

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ASSESSING GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THE ESSAYS OF FORM 2
STUDENTS OF AMANKWAKROM RC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN THE
KWAHU AFRAM PLAINS NORTH DISTRICT**



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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Edna Toga, 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 any other degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE :

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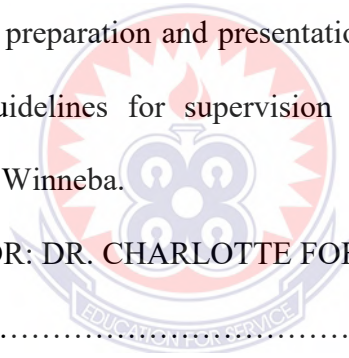
SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTÉY

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DATE :



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DEDICATION

I specially dedicate this study to you my husband, Victor Yao Osokli and my brother, Daniel Togah for your support, encouragement, motivation and prayers which have helped me to this level. God richly bless you.



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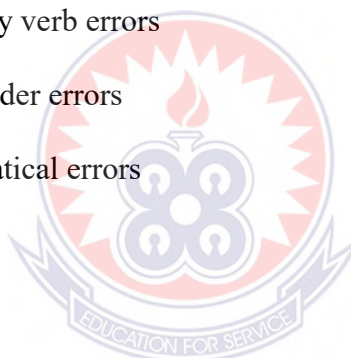
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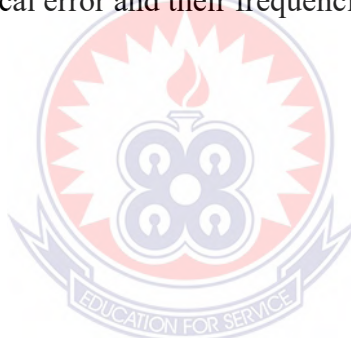
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ABSTRACT

This research is a qualitative study that assessed causes of grammatical errors committed by Junior High School Students in their writings in English language and how to help reduce or correct them. The study sought to identify the grammatical errors, classify them and suggested ways to help students of Amankwakrom R/C Junior High School reduce the occurrence of such errors in their writings. This study used fifty-four (54) participants made up of fifty-two (52) students and two (2) teachers. The researcher used instruments such as observation, interview and essays (main instruments) to collect data. In this work hundred and four (104) essays were analyzed and a number of grammatical errors were identified. These errors include concord, tense, adjective, article, preposition, pronoun, infinitive, word order and L1 transfer errors. From these, concord errors had the highest frequency while infinitive errors had the lowest. Causes of these errors identified ranged from context of learning, inadequate knowledge on rules of restriction, overgeneralization of concepts, teacher competence to methods of teaching and L1 transfer. Based on the findings, it was suggested that teachers create conducive classroom environment for students to participate actively in class activities. Also, various stakeholders should play their roles effectively to improve teaching and learning of the English Language in basic schools.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research work. It includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study and research questions. It continues with objectives of the study, scope of the study, limitation, delimitation, significance of the study and it ends with organization of the study.

1.1 Background to the study

English Language is widely used or spoken around the globe as a medium of communication. It is used in business, politics, educational cycles and other areas of men lives. This makes learning and speaking of the language essential, especially in Ghana. English language has been a second language for many years as well as an official language in Ghana. That is, there are about nine (9) indigenous languages used as a medium of instruction from Kindergarten 1 to Lower Primary 3 in Ghana,,s education. From Primary 4 to the University level, English is studied as a subject and at the same time used as a medium of instruction.

English has become essential in Ghana such that before one can continue on the academic ladder, one has to perform well in the English Language paper from the Basic level. Aside this, it is prestigious to be able to fluently communicate in the English Language. In order to perform well in the English Language, students have to be conversant with the four skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing. In writing, students are supposed to express meaning that has purposes in communication and text structure in the form of descriptive, reports, letters, and articles. Writing is the most difficult among the four required to demonstrate simultaneous control over a number of variables. According to Numan (1989), it has

been argued that learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of the macro skills for all language users regardless of whether the language in question is first, second or foreign language.

Making errors is an inevitable part of learning and it is usual for people who cannot learn language without first committing errors (Dulay, Burt & Krashen; 1982). Cognitive ability is one of the aspects to be mastered in a target language. In doing so, it is usual for the learner to make errors in his/her English writing. Although a number of studies on error analysis have been carried out all over the world in a bid to minimize these errors and make ESL/EFL teachers' job easier in the classroom, errors are still prevalent in students' written performances.

The Chief Examiner's (2015) report stipulates that there were instances where you could not tell whether the candidate was writing English or some other language. Most of these candidates showed that they did not have a good grasp of basic grammar rules such as tense, concord, complementation and others which made most of the scripts quite unreadable. It was realized that tense usage was particularly chaotic. This is because most of the candidates did not have adequate vocabulary repertoire and therefore used words indiscriminately. These concerns have compelled the researcher to analyze students' writing in relation to their grammatical constructions. She analyzed essays from Form 2 students of Amakwakrom R/C Junior High School. Such a study is important because it is necessary to prepare them to have good writing skills before they enter the final year where they will be preparing for their BECE.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The level of performance observed in the essays of students of Amankwakrom R/C JHS is disappointing. They face some difficulties in constructing simple and

meaningful grammatical sentences. It has therefore difficult for teachers to read students' scripts, and make meaning of their writings. This goes a long way to affect their performance in class exercises, examinations, and later their promotions since they are always marked down due to these errors which most teachers rather see as mistakes. The major problem is the inability of students to present their ideas convincingly and in a logical order. Problems which affect students' performance with regard to knowledge acquisition, creativity and appropriate presentation of ideas are often serious. Other major effects which were highlighted after several investigations and discussions in a number of Chief Examiners' reports especially (2015) is the lack of students' command over the English Language in both speech and writing. Many students exhibit poor knowledge of grammar of the English Language. Khan (2005), in a similar study, investigated errors of 30 students and found out that the students were weak in grammar. The story is no different at Amankwakrom R/C Junior High School Students in the second year have difficulties with major grammar topics like tense, article, pronouns, infinitive, and concord, prepositions, adjective and auxiliary verbs. Another area of worry is the students also have mother tongue (L1) influence on the second language (L2) and these have led to their poor performance in written English. It is believed that learning a second or foreign language is a gradual process, during which errors are made in all levels of learning. However, the use of Error Analysis (EA) and appropriate corrective measures can help effective teaching and learning of English language. In order to better investigate the errors that students commit, teachers and researchers examine the types of errors that learners make and identify the frequency at which these errors appear in the writings of the students. This study is important because it is necessary to prepare the JHS 2 students to have good writing skills before they enter the final

year where they will be preparing for their BECE. This is done using a qualitative study which includes observation, interview and essay. The results obtained suggest that most students inappropriately used grammatical structures and committed a lot of errors of which concord errors was highest and infinitive errors was lowest. Teachers of English Language should try and teach grammar and essay writing as a unit so that students will understand the need to apply what is learnt in grammar to writing.

1.3 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following questions:

- What types of grammatical errors do Amakwakrom R/C Junior High School students commit in their writing?
- What are the causes of the grammatical errors that these students commit in essays?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- The cause of grammatical errors committed by students in their writing.
- Corrective measures to the problem.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is based on the problem identified. The researcher intends to find out causes and identify the grammatically errors made by the Second Year students as found in their writings.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study focuses on the JHS 2 students of a particular school because it is the only Junior high School situated at the eastern part of the District. While the JHS 1 students are adjusting to the system, the JHS 3 students are preparing towards the coming BECE hence, the need to investigate the JHS 2 students. These students are

used to the system of different teachers handling the different aspects of the English Language to represent the target population in the study. The researcher again focuses her attention on the causes of errors in grammatical constructions in respect of Morphology and Syntax.

1.7 Limitation

The first challenge faced by the researcher was time. She could have conducted her study using the JHS 2 and JHS 3 students of the school's population since it is the only Junior High School serving many villages around. But for the limited time available for both the participants: teachers preparing students, students feverishly get ready for final examination and the researcher being class teacher in the primary school. It was not an easy task blending all together but with comprehensive time lining I completed as planned.

The last challenge of the researcher was attitude of the participants towards the researcher and lack confidence in her. They thought she was there to find problems for them that she will post their names in the work. These situations were resolved when the researcher discussed the reasons for the study to both the teachers and students and assuring them of confidentiality that they cooperated positively with some of the students wanting their names to reach such high institution.

1.8 Delimitation

This study would have presented a better result if it was conducted in the whole district of Kwaku Afram Plains North in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Junior High Schools students need these skills to write their BECE, but due to heavy workload of the researcher in the primary school, limited time at both the participants and my disposal, proximity of the school, limited resources available to the researcher; she narrowed the study to JHS 2 students. There are other grammatical

errors such as misuse of registers, conjunctions, clauses, pidgin etc. that are not included. Also, deviations in expository writing like how to begin (Introduction), middle (main ideas), end (conclusion) and logical arrangement in of paragraphs of events (ideas) and spelling are excluded in this study. Other researchers can also conduct inquiries on the errors that are not captured in future.

1.9 Significance of the study

The researcher expects that this study benefits the English teachers to improve their techniques and methods of teaching writing. Also, the teachers will be well informed on which area of grammatical construction they should lay emphasis on during writing lessons. It is expected of the students to be more careful when writing essay. By knowing the various grammatical errors they make, they should be prompted on what makes them loose marks in writing expositions. Lastly, I hope this research can be a source of reference to other researchers in the future.

1.10 Organization of the study

The researcher divided her research into five parts. The first part consists of introduction which includes background, research questions, purpose of the study, objectives, scope, limitation, delimitation, significance and organization of the study. The second part is literature review. It talks about related theories on this study. It also explained writing, differences between errors and mistakes, definition of grammar and types of grammatical errors. The third part which is chapter three, deals with the methodology applied to the qualitative study. It consists of introduction to the chapter, research design, population and sample size, data collection instruments, observation, interviews and documents, data analysis technique and conclusion. The fourth part is the findings, discussions and causes of the errors found in students' essays. Finally, chapter five is about summary, suggestion and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature related to the study. The concept of error in writing and the differences between errors and mistakes are also captured. The discussion includes the definition of grammar, types of grammatical errors and significance of errors. Classification and categorization of errors are also discussed. The chapter finally discusses sources of errors and related studies in second language. It is argued from the discussion that most students do not pass the English language paper well during class exercises, end of term examinations and promotion examinations because they commit various kinds of grammatical errors in writing.

2.1 Writing

Process writing is an approach to writing, where language learners focus on the process by which they produce their written products rather than on the products themselves. In the end, learners surely need to and are required to complete their products, yet the writing process itself is stressed more. By focusing on the writing process, learners come to understand themselves more, and find how to work through the writing. They may explore what strategies conform to their style of learning. Brown (2001, p. 336) states that writing is a thinking process, a writer produces a final written product based on their thinking after the writer goes through the thinking process. Somekh and Cathy (2005) observe that writing enables the research to gain distance from an experience, to reconstruct and to re-evaluate it from alternative points of view. Arguably, writing is as a result of the complex processes of writing activity that is used for a wide variety of purposes and communication. This can be both entertaining and informative that is sometimes based on personal experiences

and social identities by using words (in the written form). As one of the four language skills, writing has always occupied a place in most English language course. One of the reasons is that more and more people need to learn to write in English for occupational or academic purposes. Form Two students of Amankwakrom R/C JHS have problems organizing their thoughts in the English Language. According to Oluikpe (2004, p. 6), the ability to communicate effectively in English Language is known as communication competence and it involves two components: the ability to transmit meaning through *talking* and *writing*. Writing, therefore, according to Oluikpe, impacts meaning to a reader and sustains his interest if the write-up is clear. Research has shown that writing is a complex process of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising and some approaches to the teaching of first and second language writing teach students to use these processes. Meanwhile, writing is used for a wide variety of purposes that is produced in many different forms Harmer, (2004). The sampled students under review find it difficult to communicate effectively in writing due to their use of wrong sentences, wrong spellings and inability to use appropriate grammar to develop their ideas.

2.2 The concept of error

Errors are studied in order to identify the learning process and the strategies employed in learning another language Lungu (2003). As mentioned by Maicusi and Maicusi (2000), in the language learning process, errors have always been regarded negatively, and must be avoided. As a result, they contend that teachers tend to show a suppressive attitude to their students. On one hand, errors are considered as a failure of teaching process and on the other hand, they are seen as a natural result that can hardly be avoided, so we should deal and learn from them. Therefore, errors can be a very helpful means in learning a second language as Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p.

61) explain, Learners' errors are significant in three ways. (1) They serve a pedagogic purpose by showing teachers what learners have learned and what they have not mastered; (2) they serve a research purpose by providing evidence about how languages are learned; and (3) they serve a learning purpose by acting as devices by which learners can discover the rules of the target language by obtaining feedback on their errors. Therefore, in relation to language study, errors can be the deviation from the norms or rules of a language. Errors are studied in order to find out something about the learning process and about the strategies employed by learning another language (Lungu, 2003, 323). The term errors was defined differently by many experts; but these definitions contain the same meaning while the differences lie only the ways they formulate. Before studying errors, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the two terms "error" and "mistake".

