language. In other words, the individual does not know how to use the correct form.

Meare (1980) focuses on the inappropriate use of vocabulary as a source of error. He states that vocabulary is a neglected aspect of language learning. His explanation gives rise to two major errors in the writing of the users of English as a second language. They are errors by contextual meaning and spelling errors. Baugh and Cable (1983) maintain that English spelling is as difficult as it is erratic, not only for second language learners but also for the native speakers. They draw attention to the inconsistency of English spelling and say that it is difficult to spell an English word by its pronunciation and how to pronounce the word by its spelling. Jowit (1991) illustrate this with words like advice and advise; border and boarder; cease and seize; match and March; stationary and stationery and a host of others as some of the words second language learners are likely to misspell.

Jowits also declares that errors are caused by the native language of the learners of English language. Adejare (1996) sees the learner of English as a second language susceptible to errors, both in speech and in writing. In the same vein, Aiyewuni (2001, p. 42) describes errors in language learning as "those odd items that are not evidence of carelessness or of unwillingness but of growing pains and desire to learn". To him, errors are inevitable in language learning. In addition, Myles (2002) observes that students generally produce texts that contain varying degrees of grammatical and rhetorical errors when they write a second language. He asserts that the more content-rich and creative the text, the greater the possibility there is for errors at the morphosyntactic level, depending on the proficiency level of the

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learner. A learner gains proficiency in a language if he makes conscious effort to apply the basics correctly.

Myles (2002) identifies both social and cognitive factors as sources of errors in second language learning. He explains that learners in the second language may continue to exhibit errors in their writing for the following social reasons: negative attitude towards the target language; continued lack of progress in the second language; a wide social and psychological distance between them and the target culture; and lack of integrative and instrumental motivation for learning. The submission exposes interlingual and intralingual problems as the sources of errors in English language learning.

Eyisi (2006) agrees that the interference of the first language with the second language is a factor capable of generating errors. To her, the errors become diverse because students study the target language against the background of their mother tongue in which they have attained a reasonable degree of competence. She again contends that poor teaching engenders grammatical errors. She points out that most teachers of English are also second language learners and as a result, might not have achieved the necessary proficiency and are therefore, prone to errors. In a situation like this, there is bound to be negative transference by the learners. In my opinion, the irregular inherent forms in the grammatical patterns of English language structures could be a source of some of the errors of learners. The students may be ignorant of the restrictions of the rules or may not remember since there are several exceptions in the application of the rules. In some instances, there is incomplete application of rules which could result in wrong usage. Obi (2009) also states that faulty categorization of lexis and structure of English makes learners commit errors in grammar.

Brown (2007) intimates that an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of the learner. Also, Myles (2002) notes that errors are something that might happen from time to time until the second language

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learner entirely internalizes the language. He describes an error as a derailment in the speech or writing of a second language learner by the use of inappropriate words and language structures. Myles (2002) again explains that a second language teacher can only assess the learners' ability from the range or type of errors they make.

Obi (2009) defines errors as breaches of the code of a language. He states that errors are deviant structures or unacceptable utterances which are a sign of imperfect knowledge of the linguistic code. To Obi, therefore, errors are committed by those who are not grounded in the structure of a language. Similarly, Crystal (2009) believes that the concept of error presupposes that a correct and established form already exists on the other hand, but another form that is considered wrong and unacceptable is used or is in use. Crystal presents the concept of error from several angles: 'speaker's errors and slips of the tongue' such as addition, replacement and deletion of phonemes and morphemes: error of production and 'perception', error in the context of essay-marking' and error analysis.

The concept of error by scholars like Myles, Headbloom, and Ellis claim that errors are associated with only second language learners may not be entirely true. There is evidence that first language learners also commit errors. I think what they fail to distinguish are oral errors and written errors. There are some first language users who can only communicate orally and will make a lot of errors in spelling and punctuation when writing; we can then describe such 'errors' as slip of tongue or mistakes or goofs. Quirk (2002) opines that a learner's errors are significant in that they provide to the researcher, evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of the language. Quirk and Greenbaum (2000) state that analysis of learner's errors has proven that the learner makes a significant cognitive contribution to learning. This has brought about strategies the learner can use to assimilate the rules of the language. In effect, conscious effort

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should be made by teachers of English language to avoid errors in the area of syntax because of its pivotal position in language study.

2.2 Errors and mistakes

Ellis (2006) defines a 'mistake' as a deviation in learner language that happens when learners fail to perform their competence. It is a lapse that reflects processing problems. An error on the other hand, is the deviation in learner language which results from lack of knowledge of correct rule. In error analysis, the difference in an error and a mistake lies in the fact that errors are systematic whilst mistakes are not. This means that those who learn to acquire a second language will commit language errors as a rule, whether they are errors in pronunciation, spelling, or grammar. These errors systematically occur since they are part of the process of acquiring the language. Most of these errors would cease to occur the more competent they become in the process of acquiring the language. It is easy to establish why students commit these errors if one compares the student's first language to the second language being acquired. It should be evident that the influence of pronunciation and other conventions of the first or native language is what causes the errors.

A mistake, on the other hand, is not caused by such influences but is caused because of the influence of the already acquired language as the result of oversight, carelessness, poor understanding and so forth. A mistake is not caused by the conventions of another language. It must be understood that the errors committed by a second language speaker is a convention in his or her own native language. For instance, a student in Africa may say, "Ama have finished", this happens because there may be no distinction between singular and plural verbs in his or her language, the wrong grammar use is an error and not a mistake. Linguistically, language speakers make mistakes in communicating, writing and reading since their poor language skills cannot be deemed systematic and may be due to factors such as poor level of education or the unwillingness to learn.

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Another distinction between error and mistake is made by Richards and Schmidt (2002). These researchers are of the view that a learner makes mistakes when writing or speaking because of lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspects of performance. Thus, mistakes can be self-corrected when attention is drawn to it but errors are systematic that they occur repeatedly and are not recognizable by the learner. They are part of the learners' interlanguage and the learner does not generally consider them as errors. For example, a student may restrict his or her usage of the English Language to few rules he or she is familiar with and avoids those rules he or she may use for his or her communicative needs and situations which arise spontaneously to experiment on the rules whether he knows them or not. Hence, occurrence of errors in language learning is inevitable.

2.3   The notion of concord

Concord is one of the basic rules which a user of the English language, either as a first or second language, must acquire or learn as the case may be. Concord in broad terms means agreement between the subjects and the verbs as well as other elements of the clause structure. Concord occurs when a word changes depending on the words to which it relates. Leech and Svartuik (1994) state that for an English sentence to be correct and meaningful, its constituent parts must be in perfect agreement. Their view is not different from Wiredu (1999) who explains that the term concord in grammar refers to an agreement relation between two grammatical units hence one unit displays a particular feature the other unit does same.

This explains the principle that one grammatical unit in a sentence is influenced by the feature of a different unit within the same sentence. Also, Drennan (2003) supports Blake (1988) by describing concord as an agreement between words in gender, number and person. Concord or agreement according to Aronoff and Fudeman (2010), occurs when one element in a sentence takes on the morphosyntactic features of another element. In basic terms, concord refers to agreement between two or more words in a sentence. English grammatical concord is

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very important for correct English usage. Larry (2005) sees concord as that in which the words in a sentence must match or agree with one another. Concord, according to Lutrin and Pincus (2004) is agreement in gender, case, number or person between different words that share a reference.

William (2009) is of the view that concord (subject–verb) is a grammatical relationship in which a predicate/verb must agree with the subject in number and person. By number, he means the relationship between the speaker and what he/she is speaking about. The term "agreement" according to him is used to describe the type of grammatical changes that take place between the subject of a sentence and its verb. He adds that it has to do with the "cordial" relationship that must exist between the subject and the main verb or the first element of the verb phrase. In a similar vein, Yankson (1994) sees concord as the necessary agreement/coherence needed in a sentence/statement to yield a flawless grammatical structure. As to what informs this unfortunate attitude of non-adherence to the rules of concord on the part of both native and non-native students, one has to probe through research.

According to Brown (2002), concord is the grammatical relationship between a subject and a verb, or a demonstrative adjective and the word that it modifies. This suggests that a pronoun can be used as a subject of a sentence since it is used in place of a noun in a sentence. The pronouns *he, she, they you* and *I* can act as subjects in sentences. Demonstrative adjectives such as *this, that,* and *these* show whether the nouns they refer to are far or near to the speakers. In another sense, concord is a relationship which exists between two grammatical units such that one of them displays a particular feature (Quirk et al, 2005). For example, plurality that accords with a displayed or semantically implicit feature on the other.

Also, Blake (1988) supports the principle that when the form of one grammatical unit in a sentence is influenced by the features of a different unit within the same sentence, it is referred to as concord. Therefore, per the requirement of grammar rules, concord reflects on

number, person and gender. Downing and Locke (2006) refer to concord as a number (singular or plural) and person with verb, which are determined by subjects. Again, they opine that concord can be manifested in only those verb forms that show inflectional contrast; the speaker, the one he is speaking to or what he is speaking about. Concord generally means agreement between the subjects as well as the verbs and all other elements of a sentence. Pertson (2005) also defines concord as an agreement that exists between the verb and subject in person (1st 2nd, 3rd) and number (singular and plural).

Based on the discussion above, concord can simply be referred to as an agreement between subject and a verb which can go beyond a mere subject verb agreement with regards to person and their number. The idea of concord in English grammar suggests that for an English sentence to be correct and meaningful, its constituent parts must be in perfect agreement. Concord's centrality to a good mastery of the English language has been underscored by scholars over the years.

2.4 Types of concord

According to Quirk and Greenbuam (2012), English concord has been divided into three: grammatical concord, notional concord and proximity concord.

2.4.1 Grammatical concord

Grammatical concord is also known as subject-verb agreement. This is said to be the agreement between the subject and verb which have to agree grammatically. The phenomenon is known as subject-verb concord. As explained by Estling-Vannetal (2007), grammatical concord is when the verb and the subject belong together. According to Quirk, et al (1985), English grammatical concord means the agreement between the verb and its subject in number and person. The most important type of concord in English is 'subject-verb concord' which involves, mainly, number and/or person (Quirk et al, 1985). They suggest that there is a basic rule to follow: a singular subject takes a singular verb and a plural subject takes a plural verb.

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For example, *the girl sings very well, the girls sing very well*, *the boy is good*, *the boys are good*.

This assertion is supported by Littlewoods (1984) who states that the verb is considered as the heart of the sentence and it has to take the same grammatical form as its controlled subject. Kirkpatrick (2007) also classifies grammatical concord as verb agreement; she considers verb agreement as concord and for that matter must agree with the appropriate subject in number. This implies that singular subject requires a singular verb and a plural subject requires a plural verb. The subjects of sentences are usually nouns, noun phrases or pronouns. Subjects are obligatory as they determine the form of the verb. A careful analysis of how subjects are realized in English sentences will help students to select appropriate verbs for their sentences.

2.4.2 Notional concord

Quirk and Greenbaum (1985) assert that notional concord is an agreement of verb with its subject according to the idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker for that idea. This implies that notional concord refers to the agreement between subject and verb not based on number and person, but on the speaker's perception. Therefore, the speaker chooses a singular or plural verb based on his/her own idea about number rather than the actual presence of grammatical marker of the idea. Group or collective nouns such as team, crowd, audience, family, public, government, and others fall into this category. According to Quirk and Greenbuam, collective nouns are notionally plural verbs but grammatically singular. Although singular and plural verbs are more or less interchangeable depending on the context, the choice is based on whether the group is being considered as a unit or a whole. It is the context in which the collective nouns are used in a sentence that will determine whether it should be singular or plural. Lutrin and Pincus (2004) also add their voice to the definition of

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notional concord defining it as agreement of verb with subject according to the idea of number rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker for that idea.

Parrot (2000) also states that plural nouns lacking the inflection (–s) such as a collective noun is considered singular when it refers to a group. In this context the noun takes a singular verb. If the words 'public' and 'committee' are the subjects in sentences, they may refer to a whole group and therefore will be considered as singular. This means that the group is viewed as a single individual body. When a collective noun on the other hand is used to refer to the individual members of the group, the noun is considered plural. In some cases, *staff* and audience could be considered as plural if they refer to the individual members of the group.

Sekyi-Baidoo (2000) explains notional concord as the agreement between the verb and the subject according to perception: the idea of numbers rather than the actual display or the presence of a grammatical feature for the idea. What this means is that while we can distinguish between singular and plural forms of the same words, for instance, the plural form of teacher is teachers, with others for example class, crowd, and team, it is very difficult to do that. The speaker can therefore choose to use a singular or plural verb based on his or her own idea about numbers rather than the actual presence of the grammatical marker of the idea. Collective nouns such as team, crowd, audience, family, public, committee, army, government, congregation and others fall into this category. For example,

- My family is in Tamale.

- My family are in Tamale

- The team is playing well.

- The team are playing well.

All these examples are considered grammatical in the English Language.

2.4.3 Proximity concord

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According to Wiredu (1999), proximity concord refers to the agreement between the verb and its subject based not on notion but on the fact that there is a nominal group which is immediately close to the verb. Concord of proximity does not, however, agree with the real subject in the closet noun and the numeral of that specific noun, Crystal (2004) also explains that it denotes agreement of the verb with a noun or pronoun that closely precedes it in preference to agreement with the head of the noun phrase. For instance, four singular nouns joined by (either or, neither nor, not but, and, or) take a singular verb, and if the subjects are plural, then the verbs must also be plural. Thus, grammatical concord is established between these elements instead of the normal formal agreement with the Head of the Noun Phrase/Subject. For example:

- Neither the teacher nor the students are in the classroom.

