UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

A STUDY OF GRAMMAR ERRORS IN THE WRITTEN EXERCISES OF THE STUDENTS OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL OF GOMOA JUKWA IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA

GEORGE BONDZIE

8100080022

A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS, FACULTY OF LANGUAGES, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR AWARD OF THE MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY (APPLIED LINGUISTICS) DEGREE

2012

i

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, George Bondzie, 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.
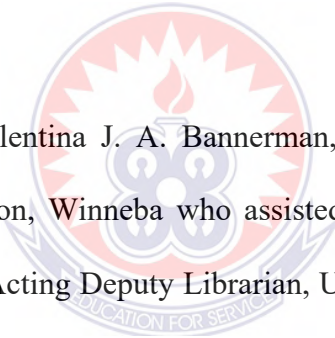
NAME OF SUPERVISOR:…………………………………......

SIGNATURE:…………………………………………………..

DATE:…………………………………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

owe appreciation to all my friends, Alex N. Amoah, Kobena Saah etc and my course mates in the programme for their encouragements and services.

I am thankful to my father, Mr. G. K. Y. Bondzie, my mother, Madam Elizabeth Arthur and my sister, Nana Ekua Bondzie for their rich advice and constant reminders to get to this level of education. May God richly bless you. I am indeed grateful to my wife, Gifty Eugenia Bondzie, for her patience, prayers and assistance in the course of this study. Finally, to all who contributed directly or indirectly especially, Miss. Gertrude Sackey towards the success of this work, I say God bless you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children, Nyanyewa and Amoasi, and my wife, Gifty E.

Bondzie; indeed, they are my source of inspiration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY/ABBREVIATION

❖ SHS: Senior High School

❖ WASSCE: West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

❖ SDASHS: Seventh Day Adventist Senior High School

❖ L1: First Language

❖ L2: Second Language

ABSTRACT

Many reports complained about grammar errors in the written exercises of SHS graduates in Ghana. This thesis work aimed to establish the types of grammar errors that SHS graduates commit, the causes of the errors and how best the errors could be addressed. Two (2) teachers and eighteen (18) students were selected through the purposive sampling technique for the study. The data collected were written responses from students and teachers through an administration of structured interview questions. The teaching syllabus for the English Language (Senior High School 1-4; 2007), English language textbooks and students' exercises were also examined. The results showed that learners' knowledge of morphosyntatic rules of the English language is insufficient.

Besides, grammar errors in SHS graduates' written exercises were caused by inadequate knowledge and understanding of the English language and grammar rules and lack of writing skills among students. Students' poor use of the forms of the English language as well as the context of learning also caused grammar errors. The study suggests that grammar errors can be minimized when conscious teaching and learning activities are focused on the meaning and the forms of the English language. Also, some SHS graduates' special needs in English grammar may be accomplished if students are assigned mentors. Among others the study concluded that educators should make conscious effort of assisting learners to be aware of morphosyntactic rules of the English language through regular practice of writing where correction and discussion of grammar errors should feature; for it is an alternative avenue for letting students to learn and understand the rules of English grammar.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter mainly talks about the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and the research questions. It further discusses the limitation of the study, delimitation of the study and the significance of the study. Finally, this chapter mentions the organization of the study also. This presentation has been done for audience to be fully aware of the details of this chapter.

1.1 Background to the Study

The phenomenon of grammar errors in students' writings has attracted different views globally from scholars of applied linguistics on how best to deal with the learners' errors. In the nineteen fifties errors were seen as taboo and not entertained in the classroom. In his book, *Language and Language Learning,* Brooks (1960) posited that errors are considered to have a relationship to learning which is like sin and virtue; "Like sin, error is to be avoided and its influence overcomes, but its presence is to be expected" (Hendrickson, 1978; p.387 cited Brooks, 1960; p. 58). According to Hendrickson (ibid), Brooks was of the view that instructional processes should assist students to produce error-free utterance, likewise written works. It was in the nineteen sixties that Corder (1967) argued that there are two schools of thought regarding methods of teaching in respect to the learners' error. The first school postulates that errors will never be committed if we are to achieve a perfect method of teaching and that committing error will only indicate inadequacy in the teaching method. Secondly, the world is an imperfect one and that errors are bound to happen regardless of all the best efforts. Therefore, "our ingenuity should

1

be concentrated on technique for dealing with the errors after they have occurred"
(Corder, ibid; p.163).

An assertion is made that "mistakes, misjudgment, miscalculation and erroneous
assumptions form an important aspect of learning virtually any skill or acquiring
information" (Brown, 2000; p. 216). It is believed that interlanguage or the learner's
language is legitimate and dynamic. Interlanguage is a legitimate system and that
learners should not be seen as producers of ill-formed or imperfect language replete
with mistakes but they are "intelligent and creative beings proceeding through
logical, systematic stages of acquisition creatively acting upon their linguistic
environment" (Fang & Xue-mei, 2007; p.11). All of these point to the fact that
grammar errors are inevitable in the process of learning or acquiring a second
language. It also suggests that second language learners continue to refine linguistic
input that is available to them. The question is how do we deal with the learners'
grammar errors after they have occurred? Ferguson (1966) then suggested that;

> our syllabuses have been based at best upon the impressionistic judgments and
> vaguely conceived theoretical principles where they have had any considered
> foundations at all. The suggestion that we should take more account of the
> learner's needs in planning our syllabuses is not new (Corder, ibid; p. 165 cited
> Ferguson, 1966).

Again, evidences from research show that researchers hold varied views on what
to do with the learners' grammar error. Oladejo (1993) suggested that learners want
their errors corrected because 96% of learners indicated that grammar errors need
high attention or some attention. Birckbichler (1977) proposed that error correction
should be reserved for manipulative grammar practice and that errors should rather

be tolerated more during communicative practice (Hendrickson, ibid; p.390 cited Birckbichler, 1977). It came out in a study on differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction of the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners that;

> The FG (Focused Group) achieved the highest accuracy gain scores for both articles and the other four grammatical structures (i.e., copular 'be', regular past tense, irregular past tense and preposition), followed by, in order, the WPG (writing practice group), UG (unfocused group) and CG (controlled group). Overall, these results suggested that unfocused CF (Corrective Feedback) is of limited pedagogical value whereas focused CF can contribute to grammatical accuracy in L2 writing (Sheen, Wright & Moldawa, 2009; p. 556).

Truscott (1996) also hypothesized that grammar correction termed as "correction of grammatical errors for the purpose of improving a student's ability to write accurately" (p.329) is not only ineffective but also harmful and needless in writing classes. Again, it is mentioned that hundred percent students approve of all their written errors corrected as some students find every error correction as 'annoying', 'distracting' and 'discouraging' (Zhu, 2010; cited Leki, 1991). The results of all the above views on error correction can be attributed to the approaches of which the studies were done. Apparently, the recommendation that learners' needs should be considered when syllabuses are planned takes us to the domain of the cognitive approach to second language learning. Therefore, Corder (ibid) mentioned the problem as researching into the built–in syllabus of the learners and to determine whether it is worthier than the instructor-generated techniques when dealing with the learners' grammar errors.

According to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports teaching syllabus for

the English language (2007), the official language of Ghana is the English language. And it is the medium of instruction in Ghanaian schools from basic four in the primary level to the tertiary level of education. Therefore, it is important for students and other people to study English since it is the principal medium for teaching and learning, official work and international communication. Also, at the senior high school level of education in Ghana, students begin to study the essential rules of the language use. Two of the general aims of the syllabus state that; (a) reinforce language skills and competencies acquired at the junior high school, and (b) develop further the language skills and competencies which were acquired at the junior high school. Clearly, at this level, learners are expected to be conversant with the rules of the English language. Apparently, since the English language has been accepted as an official language of Ghana, SHS students are learning the English language as second language learners. In effect, all Ghanaian SHS students and teachers are faced with diverse issues relating to second language learning.

Gyasi (2011) in his study of an *Analysis of the Readability of Essays of First Year University Students in Ghana - The Case of University of Cape Coast*, the result indicated that first year level hundred students' essays in Ghanaian universities are largely difficult to understand. Again, Gyasi, Nartey and Coker (2011) wrote on *A Preliminary Report on First Year University Students' Knowledge of Basic Grammar: A Case Study of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana*, the major results indicate that students who offer communicative skills have an abysmal performance in parts of speech. Again, there is no significant difference among students' programmes of study and their performances in identifying part of speech. It is worth mentioning that these students have graduated from the senior high schools in

Ghana and found themselves in the universities with these problems. Therefore, it is essential that a research is done in a senior high school in Ghana in order to ascertain the facts and suggest best ways of addressing the problem of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.

Burt (1975) mentioned that there is no current standards on whether, when, which, or how students errors should be corrected or who should correct them (Hendrickson, ibid; cited Burt, 1975; p. 53). Robinson (1971) posited that there are few widely accepted linguistic criteria of grammatical and lexical correction in foreign language teaching (Hendrickson, ibid; cited Robinson, 1971; p. 261). Hendrickson (1977) opined that much of what have been done on error correction is speculative and need validation through great deal of empirical experimentation (Hendrickson, ibid; cited Hendrickson, 1977; p. 17). Finally, Brown (ibid) mentioned that the issue of how to correct error is highly complex. Research methods on error correction are inconclusive on effective ways of dealing with the errors. All these views justify that a research can be conducted in the area of grammar errors in senior high schools in Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of grammar errors in the written works of senior high school students has been with us for some time now. Yankson (1994) mentioned that students have difficulty in handling tense, spelling and concord (Gyasi, ibid; cited Yankson, 1994). Edu-Buandoh (1997) suggested that the abysmal performance of students in the English language may be as results of inadequate time allotted to the teaching of grammar as well as lack of proper attitudes of teachers in handling

grammar. Also, the poor performance of students in English language may be caused by lack of reading among students, and the very nature of the language curriculum (Gyasi et al., ibid; p. 400 cited Edu-Buandoh, 1997).

The chief examiner's report for the senior secondary school certificates examinations for July (2001) mentioned candidates wrong use of subject-verb agreement which is exemplified as; "*He have two wives*, instead of, *He has two wives*". There is also a mixture of present and past tenses. Again, the chief examiner's report for the year 2005 mentioned that candidates displayed poor knowledge of the basic rules of the English language which include; i) the poor use of verbs particularly the irregular, transitive and intransitive, ii) wrong sequence of tenses, iii) errors of concord, iv) errors in the use of countable and uncountable nouns, direct and reported speech, v) misuse of the articles and capital and small letters, vi) spelling errors etc.

In the year 2006, the chief examiner's report mentioned that candidates' performance in English language one which is the written aspect of the English language examination declined. Also, one of the candidates' weaknesses is poor spelling and expression. It is interesting to note that on the suggested remedies, item letter (b) says; "The teaching and learning of English Language should be improved upon and emphasis placed on grammar" (p.16). These denote that there were challenges with the English grammar and that some grammar errors were encountered in many of the scripts. Gyasi et al. (ibid) pointed out that out of 350 students sampled for their study, statistical information show that students have abysmal knowledge of parts of speech as wrong responses were averagely high

6

ranging between 60 and 69 %. This suggests that the problem of grammar errors in the SHS graduates' writings persists.

With the school selected for this study, a discussion with one of the teachers on admission requirements for applicants reveals that there are no strict entry requirements for admission (Personal communication, May 29, 2012). In other words, the school accepts all kinds of English language grades for admission. This implies that students who obtained both good and bad grades in the English language of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) could be considered for admission. Additionally, statistical information obtained from the school for students' results for the year 2012 indicate that out of 155 candidates who sat for the English language of the WASSCE, sixty two (62) candidates had grades ranging between B2 – C6, and ninety three (93) candidates also obtained grades ranging between D7 – F9 representing 40% and 60% respectively. This portrays that only 40% of the candidates met admission requirements into degree programmes.

However, the teaching syllabus for the English language provides the aspects of English grammar that should be taught from form one (1) to form four (4). The syllabus clearly states topics, the objectives of the teaching, the contents, activities for teaching and learning and the evaluation processes. Nonetheless, there are no provisions for some specific suggestions to help deal with the grammar errors in the writings of SHS students. Clearly, the challenge is that the literature is void of empirical work on how to deal with the grammar errors when they occur in students' writings. Hence, the challenge is to establish the types of the grammar

7

errors, and to find out why the grammar errors are rampant in the learners' writings by assessing the views of the learners and the teachers. The syllabus silence on the issue does not provide any theoretical approach to be considered when dealing with the grammar errors in learners' writings. It may mean that the approach is *acquisition* and not learning*.* If it is acquisition, then why do we worry? But if it is *learning*, then a lot needs to be done. The implication is that the framers of the syllabus do not see grammar error treatment as crucial but from the above literature the problem is quite enormous.

Once more, in the studies of the following authors on error analysis and error correction regarding beliefs, preferences, feedbacks and expectations of learners' errors, the data collected came from learners alone but not both learners and teachers (Oladejo,1993; Rauber et al., 2004; Shawn, 2009; Zhu, 2010; Azizi et al., 2012). This implies that ideas that came out of those studies on how to address grammar errors would be based on the views of the learners only. Clearly, the difficulty is that the literature may not have enough suggestions documented from the perspectives of teachers and learners to help address grammar errors in learners' writings during teaching and learning. A research in this area will provide empirical information on current states of affairs on grammar errors from the perspectives of teachers and learners. This may assist in developing a framework to combat grammar errors. Thus, the problem is that grammar errors exist and continue to manifest in the writings of SHS graduates' writings, however there are not enough suggestions emanating from both learners and educators to help deal with the problem.

1.**3 The Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to look into the types of grammar errors that SHS graduates commit, and to find out the basis for which SHS graduates breach morphosyntactic rules of the English language in their writings and to suggest some possible instructional ideas to help address the problem. The aim is to find an effective way of dealing with the grammar errors in students' writings for future English grammar teaching and learning. The objectives of this study are to find out:

1. The types of grammar errors that senior high school graduates commit in their writings,

2. The basis for which senior high school graduates commit grammar errors in their writings, and

3. Some possible suggestions that can assist in addressing the problem of grammar errors in the writings of senior high school graduates.
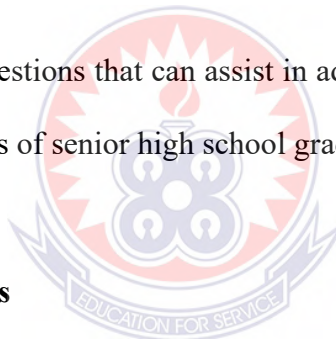
1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions that this work seeks to answer:

1. What types of grammar errors do senior high school graduates commit in their writings?

2. Why do senior high school graduates commit grammar errors in their writings?

3. How can the problem of grammar errors be addressed in the writings of senior high school graduates?

1.5 Limitation of the Study

In this study a small sample of form three students are used to represent all form three students of the SDASHS. Again, two out of the three English language

teachers are also used to represent the English language teachers of the school. The small sample also represents all other SHS students and teachers in Ghana. This may not well represent the views of other students. This is mainly due to lack of time and resources. Form three SHS students are used to represent SHS graduates in the sense that they are those who are currently being prepared to take the next WASSCE on the English language. Such students will soon be considered as SHS graduates. In addition, the reading of students' writings becomes a difficult task during the research work. The exercises of the students are also not properly organized as some exercises are found on pieces of paper. Besides, students' exercises on all the aspects of the English language are very few whilst some of the marked sheets in the students' exercise books are even torn out.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This research work focuses on grammar errors in the writings of form three students of the SDASHS. It deals mainly with the types of grammar errors students display, why learners commit grammar errors and how best the grammar error can be minimized in the writings of SHS graduates. Effectively, this work does not go beyond the boundaries mentioned in this portion of this thesis work. Again, the research questions clearly define the limits of this research work.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The essence of this research work is intended to provide some new perspectives for the teaching and learning of English grammar and for the development of educational curriculum. It will also inform decisions on how to minimize grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings, and add to the existing knowledge. The study

may provide information for teaching and learning of the English language to be more flexible than it used to be. This research work will have implications for the classroom teacher also.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This thesis comprises five chapters, and in chapter one, it deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and the research questions. The other aspects of the chapter are limitation of the study, delimitation of the study, significance of the study, and finally the organization of the study. Chapter two is the review of literature, and among others, it discusses two linguistic principles; principles of obligatoriness and grammatical categories of the major word classes of the English language. It further talks about Corder's (1967) theory of error analysis, and reviews some related studies on second language learning and error correction. The methodology of the study is the subject of chapter three. The chapter describes research design, population, sampling technique and sample size, the research site, data collection strategies and data collection protocol. In chapter four, it provides the summary of the data gathered as well as data analysis. Chapter five presents summary of findings, presents conclusions, proposes suggestions for reducing grammar errors, and offers suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses two linguistic principles; principles of obligatoriness and grammatical categories of the major word classes of the English language. It further talks about Corder's (1967) theory of error analysis, and reviews some related studies on second language learning and error correction. Alroe (2011) argued that in order for error correction to be effective, it has to be situated within a certain theoretical context. Again, that framework should be in position to assist, make and test assumptions and to develop the understanding of the theory as pedagogical. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate into the types of grammar errors, why the types exist in SHS graduates' writings and to suggest how grammar errors can be minimized from the perspectives of learners and teachers in students' writings.

2.1.0 Principle of Obligatoriness

Katamba (1993) wrote that inflectional morphology is about the influence syntax has over word-formation. Again, it deals with "syntactically determined affixation processes" (Katamba, ibid; p. 205). It means an attachment of an affix to a stem depends on the position the word occupies in a clause or sentence. Katamba (ibid) mentioned that Greenberg (1954) proposed the principle of obligatoriness to explain the phenomenon of inflectional morphology. That, "inflection occurs when, at different points in a sentence, syntax imposes obligatory choices from menu of affixes" (Katamba, ibid; p. 206 cited Greenberg, ibid). It continued that if the appropriate choice is not made, it results in ungrammatical sentence. Again, he posited that the situation is different when it comes to derivational morphemes. It

12

means that syntax does not impose the choice of a specific affix in order to ensure how well the grammar of a sentence is. For instance, the English derivational nominal suffix [-er] needs not to be suffixed to a noun because of its syntactic position. It suggests that nouns which do not have such suffix can also occupy such position as subject noun phrase (NP) without affecting the grammaticality of the sentence, for example;

  1a. The cook**er** is in the kitchen   1b. The boy is in the kitchen

  Another argument is that at certain times syntactic well-formedness requires the inclusion of a form with a particular derivational morpheme, for instance;

  2a. *He closed the door ***gentle***   2b. *The ***teach*** is in the office

     He closed the door gent***ly***   The teach***er*** is in the office

The argument is that in order to have a well-formed sentence in 2a the derivational morpheme [-ly] has to be suffixed to the adjective '***gentle***' to derive an adverb '***gently***'. Also, in order to make the 2b sentence grammatical, the head - **teach** - of the subject NP **[*the teach]** is ill-formed and has to be suffixed with the derivational nominal suffix [-er] to derive the correct NP – **The teacher**. Generally, those suffixes need to be added to the forms to ensure the well-formedness of the sentences. Katamba (ibid) said that "the claim that some affixes are syntactically more pertinent than others is well-founded" and that inflectional morphology is about "whatever information about word-structure that is relevant to the syntax" (p. 207). That is, inflectional elements of words are induced by the positions of the words, and also depend on how the words interact with other words in a phrase, clause or sentence.

13

Sundaresan (2008) mentioned that inflectional affixes have "a purely grammatical effect on the stems they attach to" (p. 2). Sundaresan (ibid) asserted that "no native speaker would leave out these affixes in the relevant contexts because doing so would mean producing ungrammatical sentences" (p.2). In effect, the absence of correct choice of an affix or morpheme in a syntactic structure makes the whole sentence ungrammatical. The following examples support the claim;

3a. This pen	These pen**s**	3b. *This pen**s**	*These pen
That pen	Those pen**s**	*That pen**s**	*Those pen

In 3a, the number of the demonstratives – *this* and *that* (singular) and *these* and *those* (plural) – determines the number of the noun – pen(s) – it qualifies to make the phrases grammatical. The reverse situations in 3b resulted in ungrammatical phrases because the number of the demonstratives does not impact on the number of the noun.
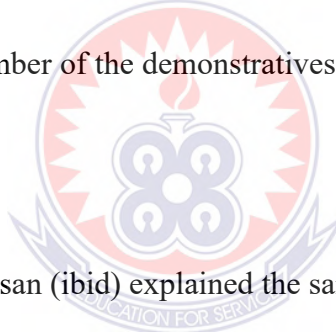
Additionally, Sundaresan (ibid) explained the same phenomenon as follows:

4a. She dance[s] to the admiration of all.

4b. We walk[ø] to the house.

In 4a, the morpheme **[-s]** is suffixed to the stem **[dance]** to agree with the subject – *she* –. In 4b, the null morpheme **[ø]** is also realized on the stem **[walk]** to agree with the subject – *we* –. The application of such morphemes has resulted in well grammatical sentences in both cases. Furthermore, it will be ungrammatical in the English language for a native speaker to say;

5a *She go to school   5b *They goes to school.

In sentence 5a, the number and the third person singular morpheme **[-s]** is not suffixed to the verb **[go],** and that makes the sentence ungrammatical. For 5b, the

14

number and the third person singular morpheme **[-s]** are erroneously suffixed to the verb **[go]** making the sentence ungrammatical. Therefore, when the number and the third person singular morpheme **[-s]** are suffixed to the verb **[go]** in sentence 5a, and also when the number and the third person plural morpheme [ø] are marked on the verb **[go]** in sentence 5b, each sentence will be grammatical as;

   6a. She goes to school.   6b. They go to school.

Essentially, the use of affixes for past tense **[-ed]**, progressive aspect **[-ing]**, perfective aspect **[-en]**, plural maker **[-s]** and third person agreement morpheme **[-s]** is crucial to the grammar of the English language. Let consider the following ungrammatical sentences;

   7a. *Four school boy visit my neigbourhood every day.

   7b. *Four school boys visits my neighbourhood every day.

   7c. *Four school boys have visit my neighbourhood every day.

   7d. *Four school boys are visit my neighbourhood every day.

In 7a, the plural morpheme **[-s]** is omitted on **boy,** in 7b the third person agreement morpheme **[-s]** is erroneously marked on **visit**, in 7c, the perfective morpheme **[-en]** is also omitted on the verb **visit,** and in 7d the progressive aspectual morpheme **[-ing]** is also not suffixed to the verb **visit.** The above explanation is a clear indication that syntax requires the presence and absence of the morphemes mentioned in each case to make the four sentences grammatical. Basically, inflectional morphemes are attached to forms to perform grammatical functions.

Notwithstanding, derivational morphemes are also important to grammar in a different way. A native speaker can leave some affixes entirely and fine other

grammatical means to convey same information. For example, the grammar of the English language does not always require the use of agentive or nominalizer morpheme **[-er]** in all situations, for instance;

8a. Kojo is a teach**er** can still be conveyed as

8b. Kojo's occupation is teach**ing**.

Here, the noun forming morpheme **[-er]** which syntax requires on the stem **[teach-]** in 8a is in a way realized with a different morpheme – gerundive morpheme **[-ing]** – on the same stem **[teach-]** in 7b which syntax requires also. The reason is that it is ungrammatical to say ***Kojo's occupation is teach.*** Let us also note that both morphemes **[-er]** and **[-ing]** are derivational morphemes. Hence, a native speaker can use either alternative to express same proposition.

Moreover, an application of a derivational morpheme on a form changes the grammatical category of the stem it attaches to. For instance, the verbs **[dance]** and **[do]** change to **[dancer],** a noun and **[doable],** an adjective when the morpheme **[-er]** and **[-able]** are suffixed respectively. In all, syntax influences the attachment of the morphemes mentioned above in a sentence. It means where the stem [**dance]** can occur in a syntactic structure the derived form i.e. [**dancer]** cannot occur. It is therefore grammatical to say; 9a. *The boys dance well*, but not 9b. **The boys dancer well.* However, where the verb "**dance"** is functioning as a 'noun' then, the derived form can occupy similar position as; 10a. *The dance is good*, and 10b. *The dancer is good.* Besides, the proposition in 10a is different from 10b.

At certain times, the attachment of some derivational morphemes like **[un-]** does not change the grammatical category of the stems. The adjectives **[happy]** and

16

[interesting] still remain adjectives **[unhappy]** and **[uninteresting]** when the morpheme **[-un]** is prefixed respectively. In other words, it is possible for both forms to occupy similar positions in a syntactic structure. For instance, both situations below are grammatical but the propositions are opposite in meaning;

11a. He is happy   11b. He is unhappy.

Interestingly, the use of inflectional morpheme does not change the grammatical category of the stem that the morpheme attaches to. For instance, when the plural morpheme **[-s]**, the past tense morpheme **[-ed]** and the third person singular morphemes **[-s]** are suffixed to the forms - **[goat]** noun, **[jump]** verb, and **[sing]** verb - respectively the categories remain unchanged; [goat**s**] noun, [jump**ed**] verb, and [sing**s**] verb. Relating this to grammar, it means syntax determines any of the morphemes mentioned above in a sentence. Conversely, derivational and inflectional morphemes can also be distinguished in terms of productivity. Arguably, inflectional morphemes are productive than the derivational morphemes. It meant that inflectional morphemes can combine freely with all members of a certain class stems. For instance, the plural morpheme [-s] combines with nouns as;

	Noun	Plural [-s]
12a.	goat	goats
12b.	boy	boys
12c.	table	tables

Moreover, the third person singular morpheme **[-s]**, the progressive morpheme **[-ing]**, the perfective morpheme **[-en]** and the past tense morpheme **[-ed]** combine with most verbs. This implies that these morphemes combine with only verbs as;

13a. She jump**s**,   13b. She is jump**ing**,

17

13c. She has jump**ed**,   13d. She jump**ed.**

Concerning derivational morphemes, they are not productive in the sense that they select the stem they attach to. For example **[un-]** can be attached to many adjectival stems but not all. For example, the forms **[happy]** and **[interesting]** can become **[unhappy]** and **[uninteresting]** and are acceptable forms in the English language when the morpheme **[-un]** is prefixed respectively. However, when the morpheme **[un-]** is prefixed to the stem **[sad]** and **[bored]**, they become **[*unsad]** and **[*unbored]** which are not acceptable forms in the English language.

