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FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THE ESSAY WRITINGS OF 3RD

YEAR STUDENTS. A CASE STUDY OF WAPULI COMMUNITY DAY SENIOR HIGH

SCHOOL IN THE SABOBA DISTRICT

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of the requirements for the award of
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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Mahama Saani Gazali, declare that this dissertation apart from quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged is entirely my original work and has not been partly or whole submitted elsewhere or this university for another degree.

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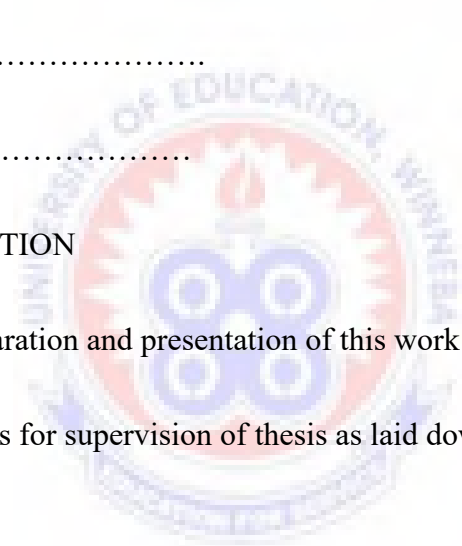**Signature**…………………………………..

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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 LOMOTEY

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DATE : …………………………………………..

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Madam Salamatu Abubakar.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, most gracious ever merciful. Your alone do we worship and you alone we ask for help.

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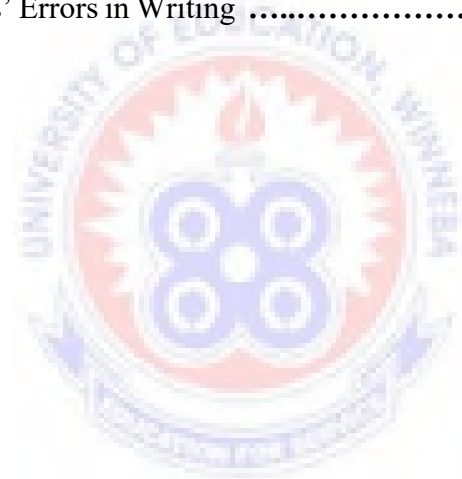
ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative study that sought to analyse the grammatical errors in the essay writings of 3rd year students of Wapuli Community Day SHS. In the Saboba District. The study sought to identify the types of grammatical errors and the causes of the errors in the writings of students of Wapuli Community Day SHS. Data gathered analysis, total of 1,930 errors were identified from the 3rd year students' essay topics. 8 error categories were identified as: spelling errors, preposition errors, verb tense form errors, punctuation errors, number errors, article errors, sentence fragment errors and concord errors. From the findings, it came to light that the causes of the learner's errors in writing were as a result of Interlingua transfer, intralingua transfer and L1 interference. And this happens due to the context of teaching and the difference in the structure of the L1 and L2 as well as lack of practice on the part of the students. The study also discussed the role of learner's errors and the pedagogical implications of the learner's errors.

Finally, the study made some suggestion and recommended that stakeholders should ensure that teachers are abreast of modern methods of teaching to guarantee effective teaching and learning of English language, to minimize the errors learners commit in their written essays.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general accounts of the present study. It includes background of the study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study as well as its limitation. Finally, delimitation and organization of the study are also discussed.

1.1 Background to the Study

History has it that early medieval England is where English Language was first spoken; however, it is now a global Lingua Franca (Wardhaugh, 2010). Several persons globally speak English since being proficient in the Language is required in most professions and occupations. Like most sub Saharan Africa countries, Ghana is blessed with many indigenous languages; however, the English language continues to play a pivotal role in the daily communications of Ghanaians. Aside the English Language being a Lingua Franca in Ghana, it is an important means of inter-ethnic communication internally and a source for communication with the international community (Afful, 2007).

In view of the linguistic imperialism in Ghana coupled with the country's colonial history, English has been adopted as Ghana's official language. As such, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the 1950s instituted a policy that the English language be taught from kindergarten to the university level. It has become the language of instruction in the teaching of many subjects right from primary four, while it is also a subject on its own. It is also compulsory for students to have a credit in the Basic Education Examination Certificate (BECE) in the English language before entering either the senior high school or the university. For this reason, it has become necessary for anyone

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aspiring to any official position or dreaming to join the formal sector in the country to learn to be able to use Standard English language. To this effect, to learn a foreign language such as English, learners need to learn its basic skills. There are two kinds of skills in English namely receptive skills and productive skills. Receptive skills are listening and reading while productive skills are speaking and writing. Those skills help learners in learning either spoken or written language. In daily life, learners are commonly considered mastering English when they can communicate in spoken language even though they mostly do not care with the grammar, but it does not mean that they do not care to improve their writing skill.

A writing activity that students always do is updating status on their Facebook or writing something on their blog. They try to express their feeling, opinion or their idea to public. This activity can be used by teachers to stimulate students to write a writing text in the classroom especially in English class. Al Saleem (2008) emphasizes that writing is an essential component of classroom activities which reinforces grammatical structures and vocabularies. In relation to this, Yeboah (2014) also asserts that a student's performance in many other subjects could be closely linked to his/her command over the English language either in writing or speech. For this reason, writing is considered to be most complex and complicated especially when it is done in the second language since the L1 interferes greatly when producing a piece of writing in the target language. In this regard, it can be stated here that the impact of the first language of learners English is heavily felt whenever they write in the English language (Chen & Huang, 2003; Collins, 2002).

More so, they find English rules very complicated because some language features such as sentence construction, grammar, vocabulary, spelling and so forth in their mother tongue are different from those of the target language. These make it difficult for them to express themselves

in a clear, correct and comprehensible manner of writing. It is in this regard that Brown (2000, p. 208) argue that "the principal barrier to the second language system is the interference of the first language system with the second language system." This is where Lado (1957), said that "the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. In this case, those elements that are similar to his language will be simple for him, and those elements that are difficult will be difficult." Likewise, when students are used to their way of thinking and concept from their native language to express their ideas in English as well will become easier. In view of this, they need to learn how to transfer their knowledge of rule/grammatical concepts of target language from oral language to written language. This difficulties in applying the rules of the language in writing cause students to make errors.