2.3 Error and mistake

A mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip" which is caused by lack of attention, fatigue, or carelessness. According to Ellis (2008), a 'mistake' is a deviation in learner language that occurs when learners fail to perform their competence. It is a lapse that reflects processing problems. Errors are not a failure but a sign of imperfect knowledge of the code. Karra (2006) refers to mistakes as unsystematic errors that occur in one's native language and are not significant to the process of language learning. Systematic ones and the other hand, occur in second language. A mistake, if pointed out to the speaker, can be corrected but an error cannot be self-corrected. Another distinction between "error" and "mistake" made by Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 472) is the fact that "a learner makes mistakes when writing or speaking because of lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspects of performance. Thus, mistakes can be self-

corrected when attention is called”. They go further to define an error as “the use of a linguistic item in a way that fluent or native a speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning”. In other words, errors occur because the learner does not know what is correct, and thus cannot be self-correct.

Hasyim (2002, p. 43) defines error analysis as “the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second languages and then to reveal the systems operated by learner”. Errors contain valuable information on the learning strategies of learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) and also supply means by which teachers can assess teaching and learning and determine priorities for future effort.

Conducting error analysis is therefore one of the best ways to describe and explain errors committed by L2 learners. This kind of analysis can reveal the sources of the errors and the causes of their frequent occurrence. Once the causes are revealed, it is possible to determine the remedy. Another way of identifying the difference between an error and a mistake is by looking at the frequency of deviation. The identification of an error by observing, analyzing, and classifying to reveal something of the system operating within the learner leads to errors as a reflection of lack of understanding of the underlying competence in the language that he/she is learning (Mezrag, 2013). Unlike competence errors which are due to inadequate mastery of language or discourse rules, mistakes can be easily corrected by the speaker soon after their occurrence in speech or during text revision after writing.

2.4 Categorization and classification of errors

According to Saville –Troike (2006: 38), Error Analysis (EA) is the first approach to the study of Second language Acquisition (SLA) which includes an internal focus on learner’s creative ability to construct language; a method used to

document the systematic errors that appear in learner language (Carla , University of Minnesota. 2013) Error Documentation.

Surface strategy taxonomy classified errors into 4 types:

Omission is a type of error which is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well- formed utterance. Example: John a new student (correct one should be “John is a new student”) He speak English well (it should be “He speaks English well”).

Addition is a type of errors which is characterized by the presence of an unnecessary item in a well- formed utterance, example, double marking, regularization and simple addition. It often occurs in the later stages of SLA where the learners usually have already acquired some target language rules, only they are too faithful in using certain rules which result in errors.

Misformation is errors which characterized by the use of the wrong form of structure or morpheme (James 1998: 108). There are 3 types of this error which have been frequently reported in the literature, namely: (1) regularization, is overlooking exception and spreading rules to domains where they do not apply such as *runned*, *womans*, *hitted*. They should be run, women and hit. (2) archi-forms, is selection of one member of a class of forms to represent others in the class, for example, out of the set this/that/those/these, the learner might use only that. (3) alternating form, is derivate from the use of archi-forms which gives way to the apparently fairly free alteration of various members of a class with each other, For example, the learner uses *he for she*, *him for he*, *they for it*, *her for she*.

Misordering, is error which is characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance: “What Daddy is doing? “ (should

be “What is Daddy doing?”), “I don’t know what is it?” (should be “I don’t know what it is”)

Sadtono (2007) in a lengthy consideration of errors, describe three major types of errors.

2.4.1 Surface structure Taxonomy

It classifies errors not by specific linguistic type, but by the structural deformations the utterance undergoes.

Examples are

- Omission: I went to () movie (Definite article omitted)
- Addition: Does he can sing? (Addition of an auxiliary verb *do*)
- Substitution: I lost my way (*lost* is substituted for *miss*)
- Double marking: She didn’t went (negative instead of *she didn’t go*)
- Over regularizing: I falled (instead of *I fell*)
- Disordering: What dad is doing? Instead of (*what is dad doing?*)

2.4.2 Comparative Taxonomy

This is a category where learners’ errors are classified by similarity with children’s first language learner deviations from target language norms and by similarity with the errors made by L2 speakers from different L1 background.

Example:

- Orange come down: this is an error because there is no determiner *the* and no auxiliary verb *had/have*

2.4.3 Communicative effect taxonomy

Errors are classified by the effect they have on the native speakers, where in terms of understanding or in terms of the way non-native speakers are perceived by native speakers. Burt and Kiparasky (1972) illustrate with the following sentences:

- (a) The English language use much people.
- (b) English language uses many people.
- (c) Much people use English language.

With these three sentences, it can be concluded that sentence (c) was judged as more comprehensible than sentences (a) and (b), suggesting that word-order errors are a hindrance to understanding than the correct use of determiners or quantifiers (Duley, Burt & Krashen, 1982). Sadtono, (2007) classifies errors by their linguistic types. These are:

- a. Errors in the production of verb group.

Example: he *was* died last year. Instead of *He died Last year.*

- b. Errors in the distribution of verb group

Example: I *am having* my hair cut on Tuesdays. Instead of *I have my hair cut on Tuesdays.*

- c. Error in the use of preposition

Example: She entered *in* the room. Instead of *she entered the room.*

- d. Error in use of articles.

Example: Grape on the table is mine. Instead of *The grape on the table is mine.*

- e. Errors in the use of question

Example: why this man is cold? Instead of *why is this man cold?*

- f. A dust bin category of miscellaneous.

Example: I am very lazy to stay at home; this is not fit to drink.

Here, there is no correlation between the two classes.

This categorization of errors is very general. As such, Brown (2000) identifies and categorizes errors based on levels of language. He, therefore, identifies error categories as phonological or orthographical, grammatical, lexical, and discourse. The

disadvantage of such categorization is that sometimes a word with faulty pronunciation might create lexical errors.

Examples:

- a. Pronunciations: An ewe pronounces „head“ / (h)ɛd/ as /heid/.
- b. Orthographical: spelling *deceive* as *decieve*.
- c. Grammatical: She *dance* Agbadza well instead of (she *dances* Agbadza)
- d. Lexical: I *loss* the book instead of (I *lost* the book).
- e. Discourse Errors: These are errors beyond sentence level.

The categorizations of errors above are important, especially the grammatical type because that is the focus of the study. It types also enabled the researcher to categorize the grammatical errors the learners made in their writing.

2.5 Types of grammatical errors

2.5.1 Article use

Articles are noun markers. There are two kinds of articles namely definite and indefinite articles. The definite article is *the* while the indefinite articles are *a* and *an*. The indefinite article *a* is used before a noun that begins with a consonant sound such as *a* cup, *a* clock... while *an* precedes a noun that begins with a vowel sound such as *an* ox, *an* igloo... The articles may precede a noun as in *a* class, *the* reason or it may be separated from the noun by modifiers: *a* large class, *the* very big reason. To know which article to use, the knowledge on countable and uncountable nouns is an advantage. Countable nouns include people places, things, or ideas that are plurals, such as a child, two rooms, or three jokes. Uncountable nouns include things and ideas that cannot be counted such as gari and sadness. For example,

1. There is *a* baby on the bed
2. She bought *an* egg today.

In short, use **the** with all specific nouns that are singular or plural as well as with uncountable nouns. Certain conditions make a noun specific and are therefore required in the use of articles. For instance, when the noun has already been mentioned then **the** should be used. For example. *Always keep the igloo clean.*

2.5.2. Adjectives (comparison)

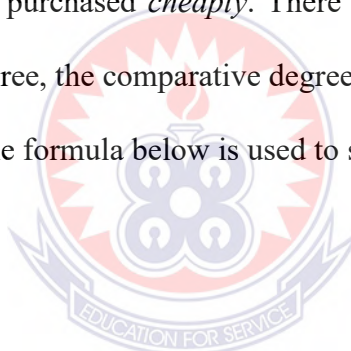
Students often misuse adjectives and adverbs, since these parts of speech (or the two; the latter two) can be easily confused. When should one use “badly” or “bad”, “slowly” or “slow”? Here is a quick tip for you: the adjective is used with a noun or pronoun; adverb is used with a verb, an adjective, or an adverb. Adjective: This *cheap* car can be purchased here.

Adverb: This car can be purchased *cheaply*. There are three comparisons in English namely: The positive degree, the comparative degree and the superlative degree.

The positive Degree: The formula below is used to show the positive degree:

as (adjective) *as*

the same (noun) *as*.



Examples:

1. He drives as slow as a snail
2. Jane is the same age as Kate.

The Comparative Degree: Comparative degree adverbial or adjective forms modified by **more** or ending in – **er**, used when comparing two things. The formula used in comparative degree is as follows:

(adjective) **er** than (for one/two syllabus).

...more (adjective) than..... (for three/more syllable).

Examples:

1. Kakra is *shorter than* Kissi.
2. GTP is *more expensive than* ATL.

The Superlative Degree: Superlative degree is adverbial or adjectival forms modified by most or ending in *-est*, used when comparing three or more things. In superlative degree, the formula is as follows:

..... the (adjective)..... est.
 the most (adjective).....

Examples:

1. Ben is *the tallest* of all the boys
2. Opha is *the most beautiful* of them all.

More examples of regular comparison are:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Big	bigger	biggest
Fast	faster	fastest
Cheap	Cheaper	Cheapest
Clever	more clever	most clever
Beautiful	more beautiful	most beautiful
Positive	Comparative	superlative
Old	older (elder)	oldest (eldest)
Many (much)	more	most
Good (well)	better	best
Bad (ill)	worse	worst
Little	less	least
Far	farther	farthest

Sentences illustrating wrong use of comparison adjectives are as follows:

1. Today weather is *badder* than yesterday
2. She ran *more faster* than we thought.

2.5.3 Tense

According to Downing and Locke (2006), tense is anchoring an event to the speaker's experience of the world by relating the event time to a point of reference. They again explain the relationship between the form of the verb and concept of time as tense. Wiredu (2005) looks at tense as the form a verb takes in order to show whether the action is past or the action is taking place in the present. From these, it is clear that there is no way a sentence can be constructed without expressing it in time. The most common tense in the English Language are the present and past. In addition, there are other aspects of verb forms that enable us to express more specific ideas about time than we could with the simple tenses alone.

The following are examples of each tense:

Tense

Examples

Present

I/You/They, walk

He/she/it walks

Past

We walked to school.

He/she/it walked to school.

This is another area of language where JHS Two students find difficulty.

Instances of the errors in students writing:

1. She didn't *went*. Instead of She didn't *go*.
2. There *is* many boys on the field. Instead of There *are* many boys on the field.

2.5.4 Concord

Nouns, whether countable or uncountable, are regarded either as singular or plural, so there should be an agreement between nouns and verbs. *Countable* nouns can have either *plural* or *singular* counterpart while some nouns are always singular. Some nouns become plural after being preceded by *many, several, some, few*, etc... while *much and little* are used for uncountable nouns. For example, countable nouns can be used in sentences as:

1. Shantel has *some oranges* left.
2. There are *several cases* unattended to.
3. Nii bought *some sugar* at the mall.
4. Drink *little water* even when not thirsty.

Examples of students' errors in writing are

1. While cleaning the room, they saw much more mousse.
2. Add many milk to the tea.
3. While cleaning the room, they saw many mice
4. Add much milk to the tea.

2.5.5 Pronouns

In English grammar, the personal pronoun system is deemed as a closed system. As the name implies, personal pronouns represent specific people, animals or inanimate object. They are not only used to substitute nouns, but also refer to a specific individual or group (Quirk et al., 1985, 341-342). English personal pronouns are associated with three grammatical persons, and can take on various forms depending on person, number, case and gender. Common types of pronouns: Subject pronouns are subjects of verbs while objective pronouns are the objects of verbs or prepositions.

A. Subject Pronoun

Subject pronoun functions as subject:

1. **They** are wearing good outfits.
2. **He** cooks the food always.

Subject pronoun as compound subject:

1. **She and he** decided to visit the zoo.
2. **My sister and I** are like twins

Subject pronoun after be (to be)

1. It was **she** who did
2. It is **you**.

Subject pronoun after than or as:

1. **You** play piano better than **he** (does)
2. **She** is happy as **I** (am)

Object pronoun

1. We met **her** after the services
2. You saw **them** a week ago.

Possessive Pronoun

1. You borrowed **her** tray to serve food
2. She wears **my** shoes.
3. This table is **mine**.
4. The shop is **hers**.

The following table shows the pronouns in English.

Table 2.1. Summary of pronoun cases

Subject pronoun	Object pronoun	Possessive pronoun
I	me	my/mine
You	you	your/yours
We	us	our/ours
He	him	his
She	her	her/hers
It	it	its
They	them	their/theirs

Students wrongly write sentences such as *The shop is **hers'*** without knowing that possessive pronouns do not take apostrophe.