One reason that accounts for the above is blocking. Blocking is "due to the prior existence of another word with the meaning that the putative word would have" (Katamba, ibid; p.73 cited Aronoff, 1976). Katamba (ibid) exemplified this with the word *thief* which already exists in the English language, suffixing it with the productive agentive derivational morpheme **[-er]** to the verb *steal* in order to form *stealer* is blocked. Such a situation results in ungrammatical syntactic structure. It is grammatical to say 14a. ***He is a thief,*** than to say, 14b. ***He is a stealer***. Also, Katamba (ibid) indicated that in a situation where there are "two semantically similar morphemes, one of which is more productive than the other, the more productive a morpheme is, less susceptible to blocking than its less productive counterpart" (p.73). He cited Aronoff (1976) to indicate that the derivational morpheme [-ness] is more productive than the derivational morpheme [-ity]. Also, the unproductive nature of derivational affixes does not mean that they always come with predictable or compositional meaning with the stem they combine with. For example the morpheme [-hood] portrays this assertion. For instance, 'brotherhood'

18

means "the state of being brothers" but 'neigbourhood' does not mean "the state of being neigbours"

Another distinguishing feature of the derivational and inflectional morphemes is that inflectional affixes are always suffixes and never prefixes in English. However, derivational affixes can be suffixes and prefixes as the examples below specify:

15a. prove	(has) prov**en** (inflectional)
15b. boy	boy**s** (inflectional)
15c. look	look**ed** (inflectional
15d. perfect	**im**perfect (derivational)
15e. state	state**hood** (derivational)

Also, inflectional morphemes usually come after all the derivational morphemes in English. In contrast, derivational morphemes, when they are suffixes, they come before all the inflectional morphemes and after the stem. For instance, in the word *ration-al-is-ation-s*, the final inflectional morpheme [-s] comes after all the derivational affixes: [**-al**], [**-iz**], and [**-ation**].

The morpheme **[-ing]** is one in form but belongs to both derivational and inflectional morpheme categories. The morpheme **[-ing]** is inflectional in the following examples; 16a. *George is dancing,* and 16b. *He was jumping*. In 16a and 14b, the morpheme **[-ing]** is used as a progressive aspectual marker. In 16a and 16b, the suffix **[-ing]** is required by syntax of the English language to make the sentences grammatical. However, the morpheme **[-ing]** is also derivational especially when it is used as gerundive suffix. The example below indicates that there is change in the category of the stem and also in meaning; 17a. *The dancing kept me awake all night*. In this situation, the suffixing of the morpheme **[-ing]** to the stem – **[dance],**

19

verb – has changed the category of the stem **[dance],** verb to noun – [dancing], noun. It can be said that there are two different [-ing] suffixes as; **(a)** [-ing] - progressive aspectual marker (Inflectional morpheme) and **(b)** [-ing]- gerundive suffix (derivational morpheme). The morpheme **(a)** [-ing] and **(b)** [-ing] sound the same; however, they are two different morphemes with different meaning and function. Grammatically, it is important that each of the two morphemes is inflected on stems based on the syntax of the sentence.

In terms of categories that inflectional and derivational morphemes are attached to in the English language, inflectional morpheme like the plural marker always attaches to only nouns and not any other category. For instance,
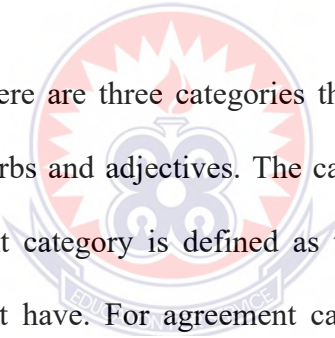
18a. car	car**s**	better	*betters
18b. book	book**s**	nice	*nices

Therefore, it is grammatical to say; 19a. *The cars look better*. But, it is ungrammatical to say 19b. **The cars look betters*. Also, the past tense morpheme **[-ed]**, past participle morpheme **[-en]**, the progressive aspectual morpheme **[-ing]**, and third person agreement morpheme **[-s]** are attached to verbs and only verbs. So it is grammatical to say; 20a*. He moved,* 20b. *He has moved*, 20c. *He is moving,* and 20d. *He moves*. The reason is that the stem – *move* – is a verb. It is therefore ungrammatical to say; 21a.**He cated,* 21b.**He has caten/cated*, 21c.**He is cating*, and 21d. **He cats*. They are ungrammatical because the stem [cat] is a noun.

2.2.0 Principle of Grammatical Categories

Tallerman (1998) postulated that different kinds of grammatical information can be attached to word classes. These include elements of comparison, number, case,

20

agreement etc. She indicated that each word class and the type of inflections it takes. According to Tallerman (ibid), there are two ways of representing them. The first situation is where a word may change its form to represent grammatical information by obtaining an affix – inflection. For example, the adjective "quick" takes a comparative suffix [-er] – quicker, or the superlative suffix [-est] – quickest. In this case, the adjective itself inflects. The second situation is where a closed word is used alongside the word class to represent the grammatical information. For instance "more handsome" and "most handsome". Here, the adjective does not inflect, and the comparative and the superlative are realized with the closed words "more" and "most".

She continued that there are three categories that are associated with the major word classes; nouns, verbs and adjectives. The categories are *Inherent*, *Agreement* and *Relational*. Inherent category is defined as those properties that a word has intrinsically or does not have. For agreement category, it indicates the syntactic links among words, e.g. subject-verb agreement. Relational category has to do with the relationship a word or phrase has with the whole sentence. For the purposes of this work, the following are the grammatical categories associated with the major word classes of the English language as explained by Tallerman (ibid; pp. 50-62).

2.2.1 Grammatical categories for English nouns

Number: In English, nouns or NPs are marked either as singular or plural. Let look at the following examples: 22a. My car (singular)   22b. My car**s** (plural). In 22a, the plural marker [-s] is not added to the form - car - , hence, it is singular in

21

number. But in 22b, the plural morpheme [-s] is attached to the form - car - to make it plural in number. Again, there are forms in English which naturally denote plural. Examples of such forms are; furniture, information, knowledge etc. In such cases, there is no need to attach the plural morpheme when necessary.

Definiteness: English language distinguishes between definite and indefinite nouns. Separate closed class words – articles – *"the"* and *"a" "an"* are used to show that distinction. For instance:

23a. The car (definite)   23b. A car (indefinite)

Glencoe (2000) explained the definite article **"the"** and the indefinite articles **"a"** and **"an"** as "it identifies specific people, places, things or ideas" and "they refer to one of a general group of people, places, things or ideas" (p. 147) respectively. These are essential in grammar in the sense that the addition of any of them to any other word class except nouns in English will be ungrammatical. The following phrases are ungrammatical because the words the articles move with are adjectives;

24a. *a specific (adjective)   24b. *the specific (adjective)

Case: Tallerman (ibid) wrote that English has a little morphology in relation to case. The only situation is where the pronouns change form in accordance with their grammatical relations. Let look at the following examples: 25a. **He** hits **her,** and 25b**. She** hits **him**. In 25a and 25b, *he* represents a man as *her* represents a woman. *He* and *She* are the subject forms whiles *her* and *him* are the object forms of the two sentences. Again *he* and *she* also agree in number with the verb *hit*. The form *her* in 25a changes form to become *she* when it occupies the subject position in 25b. Additionally, the form *he* in 25a changes form to become *him* in 25b. It means in

English, pronouns change their forms depending upon the position they occupy in a syntactic structure. Therefore, it is ungrammatical to say; 25a. *He beat they. The proper thing is to say; 25b. He beats them.

2.2.2 Grammatical categories for English verbs

Tense and Aspect: Tallerman (ibid) indicated that morphologically, English verbs have only two tenses - present and past: 26a. *George kick**s** Ama* and 26b. *George kick**ed** Ama*. In example 26a, the present tense of the verb is marked by the inflection **[-s]** on the verb form to indicate the third person and number - singular. In *I kick Ama*, the verb has no actual suffix to indicate singular. It is argued that this is non-past because most 'present' tense verbs do not refer to something that is happening now, and this is labeled as **Habitual** event. Also the past tense is marked by the morpheme **[-ed]** on the form **[kick]** in 26b, and it does not show person and number. The morphemes **[-s]** and **[-ed]** endings are the only regular verbal morphology that represent tense in English though the morpheme **[-ed]** has a dual role. Tallerman (ibid) cited Comrie (1985b; p. 9) to define tense as "grammaticalised expression of location in time". She explained that languages tend to represent grammatically contrast in time, and that is referred to as tenses. But for English, it distinguishes between past and non-past.

Aspect: Another category associated with the English verbs is aspect. It is opined that aspect as a feature on English verbs indicates whether an action is ongoing or completed. For example:

27a. John *was dancing* in the room.   27b. John *has danced* in the room.

In example 27a, the verb *was* is in past time; however, the action of dancing is not

23

over. This shows the **Progressive Aspect**, and is marked in English by the inflection **[-ing]** on the main verb – dance – plus the auxiliary verb form *be.* Regarding example 27b, we have **Perfective Aspect**, which refers to the completed action. This is realized by a change on the verb form itself. That is manifested by the use of the auxiliary verb form ***have*** plus the application of the perfective marker **[-ed]** on the main verb. The non adherence of these rules will result in ungrammatical syntactic structures.

Mood: This indicates such properties as possibility, probability and certainty. Examples are given as;

28a. Ama leaves for Accra tomorrow.

28b. Ama would leave for Accra tomorrow if she were to have enough money. The argument is that English language distinguishes between actual event 28a and hypothetical event 28b. The mood for the actual event is *Indicative*, as; ***Ama went to Accra***, (indicative mood). It is important to say that mood is a different feature from tense. For the hypothetical event, ***Ama would go to Accra tomorrow***, it is said with a separate auxiliary verb ***would,*** plus the bare form of the main verb [***go***]. These auxiliaries – would, could, should, might etc are called modal verbs. According to Tallerman (ibid), English has a subjunctive mood. In such situation, specific verbal morphology is used for the hypothetical events. The following are examples;

29a. …if she **were** to have enough money.

29b. I think that this man **leave/be removed** at once.

Here, the past tense subjunctive form ***"were'*** is used for all persons and numbers, plus the first person singular (*If I were you*). Again, the present tense subjunctive also uses the bare uninflected form of the verb, ***be*** and ***leave.*** This is different from

the third person singular of the indicative verbs; **He leaves/is removed.** In this case, the subjunctive verbal form lack verbal agreement, such as the [-s] ending.

In the view of Tallerman (ibid), *voice* is another category associated with the English verbs. However, it is relational in the sense that it is associated with the positions occupied by the NP arguments of a verb, and not any other inherent properties of the verb itself. The English language has two voices; *active* and *passive*. Lampe (2013) argued that in an *active voice* sentence, the subject commits the action. In other words, the subject NP is the agent or the doer of the action denoted by the verb. Also, in *active voice* construction, the focus is on the subject NP performing something. But for the *passive voice* construction the commitment of the action precedes the identification of the subject NP. It means that in the passive voice construction, the emphasis is on what is being done to the subject. Lampe (ibid) posited that a sentence uses the active voice when:

- The subject of the sentence is the doer: "Jane tossed the ball to Ron." (Who tossed the ball? Jane did.)
- The attribute of the subject is directly stated: "This book is excellent." (What is excellent? The book.) (Lampe, ibid; para. 3)

Additionally, a sentence is also said to be in passive voice when:

- The "doer" of the action is not mentioned: "The ball was tossed to Ron." (Who tossed the ball?)
- The subject of the sentence is acted upon: "The ball was tossed." (The subject is "the ball," but something is being done to the ball rather than the ball doing something.)
- The "doer" of the action is mentioned by is not the focus of the sentence: "The ball was tossed to Ron by Jane." (Jane threw the ball, but as the sentence is written, the focus is on the ball, not Jane) (Lampe, ibid; para. 4).

25

What distinguish between *active* and *passive* voices are the positions of the two arguments - subject NP and the object NP - and the form of the verb itself. In this active voice sentence "*Jane tossed the ball to Ron*", the subject NP [Jane] is not even mentioned in the passive voice sentence "*The ball was tossed to Ron*". And where it is mentioned the focus was not on the object NP [Jane] as "*The ball was tossed by Jane to Ron*" but rather on "the ball". Lampe (ibid) concluded that "the active voice is usually strong and direct, whereas the passive voice is often clumsy and indefinite" (para.5). It is said that the passive voice in English is featured by the auxiliary *be* or *get* and the past participle form of the main verb, but there is no specific passive affix (Tallerman, ibid). For instance in order to derive passive voice sentences from simple present and simple past tenses in active voice, it is usually marked by the auxiliary ***be-is/was/are/were plus the past participle form of the main verb.***

Agreement: Agreement in English language means that the verb form should "agree with" one or more of the subject noun phrase arguments. It implies that the inherent features of the NP should also be realized on the verb. In English, the features are person and number. However, English has little verbal agreement, that is, only the third person singular in the present tense is marked openly as in:

30a. He move<u>s</u>   30b. They sing well

30c. She run<u>s</u> fast   30d. We eat fufu

2.2.3 Grammatical categories for English adjectives

The grammatical category which is associated with English adjectives is comparison. This inherent element is represented on English adjectives. The

following examples depict the assertion; *quick*, *quicker, quickest*. Here, the base form of the adjective – **quick** – takes a comparative suffix [-er] and a superlative suffix [-est]. For instance,

31a. Kojo is older than Ama.

31b. Kojo is the oldest among all.

In 31a, there is comparison of one person with the other, but in 31b, one person is compared with many others. In effect, the comparative form compares two things as the superlative forms compares numerous things (Tallerman, ibid)

2.3.0 What is Error Analysis?

Keshavas (1997) suggested that the model of error analysis can be divided into two branches; (a) theoretical and (b) applied. Theoretically, he mentioned that the whole error analysis involves "the process and the strategies of language learning and its similarities with the first language acquisition" (Erdoğan, 2005; p. 263 cited Keshavas, 1997). He continued that it consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language and that target language itself. For learners, errors are indispensable since the making of errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses to learn. Selinker (1972**)** defined errors as "red flags" that provide evidence of the learner's knowledge of the second language (Nzama, 2010; cited Selinker, 1972). Basically, what the theory of error analysis posits is that learners do make errors, and the errors should be accepted, examined and categorized to show the processes that operate within the mind of the learner (Brown, ibid). Error analysis is a means of finding out the activities that go on in the minds of the language learner. It involves making meaning out of the strategies that the learners use. Systematically analysing errors made by language learners makes it possible to determine areas that

27

need reinforcement in teaching (Corder, ibid). Mostly, error analysis involves an examination of those errors committed by learners in both the spoken and written medium. Corder who has several publications on error analysis put it in writing as:

> The study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process (Corder, ibid; p.125).

As regards to the applied error analysis, it is basically about devising appropriate materials and teaching methods which are based on the results of the theoretical error analysis. Nzama (ibid) cited Corder (1974) that when the learners' errors are systematically analysed, the results of the analysis make it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching. What this means is that teachers should be able to analyze the grammar errors of their students and device some suggestions to help deal with the errors. In this case, the English language teacher should be able to discern the strategies that their students use in learning the English language in order to know why grammar errors occur and respond appropriately.

2.3.1 Error versus mistake

Applied linguists have drawn our attention to the distinction between errors and mistakes. Brown (ibid) differentiated between an error and a mistake as;

> A mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a 'slip' in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. As an error is a noticeably deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflects the competence of the learner (Brown, ibid; p.217).

Again, error is also defined as "the use of a linguistic item in a way that a fluent or

native speaker of the language regards it as showing faulty or incomplete learning"
(Erdoğan, ibid; p. 263). Ellis (1997) mentioned two ways to distinguish between
errors and mistakes which are based on the consistency of learner's performance as;

> If he sometimes uses the correct form and sometimes the wrong one, it is a
> mistake. However, if he always uses it incorrectly, it is then an error. The second
> way is to ask learner to try correcting his own deviant utterance. Where he is
> unable to, the deviations are errors; where he is successful, they are mistakes
> (Erdoğan, ibid; p. 263 cited Ellis 1997).

Impliedly, *mistake* can be self-corrected when one's attention is drawn to, but for
errors, it normally occurs because the learner does not know what is correct, hence,
cannot be self-corrected. Thus, with the *error*, the learner uses a linguistic item
which is not known to the learner and cannot explain its correct usage when the
learner's attention is drawn to. But for the *mistake*, the learner can self-correct when
attention is drawn to. It means the learner is familiar with the linguistic item, but for
other reasons mistake occurs. In effect a learner can correct a mistake as it will be
impossible for the learner to correct an error. Hence, the teacher must be able to
understand this phenomenon in order to distinguish learner's grammar mistakes and
errors in their written works and to provide appropriate responses.

2.3.2 Identification and description of error

Corder (ibid) identified a three stage model for error analysis. The first stage is the
collection of the data, and is basically about the recognition of the idiosyncratic
language of the learners. The second stage is the description which is the accounting
of idiosyncratic dialect of the learners. Finally, the explanation stage is the ultimate
object of the error analysis. Nzama (ibid) cited Ellis et al. (1985) and mentioned

how to identify and analyze learners' errors. The first step requires the selection of a corpus of language, followed by the identification of the errors. Thereafter, the errors are then classified and analyzed grammatically. The final step is an explanation to the different types of the errors identified and classified.

In addition, in the process of identifying and describing errors, Brown (ibid) cited Corder (1971) model for identifying errors or idiosyncratic speech that any spoken sentence by a learner can be written down and analyzed for idiosyncrasies. He talked about the distinction between overt and covert errors. For the overt errors in an utterance, they are unquestionably ungrammatical at the sentence level whiles the covert errors in an utterance or at the sentence level, the grammar is well-formed. The next issue is the interpretation of both overt and covert errors within a communication context. He argued that "I'm fine, thank you" is grammatically correct at the sentence level, but as a response to 'Who are you', it is absolutely an error. In effect, there is 'sentence level' error and 'discourse level' error.

Also, there are two areas of errors; the domain and the extent. Domain is considered as the rank or the level of linguistic unit i.e. from phoneme to discourse which must be taken as context so as to bring the error to the fore. The extent is also the level or rank of the linguistic unit that would have to be deleted, replaced, supplied, or reordered so as to repair a sentence. This axiom assists in operationalizing Corder's overt–covert distinction of errors mentioned earlier on (Brown, ibid). It can be mentioned that identifying and describing errors are important in the analysis of the learner's error since that will enable the researcher to know the causes of the errors and the necessary sanctions to be applied to arrest

30

the situation. This suggests that if a teacher is able to identify and describe the grammar errors made by the SHS students, the likelihood is that it will inform decisions on the teaching and learning of English grammar.

Additionally, Fang et al. (2007) cited Burt (1975) who distinguished between "global" and "local" errors. They explained that global errors are preventive of comprehensive communication, that is to say it does prevent some aspects of the messages to be understood. The local errors which occur at the sentence level do not impede communication. Brown (ibid) cited Hendrickson (1980) and mentioned that local errors need not to be corrected in the sense that the message is clear and that error correction interrupt the flow of speech communication. Again global errors also need not to be corrected because what it is said is believed to be true. The suggestion is that the teacher should not interrupt free speech to prevent fluency in a continuous speech. But, will it be prudent to correct grammar errors that are "global" and "local" in SHS students' written exercises? Can the correction of the grammar errors in the learners' writings impact positively on their future works?

Brown (ibid) cited Lennon (1991) and mentioned some ways of identifying and categorizing errors as; addition, omission, substitution, and ordering. Examples for the categorizations are:

Omission

Morphological Omission	: *A strange thing happen yesterday
Syntactical Omission	: *Must say also the names?

Addition

In morphology	: * The books is here
In syntax	: * The London

In lexicon	: * I stayed there during five years ago
Selection	
In morphology	: * My friend is oldest than me
In syntax	: * I want that he comes here
Ordering	
In pronunciation	: * fignisicant for "significant", prulal for "plural"
In morphology	: * get upping for "getting up"
In syntax	: * He is a dear to me friend
In lexicon	: * key car for "car key" (Erdoğan, 2005; p. 264)

As regards to the morphological and syntactical *omission* errors above, the past tense morpheme **[-ed]** has been omitted on the stem **[happen-]** as the subject noun phrase is also missing after the modal verb **"must"** in both instances causing the errors. For morphological, syntactic and lexical errors of *addition*, the plural morpheme **[-s]**, the article **"the"** and the word **[during]** have been added respectively resulting in errors. Concerning morphological and syntactic errors of *selection* in the examples above, the suffix morpheme **[-est]** is wrongly selected and suffixed on the stem **[old-]** instead of the morpheme **[-er]**. The reason is that there is a comparison of only two things. Again, it would have been better for the learner to have selected the word **"wish"** than the word **"want",** because it is the desire of the speaker to have had the one there. But for the errors of *ordering*, all of them are self-explanatory with the exception of the syntax errors. This is an error in the sense that the ordering of the words in the sentence is incorrect. It would have been better for the speaker to have said *"He is a dear friend to me"* than *"He is a dear to me friend"*

2.3.3 Sources or causes of errors

According to Erdoğan (ibid), errors can be grouped into two main categories in terms of its sources or causes as (i) interlanguage transfer, and (ii) intralingual transfer. Erdoğan (ibid) submitted that errors may occur at different levels of the language; phonological, morphological, grammatical, and lexica-semantic elements of the native language into the target language. He exemplified that when Turkish students intend to produce the "th" [θ] dental fricative of "thank you" the dental fricative is pronounced as the alveolar stop't' [t].

2.3.3.1 Interlingual and intralingual transfers

Brown (ibid) argued that *interlingual transfer* errors emerge when the learner applies his/her knowledge of the first language onto the target language resulting in an error. Ellis (1997) argued that there are some errors which are universal or reflective of the learners' effort to make the task of learning and using the target language easy. For instance, the use of the past tense morpheme **[-ed]** for all verbs in English will result in simplification and overgeneralization. *Intralingual errors* results from the faulty learning of the target language. These errors occur as a result of the learner trying to build up concepts and testing the hypotheses formed about the target language with the data available to the learner (Erdoğan, ibid; p. 266 cited Ellis, 1997). Hence, *intralingual transfer* errors result in the application of hypotheses or rules formed in the target language by the learner. It includes overgeneralization within the target language. This happens when a second language leaner applies a grammatical rule across all members of a grammatical class without making the appropriate exception (Brown, ibid).

33

2.3.3.2 Context of learning

The context of learning can also be a source or cause of error, even though it overlaps with both types of transfer. Brown (ibid) refers to the context as the classroom with its teachers and its methods in the case of school learning. He asserted that, it is possible for the teacher or the textbook to let the learner make faulty judgments about the target language. He maintained that "students often make errors because of a misleading explanation from the teacher or faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook or even because of a pattern that was rotely memorized in a drill but improperly contextualized"(Brown, ibid; p. 226). In short, the teacher and the teaching aids can trigger grammar errors.

There are stages in terms of what the learner does with the errors. The stages are; random errors, emergent, systematic and stabilization. Indications are that, at the random stage, the learner is "vaguely aware that there is some systematic order to a particular class of items" (Brown, ibid; p. 227). It continued that there is development in consistency in language production in the learner's language at the emergent stage. The learner is not able to correct error when shown to them. At third stage i.e. systematic stage the learner is able to discern the rules and internalize certain system. Even though the rules may not be correct in the target language, the learner sees them as legitimate. This is basically an on and off situation. Again, there is more consistency at the third stage. That is to say not all forms are well formed; they are however approximate to the target language.

In the third stage, the learner is able to correct errors when pointed to them. As regards to the stabilization stage, usually the learner commits relatively few errors

and is able to reach near perfection or master the rules to the extent that fluency and decoding of meaning are not problematic. At this stage the learner is able to self-correct (Brown, ibid; pp. 227-229). Corrections can be made without any input from the teacher. The above description of the stages of error correction appropriates the view that error correction is systemic from the point of view of the learner since at every stage there is an improvement on the previous stage. In this case, what stage do we place the SHS students? Are they at the random, emergent, systematic or the stabilization stage? The reason is that our ability to place them on any of the stages outlined by Brown may enable teachers to deal with the grammar errors that occur in SHS graduates' written assignments appropriately.

2.3.4 Why error analysis

Error analysis is useful in second language learning because it reveals to teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers the problem areas of the language learners. Corder (ibid) stated that errors are visible proof of learning taking place. He reiterated that if errors are studied systematically, it can provide significant insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. Again, he believed that studying learners' errors has immediate practical application for language teachers. "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 leaner is employing in the discovery of the language" (Brown, ibid; p. 217 cited Corder, ibid; p.167). Also, language learning is not about acquiring a set of automatic habits; however it is a "process of discovering the underlying rules, categories and systems of choice in the language by some sorts of processing by the learners of the data of the language presented to him by the teacher" (Zhu, ibid; p. 127 cited Corder, 1973)

It continued that error making is one of the discovery stages and processes that learners go through. Again, learners' errors actually indicate the nature of the learners' knowledge about the language. It gives the teacher of what the learners know and what is needed to be taught.