People cannot learn language without systematically committing errors first. so, errors which are made by learners contribute in understanding the process of foreign language acquisition. By seeing students' errors, the researcher tries to collect information about students' errors in writing. Corder, (1975) also observes that the study of learners' errors is part of the investigation which has contributed enormously to EA. He writes: "the study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning" (p. 125). In this respect, it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a student and may give us indications as to the learning process."

In addition, Corder posits that EA is useful in second language learning because it reveals to teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers the problem areas of students to enable them design remedial exercises as well as focus more attention on the trouble spots identified in their compositions or everyday communications expressed through writing. In composing a good

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writing, there is the need to notice some aspects. Grammar is one important aspect that should be mastered in order to make a well-structured writing. However, writing in different language is not always as easy as writing in our own language since there are some different rules in the writing systems and these differences sometimes make us commit errors.

This is why; the researcher chooses to analyze the grammatical errors in in the essay writings of Wapuli SHS final year students. Also, since one of the academic writing requirements of students is to accomplish their learning of English as a second language with an academic essay. An academic essay that has a defined structure – an introduction, a body and a conclusion. However, despite the academic essay writing opportunities offered to students, it has been observed that students' academic writing performance still remains to be deficient.

This, in the end makes SHS teachers to continue to complain about students' poor-quality essays as reflected in their submitted written outputs. However, the researcher in this study realized that the student's essays were not different from the early studies, they were also still filled with mistakes. This comes to affirm that grammatical rules are still the difficult problem faced by students in learning English as a second language. Some of the identified errors committed by the 3rd Year students of Wapuli Senior High School in their written essays include the following grammatical rules; mechanics (spelling and punctuation), tense, number, sentence fragments, concord, preposition and article errors. The students committed these errors repeatedly because they did not have the correction. In spite of all the efforts made by researchers by using EA to analyse grammatical errors which students' commit in their English essays, minimal studies have investigated the grammatical errors committed in the essays of students at the secondary level from the perspective of the students themselves. This revelation in the existing literature is an indication of the research gap that ought to be filled and this is exactly what this current study sought to do.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There have been great concerns about the falling standards of English in Ghana. Sey (1973:11) writes, "There has been an urgent feeling among educationists that there is the need for research into the problems involved in the use of English in Africa …" The study of English as a subject is intended to provide the language needs of students as they progress through all the levels of formal education.

However, it seems that the study of the language is becoming increasingly difficult for students, especially those at the second cycle. This prompted the researcher who is also a teacher to focus on the grammar aspect of the English language. Since there have been a lot of researches in Ghana but most of them have focused on the errors made by undergraduate students, it is only a few studies such as (Yankson, 1994; Edu-Boandoh 1996) who have also examined the pattern of errors in the essays of Ghanaian students in the Senior High Schools. A typical one to point out here is, Safo-Adu (2009) who examined the error pattern of students in their essays. And the purpose of his study was to draw attention to certain wrong expressions and grammatical errors, which feature prominently in the speech and written works of many students and public speakers. He complains that, in a country like Ghana where English permeates all aspects of our socio-linguistic life, the use of poor English is a serious.

This is where Khan (2005), in a similar study, also said that in learning a second/foreign language is also a gradual process, during which errors are made in all levels of learning. However, the use of Error Analysis and appropriate corrective measures can help effective teaching and learning of English language. Also, Richards and Schmidt (2002) state that in language learning, learners' errors are caused by different processes that include borrowing patterns from the mother tongue,

extending patterns from the target language, and expressing meanings using words and grammar which are already known. In this study, the researcher also identified that most of the students often find it difficult to construct simple sentences, misspell words which are mostly due to the L1 transfer, the misappropriate use of grammatical forms, challenges in the use of articles found in their class exercises and end of semester examination. Though the English language is an official language in Ghana, and teachers of English appear to be doing their best, yet each year the Chief Examiners" Reports still show a decline in the performance of candidates.

The latest Chief Examiners" reports (of 2011) contain such comments as: "the poor performance of the majority of the candidates was attributed to their inability to express themselves well in the English Language". It is obvious to state that when candidates are not able to perform well in other subjects such as Social Studies, Mathematics, the blame is laid at the door of the English Language. Since the inadequacy of the English of many candidates resulted in their poor performance in those subjects. Most students usually forget that the many parts of a sentence must work together to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively, words within sentences should be arranged in an understanding pattern, and the words should have certain relationships with one another.

The English syllabus for Senior High School underlines the importance of English language in the curriculum. The English syllabus for Senior High Schools treats grammatical rules as one of the important aspects in English language. Though these aspects are taught, yet most students are not able to apply these rules of grammar correctly, and as a result they are punished and these punishment affects their performance negatively. This deficiency in learners seem not different from students of Wapuli Community Day Senior High School who equally perform poorly in the English language examinations. This incompetence in writing English as a Second Language (ESL) can be clearly observed in examination answer scripts and class exercise books. It is worthy

to state here that one of the reasons for students' incompetence is that they are taught in a second language.

As a result of this, they usually face difficulties in learning the target language aspects such as subject-verb agreement, spellings, the use of articles, and punctuation. In order to better understand the errors that the students committed, teachers and researchers need to examine the types of errors that learners make and identify the frequency at which these errors appear in the writings of the students. In view of this, the present study focuses on analysing the grammatical errors Wapuli SHS 3 students commit in their English writings, the causes of these errors and strategies that should be adopted to enhance their performance. Since grammatical rule violations negatively affect the writing ability of students and these violations contribute to the low performance in students" English language examinations in the second cycle level.

1.3. purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to identify the grammatical errors produce by Wapuli Community Day final year SHS students in their English writings. Thus, the study also aims at examining the causes of these errors so as to suggest possible solutions that will help them to overcome the challenges in their writings. The research work would also make necessary suggestions for future research.

1.4. Objective of Study

Based on research questions above, the objectives of study can be stated as follow:

1. Identify types of grammatical errors Wapuli Community Day SHS 3 students commit in their writings.
2. Examine the causes of errors in the essays of these students.

1.5. Research Question

The study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What kind of grammatical errors do participants commit in their writing?
2. What are the causes of errors in the essays of participants?