- Either the students or the teacher performs the experiment

- The president together with his aids is coming.

- The secretary along with his chairman was absent.

2.4.4 Pronoun-antecedent concord

Antecedent means something that precedes another thing. In the English Language, it is the word that a pronoun refers back to. Since the pronoun takes the place of a noun to avoid repetition, it has to agree in number. Therefore, if the antecedent is singular, then the pronoun that takes its place must also be singular. According to Freeborn (1987), pronouns are co-referential of nouns and when linked should agree with their antecedent so that it will be possible to associate them with the nouns in whose places they perform. Oluikpe (1981) also explains that in pronoun antecedent agreement, the pronoun must agree in number, gender and case with its antecedent. It can be confusing if there are several words between the pronoun and its antecedent. These words or clauses have no bearing on the words and they need to be

ignored. Below are principles governing the correct use or form of pronoun antecedent agreement with examples.

- Compound Subjects can be a problem. If the subjects are joined by an "and" then the pronoun needs to be plural as in John and Jane took their bags. If the subjects are joined by "or" or "nor" then have the pronoun agree with the subject that is closer or closest to the pronoun. An example is "Either the coach or the footballers have messed up their performance.

- If the pronoun refers to one thing or a unit, like a team or jury, then the pronoun needs to be singular. An example is: "The jury has reached its verdict". Sometimes, words sound plural and but they are not. Examples of such words are measles and the news. These would need a singular pronoun, as in: "Measles is not as widespread as it once was". This makes sense if you replace the word "measles" with "disease".

- There are several rules concerning the use of indefinite pronouns as antecedents and the pronoun antecedent agreement. The following indefinite pronouns are singular and need singular pronoun (as an antecedent): one, no one, someone, everyone, nobody, anything etc. An example is "Everything here has its own box". The plural indefinite pronouns: several, both, few and many need to have a plural pronoun (as an antecedent), like in this sentence". Several are there because of their books".

- If there is an indefinite pronoun that is being modified by a prepositional phrase, then the object of the phrase will determine the agreement between the pronoun and its antecedent. These special indefinite pronouns are: some, most, all, any or none. Examples are "Most of the flour fell out of its canister" and "Many of the gems have lost their shine". If the object is countable, like "gems", then the pronoun needs to be plural (their).

2.4.5 Subject-complement and object-complement concord

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Quirk and Greenbaum (1990) opine that there is concord of number between subject and subject complement and between direct object and object complement:

- She is beautiful (subject complement concord)

- Their father is a watchman (subject complement concord)

- The class made Arnold a class prefect (object complement concord)

2.4.6 Pronoun concord and determiner reference

The agreement between a pronoun or determiner and its antecedent is co-reference rather than grammatical concord. Thus, a reflexive pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number, person and gender. For instance,

- They went to the market themselves.

- She washed the things herself.

- I did the cleaning myself.

Personal pronoun and possessive determiners in the 1st and 3rd persons agree with their antecedents in number, but those in the 3rd person singular also agree with their antecedents in gender. Example:

- Gariba knows that he is wrong.

- The students were in the classroom so I taught them.

The relative pronouns *who, whose and which* agree with their antecedent in gender. Examples:

- These are students who are representing the school

- Send her the dress which you bought on the market yesterday

The principles underlying concord (or agreement) is the relationship of various parts of a sentence to one another, therefore, all language users must adhere to them.

2.5 Causes of concord errors

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It important to know the causes of concord errors to understand why errors are committed by learners of English. Olukpe (1981) is of the view that concord incongruity is the most common grammatical errors that spoil one's effort in writing effectively. He stresses that mistakes in agreement are caused by inconsistency in the use of subject and verb of a sentence, pronoun and its antecedent, shifts from one tense to the other, shifts from active to passive voice. He confirms by saying that since concord is essential in producing standard English sentences, it is important that one learns how to use number, person, gender, tense and voice constantly. His view highlights the fact that a well-constructed sentence must observe the rules of concord.

According to Myles (2002), the causes of concord errors have been grouped into two, social and cognitive factors. He explains that learners in the second language may continue to exhibit errors in their writing for the following social reasons: negative attitude towards the target language, continued lack of progress in the second language, a wide social and psychological distance between the target culture, and lack of integrative and instrumental motivation for learning. He also states that learners equally exhibit errors for these cognitive reasons: difficulty in acquiring academic and discourse style, lack of coherence in organizing information both at the sentence and text level, the complex process of writing in a second language, and language transfer. This is because learners lack the necessary information in the second language or the intentional capacity to activate the appropriate second language routine.

A lot of researchers have discussed the sources of concord errors which can be grouped into first language and English language structural difference and pedagogical problems. Researchers like Yule (2010) and Myles (2008) are of the opinion that first language is a major cause of grammatical errors learners of second language commit. Chih (2013), Crystal (2004), and Haurani (2008) on the other hand add that the method of teaching is also a cause of concord errors committed by second language learners. Furthermore, Bakuuro (2015) states that mother

tongue influence affects learners in some aspects of concord due to the unreal difference between the languages, he adds that students' inability to identify the headwords of complex noun phrases poses a bigger challenge to them.

2.5.1 English language structure

The dissimilarities that exist between learner' native language and English language are sometimes the cause of concord errors among learners of English as a second language. Learners overgeneralize the concord rules; another issue is the complexity of the English language itself and fossilization by learners contribute to learners' errors in concord.

2.5.1.1 Complexity of the English language

Onuigbo (2005) explains that errors of grammatical concord can result from inherent irregular patterns in the grammar of the English language. He makes singular references to nouns and observes that some language users find it difficult to associate irregular nouns with the proper verb forms. Aside this problem with the irregular nouns, difficulties may be experienced with the nouns that end in plural markers even when they are used as singular nouns. He explains that such world as news, mumps, economics, headquarters, physics, will always select a singular verb even though they end with – 's' because its usage there does not suggest plurality. The above statement seeks adequate attention for the teaching of concord to students especially to irregular nouns and their corresponding verbs.

2.5.1.2 Fossilisation

At times a learner's grammatical progress appears to have stopped at a certain level and recurring errors of both grammar and pronunciation become permanent features of a learner's speech. This is referred to as fossilisation. (Hourani, 2008). Littlewood (1994) opines that fossilisation is not likely to arise when a learner recognizes subconsciously that the errors do not hinder him in satisfying his communicative needs at the functional or social level. This is what Gass and Selinker (2001, p. 16) refer to as a "stage short of success". They further state

that it is the stage when development ceases and even serious conscious efforts to change may be impossible. And even if there might be some brief changes, those would just not take the learner anywhere as the learner always relapses to the stable state. Spada and Lightbrown (1993, p. 72) add that "this lack of change happens even after extended to or instructed in the target language". Brown (1994) indicates that this could be a problem even with those who have otherwise learned the language quite well.

2.5.2 Pedagogical problems

Some teachers of the English language lack the appropriate methodology in teaching certain topics in English language especially concord. Sometimes teachers also lack the knowledge of rule restriction and as a result, do not apply the rules of concord totally.

2.5.2.1 Method of teaching

Tsadidey (1993) postulates that some teachers resort to the translation approach and by doing so make the mistake of teaching English in the child's first language. This approach has damaging effects on the learner which may not manifest until the learner grows up and the effects become difficult to contest. This does not suggest that in the teaching of English, the teacher of English should never resort to the use of the first language. First language can be used in explaining certain difficult vocabulary for learners to understand. Again, it can be used in explaining complex ideas and complex grammar points because that helps learners to understand more quickly. But a situation where the first language is used as the only medium of instruction in teaching a second is problematic.

2.5.2.2 Incomplete application of rules

This is when the learner fails to fully develop a certain structure to produce acceptable sentences. It involves learners' inability to learn more complex types of structure since they can be successful in effective communication by using relatively simple rules.

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2.5.2.3 Ignorance of rule restrictions

This is a generalization or transfer error which occurs as a result of failure to observe restrictions or existing structures. It encompasses making use of rules that the learners acquire earlier in new contexts where they do not apply. Errors indicate poor knowledge of the code of a language. A learner attains proficiency in a language if such a learner is adequately exposed to the rudiments of the language; and if he makes conscious effort to apply the rudiments correctly. Perhaps, this informs Jowit's (1991) declaration that errors are caused by wrong learning.

2.5.3   The first Language Problem

First language is also known as the mother tongue which a child learns at home. Children can have more than one mother tongue or native language. This affects his learning of the target language.

2.5.3.1 Language transfer

Language transfer is the effect of one language on the learning of another positively or negatively. Positive transfer occurs when both the native language and the target language have the same form or linguistic features. It makes learning easier and does not result in errors. On the other hand, negative transfer or 'interference' is the use of native language pattern or rule that leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language. Littlewood (1984) also states that in transfer, the learner uses his preceding mother tongue experience as a means of organising the second language information. Ellis (1992) believes that transfer takes place whenever habits of the native language differ from those of the target language. This type of error mostly happens in the beginning stages of learning another language, (Mbau & Mushin, 2014). The vast difference between the students' native language and the target language in language aspects like morphology, syntax and semantics makes target language specifically English, difficult to learn, (Mbau & Mushin, 2014).

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2.6   Possible areas of concord errors

Learners of English as a second Language often commit errors in subject verb-agreement, since most of them have difficulty in matching the verb to its subject. As stated by Boahemaa (2014), the main English writing problem of students in the second cycle institutions in Ghana relates to the violation of English concord rules in the various categories like notional concord, proximity concord, pronoun concord, concord within tense and plural inflection concord errors. She states that the situation is not different from the errors students of Koforidua Senior High School and Koforidua Secondary/Technical School commit.

Furthermore, according to Aronoff and Fudeman (2010), the agreement of a verb with its subject in a sentence is a major headache for most English students. This, they opine, stems from the fact that students basically have a difficulty identifying and classifying subjects in sentences. Whilst a singular subject could be taken for a plural one and vice versa, some students simply cannot tell the specific "right" subjects in their sentences for the right verbs to be chosen to agree with. He cites a few cases where students in a high school committed concord errors as follows:

1. Five thousand, two hundred dollars are needed for the project, instead of replacing the verb "are" with "is".

2. The government, as well as citizens, do not seek the growth of the country, instead of using the verb "does" in place of "do".

Obi (2007) mentioned grammatical concord, proximity concord and pronoun concord as the common concord errors learners are likely to make. Similarly, Mireku-Gyimah (2014) analysed errors caused by final year students of a public University in Ghana and found that students committed errors in subject-verb agreement, plural inflection errors and proximity concord errors. Liu (2005) also found that Chinese learners of English committed errors in subject-verb agreement, plural inflections and distance concord. He attributed such errors to

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the differences that existed between English and the Chinese language. Some common errors in concord are discussed below.

2.7.1 Concord with the auxiliary verbs (has/have) within tense

Several concord errors result from the misappropriation of the common verbs 'have' 'do' and 'be'. students must understand that the verb 'have' appears as 'has' if the subject is a singular noun or if the subject is a third person singular. If the subject is a plural noun or the pronoun 'I' and 'you', the verb 'have' is used (Uchegbu-Ekwueme & Okongor, 2015). In addition, many students and speakers of English are incapable of using the verbs 'has' and 'have' appropriately. They are unaware that the verb 'has' is a singular verb which agree only with the third person singular pronouns: he/she/it, and any noun that they can replace. Therefore, any noun or group of nouns which can represent these pronouns must agree with a singular verb. And the verb 'have' agrees with *me*, *you*, *us*, and *them* as well as any noun or group of nouns that these pronouns represents. Quagie (2010) posits that the verb 'has' may be used as a possessive verb for third person singular nouns and pronouns, while the verb 'have' may be used as a possessive verb for first person singular and plural (I, we), second person (you), and third person plural (they).

2.7.2 Concord with relative pronouns/adverbials

Quagie (2010) explains that relative pronouns such as who, which, that, whoever, whatever, whichever, and relative adverbial where, when, why, etc. always pose some difficulty to students. Indeed, many speakers of English as a second language (ESL) find it difficult to identify which verb follows a relative pronoun/adverbial in a sentence. The hint is that whenever the antecedent of a relative pronoun/adverbial is singular, a singular verb should be selected or used, and when it is preceded by a plural antecedent, then a plural verb must be used.

2.7.3 Concord within tense

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Another problem area for learners of English as a second language according to Kirkpatrick (2007) is the use of the present and past tense and aspects of the present and past tense in both written and spoken communications which is confusing. She said it is common to read or hear expressions as: 'I have spoken to him yesterday'. Instead of 'I spoke to him yesterday'. The problem of such speakers according to her, is that they tend to forget the fact that expressions of time adverbial such as: yesterday, last week, last year, and two days ago are past; hence, they should use the simple past tense form of the verb(s) in the conversation.

2.7.4   Subject verb agreement

Many of the students seem to have difficulties with subject verb agreement even though it is the first rule that students learn when they start learning English language. In phrase where the subject is singular form, there should be no ending and the time violated. For the wrong use of the verb "live" in the sentence. She lives in Tamale can be explained that the students could not identify the subject of the noun phrase. If they learn to identify the subject, they can easily learn to avoid this type of errors.

2.7.5   Plural inflection concord error

Another source of grammatical error is the plural inflection error. Most of these errors occur with words that contain the /-s/ sound at the end of the words, though the word is a singular noun. Pupils make mistakes and the /-s/ ending of those nouns such as economics, measles, politics, athletics etc. for the plural inflection and accordingly assign them plural verbs. The students commit errors like politics have made people corrupt instead of using "has".