Additionally, Zhu (ibid) argued from Corder's point of view that errors are important to the learner as they are means through which the learner uses to test hypotheses concerning the language being learned. And to the teacher, error analysis show how effective the teaching materials and techniques are. Error analysis informs the teacher when to introduce topic or to repeat a topic, and to plan and organize their teaching procedures and materials. Several authors argued that error analysis helps to find out the level of language proficiency the learner has reached. It assists to obtain information about common difficulties in language learning, and to find out how people learn a language (Nzama ibid; cited Ancker, 2000; Weireesh, 1991; Sercombe, 2000). On what to do with the grammar errors in the students' writings, the teachers can identify the challenges of the learner's and device a holistic technique to address them. Zhang (n. d.) suggested that;

> an adequate understanding of what processes in which the learners engage themselves for the task of learning a second language, are attributed to the fulfillment of the learning tasks by the learners as crucial significance to decisions making concerning development of teaching materials as input and providing conditions that are facilitative of the learning (Zhang, ibid; p.87).

2.3.5 Criticism against error analysis

On the contrarily, there are still some problems associated with the error analysis theory regarding the description of the learner's error. The reason has been that the

learners' language may be elusive and it is also dynamic in nature. Therefore, it is difficult to examine the learners' language in a sectional or horizontal way or at a particular point in time. The position is that "his language is changing all the time, that his rules are constantly undergoing revision is of course, true and rarely complicates the problem of description but does not invalidate the concept of a learner's language" (Zhang, ibid; cited Corder, 1967). This makes it difficult to actually ascertain what the features of the learners' language are at a point in time. But the question that arises out of this criticism is that can there be a way of describing the learner's language within a certain stage of the learner? Probably, a description of the learner's grammar at the SHS level can be done to determine why grammar errors occur in their writings and to develop appropriate proposals to deal with it.

Another argument against error analysis is that the textual data to be analyzed is inadequate. According to Zhang (ibid), Corder (1981) identified two constraints; external and internal constraints. The reason is that the textual data does not adequately give a better view of the learner's language. As regards to the external constraints, it is posited that the textual data is not a spontaneous utterance on the language produced by the learner who is not under pressure. Therefore, it does not show any natural communicative needs of the learner. Then, regular exercises can be done in the form of oral examination in addition to the textual data to get better impressions of the learner's language. This can help in determining where the difficulties are and to respond appropriately. In effect, SHS students can be tested orally on grammar in addition to the written exercises in order to ascertain their problems on grammar and address them accordingly only if the goal of learning the

language is *learning*.

With the internal constraints, "the learner himself will place limitations upon the data that teachers work with by selecting those aspects of knowledge which he has most confidence in" (Zhang, ibid; cited Corder, 1981; p. 60). In effect, what the learner has mastered will be presented as the learner may tend to dislodge the challenges being faced by him or her in the target language. Here, it is important that teachers ask appropriate questions in order to obtain a response which is suitable to their needs. For instance, if a teacher wants to know the level of knowledge of his or her students on subject-verb agreement, the teacher should be able to formulate a strategy to establish the fact unless the teacher has a problem.

2.4.0 Related Studies on Second Language Learning and Error correction

According to Krashen (1982) there is a distinction between *"acquisition"* and *"learning"*. In the view of Krashen, the performance of second language operates at two independent systems; "*the acquired system*" and "*the learned system*". The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is defined as "the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language" (Schütz, 2007; para.1 & Brown, ibid; p. 278 cited Krashen, 1982). Krashen (ibid) argued that at the acquisition level "we are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a "feel" for correctness. Grammatical sentences "sound" right, or "feel" right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated" (p. 10). He therefore admonishes us to concentrate on the communicative act and not the form of utterances. To Krashen (ibid), learning "is the product of formal instruction and

38

it comprises a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language" (p.10). He referred to *learning* as;

> conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them". In non-technical terms, learning "knows about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules". Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language, or explicit learning (Krashen, ibid; p.10).

Brown (ibid) defined *learning* from a contemporary dictionary as "acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction" (p. 7). He cited a definition from Kimble and Garmezy (1963; p.133) that "learning is a relatively permanent change in a behavoural tendency and is the result of reinforced practices" (p. 7). It implies that learning involves acquisition of (a) knowledge, (b) a subject, and (c) a skill through study, experience, and instruction. Again, it also includes the tendency to change behavour through continues practices. In other words, learning is not realized if all those conditions are not met. Naeini (2008) cited Walter (2004) who argued that effective learning includes the following processes; (a) making connections about what has been learnt in different contexts, (b) reflecting on one's own learning and learning strategies, (c) exploring how the learning contexts have played a part in making the learning effective, (d) setting further learning goals, and (e) engaging with others in learning. It continued that effective learning usually requires feedback, and not only repeating task. When students repeat task, it is likely that their skills will improve. Naeini (ibid) posited that "feedback ought to be analytical, to be suggestive, and to come at a time when students are interested in it" (p.122). In the domain of this work, Krashen (ibid) thought that conscious learning is thought to be useful to grammar error correction

whiles it has little or no effect on subconscious acquisition. Again, he mentioned that error correction by all intends and purposes assist the learner to induce or "figure out" the right form of a rule.

The *Affective Filter* encompasses the beliefs that there are certain emotional elements - 'affective variables'- that assist but has no contributory role in second language acquisition. The variables are: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. According to Krashen (ibid) learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety tend to be better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Likewise, low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety have the potentials to trigger the affective filter which eventually forms a 'mental block. This prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. Krashen (ibid) opined that an effective language teacher is "someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation" (p. 32). The question is, do SHS graduates who have high motivation, self-confidence and a low anxiety produce written work with less grammar errors? Again, can teachers provide input on grammar without triggering any of the affective variables of the learners in a negative way?

2.4.1.0 Types of error correction techniques for written exercises

Studies of error correction techniques have shown that there are several techniques for error correction which teachers resort to in the classroom. Walz (1982) listed various techniques for error correction in his publication *Error Correction Techniques for the Foreign Language Classroom*. Walz (ibid) cited Wingfield (1975) and mentioned five means that can be used to approach the

correction of written compositions as; (1) providing clues for self-correction, (2) correcting the text (3) making marginal notes – comments and footnotes (4) explaining errors orally to students, and (5) using errors as an illustration for class discussion. But in all of these, Wingfield subscribed to self-correction by students. He believed that there is virtually no difference correcting composition and oral errors and that students' correction can precede teacher correction. Philips (1968) argued that it has been a dilemma if the mere provision of correct forms to students will benefit them in the long run. He continued that presumably students may find it difficult remembering the input or sometimes not even bother to read written correction (Walz, ibid; p. 27 cited Philips 1968). The types of the error correction techniques have been discussed in this work under three broad heading as; (a) self-correction, (b) peer correction, and (c) teacher correction.

2.4.1.1 Self-correction

Symbols and Abbreviations: This type of technique is a situation where a symbol is written at the margin of the work where the specific error is, and is either pointed out by underlying or not. The students must then be able to locate the error and correct. This is normally done to motivate students to correct their own errors of grammar. This self-correction technique requires that the student rewrites the work and turns it in with the original script. Hendrickson (1980) suggested a standardized set of symbols for the indirect corrections. He talked of underlining the incorrect spelling, a circle around inappropriate words, and arrow for a missing element, and a question mark for a confusing phrase. This meant that the teacher prepares the standardized set of symbols with its possible interpretations and hands over the symbols and the abbreviations to the students before the beginning of the class

41

(Walz, ibid; p.28 cited Hendrickson, 1980).

Reference to Grammar Rules and Checklist: The reference to grammar rules is a situation whereby rules of grammar are prepared in the form of a textbook for learners to refer to. A learner can refer to the book whenever one breaks any grammar rule in a written work (Walz, ibid; cited River, 1975 & Stack, 1978). For example, the *Glenco Grammar and composition handbook, middle school* can be a good source of reference to grammar rules. Cohen (1975) proposed a checklist that can be referred to by learners when dealing with a particular structure - grammar error - in the learners' written work. It is suggested that a checklist can be prepared for a learner or group of learners if the teacher knows that learners or some group of learners have a difficulty in may be adjective agreement (Walz, ibid; cited Cohen, 1975). In effect, the teacher can prepare a checklist on most frequent grammar errors made by learners as a source of reference for grammar error correction.

2.4.1.2 Peer correction

According to Sultana (2009), peer correction is a form of self-correction and is closely tied with the learner's autonomy with the saying "Tell us, we forget; Show us we remember; Involve us, we learn" (p. 11). Sultana (ibid) mentioned that self-correction is a technique which makes it possible for students to correct their own errors. It continued that, peer correction is done in the classroom to enhance learner autonomy, cooperation, interaction and involvement. Peer correction can "foster the development of skills needed to regulate their own learning, and it places more responsibility for learning on the students" (Sultana, 2009; pp.11-12 cited Rief, 1990; & Harmer, 2007). Sultana (ibid) posited that "the involvement of peers in the

correction process makes the classroom atmosphere more supportive and friendlier" (p.12). Undoubtedly, there are certain criticisms against the use of peer correction in the classroom even though it has cognitive, social and affective values. Sultana (ibid) argued that some learners might feel reluctant to correct their friends' errors because correcting friends' errors might harm their relationship. Harmer (2004) put forward that students may feel inferior to their peers after getting corrected by a peer. In such cases, students prefer to be corrected by the teacher gently (Sultana, ibid; cited Harmer, 2004).

Projection: In this case a learner's work can be projected on a screen for the whole class to correct. Hagel (1978) mentioned that there has been a successful exercise on this at the secondary school level with the use of an opaque projection. The suggestion is that two or more students work are selected the day before the due date for the writing of the composition, and are made to write on transparencies. In this case, the learners-authors are advised to remain anonymous. Thereafter, the work will be projected on the screen for the errors to be corrected by the class (Walz, ibid; cited Hagel, 1978). It is argued that it may be a platform to provide some group of learners with evidence of concrete grammar errors for correction of which learning may take place. The demerit of this is that the author gets distracted as only fewer learners may dominate the class discussion (Walz, ibid; cited Witbeck, 1976).

Group Composition: In this situation, learners are grouped and made to write compositions. This provides an opportunity for dealing with the learners' written works. It is normally suitable for teachers who have large classes and find it

43

difficult to grade learners frequently. The merits of this strategy are that the teacher has less work in the sense that fewer pages and fewer errors are expected to be dealt with. It is also an opportunity for learners to get oral practice through discussion on the written work in the target language (Walz, ibid; cited Vallete, 1973).

Exchanging of Compositions and In-class Editing: Regarding exchange of composition, each student identifies a partner and swaps his/her written exercise for corrections. Here, the teacher may be of help by selecting specific types of grammar errors for learners to look for. Also, the teacher may retype the work by eliminating the grammar errors and ask the learner to evaluate and improve on the written work. (Walz, ibid; cited Witbeck, 1976). But in-class editing encompasses editing approach that involves self and peer (Walz, ibid; cited Gaudiani, 1981). The suggestion is that learners rewrite their composition early in their homes and correct their grammatical errors. They then rewrite them in class as classmates whiles the teacher guides them. Here, the class reads the work and discusses the essays by correcting grammatical errors and noting the elements of style and organizational strategies using the L2.

2.4.1.3 Teacher Correction

Direct Correction: This applies when learners are not able to make meaning out of an indirect correction. The general technique is for the teacher to draw a line or underline the portion where the error is in order to draw the attention of the learner. For example, a misplaced word can be bracketed and put in its right order with an arrow. Superfluous or bad words are crossed out entirely. For semantic errors, it should be corrected in a direct manner as possible, by providing the exact answer

44

(Walz, ibid; cited Hendrickson, 1980). Hendrickson (1980) defined direct correction as "when the teacher tells the student where the error is and what the correct form is" (Walz, ibid; p.31 cited Hendrickson, 1980).

Charting Error: Hendrickson (ibid) mentioned that many language educators usually supply the learners with the correct forms or structures of their written language; however other teachers assert that the procedure is ineffective when assisting students to learn from their mistakes (Hendrickson, ibid; cited Corder, 1967; Gorbet, 1974; & Valdman, 1975). In the view of Hendrickson (ibid), other scholars have proposed the discovery approach to error correction. The essence is to assist learners to make inferences and formulate concepts about the target language. This can go a long way in helping learners to fix the problem with the information provided.

Hendrickson (ibid) asserted that several scholars recommended that teachers record their students' errors on diagnostic charts in order to show the causes of the problem areas of the learners (Lee, 1957; Corder, 1973; Cohen, 1975; Cohen & Robbins, 1976). Hendrickson (1979) opined that the grid allows errors to be categorized along two scales (Sander, 1991; cited Hendrickson, 1979; p. 363). On the horizontal scale, the categories are; 1) lexicon means vocabulary, semantics, or errors of meaning, 2) syntax also means grammar, including word order, verb phrases, and other elements of structure, 3) Morphology includes grammatical agreement of various kinds, such as subject-verb agreement, plurals etc, and 4) Orthography spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Also, on the scale of vertical, "global" refers to errors that affect the entire organization of the sentence, for

45

instance, missing subjects or main verbs. Sanders (ibid) said that Hendrickson's grid is intended to characterize writings in the English language.

Hendrickson (ibid) mentioned the usefulness of the diagnostic chart as "developing individualized instructional materials, for building a hierarchy of error correction priorities, and providing more about the process of second language acquisition" (p. 394). He concluded by indicating that teachers use various techniques in dealing with the learner's error, however, there is no evidence of a particular technique to substantiate whether indeed it helps in reducing learner's error significantly. Once again, this makes it possible for one to posit that it may be difficult in arriving at a particular technique for grammar error correction since each learner or group of learners may prefer certain technique(s) at some points and at other time.
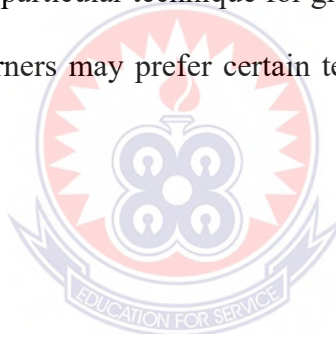
2.5.0 Conclusion

It is essential to conclude by relating the two linguistic principles and the error analysis theory expounded above to indicate how the data gathered will be analyzed. The two principles provide the structures for pointing to the grammar errors in the learners' writings. The error analysis theory makes available the ingredients for the description, identification and the sources of the grammar errors in learners' writings. Similarly, the review of the related works on second language learning and error correction will also facilitate in discussing the problem of grammar errors. In effect, the linguistic principles and the error analysis theory will be used wholly in appreciating the types and causes of the learners' grammar errors, and to help suggest some means of tackling the problem. Again, review of some

related studies on second language learning and error correction will be used wholly in discussing the issues relating to the teaching and learning of English grammar and the correction of grammar errors.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design, methodology and procedures that were followed to obtain the data for analysis. Additionally, it dealt with the population, sampling techniques as well as data collection strategies. It talked about the manner in which the information derived had been presented. The method through which the data were analyzed had also been mentioned in this chapter. This research method was based on the following research questions:

1. What types of grammar errors do senior high school graduates commit in their writings?

2. Why do senior high school graduates commit grammar errors in their writings?

3. How can the problem of grammar errors be addressed in the writings of senior high school graduates?
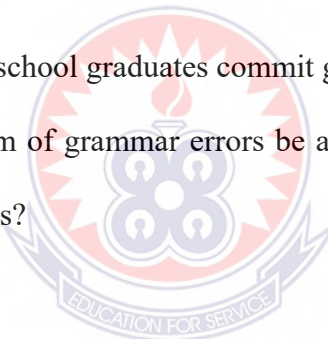
3.1 Research Design

This research work was a qualitative one. Patton (1985) wrote that qualitative research "is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there" (Merriam, 2002; p.5 cited Patton 1985). It continued that it tried to make meaning out of situation and not necessarily attempting to foretell what might happen in the future, and to understand the nature of that issue. According to Cobb & Hagemaster (1997), a qualitative research by definition should portray eight (8) distinct features. These characteristics are:

(1) attention is focused on the social context of meaningful events; (2) a serious effort is made to understand the social world from the stand point of participant in

it; (3) the inductive approach is mainly used; (4) data collection techniques largely include interviewing, participant observation, examination of personal documents and other printed materials;(5) procedures and tools for data gathering are continually revised in the field situation; (6) the concern is primarily with discovery and description although verification is also possible; (7) hypothesis are usually developed during the research rather than apriori; and (8) analysis is presented for the most part in narrative rather than numerical form (Yemeh, 2004; p.62 cited Cobb & Hagemaster, 1997).

This research work was a case study one in the sense that there was an in-depth description of what the situation had been on grammar errors in SHS students' written works. Merriam (2002) indicated that to qualify as a case study, "one particular program (a bounded system) selected because it was typical, unique, experimental or highly successful, etc, would be the unit of analysis" (p. 8). Owu-Ewie (2011) corroborated the idea as an in-depth analysis of event, settings programs or groups or one or more individuals which was limited to time and activity. Yin (1984) said that a case study research method was "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Soy, 1997; p.1 cited Yin, 1984; p. 23). In the context of this work, it was an inquiry into grammar errors so as to understand what the issues were among teachers and SHS students of the SDASHS at Gomoa Jukwa in the central region of Ghana.

Another important requirement for a qualitative research was the background information. It had been said that it took two studies to come out with one qualitative research. It meant that one of the studies was the "official" research work

and the second was the study about the study itself. That, in a well-done qualitative research, it should not be enough to see the result of the work only, but the audience should also be reached adequately in order to have an opportunity to examine the particulars of the inquiry. And that might include the construction of the study, the procedure used in forming the research questions, selecting a site, point of entry, generating and collecting the data, processing and analyzing the data, and selecting the data for the presentation (Chenail, 1995; cited Bateson & Harries-Jones, 1995). The procedural issues had been explained in this work to demonstrate openness and trustworthiness. Chenail (ibid) mentioned that all of those were important for two reasons. One reason is that "this will allow your readers to judge the validity of your efforts" (p. 2). The second reason was that in the processes of re-presenting numerous data, it would give some means of allowing the audience to foresee what the data might be.
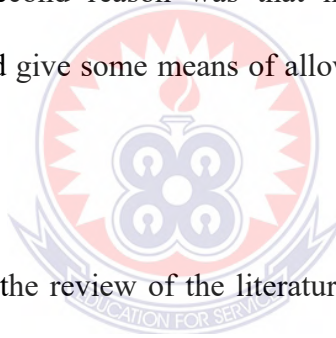
Methodologically, in the review of the literature on grammar errors, most of the works were written articles based on the views of scholars in the field of applied linguistics and some social science researchers. However, Zhu (ibid) and Oladejo (ibid) in their articles; *An Analysis of College Students' Attitudes towards Error Correction in EFL Context*, and *Error Correction in ESL: Learners' Preferences* respectively, they administered questionnaires to answer their research questions. Rauber et al. (ibid) in their article *Feedback to Grammar Mistakes in EFL Classes: A Case Study*, they also used observation to answer their research questions. It was as a result of those that I examined students' class exercises and official documents, and administered structured interview questions to answer the research questions. Merriam (ibid) indicated that researchers were encouraged to use more than one

50

method of data collection because the use of multiple methods enhanced the validity of the findings.

Procedurally, the data collected came from examination of students' exercises and the teaching syllabus for the English language and the English language textbooks. Additional data were also collected from sampled form three SHS students and their English language teachers through written responses to structured interview questions. Moreover, the form three (3) students were used in the study because the assumption was that they were far advanced in the teaching and learning of the English language than those in form two (2) and one (1). Equally, they were those students who were being prepared with the teaching syllabus for the English language to write the next WASSCE of the English language. Thereafter, they would graduate and find themselves in the tertiary level of education. Also, English language teachers were selected in the sense that; a) they teach the English language as subject, b) they were presumed to be qualified teachers for the English language teaching, c) they were believed to be familiar with students' knowledge of English grammar, and d) they were parts of the actors involved in the subject of grammar error correction. The examination of the students' exercises and the documents was done first followed by the administration of the structured interview questions.

The challenge was getting the co-operation of the teachers and the students. However, the challenge was overcome because my father happened to be the social studies teacher in the school, and he assisted in that direction. The assistance from both teachers and students was very encouraging. For example, the teachers readily made available to me the students' exercises, syllabus and the textbooks with no

51

hesitation. Information needed from administrative and academic staff and students were provided at ease. Another problem was the security of the learners in relation to the kind of information they provided. Here, this researcher assured the students and the teachers of the confidentiality of the information they provided. Additionally, it became somewhat difficult at some point to read and comprehend some of the students' writings. But with the able mind, knowledge and experiences of this researcher, the problem was overcome.

3.2 Population

The population of the study was the teachers and students of the SDASHS in the Gomoa East District of the central region of Ghana. The total population for the study was five hundred and eighty seven (587). There were thirty five (35) teachers and five hundred and fifty two (552) students. The target population for this research work was the form three (3) students and the English language teachers. The population accessed was the whole form three students comprising four different classes (see details from the table below).

Table 1. Distribution of the population studied

POPULATION			%	TP	TARGET POPULATION			%	TP	ACCESSIBLE POPULATION			%	TP
Teachers	M	29	82.9		English Teachers	M	3	100		ETS	M	3	100	
	F	6	17.1	35		F	-	-	3		F	-	-	3
Students	M	228	41.3		Form Three(3) Students	M	79	43.9		3BUS	M	20	50	
	F	324	58.7	552		F	101	56.1	180		F	20	50	40
										3SC/HE /VA	M	21	44.7	
											F	26	55.3	47
										3GA1$^{A/B}$	M	23	42.6	
											F	31	57.4	54
										3GA2$^{A/B}$	M	15	38.5	
											F	24	61.5	39

The following abbreviations mean; **F**= Female, **M**=Male, **TP** = Total Population, **ETS** = English Teachers, **3BUS** = name of a class, **3SC/HE/VA** = name of a class, **3GA1**$^{A/B}$ = name of a class and **3GA2**$^{A/B}$ = name of a class

3.3 Sampling Technique

Wretman (n. d) wrote that non-probability sampling technique meant a situation where the selected units in the sample had an unknown probability of being selected, in other words, some units of the target population might not even have a chance at all of being in the sample. And this sampling technique was used in this research work. Merriam (ibid) cited Patton (1990) to argue that it was necessary "to select *information-rich cases* for study in-depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term *purposeful sampling*" (p.12). Therefore, this researcher relied on the purposive sampling method to collect the data for analysis. The merits of this sampling technique were that it enabled this researcher to pick the participants that were relevant to the study. Indeed, this sampling method provided an avenue for me to examine students' exercises and to look out for those who committed grammar errors and collect data from them for analysis.

3.3.1 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was made up of eighteen (18) students representing 10% of the accessible population - form three students (180), and two (2) English language teachers also representing 67% of the accessible population - English teachers (3). Gay (1987) argued that the minimum number of respondents needed for a study to be adequate is dependent on the type of research. The position was that "For descriptive research, a sample of 10% of the population is considered minimum" (Gay, 1987; p.114). Therefore, ten percent (10%) of the total form three students' population which was also the accessible population were sampled for the exercise. It meant that, four (4), five (5), five (5) and four (4) students were selected

53

from **3BUS** class, **3SC/HE/VA** class, **3GA1^{A/B}** class and **3GA2^{A/B}** respectively from the accessible population indicated above for the study. That was done to have a fair representation of all the form three students.

3.4 The Research Site

The research site is the SDASHS which is located in the Gomoa East District of the central region of Ghana. The school is situated in Gomoa Jukwa, which is about four miles south of Agona Swedru. The school is privately owned by the Seventh Day Adventist Church of Ghana. The school has no strict entry requirements for admission (i.e. the school accepts all kinds of English language grades for admission). Lack of infrastructure and inadequate human resources are some of the challenges of the school. Again, the school usually engages the services of part-time English language teachers. Additionally, the dominant languages among the students and the teachers are the English language and the Akan language. In effect, the situation as it was in the school made it possible for one to conduct a research of this type in the school to ascertain whether the context of learning affects students' knowledge of the English language. The school was also convenient for me in terms of proximity and resources.

3.5 Data Collection Strategies

The following tools of data collection were used: 1) documents, and 2) administration of structured interview questions. DePualo (2000) posited that in a qualitative research the purpose was to reduce the chances of discovery failure as opposed to reducing estimation of errors in quantitative research. And, that was why I employed multiple strategies to obtain the needed information.

3.5.1 Documents

In this instance, I called for students exercise books including those on pieces of paper on all aspects of the English language of all the four classes. I examined exercises of each student covering the use of the English language in responding to questions on the following aspects of the English language; reading comprehension, summary questions, composition writing and English grammar. I identified and assembled the grammar errors in the exercises during the examination. The grammar errors were then, classified, described and explained using the two linguistic principles and the theory of error analysis. And in order for me to authenticate my impression on some of the grammar errors identified, the subjects involved were called to answer few questions orally. The questions bothered on whether the elements identified were mistakes or errors. The inspection of the exercises also covered how the grammar errors in the learners' written works were corrected by the teachers as well as students' attitudes toward the exercises. This made it possible for non-manipulation of the elements examined and to avoid confusion.

Additional documents looked at were the teaching syllabus for the English language as well as the English language textbooks. With these, I looked at the topics, the content, the objectives, the activities involved in the teaching and learning of the English Language. I also looked at the areas that learners were evaluated on which included (a) knowledge and understanding, and (b) use of knowledge. Finally, the study also covered suggestions on reading, speaking, writing and listening comprehension which the syllabus and the textbooks prescribe to the teachers and the students to use during the teaching and learning of the

English language.
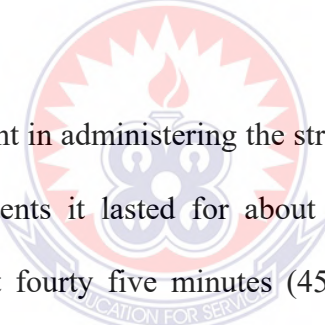
3.5.2 Administration of structured interview questions

Slightly different structured questionnaires were prepared for student respondents and teacher respondents to respond to (see appendix A & B). The structured interview questions were generated out of the research questions of this study as well as the documents examined. The administration of the structured interview questions for the student respondents was in pairs; it meant that two different student respondents answer to the questions independently through writing but at the same time. However, that of the teachers was done on one-on-one basis. The student respondents were those students who committed several grammar errors in all of their exercises examined, and their grammar errors formed part of the data gathered for the analyses.