1.6. The Significance of the Study

This study is particularly important to both teachers and students as it should provide some ideas on how they can improve upon their competence in the learning and use of English. Education has become one of the major investment's parents make. The education sector takes the largest portion (over 40%) of the national budget. More importantly, the study is coming at a time when falling standards of education in general, and English in particular, have captured the attention of education authorities. It is in this regard that the coming of this research work would find its relevance. Therefore, the study of learner's errors would be significant in three different ways.

First, to the teacher, in that they show him or her the learner's progress. Second, they provide the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired. what strategies or procedures the learner is employing? Third, they are indispensable to the learner himself. Furthermore, the study will contribute immensely to the development of pedagogic strategies. This is because it is an investigation into language learning process. which will help both the language teacher and the course designer to decide which areas of grammar needs attention and what type of attention. The textbook writers will also be aware of the areas of grammar in language learning that pose problems to learners and they will accordingly include the textbook topics that address such problems.

Additionally, the study will assist students, especially those in the senior high schools, to minimize the errors they have with the use of grammar and for that matter, improve on their writings generally. Ultimately, it is believed that if the writing skills of senior high school students improve, writing problems in our post-secondary institutions will be minimal and this will lead to a general improvement in the standard of education in Ghana.

Moreover, from pedagogical contribution, this study will provide teachers of English as a second language with the information concerning student's grammatical difficulties at different stages in their second language acquisition process so that appropriate courses could be designed and new teaching materials could be constructed for future teaching. For policy formulation, the findings would help to identify the factors that continue to influence the wrong use of grammar among SHS students. This would further help the Ministry of Education through the Ghana Education Service to come out with initiatives to address the challenges.

1.7 Limitations

Geographically, this study was limited to only the form three students of Wapuli Community Day Senior High School. It is also limited to the Saboba District Assembly in the Northern Region and its findings cannot be generalized to all Ghanaian students. The implication therefore is that the study's external validity could be affected, since external validity has to do with the extent to which a study's results can be generalized from samples to a population (Nunan, 1992). The study made use of only ten students each from the three sets of programs run by the school. Thus, General Arts classes, Home Economics and General Science classes. So, in all the six classes. Only sixty students were sampled from the year group. It is also worthy to note that all these students written essays were vetted and the errors found were counted and used for the analyses.

1.8 Delimitation

Specifically, the English language syllabus in Ghana is split between reading, grammar, and writing composition. For the purpose of this study, focus was placed on the grammar aspect of the syllabus. Although the English grammar aspect is broad, the study therefore focuses on spelling errors, article errors, preposition errors, concord errors, sentence fragment errors, punctuation errors number errors, and verb errors students commit in their English writings.

The study also looked at the causes of the errors and their implication on the teaching and learning of English language. Though grammar is taught in both JHS and SHS, this study focused on the SHS. This is also based on the fact that by the time the student transits to SHS, they would have at least been introduced to the fundamentals of grammar, hence should know the grammatical rules by now. Therefore, they could be more credible in responding to the study than those in the JHS.

1.9. Organization of the study

The rest of the study is organized as follows: Chapter 2 reviews related literature on the study. This focuses on theoretical views that are closely relevant to error analysis. It includes what constitutes an error, causes of error, the significance of errors and related studies. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology adopted for the study.

This includes, the instruments and sampling technique used for the study, as well as data analysis. The results of the study are discussed in Chapter 4. The analysis revealed that learners committed spelling, preposition, punctuation, article, tense, and sentence fragment errors. Lastly, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the study. This includes the summary of the findings, the role of errors in teaching and learning, the pedagogical implications, as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0. Introduction

This chapter contains an explanation about the concept of related theories used in this research which include: error, error analysis, the differences between error and mistake, types of errors and importance of errors in second language learning, and the causes of errors. The chapter finally would discuss the approaches to studying errors, as well as related studies on students' errors in second language acquisition.

2.1. The concept of errors

According to Ellis, (1994), errors are the deviation from the norms of the target language. It is to be remembered that a learner cannot learn language without first systematically committing errors. Therefore, making errors is an inevitable part of learning. Edge (1989) defined errors as forms that language users cannot correct by themselves even though they have been taught. James (1998, p.1) also identified a language error as an unsuccessful bit of language. He adds that language learners cannot correct their errors until they have additional knowledge on the topic. These errors occur in the course of the learner's study because they haven't acquired enough knowledge. Once they acquire additional knowledge, they will be able to correct their errors and the more errors the learners correct, the more conscious of language they will become.

Moreover, it was pointed out that error is unique to humans, and error analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language. From the

explanation above it can be concluded that error is a deviation caused by the lack of competence of the learner which happens consistently.

2.2. Errors and mistake

Language learning is a process to develop the language skills, both oral and written. In developing the skills, learners are often making mistakes and errors. Learners usually commit errors when they lack of knowledge about grammar rules, appropriate words or sentences. When they make mistakes, correct or error sentences and free utterances, it may tell about what is going on in their minds. Thus, making errors is an important aspect to get information whether it is caused by the grammatical errors or slip of the tongue either in spoken or written language. As Davis and Pearse (2002: 103) state that 'errors are integral part of language learning and not evidence of failure to learn'. Those errors should be analyzed because they give a contribution in understanding the process of language learning. From their errors, learners can get feedback which can be used to find new attempts to achieve the goal of learning. It contains information on strategies that learners use to acquire language and can play an important role in the study of foreign language. It is important to know about mistakes and errors because those terms are technically different. Edge (1989) suggests that mistakes can be divided into three broad categories: 'slips' (that is mistakes which students can correct themselves once the mistake has been pointed out to them), 'errors' (mistakes which they cannot correct themselves and which therefore need explanation), and 'attempts' (that is when a student tries to say something but does not yet know the correct way of saying it).

According to Dulay and Burt (in Brown, 1994: 205), error is considered as "goofs". An error is a deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker which reflects the learner's inter language

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competence. It is called competence error when learners make errors because they lack knowledge of the rules of the target language. They will not be able to correct the errors by themselves quickly. They need guidance to correct the errors. They may also make the same errors at the times. In conclusion, they define errors are the flawed side of learner speech or writing. It means that learners cannot learn language without systematically committing errors first.