2.7.6   Omission of the /-s/ Inflection

There is the possibility for learners of English language to omit the /-s/ of verbs. This might partly be due to the fact that all grammatical persons except the third person singular (he. she) and the personal pronoun (it) do not take an /-s/ ending. For instance, Hourani (2009)

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states that Arabic learners of English language have problems with the use of the (-s) inflections. The situation is similar in Ghana, specifically Tamale, where the research took place because the learners use English as a second language like the Arabic learners of English.

2.7.7 Review of related studies on concord errors among students

Currently, there are several studies in Ghana which relate to this present study but most of these studies are outside Tamale Municipality. Azasu (2014) conducted a study on the analysis of concord errors among SDA Senior High School students in Bekwai in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. She used the descriptive survey design with a population of hundred (100) students. The instrument she used was only essay test, and purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting the respondents. At the end, it was revealed that students do not have good attitude towards the study of grammar, and that they were unable to identify noun heads and modification of the nouns phrases. One of the difference between Azasu's study and the present study is that the present study used test, interview and observation as the instruments in conducting the study while Azasu only used test. The sample population also differs. However, the present study and his, both have similar objectives and research questions.

Bakuuro (2015) also conducted a study on concord among two schools in Wa. Although his study is similar to the present study it was noted that his focus was on two schools of the senior high school level whiles this present study used four classes of the same school. In this study he set out to find out problems with the use of concord in English among two senior high schools in Wa. Like the present study, he used the qualitative research design with a population of seventy (70) students. His objectives are similar to the objectives of the present study and his objective three is also similar to the objective two of the present study.

At the end of the study his findings were:

1. Mother tongue affects learners in some aspects of concord due to the syntactic difference between the languages.

2. Subject-verb agreement posed a greater threat to students.

3. Students are unable to identify the headwords of complex noun

Apart from the studies conducted in Ghana other studies on concord errors have been conducted in Africa. Nnadwamato (2017) conducted a study on analysis of written concord errors among grade 12 first additional language learner in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. He used an experimental design with a population of seven hundred and twenty (720) respondents. He used mixed methods in conducting the study. He concluded that learners of Vhembe District have problems in the usage of concord and also recommended that teaching of grammar should be emphasized in the school curriculum and the teaching of concord should be intensified for improved mastering. Obi (2009) conducted a research on error analysis on the English concord of students in Onitsha in Nigeria. Unlike the present study, she chose a sample survey research design. The population was five hundred students from five secondary schools in Onitsha North Local Government Area of Anambra state. At the end of her study, her findings were that concord errors were the commonest grammatical errors committed by the students due to their lack of knowledge on the use of concord. English language learnt at the secondary school level did not adequately prepare students for tertiary education. Her conclusions were that strong foundation for acquisition of proficiency in English cannot be undermined. She believed there should be a deliberate effort to improve on the standard of teachers of English language. The difference between Obi's study and the present study is that she uses five hundred students in five schools while the present study uses thirty students in one school. He focused on senior high whilst the present study focuses on SHS. The similarities are that both study use qualitative research.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter deliberated on the various definitions of concord as given by some scholars or authorities on the topic. Types of concord explanations and examples under each of them,

rules governing each type of concord such as grammatical, proximity and notional concord were also discussed. Also, general conclusion about the problems associated with the use of concord among students of Ghana Senior High School and the view of other recognized authorities of their previous research work about learning concord. Finally, the chapter outlines the various rules governing the use of concord to assist the usage of this work.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology and the procedure that were followed to conduct a successful study. This chapter is made up of data analysis and data collection which includes; research design, area of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, research instrument and source of data.

3.1   Research design

Research design refers to the overall plan the researcher employs to collect data in order to answer the research questions including the research data analysis technique or methods (Adenntwi & Amartei, 2009). According to Punch (2005), research design is the strategy to plan and restructure of conducting a research project. In order to get credible, accurate and reliable data, the researcher adopted qualitative case study; interview, test and observation were employed. A qualitative research is a kind of method used when a researcher seeks to "describe action within a specific setting and invites rather than tries to control the possibility of a rich array of variables". A case study is a written account that gives detailed information about a person, group or thing and their development over a period of time (Halliday, 2004). A case study was chosen because it enables the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the subject in hand and do away with any potential bias. Hence, it leads to accurate and credible data.

3.2   Area of study

The area of study is Ghana Senior High School (Ghanasco) Tamale. The choice of Ghana Senior High School stemmed from the fact that the school has students from different academic and cultural backgrounds. Also, majority of them are from rural parts of the region.

3.3   Population of the study

According to Castilo (2000), research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects, having common observable traits. That is the main focus of a scientific query. To Agbeke and Denkyira (2001), population is the total set from which the individual or unit of a study are chosen. It is the totality of persons, events or organization units with which the real research problem is concerned. Also, Seidu (2001) refers to population as the entire group of people, objects, animals, institutions which the research intends to study. The sample population comprised two hundred students (form three students) of Ghana Senior High

School in the Tamale municipality. Four classes were randomly selected (both boys and girls) for the study.

The choice of the population for the study is deemed appropriate because the students were at the final stage of secondary education and consequently, preparing for the Senior School Certificate Examinations. A success in English still remains a prerequisite for admission into any programme of study in Ghanaian tertiary institutions. Therefore, a good knowledge of the rules of concord would make students improve on their English Language performance. And it would invariably lead to success in English as well as other subjects taught through the medium of the English Language.

3.4   Sample and sampling technique

Sampling size means the actual number of members, individuals or cases selected from the target population. Bentil (2001) defines sampling as the process of selecting units from the large population. As a result of time constraints, effort and resources, it was impossible for one to undertake a large scale. Random sampling was used to get the population of the study. The above mentioned school has at least thirteen classes of SHS 3 students. Each of the classes has a nominal roll of not less than fifty students. For fair distribution of the subjects of the study, two hundred students were selected from four classes of SHS 3 in the school. The total number of students selected from the school for this study was hundred out of two hundred students of which 38 were boys and 62 were girls. Finally, they were tested on hundred (100) questions on the various types of concord. The following are the various programs offered by the respondents; business courses, Home Economics, General Arts and General Science.

3.5   Research instrument

The researcher used a number of instruments which included interview, observation and test items.

3.5.1   Interview

For research purposes, interviews normally take the form of conversations in which the researcher asks questions which relate to the research topic. To facilitate the interview schedule, mostly a set of questions written more or less like a questionnaire which assists the interviewer to ask questions on the topic under study, is prepared. According to Vale (1996), interview for research purposes usually takes the form of conversations in which the researcher tries to ask questions in connection with his research topic. Interview mostly comprises a set of questions written to assist the interviewer to ask questions on the actual issues which he is interested in instead of drifting into irrelevant issues. It also helps the interviewer ascertain the meaning of what the interviewees say. Interview was considered because it assisted the researcher to seek clarification for responses provided by the interviewees. It also gave a wide range of information on the problem being investigated. The students were interviewed at different times using structured and unstructured method; the researcher used face-to-face interview to engage a number of students both in and outside the classroom.

Students were engaged in a conversation outside the classroom while the researcher listened to them carefully and noted down their concord errors. For example; 'my mother come from Tamale', 'us are going'. She used question-and-answer method to seek the students' concord errors. The researcher used this instrument to enquire from learners if they understand and like English lessons on concord. Students were also asked of the problems they face in using concord. In the same way, the researcher interviewed three English teachers to seek information about what they think is the source of students' concord errors and how this affects the students' performance in English language, together with how best this problem could be solved. A carefully formulated interview questions were written on a paper for the teachers to respond. This will serve as a guide to the researcher and the participants.

3.5.2 Observation

Observation refers to the systematic selection, recording and encoding of a set of behaviours and setting. The researcher employed observation as one of the primary sources of data collection. Students and teachers in their normal learning environment were closely observed by the researcher. They were observed in the classroom when teaching and learning was taking place and outside the classroom environment. In all these the researcher employed the concealed approach method of observation. This was done to assist the researcher to have accurate and reliable data.

3.5.3 Test

According to Owu-Ewie (2018, pp.327-329) a test is a procedure used to elicit certain behaviour from which one can make inferences about certain characteristics of an individual. He further explains that a test is a measurement instrument designed to elicit a specific sample of an individual's behaviour. Test are used for pedagogical purposes, either as a means of motivating students to study or as a means of reviewing material taught and may be used for purely, descriptive purposes. Test is one of the most common tools used to obtain measurement in the learning process in our schools. The researcher used multiple objective tests with a total of hundred (100) test items. The test was conducted by the researcher with the assistance of some teachers of English under examination conditions and lasted for one-hour-thirty-minutes (1:30hr). The need to test for the understanding of students in the various types of concord informed the researchers' choice of using objective test as an instrument. The researcher was able to cover the various types of concord errors students commit using this instrument.

Testing was conducted in a way that the students had options to select from. Some of the questions were on errors and learners were to identify the errors and correct the sentences. This test instrument is considered suitable since it generally measures learners' specific knowledge of the concept that is being studied. The 100 test items were based on types of concord like: proximity, notional, pronoun, and grammatical. Students were given possible

answers to select from. The students completed the test within the allotted time, though some completed before time. The answers to the multiple objective test items would give reliable and accurate information of the students' knowledge of concord in the English language

3.6   Data collection procedure

The researcher verbally requested to meet the headmistress of the school. When the request was granted, the research topic was disclosed and discussed with her about the need to conduct the research in the school. I also discussed the topic with the English language teachers. I explained the nature of the study to them and solicited their support. The advantages of the study were outlined to the headmistress and teachers and the days for the data collection was also communicated to them. The researcher was assured by the staff and headmistress of their co-operation.

3.7   Data analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical or logical techniques used to describe and illustrate, condense and recap, evaluate data. It is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with a goal of revealing useful information, suggesting, conclusions supporting decision-making. To achieve the objective of the study, a total of hundred (100) test items were administered to two hundred (200) students, the scripts were marked by the researcher. The data collected was analysed using the qualitative analysis. The researcher grouped some of the data that are similar and those that are different were presented on a table. The data were analysed and interpreted. Also, simple percentages were used to discover the subjects' overall performance on the different types of concord that were tested.

3.10   Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology that was used for the research. It discussed the research design, the population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, the research instruments like interviews, observation test, and source of data and method of data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0   Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of data which includes: students' responses to objective test items set on the various types of concord, interview, and observation. The researcher discusses the common concord problems and the common errors students made as well as the factors that account for the errors committed by students of Ghana Senior High School. The first research question sought to identify the concord problems of the school under study. The categories of concord errors students committed were identified as: subject-verb agreement error, determiner–noun concord error, verb-verb concord error, noun- pronoun

concord, inverted subject-verb errors and deviant or shifts in constructions concord errors. The second research question which sought to identify the factors that account for students' concord errors was also addressed. These are put into two groups: Firstly, first language interference and English structural deference which include complexity of the English language, and fossilisation, and secondly, the pedagogical problems which include the method of teaching and inadequate use of teaching and learning materials, lack of motivation, student' misapplication of rules, ignorance of rule restrictions.

4.1   Categorization of concord errors

The researcher analysed the data and identified the concord errors students committed as: subject-verb concord error, verb–verb concord error, determiner-noun concord error, noun-pronoun concord error, inverted subject concord and deviant or shifts in constructions concord error.

4.1.1   Subject-verb concord error

The area students encountered difficulties the most was subject verb concord. Table 4.1.1 indicates that the category has a highest frequency. The data indicated that students did not fully internalize the formation rules. The rule states that a singular verb requires a singular subject. Matching the verb to agree with the subject was a challenge for the respondents. The rule also states that a verb should agree in number, person and gender. The students found it difficult to apply this rule. Some of the errors students committed are explained below:

4.1.1.1 Relative pronoun subject with singular verb

The rule of proximity states that the nominal relative clause that functions as the subject of the sentence is singular and should select a singular verb in present tense and if the

antecedent of the relative pronoun is plural, the verb that follows will be plural. These relative clauses are introduced by the relative pronouns like: who, whose, that, which and whom. There should be concord between the verb and the antecedent relative pronoun in every English structure where these two elements co-occur. Example: Annette is one of the ladies who <u>sing</u> well.

In the above sentence, the main clause is 'Annette is one of the ladies' and the subordinate clause is 'who sing well'. Ladies is the antecedent of the word 'who' and its plural, therefore the verb that follows should also be plural. So sing is selected instead of sings.

The respondents violated this rule and mismatched the verbs with their subjects in the following sentences:

i. He who works hard at his studies *make* good grades.

ii. Mary is one of the ladies who *sings* in the school choir.

iii. These people pollute their surrounding was fined (is, was, are) one of the main issues that *needs* to be addressed is sanitation

iv. I wish to dedicate this book to the poor and needy whose anguish ensures my continuing protest.

The above sentences in which the students committed errors indicate that they lack knowledge of the nominal group which these relative pronouns refer to. Their wrong responses to these sentences are due to ignorance of the rule restriction of proximity concord.

The correct versions of the sentences are:

i. He who works hard at his studies <u>makes</u> good grades.

ii. The people who polluted their surroundings <u>are</u> fined.

iii. Mary is one of the ladies who sing in the school choir.

iv. One of the main issues that need attention is sanitation.

4.1.1.2 The head noun identification in complex noun phrases

It was observed that students were unable to identify the headwords in complex noun phrases. This caused the errors they committed under this noun subject verb concord category. The headword is the most important word among the series of words put together in a sentence. Students find it easy to match the verb to the subjects in present tense. However, it becomes difficult for the students when the subjects are complex. Noun phrases that have pre-modifiers as well as post modifiers put together result in complex subjects which poses problems for students since they are confused as to which verb to select when the head word is put far-away from the verb. For example,

The handsome man in the room.