Before the administration of the structured interview questions, student respondents were informed by their teachers that they would respond to some few questions from a researcher. That was done in order for the subjects to feel at ease. Additionally, I personally requested the teachers to respond to the structured interview questions which they did. Besides, the teachers and the students did not know anything about the structured interview questions at all till they appeared before me. In order to get the student respondents, a list of the sampled students was prepared and given to one of the teachers to get them ready for the exercise. Students were then instructed to appear before me in an office in pairs and turns.

The administration of the structured interview questions followed the steps below;

56

1) I introduced himself by mentioning my name, and then asked for the names of the subjects as well, thereafter few pleasantries were shared, 2) the administrator mentioned his mission to the subjects (see appendices A & B), 3) I then gave out copies of the structured interview questions to the subjects. Thereafter, I read out the first question to the two student respondents, and asked them to answer separately through writing; this was done because it was in my view to validate the grammar errors identified in the student respondents' exercises through their written responses, 4) the subjects then read the subsequent questions and responded to them individually, and 5) the administrator supervised the subjects as they responded to the structured interview questions. The whole exercise was like pen-to-paper survey.

As regards to time spent in administering the structured interview questions, for a pair of student respondents it lasted for about fourty minutes (40) and that of teachers was also about fourty five minutes (45). These periods were arrived at because each session was timed. In all, there were nine (9) and two (2) sessions for the students and the teachers respectively. To sum up, in order to obtain the data through the administration of the structured interview questions for analysis, about four hundred and fifty (450) minutes or seven (7) hours, thirty (30) minutes were spent on all the subjects. The merits for this administration of structured interview questions were that it provided an opportunity to avoid reframing the questions, and to stay focus on the questions that were being asked. Also, it made it possible for students who find it difficult to speak to respond to the questions in writing. It provided an opportunity for students to freely express their views. It enabled me to verify my impressions on the grammar errors identified in students' writings. It also

ensured that students were not allowed to consult with one another or prevented cross-fertilization of opinions. Again the written responses also enabled me to use few of them as data for analysis. It also offered the opportunity to ask each subject the same questions so that the responses could be compared (Owu-Ewie, ibid).

3.6 Data Collection Protocol

The study was to take place initially at the Agona Kwanyako Senior High School in the Agona East District of the central region of Ghana. But due to the death of then assistant headmaster who happened to be my very good friend, I change the school to the SDASHS. The major reason for the change was that it could be unbearable for me to do the study in the school whilst my dear friend was absent. My father who happened to be a social studies teacher in SDASHS assisted in securing the approval to conduct the study. The study came to fruition after the headmaster had received an introductory letter (see appendix C) from the Department of Applied Linguistics of the University of Education, Winneba and told me verbally to conduct the study.

3.7 Data Presentation

The data collected were presented in the form of Thematic Content Analysis (TCA). Thematic areas of each of the research questions were identified out of the data collected from the respondents on the frameworks of this work. To Anderson (2007), "a satisfactory TCA portrays the thematic content of interviews transcripts (or other text) by identifying common themes in the texts provided for analysis" (p. 1). A list of common themes was presented to express the communality or divergence voices of the respondents. A juxtaposition of the thematic areas

58

identified in relation to the frameworks for this research work was presented also. The reason was that Chenail (ibid) indicated that juxtaposition of the themes was the key to producing a quality presentation. He explained juxtaposition as rhythm which meant "to create a template for re-presenting your data so that there is a recognizable pattern throughout the Analysis or Findings section of your paper" (Chenail, ibid; p.5). It meant that the data collected was presented in such a way to follow a pattern. The information obtained from the documents was presented in conjunction with each respective theme identified for the data analysis.

3.8 Data Analysis

The analysis was made up of the responses and results from the documents. It had been said that "the use of different methods in concert compensate for their individual limitations and exploits their respective benefits" (Shenton, 2004; p.65 cited Guba, n. d; Brewer & Hunter, n. d). The analysis followed a pattern of the data as presented in response to the research questions. The analysis was done in the form of description, comparison and relational. Divergent views were used to challenge generalizations made earlier on by some scholars. Returns were made to the substantive, theoretical and methodological literature for analysis. Finally, the data derived were used for creation and displays. Bazeley (2009) said "the researcher moves away from describing to explaining through a 'ladder of abstraction'" (p.12). Microsoft excel was used to design the tables and the pie chart.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

3.0 Introduction

This chapter mentions the data analysis and presentation. The findings of each of the research questions are presented and discussed. The presentation is based on the themes identified within the research findings. The findings of the research questions - one, two and three - are presented under the identified concepts. They have been presented on tables, pie chart and models to show divergent views. Therefore, appendixes D to N summarize the findings of the study. The rationale is the nature of the data obtained; also it is more advantageous to do that than to be going forth and back. The following are the discussions of the results.

4.1.0 Findings for Research Question One

Research question one says: what types of grammar errors do senior high school graduates commit in their writings? In the first place, the grammar errors that are presented and discussed in this portion of the work are identified in students' exercises and interview responses. Also, the types of the grammar errors have been presented under each sub-heading, and in each sub-heading the sentences with the grammar errors are presented. Secondly, the description and the possible causes of the grammar errors are then mentioned. Again, a presentation of what should have been the appropriate construction is also given. General analysis and opinions are expressed thereafter. Generally, a few of grammar errors identified have been presented and analyzed in this part of the work. However, a cursory look at the grammar errors identified in students' exercises and their written responses to the structured interview questions (appendixes D to N) will show most the types of

60

the grammar errors.

4.1.1.0 Types of grammar errors

To obtain additional information to buttress the view that the grammar errors in the students' exercises are indeed errors, teachers are made to respond to three specific questions. The teachers mentioned the following as the kinds of grammar errors students commit in their writings:

a.   Students grammar errors are mostly based on wrong connection between the subject and the verb of a sentence e.g. ***The tree have fallen** and ***Some of the boys has arrived late.** Secondly, there is wrong use of the tense e.g. ***Yesterday, the boys come to school** and ***The car has fall.** And improper use of parts of speech, verb and adjective patterns e.g. subject/verb agreement, intensifying adjectives and adverbs, phrasal verbs and idioms (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Secondly, the teachers became aware of the grammar errors in the learners' writings through their personal knowledge and the manifestation of the errors in students' writings and speeches. Moreover, the teachers considered the kinds provided as grammar errors through the students' exercises. The teachers' responses that support the above assertions are:

b.   My personal academic awareness through learning from my teachers/professors, and reading grammar books, dictionaries besides extra materials like magazines and newspapers, and the appearance of the errors in students' writings and hearing the errors in students' speech (Interview, June 7, 2012).

c.   It is because I am aware of the grammatical errors associated with students that learn English language as second language and, it is because of exercises, quizzes, and assignments I gave them on grammar (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Based on the above responses and the grammar errors identified in students' writings, the types of the grammar errors identified have been classified under five different categories; 1) agreement, 2) morphological and lexical omissions, 3) morphological and syntactic additions, 4) intralingual transfer, and 5) misrepresentation of form or spelling. Beneath are the presentations and discussions

of the types of grammar errors identified in students' writings under their respective sub-headings.

4.1.1.1 Agreement

There are two varieties of agreement errors; subject-verb agreement and number agreement. The following are subject-verb agreement errors identified in students' writings;

32a. My Aunt with her husband **sing** in the church, and
32b. She remembers them but they **doesn't** seem to know her (Student class exercise, February 28, 2012).

In the context of 32a and 32b, the heads of the subject noun phrases are *Aunt* and *They* which are the entities that are being talked about. The subject NPs [**Aunt**] and [**They**] are singular and plural in form respectively. Thus, in terms of the principles of obligatoriness and grammatical categories, the forms of the verbs by the positions they occupy in the sentences should not have been *sing* and *doesn't*. So, the subject noun phrases –**Aunt** and **they** – do not agree with the verbs – **sing** and **doesn't** respectively. Meaning, the third person agreement morpheme [-s] is omitted on the verb **sing** and erroneously marked on the verb **do.** Clearly, the sentences are unquestionably ungrammatical, and therefore they are overt errors as argued by Corder (1971). Again, for *the domain* of these errors, they are found at the sentence levels. Therefore, *the extents* are the verbs *[sing]* and *[doesn't]* which have to change forms for the sentences to be grammatical in 32a and 32b as;

33a. My Aunt with her husband **sings** in the church.
33b. She remembers them but they **don't** seem to know her.

In a response to the question; which kinds of the grammar errors give rise to complaints? The subject-verb agreement error is mentioned as; "the kinds that are

associated with complex subjects or irregular verbs" (Questionnaire, June 7, 2012). An example is given as '*The man with his friend and their mates **are** coming*' (Interview, June 7, 2012). This may suggest that the prepositional phrase (with her husband) in 32a that come immediately after the head noun is also seen as an inherent feature of the subject noun phrase by the learner. It makes the learner to see the subject noun phrase as plural form in 32a. Thus, marking the plural feature on the verbs - *sing*. The words or group of words that come immediately after the head noun may be the problem since similar error like; "I never **goes** to school" is also encountered in some of the exercises examined. In 32b, the problem may be caused by the antecedent noun phrase that the subject noun phrase refers to. Students may think that the subject ***They*** refer to the third person singular form ***She*** and not the object noun phrase ***Them*** - the third person object form. This might have motivated the learners to mark the verb **do** with the singular morpheme [-s].

Moreover, the following sentences also portray grammar errors that relate to number agreement;

34a. The bread winners in [**this strenge men**] (Student class exercise, October 20, 2011).
34b. [This things] are has been a situation in my school here (Student class exercise, May 9, 2012).

In 34a and 34b the number inherent in the heads – [**men**] and [**things**] – of the NPs in the square bracket does not agree with its corresponding determiners – [**this**] and [**this**]. The heads of the NPs are plural in nature whereas the corresponding determiners are singular in nature. From the perspectives of the principles of obligatoriness and grammatical categories, the forms of the determiners by the positions they occupy in the phrases should not have been *this* and *this* but *these* and *these.* Consequently, the inherent feature of plurality of the head NPs is not in

agreement with the determiners which are singular in form. Therefore, the situation clearly tells that at the phrasal level, the NPs are unquestionable ungrammatical, and therefore they are overt errors as argued by Corder (1971). Again, for *the domains* of these errors, they are found at the phrasal level; *[this strenge men]* and *[This thing]*. Therefore, *the extents* are the determiners **[this]** and **[this]** which have to be deleted and replaced with the appropriate forms for the phrases to be grammatical. So the whole noun phrases for 34a and 34b should have read;

35a. The bread winners in [**these strange men**]
35b. [These things] are has been situations in my school here.

Again, all the agreement errors are "local errors" because the messages inherent in the sentences can easily be understood. Also, there are other lexical errors of selection and addition in 34a and 34b. For instance in 34a, it would have been better for the learner to have selected the preposition ***among*** instead of ***in***. And in 34b, the verb forms - **[has]** and **[been]** - have been added unnecessary. Therefore, when the preposition ***among*** is selected and the other verbs – **has** and **been** – are deleted respectively, the noun phrase and the sentence will make some grammatical sense as; "**The bread winners among these strange men**" and "**These things are situations in my school here**".

In terms of teaching and learning of English grammar in senior high schools, students must be made to understand how the concept of agreement operates in the English language. For instance, singular noun phrase subjects agree with singular verbs as determiners that denote singular sense move with singular nouns. Likewise, plural noun phrase subjects agree with plural verbs as determiners that denote plurality also move with plural nouns. Students must be made aware of what

constitute a singular noun phrase subject and a plural noun phrase subject. The belief is that when such is done it will equip students to know how the agreement rules work and apply them accordingly. This finding supports the assertion made by Yankson (1994) and the chief examiner's report of the English language for the years 2005 and 2006.

4.1.1.2 Morphological and lexical omissions

It is a situation where learners omit some morphological and lexical elements in their appropriately places in a sentence resulting in grammar error. The following are some of the examples identified;

36a. … because we want to go to the **highest** [ ] of education (Student class exercise, May 29, 2012),

36b. These are legal and illegal. Legal is [**the]** better because it is **prescribe**[**]** by the states, and

36c. It **cause**[ ] harm to **nervous**[ ] (Student class exercise, November 16, 2011).

Concerning 36a, the word *highest* is the superlative form of the word [**high]** which is an adjective. The framework of grammatical categories makes it clear that the superlative forms of adjectives "compares one person or thing with several others" (Glencoe, ibid; p. 149). In this case, the form *highest* is not comparing anything with others. Alternatively, adjectives also modify nouns; but in this case no noun comes after the form *highest.* Again, the article *the* does not 'associate with' adjectives. In effect, by placing the article *the* before the adjective *highest* and omitting a noun after the adjective make the whole sentence ungrammatical and ambiguous. So the 36a sentence should have read **"… because we want to go to the highest [level] of education".**

In 36b and 36c, the form [**the]** - a definite article does not associate with adjectives, but nouns**.** Once the article "**the**" has been 'associated with' the adjective

65

***better*,** it causes grammar error of syntactic addition**.** Likewise, the stems [**prescribe**] and [**cause**] by the positions they occupy in the sentences should have been suffixed with the participle marker **[-ed]** and the third person singular marker **[-s]** respectively to derive grammatical sentences in both cases, but they are omitted resulting in grammar errors of morphological omissions. Again in 36c, syntax requires that the form [**nervous],** an adjective should have been [**nerves],** a noun**.** Or a noun should have been placed after the form [**nervous]** to qualify it. Thus, the noun has been omitted as there is no need to suffix the stem **[nerve]** with the derivational morpheme **[-ous]**. In effect, 36b and 36c sentences should have read;

37b. It **causes** harm to [**the nerves** or **nervous system**]
37c. These are legal and illegal. Legal is **better** because it is **prescribed** by the states.

4.1.1.3 Morphological and syntactic additions

Additionally, there are certain times where learners add some morphological and syntactic elements to stems or places in the sentences resulting in grammar errors. The following sentences depict the assertion;

38a. Yes, it can be attributed to drugs. This is because people who are engaged in crime take[**s**] in drugs and act[**s**] beyond **[their]** capabilities **[and]** irrationally, and
38b. Narcotic drugs also **leads to have** physical and emotional health and also social life (Student class exercise, November 16, 2011).
38c. Some student turns to disobey rules binding the institutions (Student class exercise, May 29, 2012).

In 38a, the morphemes **[-s], [their]** and **[and]** have caused grammar errors by breaking the principles of obligatoriness and grammatical categories. The principle of obligatoriness states that inflections are "syntactically determined". In other words, an affix is applied to a base or stem depending upon the position it occupies in a sentence. The grammatical categories simply mean that each of the major word classes has sets of grammatical categories that are "universally associated with it, and from which languages again 'select' a subset" (Tallerman, ibid; p.49). The

morpheme [-s] by the positions it occupies in sentence 38a has caused grammar error. The verb [take-s] does not agree with the subject noun phrase [*people who are engaged in crime*] in terms of number. This is as a result of the addition of the morpheme [-s]. The NP is plural therefore the verbs [take & act] should have also been plural.

Again, it is known that possessive pronoun – **their –** associates with nouns and not adverbs. The fact that the possessive pronoun **- their -** has been associated with the adverb **- irrationally -** makes the sentence ungrammatical. So, if we are to omit the morpheme [-s] and the conjunction [**and**] and still maintain the adverb **irrationally,** the sentence will be; "*Yes, it can be attributed to drugs. This is because people who are engaged in crime take in drugs and act beyond their capabilities irrationally".* The sentence in this case makes some grammatical sense. Thus, it is needless for the learner to have added the third person singular morpheme [**-s**] and the conjunction [**and**].

In 38b, the verb [**lead**] is suffixed with the third person singular marker morpheme **[-s]**. This makes the sentence ungrammatical in the sense that the addition of the morpheme [-s] is unnecessary. The reason is that the head of the subject noun phrase [**drugs**] has a plural form as its inherent feature, therefore there is no need for the inflection [-s]. Additionally, the verb [**have**] has no place in that syntactic structure. Its addition in that position of the sentence causes grammar error of lexical addition. It means when the third person singular morpheme [-s] and the verb **have** are omitted, the sentence will make a grammatical sense as; "*Narcotic drugs also **lead to** physical and emotional health and also social life".*

67

   Moreover, in sentence 38c, the head – **student** – of the subject noun phrase should have been suffixed with the plural morpheme **[-s]** to match with the inherent feature of the modifier – **some** – which is plural by nature. However, the plural morpheme has been omitted. Similarly, the verb [**turn]** has also been suffixed with the third person singular morpheme **[-s]** with no apparent reason. The omission of the plural morpheme **[-s]** on the head – **student** –, and the addition of the third person singular marker morpheme **[-s]** to the verb [**turn]** have rendered the sentence ungrammatical. The reason is that there is no agreement or concord between the subject noun phrase - ***some student*** - and the main verb – ***turns***. It is necessary that students are advised to apply the English grammar rules of agreement accurately during teaching and learning of English grammar. To buttress this argument, one of the teachers' responses indicates that the following grammar errors give rise to complaints; "grammatical names and functions (as in part of speech), verb patterns and adjective patterns, phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions". In effect, those types of grammar errors are disturbing.

4.1.1.4 Intralingual transfer

   These grammar errors result from intralingual transfers. *Intralingual errors* result from the faulty learning of the target language. These errors occur as a result of the learner trying to build up concepts and testing the hypotheses formed about the target language with the data available to the learner (Erdoğan, ibid; p. 266 cited Ellis, 1997). The following sentences indicate some of the intralingual transfer grammar errors;

39a. At time people take in drugs and behave **unnormally, (**Student class exercise, November 16, 2011)

39b. Please give a brief **summarison** (summarize) of what you have just read, and

68

39c. Please give a brief **summarization** (summarize) of what you have just read (Student class exercise, February 28, 2012).

In 39a, the word ***unnormally*** does not exist in the English language. However, looking at its morphology, it can be divided into three as **[-un], [-normal],** and **[-ly].** The morpheme **[-un]** marks negatives, **[-normal]** is the stem, and **[-ly]** is a derivational morpheme. From the data, there has been an overgeneralization or simplification of the derivational negative morpheme **[-un]**. Brown (ibid) explained that overgeneralization happens when a second language learner applies a grammatical rule across all members of a grammatical class without making the appropriate exception. Here, the learner prefixed the derivational negative morpheme **[-un]** to the form **normally** to derive 'a supposed good form'. The errors of overgeneralization and simplification manifest in the sense that learners do not know that derivational morphemes are not 'productive'.

In 39b and 39c, the derivational suffix morpheme **[-son]** and **[-ation]** are equally suffixed to the stem – **summarize** – to derive a noun form. Likewise, the learners are not aware that those morphemes cannot be inflected on the said stem to derive the noun form. In effect, the sentences should have read;

40a. At time people take in drugs and behave **abnormally.**
40b. Please give a brief **summary** (summarize) of what you have just read.
40c. Please give a brief **summary** (summarize) of what you have just read.

The positive aspect of this error is that, it clearly demonstrates that students are applying some morphological rules in the target language. It confirms the assertion made by Brown (ibid) that the learner's language is a "'creative construction of a system' and that learners are testing assumptions consciously on the target language from various numbers of possible sources of knowledge". These are perfect

examples of intralingual transfer errors. In the area of teaching and learning of English grammar, it is essential that students are made aware that not all derivational morphemes can be attached to all stems. Also, students should understand that derivational morphemes are not productive. Moreover, certain derivational morphemes can be inflected on certain stems.

4.1.1.5 Misrepresentation of form or spelling

Another type of errors that emerged through the study is what this researcher has labeled as misrepresentation of form or spelling. Examples of such errors are;

41a. Some of the student [ ] cannot **speek** the **Elish will**… (Interview, June 5, 2012).

41b. We are suffering of this **buildes**. If rains are about to come… (Student class exercise, May 29, 2012)

41c. Mean why is not like that… (Student class exercise, May 29, 2012)

These grammar errors are called misrepresentations of forms because some forms have been used to represent the correct forms, or the correct forms are wrongly spelt. Several of such errors are encountered in students' writings but the above are few of them. In 41a, the forms **[speek], [Elish]** and [**will]** have been used to represent the forms **[speak], [English]** and **[well]** respectively. Grammatically, the placing of the auxiliary verb [**will]** just after the form [**Elish]** is wrong. It requires an adverb [**well]** to make it grammatical. For [**speek]** and [**Elish],** it can be attributed to spelling error. Also, the forms [**buildes]** and **[why]** in 41b and 41c have also been used to represent [**buildings]** and [**while]** respectively. In terms of inflectional morphology, the forms [**build]** has been suffixed with the morphemes **[-es]** to derive the noun form of the verb *build.* Again, the form *buildes* does not exist in the English language as a noun form. Therefore, the definite article [**the]** cannot associate with it. Regarding [**why]**, one can attribute the anomaly to spelling error. Thus, the sentences should have read:

70

42a…Some of the students cannot **speak** the **English well**…
42b. We are suffering *of* these **buildings**. If rains are about to come…
42c. Mean while is not like that…

In relating this to the teaching and learning of English grammar, it is prudent to advise students to check on the forms of the messages of the English language that they might have acquired. Students spelling skills must be improved through teaching and learning. Again, teaching and learning techniques must ensure that students cross check the messages with the forms. The beautiful thing about all these types of grammar errors identified in students' writings is that students are processing language input that are available to them. It portrays that learners are internalizing the language inputs available to them.

4.2.0 Findings for Research Question Two

Research question two says: why do senior high school graduates commit grammar errors in their writings? The study reveals that there are some variables that trigger grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings (see appendix E). The table below illustrates the distribution of the responses on the causes of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents' responses on the causes of grammar error

Causes of Grammar Errors	No. of Responses	Percentage %
Lack of knowledge and understanding of the English language	6	30
Lack of extensive reading and reading materials	4	20
Lack of writing skills among learners	4	20
Context of learning	3	15
Spelling	2	10
Interference of L1	1	5
Total	**20**	**100**

Respondents hold diverse views on the causes of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. It is apparent that lack of knowledge and understanding of the

English language receives the uppermost response of six (6) representing 30% of the total responses. Comparatively, lack of extensive reading and reading materials, and lack of writing skills among learners receive four (4) responses each representing 20% of the total responses. The context of learning obtains the third highest response of three (3) representing 15% of the total responses whiles spelling follows fourth with two (2) responses representing 10% of the total responses. Interference of learners' first language attracts the least response of one (1) representing 5% of the total responses. Nonetheless, the diagram below illustrates the stances of both respondents on the causes of grammar errors as mentioned above. This has been done for audience to appreciate the positions of both respondents on the issue, and to assist in the analysis of this part of the work also.
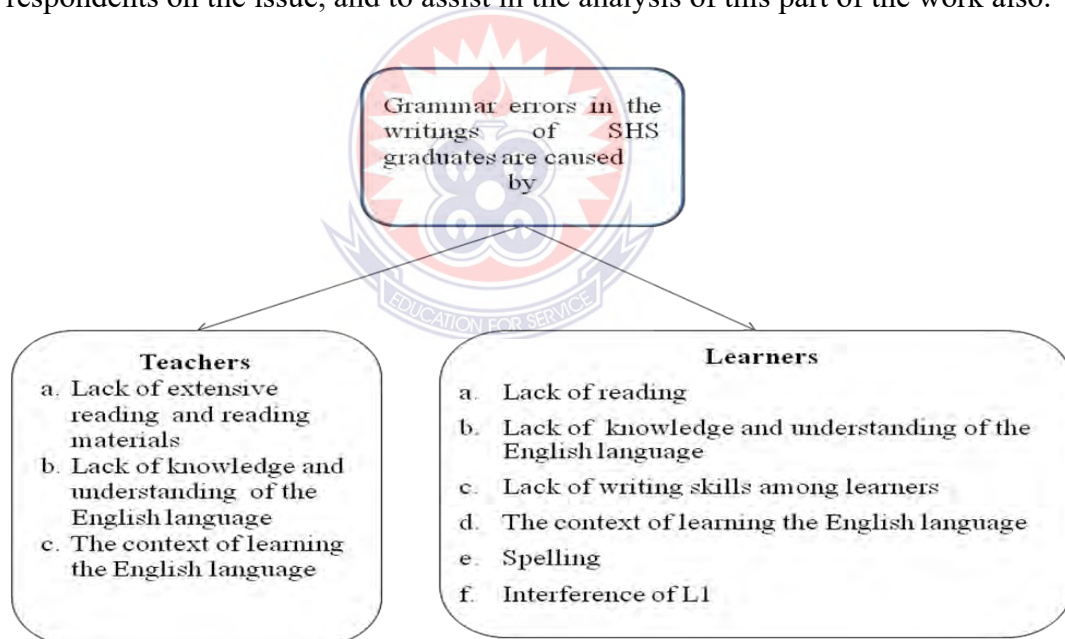
Figure 1. Model for Causes of Grammar Errors

From the diagram, it can be argued that respondents hold diverse views on the causes of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. Teachers agree with some students on lack of reading, lack of knowledge and understanding of the English language and the context of learning as the causes of grammar errors in SHS

graduates' writings. Aside this, learners also believe that lack of writing skills among students, spelling and the interference of the L1 also cause grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. This is indicative that teachers may not be fully aware of all the causes of the grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The danger is that it will be difficult for teachers to address the problem of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings if they are not completely aware of the all causes of the grammar errors. Thus, it will be essential for a teacher to regularly conduct error analysis with his or her class so as to determine the causes of the students' grammar errors and address them accordingly.