2.5.6 Prepositions

A preposition is a word governing and usually coming in front of a noun and expressing a relation to another word or element. Prepositions in English are often idiomatic, that is, words are peculiar to a certain language with many exceptions to general rules. There are about 150 prepositions in English, yet they are very small as compared to thousands of the other words (nouns, preposition, verbs, pronouns, adjectives). Therefore, their use must be learnt gradually through experience.

The common or very simple rule about prepositions (with no exceptions) that a preposition is followed by a **noun**, but never a **verb**. The following table presents the rule about preposition.

Table 2.2. Summary of simple rule about prepositions

Subject+verb	Preposition	Noun
The food is	on	the table
She lives	in	Keta
Anne is looking	for	you
Sheiley is used	to	English

Prepositions are used to express place and time.

Preposition of place:

- At for a Point..... At the bank
- In for an Enclosed Space... In the garden
- On for a Surface.... On the wall

Preposition of Time:

- At for a Precise Time.... At 3 o'clock
- In for Months, Years, Centuries.... In May
- On for Days and Dates.... On 25 December, 2017

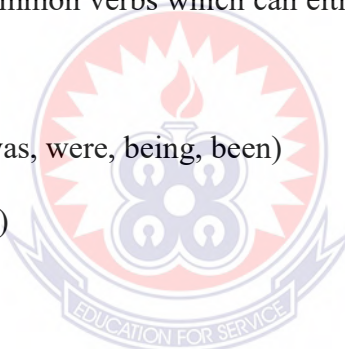
2.5.7 Auxiliary/helping verbs

There are three common verbs which can either stand alone or get “help” from other verbs. These are:

To be – (be, is, am, are, was, were, being, been)

To have – (has, have, had)

To do – (does, do, did)



When used alone:

1. Cynthia was angry
2. Ken has the bottle
3. She did great in the contest

When used as helping verbs:

1. I am leaving tomorrow
2. Ken has taken the bottle
3. She did get the scholarship

Modals auxiliary verbs

There are nine modals/helping verbs that are always used in combination with other verbs. Below are the nine modals and sentence example of each:

Can	I can see the rainbow.
Could	I could not find my cap
May	The boy may be here
Might	Rejoice might reject the offer
Shall	We shall meet again
Should	They should play with caution
Will	He will try his luck
Would	You would not go there
Must	You must listen to me

According to the English grammar rules, a modal should be followed by a basic verb. It cannot be followed by *to*, *-ing*, *-s/es* and *-ed*. If a sentence has a noun, adjective, or adverb as predicate, it should be followed by *be*.

2.5.8 Subject-Verb agreement

Understanding subject and verb as the basics of English sentence is an important step towards mastering of sentence skills (Langan & Goldstein, 2011, p. 413). Every sentence has a subject and a verb. Who or what the sentence speaks about is known as the **subject**; what the sentence says about the sentence is known as the **verb**. The number of errors in agreement is mainly the agreement of subject and verb. This is the most common and frustrating mistake ever. Remember, you must use a singular verb with the singular subject, and a plural verb is used with the plural subject.

Right: Most students use singular subject and singular verb or plural subject and plural verb. These can be seen in the samples of students writing as follows:

1. Politics **are** one of my father's interests apart from soccer.
2. My teacher remarked that, every student in the class **were** important.
3. Edna **go** to school every day.

Instead of:

1. Politics is one of my father's interests apart from soccer.
2. My teacher remarked that every student in the class is important.
3. Edna goes to school every day.

Below are some rules of subject-verb agreement:

A. A singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject takes a plural verb.

Example:

1. They *visit* Efua Sutherland Park every year.
2. Each *gets* the chance to throw the ball.

B. Sometimes the subjects of the verbs are separated by a word or a phrase. When that happens they forget to make them agree in number.

Example:

The number of students in my class is reduced.

2.5.9 Word order

This is probably the most frustrating mistake students make. Wordiness makes writing unclear and confusing. Replace long phrases with a single word when possible.

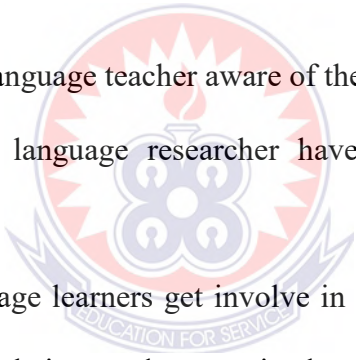
Remove words that have the same meaning. Here is an instance of a wordy sentence:

Wrong: For all intents and purposes, the reason Cecilia missed the conference was due to the fact that he had to stop very many traffic lights that were mainly red in colour.

Right: Cecilia missed the conference because he stopped at many red lights.

2.6 Significance of errors in L2 learning

Some time ago, language teachers considered errors committed by their learners as something unacceptable which they try hard to prevent from occurring (Touchie, 1986). This reminds the researcher of how her English teacher would halt the class reading when they mispronounced a word. He will drill us for the next five minutes on the correct pronunciation. This was also common in grammar lessons. In recent times, L2 and even L1 researchers in the area of applied linguistics have realized that errors are significant in language learning. Selinker (1969) cited in Brown (2002) has noted three important roles of errors in language learning. These are:

- 
- (a) Errors make the language teacher aware of the progress of learners.
 - (b) Errors make the language researcher have insight into how language is learned.
 - (c) Errors help language learners get involve in hypothesis testing to know what they have learnt in being used appropriately.

Other studies including that of Karra and Mohamoud (2013) have identified the following as the importance of errors in language teaching and learning:

1. They help the teacher to know the students' progress, provide feedback;
2. They tell the teacher something about effectiveness of teaching materials and teaching techniques;
3. They show the teacher what part of the syllabus has been adequately learned or thought and need further attention.

Thus, errors are studied in order to find out something about the learning process and about the strategies employed by learning another language (Lungu, 2003). In effect,

errors show how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner uses and help the learner to benefit from these errors.

2.7 Causes of errors

Many researchers in the linguistic field have tried to identify the possible causes of errors in English as a Second Language students' writing. While some researchers classify the causes of errors as interlingual, intralingual errors, and language learning communication strategies errors, some categorize the causes as L1 interference, overgeneralization, simplification, omission, addition and substitution. Others also categorize the causes of errors as phonological, orthographical and morphological errors (Kthupi, 2015). Language errors as identified arises from negligence, interference from the learners' mother tongue, translation from the first language, contrastive analysis, general order of difficulty, overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, material-induced errors and a part of language creativity. Brown (2002) identified the following as causes of second language errors: Interference errors, Intralingua errors, context of learning and communication strategies. These are given attention because they summarize all causes talked about. In writing, learners easily make errors because information has to be transmitted without any aid from sources other than the language itself. However, there is a danger that the language learner will tend to focus on the errors rather than on the presumed aim of the piece of writing communication. Sompong (2014) classified causes of competence errors into two categories: a) Interlingual errors caused by the mother tongue interference and b) intralingual and developmental errors occurring during the learning process of the second language at a stage when they have not really acquired the knowledge. Almost 90% of errors are said to be intralingual errors (Dulay & Burt, 1974). James (1998) states that there are four causes of errors:

interlingual errors, intralingual errors, communication strategy-based errors and induced errors.

2.7.1 Interlingual or mother tongue causes

Interlingual transfer as an error source mostly occurs at the initial stages of L2 learning. The learners frequently transfer L1 structures into the L2. It happens because the native language is the only previous linguistic source the learner can draw from. Very often we here some learners speakers produce, *sheeps* because there is a plural marker for it in their L1 language so this concept is transferred in English. Ewe speakers learning English may say, “*Man tall the*” which is a direct transfer from their native language where adjectives are post modified instead of pre-modified in English, as in The tall man. Familiarity with the native language of the learner will aid the teacher in detecting and analyzing such errors.

2.7.2 Intralingual causes

This cause of error goes beyond interlingual transfer in L2 learning. This is within the target language itself. It occurs when learners begin to acquire new structures in the target language. As a learner progresses in the target language, his /her previous experience begins to interrupt with the structures in the target language. This causes negative intralingual transfer or overgeneralization. He comed/ I goed/ I wented (overgeneralization of past tense rule)

2.7.2.1 False analogy

Learners assume that the new item Z behaves like Y: they know that „orange“ (Y) has its plural „oranges“ and assumed that „ox“ (Z) behaves likewise, so pluralizes to „oxes“.

2.7.2.2 Misanalysis

Learners form a wrong hypothesis. An example of this is seen in: *they are red ants and its (their) habitat is the hills*. The false concept in operation here is that it is the pluralized form of it. A false concept is the result of the learners misanalysing the TL.

2.7.2.3 Incomplete application of rule

This is the converse of overgeneralization as the learners do not use all the rules. They change or decrease the complicated rules to simpler rules as they aim at simplification rather than attempt to get the whole complex structure. An example is in: *Nobody knew where () was (Milestone was)*. The learners have selected and fronted a wh – element (rule component 1 and 2), but have omitted to invert the subject and verb.

2.7.2.4 Overgeneralization or system simplification

This error is caused by the misuse of words or grammatical rules. An example is the generalization of the relative pronouns *that* as in: *Thywill that had a great sense of childhood memories*.

2.7.3 Context of learning

This overlaps both types of transfers. Context here refers to classrooms in the case of school learning and social situation in the case of untrained L2 learning. In a classroom situation, the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make faulty hypothesis about language. Richards (2008) calls this false concepts while Stenson (2015) terms it induced errors. Students often make errors because of wrong instruction or explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure, or word in textbook, or wrong patterns in a drill. The sociolinguistic context or natural language acquisition can give rights to certain dialects which may be a source of error.

2.8 Related studies

This section looks at studies conducted on grammatical errors by some authorities on the writings of learners of L2. One research was conducted on Error analysis of the written English Essays of secondary school students in Malaysia: A case study was by Darus (2009). She examined errors in a corpus of 72 essays written by 71 participants in a secondary school in Malaysia. The results of her study showed that errors that participants committed were basically grammatical. The results further suggest that participants also had relatively weak vocabulary and their sentences were sometimes incomprehensible. They committed errors applying sentence structure rules in the English language. Hence, it can be said that the participants had problems in acquiring normal grammatical rules in English.

Another study conducted in the area of error analysis was by Eun-Pyo (2003). The study identified and classified errors from the students' formal and informal letters. The study revealed that about one fourth of errors (26%) resulted from L1 transfer. Other major causes were wrong word use (16%), preposition (15%) and article use (14%). Sarfaz (2011) argues that though students are taught grammatical rules of English, they still lack practice and positive feedback. Without this, he further observes, the development of their proficiency in the target language is hindered. A study which is essential to this work is by Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2011) on L1 interference in the L2 writings of Akan Junior High School Students. Students' written essays served as data for analysis. The researchers employed content analysis to 90 written essays from the students. The study found transliteration, omissions, wrong word use, L1-induced spellings errors, and wrong pronunciation as the errors that occurred in the students' essays. Based on the results, the authors concluded that

learners need to be adequately taught to understand and effectively use English grammatical rules

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the concept of error and the differences between error and mistake. It also conferred the importance of errors in second language learning, the causes of errors as well as their categories. The chapter finally presented the approaches to studying errors as well as related studies on errors in second language acquisition. The use of Error Analysis in identifying and describing the source of the learners' errors has received much attention by researchers. The discussion shows that second language learners are bound to make errors (Myles, 2002). Error analysis can therefore be considered as one of the effective ways to identify and analyze such errors since it can reveal the sources of the errors as well as what causes their frequent occurrences. It is possible to determine a remedy once the causes of the errors are noticed (Penny, 2001). The next chapter considers the methodology as well as a presentation of the data collected for analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted to carry out the whole research. It also presents the procedures used in data collection. The chapter discusses the methodology of the study under the following: research design, population and sample size, data collection instruments, data collection protocol, data analysis technique and conclusion. This method was applied to find out problems and how to curb them.

3.1 Research design

According to Kothari (2004), research design is a detailed plan which researchers use to guide the research. Owu-Ewie (2012) observes that a research design provides the most valid and accurate answers to research questions stated. In this study, the qualitative research design was used. For Owu-Ewie (2012), a qualitative research implies a detailed verbal description of characteristics, case and setting by using interviews, observations and documents as the data collecting procedure. Therefore, different data sources were employed to identify errors in the written essays of Amankwakrom R/C Junior High School. A qualitative content analysis of the students' writings was conducted based on the error analysis approach. As Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2006) state that, content or document analysis is a research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the material. For this, the written essays of the learners were analyzed for the common errors they commit. This study focused on students' deviations in grammatical errors in English writing. There are three instruments used in the study; observation, interview and essay writing.

3.2 Population and sample size

According to Best and Khan (2006), population is a group of individuals that have one or more common characteristics and of interest to the researcher. It also refers to the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which he or she would like the results of the study to be generalized (Creswell, 2013). Sampling is the process of selecting portion of the population to represent the entire population (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001). The population for this study was two (2) teachers of English language and fifty two 52 Form 2 students of Amankwakrom R/C Junior High School in the Kwahu Afram Plains North District of the Eastern Region.