According to Ellis (1997:17), mistakes reflects occasional lapses in performance, they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what she or he knows while errors reflect gaps in leaners knowledge that occur because learners do not know what is correct and they are still in the learning process. Mistakes refer to performance errors or nonsystematic errors which are caused by inattention while errors refer to competence.

From definitions above, it can be concluded that the mistakes are different from errors. People make mistakes both in native and second language. Mistakes are the wrong use of language because the user is not aware of the mistakes, he makes whereas he knows the correct form of its rules. Mistakes can be corrected by the user himself and it does not need help from other people,

2.3. Types of errors

Taxonomies of error refer to the classification of error according to certain criteria. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (cited in James, 1998: 48) suggest that there are four kinds of error taxonomy: the linguistic category classification, the surface structure taxonomy, the comparative taxonomy, and the communicative effect taxonomy.

2.3.1. Linguistic Category Classification

This type of taxonomy carries the specification of error in terms of linguistic categories, in terms of where the error is located in overall system of the target language based on the linguistic item which is affected by the error (Dulay *et al.* cited in James, 1998: 105). Linguistic category involves the language levels of the error, its class, its rank, and its grammatical system.

2.3.2 The Surface Structure Taxonomy

This is the second type of descriptive taxonomy first proposed by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982). Many researchers (e.g., Dulay et al., 1982; Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005; James, 1998; Kaeoluan, 2009) describe this taxonomy as being based on how learners alter surface structures of the language when they use it incorrectly. Dulay et al. (1982, as cited in Sompong, 2015) state that errors can occur because of change in surface structure in specific and systematic ways.

Based on this taxonomy, four categories were proposed to explain how sentences derivate from the correct forms because the learners change the surface structure.

Omission is indicated by the absence of certain item that must appear in sentences. This usually happens in the early stages of second language acquisition, for example *my sister very pretty* (omitted *is*). *Addition* is indicated by the presence of an „unwanted‟ item in sentences. The unwanted items do not appear in a well-formed utterance. This happens when the learners overuse certain grammatical rules of the target language, e.g *he didn't to come (*added *to*).

Misinformation is the use of wrong forms of certain morphemes or structures, for example *me don't like* (I don't like). The last, *misordering* is indicated by the incorrect placement of certain morphemes, for example *He every time come late home* (correction: *He comes late every time*).

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Errors in comparative analysis taxonomy

2.3.3 Comparative taxonomy classifies errors based on comparison between the structure of language learner errors and certain other types of construction.

The types of errors are:

a. Intralingual or developmental Errors

These kinds of errors occur during the learning process of the second language at a stage when the learners have not really acquired the knowledge. In addition, errors are also caused by the difficulty or the problem of language itself.

e.g. *I'm boring*

There is intralingual error that should be "I'm bored".

b. *Interlingual Errors*

Interlingual error is the system in the brain that language learners attempt to use the structure or the system of the prior language that exists in order to acquire second language. These errors result from the mother tongue interference.

e.g. *the man skinny.*

There is interlingual error that should be "The man is skinny".

This sentence is caused by interference of native language sentence
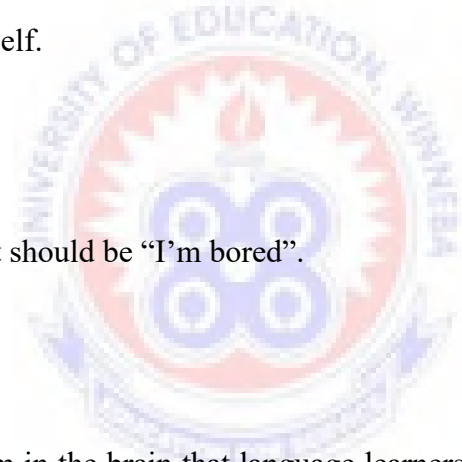
c. *Ambiguous errors*

Ambiguous errors are those that could be classified equally well as developmental or interlingual. It is caused when the errors reflect the learner's native language structure and the types found in written works/speech of children acquiring a first language.

e.g. *I fine.*

This is an ambiguous error that should be "I am fine". It may be caused by the learner's grammar knowledge or sentences which are produced by children who acquire English as the first language.

d. **Unique errors**

Since the errors are not similar to those children make during first language development, they must be unique to second language learners and since they are not interlingual, some must be unique reflections of creative construction.

2.4. Communicative Effect Taxonomy

While the surface strategy taxonomy focuses on the aspects of the errors itself, the communicative effect taxonomy deals with errors from the perspective of their effect on the listeners or readers. It focuses on the distinguishing between errors that seem to cause the miscommunication and those that do not (Dullay et. Al, 1982: 189). This taxonomy classifies errors in two types, global and local errors.

Below is the detailed description of each category used in communicative effect taxonomy.

A. Global Error

Errors that affect overall sentence organization significantly hinder communication. Because of the wide syntactic scope of such error, Burt and Kiparsky labeled this category "global". These systematic global errors include:

a. Wrong order or major constituents, e.g: *English language used many people*.

This sentence can lead the reader to have different interpretation about meaning. The sentence should be changed as "*Many people used English*"

b. Missing, wrong misplaced sentence connectors, e.g:

1. *He does not go to school, he is sick*. The sentence connector "*because*" is missing. The correct sentence is: *He does not go to school, because he is sick*.

2. *I buy a new dress because I love my old dress*. The sentence connector "*because*" is wrong. It should be "*even though*". The correct sentence is: *I buy a new dress even though I love my old dress*.

3. *Because I have to finish my work, my time is limited.* The sentence connector "because" is misplaced. The correct sentence should be *I have to finish my work, because my time is limited.*

c. Missing cues to signal obligatory exceptions to pervasive syntactic rules, e.g:

The students' proposals look the principle. In this sentence, *are* and *by* are missing in passive sentence. This sentence leads the readers to have different interpretation because it is a confusing sentence. And the correct sentence should be "*The students' proposal is looked by their principle*".

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B. Local Error

Local error that affects single element or constituents in a sentence does not usually hinder communication significantly. In other words, local error is error that does not significantly influences the structure and the meaning of the overall sentence. The categories include these following errors:

Errors in noun and verb inflection, e.g.:

a. Errors in article, e.g.:

I buy *a* apple with my sister.