However, the study also shows that certain circumstances may give way to the display of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The circumstances are;

43a. Stress, because of limited time or too much work, lack of practice and lack of knowledge (ignorance) and,

43b. If they don't understand the principles governing the use of the language; and when they have no way of knowing such principles. Also, when they are exposed to the wrong 'models' they will copy wrongly (Interview, June 7, 2012).

This is suggestive that SHS graduates commit grammar errors because at the high school level they did not understand the principles of English grammar rules. Also, students did not have enough time to practice and understand the rules of English grammar. Additionally, students who may be affected by the circumstances mentioned are;

44a. Students who are mostly "Day Students", and sometimes the 'reserved' or introverted ones, truants, scanty readers of materials in English language, and

44b. Casual readers - they do not analyze the sentences in paragraphs read to learn whatever grammar available (Interview, June 7, 2012).

In effect, there may be some groups of SHS graduates who commit grammar errors in their writings. It may be that SHS graduates who were 'scanty readers' or 'casual readers' in their high school days will show grammar errors in their writings.

4.2.1 Lack of knowledge and understanding of the English language

The syllabus also advises on issues relating to the causes of grammar errors. As regards to the understanding of the English grammar rules, the syllabus indicates that when students are "able to explain, summarize give examples etc means that the student has understood the lesson taught" (p.xii). It continues that "It must be borne in mind that grammar is taught to be applied in speech and in writing" (p. xviii). The syllabus also makes it clear that at the SHS level of education in Ghana, students begin to study the essential rules of the language use. This means that teaching is done for students to "understand" the English grammar rules before applying them in speech and writing. It also implies that at the SHS level, learners are expected to be knowledgeable of the rules of English grammar. It suggests that the framers of the syllabus believe that at the SHS level, students "understand" the language. Therefore, students should be able to study the rules of English grammar.

The results depict that students commit grammar errors in their writings because they do not "understand" the English language or the grammar rules. This assertion is supported by the following responses;

45a. Lack of understanding then question,
45b. The understanding of the question and some words in the sentence,
45c. Understanding of the underline words, some underlining words are also difficult, and
45d. When they have little or no idea about the requirements of what they are writing about (Interview, June 5 – 7, 2012).

These findings reiterate the point made by Krashen (1982) that it is necessary for the acquirer to understand the message before the forms of the messages. Clearly, the notion of the syllabus is at variance with Krashen's position on second language learning. The diagram below illustrates the position of Krashen and the syllabus on second language learning as against the results obtained on lack of knowledge and

74

understanding of the English language.

Krashen's Position	Syllabus Position		Respondents' View
Let the acquirer understand the messages before the acquisition of the forms of the messages.	Teach learners to understand the rules of English grammar and apply them in speech and writing.	but	Learners lack knowledge and understanding of the English language.

| These will assist learners to understand the English language and grammar rules. Also, it will enable learners to apply the English grammar rules aptly. | | | This leads to grammar errors in learners' writings. |

Figure 2. Model Explaining How to Understand the English language

Generally, the model suggests that SHS graduates commit grammar errors in their writings because they did not understand the rules of the English language during their high school days. Impliedly, SHS graduate will not commit grammar errors if they had understood the rules of the English language during their high school days. This finding suggests that the position of the syllabus on the methods of teaching and learning of the English language and grammar rules is inadequate. Therefore, how do learners understand the grammar rules of the English language? Should it be the combination of both ingredients proposed by Krashen and the syllabus? Or are there other means to the teaching and learning of the English language and the grammar rules? Pedagogically, when is it appropriate to introduce the teaching and learning of English grammar in Ghanaian SHS?

4.2.2 Lack of extensive reading and reading materials

It is recognized that lack of extensive reading and reading materials also make it possible for SHS graduates to commit grammar errors in their writings. This result corroborates the finding of Edu-Buandoh (1997) that the abysmal performance of

students in the English language may be as a result of lack of reading among students. The results show that students commit grammar errors mainly because they do not read extensively or fail to read or students have no reading materials to refer to. The following responses explain this theme;

46a. Inability of the students to read through the script for errors to be corrected,
46b. Not reading the question well before answering them,
46c. Poor or lack of extensive reading and lack of reading materials,
46d. Other time, there are no adequate or "good" textbooks for students to study about grammar,
46e. And If students fail or refuse to read or do not have enough or "good" Readers to reference from, it is hard for them to know the correct forms from the incorrect. The more they read, the more they meet same or different grammatical forms and can adapt them (Interview, June 5 – 7, 2012).

In effect, the display of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings can be attributed to the fact that students do not read to know the correct forms and use them accordingly. What the syllabus says on reading will be part of the suggestions that can be used to address grammar errors.

4.2.3 Lack of writing skills among students

Similarly, lack of writing skills among students causes grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The syllabus talks about writing in relations to grammar as "writing lessons must therefore feature relevant issues of grammar" (p. xviii). It means that there should be lessons on writing and that grammar rules must work. In this study, it is demonstrated that SHS graduates commit grammar errors in their writings because they lack writing skills. It is revealed that students write as if they are speaking as students do not know how to sequence tenses. The arguments are;

47a. The way we speak the language, that is how we write sentences in past, tense instead of present tense continuons,
47b. The use of the past, present tense,
47c. May be the sentence was in the past and I answered it in the presence, and
47d. Because the heard is fast then the mind and also rushing in written (Interview, June 5 – 6, 2012).

This clearly suggests that students do not monitor or edit what they write. Learners do not make good use of their learned system as postulated by Krashen (ibid). To Krashen (ibid), the acquisition system initiates utterances as the learning system monitors it. The learning system involves in planning, editing and correcting functions. He believed that learning should assist the learner to make changes to the form of speech or the written text after it has been uttered by the acquired system. Probably, students are under users of their learned systems. The category of lack of writing skills among students as a cause of grammar errors suggests that there are no effective and efficient lessons on teaching and learning of writing where English grammar rules are expected to feature appropriately.

4.2.4 Context of learning

Furthermore, the context of learning also contributes to grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. One response from a teacher posited that grammar errors result from the context of learning. The justifications provided by the teacher are that;

48a. Students say or explain the possible causes of their errors. They do not often know the grammatical names let alone the functions of parts of speech (Interview, June 7, 2012).

The syllabus also mentions that; "T/L activities that will ensure maximum student participation in the lessons are presented in column 4. Try to avoid rote learning and drill-oriented methods and rather emphasize participatory teaching and learning" (p. xi). Though the syllabus gives other alternative methods for the teaching and learning of the English language and grammar, the responses depict otherwise;

49a. The traditional way of teaching and learning grammar whereby students do not know the real names of words or group of words (e.g. Model Verbs),

49b. Our English teacher needs to teach us very well and needs to help or collect we the students when we do the wrong thing, and

49c. Through attending library for the meaning and also through teachers who know much about it (Interview, June 5 – 7, 2012).

This idea is substantiated by Brown (ibid) that the context of learning can also be a source or cause of error, even though it overlaps with both types of transfer. He maintained that "students often make error because of a misleading explanation from the teacher or faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook or even because of a pattern that was rotely memorized in a drill but improperly contextualized" (Brown, ibid; p.226). An argument can be made that the context of learning can contribute largely to the grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The diagram below tells the positions of teachers and learners on the context of learning as a cause of grammar errors.

Teachers
Grammar errors occur through
a. The traditional ways of teaching & learning, and
b. Lack of extensive reading and reading materials

Learners
Grammar errors occur through
a. The teachers' explanations,
b. The method of teaching, and
c. The learners' use of library materials
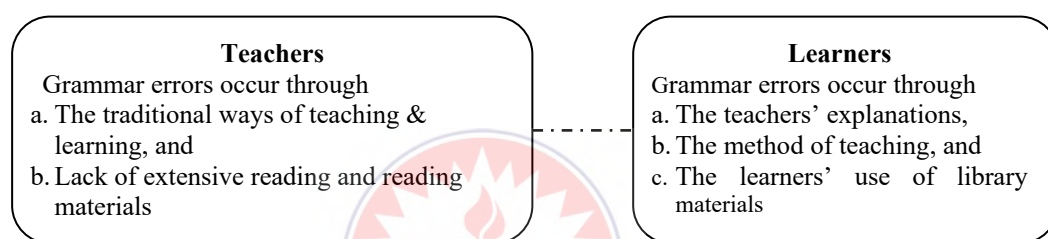
Figure 3. Model for Context of Learning

From the model, it can be deduced that teachers and learners agree that the methods of teaching and learning of English grammar lead to grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. However, learners also believe that sometimes it results from their use of library materials and their teachers. In all of these, one can conclude that the teachers' and the learners' views support the argument advanced by Brown (2000) that errors can results from "a misleading explanation from the teacher or faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook" (p. 226). In effect, teachers appear not to follow the advice enshrined in the syllabus that they avoid rote or drill learning and emphasis on participatory teaching and learning methods. Again, SHS graduates commit grammar errors in their writings because teachers did not vary their methods of teaching to include participatory methods of teaching and learning.

4.2.5 Spelling

Spelling can also lead to grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The responses argue that grammar errors in students' writings result from spelling. The following responses argue for the assertion;

50a. Some causes includ spellings, some student makes mistakes, through their spelling…, and
50b. Sperling miska is one of the cause (Interview, June 5 – 6, 2012).

This theme as a cause of grammar errors in students' writings needs serious attention by teachers and researchers. The research reveals that students use unrelated forms (words) to represent forms they might have acquired unconsciously through speech and reading. Probably, students may use those forms correctly in speech. But for some strange reasons students cannot identify the forms and use them appropriately in their writings. They either use other forms to represent the acquired forms or spell the forms anyhow (see examples 41a, 41b, and 41c). This is also labeled as carelessness or forgetfulness in the sense that one cannot fathom why students commit such errors. There are instances where students can refer to the appropriate form and use it, but students ignore that and use "any form". Perhaps the context of learning makes it possible for teachers to overemphasize on speech than the forms of the messages of the English language.

4.2.6 Interference of L1

There is a view that grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings may well be caused by the interference of the first language. The response that argues for this is;

51a. The translation of our language into making sentences are sometimes the problem (Interview, June 6, 2012).

This validates the view that some errors in the learners' language are as a result of interlangauge transfer. It is said that interlingual transfer errors emerge when the

learners apply their knowledge of the first language onto the target language resulting in an error (Brown, 2000). It means some learners believe that grammar errors emerge in their writings as a result of the translation of the L1 into the L2. This suggests that the thought of the learner is organized in the L1 before it is translated into the L2. Ultimately, the probability that grammar errors may emerge in the L2 is high because the morphosyntatic rules of the language of the learner - L1- may be different from the L2.

4.2.7 Attitudes of teachers and students toward exercises

Additionally, it is also recognized in the study of students exercises that attitudes of students towards class work also contribute to the display of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.   It is clear during the study of students' exercises that some students do not take part in some class exercises as some go to the extent of tearing some marked sheets in their exercise books. It is also serious for teachers to allow students to do exercises on sheets of paper. The reason is that students may misplace the papers. Thus, locating the papers for clarification will be difficult. This confirms Edu-Buandoh (1997) assertion that the abysmal performance of students in the English language may be as a result of lack of proper attitude of teachers in handling grammar. In effect, SHS graduates become deficient in the use of the English grammar rules because in their high school days they did not demonstrate the right attitudes toward grammar exercises.

4.2.8.0 Why Learners Worry about their Grammar Errors

The table below presents the distribution of the responses in relation to the factors that lead to learners' worry about their grammar errors.

Table 3. Distribution of responses on learners' worries about the grammar errors

Reasons for Learners' Worry	Number of Responses	Percentage %
Academic factors[1]	9	50
Affective factors	4	22
Stage of acquisition	3	17
Academic factors[2]	1	5
Interlanguage	1	6
Total	**18**	**100**

It is apparent from the table that academic factors which is in two folds receive the uppermost response of nine (9) and one (1) representing 50% and 5% respectively making 55% of the total responses. Comparatively, affective factors receive four (4) responses representing 22% of the total responses. The stage of acquisition obtains the third highest response of three (3) representing 17% of the total responses whiles interlanguage get one (1) response representing 6% of the total responses. These reasons are arrived at when student respondents are made to tell whether they worry about the grammar errors that they commit and assign reasons. In all, respondents indicated 'yes' and give out the reasons, but for the academic factors, with an exception of one respondent who indicated 'no' all of them indicated 'yes'. In furtherance to the above, the model below presents a clearer picture on the issue of the learners' worries about their grammar errors.
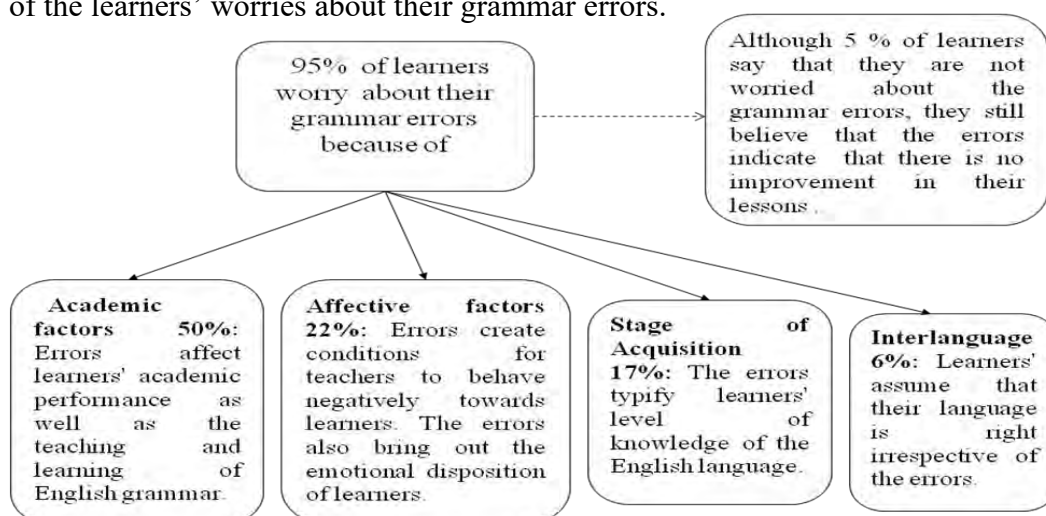
Figure 4. Model Explaining Learners' Worries about the Grammar Errors

81

Certainly, most SHS graduates will be unhappy when they commit grammar errors in their written exercises. But for the few who are not even worried, indications are that the errors suggest to them that there is no progression in their pursuit to learn the rules of English grammar. Impliedly, if these concerns for learners' worries about their grammar errors are not addressed, then learners' knowledge of the English language and grammar will not be increased leading to fossilization in L2 learning. Therefore, it is essential to look into the concerns of the learners in these situations and address them accordingly in order to aid learners to learn and understand the English language and grammar rules. Each of the factors for learners' worries about their grammar errors has been discussed in details below.

4.2.8.1 Academic factors

Learners indicate that they get worried when they commit grammar errors in their writings mainly because of academic reasons. The syllabus also talks about "Dimension" which simply means "a psychological unit for describing a particular learning behaviour" (p.xii). The dimensions are of two folds; (a) knowledge and understanding, and (b) use of knowledge. Additionally, the use of knowledge is defined as "being able to develop, plan, solve problems, construct, etc. means that the students can 'apply' the knowledge acquired in some new context" (p.xii). Also, there are four skills under those two dimensions; (1) listening comprehension, (2) reading comprehension, (3) speaking, and (4) writing. Besides, in the study of the students' exercises, learners are expected to know the grammar rules and apply them appropriately. Also, in students' exercises, teachers award grades to tasks performed correctly by the students.

In effect, the central focus on the teaching and learning of the English language in SHS in Ghana is learning and not acquisition. Again, it means students' performance in English language is measured on the 'dimensions'. This view can also be linked to the context of learning as a cause of grammar error in SHS graduates' writings. The reason is that students are expected to be taught to understand and acquire knowledge of English grammar rules, apply them accurately and receive reward for showing correct learning behaviours. Hence, when students are not able to accomplish correct learning behaviours it affects them academically. Therefore, students get worried because;

52a. It is the dream of every student to be on top of his or her class,
52b. So if I see it, meaning, I did not pay much attention on the question,
52c. Yes, because I am not to be especting do such mistakes, and
52d. Yes, because when ever you are given exercise, your teacher will record your marks in continue accessment to gather with your examination mark which will help give you a good grade at the end of the term (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012)

Now, do the reasons that make students to be worried motivate them to improve on their knowledge of English grammar? What will then happen when grades are not awarded to students for showing both wrong and right learning behaviours?

4.2.8.2 Affective factors

For the affective factors, the teaching syllabus for the English language says little about such an important aspect of second language learning as; "try to avoid rote learning and drill-oriented methods and rather emphasize participatory teaching and learning, and also emphasize the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of knowledge in your instructional system where appropriate" (p. xi). Indications are that students get worried because of affective factors. Stevick (1976) mentioned that research has validated the view that different affective variables relate to the success in second language acquisition. The argument is that;

83

Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter--even if they understand the message, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device (Krashen, ibid; p.31 cited Stevick 1976).

Two things are very important on this issue. Firstly, students get worried because they are not "comfortable" and also "feel bore" when they find grammar errors in their exercises. Secondly, the teacher will not have "time" and will be "angry" and corrects the students wrongly. The following argue for this assertion:

53a. Sometimes I do worry, because I do not feel comfortable if I get any spelling wrong,

53b. Yes, because when mistakes are in the grammar you feel bore when your work is being marked and by this improve on your grammar, and

53c. Yes, because, when you do the errors, may be teachers who is marking may be will not get time if he or she sees first mistakes he or she will get angry to mark you wrong (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

These points are serious because the emotional instability of the learners and the negative behavours of teachers during teaching and learning can impede students' acquisition and learning processes. This view can be connected to the context of learning as a cause of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. Krashen (ibid) indicated that pedagogically "the Affective Filter hypothesis implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter" (p. 32). The behavour of teachers in a moment can contribute to students' lack of understanding of the English grammar rules thereby creating conditions for students and SHS graduates to commit grammar errors in their writings. In all of these, teaching and learning activities should consider how to manage the affective variables effectively.

84

4.2.8.3 Stage of acquisition

Other learners also do worry about the grammar errors in their exercises because the errors typify their knowledge of the rules of English grammar. The following responses suggest so;

54a. Yes because, I thank what I write is not correct,
54b. Because, it will make us know the mistakes, and
54c. Yes, because I may not be aware of what I would be writing but after the teachers have gone through I now know my mistake (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The theory of error analysis makes a claim that the learners' error indicates the nature of knowledge of the learner. This finding corroborates Coder (1973) view cited by Zhu (ibid) that error making is one of the discovery stages and processes that learners go through. It also affirms Brown (ibid) views on what learners do with errors at the emergent and the systematic stage. At this stage, second language learners see their language as legitimate on its own right because they are not able to recognize their grammar errors when shown to them. Likewise, not all of the learners language are well formed; they are however approximate to the target language. This presupposes that grammar errors are "significant" to the learners and the teachers in the sense that learners may make an effort to deal with the grammar errors when shown to them. However, when the grammar errors are not shown to the students, they may still believe that everything is acceptable, legitimate and will continue to commit the errors. In terms of teaching and learning of English grammar, it is sometimes significant that learners' errors are pointed out to them.

4.2.8.4 Interlanguage

It is revealed that learners get worried after seeing grammar errors in their written texts because they believe that whatever they have written are all 'right';

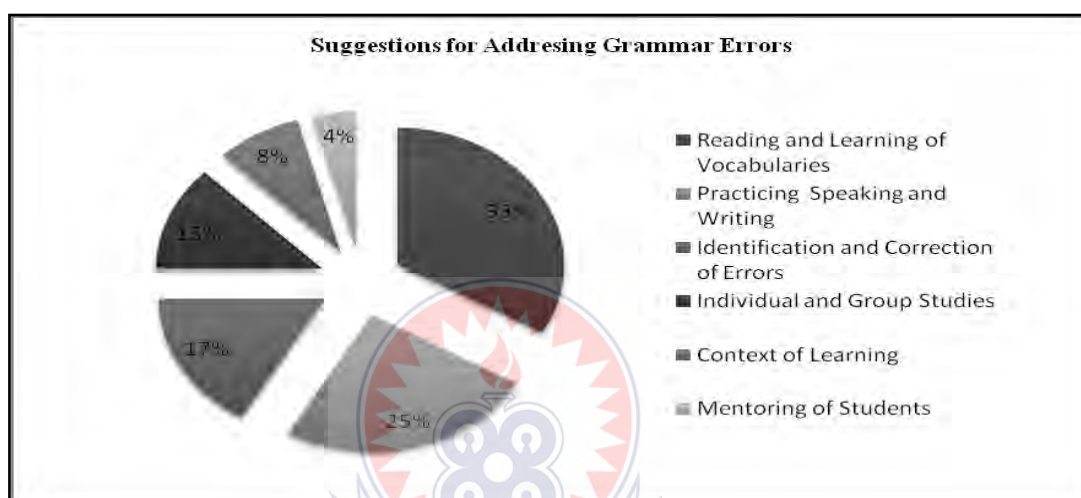**55a.** Yes, because we may think its right (Interview, June 6, 2012).

This supports Corder (1971) view that "the learner's language is unique to a particular individual, that the rules of the learner's language are peculiar to the language of that individual alone" (Brown, ibid; p. 215 cited Corder, 1971; p.151). From the perspective of the learner any sentence constructed is grammatically correct. Impliedly, the tendency for such learners to commit same error over and over again is high since the learner thinks that his/her language is right. Though the learners' language is unique to that individual, studies have also shown that it undergoes changes. It is therefore essential that the learners' grammar errors are pointed out to them in order to assist them in refining and reconstructing their language. The benefit of pointing out the learners' errors to them is to purge the learners' assertion that *"…we may think its right".* Again, learners' misconceptions about the language structure will be erased when the errors are shown to them.

4.3.0   Findings for Research Question Three

Research question three says: how can the problem of grammar errors be addressed in the writings of senior high school graduates? In this regard, the analysis of the findings for research question three has been presented and discussed under the identified themes (see appendixes G, & H). The table and the pie chart below show the distribution of the suggestions that can be employed by students and teachers to reduce grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. In addition, the number of responses in relation to the suggestions for addressing grammar errors is twenty four (24) because some respondents give two suggestions. However, teachers are also made to respond to or comment on some specific issues relating to teaching and how students respond to some prescriptions in the syllabus and the textbooks which form part of the suggestions for addressing grammar errors.

57a. It should be considered because, if we learn more vocabularys everyday, we will meet new words and spell them correctly their spellings, so the next time we meet them we will be familiar with them,

57b. It should be considered because, sometimes the mistakes comes from the teachers and also we the students. There should be a pamanent teachers to correct our mistakes,

57c. My answers for question 4 should be considered because now adays students do not like reading and finding meaning of words they do not understand, and

57d. It not found in any book, It is not familiar to everbody, it so difficult (Interviews, June 5- 6, 2012).

Also, the English textbooks for form one, two and three, make a suggestion under the subheading **"Read Widely".** It urges students to read widely in the sense that "No one English course can possibly teach you everything you need to know" (p.1). It goes on to say that one cannot claim to be educated if that person does not read widely both at school or college and even throughout life. It continues to mention the number of hours that students should read; "try an hour, or half an hour, per day and do your best to stick to it" (p.1). Again, students should try and read at weekends and during the school holidays. Students are also advised to go to the library and read both fiction and non-fiction books. Additionally, students should read newspapers and magazines particularly the main news items and other stories that interest them. As regards to the syllabus, it states that "it is a requirement that each student should read five books on different topics each term, except the last term of the fourth year" (p. xviii). The syllabus also recommends to students to read on social, political, economic and health issues in Ghana. As a matter of fact reading is recognized as a major means of addressing grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The reasons are that it can improve students' spelling. Reading can assist students to be aware of unfamiliar facts of which teachers are also not aware of.

Additionally, teachers recommend reading materials to students to read as they

also motivate students who read with praise and grades. The teachers' statements below support the argument;

58a. I endorse the idea of students reading other extra materials and reading also extensively. This exposes them to different ways of applying the grammar of the language. I recommend such materials to the students to buy and study/read.

58b. By motivating students to read suggested materials, by rewarding students with praise or marks any time each one reading a book/story book magazine on his/her own (Questionnaire, June 7, 2012),

Furthermore, a response from one of the teachers on how students respond to the advice that students read extra materials indicates that students do not often buy such materials to read. Also, students who have the materials do not like reading them. But, one teacher is of the contrarily view that students ask for the materials, borrow books from the library or buy the recommended books to read. The assertions below portray the positions of the teachers on whether students read extra materials or not;

59a. Most of the times, students don't like buying such materials, and other times those who have do not like reading most of them only depend on the examples of the teacher in the class,

59b. By asking for kinds of materials to read, by borrowing source materials to read from libraries, by buying books, newspapers or magazines to read, and by reading grammar books gathered as "class library" (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Similarly, teachers indicate that students infrequently consult them on grammar errors in their exercise books but not on any specific problems. Again, students benefit from the consultations by clearing of their doubts about English grammar. These assertions are expressed in the following responses;

60a. Yes, students come for assistance on grammar but this is only occasional; and the complaints one usually on those in their essays, but not specific grammar problems, and

60b. Yes, they have been, less frequently. The students benefit by clearing off their misunderstanding they might have had during the lesson; by earning even more during the explanation. Both students and teachers are satisfied for work done (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Learners have clearly indicated that grammar errors in their writings can be addressed through reading, consulting the teacher and learning of vocabularies. But

teachers say learners do not read, and that they "occasionally" and "less frequently" consult them. It is significant to mention that it is not enough to address grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings through reading. Reading should move with learning. Students only avail themselves to language input when they read. At that level, it is the *acquired system* that may operate. Once more, the teachers' responses suggest that students appear not to make adequate effort to upgrade their knowledge of English grammar through reading and consultations.