The principle of subject-verb does not change if subject is simple or complex. Hence, the rule is singular verb in the present tense and if the head is plural verb students committed such errors as:

i.   Indiscipline among students *are* on the increase.

ii.   You, Amina *is* in charge of this house.

iii.   Given the waste matter from the cows *are* useful.

iv.   All the members of my family *is* rich.

v.   A box full of pens *were* found here.

The researcher observed that students failed to realize that it is the headword in a subject noun phrase (NP) which determines noun-verb as result them were unable to match the appropriate verbs. The researcher also noticed that it is very necessary to teach noun modification before teaching concord.

The correct versions of the sentences are:

i.   Indiscipline among students is on the increase.

ii.   You, Amina are in charge of the house.

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iii.   Even the waste matter from the cows is useful.

iv.   All members of my family are rich.

v.   A box full of pens was found here.

4.1.1.3 Demonstrative pronoun concord errors

The analysis revealed that this category was another problematic area for students. The researcher observed that students had difficulty differentiating between 'this' and 'these' as well as 'that' and 'those'. Students seemed confused about whether – this is singular whiles 'these' is plural. ''That is singular whilst 'those' is plural. The demonstrative pronoun used as a number with its verb. Students failed to select the appropriate noun to make it grammatical and therefore violated the grammatical concord rule. This may be caused by fossilization which occurs when a learner realises that the error does not hinder him in satisfying his communicative needs at the functional level.

The students committed the following errors:

(i)   This <u>men</u> makes a lot of book.

(ii)   These sheep lost its shepherd.

(iii)   The cause of this social evil are not known

(iv)   This are all my shoes.

These are corrected to:

(i)   This man makes a lot of books

(ii)   These sheep lost their shepherd.

(iii)   The cause of these social evils is not known.

(iv)   These are all my shoes.

4.1.1.4 Singular subjects with plural verbs

The error students committed under this category are shown below:

i.   She <u>eat</u> food everyday

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ii.   A human being <u>breath</u> air.

iii.   Government <u>have</u> changed the educational system of Ghana.

iv.   The headquarters of our local government <u>have</u> been moved to Accra.

v.   Her remains <u>was</u> buried in the church yard.

The above errors students committed are as a result of Interlingual interference which occurs as a result of using an element from one language while using the other. There is no inflection in the third person singular form in the present tense in Dagbani. The verb maintains its in singular and plural, students committed this error because they have been taught to use the inflection –s after pronouns he, she and it if the subject is singular. The students are confused when the subject of the verb is singular.

The rule of this category is that the nouns are semantically singular and always require a singular verb. The learners need to be guided to be mindful of the grammatical or subject-verb rules

The sentences are corrected as:

i.   She eats food everyday

ii.   A human being breathes air

iii.   Government has change the educational system of Ghana.

iv.   The headquarters of our local government <u>has been</u> moved.

v.   Her remains were buried in the church yard.

4.1.1.5 Plural inflectional subjects with singular verbs concord errors

The participants mismatched the verb with its subject because they have made defective over generalization of this concord rules of the inflection (-s), some words especially nouns end with –s inflection but they are not plural noun and therefore will agree with a singular verb.

Some errors students committed in this category are shown below:

i.   The news that reached us after the accident <u>were</u> shocking.

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ii.   Physics <u>are</u> my best subject.

iii.   Public are not actively mould.

iv.   Mumps are a painful diseases

v.   Economics are my best subject.

vi.   Politics have made people corrupted

The form of the noun is identified by the use of the inflection –s to show number as in girl –girls, showing plurality and singularity. On the other hand, it is only in the third person singular, form in the tense that the verb takes the inflection –s.

These notional concords were committed by students because students misapplied the notional concord rule. The rule states that though the subject is singular the corresponding verbs and also plural. This indicates that they have not truly mastered the subject – verb rules. The grammatical rule of this category is that the subject and the verb must agree in number. The students violated this rule and therefore committed the errors by matching the plural verbs with singular subject which is unacceptable in the English language.

The corrected sentences are:

i.   The news that reached us after the accident is shocking.

ii.   Physics is my best subject

iii.   Mumps is a painful disease

iv.   Economics is my best subject.

v.   The public is not actively involved

vi.   Politics has made people corrupt.

Table 4.1.1 presents subject-verb concord errors committed by students.

Table 4.1.1. Subject –Verb Concord Errors

Type of error	Frequency of error	Percentage of error %

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Relative pronoun subject with singular verb	30	28%
The noun head word in complex phrases	22	21%
Demonstrative pronouns	20	19%
Singular subject with plural verb.	18	17%
Plural inflectional subject with singular verbs	16	15%
Total	**106**	**100**

The information on bale 4.1.1 is illustrated in Figure 4.1.1.
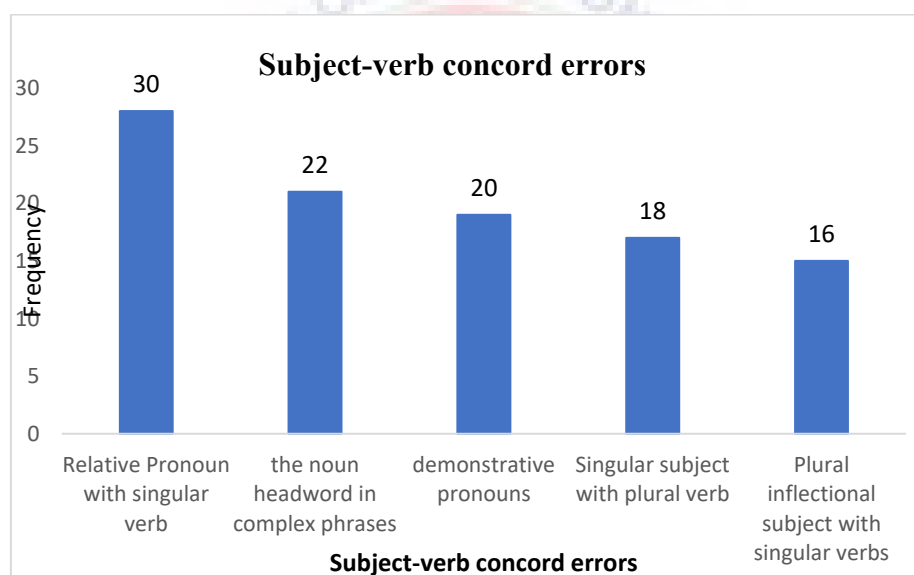
Figure 4.1.1. Types of subject–verb concord errors

The various categories of errors students committed in subject verb agreement are present in Figure 4.1. The data revealed that the participants have a challenge in choosing the correct verb to agree with its subject especially in the relative pronoun subject with singular verb concord category. Students mismatched the antecedents of the relative clause. Singular with plural were made to agree with plural verbs and antecedent were matched with singular verbs.

The headword-verb errors were committed due to students' inability to locate the headword of a series of words in a sentence. They become confused if the headword is placed far from its subject, hence, committing such errors. The demonstrative pronoun subject-verb concord posed problems for students since the students could not distinguish between the singular and plural demonstrative pronoun. They therefore violated the rules of concord and committed errors in this category. Students also mismatched the subjects and the verbs under the plural inflection subjects with singular verbs category where the subjects of the sentences are plural but the verbs are singular. Under the singular subject with plural verb category, students again selected subjects with plural verbs. They misapplied the concord rules in this concord category.

4.1.2 Determiner-noun concord errors

This relates to the agreement that exist between a noun and its determiner in terms of number. Leech and Svartvik (1994) describe determiner as words which specify the range of reference of a noun by making it definite as in *the* table, indefinite as in *a* table or by indicating quantity as in *these* boys or *this* boy. There are six classes of determiner which co-occur with the noun, classes, singular nouns such as tables and plural nouns such as luggage.

4.1.2.1 Plural determiner-noun concord errors

This category of errors recorded 25 instances representing 38% students used. The determiners *those* and *these* were used wrongly to introduce singular nouns. *These* and *those* are plural determiners. They are used to introduce noun which should also be in the plural form. Examples:

i.   Those girls are coming

ii.   These students are late

Students selected the singular determiner to introduce plural nouns and matched them with singular verbs, the sentences committed errors in are shown below:

i.   This houses is beautiful.

ii.   These girl is a student

iii.   I hope with all this suggestions you would make a good choice.

iv.   The reasons why this students are late is another factor to consider.

The students committed errors in the above sentences because they violated the rules of concord this is due to the students' inability to make distinctions between 'these', 'this', 'those' and 'that' in their usage of these determiners. The corrected versions are:

i.   These house are beautiful

ii.   This girl is a student

iii.   I hope with all these suggestions you make a good choice.

iv.   The reasons why these students are late is another factor to consider.

4.1.2.2 Singular determiner-noun concord errors

Errors were committed under this concord representing 20%. The principle of concord suggests that this and that co-occur with singular nouns and therefore agree with singular verbs. For example,

i.   This mango is ripe

ii.   That man is wicked

iii.   Each boy is to weed

iv.   Everybody is late

The determiner must occur with nouns and must agree in number with the noun that is being modified as the above examples suggest which must agree with its verbs. The demonstrative 'this' suggests nearness while 'that' suggests farness. Students did not understand this rule and so selected plural verbs to match the single determiners and their nouns. Examples of their wrong structures are:

i.   Each of the players (get, gets, getting) a prize after every match.

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ii.   Every student and every lecturer (is, <u>are</u> expected) at the pavilion.

iii.   This (<u>are</u>, is, were) my piece of advice

iv.   One of the main issues that (<u>need</u>, needs, needing) to be addressed is sanitation.

These wrong structures are not acceptable in the English language. Students committed this error because they do not understand the principle of proximity and so misapplied the rule. The rule is that a singular determiner must always occur with a singular noun because they must agree in number with the noun and require a singular verb.

The corrected versions of the sentences are:

i.   Each of the players <u>gets</u> a prize after every match.

ii.   Everybody <u>is</u> to go.

iii.   This is my piece of advice

iv.   One of the main issues that <u>needs</u> to be addressed is sanitation.

4.1.2.3 Non-count determiner-noun errors

This concord category recorded 20 errors committed by the students as a result of overgeneralization of rules. Students could not differentiate the determiners used for non-count nouns like Gari, luggage, milk, rice, etc. They selected 'these' and those which are plural forms and matched with non-count nouns. Examples of students' errors they committed in this category are presented below:

i.   These luggages are heavy

ii.   These furnitures are beautiful.

iii.   The poor needs our help

The above sentences with errors indicate that the students have a difficulty matching non-count nouns with their appropriate verbs. However, they find it easy to construct sentences with singular and plural count nouns.

The sentences are corrected as:

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    i.   This milk is spoilt

    ii.   This luggage is heavy.

    iii.   This furniture is beautiful

    iv.   The poor need our help.

Table 4.1.2. Determiner-noun concord errors

Types of errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage of errors
Plural count errors	25	38%
Singular count errors	20	31%
Non – count noun errors	20	31%
Total	**65**	**100**

Table 4.1.2 describes the categories of concord errors committed under determiner-noun concord errors. The data has been represented in Figure 4.1.2.
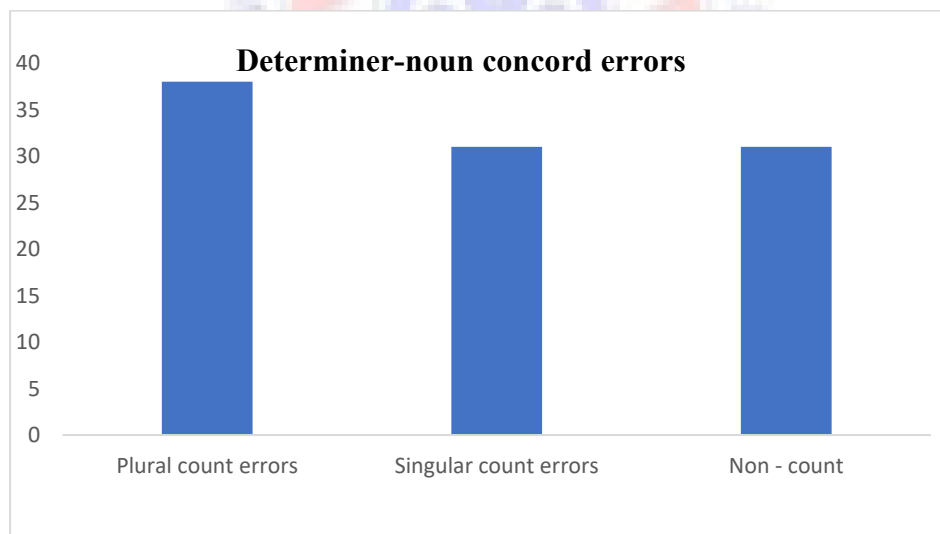
Figure 4.1.2. Determiner-noun concord errors

The researcher discussed the classes of determiners with regards to their co-occurrences with the noun – classes: singular count, plural count and non – count nouns. The demonstrative 'this' and 'that' belong to the class of determiners that count and non – count nouns. The determiners 'this' and 'that' co-occur only with single noun under the count nouns category

while *these* and *those* are the classes of determiners that co-occur with count nouns that are plural. These plural determiners do not co-occur with non-count nouns. Students' inability to apply the rule of concord of these classes of determiners resulted to the errors they committed.

4.1.3 Verb-verb concord errors

On verb-verb concord, the researcher realized from the responses of students on the test that they did not know that English maintains sequence of tense within clause in sentences: Verb/ present – verb/past. Kirkpatrick (2007) attests that students get confuse with the use of present and past tense as well as aspects of the present and past tenses in both written and spoken communication. It is common to read or hear expressions like: "I have spoken to her yesterday" instead of "I spoke to her yesterday". Tense is the form of the verb that takes to show the time and event happened. This means that in concord, the rule of sequence of time has to be applied when talking about time by selecting the appropriate verb tenses. Speakers and learners of the English language should stick to the single general present tense, past or future.