The JHS 2 students made up of 20 boys and 32 girls were selected because they have been in the Junior High School system for the previous academic year and are used to the subject teaching unlike the primary where only one teacher teaches all subjects. The researcher chose this site for proximity reasons; she also selected the school and population because she has been a member of staff at the school for the previous academic year. The sampling technique was random sampling so that everyone in the Form 2 is automatic participant. In all, fifty-two (52) students and two (2) teachers making a total of 54 participants were used for the study. Form 3 students were too busy preparing for the BECE and the Form 1 students had just enrolled so they were excluded.

3.3 Data collection instruments

According to Owu-Ewie (2012), ordinarily, qualitative research implies detailed verbal descriptions of characteristics, case and setting by using interviews, observations and documents as the data collecting procedure. The data for the study were collected through the use of the following instruments: observation, interview and essay. Below is detailed description of the data collection instruments used.

3.3.1 Observation

Observation was part of the data collection instruments the researcher used. It is a primary technique of collection data on non-verbal actions. It involves field work to interact with participants or organization to collect data. The researcher used observation because it gave her the opportunity to learn at first-hand how teachers really handle grammar topics. The researcher sat in class while grammar lessons were on-going to witness the teaching and learning process. Although the researcher sought permission from the teachers concerned to observe their teaching, the first two lessons were not used because both teachers and students appeared confused. The researcher used the last two lessons because the class was used to seeing her in their class during grammar lessons. In these two, lesson delivery was normal.

3.3.2 Interview

Interview was also used as one of the instruments in this study. Interview was used to elicit information from the teachers. According to Owu-Ewie (2002), interviews are powerful conversations with participants to answer research questions. The researcher used structured interview in order to find out the extent to which students' grammatical errors affect English writing. The main reasons the researcher used interviews were to find out from the teachers how they go about the teaching of grammar and the challenges they encounter in their delivery. The researcher explained to them the relevance of the study after some initial hesitation to participate as they thought she was interested in their weakness. To make sure everyone felt comfortable, she assuring them that their names will not be used. Sample of the interview questions can be found in appendix.

3.3.3 Essay

Nigel Kent (1990) argues that writing is one's handwriting and sorting out what one wants to say first. He further states that writing is the writer getting his spelling and grammar right. In his view, writing is not just a matter of putting words and sentences together but also, the spelling and grammar as well as the logical arrangement of the writer's ideas. This is done in order to make what he is writing meaningful. Junior High school Form 2 students of Amankwakrom R/C have problems organizing their thoughts grammatically in the English Language. According to Oluikpe (1981), the ability to communicate effectively in English Language is known as communication competence and it involves two components, the ability to transit meaning through, that is talking through and writing.

Writing therefore impacts meaning to a reader and sustains the reader's interest if the write up is clear. Jordan (2000) quotes Hamplons and Henly (1984) as having defined writing as a communication occurrence between the writer and an intended reader. If communication is between two targets ends, then, the ideas of being clear and meaningful holds in his definition. The students find it difficult to communicate effectively in writing due to their use of wrong construction of sentences, wrong spellings, and inability to use grammar appropriately to develop their ideas. The researcher used the written scripts of students because it helped her to obtain their writing as data to analyze at her own convenience. The researcher paid attention to the information presented by students in their writings in order to use the documents appropriately. The researcher encountered the problem of how to ensure confidentiality of the students. In order to solve the problem, she coded the names of the students, instead of using their names. She then took time to study their work. The topics on which students wrote for the study were

- Discuss the advantages of being in a small school.
- Write an article for publication in the school magazine on how to keep our environment clean.

The first was given to students as class exercise while the second was as assignment.

3.4 Data collection procedure

The researcher sought verbal permission from the headmaster of the school to make him aware of her research. The permission was verbal because the researcher was a member of staff at the primary section of the same school. The researcher called on the teachers of English Language and briefed them on the goals of the study and also on how beneficial it would be to them as teachers of the language. The students were also briefed on the objectives of the study and how the researcher intends to use the study to help them reduce their difficulties in grammar. Written essays were the major instrument of this study because the analysis of the students' writing errors is the main objective of the study. The writing exercise was in the form of an open essay question where pupils were given guidance on how much to write (at least 200 words). The time limit for the essay was 40 minutes, which is in line with the Basic Education Certificate Examination (B. E. C. E) guidelines. The purpose of the essay is to identify the types of errors pupils commit and group them. The topics were; Discuss the advantages of being in a small school and Write an article for publication in the school magazine on how to keep our environment clean. The researcher requested the help of the teacher of grammar to mark the scripts of students, identify and classify the errors found.

3.5 Data analysis

Data analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the form of language writing and speaking (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

The data which had been collected, identified and classified were then analyzed according to the errors made. The researcher classified the type of errors in sentences based on each grammatical type. The researcher then analyzed the errors and explained causes of the errors made by the students. The written essays were collected from the 52 students that are part of the sample for the study. The following steps as outlined by Gass and Selinker (2001) were used: data collection, identification of errors and a statement of error frequency. The written essays were read, marked and analyzed. With the Taxonomy of Error Analysis designed by James (1998, p. 304), categorization and sub-categorization were used to record all the occurrence of errors which were committed by the students. The errors were categorized into articles, tense, concord, adjective use, infinitive, pronoun, preposition, auxiliary verbs and word order errors. The explanation she made was also based on the type of grammatical errors found.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology of data collection for the study. It began with the research design which is a qualitative one. It also discussed the population and sample size which involved the particular people selected. Other issues such as the instruments used in collecting data, data collection and the methods used in analyzing the data were also discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at methodology applied in conducting the study. This chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis of students' writings. The chapter is structured into two (2) main sections. The first section presents the analysis of common grammatical errors committed by learners in their written essays. These errors include article errors, errors, tense, adjective errors, infinitive errors, concord (number, subject-verb agreement) errors, pronoun errors, preposition errors, auxiliary verb errors and errors in word order. These errors are explained with examples from the essays written by the students. The individual results are summarized in tables and figures. The second section discusses the causes of the students' errors made by the students and those made by the teachers.

4.1 Categorization of learners' grammatical errors

The researcher, in order to analyze the various types of the students' errors in their writings, identified and classified the errors into different categories. The researcher used their score sheet to analyze and present the errors found with frequencies and percentages. According to Huang (2002), absolute frequencies refer to the actual occurrence of errors expressed by natural numbers. Based on the data collected and analyzed, I found errors in terms of article errors, tense errors, adjective errors, errors of infinitive, concord, pronoun and preposition errors, auxiliary errors and word order errors. These errors are discussed as follows:

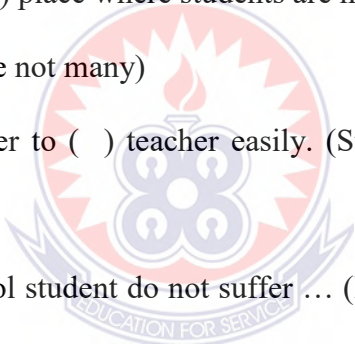
4.1.1 Article errors

There are three main articles (a, an, the) used in English. A singular common noun starting with a consonant takes the article *a* while a singular common noun

starting with a vowel takes the article *an*. The two articles are indefinite articles because they introduce the noun they precede. When the noun is mentioned again then *the* is used to precede it as a definite article. A plural common noun can be used with or without an article. The definite article *the* is also used with superlative adjectives. Normally, a proper noun does not take any article. The examples of errors found in the sentences of the students show that they over-looked these rules and made errors.

4.1.1.1 Omission of articles (Om-A)

Omission is when learners omit articles in sentences where they are required. The following sentences are examples of articles left out by the students with their corrected forms:

- 
- (a) Small school is () place where students are not many. (Small school is a place where students are not many)
 - (b) Students get closer to () teacher easily. (Students get closer to the teacher easily)
 - (c) In () small school student do not suffer ... (In a small school students do not suffer...).
 - (d) proper sanitation in the environment and Ghana as () whole. (... proper sanitation in the environment and Ghana as a whole).
 - (e) () headmaster's office is open to students.... (The headmaster's office is open to students).

From these examples, one can observe the omission of articles in the sentences. In sentences (a), (c) and (d), the indefinite article *a* is omitted while in sentences (b) and (e) the definite article *the* is omitted. The errors occur due to the fact that either the students are ignorant of the rules in the use of articles in English. This rule shows that a singular common noun e.g. place, school, teacher etc. needs

articles to introduce them (Downing & Locke, 2006). Students disregard and omitted articles in their sentences. Most errors found in this category were of omission.

4.1.1.2 Misuse of article (Ms-A)

This is a problem for many students because the article *a* which becomes *an* when the next word (noun) begins with a vowel - *a, e, i, o, u* - is known as the indefinite article. This is so because the noun it precedes is not definite. The meaning of *a* is similar to the number *one*. It is therefore possible to say *I ate an egg* which is similar to I ate one egg. The sentences that follow are examples of errors found in students' writings:

- (a) Students have a strong lives (strong lives)
- (b) An article written a published....(An article written for publication)
- (c) Make everybody get to a understanding (...make everybody get to understand...).
- (d) In small area of Kpeme the... (In small area of Kpeme...).
- (e) We need to weed a bushes around... (We need to weed the bushes around...).

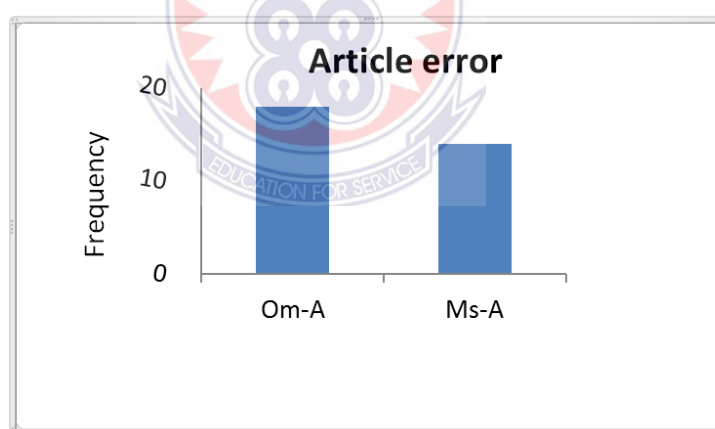
From the examples, it is clear that the learners lack in-depth knowledge on the rules using articles. In sentence (a), the learners used indefinite article *a* with plural which should be there. In sentence (b) and (c), instead of preposition, an article was used. In sentence in sentence (d), the article was placed behind the noun. In sentence (e), instead of definite article, the learners used indefinite article. A few were also due to L1 structures where the article is place at the back of the noun if there is an adjective it is also considered before the article.

Hence the learner swings between the meaning of specification and the definition (Ionin & Wexler, 2004). The findings suggest that learners need to concentrate on the construction of 12 structures in order to write meaningful sentences in their essays.

Table 4.1. Summary of article errors

Type of errors	Frequency	Percentage
Om-A	18	56
Ms-A	14	44
Total	32	100

From table 1, most of the article errors were made by omission with 18 errors representing 56% while the least made errors was the misuse of the article with 14 errors representing 44%. It can be seen that the cause of these errors is that, the students did not understand the context of using the article.



Categories of Article Error types

Figure 1. Summary of Article errors

4.1.2. Tense errors

The knowledge of grammar, especially tense, in language learning, is considered to be a crucial part for non-native learners to master properly (Mufta & Rafik-Galea, 2013). Verb tense refers to the way a verb is constructed to communicate when an action or an event takes place. Simply, one can say that a verb

is a word that tells one what a subject does or is. It expresses an action as well as a state of being. There are two basic verb tense forms in English: the *present* and the *past*. There are other forms but they are aspects to the main forms. The verb tense makes a person aware of when the action expressed in a sentence, whether in speech or written is taking place. Consistency between the action and the type of verb used is very important.

4.1.2.1 Omission of present tense (Om-T)

Omission is the absence of an essential element which is needed in a well-formed sentence, students overlooked this and thereby committed omission errors.

(a) If we () many they cannot take good care..... (If we **are** many they cannot take good care...).

(b) It is easy for teachers to punish us if we () wrong. (It is easy for teachers to punish us if we **are** wrong).

(c) For the class not () noisy... (For the class not **to be** noisy)

(d) Association with students () more friendly. (Association with students **is** more friendly).

(e) The student () more free. (The student **is** more free).

Learners omitted 1st and third 3rd plural present tense *are* from sentences (a) and (b). In sentence (d) and (e), they omitted 3rd person singular present tense *is* from the sentences. In sentence (c), the state of being was omitted. The examples of omission errors found in the learners' essays made the sentences unclear and therefore could not convey the right meaning.