Also, in a situation where one reads without activating the *learned system,* there is only a "feel or sound" of correct or right grammar. The reason is that the *acquired system* according to Krashen (ibid) will only indicate that "grammatical sentences "sound" right, or "feel" right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated" (p.10). It is therefore important to emphasize the point that students should activate their *learned system* during reading. The reason is that it will assist students to authenticate their feelings of "correct" grammar. To Krashen (ibid) learning refers "to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is "knowing about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules"" (p. 10). In all of these, it is necessary that the *acquired system* and the *learned system* complement each other during reading in order to aid students to know the English grammar rules and apply them aptly when writing. Actually, learners should learn English grammar consciously or explicitly. But what do students learn when they are finding the meanings of words? Do students look for grammatical information on those words they find their meanings?

4.3.2   Practicing speaking and writing

Comparatively, grammar errors can be addressed in students' writings through regular practice of speaking and writing. This strategy ranks second with six (6) responses representing 25% of the total responses. The syllabus makes a clear statement that speaking and writing are in the realm of productive skills; "it must be remembered that…productive (speaking and writing skills) are interrelated and hence complementary. Thus, for example, a reading lesson must provide ample opportunity for the practice of related listening, speaking and writing skills" (p. xviii). The views of the respondents support what the syllabus has prescribed. The following are the responses that argue for this proposal;

61a. They should give adequate room for students to know the rules in the speaking and writing of English language,

61b. When the teacher comes to class to teach, may be we may be with spelling or words or dictation which will help our grammar very well,

61c. What I can do to reduce my grammar errors in my exercises book is to study how I can use and write my grammar nicely or and also how I speak the language, and

61d. By practicing the language and speaking it frequently (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012)

Respondents justify their suggestions by saying:

62a. It will help reduce because practice makes man perfect,

62b. Because when there is an essay writing or competition somewhere because we have heard the grammar before we will not panic in doing that,

62c. What I think my answers in question (4) should be considered is that, the language is not our own language and also we are now learning how to speak and how to write, and

62d. Because the English language is language which can be used anywhere and understood (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

However, on the issue of supplementary materials to assist learners on all of the four skills - listening, reading, speaking and writing -, the syllabus says; "the teacher is further encouraged to ***constantly*** look for other supplementary materials that will enhance the teaching and learning ***especially*** of the sections on '***Listening and Speaking' and 'Reading***" (p. xviii). The diagram below explains the situation regarding speaking and writing.
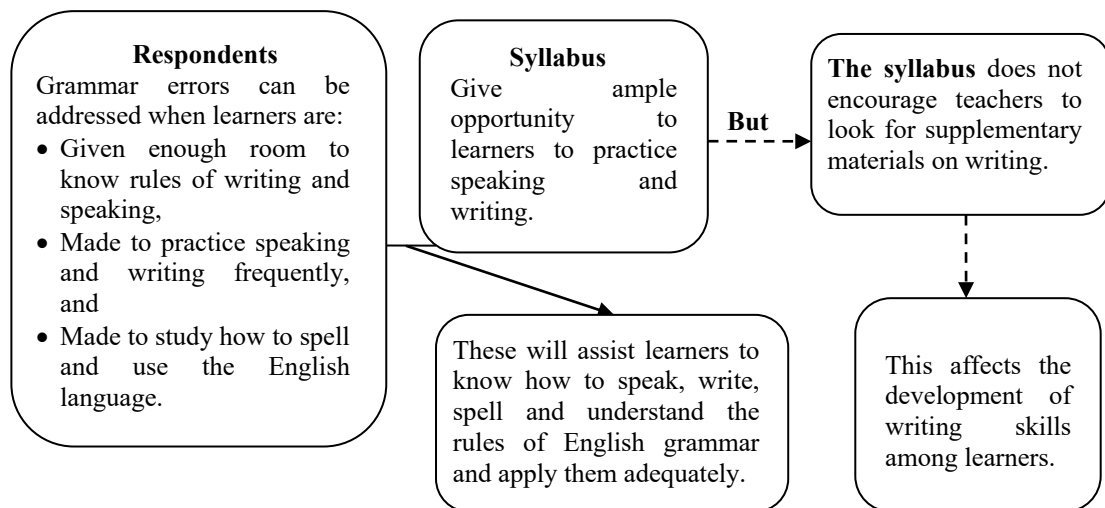
Figure 6. Model Explaining Practicing Speaking and Writing

From the model, it can be put forward that when learners are given ample opportunity to practice speaking and writing, it will assist them to know how to spell, speak, write and understand the English grammar rules well. But, teachers are also not encouraged to recommend books on writing to students to read and practice leading to grammar errors in learners' writings. For if learners are made to practice speaking and writing constantly, it will assist them to know how to speak and write well. Again, if teachers are encouraged to look for books on writing, they will probably get them, study and use it to teach students on how to write. In summary, grammar errors are showing in SHS graduates' writing because in their senior high school days they did not read and practice regularly on writing.

Again, *writing* is less essential to the developers of the syllabus. Indeed, if a learner is fluent in speech and cannot write coherently then that learner is incomplete with respect to the four skills. Undoubtedly, most of the grammar errors that are identified in students' writings are unnecessary additions and omissions. Students could have avoided those errors if they have fair knowledge of how to edit

written work. For if students are taught how to write and edit work, they will be armed with writing and editing skills. This strategy seems to agree with the proposal of in-class editing or editing approach, exchanging compositions, group composition, and projection which are techniques for error correction (Walz, ibid; p.30-31 cited Gaudiani, 1981; Witbeck, 1976; Vallete, 1973 & Hagel, 1978).

4.3.3 Identification and correction of errors

With this suggestion, the syllabus does not provide any techniques for dealing with the grammar errors when they occur in students' writings. This research has nonetheless shown that it is essential to identify, correct and discuss the grammar errors in class. This suggestion ranks third with four (4) responses representing 17% of the total responses. The arguments or suggestions advanced by the respondents indicate that grammar errors should be identified and corrected for learners to be aware of the correct forms. The responses that argue and justify the proposition are;

63a. Class approach – identification and correction of errors after class exercise(s), quizzes and test based on identified errors as well as assignments on reading/exercises to reinforce learning,

63b. It should be marked wrong in the exercise book and then corrected, and

63c. The teacher should write the correct world (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

The reasons assigned for this suggestion for addressing grammar errors are;

64a. I think so because students and teachers are together concern about the correction of grammatical errors that will positively raise their academic performance in not only, English language, but also other subjects, by explaining to students the advantages inherent in the strategies and by maintain constancy in the application of the strategies,

64b. When the errors are corrected on the spot the learner in question gets to know the correct form and chances are that he/she will not repeat it in future; and when the errors are discussed it gives room for better understanding and knowledge to other students who might make the same /similar errors, and

64c. Because I don't know the correct world (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

Walz (1982) posited that teachers should correct in a positive manner. Again, Vigil and Oller (1976) discovered that "predominantly negative feedback

discourages students' participation" (Walz, ibid; p.16 cited Vigil and Oller, 1976). Also, teachers' correction should be gentle and come with respect (Walz, ibid; p.16 cited Vigil and Oller 1976). Moskowitz (1976) supported this argument that "students respond much better to this approach than to criticism" (Walz, ibid; p.16 cited Moskowitz 1976). Additionally, Walz (ibid) mentioned that numerous scholars (Cathcart and Olsen 1976; Chastain 1971; 1981; Knop 1980; Rivers 1975) have recommended that placing emphasis on correction during drills than during communication activities is good.

In all, it is suggestive that the grammar errors in students' writings should be identified and corrected. Besides, the respondents put forward that the grammar errors in the learners' writings should be corrected through "class approach" and teacher direct correction. Meaning, the teacher together with the class can identify grammar errors in learners' writings and discuss them openly in class. For when students learn in the form of identifying and correcting errors in their exercises, it means students are monitoring or editing what the acquired system has initiated. This seems to agree with Krashen's (1982) monitor hypothesis. Also, it confirms Walter (2004) view that effective learning includes making connections about what has been learnt in different contexts and reflecting on one's own learning and learning strategies (Naeini, 2008 cited Walter 2004).

4.3.4 Individual and group studies

Individual and group studies ranks fourth with three (3) responses representing 13% of the total responses. The responses that posit for this idea are;

65a. Other times they can drill them in the correct forms or employ the brilliant or competent

     students to form groups with the needy ones and teach themselves while the teacher supervises,

65b. Individual/group approach which includes face-to-face discussion of errors and correction and group studies (under chosen leader), assignment on reading exercises to reinforce learning,

65c. Learning hard, and thinking very well before answer it (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

Respondents justified this suggestion by stating that;

66a. It can help those who might be shy because of the "appearance" of the teacher and to learn at ease with peers. It will expose student to many of the correct forms and many of the wrong or ungrammatical forms for them to know and apply the corrects ones,

66b. By evaluating and modifying corrective strategies, I think so because students and teachers are together concerned about the correction of grammatical errors that will positively raise their academic performance in not only English language, but also other subject, and

66c. It is so difficult. It is untaught (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

Also, in the official English textbooks for the senior high schools, there is a section labeled ***Review and Self-Assessment.*** Under the topic, students are encouraged to either go through the units again alone or with their classmates or to ask their teachers if a student is dissatisfied with his or her performance. This seems to be a form of encouraging independent learning, group discussions or peer correction and consultation. The syllabus suggests to teachers to pair students or group students to apply some English grammar rules learned. As regards to project work, the syllabus says "develop excellent skills in English as a result of having undergone instruction in this syllabus" (p.xii). Again, the syllabus encourages teachers to "determine the mastery level you want students to achieve in their answers and responses" (p.xii). However, the teachers' responses to the question; what do you seek to achieve when you organize project work on English grammar for your students are;

67a. Motivating students to work in unity, identify with a common problem and solving it, learning to tolerate divergent views for a common purpose, encouraging healthy socialization goals, and

67b. It will compel students to research and gain more information on grammar from other materials. They will have the opportunity to learn on their own, so that I can assess further my own progress and that of the students (Interview, June 7, 2012)

The diagram below clearly illustrates the situation on individual or group exercises on grammar as mentioned above.

Syllabus Advice

Let learners do project work on English grammar and the teacher should:
- Develop excellent skills of learners in English
- Determine the mastery level of what the teacher want the learners to achieve

Respondents

Grammar errors can be addressed through:
- Discussions of errors
- Group studies
- Peer correction
- Drills, and
- Individual learning

Teachers
Teachers want learners to achieve the following whenever they organize project work for them:
- Gain information on grammar
- Learn on their own
- Work in unity
- Identify problems and solve them
- Tolerate divergent views etc

These will expose learners' to correct forms and raise their academic performance. It will also improve learner's level of knowledge, understanding and application of English grammar rules adequately.

But what learning dimensional skills are learners developing excellently or mastering when teachers organize project work on English grammar for their students?

Figure 7. Model Explaining Individual and Group Studies

Clearly, the responses from the teachers do not match rightly with the advice given by the syllabus in relation to the learning dimensions (knowledge and understanding - listening comprehension and reading comprehension and use of knowledge - speaking and writing). The model portrays that though project works are organized for learners to gain information on grammar, the objectives do not pin-point a clear sets of objectives that will help students to develop excellent skills in English grammar. This is suggestive that teachers only organize the project work with a little focus of developing the dimensional skills. Learning may take place but not excellently as advised by the syllabus. This may not assist students to develop knowledge in English grammar and apply them when necessary. In effect, the tendency for SHS graduates to commit grammar errors in their writings is high.

But for this suggestion, there are merits and demerits that are associated with this type of technique. By and large this may agree with the advantages and disadvantages mentioned by Sultana (2009) on peer correction. Moreover Burt and Kiparsky (1972) opined that peer correction is less threatening in the sense that it does not involve any grade. They however caution that teachers should be very careful in order not to call same students all the time. The reason is that others may feel a sense of favouratism (Walz, ibid; cited Burt and Kiparsky, 1972). Furthermore, Stevick (1980) warned that peer correction can invite unfavourable comparison among students (Walz, ibid; cited Stevick 1980). Though, this finding supports other views, it is important to indicate that the method can be evaluated and modified at any time when the need arises. However, in correcting grammar errors through peer correction or group discussion, how should the peer correction be done? How can the discussion group or study group be formed? Who should lead the group? What should be the maximum number for a group and what should be the form of the discussion?

4.3.5 Context of learning

The context of learning is the fifth suggestion prefer by respondents with two (2) responses representing 8% of the total responses. The position of the respondents on this suggestion is that the teachers' explanation on English grammar should be clear to assist learners to understand. Again, in order for teachers to know the difficulties of the learners on English grammar, teachers should give assignments or homework to learners. The responses are;

68a. I think the teacher should teach us well and try to give us homework or assignment so that he/she can know mistakes and I think things shall move well, and

68b. Questions given to has must be clear (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The reasons assigned to the above suggestions are that;

69a. My answer should be considered because grammar errors or mistake can reduce when teaching goes on well and I think we the students will appreciate that, and

69b. Because some words are above standard and we find it hard to understand them when answering questions (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

Perhaps, when all the suggestions mentioned earlier on are applied effectively and efficiently, it will aid learners to understand the rules of English grammar. It can be deduced from the responses that learners need improvement on the context of learning. The strategies mentioned in this work together with Krashen criteria for how to understand can possibly assist learners to understand the rules of English grammar. In effect, letting students to understand the target language is also a pre-requisite for learners to know how the English grammar rules work and apply them aptly when writing.

4.3.6 Mentoring of students

Mentoring of learners ranks least with one (1) response representing 4% of the total responses. A response argues that grammar errors can be addressed if students are mentored. It is not surprising to have one response arguing for mentoring of students because the rest of the strategies are not new. The suggestion is;

70a. Apart from making "good" materials available to students, teachers should also model the learners (Interview, June 7, 2012).

The reason assigned for the above suggestion is that;

71a. It will help reduce because practice makes man perfect and when one is shown or taught what he or she does not know or helped to understand what he/she does not understand, there is knowledge, and once they know they will do what they know but not what they don't know (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Mentoring of students can be classified as an emerging theme. This may serve the needs of SHS graduates when senior high school students are identified and

assigned teachers or senior colleagues as their mentors. This can begin at the very first year in the senior high schools. What that means is that students are assigned teachers or senior colleagues as their mentors right from form one. The axiom is that a learner mentee's difficulty in English grammar is referred to the concerned "mentor" or "model" or "senior colleague" to deal with them. This may be a new area that can be researched into to know the efficacy of the proposal.

4.4.0 The Wants of Respondents for Grammar Error

Five themes are realized when student and teacher respondents are asked to express what they want to be done to the grammar errors in students' exercises. The table below shows the distribution of the wants of respondents on grammar error.

Table 5. Distribution of responses on respondents' wants of grammar error

Wants	Number of Responses	Percentages%
Direct correction	10	50%
Teacher points to the error and learners correct	4	20%
Teacher correction plus one-one-one discussions	4	20%
Charting of errors	1	5%
Repetition of topic	1	5%
Total	**20**	**100%**

As indicated, the syllabus does not talk about errors and even the manner in which it should be corrected. However, the study has shown that respondents want grammar errors in students' exercises corrected in diverse ways. From the table, direct correction technique receives the highest number of responses of ten (10) representing 50% of the total responses as against the other techniques. Again, teacher points to the error and learners correct as well as teacher correction plus one-on-one discussions obtain the second highest number of responses of four (4) representing 20% each of the total responses. The least preferred techniques are

few students' wants of grammar error correction are met when teachers correct grammar errors in students' exercises. The reason is that in the examination of students' exercises, teachers employ only the teacher points to the error and learners correct technique when correcting grammar errors in students' exercises. The question is how do we ensure that every student's wants of grammar error correction are met when teachers are correcting students' grammar errors in their exercises? One possible solution is that the teachers and the students must always agree on one or two techniques for the correction of the grammar errors in students' exercises during teaching and learning.

Again, respondents have clearly indicated the advantages inherent in all of the techniques for correcting grammar errors. The merits for correcting grammar errors through the techniques mentioned are that students will make the needed effort not to repeat similar errors as it is also a way of inculcating research skills in students. Again, correction of grammar errors in students' exercises is a source of encouragement or motivation to students. Hypothetically, if grammar errors are corrected as proposed by the respondents then students and teachers will experience the benefits assigned to the techniques mentioned also. Each of the wants of the respondents on grammar error has been discussed below.

4.4.1 Direct correction

Respondents have proposed that when teachers correct grammar errors directly in students' writings, it can help in minimizing grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The responses that argue for this point of view are;

72a. When the teachers see the mistakes and errors they very to correct them, and they should still underline it,

72b. The teacher should correct me,

72c. They should mark it wrong and then correct it in the exercise books, and

72d. I think they should underline it and then write the correct answer to know our mistakes (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The reasons assigned to these responses are:

73a. They should correct us and let us see them for correction and teachers us what to do in grammar works,

73b. Because I don't know correct world,

73c. For me to avoid repeating the usual mistake I have been doing and for revision seek, and

73c. Because when our mistakes are not known to us we may repeat again (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The responses clearly fit into Hendrickson (1980) definition of direct correction as "when the teacher tells the student where the error is and what the correct form is" (Walz, ibid; p.31 cited Hendrickson, 1980). In effect, in order for students not to repeat similar grammar errors, it is advisable that direct correction is done by the teachers. Again, this finding answers Hendrickson (ibid) questions; how should learner errors be corrected? And who should correct learner errors? Equally, when direct correction is done it makes the students to be aware of the correct forms. Again, one reason for teacher's direct correction is that *"the English is not our language and we children are now learning"*. Clearly, students are on the path of learning a foreign language; therefore, it is essential that learners are helped through direct correction by the teacher. This finding supports an earlier suggestion by Grittner (1977) that "teachers should give more emphasis to what is correct than what is wrong" (Walz, ibid; p.27 cited Grittner, 1977). On the contrarily, the direct method of grammar error correction does not encourage self-learning. The logic is that it may kill students' initiative of finding the causes of the errors and the remedies thereof.

4.4.2 Teacher points to the error and learners correct

The technique of teacher points to the error and learners correct seems to affirm the following authors' views on error correction (Walz, ibid; p. 28 cited Brown 1979; Higgs, 1979; Omaggio, 1981; Rivers, 1975 & Stack, 1978b). The below responses posit for this technique;

74a. I identify or indicate them with a red pen to alert the student to correct the errors either by him/herself or with my help,
74b. I sometimes underline them and write the correct answer besides it or just underline and leave,
74c. Teachers should underline them, so that we can correct them when we receive them, find the suitable word which can replace it in the sentence, and
74d. The teacher must circle the mistakes in our exercise (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

Respondents justify their suggestions by saying;

75a. I do that so as to show where the mistakes is, for the students to assign possible causes of the errors and to correct them,
75b. The reason is to let the students know the correct construction and also to go and find out which is the correct answer,
75c. To improve teacher, student learning for a better grammar, and
75d. Yes, because if the teacher circle the mistakes it will encourage us in written an exercises (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

This idea indicates that grammar errors should be corrected with specific error-like labels. However, Hendrickson (1980) opposed this view that confidence may be lost when students see more correction in their written exercises (Walz, ibid; p.27 cited Hendrickson, 1980). This may be true because one reason given by a respondent as regards to his/her satisfaction for this technique is that ***"No, because it does not make my exercise book nices"***. Students are made to express their satisfaction on this technique because this technique is what the teachers use to correct students' exercises. Again, this finding answers Hendrickson (ibid) questions; how should learner errors be corrected? And who should correct learner errors? The table below illustrates distribution of students' satisfaction for this technique (see appendix M).

Table 6. Distribution of responses on learners' satisfaction for teacher points to the error and learners correct technique

Satisfaction	Number of Responses	Percentages
Satisfied	13	72%
Not Satisfied	4	22%
Not Always Satisfied	1	6%
Total	**18**	**100%**

The results show that thirteen (13) responses representing 72% of the total responses indicate that students are satisfied when teacher points to the error and learners correct. The beauty of this is that it is a way of inculcating research skills in students. Comparatively, four (4) responses representing 22% of the total responses oppose to this technique. One (1) response representing 6% of the total responses indicates that the satisfaction is not always. This result of grammar error correction affirms Robinett (1972) view on error correction (Walz, ibid; 1982 cited Robinett 1972). The responses below assert that students are satisfied when teachers employ this kind of technique to correct their exercises;

76a. Yes because, the thing that I will may be wrong so he/she have to mark the errors which is in my exercise book so that I can be serious in study grammar,

76b. Yes, because it makes me aware of what I have to learn and how I have to answer questions,

76c. Yes, and the reason is that it will make you where you have to sit on your books to learn hard and give a beter understand, and

76d. Yes, Because when ever teacher underline your words you sit down and access your and be more serious with those words he/she underline if spelling mistake you learn more and read more books (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

Notwithstanding the above assertions, some students are also not satisfied when the teacher points to the errors for them to correct. The arguments against this technique are that;

77a. No, because most teachers come to the class and also talk about something that does not concern about the topic and at end of the lesson, you will not understand anything though you,

77b. I am not satisfied at all, This is because if the teacher marks me wrong, it does not encourage me to continue it again why because it is one of the subject needs thinking,

77c. No, because it does not make my exercise book nices, and

77d. No because when I made a mistake instead of telling me or collecting the teach will rather insult you and such practice is not fair (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The responses seem to suggest that students are discontented with the behavours of teachers after they have corrected their exercises. Students prefer that grammar errors in their exercises are identified, corrected and discussed openly in class with their teachers. Students will be happy if the teachers correct their grammar errors and talk about it in class or discuss it with them individually. It can be inferred from the responses that teachers do not discuss with the students in class the grammar errors identified and corrected. But rather, the teachers "insult" students and also talk about other things which are inimical to the grammar errors correction.

However, it is not always that students are satisfied when teachers point to the error and learners correct. The reason may be that teachers are not able to reach to their audience well, or the students find it difficult to understand the teachers' explanation. The response below explains this assertion;

78a. Not always, because at times I know what I have written is correct but the teacher marks me down which disturbs a lot but you the student you have to understand and then be satisfied (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

It is interesting to note that students do not challenge their teachers though they are "disturbed", and when students think they are right they become "satisfied". This indicates that there are situations that students seem to disagree with their teachers on English grammar rules, but there are no means for students to challenge their teachers. This may indicate the legitimacy of the learners' language or the context of learning as a source of the error. In all of these, the context of teaching and learning of English grammar should be conducive for discussions on grammar error

issues among students and teachers.

4.4.3 Teacher correction plus one-on-one discussion

The teacher correction plus one-on-one discussion technique means that students want their grammar errors corrected in order for them to understand but not openly in class. Again, four of the responses supporting this argument are;

79a. They should mark it wrong and call the owner of the book so that they will advice that person, they should correct your mistaka that you make in you exercise book,

79b. They have to call us and or correct so that we shouldn't make that mistake again,

79c. They should still underline it and call us individually to teach us secretly in order to help improved the standard of our English grammar, and

79d. They should underline and mark the mistakes after, call the student in the class and reteach as again to do the mistakes (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The reasons assigned to the responses are;

80a. It should be consider because underline word are not so clear to me, and sometime when the teacher is teaching you can not get it clear so when class test all examine comes you can not find it easy,

80b. By doing correction,

80c. Because, when students accept the fact that what they have written is wrong, they will sit down and learn will reduce their grammatical error, and

80d. It should be considered to know the errors/mistakes concerning the work and also encourage as in doing some exercises to improve our academic performances (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

Firstly, this finding answers Hendrickson (ibid) questions; when should learner errors be corrected? How should learner errors be corrected? And who should correct learner errors? The proposal made by the respondents seems to portray that students want a very good rapport with their teachers in terms of correction of the grammar errors. This proposal is indicative that correction of grammar errors should not start and end with the teacher alone; however, the teacher should create a platform that involves teacher-student discussion of the grammar errors after the teacher's correction. But, the question is, can the teacher correct students exercises and call them individually to discuss "secretly"? The issue of additional contact

hours with its inherent cost also comes in. Who pays the teacher for the extra hours to be used for the one-on-one discussion? That is why it is vital that students are assigned mentors who may be senior colleagues to correct their grammar errors. Also, what are the pedagogical implications for this proposal?

4.4.4 Charting of errors and repetition of topic

Furthermore, the finding of charting of grammar errors seems to support Chastain (1980) and Hendrickson (1977) position. Their idea was that learners' errors are recorded in order to deal with them effectively (Walz, ibid; p.32 cited Chastain, 1980 & Hendrickson, 1977). The argument put forward by the respondents is;

> **81a.** It must put in to record and have solution about it in the next lessons, or by recording it (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

The reason provided for this response is;

> **82a.** It must be consider because that is the main thing needed when grammar is been done, and by studying it (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

Hendrickson (ibid) mentioned the benefit of recording learners' errors on a diagnostic chart as "developing individualized instructional materials, for building a hierarchy of error correction priorities, and providing more about the process of second language acquisition" (p.394). It is a way of chronicling the grammar errors of learners and addressing them accordingly. Students may understand better when their grammar errors are identified and taught again. After all, the essence of teaching is for students to understand the topic. Again, this finding answers Hendrickson (ibid) questions; when should learner errors be corrected? And who should correct learner errors?

4.4.0   The Expectations of Respondents on Grammar Error

The table portrays the distribution of the responses on the respondents'
expectations of grammar error correction techniques.