4.1.3.1 A single general – 'Past'

This means concord between two verbs. That is, the verb in the first clause of a structure and another verb or verbs in the second clause. Examples are as follows:

i.   The teachers carried the students and <u>suspended</u> them as well.

ii.   Agatha <u>took</u> her bag and <u>gave</u> it to her son.

iii.   Mary sung and peter played the piano.

The above sentences are independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunctions 'and'. This in English is called compound sentences. These independent clauses as explained by Sekyi–Baidoo (2003) are independent not only semantically and morphologically but are as well independent in tense. The complexity of the English language and students' inadequate mastery of this rule made them to commit the errors in the sentences below:

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1. The boy danced and the girl like it.

2. She walk to school but I went by bus.

3. The bus stopped at the station and we all get down

4. Agnes take the book last week and she brought it back last yesterday.

The students were not consistent in tense. They were mismatched the two independent clauses with present tense and past tense, therefore, the sentences do not agree in tense. The sentences are corrected as:

1. The boy danced and the girl liked it.

2. She walked to school but I went by bus.

3. The bus stopped at the station and we all got down.

4. Agnes took the book last week and she brought it back yesterday.

4.1.3.2 A single general – 'Present'

The principle of sequence of tense is that, the independent clauses are not independent only in meaning and structure but in tense too. Hence, the two independent clauses put together by 'and' will take the same tense. In this category the tense is simple, therefore, both independent clauses should also be in present tense for consistency sake. Sekyi-Baidoo (2003) explains that, these sentences are supposed to agree even if they are complex sentences. He adds that in the case of complex sentences, the two subordinate clauses should agree with the main or independent clause.

Examples:

1. The people celebrate this festival once in a week.

2. The boy is smart but the girl is lazy.

3. Annette likes to work hard and Arnold hates to sit for long.

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Some of the students could not apply this rule and selected past tense and present tense in the alternatives given making the sentences inconsistent and unacceptable. For instance, they committed this category of error in the following sentences:

1. The hostels were overcrowded and that comes with several problems.

2. The world is around and the earth go round the sun

3. The problem she is talking about yester was real.

4. Anytime I cry, my husband gave me sweets.

The wrong sentences are corrected to:

1. The hostels were overcrowded and that came with several problems.

2. The world is round and the earth goes round the sun

3. The problem she was talking about yesterday was real.

4. Anytime I cry, my mum gives me sweets.

4.1.3.3 A single general – 'Future'

The principle of verb – verbs is applied in this category where the sequence of tense must agree in form. As explained by Yankson (1994), English maintains the sequence verb/ present – verb/ past – verb/ future within clauses in sentences. Here, the rule is not different from the first two sequences discussed. The future tense used in the two clauses must agree in tense. An example is

1. If I get kenkey, I will eat.

In the example above, though the sentences are conditional they express future tense or event. The students' inability to master this rule results in errors in their writing and speech. Some of the students selected the wrong tense form of the verb in either of the clauses to match the future events/ tenses in the other clauses. Examples of students wrong sentences:

1. The boy loved America and he will go one day.

2. My brother sewed a shirt and he will buy me a dress.

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3. If I were you, I will have not agree.

4. My brother will buy a car next month and I would buy a bicycle.

The above responses of students violate the principle of sequence of tense and so are not acceptable as correct sentences. This category of verb – verb concord poses a challenge for students. Sentences corrected as:

1. The boy loves America and he will go one day.

2. My brother will saw a shirt and he buy me a dress.

3. If I were you, I would not agree.

4. My brother will buy a car next month and I will buy a bicycle.

Table 4.1.3. Verb-Verb Concord Errors

Type of errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage of errors %
Single past	22	47%
Simple present	15	32%
Simple future	10	21%
Total	**47**	**100**

Table 4.1.3 illustrates the different types of concord errors committed by students in verb – verb concord. These are shown in Figure 4.1.3.
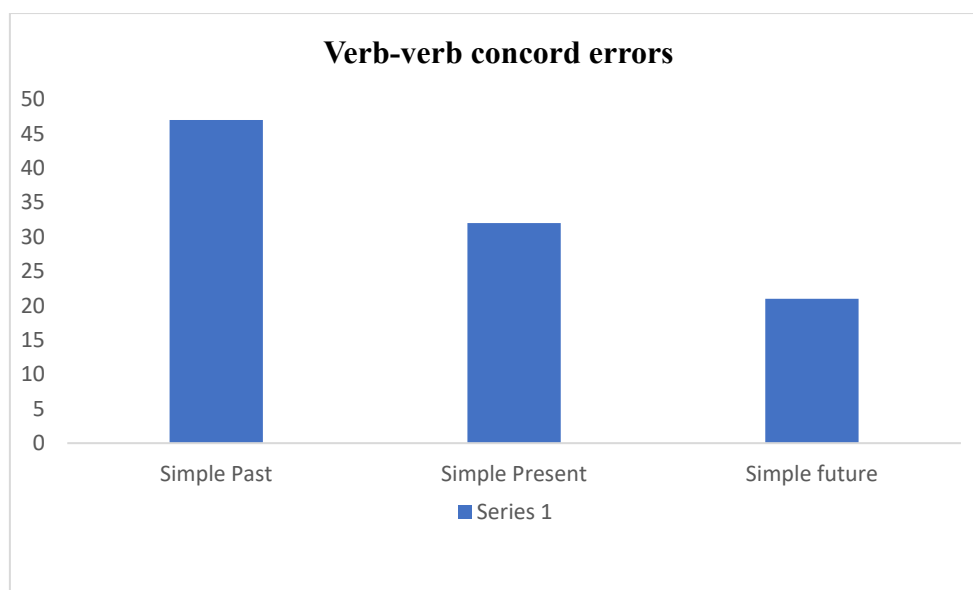
Figure 4.1.3. Verb-Verb concord errors

The students who committed this category of errors could not interpret the principles of sequence of tenses. The rule says the clauses should agree in tense. Therefore, in referring to events that are same or group of events, one needs to stick to a single present, past or future tense so as to maintain consistency. This was a challenge for the students.

4.1.4 Noun-pronoun concord errors

Grammatically, all the parts of a sentence must agree with one another to be accepted as correct. A pronoun which refers to singular noun phrase is singular noun phrase is a singular and a pronoun that refers to a plural noun phrase is also in plural. Examples: They did it themselves.

I washed the dress myself.

A pronoun is described as a noun phrase used by itself and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (eg. I, you) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (eg. She, it, this) (Doyle, 2013). She adds that linguistics and grammar of a pronoun is a word that substitutes for a noun or noun phrase. Wiredu (1998) also attest that they are words which are used to replace a noun, in order to avoid repetition of the same noun. Afreh (2006) defines pronoun as an anaphoric element used to replace nouns.

4.1.4.1 Personal pronoun in the third person

Afreh (2006) says that personal pronouns distinguish three types of persons: First, second and third persons. Any of these types she said must agree in both number, which indicates whether any of the persons is singular or plural and gender indicates whether the masculine (she) or feminine (he). Gender is clearly distinguished in the third persons' singular. Examples are as follows:

1. Ama sings well, she sings well.

2. Vanessa cooks well, she cooks well.

3. Arnold likes playing football, he likes playing football.

They failed to apply the rule of this concord category. Arabic learners of English language problems with the use of the (-s) inflections. The situation is similar in Ghana especially the students of Ghana High School who are also second language learners. Therefore, there is the possibility of learners to omit the '-s' of the verbs which express tense. This is because all the grammatical persons except the third person and the personal pronoun (it) do not take an '-s' ending. Students are therefore overgeneralizing the rules in this case and this resulted in the errors they committed below:

1. Akosua like dancing

2. She sweep the house every morning.

3. The woman beat the child every night.

4. She eat food everyday

The sentences from students are corrected as:

1. Akosua likes dancing

2. She sweeps the house every morning

3. The woman beats the child every night

4. She eats every day.

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4.1.4.2 A pronoun that refers to plural noun phrase

A plural noun phrase is a word that indicates that there is more than one person, thing, idea, or place. It means that when more than one of anything is talked about, plural noun is used. Leech and Startvik (2002) affirm this as they say that pronouns which refer to plural noun phrase are also in plural form.

Example:

1. Mr. Akurugu and Mr. William are early to work. They are early to work.

2. The doctor and his fiancée have travelled abroad. They have travelled.

3. The teacher and the students are happy. They are happy.

4. Adam and Ama are hard-working students. They are hardworking students.

Some students failed to select the appropriate pronoun to match the plural noun phrase as seen in the responses of students.

1. The chief and his wife have arrived. Them has arrived.

2. The chairman and the secretary have come here. Themselves has come.

3. The woman and her daughters has travelled abroad. We has travelled abroad.

4. Mary and Azumah has gone to school. Us has gone to school.

5. The black and the blue bags is lost. It has lost.

Students committed these errors as a result of misapplication of the common verbs 'have' and 'has' and they could not much the appropriate pronouns with the noun phrases. The students also misapplied the rules of pronoun, which is the noun phrase subject must conform to its pronoun subject. In sentences (4) and (5), the students took the noun phrase subjects and therefore matched it with a singular verb 'is'. The researcher observed that the students have a challenge in this category and therefore do not use the appropriate verbs that will agree with noun phrase subjects. They need to be guided to understand when to use 'has' (singular) and 'have' (plural) and other plural verbs and pronouns to agree with the noun phrase subjects.

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The sentences are corrected as:

1. The chief and his wife have come. They have come.

2. The chairmen and the secretary have come here. They have come here.

3. The woman and her daughters have travelled abroad. They have travelled abroad.

4. Mary and Azumah have gone to school. They have gone to school.

5. The black and blue bags are lost. They are lost.

Table 4.1.4. Noun-Pronoun Concord Errors

Type of errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage of errors
Personal pronoun in third person	20	57%
A noun which refers to plural noun phrase	15	43%
Total	**35**	**100**

The Table 4.1.4 presents the summary of errors committed in noun pronoun concord. This is represented in Figure 4.1.4.
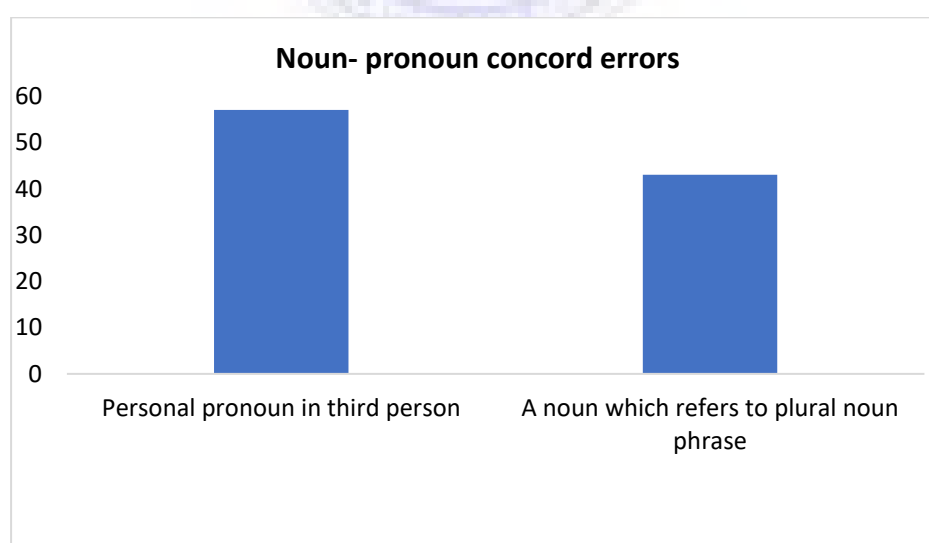
Figure 4.1.4. Noun Pronoun Concord Errors

The principle of noun-pronoun phrase is that a singular noun phrase requires a singular form of the pronoun to match it and a plural noun phrase will take a plural pronoun, personal pronouns in the third person must agree with the antecedent in both number and gender. The rules were inappropriately applied and it resulted in students committing errors.

4.1.5   Inverted subject-verb concord errors

This concord category deals with sentences whose subjects are the interrogative pronouns. This type of pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun and that asks a question. In English there are five: who, whom, whose, which and what.

4.1.5.1 The Wh-interrogative

WH-questions are formed by inserting a Wh-word into a sentence in the place of missing information and they focus on a particular part of speech. In this category, it is the noun phrase that comes after the verb that functions as the subject. So, if the noun or noun phrase is singular then it will require a singular verb and if the noun or noun phrase is plural then automatically requires a plural verb. Examples

1. What is your best food?

2. Whose car is this?

3. Which cars are blocking the road?

4. What textbook is Ama holding?

In sentence one (1) the noun car is singular and requires a singular verb 'is'. Sentence two (2) has a plural noun; therefore, it requires that the verb that follows it must be plural. The third and fourth sentences contain singular nouns too and agree with a singular verb. Some of the students violated the rule of this category and produced the corrected versions above wrongly as shown below:

1. What are your best food?

2. Whose car are this?

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3. Whose cars is blocking the road?

4. What textbook are Ama and Yaa holding?

The students' errors they committed reveals that they do not understand this rule and need to be guided to decipher the rule.

4.1.5.2 The unstressed 'there'

This category of concord deals with sentences whose subjects are the unstressed existential 'there'. This is the noun or noun phrase that comes before the verb that controls the verb. Therefore, a plural noun phrase will agree with a plural verb and vice versa (Downing & Locke, 2006). As crystal (2003) has noted, existential there is entirely different from there used as a place adverb. It has no locative meaning, as can be seen by the contrast: There is a sheep over there.