(Article *an* should be used instead of *a*)

The correct sentence is:

I buy *an* apple with my sister.

b. Errors in auxiliary, e.g.:

She *have* listened that information from her teacher.

(Auxiliary *has* should be used instead of *have*)

The correct sentence is:

She *has* listened that information from her teacher.

c. Errors in the formation of quantifier, e.g.:

I have *much* friends in that school.

(The using of quantifier *much* is wrong. It should be *many* because the word

"friends" is countable)

The correct sentence is: I have *many* friends in the school.

2.5. Causes of Errors

It is quite important to understand the causes of errors in order to identify the students" problems in writing, particularly in essay writings. Brown (2000) divides the causes of errors into four categories; *Interlingual transfer, Intralingual transfer, Context of learning* and *Communication strategy*. Before learners become familiar with the systematic of second language (L2) they tend to use the linguistic system of first language. The negative effect of this situation is known as Interlingual Transfer. The second is what is called Intralingual Transfer is the negative effect of the second language itself. Learners misuse over generalization in the second language.

Next, Context of Learning refers to the situation of classroom or social situation which includes the teaching material. In the classroom context, the teacher and the text-book can lead the learners to make faulty hypothesis about the second language. It means the learners get wrong hypothesis from the teacher and textbook transfer. The last one refers to learning style. The use of some techniques in transferring messages can lead the learners to make errors in second language. Such errors are what come to be known as *communicating strategy*. Similar to Brown's theory, James (1998) also has the same explanation about the causes of errors in second language learning, but he uses different terms in classification. He classifies the causes of errors into *mother language*

influence, target language cause, *communication strategy based-errors* and *induced errors*. Norrish (1987, as cited in Emmaryana, 2010) classifies the causes of errors in the second language acquisition into three points, *carelessness, first language interference* and *translation*. The first one closely relates to the lack motivation of learners. It does not always mean that they lose the interest. Sometimes, the materials and learning strategies do not suit them. When learners try to learn the new one (second language) the old one (first language) will interfere the target language. This error denotes as first language interference. In the case of translation learners tend to translate a message or a sentence into the target language word by word. Mostly, this becomes the common causes of errors for high school students.

In other words, Richards (1974: 124) says: "The causes of errors in studying a language might be derived from the interference of the learners" mother tongue and the general characteristics of the rule of learning. The errors that are caused by the general characteristics of the rule of learning are also called the intralanguage errors. And the errors caused by the interference of the learners" mother tongue are called the interlanguage errors." Based on his explanation, it can be summed up that errors are classified into three categories. *Interference Error* denotes the results of using the elements of first language (L1) while speaking or writing the second language. For example, learners use the elements of Bahasa while speaking or writing in English. In this case, the interference errors occur because Bahasa and English have different linguistic system, for an example students say *"my age now 15 year old"* instead of "*my age is 15 years old"* or *"I am 15 years old*" *Intralingual Error* demonstrates the general characteristics of learning rules in the second language acquisition. Its origin is found within the structure of English itself and through reference to the strategy by which a second language is acquired and taught. Furthermore, Richard (1970) divides the intralingual errors into 4 subdivisions. The first is overgeneralization error;

learners create a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language such as *"he can sings"* where English allows *"he can sing"* and *"he sings"*. The second is

Ignorance of rule restrictions; learners apply rules to context where they are not applicable, such as *"he made me to go rest"* through extension of the pattern "*he asked/wanted me to go*". The third is Incomplete application of rules; learners fail to use a fully developed structure, such as *"you like to sing?"* in place of *"do you like to sing?"*. as cited in Heydari and Bagheri (2012).

In addition to the wide range of intralingual errors which have to do with faulty rules learning at various levels, there is a class of *Developmental Error* which derives from faulty comprehension of distinction in the target language. Developmental error illustrates learners attempt to build up hypotheses about the English language from their limited experience of it in the classroom or text-book. Here, sometimes due to poor gradation of teaching items. The form *was,* for example, may be interpreted as a marker of past tense and the form *is* may be understood to be a marker of the present tense. Based on this limited knowledge the student tries to create a hypothesis by writing *"one day it was happened"* and *"He is speaks French"*. One another example comes up in the use of synonym words such as *very* and *too.* These two words are different in the context of use, but from the viewpoint of a student who has limited experience, they have the same meaning (Richard, 1970; Scope, 1969). However, in this study, the researcher used brown's theory on error analysis that consist of three causes of error classification to identify students‟ errors in the writings of students' essays because the classification corresponds to the context of the data

2.6. Approaches to the study of errors

According to Latiff and Bakar (2007), they argue that there are four approaches to L1 interference in l2 learning. These are contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) which is the traditional approach,

Error Analysis (EA); the contemporary approach, Interlanguage Analysis (IA) and Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) as the modern approach. For the purpose of this study, the error analysis approach and interlanguage are discussed in this chapter.

2.6.1 Error Analysis

Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the error's learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the Target Language (TL) and that of the TL itself. Error Analysis is one of the most influential theories of second language acquisition. It is concerned with the analysis of the errors committed by L2 learners by comparing the learners' acquired norms with the target language norms and explaining the identified errors (James, 1988). For Crystal (1999, p. 108) Error Analysis in language teaching and learning is the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language. According to Hourani, (2008, p.39). EA refers to "the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance. Definition of error analysis is given by Ridha (as cited in Hassan & Sawalmeh, 2013, p. 3), defined "Error analysis as the process to observe, analyze and classify the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by learner".

Corder (1967) views errors as valuable information for three beneficiaries: for teachers, it clues them on the progress of the students; for researchers, it provides evidence as to how language is acquired or learned; for learners themselves, it gives them resources in order to learn.

Brown (2000, p. 224) states that there are two main sources of errors, namely, interlingual errors and intralingual errors. Interlingual (Interference) Errors are those errors that are traceable to first language interference. These errors are attributable to negative interlingual transfer. According to

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Kavaliauskiene (2009, p. 4), transfer of errors may occur because the learners lack the necessary information in the second language or the attentional capacity to activate the appropriate second language routine. In this study, it can be stated that transfer is of two kinds: positive and negative. The transfer may prove to be justified because the structure of the two languages is similar – this case is called 'positive transfer' or 'facilitation', or it may prove unjustified because the structure of the two languages are different – that case is called 'negative transfer' or interference' (Wilkins, 1972, p. 199).