Table 7. Distribution of responses on respondents' expectations of grammar error

Expectations of Respondents	Number of Responses	Percentages
Direct Correction	11	55%
Charting and discussion of grammar errors	5	25%
Teacher points to the errors and learners correct	4	20%
Total	**20**	**100%**

What this means is that three themes are recognized when learners and teachers
are asked to mention what they expect to be done to the grammar errors in students'
writings. The findings indicate that direct correction is the most expected grammar
error correction technique of respondents. It obtains eleven (11) responses
representing 55% of the total responses as against the other two techniques.
Correction, charting and discussion of grammar errors follow with five (5)
responses representing 25% of the total responses. The teacher points to the error
and learners correct is the least expected technique by respondents with four (4)
responses representing 20% of the total responses. In effect, learners and teachers
yearn for errors to be corrected in learners' written exercises; however respondents
have different expectations of the techniques for the correction of the grammar
error. Nevertheless, the diagram below puts forward the stances of both respondents
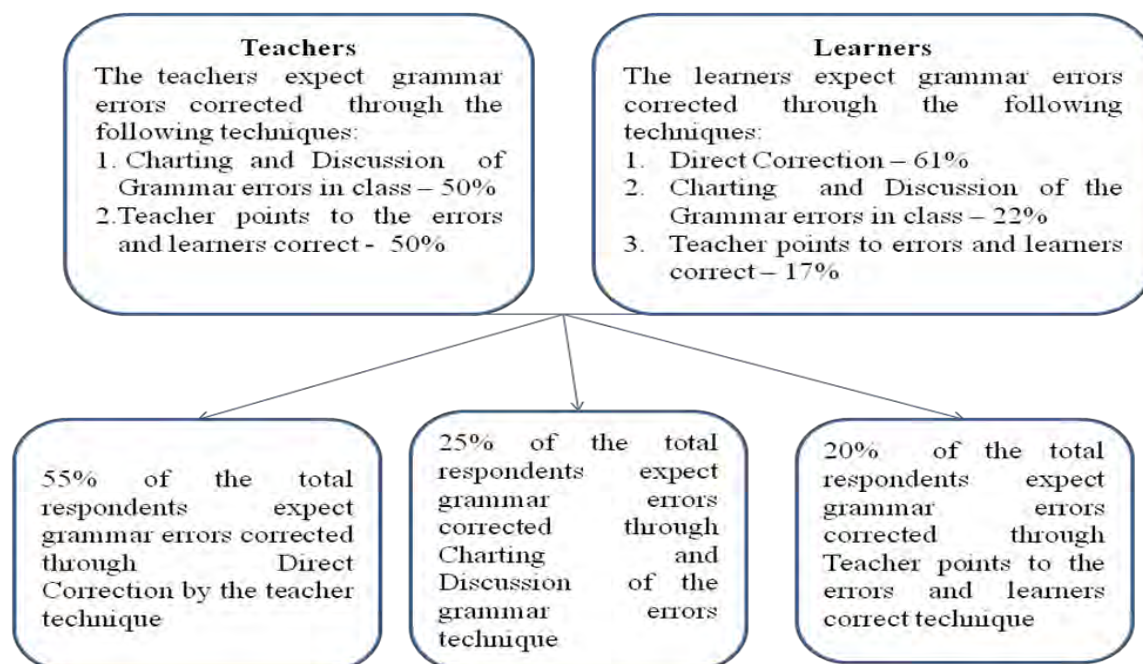on their expectations of grammar error correction.

Teachers
The teachers expect grammar errors corrected through the following techniques:
1. Charting and Discussion of Grammar errors in class – 50%
2. Teacher points to the errors and learners correct - 50%

Learners
The learners expect grammar errors corrected through the following techniques:
1. Direct Correction – 61%
2. Charting and Discussion of the Grammar errors in class – 22%
3. Teacher points to errors and learners correct – 17%

55% of the total respondents expect grammar errors corrected through Direct Correction by the teacher technique

25% of the total respondents expect grammar errors corrected through Charting and Discussion of the grammar errors technique

20% of the total respondents expect grammar errors corrected through Teacher points to the errors and learners correct technique

Figure 9. Model Explaining Respondents' Expectations of Grammar Error

The model for respondents' expectations of grammar error indicates that teachers differ in their expectations of grammar error correction likewise the learners. What is more revealing is that the uppermost expectation of the learners for the correction of grammar errors – direct correction 61% – is not being practice in the classroom. However, the least expectation of learners for the correction of grammar errors – teacher points to the error and learners correct 17% - is being practice in the classroom. This situation creates the needed conditions for most learners' lack of understanding of the rudiments of the English grammar rules. The logic is that when the learners' expectations of grammar error correction are met, it will assist them to understand the English grammar rules. Again, SHS graduates are committing grammar errors in their writings because most of their expectations for grammar error corrections were not met during their high school days. But the question still remains that how do educators ensure that the expectations of learners are adhered to when teachers are correcting learners' grammar errors in their written exercises?

Besides, the arguments advanced by the student respondents for direct correction as their most expectation of grammar error correction technique are;

83a. Cancel it and the correct word written in place of the error,

83b. I expect that the teacher will help me to not make mistake and assist me to workhard and have special class for me,

83c. We expect the teacher to correct our grammar errors to help us to and also force us to red and learn hard to understand,

83d. I expect my teacher to correct my grammar errors for me so that any time he gave me the same question I can able to do it, and

83e. He should write the correct in my exercise book (Interview, June 5- 6, 2012).

But for charting and discussion of grammar errors, respondents are of the following expectations;

84a. The teacher should discuss where we went wrong with us so that we will not commit that mistake again,

84b. Teacher should inform us or punish so that such grammar errors can be stop,

84c. After marking our exercises he should tell us or discuss with us for us to know what we have done,

84d. By recording it and accept my mistake, and

84e. The errors should be corrected immediately as much as possible should be assembled and discussed with the class in later lessons - Reason: When the errors are corrected on the spot the learner in question gets to know the correct form and chances are that he/she will not repeat it in future; and when the errors are discussed it gives room for better understanding and knowledge to other students who might make the same/similar errors (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

Finally, regarding teacher points to the error and learners correct technique, respondents put forward the following expectations;

85a. By underlining it with red pen,

85b. By indicating it the grammatical error in them,

85c. By underlining the errors, and

85d. Correction must be done by the students and marked by the teacher – Reason: The marked correction(s) will serve as sure reference materials for the students during their revision period. The "correction" is also a record that a concerted effort by student and teacher is made (Interview, June 5- 7, 2012).

Again, these findings answer Hendrickson (ibid) questions; when should learner errors be corrected? How should learner errors be corrected? And who should correct learner errors? In fact, the results of this study seek to answer almost all the questions posed by Hendrickson (ibid). Respondents' expectations of grammar

110

error corrections clearly support Zhu (ibid) view, that the expectations of students on error correction are identified and adhered to. The reason is that "individual students differ from each other in their attitudes towards errors and error correction" (p.129). However, how do teachers identify the wants and expectations of students in this regard? The suggestion is that questionnaire in the form of survey can be prepared and distributed to students to respond to before lessons. It continues that the "questionnaires should include statements and questions that are carefully prepared to the students attitudes towards correction and feedback" (Zhu, ibid; p.129). It is important to mention that such questionnaires should also include students' personality traits. Or a standardized personality trait test on English as a second language learning is developed and run on students to assess their second language learning needs. This will enable teachers to know their students from different viewpoints and address their grammar error needs accordingly. Certainly, learners want and expect grammar errors in their writings corrected but in diverse ways.

5.0 Conclusion

The findings emanating out of the research questions affirm Corder's (1967) view that the world is an imperfect one and that errors are bound to happen regardless of all the best efforts. Again, it reminds us of the expression, "our ingenuity should be concentrated on technique for dealing with errors after they have occurred" (Corder, ibid; p.163). And finally, "we should take more account of the learner's needs in planning our syllabuses" (Corder, ibid; p. 165 cited Ferguson 1966). In all, it is critical for second language researchers to experiment or test the identified suggestions for addressing grammar errors, and techniques for grammar error

111

corrections in order to ascertain the efficacy of the proposals. Equally, the syllabus can be improved by incorporating the needs of learners on grammar error correction.

In theory, the types of the grammar errors are caused by; lack of understanding, lack of extensive reading and reading materials, lack of writing skills, interference of L1, spelling, context of learning and teachers' and students' attitudes towards exercises. Additionally, learners become worried after committing grammar errors because of affective and academic factors. However, the errors show the stage of acquisition and the features of the learners' language. Certainly, the strategies identified to help address grammar errors together with learners' wants and expectations of grammar error correction if applied effectively can assist in minimizing grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.
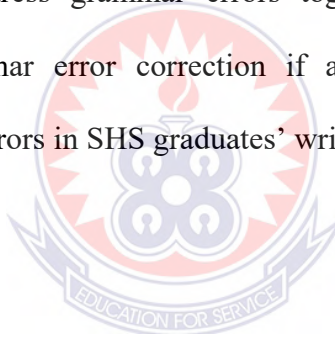
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings for each of the research questions. Conclusions are made from the summary of findings. Suggestions are also offered to help address the problem of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. Suggestions are also provided for further research into grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings for other researchers.

5.1 Summary of Findings for Research Question One

Research question one states: what types of grammar errors do SHS graduates commit in their writings? Throughout the research, the kinds of grammar errors that students commit in their written exercises include the following:

a) Students commit subject-verb agreement errors in their writings. Students normally add or omit the third person singular morpheme unnecessary. Where it is necessary to add, students will omit and vice versa. In most cases, students cannot differentiate a plural subject noun phrase from a singular subject noun phrase. Additionally, there is also agreement error of number where determiners with inherent feature of single number modify nouns with inherent feature of plurality and vice versa.

b) There are situations where learners commit grammar errors of morphological, syntactic, lexical additions and omissions in their writings. In some cases, the auxiliary verbs are added with no apparent reason. Also, the third person singular morpheme is often omitted or added where it is not necessary. Similarly, lexical items are often omitted where possible, and also added where

113

not necessary.

c) It is also realized that students do not inflect on the major word classes appropriately. At some points, students do not know which word class takes the close word morphemes. This then creates grammar errors in students' writings.

d) Another type of grammar error identified in students' writings is intralingual transfer errors. Students are not aware that derivational morphemes are not productive.

e) Some serious grammar errors that are identified in students' writings are the misrepresentations of forms or spelling errors. It is recognized that students tend to use other forms to represent forms that they might have acquired unconsciously. This does not only result in grammar errors but also semantic cum spelling errors.

5.2 Summary of Findings for Research Question Two

Research question two states: why do SHS graduates commit grammar errors in their writings? The following are the summary of findings in relation to research question two. In other words the grammar errors identified in students' exercises may be caused by;

a) Lack of knowledge and understanding of the rules of the English language and grammar. This results in grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. SHS graduates' commit grammar errors in their writings because they did not understand the morphosyntax rules of the English language during their high school days.

b) The failure of learners to avail themselves adequately and consciously to the language input through reading. One main reason is that, at certain times,

reading materials are not available to the students to read. This makes it difficult for students to recognize the appropriate forms and use them accordingly.

c) The failure to discuss students' grammar errors in their written exercises after corrections. This makes it possible for students to display errors and also repeat similar errors many a time. Since there is no clear-cut approach to students' grammar errors, teachers do not worry talking about it openly in class.

d) The lack of writing skills on the parts of the students. This leads to grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings. The reason is that the syllabus and the teachers do not place much emphasis on developing students' writing skills as students write as if they are speaking.

e) Non-application of students' conscious knowledge of the English grammar rules whenever they write. In effect, students write anything that comes to mind.

f) Carelessness or forgetfulness on the parts of the students. Students do not pay attention, and also do not care about whatever they write or spell.

g) Educators and teachers do not seem to concentrate on elements that will assist learners to understand the principles of English grammar. The syllabus talks of nothing on supplementary materials on writing as teachers do not have patience to understand their students in the area of English grammar. Even though, teachers subscribe to peer correction, in the research it is found that teachers do not encourage peer consultations.

5.3 Summary of Findings for Research Question Three

Research question three states: how can the problem of grammar errors be addressed in the writings of SHS graduates? This research reveals that the following strategies can be applied to help reduce grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings;

a) In the first place, students' grammar errors in their written exercises should be corrected and discussed. The correction should be in the form of direct correction and teacher points to the error and learners correct. Finally, teachers should record learners' grammar errors and address them accordingly.

b) Individual or peer correction as well as group assignment should be encouraged. It is realized that when students do independent learning it assists the individuals in English grammar. Again, when group learning or peer correction takes place, students benefit from one another.

c) Likewise, English grammar topics that have been taught which students find it difficult to understand should be taught again.

d) Another technique that can help to reduce grammar errors in SHS graduates writings is for the students to be assigned role models or mentors.

e) Letting students to understand the language and the concepts of English grammar can go a long way in reducing grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.

f) The results also show that when students read and learn vocabularies, it will go a long way in reducing the grammar errors.

g) Also, when students change their attitudes towards grammar exercises, the problem of grammar errors in SHS graduates' exercises will lessen.

h) Again, it is also shown that when teachers organize exercises to reflect on what the syllabus proposes adequately, it will help reduce grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.

i) Last but not the least, the results show that when students continue to speak and improve their knowledge of how to write, most grammar errors will dwindle. Additionally, the problem of grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings may reduce when good materials on grammar and writing are made available to them.

5.5 Conclusions

On the basis of the results obtained in this study the following conclusions are arrived at; one conclusion is that students' knowledge of morphosyntactic rules is inadequate. Part of the reason is that in most cases students do not adhere to the rules. Again, students' attitudes of writing on pieces of paper, tearing sheets of paper in their exercises and not taking part in class assignments may help create the necessary conditions for SHS graduates' lack of knowledge of the English language and grammar rules. It is therefore essential that serious efforts on teaching and learning of the English language and grammar should be made by both teachers and students to help improve SHS graduates' knowledge of the English grammar rules and its application. Learners should also be encouraged to check on the forms of the messages they might have acquired unconsciously also.

Besides, SHS graduates display grammar errors in their writings because educators do not recognize its correction. In addition, grammar errors corrected in students' assignments and exercises are not discussed openly in class for learners to benefit from it. Understanding of the English language is a major problem as students write anything that comes to mind. It is also evident that there is more concentration on acquisition of the English language and grammar rules than learning, yet the goal of learning English language in the senior high schools in Ghana is learning. Thus, acquisition is projected as learning is given little attention. Generally, the meaning of the message is more important than the form of the message. Meanwhile, in WASSCE examination the form of the message is equally important to the meaning of the message. The rationale is that the form of the message assists the examiner in understanding the students. Therefore, effort should

be made by educators to let students be aware of the forms of the messages as well. In effect, grammar errors are caused by lack of understanding of the English language and inadequate knowledge of how grammar rules operate by students, non-recognition of the forms of messages by students and educators, and not placing much emphasis on developing students' writing skills. It is also caused by lack of writing skills among students and poor attitudes towards English grammar exercises by teachers and students.

Addressing grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings is not only a task for the students but for teachers and policy makers also. Educators and students should pay attention to elements that will enable students to increase their knowledge of the English language as well as English grammar. This will enable students to know the meaning, the rules, and the forms of the messages of the English language. It will also aid students to develop the appropriate writing skills and apply them appropriately. Thus, it is evident from the study that grammar errors can be addressed through conscious reading and learning of vocabularies, practicing speaking and writing, identification and correction of errors, individual and group studies, the context of learning and finally mentoring of the learners.

5.6 Suggestions for Addressing Grammar Errors in Learners' Writings

In view of the findings discussed above, I wish to make the following suggestions:

1. I suggest that educators should make conscious effort of assisting learners to be aware of morphosyntactic rules of the English language through regular practice of writing where correction and discussion of grammar errors should apply; for it may have some benefits of developing writing skills in students as well as letting

learners to understand the English grammar rules. Again, books on writing should also be recommended for students to use. The reason is that the syllabus does not encourage teachers to recommend books on writings for students to learn. Besides, teaching students how to write in the form of applying grammar rules adequately in their writings means minimal grammar errors in SHS graduates' writings.

2. Again, I suggest that grammar errors in students' written exercises are corrected and discussed. And for effective grammar error correction in the classroom, the teacher and the learners must always agree on one or two techniques for dealing with the learners' grammar errors, likewise classroom practice should often incorporate the wants and expectations of the language learner. Additionally, teachers can record students' grammar errors on a diagnostic chart and address them through class discussions. For when students' grammar errors are presented on a chart it will show the recurrent ones and enable teachers to address them appropriately. The discussion should be devoid of face threatening language. Students who tend to portray similar attitudes toward grammar errors can be considered for a group discussion. In composing peer groups, students' affective factors, views on error corrections, knowledge and performance in English grammar should be considered. Again, care must be taken in order not to jeopardize the beauty of learning English grammar in groups.

3. Finally, I suggest that students who show severe grammar errors in their writings right from their first year in secondary education should be identified through a simple survey and attended to in a special manner. For instance, focused written

exercises with an objective of increasing such students' knowledge and understanding of the English language and grammar rules can be organized for them alongside the normal class exercises. Additionally, the research also reveals that some students want to be corrected "secretly" and on one-on-one basis. In other words, such students need special attention, and they can be identified through a simple survey and assigned tutors or employ other good students to shape them. Students can then send their problems of English grammar to their tutors or senior colleagues as and when it becomes necessary. In such situation, students will be given the right support by their models or mentors in the area of English grammar.

5.7 Suggestion for further Research

I suggest replicating the study in a different setting because this can be beneficial. For instance, the study can be conducted in a public school also. The reasons are that the problems associated with the private schools may be different from the public schools. Likewise, the views and opinions of students and teachers in private schools may differ from that of public schools students and teachers also.

REFERENCES

Alroe, J. M. (2011). Error correction of L2 students' texts – theory, evidence and pedagogy. *Asian EFL Journal, Professional Teaching Articles*. *Vol. 50* Retrieved: March 3, 2012. http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/PTA/February-201--Alroe.pdf

Anderson, R. (2007). Thematic content analysis (TCA), Descriptive Presentation of Qualitative Data, available at www.itp.edu. Retrieved: October 11, 2011. www.wellknowinggconsulting.org

Azizi, Y., Harison, B.T.I., Zaidah, Z., Ladan, J. F., & Noordin, Y., (2012). Error analysis of L2 learners' writings, a case study. *2012 International Conference on Language, Medias and Culture, IPEDR vol.33.* Singapore, IACSIT Press. Retrieved: May 22, 2010. www.ipedr.com/vol33/023-ICLMC**2012**-L10016.pdf

Bazeley, P. (2009). Analyzing qualitative data: more than 'Identifying Themes', *Malaysian Journal of Qualitative Research, 2009, 2, 6-22,* Retrieved: October 11, 2011. http://www.researchsupport.com.au/More_than_themes.pdf

Brown, D. H. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. 4th Ed. New York, Addison Wesley Longman.

Chenail, J. R. (1995). Presenting qualitative data, *The Qualitative Report, Vol. 2* No.3. Retrieved: October 11, 2011. http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR2-3/presenting.html

Chief Examiners Report for Secondary School Certificates Examination (2001, 2005 & 2006). The West African Examination Council, Ghana.

Corder, S. P. (1967).The significance of the learner's error. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, Vol. 4* p. 162-169. Retrieved: May 22, 2010. www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=ED019903

DePaulo, P. (2000). Qualitative research sample size, available at Quirk Enterprises, Inc. Retrieved: May 22, 2011. http://www.quirks.com/articles/a2000/20001202.aspx?searchID=215035&sort =5&pg=1

Erdoğan, V. (2005). Contribution of error analysis to foreign language teaching, *Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education, Vol. 1 (2)* pp. 261-270 Retrieved: September 19, 2011. http://efd.mersin.edu.tr/dergi/meuefd_2005_001_002/pdf/meuefd_2005_001_ 002_0261-0270_erdogan.pdf

Fang, X., & Xue-mei J. (2007). Error analysis and the EFL classroom teaching. *US-China Education Review 4(9) serial No. 34*. Retrieved: September 8, 2011. http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED502653.pdf on 8/09/2011

Gay, L. R. (1987). *Educational research competencies for analysis and application.* 3rd Ed. Columbus, Merrill Publishing Company.

Glencoe (2000). *Grammar and composition handbook middle school.* New York, McGraw-Hill Company.

Grant, N. & Dadzie, .A. B. K. Eds. (2007). *English gateway to English for senior secondary schools studies book 1, 2, & 3,* Ghana Association of Teachers of English. Accra, Longman/Sedco Publishing Limited.

Gyasi, K. W. (2011). An analysis of the readability of the essays of first year students of Ghanaian universities - the case of university of Cape Coast. *Language in India Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow,* Vol. 11. Retrieved: March 9, 2012. http://www.languageinindia.com/aug2011/capestudies.pdf

Gyasi, K. W., Nartey A. T., & Coker W. (2011). A preliminary report on first year university students' knowledge of basic grammar: a case study of the

University of Cape Coast, Ghana. *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences 3(5):* 399-405. Retrieved: March 1, 2012. http://maxwellsci.com/print/crjss/v3-399-405.pdf

Hendrickson, M. J. (1978). Error correction in foreign language teaching: recent theory, research, and practice. *The Modern Language Journal, Vol. 62 No. 8* pp.387-398. Retrieved: May 22, 2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/326176

Katamba F. (1993). *An introduction to phonology*, UK: Longman Group Ltd.

Krashen, D. S. (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition. Retrieved: February 24, 2012. www.sdkrashen.com/…tice/Principles_and_Practice**.**pdf

Lampe, B. (2013) Active versus passive voice. Retrieved: July, 2. 2013. http://english.cua.edu/wc/handouts/ActiveVersusPassiveVoice.cfm

Merriam, B.S. (2002).Introduction to qualitative research. Retrieved: March 9, 2012. http://www.connecticutchildrens.com/workfiles/faculty_dev/Merriam_chapter_1-2.pdf

Naeini, J. (2008). Error correction: an indication of conscious-raising, *Novitas Royal*, Vol. 2 (2), p. 120-137. Retrieved: March 9, 2012. http://www.novitasroyal.org/naeini.pdf

Nzama, V. M. (2010) Error analysis: a study of errors committed by Isizulu speaking learners of English in selected schools. Retrived: March 9, 2012 http://uzspace.uzulu.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10530/615/error%20analysis.pdf?sequence=1

Oladejo, A. J. (1993). Error correction in ESL: Learners' Preferences, *TESL Canada Journal, Vol. 10, No 2 p.* 71-88. Retrieved: September 19, 2011. Website: journals.sfu.ca/tesl/index.php/tesl/article/view/619

Owu-Ewie, C. (2011). *Learn to do research: an introduction to research methods*, unpublished work

Rauber, S. A. & Gil G. (2004). Feedback to grammar mistakes in EFL classes: A case study, Rev. *Brasileira de Linguistica Aplicada 4(1)* pp. 277-289. Retrieved: May 22, 2010. http://www.nupffale.ufsc.br/rauber/Feedback_RBLA_Rauber&Gil.pdf

Sanders H. R. (1991). Error analysis in purely syntactic parsing of free input the example of German *CALICO Journal, Volume 9 Number* pp. 72-891.*Re*trieved: May 8, 2012. https://calico.org/html/article_524.pdf

Schütz, R. (2007). Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition, Retrieved: February 22, 2012. http://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash.html

Shawn, L., Shaofeng, L., Fei, F., Amy, T., Kimi, N., Seongmee, A., & Xiaoqing, C. (2009). Second language learners' beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction. *The Modern Language Journal*, Volume 93, Issue 1, pg. 91–104, Spring 2009. Retrieved: May 8, 2012. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00830.x/full

Sheen, Y., Wright, D., & Moldawa, A. (2009). Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. Retrieved: March 1, 2012. www.sciencedirect.com

Shenton, K. A. (Jan. 2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research project, *Education for Information 22 (2004) pp 63-75* IOS Press, UK

Soy, S. K. (1997). *The case study as a research method*. Unpublished paper. Retrieved: April 3, 2012. http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~ssoy/usesusers/l391d1b.htm

Sultana, A. (2009). Peer correction in ESL classrooms, *BRAC University Journal, vol. V1, no. 1, 2009, pp. 11-19.*Retrieved: May 5, 2012. http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/bitstream/handle/10361/450/Asifa.Sultana.pdf?sequence=1

Sundaresan, S. (2008). Lecture 5: Inflectional vs. derivational morphemes, G2 Basics of Morphological Analysis. Retrieved: May 30, 2012. http://yulianidesak.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/stem-vs-root.pdf

Tallerman M. (1998). *Understanding syntax*, London: Arnold Group

Teaching Syllabus for English language, Senior High School 1-4 (2007). Accra, Ghana: Ministry of Education Science and Sports.

Truscott, J. (1996). Review article the case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning 46:2, June 1996*. pp. 327-369. Retrieved: March 1, 2012. http://www.hss.nthu.edu.tw/~fl/faculty/John/Grammar%20Correction%20in%20L2%20Writing%20Class.pdf

Walz, J. C. (1982). *Error correction techniques for the foreign language classroom. Language in Education: Theory and Practice*. Retrieved: September 20, 2011. http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/

Wretman, J. (n. d). Reflections on probability vs. non-probability sampling. Retrieved: May 28, 2012. http://officialstatistics.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/bok03.pdf

Yemeh, N. P. (2004). *The instructional literacy experiences of two reading recovery children,* UMI Dissertation Service, Proquest Company

Zhang, M. (n. d). Error analysis and interlanguage. Retrieved: September 19, 2011. citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.138.7414...

Zhu, H. (2010). An analysis of college students' attitudes towards error correction. *English Language Teaching 3(4)*.pp127-130. Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education. Retrieved: September 20, 2011. www.ccsenet.org/elt

APPENDIX "A"
Structured Interview for Teachers
Introduction of interviewer

Hello, my name is _____ and your name is ………
Please, I am here to interview you on the teaching and learning of English
Grammar. I wish to take this opportunity to assure you of the confidentiality of the
information you will provide. The information you are going to provide is only for
academic purposes and nothing else. There are no correct or wrong answers to the
questions. During the interview, I would like to discuss the following topics:
Grammar errors, teaching and learning of English Grammar. Thank you.