They add that existential there carries no emphasis all, whereas the adverb does. There he is? *There* is the grammatical subject and it is a dummy pronoun. It is used in front of a verb. The whole construction is called existential sentence.

Examples:

a. There was a cat under the table

b. There were cats under the table.

c. There is always some madness in love.

d. There is pressure on the teacher to complete his scheme of work.

e. If there are enough seats, the students would be happy

In the first sentence, the noun 'a cat' requires that the verb be singular since it is a singular noun, in the same way, the verbs in the other senses are controlled by the noun or noun phrase. Students have challenges differentiating the existential 'there' and the place adverb there. They also mismatched the singular subjects with plural verbs and vice versa.

Errors committed by students included:

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i. There are always some madness in love

ii. There is a cat under the table.

iii. There was cats under the table.

iv. There are pressure on the teacher to complete the scheme of work

v. If there is enough seats, the students would be happy

Table 4.1.5. Inverted subject-verb concord errors

Type of concord (Rule) errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage of errors (%)
The WH –interrogators	20	57
The unstressed (there)	15	43
Total	**35**	**100**

Table 4.1.5 shows the various concord errors committed under inverted subject-verb agreement. This is presented in Figure 4.1.5.
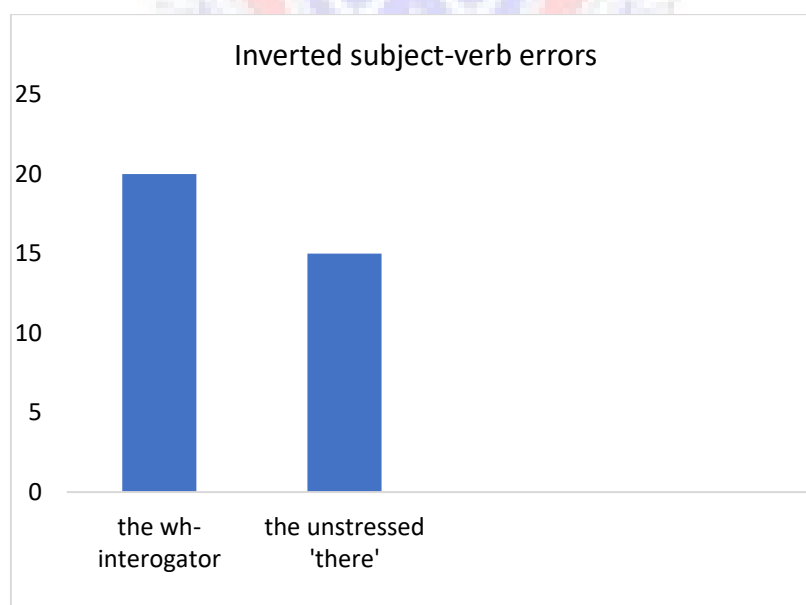
Figure 4.1.5. Inverted subject-verb errors

The inverted subject is referring to the noun pronoun phrase that comes before the verb which is the subject of the verb. Therefore, per the principle of this category of concord, if the

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noun phrase or noun is singular, it requires a singular verb and if the noun phrase or noun is plural then it must agree with a plural verb.

4.1.6 Shifts in constructions with concord errors

A shift in sentence construction occurs when words or phrases intend for one purpose are used for another, upsetting the natural flow of the sentences some students failed to give correct responses to these shifts in constructions below:

4.1.6.1 Shift in verb-tense concord errors

1. We came, we saw, we conquer

2. She caught the ball and then throw it to the catcher.

3. My father visit me last week.

4. They broke the door and cater away the property.

The sentences above begin in the past tense but shift without any reason to the present. Such shifts make the sentence inconsistent. Student could not correct these sentences because they could not apply the rule of this category which states that elements in sentences should be agree in tense to keep elements consistent. This type of errors recorded 30 errors committed. The correct versions of sentences are:

The sentences are corrected as;

a. I came, I saw, I conquered

b. She caught the ball and then throw it to the catcher.

c. My father visited me last week.

d. The broke the door and catered away with the property.

4.1.6.2 Shift in voice concord errors

The voice of the verb may be either active or passive in a sentence. The principle is that when a sentence contains two or more verbs, both verbs should maintain the same voice. Examples are:

a. When children turned on the TV, a buzzing noise was heard.

'turned' is active and was heard is passive voice

b. Two men escaped from prison yesterday but were captured immediately.

'escaped' is in active voice and were captured is in the passive voice. Though not consistent but the use of the passive allows the sentence to focus on the subject.

The sentences are corrected as;

When the children turned the TV, they heard a buzzing noise.

c. The principal caught him, in the act, interrogated him, found him guilty and he logs expelled.

In this sentence too, the first two clauses are in the active voice and the last two subordinate clauses are in the passive voice. This is corrected to the principal caught him in the act, interrogated him and expelled him. Twenty (20) errors were made

4.1.6.3 Shift in mood concord error.

This concord error category occurs with directions, where the mood shifts from indicative to imperative or voice-versa. Examples are as follows:

a. Take two mangoes, and then you should call me in the morning.

The word 'take' is an imperative mood whilst you should call is an indicative mood. The two are not consistent and therefore do not agree in voice. The sentence is corrected as:

b. Take two mangoes and then call me later.

Here, most students could not correct the sentences because of the changes in tense, voice and mood. This makes it difficult for the students and distracts the meaning of the sentences.

c. Call me when you get home, then you should start your homework.

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Here, there is a shift from imperative mood to indicative mood when the two clauses are all put in imperative mood. The sentences are corrected as:

a. Call me when you get home and then start your homework.

b. If I were you, I should be excited about the play.

Here, the first clause is a subjunctive mood expressing a wish, and the second clauses is an indicative mood. The sentence is corrected as.

a. If I were you, I would be excited about the play.

Now, the two clauses are all in subjective mood. Students failed to give correct responses to this category of concord due to in adequate mastery of this rule. Ten (10) errors were committed under this category.

The deviant sentences contain two clauses which do not agree in either tense, voice or mood. For instance, starting a construction using past tense but shift to present tense results in a shift in construction concord error. Therefore, per the rule, the clauses must agree in number, person, tense and mood to bring about consistency and to make sentence easy to understand. Students found it difficult to identify the shift and a result committed these errors in this category of concord.

Table 4.1.6. Shifts in constructions concord errors

Types of Errors	Frequency of Error	Percentage of Error (%)
Shift in verb tense	30	50
Shift in voice	20	33
Shift in mood	10	17
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 4.1.6 indicates the categories of errors committed under shift in construction concord errors. The results are presented in Figure 4.1.6.

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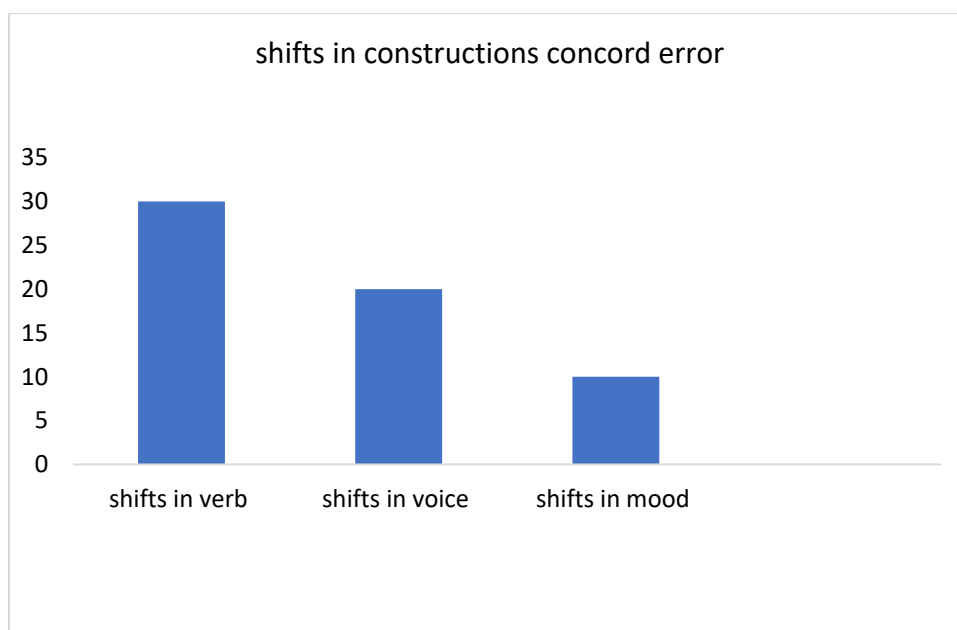
4.1.6. Type of shift in construction concord errors
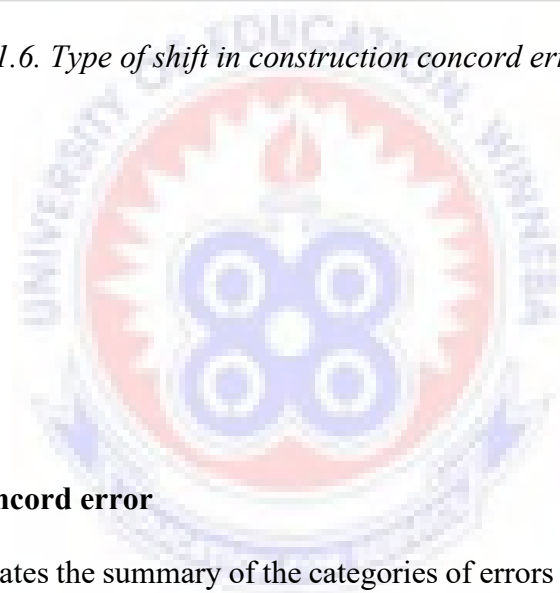
4.1.7   Summary of concord error

Table 4.1.7 indicates the summary of the categories of errors found from the study with their frequencies and percentages.

Table 4.1.7. Summary of types of concord errors

Categories of concord errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage or errors (%)
Subject-verb concord	106	30
Determiner-noun concord errors.	65	19
	60	17

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Shifts in constructions concord errors.	47	14
Verb -verb concord error	35	10
Inverted subject-verb concord errors.	35	10
Noun-pronoun concord errors		
Total	**348**	**100**

These are presented in figure 4.1.7. Figure 4.1.7 indicates that subject-verb concord errors. Comprises the highest errors found in the responses of students in the test. This category of concord error has 106 cases representing 30%. The researcher noted that the students have difficulty in internalizing the various rules of subject verb concord. The student's errors committed may be due to overgeneralization of rules or incomplete application of rules as well as ignorance of rule instruction it may also be as a result of the omission of the –s in third person singular in present tense and many more could have resulted to these errors under subject-verb concord error.
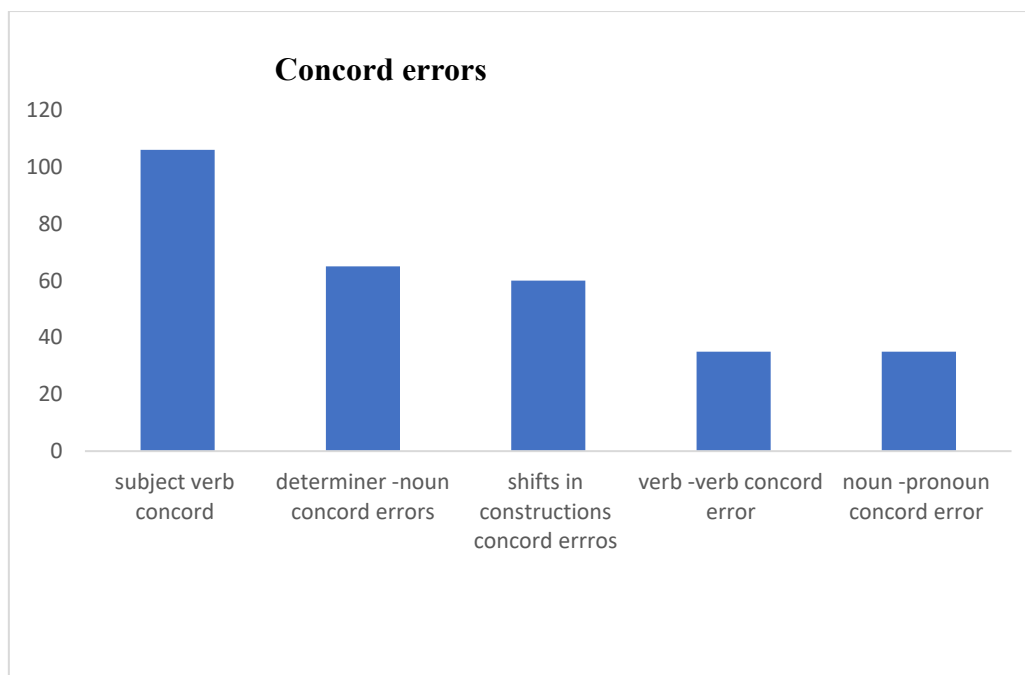
Figure 4.1.7. Summary of types of concord errors

The information in Figure 4.1.7 revealed that determiner-noun concord error recorded 65 errors representing 19%. This error was, committed due to student's inability to apply the rules of the concord category. Shifts in construction concord error also had 60% errors with 17%. These errors occurred because students were unable to identify the various shifts as in tense, voice and mood. The next category of concord error is the verb –verb concord which had 47 errors committed representing 14% errors committed representing 14%. This error occurred because students could not interpret the principle of sequences of tenses. Also, inverted subject verb concord errors were identified and recorded 35 instances committed by students representing 10%. The noun-pronoun error was the last among the various errors committed with a frequency of 35 representing 10%. This occurred because students violated the rule of this category of concord. The findings revealed, the various categories of concord errors identified are the learning difficulties of students of Ghana senior high school, Tamale.