As far as the intralingual errors are concerned, they result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer (Keshavarz, 2003, p. 62; Fang and Jiang, 2007, p. 11). Richards (1972) cites four main types of Intralingual errors, namely: (1) overgeneralization, (2) ignorance of rule restrictions, (3) incomplete application of rules, and (4) false concepts hypothesized. Later he identifies six sources of errors: (1) interference, (2) overgeneralization, (3) performance errors, (4) markers of transitional competence, (5) strategies of communication and assimilation, and (6) teacher-induced errors. Likewise, Stenson (1974) also states three main reasons for errors, namely, (1) incomplete acquisition of the target grammar, (2) exigencies of the learning/teaching situation, and (3) errors due to normal problems of language performance.

Committing errors is one of the most unavoidable things in the world. Students, in the process of learning language, profit from the errors that they make by obtaining feedback to make new attempts that successively approximate their desired objectives. Weireesh (1991) views learners' errors to be of particular importance because making errors is a device learners' use in order to learn. According to him, EA is a valuable aid to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners. He goes on to say that EA serves as a reliable feedback to design a remedial teaching method.

Candling (2001, p. 69) states that L2 learner's errors are potentially important for the understanding of the processes of Second Language Acquisition.

Olasehinde (2002) also argues that it is inevitable that learners make errors. He also suggested that errors are unavoidable and a necessary part of the learning curve. Sercombe (2000) explains that EA serves three purposes. Firstly, to find out the level of language proficiency the learner has reached. Secondly, to obtain information about common difficulties in language learning, and thirdly, to find out how people learn a language. Iamsiu explained the importance of error analysis: The investigation of errors made by second language well-known and contemporary. Error analysis is the study and analysis of the errors produced by second/foreign language learners, and both at the beginning and during the various stages of a foreign/second language teaching program can be useful. It can reveal both the success and the failure of the program, and benefits for teachers to design proper materials and appropriate teaching plans (2014, p. 12)

According to Hamza (2012), error analysis is different from error correction, and error analysis makes a scientific study of error and occurs when a group of people who share the same mother tongue are studying a second or a foreign language. Error analysis indicates all error produced that are common to that group of people. In addition, he suggested that students' errors have positive value for teachers, students and researchers; it can give the indication for the teacher of how far the learner has come and what he still must learn. Meanwhile, in the part of student error is an instrument he uses to test out his hypothesis concerning the language he learns.

Vahdatinejad (2008) maintains that error analyses can be used to determine what a learner still needs to be taught. It provides the necessary information about what is lacking in the learner's competence. He also makes a distinction between errors and lapses (simple mistakes). According

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to him, lapses are produced even by native speakers, and can be corrected by themselves. They call for on the spot correction rather than remediation, which is needed for errors.

Mitchell and Myles (as cited in Keshavarz, 2003) claims that errors, if studied, could reveal a developing system of the student's L2 language and this system is dynamic and open to changes and resetting of parameters. This view is supported by Stark's (2001, p. 19) study, who also explained that teachers need to view students' errors positively and should not regard them as the learners' failure to grasp the rules and structures but rather should view the errors as process of learning. He subscribes to the view that errors are normal and inevitable features of learning. He adds that errors are essential condition of learning. In affirmation, Owu-Ewie & Lomotey (2016) equally assert that error analysis help to reveal the types and causes of errors which could lead to an effective way of reducing errors made by L2 learners. Although error analysis has been offered as an alternative to contrastive analysis and has been supported by researchers and scholars, it also has its own inadequacies and weaknesses.

According to Brown (1986, p: 166) error analysis has some major problems, which prevent a precise analysis of learners' errors. The first one of these problems is too much attention on errors. While placing too much attention on errors, we may lose the value of positive reinforcement of free communication. Another danger according to Brown (1980) is overstress of production data. Since researchers are only interested in production data, they may ignore the aspect of comprehension in the learner's production. Thus, a grammatically correct production may be incorrect in terms of the whole context. And, the final inadequacy of error analysis, According to Schatcher (1974; cited in Brown, 1980, pp: 166:167) is the strategy of avoidance. A learner may not utilize a word, structure or discourse category, in which he does not have a native like competence, thus it may seem that there is no difficulty with these structures, words or discourse

category L2 acquisition it is necessary to take into account both what the learner is able to do and the visa-versa. As Ellis (1985) asserted that language learning is developmental and EA has failed to help us understand how learners develop knowledge of the L2 over time.

James (1998) indicates that EA does not take into consideration the strategy of avoidance in L2 learning. Schachter & Celce-Murcia (1977), identified six potential weaknesses in Error Analysis. These are the analysis of errors in isolation, the classification of identified errors, statements of error frequency and identification of points of difficulty. Others are the ascription of causes of systematic error and biases nature of sampling. In view of this, it can be inferred that EA as a model has not account for what the learner has done correctly but only interested in what the learner will not been able to do.

2.6.2. Interlanguage

As stated in the beginning of the study, errors are an inevitable part of language learning and the early stages of learning a second or foreign language are usually characterized by a large number of interlingual errors. The theory of interlanguage, which was proposed by Selinker in 1972, is based on the theory that there is a "psychological structure latent in the brain" which is activated when one attempts to learn a second language. He also notes that in a given situation, there is dissimilarity between the utterances produced by a native speaker and a second or foreign language learner. He states that this difference results from a separate language system called interlanguage. Thus, dealing with the errors in this perspective will make it easier to have a better understanding of the errors committed by the second or foreign language learners. For James (1998), interlanguage is a system which holds a half-way position between knowing and not knowing the target language. Interlanguage is synonymous with learner language, and Coder calls it *transitional*

competence. At any one point in time, the interlanguage may show forms from its earlier stage which have not disappeared completely, as well as emergent forms which are just starting to appear often alongside the forms they are to replace and which the learner is on the threshold of acquiring language of that individual alone. Selinker (1972) coined the term "interlanguage" to refer to the systematic knowledge of language which is independent of both the learner's native language and the target language. The term has come to be used with different but related meanings:

Interlanguage is neither the system of the native language nor that of the target language, but instead falls between the two. It is a system based on the best attempt of learners to provide order and structure to the linguistic stimuli surrounding them. By a gradual process of trial and error and hypothesis testing, learners slowly succeed in establishing closer and closer approximations to the system used by native speakers of the language.