4.1.3.1 Misuse of tense (Ms-T)

Misuse occurs when the learner inappropriately uses an element in a grammatical construction. It affects the clarity of expression the learner conveys. This

becomes an error in English. Examples of errors found in learners' writings are as follows:

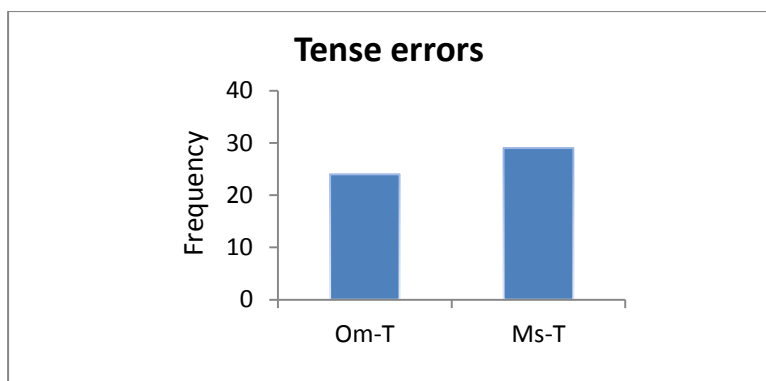
- a) If you does not weed... (If you **do** not weed,...)
- b) We has plan to collect the refuse from the gutters (We **have planned** to collect the refuse from the gutters....).
- c) If rubbish surround us and we did not take any action... (If rubbish surrounds us and we **do** not take any action...).
- d) The student should think why they should study in the school that he/she has chosed.
(The student should think why he/she should study in the school that he/she has **chosen**).
- e) Teacher are closed to each other... (...teachers are **close** to each other...).

From the examples, students could not tell when to use past tense or present tense in their writings. They place a past tense where a present tense should be in example (c). They overgeneralized the present perfect with the past form of the verb in example (d). For example, the learners used chosed, instead of chosen. The learners have not enough understanding when to use which form of the tense. This appears to be caused by lack of practice and exposure of the non-native language

Table 4.2. Summary of tense errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Om-T	24	45
Ms-T	29	55
Total	53	100

Table 2 shows the sub categories and summary of tense errors with the total of 53 errors; misuse of the verb was higher than the omission of tense errors with 55% and 45% respectively.



Categories of Tense Errors

Figure 2. Summary of tense errors

These findings are comparable to those of Thomas (2014) in his study which aimed at analyzing the English language efficiency of the first Engineering students of India. In that study, the researcher found that the errors made by learners were of omission errors and misuse of tense. She ended that the causes of errors were over generalized and lack of knowledge on the contest of learning. Example, *When we didn't do it* instead of *when we don't do it*. Students in their example should have used present tense negative but they used past negative.

4.1.3. Comparative and superlative adjective

Adjectives help us to express the degree of comparison. There are three comparisons in English namely; the positive, the comparative and the superlative. All these degrees have their formulae. For example, it is incorrect to say *Please come as faster as possible* instead of *Please come as fast as possible*. Putting 2 degrees in one structure in place of positive does not express clarity of sentence but shows that the writer is incompetent in the language. Some of the subject in this study lack knowledge of the fact of comparison between two or more. These types of adjectives and adverb help us to express the degree of comparison.

4.1.3.1 Omission of more (Om-Com)

Omission is the inability of the writer to present an item that is necessary to make a sentence meaningful (Haryono, 2011). Instances where students' errors occur are as follows:

- (a) well-being of their students is () important than ... (well-being of their students is **more** important than ...).
- (b) One of them is () close the teachers... (One of them is **more** close the teacher...).
- (c) ... cook () food reach us (cook **more** food for us)
- (d) We love our small school () than big school (we love our small school **more** than big school).
- (e) Big school don't have () furniture for all students, (big schools don't have **more** furniture).

In all the sentences above, learners omitted comparative degree *more* from the sentences making them unclear.

4.1.3.2 Misuse of comparative (Ms-Com)

Misuse is the inappropriate usage or abuse of a particular grammatical structure. In this case, there is misuse of *-er ...than* in the students writings. Examples of instances where students misuse this structure:

- a) Students in small schools are good friends than a big school. (Students in small schools are **better** friends **than** a big one).
- b) Small group of students is easy to make relationship than large one. (It is **easier** to make relationship with a smaller group of students **than** a large one).
- c) The block is very small than my school. (The block is **smaller than** my school).

- d) When trees are around, is good than. (When trees are around, it is **better than**).
- e) My school is best than other school. (My school is better than).

In sentence (a), the learners used only *than* without the *-er*. In sentence (b), (c) and (d), the learners could not use the comparative form appropriately. In sentence (e), they used superlative degree instead of comparatives.

4.1.3.3 Misuse of adjective/ adverb (Ms-Adj/Adv)

Misuse errors here are the abuse of the adjective or the adverb of the students in the essay because they lack knowledge on how the rules work. Some examples of errors found in learners' writing are as follows:

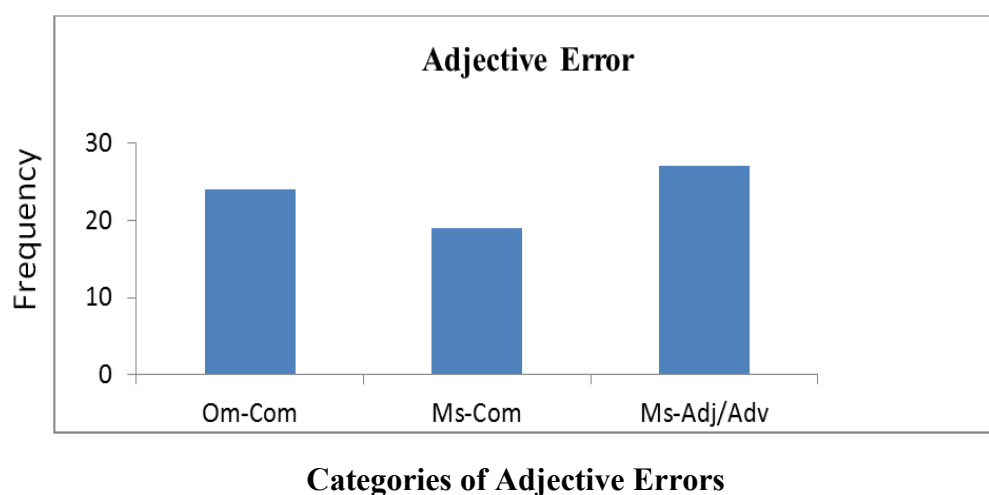
- a) There are also much nice desks in the school. (There are also **many nice** desks in the school).
- b) We are not many as like school like St. Francis Demo. (We are not **as many as** St. Francis Demo).
- c) Defecating very where. (Defecating **everywhere**).
- d) Small school need more cost to get some facility with large school.
(Small school needs more cost (funds) to get the **same** facilities **as** large school).
- e) They give as sweet food to it. (They give us **tasty** food to eat).

From the findings in the learner's writings, it is clear that they lack adequate knowledge on the facts of the rules underlining the use of much/many in sentence (a). In (b) and (d), the students used *many as like* instead of adverb/adjective *as....as* and *same...as* respectively. the adverb of was also misused in sentence (c).

Table 4.3: Summary of comparative and superlative

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Om-Com	24	34
Ms-Com	19	27
Ms-Adj/Adv	27	39
Total	70	100

Table 3 presents results of errors of adjective found in the students' writings. Misuse of comparative was least with 19 errors representing 27%. Omission was more with 24 errors representing 34% while misuse of adjective/adverb was the most with 27 errors representing 39%. There are some rules in comparison that should be implemented whether in positive, comparative or superlative. The positive is the basic comparison using *as... as* or *the same...as*. While in comparative two things are compared using *+ er than* or *more + than*. In superlative more than two object or situations are involved and the definite article *the* is put before the superlative word. Students lack knowledge of the above rules in comparison. Example is *some think big school is () best than* instead of **some think big school is the best of all**.

**Figure 3. Summary of comparative and superlative errors**

4.1.4 Errors of infinitive

In English, an infinite is the basic form of a verb used by **itself** as in *she can swim*, or with **to** as in *she likes to swim*. However, students could not use this type well. Examples of their sentences are as follows:

- (a) Draining of choked gutters. (**To drain** off the choked gutters).
- (b) Everybody gets to understood... (Everybody **understands**).
- (c) We can only stop by avoiding... (We can only stop **to avoid**...)
- (d) They can only stop use that opportunity for sharing...(They can use that opportunity **to share**...).
- (e) Follow their example to preparing the environment... (follow their example **to prepare** the environment...).

From the analysis shown in learners' errors from this category, the use of simple past instead of non-finite make up most of the errors, followed by the use of present tense instead of infinitive the use of past tense instead of infinitive and in sentence (a) and (e) progressive used instead of to-infinitive.

4.1.5 Concord errors

In grammar, concord refers to the way that a word has a form appropriate to the number or gender of the noun or pronoun it relate to. For example, in *He hates it*, there is concord between the singular form of the verb hate the singular pronoun he. Also, concord is relatively limited in modern English; subject verb concord in terms of number is conventionally marked by inflection (or word ending). Noun pronoun concord is used for agreement between pronoun and its antecedent in terms of number persons and in gender.

4.1.5.1 Number errors (N-C)

In Grammar „number“ is form of a word showing whether one or more than one person or thing is being talked about. The word „men“ is plural in number, therefore the verb in the sentence of its subject must agree in number: The rule is singular subject must agree with singular verb while plural subject must agree with plural verb. There is the exception of first person singular „I“ and second person „you“. These agree with the plural verb in the single present. The third person singular agrees with the singular verb in the present tense as in *he walks to bank*. Some Examples of students“ errors are:

- (a) It help us to get access to computers. (It **helps** us to get access to computers).
- (b) If you can avoid all this things our environment.... (If you can avoid **all these things** our environment...).
- (c) It means that when there is bushes... (It means that when there **are bushes**...).
- (d) Most industries in Ghana or in our environment has.... (Most **industries** in Ghana or in our environment **have**...).
- (e) Because there is flies over.... (Because there **are flies** all over).

The examples of students“ errors shows that students were not able to differentiate between the number as to plural or singular. For example, in sentence (a), it is seen that the students could not use the singular subject *it* to agree with the singular verb therefore there was an error of number concord. The rest of the examples followed the same pattern as in sentence (a).

4.1.5.2 Subject-verb agreement (SV-C)

A subject concord is used to make sure that the subject is in agreement with the rest of the sentence. Verb concord means agreement or harmony between people or groups. In the context of grammar, it means grammatical agreement between two

parts of the sentence. The students in the present study were not able to relate the subject to the verb to agree. Examples of sentences in which such errors could be found are as follows:

- a) Each students have access to learn more... (**Each student has** access to learn more).
- b) The computers we are using for learning is enough. (The **computers** we are using for learning **are** enough).
- c) When you do this you well stays germ free and healthy. (When you do this **you will stay** germ free and healthy).
- d) Those is why I like small school. (**That is** why I like small school).
- e) We does not share one book... (We **do** not share one book).

In sentences (b, c and e), the learners could not use the idea of the 3rd person plural they, 2nd person you, and the 1st person I / we using the plural verb to agree with the subject. Therefore they made the error of plural subject *computers* use *is* as the verb instead of computers are so that the plural subject will agree with the plural verb. In sentence (a), the learners could not identify that when a subject starts with each the verb should be singular. Sentence (d) shows that the students lack the ideas of demonstrative pronoun. For example, *this –that, these-those*. The first set is in singular while the second set is in plural. The learners could not express this due to contextual knowledge.

4.1.5.3 Omission of plural marker (Om-Pl)

This omission error happens when a learner leaves out or omits the morpheme „s“ used to mark plural where it is needed in sentence. In well-constructed sentence, the plural marker tells the reader which nouns are plural or not. The cause of these errors could be the fact that the learners could not decide where and what takes the

plural marker. Instances where learners left out the plural marker which is essential in the construction of sentences are as follows:

- a) Firstly environment () are thing we see around us. (Firstly, **environments** are **things** we see around us)
- b) Teacher() have enough time to teach.... (**Teachers** have enough time to teach...).
- c) We have about 15 student () in the class. (We have about 15 **students** in the class).
- d) They need about 20 bus () before (They need about 20 **buses** before).
- e) The students to do their correction ()... (The students to do their **corrections**)

In sentence (a) the student could not identify the plural noun as *environments*.

In sentence (b) if the verb is *have* then the subject should be plural *teachers* to match the verb. In sentence (c) the learners use the numeral 15 to mean number of students but failed to add the „s“ making the sentence wrong. The same thing happened in sentence (d). Lastly, the students in sentence possess the *corrections*, omitting ‘s’ makes it an error.

4.1.5.4 Misuse of plural marker

Misuse plural marker errors occur when the learners place the plural marker where it is not needed by generalizing the rule from their native language.

- (a) Every students with his/her desk... (Every **student** with his/her desk...).
- (b) This question will appear to many peoples who look down on small school.
(This question will appear to many **people** who look down on small school).
- (c) We should clean our rooms to do away with funguses. (We should clean our rooms to do away with **fungi**).
- (d) Womens to carry rubbish. (**Women** to carry rubbish).

(e) The sheeps spoil the street. (The sheep spoil the street).

4.1.5.4 Quantity +plural (Quan-pl)

Learners lack knowledge on quantifiers so they make errors with the words that shows quantity such as some, many, much, a few etc. Examples of students' errors are as follows:

- a) Some people does not dispose off waste properly. (**Some people do** not dispose off waste properly).
- b) There are many school ... (There are **many schools**...).
- c) It is doing **some town** already. (It is doing to **some towns** already).
- d) Some small school have good behaviour. (**Some small schools** have good behaviour).
- e) We can find many friend..... (We can find **many friends**....).