4.2   Causes of concord errors

A careful look at the results of the analysis revealed that learners' errors are sometimes caused by teachers, learners themselves and the influence of learners' mother tongue. Error indicates poor knowledge of language code. Generally, students write test that have different degrees of grammatical and rhetorical errors. Errors can be classified into three types: carelessness, first language interference and translation (Norrish, 1987, p. 21). To Norrish, carelessness can be related to lack or inadequate motivation. It must be noted that learners lose interest in the learning of the second language if the teaching materials and presentations becomes monotonous or not appropriate for the learners. This according to Norrish, it is not the fault of the learners. Interference is another factor that accounts for learners' errors. Immediately an individual attempt to learn new habits, the old ones will absolutely interfere with the new habits. He refers to this as first language interference. Norrish believes that the learners' first language plays a complex and significant role in the acquisition of a second language. In learning the English language learners are likely to recall features from the mother tongue and try to transfer those that are similar to the second language. This may be defensible if the syntactic forms and structures are similar and it will be a positive transfer.

On the other hand, if the structures of the two languages are different. This will be a negative transfer and it will be unpardonable. Translation is another factor that accounts for learners' errors. This occurs when learners translate their first language structures, or idioms or any other feature verbatim into the target language. This is perhaps the most common source of errors in language learning. Richards (2015) on the other hand has a different view as to what causes errors. He believes the causes of learners' errors are as a result of overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized and ignorance of rule restrictions. Research has also proved that language transfer, transfer of learning, strategies of second language communication and overgeneralization of the target language

materials are the sources of learners' errors. This study also identified several causes of errors which are similar to what Norrish (1985) and Richards (2015) posited. Using interview, observation and feedback from test, the researcher realised that the role of teachers, learners themselves and first language interference are crucial in the teaching and learning of the English language. The next subsections discuss how the above-mentioned contributed to learners' errors.

4.2.1   Errors caused by teachers

The study revealed that teachers contribute to the learners' errors. From the interview and observation made it was revealed that most of the challenges learners faced when it comes to the use of concord was associated to context instruction. Researchers have proved this by explaining that the technique of language learning is the teachers attempt to communicate or use it. Learners and teachers were observed both in and outside the classroom and it was revealed that the local dialect, Dagbani, was used to teach English grammar because they were teachers who studied Ghanaian language in the university but have been asked to teach English language. Some are also teachers of English but also use the local dialect. They end up teaching traditional grammar, which is an approach used to teach grammar in which grammatical structures and rules were read out to learners. This method does not give learners the opportunity to use language in their daily activities. The teachers gave examples from textbooks based on the rules spelt out and the learners were asked to look at the examples written on the chalkboard and so that they can also give their examples. Learners were not actively involved in any class activities.

Outside the classroom, learners and teachers communicate using the mother tongue which does not make room for the learners to use the forms and structures studied in the target language (English). The interview also revealed that some of the teachers teaching English language don't have any formal training indicating that they are not qualified professional

teachers, but they have been appointed to teach English language. This condition is also a great factor that contributes to learners' errors in concord because these teachers lack the adequate knowledge in the content which they need to teach grammar and other aspects of the English language. This poses a big challenge for the students. Two of the teachers interviewed said they are diploma in education holders whilst another holds a degree in basic education. This is an indication that they lack the competence and knowledge to teach the English language effectively since they are not trained as teachers of English. Richards (2015) affirms this by arguing that teachers' attempt to communicate in the target language without having completely acquired the grammatical forms necessary to do so causes errors. This results in automatic transfer of errors from the teacher to the learners and this is called teacher induced errors.

The role of the teacher is to provide models of the target language in respect to speaking. Writing and teaching the language but the teachers themselves have problems with the correct use of form and structure of the English language. Poor teaching methods or order of presentation by teacher is another factor that causes learners errors. From the interview and observation, it was also noted that some of the teachers did not use teaching and learning materials during grammar lessons and rather taught in abstract and so learners could not understand some of the rules. The researcher also observed that learners were not taught the exceptions to rules in the use of structures and forms. This resulted in in overgeneralization. From all indication, teachers are a contributing factor to learners' concord errors.

4.2.2 Errors caused by learners

Aside the teacher-induced errors, learners also contribute to a greater extent in relation to the errors they commit in their reading and writing. Learners do not communicate regularly using the English language. The researcher observed that learners speak the first language mostly outside the classroom and so do not practice the structures and forms they learned in

class. The interview with the learners also revealed that they had poor reading habits due to lack of reading materials which is a big challenge for learners. They complained that apart from the notes they copy in class they had no other reading materials and so could not do any further reading on what was taught in class. The interview with teachers also revealed that students' poor performance in concord is due to their inability to identify the subject when there are several pre-modifiers before the noun head or post-modifiers. Also, during grammar lessons learners are not actively involved since most of them did not ask or answer questions. The grammar lessons the researcher observed were mostly teacher- cantered because learners were not given the opportunity to use the rules learnt in class as a result make learners passive and unable to grasp the concept of concord and grammar as a whole. Confusion, carelessness and poor attitude to learning of concord results in concord errors. Norrish (1987) however shares a different view on carelessness. He says that carelessness is most often related to lack of motivation and not the fault the learner.

The perception that concord has a lot of rules and for that matter it is difficult to understand as one of the teachers said in the interview has been a big problem. Some of the learners also said they find it difficult to identify singular and plural verbs, they have difficulties with regards to when to add the –s inflection of the singular verbs. The irregular forms in the grammatical patterns of the English language pose a problem for learners. This is evident in the formation of nouns, verbs, aspects, etc. for instance, a second language learner who comes to believe that the plural of 'chief 'is chiefs then the next moment the learner is taught again that the plural of 'thief' is plural 'thieves'. This definitely confuses the learner. The same is applicable to the learner who believes that the superlative of 'small' is 'smallest' then the next time the learner is told again that the comparative for 'beautiful' is more beautiful. The learner will be more confused that the comparative of 'little' is 'less' and not 'more little'. The learners' ignorance of these rule restriction and sometimes learners may not remember that for

the rules, so their incomplete application of grammatical rules can result in unnecessary usage. Categorization of lexis and structure of English can make learners commit errors. It is very impossible for the learner and user of the second language not to make grammatical errors in the process of learning and using the target language.

4.2.3   Errors caused by learners' L1 transfer

When both learners' Ll and L2 have the same form or linguistic features, learning becomes easier and does not result in error. This is because although some features are transferred, they do not result in any problem. However, when the structures are different and are transferred, it results in negative transfer or interference. The learner is a passive recipient of a language and for that matter constantly tests the new language, makes rules and then alters and refines these rules. By doing this, the learner is bound to commit errors. These errors are inherent within the language system and not native language-induced. Learners' use of the native language patterns or rules leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language.

This assertion is not different from the students under this study. They overgeneralized the rules of concord especially in the deviant constructions concord errors where they failed to apply the rule of restriction to the existing structures. The learners seemed unaware of the differences and similarities between theL1 and the L2. For example, to the learner, 'furnitures' is the plural of furniture because there is plural marked on furniture in their native language, Dagbani, and so they transferred into English language. The teacher can detect this error if he/she is familiar with the native language of the learners. The differences between students' L1 and the target language aspects like morphology, syntax, and semantics make the target language difficult to learn (Mbau & Muhsin, 2014).

4.3   Conclusion

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This chapter analysed data from feedback of objective test items on the various types of concord, through interview and observation. The study identified some concord errors students commit and the factors that account for those errors. In conclusion, the first research question sought to identify the concord errors of Ghana Senior High School, Tamale. The categories of concord errors identified include: subject verb concord errors (106), determiner noun concord errors (65), shifts in constructions concord errors (60), verb-verb concord errors (47), inverted subject-verb concord errors (35), and pronoun noun concord errors, (35). The second research question looked at the causes of the learners' concord errors which are; Interference of L1, inadequate motivation during teaching and learning, attitude of students towards learning and teacher, poor teaching techniques of teachers and inadequate knowledge of content, inadequate teaching and learning material, misapplication of rules, and ignorance of rules.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of the major findings of this study, the implication, suggestions and conclusion. The main objective of the study was to identify the concord errors committed by students of Ghana Senior High School. The study is a qualitative analysis conducted in Ghana Senior High School, Tamale, Northern Region of Ghana. The researcher gathered data from 100 students. The marked scripts revealed several categories of errors in concord under subject verb concord, proximity concord, grammatical concord and pronoun concord. The next section presents a summary of the findings made of the errors identified. This is followed with a discussion on the causes of the errors. The fourth section presents pedagogical implications of the results. The chapter ends with suggestions for future research.

5.1   Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Categories of errors

A total number of 348 errors were recorded from the objective test, subject-verb agreement concord errors topped the list with 106 errors representing 30%. Errors in this category were committed due to students' inability to match the appropriate verb with its subject, particularly, singular subject with third person singular verb in present tense. The headword-verb concord errors are also attributed to the inability of students to identify the headword of a string of words. Determiner –noun concord errors are second with 65 errors representing 19%. Errors in this category were committed because students were unable to the rules of this concord category.

Shifts in constructions concord errors were third with 60 cases representing 17%. These errors occurred due to students' inability to identify the various shifts in the clauses with regards to tense, voice and mood. Verb-verb concord errors recorded 47 cases representing 14%. Here, students could not decipher the rules of sequences in tense. Inverted subject-verb

concord came next with 35 errors representing 10%. This occurred because students violated the rule by mismatching singular verbs with plural noun phrases and vice versa. Pronoun – noun concord errors which came last also recorded 35 error cases representing 10%. Students committed this error because they could not use the appropriate pronouns in place of their noun phrases and could not also match the appropriate verbs to the pronouns. Inverted subject-verb concord errors and noun-pronoun concord errors were the least.

. These errors occurred due to learner's inability to apply the rules of concord in their use in all the instances.

5.1.2   Causes of Errors

Based on the findings made from the data gathered and analysed for this study, several factors were realized to be the cause of learners' errors in students' use of concord. These can be grouped under the school environment, the learner's attitude towards learning and L1 interference.

1. **School environment (teachers)**

   i.   Poor methods of teachers of English.

   ii.   The most common method of teaching grammar is the grammar translation method.

   iii. Failure to give students individual attention and using lots of illustration or examples during concord lessons for students to do more practice.

   iv.   Lack of adequate qualified teachers.

   v.   Teachers inadequate knowledge of their subject matter or content.

   vi.   Lack of students reading material and archaic books stocked in the school library.

   vii. Failure to involve students actively in grammar lessons.

   viii. Teachers' failure to use teaching and learning materials to teach.

ix.   Failure to motivate learners.

2. **Learners' attitude**

    a. Lack of concord knowledge right from basic level.

    b. Lack of personal reading materials due to poverty rate of learners' background.

    c. Students perception that concord rules are many, difficult and confusing.

    d. Poor attitude towards reading.

3. Intra -lingual and inter -lingual transfers or L1 interference.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

The study has pedagogical implications for the teaching and learning of the English language. Finding strategies that could improve the students understanding of the concept of concord to help them acquire the desired competence in its usage is essential. Brown (2006) opines that there is increasing evidence that error correction is over all useful and can be helpful in learning the target language. Teacher should encourage classroom activities that will involve learners. This will assist students to achieve the desired competence, and teachers should also design learning outcomes that will allow learners practice the forms and structures learnt in a lesson. Teachers should give regular class exercises and assignments which will help learners to read and do more oral presentations. Teachers should build a good rapport with students for a successful teaching and learning. This will help build a good relationship between teacher and students to develop and improve the academic performance of students.

Affable teachers maintain a good relationship with their learners and report to their students when they are performing well or not academically, this contributes to the wellbeing of the students. Teachers should make students more sensitive to concord rules in the input that surrounds them and also should ensure the environment for teaching and learning language is conducive, so that learners can take risk to practice what they have been taught freely without fear. This can be done through the use of role play, dramatization, group work or pairing

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learners to solve a problem task. Through such activities, learners interact with their peers freely using the English language. Through this, learners' hypothesis in language learning environment are tested.

Also, teachers should use learner-centred methods to encourage active participation of students in a language teaching lessons. Teachers should make use of drills in sentence patterns, identify learners' errors and correct them. Again, teachers should be good model of the target language since the learners copy their teachers; therefore, whatever they say or write is a reproduction of what they heard. Teachers should also motivate students to learn and they should be innovative and make good use of contemporary activities that can be adapted to the learning experiences in the classroom, the teacher has to be creative enough to make this activity interesting and exciting for learners.

Furthermore, in service training and workshop should be organised for language teachers to update themselves with new ideas. Teachers should always prepare adequately to understand subject matter by reading extensively before going to teach any aspect of grammar, especially concord. They should make good use of teaching and learning materials. Finally, teachers of English must be adequately equipped to face the challenges of teaching concord and language such as English. This will help minimize most errors in concord. Qualified teachers should be employed to teach the English language.

On the other hand, learners should be provided with their personal reading materials to help them learn, and they should be attentive in class during teaching and learning to get a better understanding of the concept being taught, and practice more on concord rules by reading more about them. The students should have a positive mind set towards learning concord and English language.

Also, the syllabus should be planned and designed with its appropriate books to reduce the burden on teachers going around to look for appropriate text books for learners. Text books

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designers should also provide corresponding teachers guide to assist them teach grammar. These two bodies should work hand-in-hand to produce books that will correspond with the topics in the syllabus.

Finally, parents and guardians must work together with teachers towards assisting the learner in their studies. House whole chores should be reduced for learners to be able to do their home works and assignments. They should provide their wards with appropriate reading materials to help learners learn effectively.