Thus, the concept of "interlanguage" might better be understood if it is regarded as a continuum between the native language and the target language. At any point along the continuum, the learners' language is systematic, and any difference may be explained by differences in their learning experience (Larsen Freeman and Michael, 1991).

The Characteristics of Interlanguage

Selinker (1972) In his research paper on *Interlanguage* presented three main characteristics of interlanguage. The first one is permeability. As he stated, the second language learners' language system is permeable, in the sense that rules that constitute the learners' knowledge at any stage are not fixed, but are open to amendment. In many aspects, this is a general feature of native languages. All language systems are permeable. Interlanguage differs from other language systems only in the degree of permeability.

The second one is that interlanguage is dynamic, i.e., interlanguage is constantly changing. However, a learner's interlanguage does not jump from one stage to the next, but rather slowly revises the interim systems to adapt new hypotheses to the target language system. This takes place by introduction of a new rule, first in one context and then in another, and so on. A new rule spreads in the sense that its coverage gradually extends over a range of linguistic contexts. The process of constant revision and extension of rules is a feature of the inherent instability of interlanguage and its built-in propensity for change.

The third one is that interlanguage is systematic. In spite of the instability of interlanguage, it is possible to detect the rule-based nature of the learner's interlanguage. The learner does not select accidentally from his store of interlanguage rules, but in predictable ways.

Apart from the above-mentioned characteristics, variability is another characteristic that cannot be neglected. At any one stage in his development, the learner operates according to the system of rules he has constructed up to that point. A crucial issue is why his performance is so variable. On one occasion he uses one rule, while on another he uses a different one.

It has been generally accepted that interlanguage is variable (Dickerson, 1975; Huebner, 1979). This variability is evident both synchronically and diachronically. Each learner's interlanguage contains alternative rules for performing the same function. As it has been mentioned, on some occasions, one rule is used; on others, a different rule. Also, in spite of the striking uniformity in the developmental profile of different learners, there are variations in the overall course of development that learners follow. Interlanguage constitutes an unstable system and is permeable to invasion by new linguistic forms; its dynamic quality is reflected in tremendous interlanguage

variability and also in overlapping stages over development as one set of variable rules is revised in favour of another.

2.6.3 Nature of interlanguage

The term interlanguage introduced by American linguist Larry Selinker (1972:71), defined interlanguage as the separate linguistic system evidenced when an adult L2 learner attempted to express meanings in the language being learned. He hypothesizes that adult acquiring a L2 use "latent psychological structure". Interlanguage is a term coined by Selinker (1972), which may be generally defined as the features of languages between first language and L2. Ellis (2012:350) takes interlanguage as both the internal system that a learner constructs at a single point in time and the series of interconnected systems that characterize the learner's progress over time. According to Ellis, the study of interlanguage is a starting point to explain the nature of L2 acquisition.

According to Selinker Selinker (1972:56), there are several factors that lead to fossilisation. They are: "native language transfer, transfer-of-training, strategies of L2 learning, strategies of L2 communication, and overgeneralisation of TL linguistic material". These five essential processes of IL are involved in the latent psychological structures. interlanguage is shaped by five psycholinguistic processes which exist in this latent psychological structure are discussed below:

Native language transfer, assumed by Selinker, is the process that learners make interlingual identifications in approaching the task of learning a L2. For example, learners may perceive native language *table* and develop an interlanguage like *mesa* to express *table of contents*, *table of motion* and so on. It is the same case for interlanguage grammar, which has transfer errors resulted from

L1. A similar factor or developmental errors observed in interlanguage may involve overgeneralize rules as L2 learners acquire the target language.

Overgeneralization of target language rules is a process that the learner shows evidence of having mastered a general rule, but does not yet know all the exceptions to that rule. For example, the learner may use the past tense marker –*ed* for all verbs, regular and irregular alike: *walked*, *wanted*, *hugged*, *laughed, hitted, gived*, *hitted goed*. The overgeneralization error *hitted*, *goed* shows that the learner has mastered a target language rule, but it also shows what the learner has yet to learn.

Transfer of training occurs when the second-language learner applies rules learned from instructors or textbooks. Sometimes this learning is successful, but at other times errors may result. For instance, a lesson plan which describes the past perfect tense as the *past past* can lead the learner to erroneously use *the past perfect for the absolute distant past*, as in the isolated statement *My relatives had come from Nigeria in the 1700s*.

Strategies of Communication are used by the learner to resolve communication problems when the interlanguage systems seem unequal to the task. When in an attempt to communicate meaning, the learner feels that the needed linguistic item is not available to him or her, he or she can resort to a variety of strategies of communication in getting that meaning across. One example of this is that the learner wants to refer to an electrical cord in English and does not know the exact lexical item to use in referring to it, he or she can call it *a tube*, or *a kind of corder that we use for electric thing*. Strategies of learning refer to the learner's conscious attempts to master the target language. One such strategy of learning is learner's conscious comparison of what they produce in interlanguage with the native language and a perceived target, which set up interlingual identifications. For example, in order to remember target vocabulary.

2.6.4 Problems with interlanguage

Selinker relates the problems with this approach within five items by asking questions. He states that the first problem is that we cannot always identify which of these five processes is the observable data to be attributable to. The second problem is the difficulty in systemization of the notion fossilization; it is also difficult to predict which items in which interlingual situations will be fossilized. The third problem is characterized by the question "how does a second language learning novice become able to produce interlanguage utterances, whose norm he is attempting to produce?" The fourth problem is related to the hypothesized latent psychological structure. Selinker asks if there is any evidence for the existence of these structures. And the final problem or question is "how can we experiment with three linguistic systems, creating the same experimental conditions for each one, with one unit which is identified interlingually across the systems?"