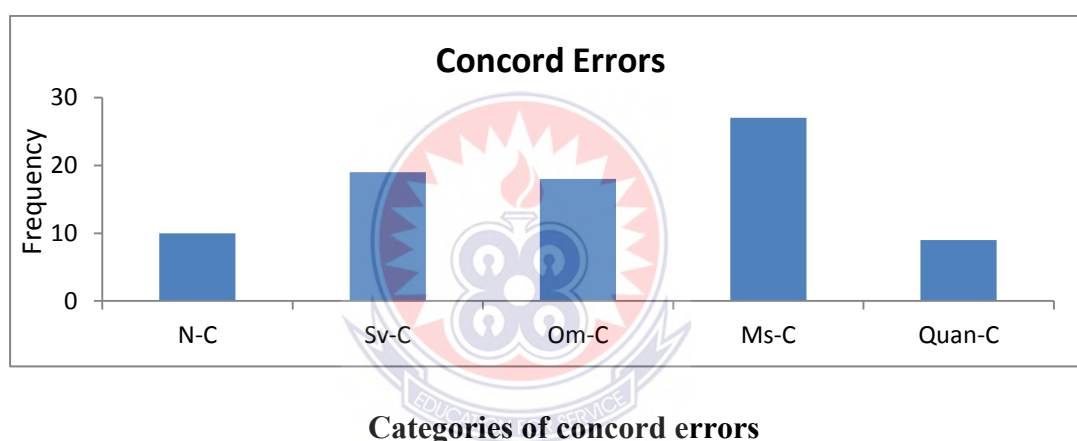
In sentence (a), (c) and (d) the learners used *does*, *town* and *small school* which are singular instead of plural *do*, *towns* and *small school* because of the noun phrase *some people*. In sentence (b) and (e), the learners should have said *schools* and *friends* because of the quantifier *many* which show plural.

The learners used quantifiers with nouns but used singular verbs so there is no concord between the plural subjects with the verbs. From the findings it is clear that the subjects of this study transferred directly from their native language L1 to the L2 second language. Chuo (2001), however, agrees that the use of L1 requires language teachers to explain the abstract in difficult grammar structures learners.

Table 4.4. Summary of concord error

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
N-C	10	12
Sv-C	14	17
Om-C	18	23
Ms-C	27	37
Quan-Pl	9	11
Total	78	100

Table 5 presents misuse of plural marker had the highest of the frequency with 27 errors; omission errors were next with 18 errors. The subject-verb agreement had 14 errors; number concord had 10 errors and quantities were the least of 9 errors.

**Figure 4. Summary of concord errors**

Koh (2000) investigated subject-verb agreement errors in the interlanguage of ESL learners of a secondary school. The test instrument was a self-designed cloze test. The findings revealed that the subject + auxiliary does/do category accounted for the highest percentage of errors (24.7%), followed by subject + auxiliary has/have category (23.1%) and subject + full verb category (21.2%). For the countable nouns/uncountable nouns + verb + subject and subject + auxiliary verb is/are/am categories have the same percentage (15.5%). Most of these were caused by lack of knowledge of the rules of the language and L1 interference.

4.1.6 Pronoun errors

A pronoun is a word that is used instead of a noun or a noun phrase. Examples are I, he, she, it, you, we, they. There are types of pronoun but the researcher considered only those found in students writing. The basic principles of pronoun are that a singular pronoun refers to a singular noun while a plural pronoun refers to a plural noun Sorenson, (2010). Examples of students' sentences:

4.1.6.1 Omission of pronoun

An omission occurs when an item that should be present in a grammatical construction is absent Haryono (2011). Students left out some of the pronouns needed in their constructions. Examples are as follows:

- a) Throwing rubbish away when () finish cleaning. (Throwing of rubbish away when we finish cleaning).
- b) If they clean the gutters and make () free from rubbish... (If they clean the gutters and make them free off rubbish...).
- c) That is why () like small school. (That is why I like small schools)
- d) This is because () make free movement of water. (This is because it makes free movement of water.)
- e) The large school () will not be able to get enough food to eat. (The large school you will not get enough food to eat).

There are three errors found here. Misuse and omission are the most committed errors while addition of pronoun is the least.

4.1.6.2 Addition of pronoun (Ad-Pron)

Addition is the process of adding a pronoun where it is not required. Learner added some pronouns to their sentences in the following instances.

- a) As a matter of fact all attending a small school, it bring a lot of advantages...
(As a matter of fact attending a small school brings a lot of advantages).
- b) We have mono desks in our class which made us sit one, one in the class.
(We have mono desks in our class, one to each student).
- c) Teachers can't see all of us all. (Teachers can't see all of us).
- d) They love us ourselves. (They love us)
- e) Which students who come from far. (Students who come from far).

In sentence (a) the learner added *it* which was not needed in that sentence. In sentence (b), the learner added object case pronoun *us* and repeated pronoun *one*. The *all* in sentence(c) was added as a result of the learner's L1 transfer to L2 where *all* is used to emphasis on things or people and it is placed at the back of the noun it emphasizes. The same pattern was used in sentence (d). As for sentence (e) the learner could not appropriately use relative pronoun *which*.

4.1.6.3 Misuse of pronoun

It is the abuse of words. In this case using a pronoun where it is not required.

Samples of students' errors are shown as follows:

- a) keep our environment clean by weeding all the bushes around your compound.
(keep our environment clean by weeding all the bushes around our compound)
- b) One advantage of attending a small school is u will easy know each other.
(One advantage of attending a small school is you will easily know each other.)
- c) So that it will not harm you us it is doing some town already. (So that it will not harm you as it is doing to some towns already)

d) and then they give as many food to it. (and then they gave us much food to eat).

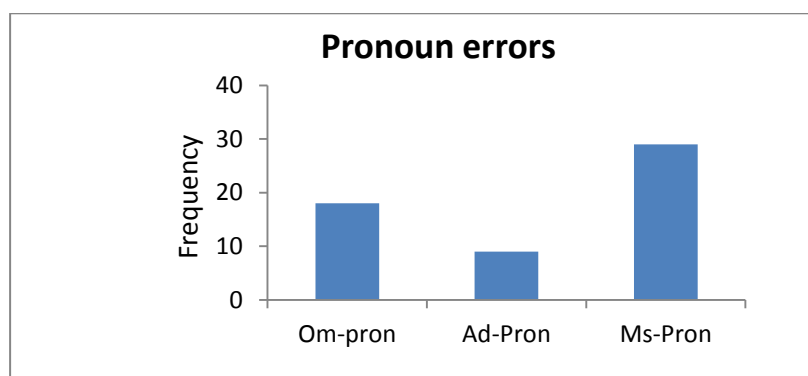
e) them will not be able to eat it... (they will not be able to eat it...).

Misuse of pronoun occurred in sentences (c) and (d), us and as were interchanged while it is used instead of eat in sentence (e).

Table 4.5. Summary of pronoun errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Om-pron	18	32
Ad-pron	9	16
Ms-pron	29	52
Total	56	100

Table 6 explains the sub categories of the pronoun errors made by learners in their writing. It is clear from the table that misuse of pronouns was the highest errors committed with 52%. While omission were higher with 32% errors, addition were the least with 16% errors.



Categories of Pronoun errors

Figure 5. Summary of Pronoun errors

4.1.7 Preposition errors

The term *preposition* is a word or group of words used before a noun or pronoun to show position, place time or method. It introduces a prepositional phrase in a sentence.

4.1.7.1 Omission of prepositions

Omission is the absence of an essential element which must be present to make a sentence meaningful. Examples of errors made by students:

- (a) We ask for textbook () be learning during free period. (We ask for textbook **to** be learning during free period).
- (b) Teachers have time () teach very well. (Teachers have time **to** teach very well).
- (c) So as a human being we have () clean our environment. (So many human beings we have **to** clean our environment).
- (d) Some have () go to the house and bring seats. (Some have **to** go to the house and bring seats).
- (e) The teacher focuses () giving individual attention. (The teacher focuses **on** giving individual attention)

In the above, *to* was left out in sentences (a), (b), (c) and (d). In sentence (e) the preposition *in* was left out. The errors were caused by the learners ignorant of the fact that their expressions would convey the right meaning to the reader.

Instances students' sentences where omission occurred are as follows:

- (a) There is no ventilation () the class. (There is no ventilation **in** the class).
- (b) () Ghana now a days,.... (**In** Ghana nowadays...).
- (c) The world health organization () collaboration with every country
(The World Health Organization **in** collaboration with every country...).

(d) When I was () small school... (When I was in small school,).

(e) Flies get () in content with feaces.... (Flies get into contact with feaces...).

4.1.7.2 Misuse of preposition

Instances where students abused the use of prepositions where they must be absent are as follows:

(a) When we do exercise is also easy to the teacher to mark.(when we do exercise it is also easy for the teacher to mark).

(b) When we have I.C.T. is easy to the teacher to come to us. (When we have I.C.T., it is easy for the teacher for attend to each of us).

(c) Cholera can also lead in to death. (Cholera can also lead to death).

(d) We can enjoy in there. (We can enjoy there).

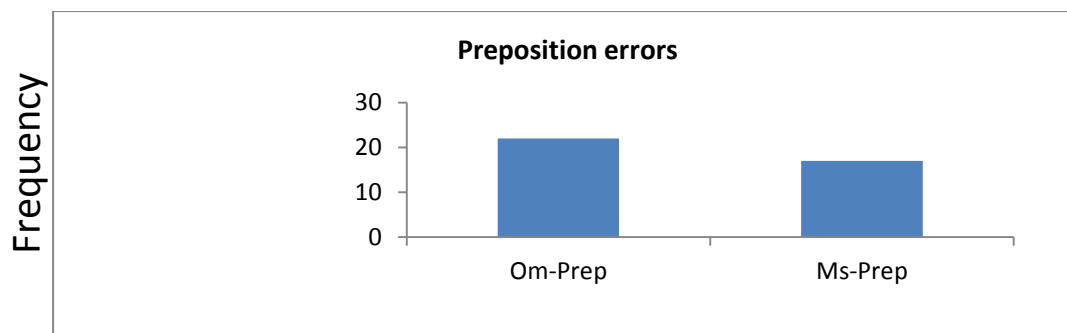
(e) They are proud to the school. (They are proud of their school).

In sentences (a), (b), (c) and (e), the preposition *to* was misuse by the learners instead of other prepositions. In sentence (d), one may say the structure was correct but the context in which it was used was wrong. The learners lack knowledge or the rules of using prepositions.

Table 4.6. Summary of Preposition errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Om-Prep	22	56
Ms-Prep	17	44
Total	39	100

Table 7, two major errors were identified. They are omission of „to, on, in“, and misuse of preposition. Misuses of the preposition were the least with 17 errors among the preposition errors representing 44%. Omissions were the most with 22 errors representing 56%. Students lack comprehension of context of learning.



Categories of preposition errors

Figure 6. Summary of preposition errors

4.1.8 Errors in the use of auxiliary verbs

The auxiliary verbs are also known as helping verbs. They are used with other main verbs to form tenses negatives, questions, etc. There are primary auxiliary verbs which are sub-divided into three; *to be*, *to do* and *to have* while modal auxiliary is used with another verb (not a modal) to express possibility, permission, intention, etc. Those auxiliaries that were used wrongly would be stated. In English it is inappropriate to say *You has good mood*. That will mean breaking of the rule of “to have” auxiliary instead, the sentence should read, *You have good mood* or *You are in a good mood*. This study identified various error types use by auxiliary verbs. They are grouped into omission, addition, wrong use and misuse. The study found that the learners committed all the categories one way or the other. These auxiliaries that were used inappropriately are stated as follows:

4.1.8.1 Omission of 'to be'

These omission errors make by learners affected the clarity of their expressions. Examples of students’ errors found in sentences are as follows:

- (a) We () clean our surrounding always. (must).
- (b) This can cause the environment () dirty. (This can cause the environment **to be** dirty).

- (c) There () no enough water. (There **is** not enough water).
- (d) You cannot () it alone. (You cannot do it alone).
- (e) Industries in Ghana () no place. (Industries in Ghana have no place).

In sentences (a) and (b) the *be* helping verbs which show state of being were omitted. From examples (c), (d) and (e) the *is* present tense, verb 3rd person singular was omitted making the sentences meaningless.

4.1.8.2 Addition of 'to be' (Ad-Aux)

Addition errors are characterized by the presence of an item which should not be present in a particular grammatical construction. Students fail to honour this rule.

Some of learners' errors are seen in the sentences below:

- a) Other thing which is **being** brought about by technology,
(Other thing which is brought by technology)
- b) Environment refers to things surrounding us, **being** artificial or natural things.
(Environment refers to things surrounding us, **be** them artificial or natural things).
- c) I **be** sick of malaria. (am)
- d) They go **being** charcoal. (burn)
- e) **Was** bad friends were many. (Bad friends were many)

According to Haryon(2011), when learners add elements, where they were not needed, their constructions become meaningless.