5.3   The role of errors in the teaching and learning of English

Myles (2002) says that errors are something that might happen from time to time until the second language learner internalizes the language entirely. He describes an error as a derailment in the speech or writing of a second language learner by the use of inappropriate words and language structure. Knowledge of learners' errors is very significant in the teaching and learning of English for teachers because it will assist them to discover the areas of learners' difficulty in learning the English language from basic level to tertiary. Generally, interferences affect the scope of knowledge the learner has acquired at a specific stage. Regular findings of errors committed by learners and the frequency of occurrence will assist teachers to design different strategies to organise remedial lessons on those areas they are committing the errors in order to minimise the challenge the learners have. Errors are very important to the language teacher because they provide enough authentic feedback that gives the teacher a clue of the effectiveness of teaching techniques.

Errors help the teacher to identify concepts in the syllabus that learners have difficulty in understanding or topics that have not been taught well will be given further attention. Based on this, the teacher can devise remedial classes for learners. Also, errors help the teacher to measure the rate at which language is acquired and the strategies learners devise to acquire language. This is evident from the interlingua and intralingual errors learners make. Richards

(2002) affirms that errors play the role of enabling the teachers to discover, identify and analyse learners' mistakes as well as designing the appropriate methods for their mitigation. To him, error serve as a tool through which the discovers the rules of the target language which could not be understood earlier. Myles (2002) also explains that a second language teacher can only assess the learners' abilities from the range or type of errors they make. Errors must occur before correct grammar rules are completely internalized. Yankson (1994) therefore urges teachers of English to have a humane and tolerant attitude to error because the error is a natural inevitable outcome of the second learning process. The above views suggest that error making is inevitable in the learning of a second language.

5.4   Suggestions for future research

This study sought to identify the concord errors that Ghana Senior High School students (Tamale) commit. From the data, different categories of concord errors where identified. Further research work may also be conducted on concord errors in English on a wider range. This could be executed by looking at different schools in Tamale municipality as well as other regions with an increase in the number of students.

5.5   Conclusion

The study aimed at investigating, identifying and categorizing the various concord errors committed by students of Ghana Senior High School. Findings obtained from objective test, interview and observation revealed different types of errors. These were subject-verb concord errors, determiner-noun concord errors, shifts in construction concord errors, inverted subject-verb concord errors and noun-pronoun concord errors. The concord errors of students of Ghana Senior High School and the factors that account for these errors were the focus of the discussion. The main challenges include the problems in applying the rules of English language concord due to intra -lingual or inter lingual interference, subject verb, concord as well as peculiar challenges in identified areas of concord. As to why these students encounter these

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learning problems could be generally poor reading habit of students, due to lack of personal reading materials like texts books, lack of constant practice of the concord rules, difficulty in identifying subjects in sentences, rule exceptions and difficulty in mastering the rules of concord. Finally, the question of how students could be assisted to overcome their concord problems was answered with the following; encouraging in-service training for teaching, training more qualified teachers of English, encouraging students to develop the habit of reading, involving students actively in grammar lessons using different drills, teachers using appropriate teaching methods, teaching learning materials curriculum designers and textbooks designers should work hand in hand for books provided to correspond with syllabus and parents should provide the learners with all they need to learn effectively. The researcher hopes that these suggestions would be looked at so that students' concord errors will be reduced if not eliminated.
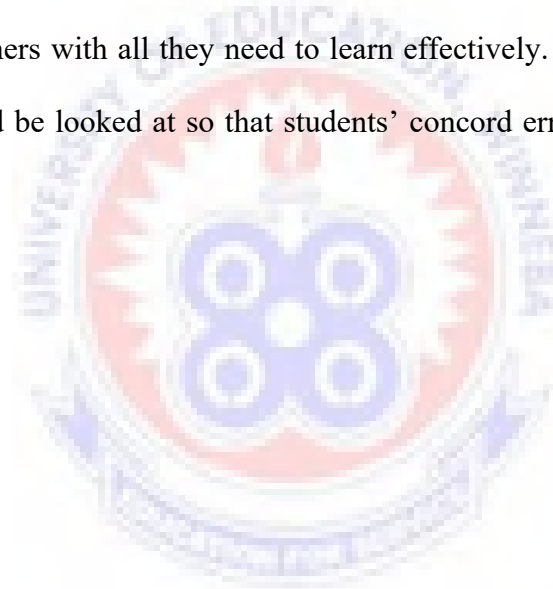
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APPENDIX A

TEST ON CONCORD

Subject   :   English language

School   :   Ghana Senior High School

Class   :   SHS 3

Duration   :   1 hour, 30 minutes

Instruction : Answer all questions

Select the appropriate option from the alternatives lettered A to C to complete each sentence below.

1. All the members of my family ------------------------- kind.

(a) is   (b) are   (c) are being

2. A box full of pens -------------------- found here.

(a) are (b) was (c) were

3. This man ----------------- good.

(a) is   (b) are (c) were

4. These sheep lost ---------------------- shepherd.

(a) its   (b) them   (c) their

5. These ---------------------- all my shoes.

(a)are   (b) is   (C) was

6. The government ------------------------ decided to change the educational system of Ghana.

(a) have   (b) has   (c) was

7. Physics -------------------------- my favourite subject.

(a) are (b) were (c) is

8. Public toilets --------------------- not hygienic.

(a) is   (b) are (c) has

9. Our teachers ------------------------- understand us.

(a) don't (b) doesn't   (c) does

10. Mumps -------------------- painful.

(a) is been   (b) are   (c) is

11. The main problem with the restaurant …………………………. the flies.

(a) was   (b)is   (c) are

12. Human beings ………………………. in air.

(a) breathe (b) breathes   (c) breathing

13. She …………………….. food.

(a) eat   (b) eats   (c) eating

19. The particulars of the vehicle ……………………………………….. expired.

(a) have   (b) has   (c) having

14. Her mortal remains …………………….. buried in the church yard.

(a) was   (b) were   (c) has been

15. You and Amina, …………………………….. in charge of this house.

(a) am   (b) is   (c) are

16. His aim in making all those efforts ………………………. to pass the examination.

(a) was   (b) were   (c) are

17. The news that reached us after the accident …………………… shocking.

(a) were   (b) was   (c) were being

18. Extra police ………………………….. drafted into the violence.

(a) were   (b) was   (c) has been

19. The outstanding arrears of salaries ………………………….. paid last month.

(a) was   (b) are   (c) have been

20. Mary is one of the girls who ……………………………. in the school choir.

(a) sing   (b) singing   (c) sings

21. She bought …………………………….. a nice travelling bag.

(a) myself   (b) herself   (c) himself

22. The government …………………………………. tired of workers strikes.

(a) is   (b) are   (c) is being

23. The chief and his wife …………………………. arrived.

(a) have   (b) has   (c) has been

24. My thanks ………………………. to my parents.

(a) go   (b) goes   (c) are going

25. My trousers ……………………. torn.

(a) are   (b) is   (c) has

26. Two years ………………………. a short period to be away.

(a) has   (b) are   (c) is

27. The cause of all these social evils ……………………………………. improper discipline.

(a) is   (b) are   (c) were

28. I …………………………. my parents weekly.

(a) visit   (b) visiting   (c) visits

29. What I say and what I think ………………………. my own affair.

(a) is   (b) are   (c) has been

30. The chairman and secretary of the association ……………………………. come.

(a) has   (b) have been   (c) have

31. The president and his asides ………………………… arrived.

(a) have   (b) has been   (c) has

32. Exchanging gifts among friends …………………………… always encouraging.

(a) are   (b) being (c) is

33. This couple ……………….. moved into their new house.

(a) has   (b) have   (c) having

34. Even the waste matter from our cattle ……………………………. very useful.

(a) are   (b) are been   (c) is

35. When one is confronted with a problem he ……………………………….

(a) prays   (b) pray   (c) prayed

36. Everybody …………………………. ready to go.

(a) are   (b) is   (c) were

37. Three plus seven …………………………….. ten.

(a) equal   (b) equals   (c) equalling

38. Every student and every lecturer …………………. expected at the pavilion.

(a) am   (b) is   (c) are

39. Make sure you ………………………. your scripts after writing.

(a) submits   (b) submit   (c) has submitted

40. Each of the players ………………………….. a prize after every match.

(a) gets   (b) get   (c) are getting

41. Your brother loves me, ………………………… he?

(a) don't   (b) didn't   (c) doesn't

42. Tales of Two Cities ……………………… an interesting novel.

(a) is   (b) are   (c) have been

43. Lack of books ……………………… the teacher great concern.

(a) gives   (b) give   (c) given

44. He who works hard at his studies………………………… good grades.

(a) make   (b) makes   (c) are making

Fill in the gaps with the appropriate past tense verb

45. The boy danced and the girl ------------------ it.

(like, liked)

46. She ---------------------- but I went by bus.

(walked, walk)

47. The bus ------------------------- at the station and we all ----------------------- .

(stop, stopped)   (get, got)

48. Agnes -------------------- the book last week and brought it back yesterday.

(take, took)

49. The hostels were overcrowded and that ----------------------- a lot of problems.

(bring, brought)

50. The story she ---------------------- talking about yesterday was real.

(is, were, was)

51. The boy ---------------------- America and he will go one day again.

(loved, loving, loves)

52. My brother -------------------------- a shirt but he will buy me a dress.

(sewing , sewed, will sew)

53.Monica has the bags which ………………………………. Stolen.

(was, were, is)

54. The children ……………………….. all the mangoes.

(plug, plugged)

Identify the errors in the following sentences and correct them.

55. Dr. and Mrs. Osei are my sponsor.

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

56. The ladies in black shoes are our aunty.

…………………………………………………………………………………….

57. One of my sisters have arrived.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

58. These ladies are actress.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

59. Mr. Edward is a seamstress.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

60. Mary is the hero of the novel.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

61. He bought a dress for his fiancé.

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

62. She is a porter.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

63. The couple are teacher.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

64. She is a king.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

65. My father visit me last week.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

66. We came, we saw, we conquer.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

67. Mohammed bought a wrist watch and it was stolen by Latif.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

68. The principal caught him in the act, interrogate him, found him guilty and he was expelled.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

69. The broke the door and scatter away the property themselves.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Choose the appropriate determiner and verb to complete the following sentences.

70. (These, This,) girl (is, are) beautiful.

71. (These, This) houses (is, are) magnificent.

72. These, That) girls (is, are) students.

73. I hope with all (these, this) suggestions, you would make a good choice.

74. The reasons why (this, these) students are late is another factor.

From the brackets below, underline the verbs that agree with the subjects of the sentences.

75. Neither Joseph nor I (am, are) to blame.

76. Neither the lecturer nor the students (was, were) in the class.

77.Either Grace or her brothers (are, is) guilty.

78. Either his brothers or Gariba (is, are) greedy.

79. The man as well as his wives (are, is) here.

80. The men as well as their wives (are, is) here.

81. The president accompanied by his aides (was, were) late

82. The secretary along with his chairman (was, were) absent.

83.Not only the members of the club but also the president (are, is) to go for the conference.

84. The friends in collaboration with Bright (steal, steals) from his parents.

Fill in the gaps in the following sentences with the appropriate pronouns.

Example: She enjoyed herself.

85. He injured …………………………in the leg

86. You should …………………… her another chance.

87. The ladies blamed ……………………. for being very flippant

88. They are ruining ……………………… own chances.

89. The warriors are killing ………………………….

90. I blamed ……………………………. for his misfortune.

91. The dog fed ………………………. yesterday.

92. I can do the work ……………………………..

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From the brackets below choose the pronouns that will agree with the subjects or objects.

93. Azuma gave   ………………… a slap.

94. The man enjoyed ……………….. stay at Sunyani.

95. Apandiok and Damoah have finished ………………. work.

96.Some teachers are lazy. They hardly prepare …………………….. lessons.

97. I play tennis because ………………… makes me happy.

98. I invited the students and told them to play in the field.

99. That woman is Obaa Yaa. I want to talk to ……………………….

100. Music is an aspect of culture. ………………. should be handled with care.

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. i. Are you regular and punctual at school?

   ii. If no why?

   ....

   ....

2. What language do you speak most in school?

   Standard English [ ]   Kasem [ ]   Non-standard English [ ]

3. Do you have reading materials?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

4. How often do you visit the community library?

   Always [ ]   once a while [ ]

5. Were you taught the rules of concord   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

6. Do you understand and enjoy your concord lessons?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

   ii. Give reasons for your answers above

   ....

   ....

7. Suggest one thing that should be done to improve upon your understand of concord lessons

   ....

   ....

8. Do you use mobile phones   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

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APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

1. What is your professional qualification?

   Unprofessional teacher ☐   Cert A' ☐   Diploma ☐

2. For how long have you been teaching?

   _____

3. Have you attended any in-service training course on teaching grammar?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. What language do you use as a medium of instruction?

   English ☐   Kasem ☐

5. Which method do you use in teaching concord?

   i. Discussion ☐   ii. Demonstration ☐   iii. Lecture ☐

6. What are some of the challenges you face in class as regards to teaching of concord?

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. i. What do you think is /are responsible for studies poor performance in concord?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   ii. What do you think should be done to improve the situation?

   _____

   _____

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8. i. Do you think a good knowledge in concord will help students do well in

English   Yes ☐   No ☐

    ii. Give reasons for your answer

....

....

9. i. Do you use teaching and learning materials in your concord lessons?

Yes ☐   No ☐

ii. Give reasons for your answer above...

....

....

10. What do you think are the appropriate strategies and techniques that can

overcome the problem of concord?

....

....

11. What are some of the recommendation or suggestions as to how to solve the

problem of the use of concord among students.

....

....

....

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