1. Please, what kinds of grammar errors do your students show in their writings? For
   e.g., *Kwesi together with Ama **are** coming. *He closed the door *gentle*

2. How did you know that the kinds you provided for question one (1) are grammar
   errors (mistakes)?

3. Why do you consider the kinds you have provided as grammar errors?

4. Which kinds of the grammar errors give rise to complaints?

5. Kindly tell me some of the possible causes of those grammar errors in students'
   writings?

6. On what bases do you say that your earlier response to question five (5) can
   actually cause grammar errors in students' writings?

7. Under what circumstances do the problems of grammar errors arise in students'
   writings?

8. Which students are mostly affected by the circumstances you mentioned in
   response to question seven (7)?

9. Explain to me some possible strategies that can be applied to mitigate the problem
   of grammar errors in students' writings?

10. How effective can the strategies you have indicated be?

11. Why do you think the strategies you have mentioned in response to question ten
    (10) can help reduce grammar errors?

12. What do you do to those kinds of grammar errors when you encounter them, and
    why?

13. What do you think must be done to the grammar errors in students' writings?

14. Why do you think your suggestion as a response to question thirteen (13) can assist in dealing with grammar errors in students' writings?

15. How do you carry out the advice that students read other extra materials?

16. How do students respond to the advice?

17. Have students been approaching you for clarification on topics you have taught on English Grammar? How often has this been? How beneficial has this been?

18. What do you seek to achieve when you organize project work on English grammar for your students?

APPENDIX "B"
Structured Interview for Students
Introduction of interviewer

Hello, my name is _____ and your name is ………
Please, I am here to interview you on the teaching and learning of English Grammar.
I wish to take this opportunity to assure you of the confidentiality of the information
you will provide. The information you are going to provide is only for academic
purposes and nothing else. There are no correct or wrong answers to the questions.

During the interview, I would like to discuss the following topics: Grammar errors,
teaching and learning of English Grammar. Thank you.

Please, after going through your written exercises which have been marked by your
teachers, you sometimes find some words that have been underlined or marked as
wrong with red pen. For example, I never go to school (where goes is underlined and
the sentence marked as wrong).

1. What do you think are the causes of those grammar errors/mistakes in your
   written exercises?
2. Do you worry about the grammar errors/mistakes you make in your written
   exercises, and why?
3. Are you satisfied with the way your teacher marks your grammar errors in your
   exercise books, and why?
4. What do you think can be done to reduce grammar errors/mistakes you make in
   your written exercises?
5. Why do you think your answers for Question 4 should be considered?
6. Now, your grammar errors/mistakes that you make, what do you want your
   teachers to do to them when they see it in your written exercise?
7. Why do you think your answer to question six (6) should be considered to the
   grammar errors (mistakes) you make in your written work?
8. How do you expect your teacher to correct your grammar errors in your written
   exercise?

Appendix D. Types of Grammar Errors Identified in Students' Exercises

Agreement	Morphological and Lexical Omissions	Morphological and Syntactic Additions	Intralingual transfer	Misrepresentation of Form or spelling
1. My Aunt with her husband **sing** in the church.	1. It **cause[ ]** harm to [ ] [**nervous**]	1. Narcotic drugs also **leads to have** physical and emotional health and also social life.	1. It cause(s) harm to the brain. At time people take in drugs and behave **unnormally**	1. We are suffering of *this* **buildes**. If rains are about to come…
2. Kofi, like Kwame **play** the flute.	2. These are legal and illegal. Legal is [**the**] **better** because it is **prescribe**[**]** by the states.	2. **Some student turns** to disobey rules binding the institutions.	2. Please give a brief **summarison** of what you have just read.	2. **Mean why** is not like that
3. She remembers them but they **doesn't** seem to know her	3. The most [**importance**] thing is that.	3. Yes, it can be attributed to drugs. This is because people who are engaged in crime take[**s**] in drugs and act[**s**] beyond their capabilities and [**irrationally**].	3. Please give a brief **summarization** of what you have just read.	3. To **ebel** against parental authority and values.
4. Neither of the teachers **are** married	4. The person **become [ ]** weak through **addict[ed] by drugs**		4. Please give a brief **summarism** of what you have just read	4. Some pregnant women **exposer** their unborn baby to alcohol…
5. Stupid students **allows** themselves to fail the exams which average students pass.	5. … because we want to go to the **highest** [ ] of education			5. Some pregnant women **engaes**
6. Neither the chief nor the elders **is** right				6. State three reasons why people use **druge**
7. ..If that person **fall** sick it will leard				
8. The bread winners in **this strenge men carrye barning** than women.				
9. **This things are has been** a situation in my school here.				

Appendix E. Distribution of respondents' responses on causes of grammar errors

Responses/ Percentage	Lack of Knowledge and Understanding of the English language	Lack of Extensive Reading and Reading Materials	Lack of Writing Skills among Learners	Context of Learning	Spelling	Interference of L1	Total
	1. Lack of understanding then question, 2. I think that the word which is underline is not placed in a correct area or point, 3.This is because may be the underline word is past tense or whether there is a mistake over there, 4. The understanding of the question and some words in the sentence, 5. Understanding of the underline words some underlining words are also difficult, and 6. When they have little or no idea about the requirements of what they are writing about.	1.Inability of the students to read through the script for errors to be corrected, 2.Not reading the question well before answering them, 3. Poor or lack of extensive reading and lack of reading materials. Other time, there are no adequate or "good" textbooks for students to study about grammar, and 4. If students fail or refuse to read or do not have enough or "good" Readers to reference from, it is hard for them to know the correct forms from the incorrect. The more they read, the more they meet same or different grammatical forms and can adapt them.	1.The way we speak the language, that is how we write sentences in past, tense instead of present tense continuons, 2. The use of the past, present tense, 3. May be the sentence was in the past and I answered it in the presence, and 4. Because the heard is fast then the mind and also rushing in written.	1. The traditional way of teaching and learning grammar whereby students do not know the real names of words or group of words (e.g. Model Verbs), 2. Our English teacher needs to teach us very well and needs to help or collect we the students when we do the wrong thing, and 3.Through attending library for the meaning and also through teachers who know much about it	1.Some causes includ spellings, some student makes mistakes, through their spelling…, and 2. Sperling miska is one of the cause.	1. The translation of our language into making sentences are sometimes the problem.	
No of Responses	6	4	4	3	2	1	20
Percentage %	30%	20%	20%	15%	10%	5%	100%

Appendix F. Distribution of responses on learners' worries about the grammar errors

Responses/ Percentage	Academic Factors		Affective Factors	Stage of Acquisition	Interlanguage	Total
	1. It is the dream of every student to be on top of his or her class. So if I see it, meaning, I did not pay much attention on the question, 2. Yes, because I am not to be especting do such mistakes, 3. Yes, because when ever you are given exercise, your teacher will record your marks in continue accessment to gather with your examination mark which will help give you a good grade at the end of the term, 4. Yes, because I have not been taught how it can be done and I will like to draw an attention to the head so that our mistakes can be in control, 5. Yes and the reason is that we have to read more story books under so that we can write it better, 6. Yes, because some student did not get good foundation when they are in primary school, 7. Yes, Because sometime the world in it is our very hard and we should consult our teacher, 8. Speling miska and also understanding of underline word is difficult for us, and 9. Yes, I worry about the grammar errors or mistake is that because I have done a mistake in the exercise,	1. No, because it shows that you not improving in your lessons day in day out.	1. Sometimes I do worry, because I do not feel comfortable if I get any spelling wrong, 2. Yes, because when mistakes are in the grammar you feel bore when your work is being marked and by this improve on your grammar, 3. Yes, because, when you do the errors, may be teachers who is marking may be will not get time if he or she sees first mistakes he or she will get angry to mark you wrong, and 4. I worried the mistakes, this is because in my expression I wrote maybe there will be an error in my sentence or the question the teacher gave it to me.	1. Yes because, I thank what I write is not correct, 2. Because, it will make us know the mistakes, and 3. Yes, because I may not be aware of what I would be writing but after the teachers have gone through I now know my mistake.	1. Yes, because we may think its right.	
No of Responses	9	1	4	3	1	18
Percentage %	50%	5%	22%	17%	6%	100%

132

Appendix G. Distribution of responses on respondents' suggestions for addressing grammar errors

Reading and Learning of Vocabularies	Practicing Speaking and Writing	Identification and Correction of Errors	Individual and Group Studies	Context of Learning	Mentoring of Students
1. Learning more vocabularys will help to reduce the errors we make grammar. 2. By reading about it 3. The best way by which one can improve his/her grammar is by reading story books and founding different words in book or desional 4. I think I have to read more story books, watch series of movies, and also try to speak the English language always, 5. This can be done by reading of more books like story books and also pick up some new words from different books, 6. By finding the meaning of the word through library and asking the teacher about the answers, 7. By reading more story books and newspapers, and 8. It need to read widly, you need to strick with you book always read it over and over.	1. They should give adequate room for students to know the rules in the speaking and writing of English language, 2. When the teacher comes to class to teach, may be we may be with spelling or words or dictation which will help our grammar very well, 3. What I can do to reduce my grammar errors in my exercises book is to study how I can use and write my grammar nicely or and also how I speak the language, 4. By practicing the language and speaking it frequently, 5. Yes because what I think I can done to reduce grammar errors/mistake is to learn how to spell and pay attention in class and be serious in every grammar lesson, and 6. There must be more effort in our spelling aspect	1.1 Class approach – identification and correction of errors after class exercise(s), quizzes and test based on identified errors as well as assignments on reading/exercises to reinforce learning, 2. I think that the teacher should reduce mistakes we make in written exercises, 3. It should be marked wrong in the exercise book and then corrected, and 4. The teacher should write the correct world.	1. Other times they can drill them in the correct forms or employ the brilliant or competent students to form groups with the needy ones and teach themselves while the teacher supervises, 2. Individual/group approach which includes face-to-face discussion of errors and correction and group studies (under chosen leader), Assignment on reading exercises to reinforce learning, 3. Learning hard, and thinking very well before answer it.	1. I think the teacher should teach us well and try to give us homework or assignment so that he/she can know mistakes and I think things shall move well 2. Questions given to has must be clear	1. Apart from making "good" materials available to students, teachers should also model the learners.

Appendix H. Distribution of responses on justifications for the suggestions for addressing grammar errors

Reading and Learning of Vocabularies	Practicing Speaking and Writing	Identification and Correction of Errors	Individual and Group Studies	Context of Learning	Mentoring of Students
1.It should be considered because, if we learn more vocabularys everyday, we will meet new words and spell them correctly their spellings, so the next time we meet them we will be familiar with them, 2. You send it to your English or any one to teach you. 3. By reading story book everyday 4.My suggestion for question number four should be considered in order to reduce my grammatical errors, 5. It should be considered because, sometimes the mistakes comes from the teachers and also we the students. There should be a pamanent teachers to correct our mistakes, 6. Because when we are finding difficult thing it should be considered, 7.My answers for question 4 should be considered because now adays students do not like reading and finding meaning of words they do not understand, 8.It not found in any book, It is not familiar to everbody, it so difficult	1.It will help reduce because practice makes man perfect, 2. Because when there is an essay writing or competition somewhere because we have heard the grammar before we will not panic in doing that, 3.What I think my answers in question (4) should be considered is that, the language is not our own language and also we are now learning how to speak and how to write. 4.Because the English language is language which can be used anywhere and understood, 5.I think the answer in question four should be considered because to teach as how to spell some words and help as in our studies. It must be considered because that is the main thing needed when grammar is been done, 6.It must be consider because that is the main thing needed when grammar is been done.	1. I think so because students and teachers are together concern about the correction of grammatical errors that will positively raise their academic performance in not only, English language, but also other subjects, by explaining to students the advantages inherent in the strategies and by maintain constancy in the application of the strategies 2. My answers should be considered because grammar errors or mistakes can reduce when teaching and learning goes on well and I think we student are going to appreciate that 3. When the errors are corrected on the spot the learner in question gets to know the correct form and chances are that he/she will not repeat it in future; and when the errors are discussed it gives room for better understanding and knowledge to other students who might make the same /similar errors. 4. Because I don't know the correct world.	1.It can help those who might be shy because of the "appearance" of the teacher to learn at ease with peers. It will expose student to many of the correct forms and many of the wrong or ungrammatical forms for them to know and apply the corrects ones, 2. By evaluating and modifying corrective strategies, It think so because students and teachers are together concerned about the correction of grammatical errors that will positively raise their academic performance in not only English language, but also other subject 3. It is so difficult. It is untaught, and	1.My answer should be considered because grammar errors or mistake can reduce when teaching goes on well and I think we the students will appreciate that 2.Because some words are above standard and we find it hard to understand them when answering questions	1. It will help reduce because practice makes man perfect and when one is shown or taught what he or she does not know or helped to understand what he/she does not understand, there is knowledge, and once they know they will do what they know but not what they don't know

134

Appendix I. Teachers' responses on some prescriptions from the syllabus and the textbooks
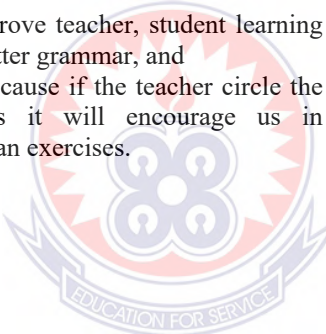
The Views of the Teachers on the Prescription that Students Read Extra Materials	The Views of the Teachers on the Prescription that Students Read and Consult	The Objectives of the Teachers for Organizing Project Work for Students
1. By motivating students to read suggested materials, by rewarding students with praise or marks any time each one reading a book/story book magazine on his/her own, and 2. I endorse the idea of students reading other extra materials and reading also extensively. This exposes them to different ways of applying the grammar of the language. I recommend such materials to the students to buy and study/read.	1. Most of the times, students don't like buying such materials, and other times those who have do not like reading most of them only depend on the examples of the teacher in the class, and 2. By asking for kinds of materials to read, by borrowing source materials to read from libraries, by buying books, newspapers or magazines to read, and by reading grammar books gathered as "class library". 3. Yes students come for assistance on grammar but this is only occasional; and the complaints one usually on those in their essays, but not specific grammar problems. 4. Yes, they have been, less frequently. The students benefit by clearing off their misunderstanding they might have had during the lesson; by earning even more during the explanation. Both students and teachers are satisfied for work done.	1. Motivating students to work in unity, identify with a common problem and solving it, learning to tolerate divergent views for a common purpose, encouraging healthy socialization goals, and 2. It will compel students to research and gain more information on grammar from other materials. They will have the opportunity to learn on their own, so that I can assess further my own progress and that of the students.

135
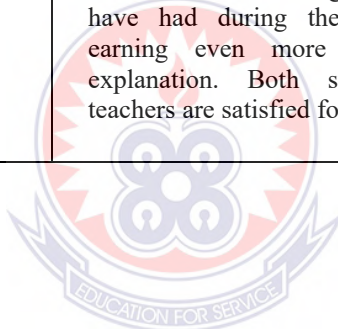
Appendix J. Distribution of responses on respondents' wants of grammar error

Responses/ Percentage	Direct Correction	Teacher Points to the Error and Learners Correct	Teacher Correction Plus One-on-one Discussion	Charting of Grammar Errors	Repetition of Topic	Total
	1.When the teachers see the mistakes and errors they very to correct them, and they should still underline it, 2.The teacher should correct me, 3.They should mark it wrong and then correct it in the exercise books, 4. I think they should underline it and then write the correct answer to know our mistakes, 5. Teachers should collect us or let we the student know our mistakes and help collect them and I such practice will surely ensure us and things may go well, 6.We want our teachers to tell or show us the correct words so that we won't make that same mistakes when we are asked to say again, 7. What I want my teacher to do for me any time he/she sees an errors in my exercise is that they should mark me rong and write the correct answers for me so that any time I see collection I can remember, 8. I will want the teacher to cancel the wrong one and write the correct one us so that when we are revising it will be easy, 9.The teacher must correct all the mistakes and mak sure that she give as letter writting everday in other to know our mistakes, and 10.I want my teacher to correct them and draw my attention to them	1.I identify or indicate them with a red pen to alert the student to correct the errors either by him/herself or with my help, 2. I sometimes underline them and write the correct answer besides it or just underline and leave, 3. Teachers should underline them, so that we can correct them when we receive them, find the suitable word which can replace it in the sentence, and 4. The teacher must circle the mistakes in our exercise	1.They should mark it wrong and call the owner of the book so that they will advice that person, they should correct your mistaka that you make in you exercise book, 2. They have to call us and or correct so that we shouldn't make that mistake again, and 3.They should still underline it and call us individually to teach us secretly in order to help improved the standard of our English grammar. 4.They should underline and mark the mistakes after, call the student in the class and reteach as again to do the mistakes.	1.It must put in to record and have solution about it in the next lessons, or by recording it1.It must put in to record and have solution about it in the next lessons, or by recording it	1.The teacher should teach us again when we are not clear about it, and also the teacher should go over again	
Number of Responses	10	4	4	1	1	20
Percentage	50%	20%	20%	5%	5%	100%

Appendix K. Distribution of responses on justifications for respondents' wants of grammar error

Direct Correction	Teacher Point to the Error and Learners Correct	Teacher Correction Plus One-on-one Discussion	Charting of Grammar Errors	Repetition of Topic
1.They should correct us and let us see them for correction and teachers us what to do in grammar works, 2.Because I don't know correct world, 3.For me to avoid repeating the usual mistake I have been doing and for revision seek, 4. Because when our mistakes are not known to us we may repeat again, 5.My question should be considered because helping student doing or collecting their grammar errors may help, 6.It should be considered because when we write the wrong answers to the question the teacher should be able to correct us so that next time the mistakes will not be repeated again, 7.The reason is that the English is not our language and we children are now learning, 8. When the wrong answer I wrote is been cancelled and the correct one is written, next time when revising I will realize my mistakes and correct them, 9.It should be considered in other to makes sure that the student writ and know how to read 10. My answer to question 6 should be considered because when a student is aware of his or her mistake, he or she makes an effort to make progress the next time.	1. I do that so as to show where the mistakes is, for the students to assign possible causes of the errors and to correct them, 2. The reason is to let the students know the correct construction and also to go and find out which is the correct answer, 3. To improve teacher, student learning for a better grammar, and 4. Yes, because if the teacher circle the mistakes it will encourage us in written an exercises.	1.It should be consider because underline word are not so clear to me, and sometime when the teacher is teaching you can not get it clear so when class test all examine comes you can not find it easy, 2. By doing correction, 3. Because, when students accept the fact that what they have written is wrong, they will sit down and learn will reduce their grammatical error, and 4. It should be considered to know the errors/mistakes concerning the work and also encourage as in doing some exercises to improve our academic performances.	1.It must be consider because that is the main thing needed when grammar is been done, and by studying it.	1. Because when we are finding difficult thing it show be considered

Appendix L. Distribution of responses on respondents' expectations of grammar error

Responses/ Percentage	Direct Correction	Correction, Charting and Discussion of Grammar Errors	Teacher Points to the Error and Learners Correct	Total
	1. Cancel it and the correct word written in place of the error, 2. I expect that the teacher will help me to not make mistake and assist me to workhard and have special class for me, 3. He is expect to do because he has the idel more than we the student, 4. I expect my teacher to correct my grammar errors for me so that any time he gave me the same question I can able to do it, 5. We know want to makes mistakes when ever we are speaking 6. This is because next time we will not do the mistakes again, 7. To know our mistakes, 8. We expect the teacher to correct our grammar errors to help us to and also force us to red and learn hard to understand, 9. He should write the correct in my exercise books, 10. Underline the word and write the next word which can fit in and dedart half mark form the total mark, and 11. I expect that they should either use red pens black pens to underline it and also write the correct words or group of words on top of the wrong words.	1.The teacher should discuss where we went wrong with us so that we will not commit that mistake again, 2.Teacher should inform us or punish so that such grammar errors can be stop, 3.After marking our exercises he should tell us or discuss with us for us to know what we have done, 4.By recording it and accept my mistake, and 5. The errors should be corrected immediately as much as possible should be assembled and discussed with the class in later lessons - Reason: When the errors are corrected on the spot the learner in question gets to know the correct form and chances are that he/she will not repeat it in future; and when the errors are discussed it gives room for better understanding and knowledge to other students who might make the same/similar errors.	1.By underlining it with red pen, 2.By indicating it the grammatical error in them, and 3.By underlining the errors 4. Correction must be done by the students and marked by the teacher – Reason: The marked correction(s) will serve as sure reference materials for the students during their revision period. The "correction" is also a record that a concerted effort by student and teacher is made.	
Number of Responses	11	5	4	20
Percentage	55%	25%	20%	100%

Appendix M. Table showing distribution of responses on "satisfied", "not satisfied" and "not always satisfied" when teacher points to the errors and learners correct

Responses/ Percentage	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Not Always Satisfied	Total
	1. Yes because, the thing that I will may be wrong so he/she have to mark the errors which is in my exercise book so that I can be serious in study grammar, 2. Yes, because it makes me aware of what I have to learn and how I have to answer questions, 3. Yes, and the reason is that it will make you where you have to sit on your books to learn hard and give a beter understand, 4. Yes, Because when ever teacher underline your words you sit down and access your and be more serious with those words he/she underline if spelling mistake you learn more and read more books, 5. Yes, because if he does not mark my errors and correct it would always repeat that mistake, 6. Yes, because the teacher mark what she/he think it is correct and makes sure that what you have been written is in correct others, 7. I'm satisfied the way my teacher marks my grammar errors in my exercise books, this is to remember me to make sure of how I should use my words and how to write my grammar, 8. Yes, sometimes when we spot our corrections we learn from them and ensure that we do not make that mistakes again, 9. Yes, because it makes me aware of my mistakes and take a lesson from it, 10. Yes, to help me know my standard, and 11. Yes, because, it makes you identify your mistakes for corrections. 12. Yes, because the teacher correct our mistakes that we do and also am satisfied with it 13. Yes because our teacher make it clear that even if you do not know by the end of the discuss you could able to understand	1. No, because most teachers come to the class and also talk about something that does not concern about the topic and at end of the lesson, you will not understand anything though you, 2. I am not satisfied at all, This is because if the teacher marks me wrong, it does not encourage me to continue it again why because it is one of the subject needs thinking, 3. No, because it does not make my exercise book nices, 4. No because when I made a mistake instead of telling me or collecting the teach will rather insult you and such practice is not fair.	1. Not always, because at times I know what I have written is correct but the teacher marks me down which disturbs a lot but you the student you have to understand and then be satisfied	
Number of Responses	**13**	**4**	**1**	**18**
Percentages	**72%**	**22%**	**6%**	**100%**

139

Appendix N. Findings related to the documents examined

Reading	Speaking and Writing	Understanding of English Grammar Rules	Context of Learning	Affective Factors	Attitudes Towards Class Exercises	Project Work	Grammar Error Correction
1. Furthermore, officials who administer the West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) – both in English, and in other subjects – all agree that candidates who habitually read widely in their spare time will almost always get better results than candidates who do not. So, reading widely increases your chances of passing important examinations (Grant et al, 2007, p. 1). 2. It is a requirement that each student should read five books on different topics each term, except the last term of the fourth year (p. xviii).	1. "It must be remembered that…productive (speaking and writing skills) are interrelated and hence complementary. Thus, for example, a reading lesson must provide ample opportunity for the practice of related listening, speaking and writing skills" (p. xviii). 2. "The teacher is further encouraged to *constantly* look for other supplementary materials that will enhance the teaching and learning *especially* of the sections on 'Listening and Speaking' and 'Reading" (p. xviii). 3. "Writing lessons must therefore feature relevant issues of grammar" (p. xviii).	1. The syllabus indicates that when students are "able to explain, summarize give examples etc means that the student has understood the lesson taught" (p.xii). 2. Again, "It must be borne in mind that grammar is taught to be applied in speech and in writing"(p. xviii)	1. The syllabus also mentions that "T/L activities that will ensure maximum student participation in the lessons are presented in column 4. Try to avoid rote learning and drill-oriented methods and rather emphasize participatory teaching and learning…"(p. xi) 2. "Dimension" which simply means 'a psychological unit for describing a particular learning behaviour'. The dimensions are of two folds; (a) knowledge and understanding, and (b) use of knowledge" (p.xii). 3. Additionally, use of knowledge is also defined as "being able to develop, plan, solve problems, construct, etc. means that the students can 'apply' the knowledge acquired in some new context". Also, there are four skills under those two dimensions; (1) listening comprehension, (2) reading comprehension, (3) speaking, and (4) writing. 4. It is essential to mention that each has been awarded grades in terms of percentages. Knowledge and understanding attract 40% as the use of the knowledge get 60%. Likewise, the skills also attract some percentages as follows; listening comprehension 10%, reading comprehension 30%, speaking 30%, and writing 30% (p. xii)	1. "Try to avoid rote learning and drill-oriented methods and rather emphasize participatory teaching and learning, and also emphasize the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of knowledge in your instructional system where appropriate" (p. xi).	1. It is clear during the study of the students' exercises that some students do not take part in some class exercises. 2. Again, some students do not have exercise books as some of the exercises are done on pieces of papers. 3. Some students even go to the extent of tearing some marked sheets in their exercise books.	1. "Develop excellent skills in English as a result of having undergone instruction in this syllabus" (p.xii) 2. "Determine the mastery level you want students to achieve in their answers and responses" (p.xii).	1. Teachers correct by underlining or pinpointing the grammar errors for students to look up for the correct forms. At some times, teachers provide the correct forms – teacher correction

140