4.1.8.3 Wrong use of 'to be' (Wr-Aux)

Wrong use occurs when a learner inappropriately uses an auxiliary verb in writing of speech. Examples of subjects errors found in their essays are as follows:

- a) This is one of the major **was** of destroying habitation.(this one of the major **ways** of destroying habitation).

- b) Because there is flies all over there. (Because there **are** flies all over the place)
- c) People is the school are many. (People **in** the school are many).
- d) When we is the class room... (When we **are** in the classroom...).
- e) Unlike the big school were the students ;...). (Unlike the big school **where** the students...).

In sentences (a) and (e), the learners wrongly used *was* and *were* instead of *ways* and *where*. The sentences (b) and (d) had *is* instead of *are* for the plural nouns *flies* and *we*. In sentence (c), the learners used auxiliary verb *is* instead preposition *in*.

4.1.8.4 Misuse of ‘do’

Misuse occurs by the abuse of a particular morpheme to make the expression incorrect. Students of this study misuse the primary auxiliary *do* in their sentences.

Instances are as follows:

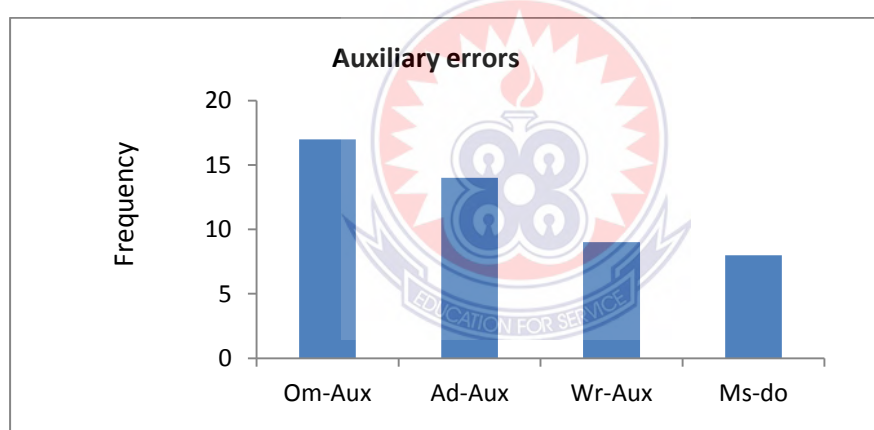
- (a) We does not share.... (We **do** not share...).
- (b) The lazy people does come for communal labour. (The lazy people **do** not come for communal labour).
- (c) Punish us if we did something wrong. (Punish us if we **do** something wrong).
- (d) Especially, boys does not respect. (Especially, boys **do** not respect).
- (e) Compound don’t look nice. (Compound **doesn**’t look nice).

Students of this study used *does* with plural subject *we* in sentence (a). Auxiliary verb *was* as used in the past tense where it should present in sentence (b). The *do* also could be used as a main verb as seen in sentence (c), (d) and (e).

Table 4.7. Summary of auxiliary verb errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Om-Aux	17	35
Ad-Aux	14	29
Wr-Aux	9	19
Ms-do	8	17
Total	48	100

From the table 8, four main categories of auxiliary verb errors were identify. The omissions were 17 errors representing 35%. Additions were 14 errors representing 29%. Wrong uses of auxiliary were 9 errors representing 19%. Misuses of *do* were 8 errors representing 17% and it was the least of the errors on the table.

**Categories of Auxiliaries errors****Figure 7. Summary of Auxiliary errors**

Zughoul (2002) studied syntactic accuracy in the use of English Modal verbs by students in Malaysia. The research findings showed that Malaysian students had little problem using modal verbs grammatically in argumentative writing. It was concluded that despite the inaccuracies in terms of meanings, most students were able to use syntactically accurate modals in their sentences.

4.1.9 Word order errors

In linguistics, word order typology is the study of the order of the syntactic constituents of a language, and how different language can employ different orders. Correlations between orders found in different syntactic sub-domains are also of interest. In simple terms, it is the arrangement of words according to their syntax. On the other hand, word order in English is fixed, or to be more precise, the positions of subject, verb and object are relatively fixed. Slobodanka, (2002 as cited in; Quirk et al., 1991) But being relatively fixed is obviously, if not opposite then not the same as being mainly free. The following explanation defines the difference: "English does indeed have strict limitations of the ordering of clause elements. Students lack knowledge of the rule of this part of the language structure."

4.1.9.1 Misuse of words

The meaning of the sentence of which it is used becomes incorrect or ambiguous. Students of this study lack right terms in the word inventory. Learners made the following errors due to lack of vocabulary.

- a) Flies to go and have content with the gutters and come to stand on our food.
(Flies have contact with the gutters and come to settle on our food).
- b) So a small school is good then a large school. (So a small school is better than a large school).
- c) The teacher gives it to us to lean... (the teacher give it to us to learn...).
- d) We have a dusk (We have desks).
- e) If it were a dig school... (if it was a big school).

The words supplied to the sentences above, made them incorrect. The meanings of these sentences were different from the context in which the learners wanted to use them.

4.1.9.2 Misuse of word due to homophone.

Homophones are words that have same pronunciation but different spellings and meanings. Homophones errors occurred due to the limited vocabulary of the learners. Some of the examples of learners' inability to use the right words due to homophones are as follows:

- a) Seens students are not many in the class, (**Since**)
- b) And then they give as food to it. (**us, eat**)
- c) They must berry the rubbish. (**bury**).
- d) We no everyone. (**know**).
- e) Those who catch malaria get week. (**weak**)

The homophone errors were caused by context of learning, as in sentence (a), the learners use *seens* in place of preposition of time *since*. In sentence (b), the adverb *as* is used in place the pronoun *us* and the pronoun *it* is also used in place of the verb *eat*. In sentence (c) had *berry* (fruit) in place of *bury*(underground). In sentence (d), *no* which negates the statements or shows disagreements was used for *know* to be aware of have knowledge of something. In sentence (e), *week* is a noun but the learners used it instead the adjective *weak*.

4.1.9.3 Word order due to L1

These are types of errors that aroused due to the native language (interlingual transfer). Here, most students rely on the structures of the L1 and transfer the features from to second language L2. In the essays, some students transferred some L1 (Ewe) structures into English writing. Here is an example:

They	will	come	stay
Wo	a	va	no

The correct sentence in English should be, *they will settle*. But students do not understand why they should use the word *settle* as the most appropriate for the construction due to their L1.

Instances learners transferred directly from their L1 to the L2 are as follows:

- a. When they teach finish, (When they **finish teaching**...).
- b. ...how to do some small, small things. (how to do **petty things**).
- c. some things will not be hard for you. (**you will find things easy**).
- d. throw it to peoples house back and bushes. (throw it at the back of people houses and bushes).
- e. One must sweep all choked gutter... (One must **disilt all choked gutters**...).

Another example is:

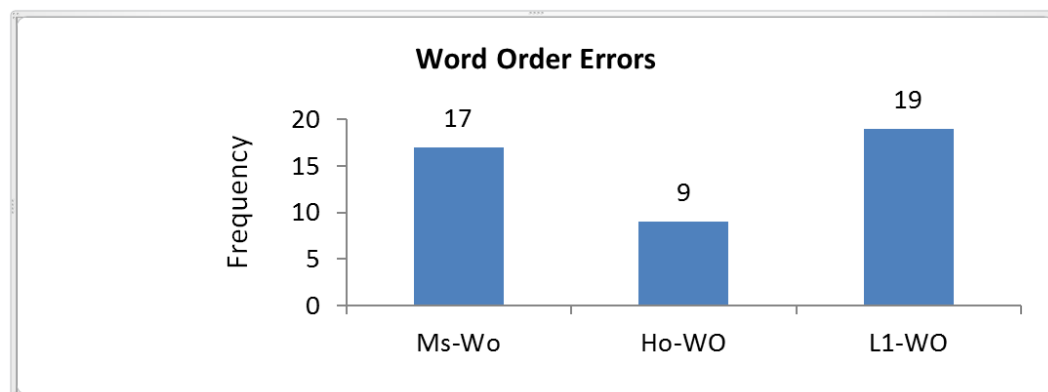
It	will	born	a	mosquito
A	va	dzi	e	mu

The correct sentence in English should be, *it will hatch a mosquito*. But students do not understand why they should use the word hatch in their sentence because in their native language dzi means born. In their native language, emu is one word and it means a mosquito in English. Some students transfer that idea in composition writing in English.

Table 4.8: Summary of word order errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Ms-Wo	17	38
Ho-Wo	9	20
L1-Wo	19	42
Total	45	100

Table 9 presents the summary of errors found in students' essays and their frequencies. Misuse of words had 17 errors representing 38%. There were 9 errors homophone representing 20%. Errors due to L1 transfer were 19 representing 42%.



Categories of Word Order Errors

Figure 8. Summary of Word Order Errors

According to Crystal (2003), transliteration is the conversion of one writing system into another. Crystal also says that, each item in the sourced language is given and equivalent item in the target language. These are greatly caused by both intralingual and interference as found in students writings. Here is an example:

They	will	come	stay
Wo	a	va	no.

As shown on the figure 9, L1 interference errors are the most in this section, if it continues without remedy to curb, it would lead to writing difficulty and loss of marks during examinations.

4.1.9.5 Errors found in learners' writing

The table below gives the summary of the main grammatical errors identified in the essays of the learners in this study. The table is drawn according to how the

errors appear. They are arranged in descending order from the highest to the lowest clearly.

Table 4.9: Summary of grammatical errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Concord - Conc	78	17.9
Adjective - Adj	70	16.0
Pronoun - Pron	56	12.8
Tense - Tens	53	12.1
Auxiliary verb - Aux	48	11.0
Word order - Wo	45	10.3
Preposition - Prep	39	9.9
Article - Art	32	7.0
Infinitive - Inf	14	3.0
Total	387	100

Table 10 shows the summary of grammatical errors found from the study with their respective frequencies and percentages. These are presented in the figure below which is also a summary of all the categories of errors taken from the learners' writings.

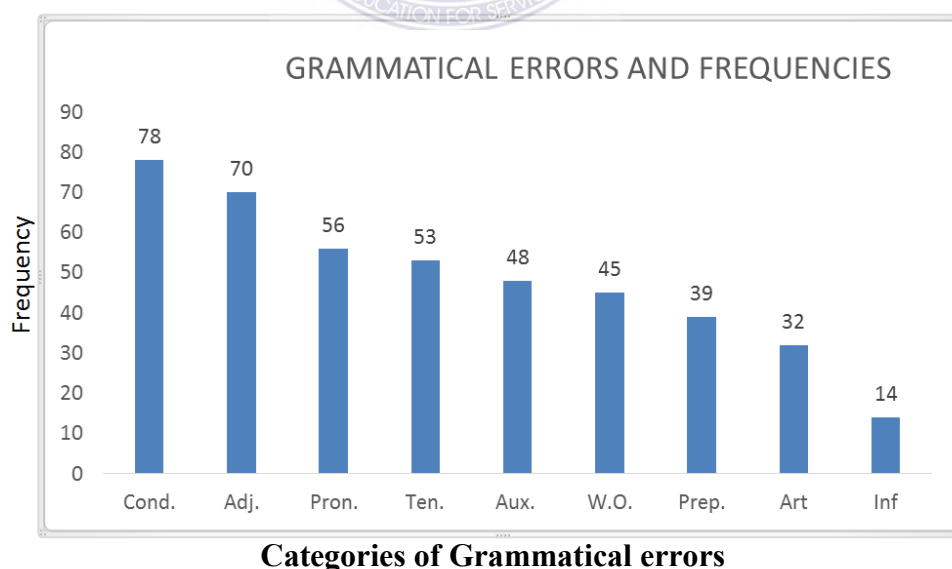


Figure 9: Summary of grammatical error and their frequencies

In all, 104 essays of 52 learners were analyzed from which a total 435 errors were identified. From the analysis, concord errors took the lead with 78 cases representing 17.9% of the overall categories and the errors were due to the plural marker and quantifiers. One can say that the learners' lack knowledge of making agreement of subject and verb. Adjective errors were second highest recording 70 errors representing 16.0%. There are rules in comparison that should be implemented whether in positive, comparative and superlative. Students lack knowledge of the rules in comparison. The third highest errors were pronouns with 56 errors representing 12.8%. From the study, students lack knowledge of the different types and the uses of pronouns. The fourth category of errors identified were tense errors with 53 errors representing 12.1%. These were due to incomplete learning of the rule and overgeneralization of the rule learnt that is intralingual and context of learning. The fifth category of errors on the table was auxiliary verb errors with 48 errors representing 11.0%. These errors were caused by lack of understanding of when to use which of the auxiliary verbs to construct clear sentences. The sixth is word order errors were 45 representing 10.3%. These errors were greatly influence by both intralingual and interference as found in the learners essays. A few of these errors were caused by context of learning. The seventh which had low errors were prepositions with 39 errors representing 9.9%. Omissions of preposition errors were the highest in this category. These errors affected clarity of learners' expressions. Learners lack the comprehension of the context of learning. The article errors were lower and the eighth error category with 32 errors representing 7.0%. From the essays, it can be seen that the cause of these errors were students lack of understanding of the context of using. The final and ninth errors type is the infinitive errors which had the least of the errors with 14 errors representing 3.0%. These were

caused by the learners' inability to internalize the concept of grammatical rules. Although these were few, if they are not checked in time it will cause communication discourse in future. Similar to this investigation is the study of Chen (2002; in Mojica, 2010); he used freshmen and sophomore Taiwanese students' through letting his participants write a self-reflective report on writing problems in English. Chen's result of the study are the following (in Mojica, 2005; Chen, 2002): (1) Word usage and English expressions, (2) confusion about the subtle differences among similar words due to insufficient cultural knowledge, limited vocabulary, (4) grammatical errors, (5) organization, (6) errors on prepositions (idioms) or slang, (7) L1 influence, and (8) independent thinking – ranging from lexical, syntactic levels to rhetorical and cultural levels.

4.2 Causes of errors

The data collected so far have made some revelation as to why students commit a whole lot of grammatical errors in their writings. The researcher identifies a number of reasons for these errors from both teachers and students. The observation the researcher made when she observed the classroom routing were that the students were more passive during grammar lesson than active. The interview also revealed to the researcher that the teacher of grammar, though highly qualified, he had to handle the subject because for some time the school did not have English teacher. He did not know how students were doing in writing and the teacher of writing could not confer with her colleague on the challenges of the subject because she does not know how to approach it in order not sound intimidating to him.

4.2.1 Errors caused by students L1 transfer

From the essays, it can be seen that almost all students made one error or the other. In some cases, the students made the same errors to confirm that the greatest

part of the errors committed were caused by context of learning that is misuse of sentence fragments, failure to make good sentences using correct grammar indicate that students lack of grammatical knowledge, and their sentence formation was not understood.

Another one was L1 interference; these errors were caused by the learners' transfer of the L1 structures to the L2. For example, learner have in their native language the 3rd person plural to be „wo“ (Ewe) that is the morpheme „s“ or „es“ used to pluralize regular common count nouns in English. Examples are books, seats, oranges etc. The learners do not understand that in the L2 there are irregular common count nouns that do not respect the regular rules. Examples are, people, sheep, furniture etc.

Peoples - Amewo x

People - Amewo ✓

Also the results indicated that errors committed were due to mother-tongue interference. The transfer came about because learners could not find the right terms to use. The learners do not have the appropriate words in the word inventory. For example, scrub was found in some essays of students of learners to mean desilt choked gutters. Chuo (2001), consents that, the use of L1 needs language teachers to elaborate abstract and complex grammar structures to learners. Mahmoud (2000) also established trails of transliteration of grammar and vocabulary in the compositions of Sudanese University Students. Owu-Ewie & Lomotey (2016), are also of the view that L1 learners transfer because their knowledge of the L1 is most readily available as a linguistic resource they use to solve L2 problems.

4.2.2 Intralingual errors

The final is intralingual errors which are characterized by itself in terms of overgeneralization, incomplete application of the rule and ignorance of rules restriction. Ellis (1997) stated that some errors are universal. Learners tend to form language rules themselves as an attempt to reduce their language burden. As a result, they, for instance, use the past tense suffix -ed for all verbs in past tense, ruling out some irregular forms of past tense verbs. This is an example of simplification and overgeneralization, a strategy used by learners to reduce their linguistic burden. Learners of this displayed the overgeneralization by using *chosed* as past participle of *choose* which should in fact be *chosen*. Learners also showed incomplete application of the rule in writing for example: *we has plan* to collect the rubbish instead of *we have planned* to collect the rubbish. learners ignorance of rule restriction were shown in words like *peoples*, *sheeps*, *goned* and *you walks* to show plural and tense respectively. In short, intralingual errors happen as a result of learners' attempts to build up hypotheses and concepts about the target language from their limited experience in the classroom or textbook. Nganbam (2016) also examined 60 native Arabic speaking students. In all, 15 categories of errors were classified to find out the cause of syntactic errors, which type of errors are more frequent areas of weaknesses and the problems that tend to occur in writing compositions.

4.2.3 Teachers factor errors

It was realized from the observation that teacher is a contributing factor to the uses errors learners commit in their essays. They create less conducive classroom environment for learners so most of the learners who do not have courage to face intimidation do not practice the use L2 during lesson.

Another teachers' factor which the interview revealed was, they had good education but not in English language. Hence, the teachers lack understanding of the curriculum content there are areas of grammar which must be handled by an expert. The interview also brought to bare the fact that the teachers in the same department of English were not in cordial relationship with each other to discuss the performance of the learners.

Teachers should equip their learners with skills of reading to improve upon their vocabulary.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the findings of results obtained and discussed the analysis of the data collected under the categories of grammatical errors and the causes of the errors. The chapter is put in three sections. The first part presented the analysis of errors committed by learners in their writings. The total number of errors found was 435 from 104 essays of 52 participants. The very top on the list, concord errors, recorded 87, adjective errors recorded 70 while pronoun recorded 56 cases, tense errors had 53, auxiliary verb errors were 48 and word order errors were 45. Prepositions errors were low with 39 cases. Also, article recorded low errors with 32 and infinitive errors were the least with 14 errors. The second part looked at causes of errors in the essays of the learners. They identified factors such as context of learning, overgeneralization, ignorance of restriction and teacher competence. Lack of motivation for learners and the learners L1 influence.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is the final one and deals with the information obtained from this study. It summarizes findings of the analysis and interpretations made in Chapter 4. The main aim of the study was to identify the grammatical errors learners commit in their essays. A qualitative research design was adopted for the analysis of the data obtained. It also summarizes suggestions for stakeholders and future research.

5.1 Summary of the study

This study tried to find grammatical errors committed in the writings of Form 2 students of Amakwakrom R/C Junior High School. This school was chosen for proximity reasons. The researcher did a qualitative study and used purposive sampling to choose her participants. In all, there were twenty (20) boys, thirty-two (32) girls and two (2) teachers. Total of fifty-four (54) participants were used in this study. In order to identify the causes of the various grammatical errors, the researcher employed the use of observation which showed that students were not even given the opportunity to practice more of the new structures so that their errors could be corrected by the teacher, interview which the fact that teachers do not have cordial relationship with one another in order to discuss the interest of the learners and essay as data collection instruments to obtain the needed information for the study. The data collected by the researcher were carefully analyzed focusing on grammatical errors. The following errors were identified: article errors, tense errors, comparative adjective errors, to-infinitive, concord, pronoun use errors, preposition use errors, auxiliary use errors, and word order errors.

In all, 104 essays of 52 learners were analyzed from which a total of 435 errors were identified representing 100%. From the analysis, concord errors had 78 cases representing 17.9% of the overall categories. One can say that the learners' lack knowledge of ensuring agreement between subject and verb. Adjective errors were second highest recording 70 representing 16.0%. There are rules in comparison that should be implemented whether in positive, comparative and superlative. However, students' lack of knowledge of the rules in comparison caused them to use them erroneously. Pronouns errors had 56 representing 12.8%. From the study, students lack knowledge of the different types and the uses of pronouns. Tense errors had 53 instances representing 12.1%. These were due to incomplete learning of the rule and overgeneralization of the rule learnt as well as the context of learning. Auxiliary verb errors had 48 instances representing 11.0%. These errors were caused by lack of understanding of when to use which of the auxiliary verbs to construct clear sentences. Word order errors accumulated 45 representing 10.3%. These errors were greatly influenced by both intralingual and interference factors as found in the learners' essays. A few of these errors were caused by the context of learning. Prepositions had low errors 39 representing 9.9%. Omission of preposition errors was low in this category. These errors affected the clarity of learners' expressions. Article errors were lower with 32 errors representing 7.0%. From the essays, it can be seen that the cause of these errors was students' lack of understanding of the context of use. The final, infinitive errors had the least of 14 instances representing 3.0%.

The causes of errors were identified as lack of knowledge of context of learning grammar, incomplete application of grammar rules by students, intralingual causes which were characterized by overgeneralization, incomplete application of rule

and ignorance of rule restriction and interlingual or L1 transfer, these errors were caused by the learners' transfer of the L1 structures to the L2.

5.2 The role of errors in the teaching learning of English

The study of learners' errors is essential for teachers to identify areas of difficulty in language learning at different levels of education. Inferences are made on the nature and depth of learners' knowledge acquired at given stages. Frequent exercises on the investigations of learners' errors and the frequency with which they occur will enable the teachers devise alternative strategies to organize remedial lessons on those errors towards minimizing them. This is necessary because errors provide adequate feedback that informs the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching techniques. They also show teachers the topics in the syllabus that have been inadequately learnt or taught that might need further attention. This will provide the information for designing a remedial programme for learners. Errors also show the teacher how language is acquired and what strategies learners use. This is evident from the interlingual and intralingual errors learners make. According to Richards (2002), errors play the role of enabling the teacher to discover, identify and analyze learners' mistakes as well as designing the appropriate methods for their mitigation. Errors are also important to the learner. To Richards, (2002) this serves as a tool through which the learner discovers the rules of the target language which could not be understood earlier.

5.3 Pedagogical implications

This part of the study presents the pedagogical implications of the findings obtained. First of all, teachers should realize that correction is essential in helping learners become more accurate in using the L2. Brown (2006) stress that there is growing evidence that error correction is overall useful and can be helpful in L2

learning. In addition, grammar lessons should be learner-centered so that learners are actively involved in the learning process. Practice they say makes man perfect, so teachers should design learning activities that encourage learners to practice the forms and structures learnt. Policy makers should also review the policy of the L1 as a medium of instruction at the Lower Primary. English should be used more at this level along with the L1 where it is necessary to help eliminate the transitional challenges learners face at the Upper levels as was the case of this study.

In-service training on the teaching of English should also be organized often for teachers since teachers sometimes move from school to the other by transfers and release. This will help equip them with some skills to help learners reduce the errors. The English language syllabus clearly spells out the grammar topics that are supposed to be taught by teachers, however, there are no suggestions about how these topics can effectively be taught. Because of this, the researcher recommends that subsequent syllabi should clearly spell out effective methodologies that can help teach these topics. Again, textbook writers should go the extra mile to design corresponding textbooks and teachers' guides to the syllabus. Finally, parents and guardians must work together with the teachers towards helping learners in their learning. Good materials like story books, learning aids like good computer programs that help must be provided by parents. This would help both teachers and learners to find the right information in order to acquire the skills they need in the English language.

5.4 Suggestions for teachers and learners to reduce errors

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are made to students. They should be encouraged to make conscious effort to use English often even during play time. They should be encouraged to read more with relevant materials made available to access and monitor themselves. The classroom

environment should be friendly and interesting to make students participate actively during grammar lessons. Students should be given the opportunity to practice more of the new structures so that their errors could be corrected by the teacher. To help students improve on their writing, their errors should be discussed with them in class. It would be good if experienced and trained as well as highly qualified teachers for English are employed to handle them in the Basic School because learners migrate from basic to high levels.

The pedagogy of L2 should be emphasized with particular reference to the identification, describing and treatment of errors during training of English language teachers. These teachers should have cordial relationship with one another in order to discuss the interest of the learners. Teachers should use few moments of the writing class to address a particular grammatical structure at every meeting with the students. Teachers are models to learners so they should be conscious of the use of L2 in and out of the classroom. The teacher's predicting skills will help learners curb their grammatical problems. Meanwhile, there is the need to have regular in-service training for English language teachers in the Junior High School for them to be abreast of modern trends in teaching the language. This will help those who are not English Language teachers but find themselves teaching it acquire some skills to help learners reduce the errors they make.

5.5 Suggestions for future research

This study assessed the causes of grammatical errors in the writings of Junior High School Students and attempted to find ways of minimizing them. The study was limited to grammatical errors. It is suggested that further studies should be conducted in some other grammatical areas, conjunctions and nouns, areas of composition writing: sentence types and paragraphing. Again, researchers may also investigate

how errors in the writing of L2 learners are corrected by teachers in the classroom. It is also suggested that other researchers on the same study may expand it to cover other schools in the district.

5.6 Conclusion

From the analysis and the discussions, it is clear that errors committed by learners can be traced to inadequate knowledge and understanding of the rules of grammar. For these reasons it is believed that grammar learning can be promoted collectively, if the students, teachers and all stakeholders of education play their individual roles appropriately. Therefore, all must join hands to help English learners improve upon their grammatical errors.



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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTION FOR TEACHERS

1. What is your Academic Qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching?
3. How long have you been in the present school?
4. Have you been teaching English for the whole time?
5. a) If „Yes“ do you think the teaching and learning of grammar has a bearing on the writing of students?
b) If „No” why do you teach English presently?
 - (i) What is your favourite subject?
 - (ii) Have you ever attend any in-service training for teachers of English?
 - (ii) Do you think more of such INSET be organized?
6. Do you do discuss errors with students after marking their exercise
7. What are some of the challenges you face in teaching of English?
8. Do you discuss with your other colleague teacher the challenges?

APPENDIX B

ESSAY QUESTION FOR TEACHERS

1. Write an essay on the advantages of being in a small school.
2. Write an article for publication in the school Magazine on how to keep our environment clean.