2.7. Importance of errors in language learning

The significance of errors in learning a second language has been discussed by researchers. In his essay "The Significance of Learner's Errors", Corder (1967) claimed that these errors are useful for teachers, learners and researchers and reflect the language learner's development. Moreover, these errors may motivate learners to learn. Akhter (2011) said, "Giving feedback and correcting errors not only let learners know how well they have performed but also help to increase motivation and build a supportive classroom environment" (p. 2).

 Hourani (2008), indicated that errors are significant in three different ways. First to the teachers, in that they tell them how far toward the goal the learners have advanced and consequently, what remains for them to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher's evidence of how language is

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learnt or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learners themselves, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learners use in order to learn. Research has provided empirical evidence pointing to emphasis on learners' errors as an effective means of improving grammatical accuracy (Hourani, 2008 & Hamzah, 2012). Indeed, Jamil and Kamran (2016) states that "knowing more about how grammar works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused". There is a need for students to recognize the significance of errors which occur in their writing, to fully grasp and understand the nature of the errors made. This requires English language teachers to be better equipped, more sensitive and aware of the difficulty's students face with regard to grammar. In other words, it is a way the learners have for testing their hypotheses about the nature of the language they are learning.

2.8. Related Studies

The grammatical error studies discussed in this section involves both intralingual and interlingual. Khodabandeh (2007) defined error analysis as a kind of linguistic analysis consisting comparison and focusing on errors that made by learners and believed that error analysis identifies, classifies and interprets the language learners' mistakes and associates with hypotheses and theories of language learning. The primary causes of errors that was reviewed by Khodabandeh (2007, p. 8) are Interlingual/transfer errors that are attributed to the interference of the mother language when acts as a negative transfer on the performance of the target language learner. And intralingual/ developmental errors that are attributed to the language being learned based on partial exposure to the target language. In this case, the learner tries to correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language. AbiSamra (2003) analyzed errors of Arabic speakers' English writing", he collected samples of written work from 10 students in grade 9. He classified the writing errors into

five categories, namely, grammatical; syntactic; lexical; semantic and substance; and discourse errors. The results revealed that one third of the students' errors were transfer errors from the native language, and the highest numbers of errors were in the categories of semantics and vocabulary. The rest of the errors (64.1%) were errors of over-application of the target language, the highest numbers of errors being found in substance (mainly spelling), syntax and grammar.

Sattari, et al. (2012) analyzed grammatical errors in Persian English learners' compositions and exam papers. And their work showed that a great number of errors made by the learners at elementary levels could be traced due to the influence of their mother tongue. Rahmani and Bagherzadeh Kasmani in their study of errors made by Persian and Kurdish speaking learners whose major was English Translation also found that interference from learners' mother tongue was the main cause of errors. Moreover, Sabzalipour in the same year conducted an analysis on advanced EFL students' errors in their translation from Persian to English and showed that major errors were intralingual.

Kafipour and Khojasteh were among other researchers in 2012 who analyzed students' errors in their writings and found out that the majority of the errors were developmental while interlingual errors constituted the lowest number of errors. Beheshti (2015) analyzed that most errors made by the learners are caused by two main factors: inter-lingual (interfering) and intra-lingual (developmental) in her study at upper-intermediate and advanced levels, most of Iranian EFL learners made developmental errors, whereas at the lower level, most of the errors were made due to interference from Persian which is the result of differences in the patterns dissimilar in these two languages. It was found that the most problematic area was the prepositions.

Another study worthy of reviewing in this research is the work of Bataineh (2005). In this study, it aims was to identify the kinds of errors committed by Jordanian first, second, third, and fourth year minority EFL students, identified nine types of errors in relation to the use of the indefinite articles. The nine types of errors identified were deletion of the indefinite article, writing *a* as part of the noun/adjective following it, substitution of the indefinite for the definite article, and substitution of the definite for the indefinite article. Others were substitution of *a* for *an*, use of the indefinite article with unmarked plurals, use of the indefinite article with marked plurals, use of the indefinite article with uncountable nouns, and use of the indefinite article with adjectives.

In addition, Ridha (2012) examined English writing samples of 80 EFL college students and then categorized the errors according to the following taxonomy: grammatical, lexical/ semantic, mechanics, and word order types of errors. The results showed that most of the students' errors can be due to L1 transfer. Furthermore, she found that most of the learners rely on their mother tongue in expressing their ideas. She added that although the rating processes showed that the participants' essays included different types of errors, the grammatical errors and the mechanical errors were the most serious and frequent ones.

Likewise, Hamza (2012) conducted a study about the errors committed by Jordanian secondary male students in their learning of English passive constructions. The sample was 30 first, 30 second and 30 third a academic secondary male students. It was selected randomly from five academic secondary government schools in the city of Irbid. The hypothesis of the study was that would be statistically significant differences among the three levels of students with respect to the simple past, simple present, past prefect future and the models of passive voice. The analysis of the study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences among the three levels of students with respect to the errors made in pas perfect, present perfect, simple future and the models of

passive voice. The researcher insisted that the errors made by the three levels of students to the following possible sources: First, mother tongue interference, Second, performance, third, ignorance of the grammatical rules of the target language and fourth overgeneralization and global and level errors.

Jamil (2016), equally analyze common errors in English composition at postgraduate level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The sample of the study consisted from 243 male and female students selected from 8 classes. The variables of the study were sex and grade. The results of the study showed that the predominant errors among male students were tense, auxiliary verbs and prepositions while the leas predominant were pronouns and concord. The most predominant error type for females was tense, article and prepositions while the least predominant were subject verb agreement and concord. The researcher attributed various syntactic errors to: mother tongue interference, overgeneralization and ignorance of rules of usage. Al-bakri, (1998) analyzed spelling mistakes committed by English major at Yarmouk University. The study aimed at: (a)-investigating and analyzing the misspelling of 700 common words observed in the writings of the third - year Jordanian students at Yarmouk University. (b)-identifying the sources of the spelling errors made by the same students and (c)finding out if the spelling errors were different from male to female students. The sample of the study consisted of 200 students. 80 male students and 120 female students in the academic year 1996/1997.The researcher raised the questions: how widespread are spelling errors?, is error concentrated in particular categories?, do advanced learners differ markedly as to the distribution of their errors over various categories?, are there significant differences between male and female students in spelling errors?, are there words that are especially difficult to learn? In this study, three processes of data analyzing were undertaken: (a)-identification of errors, (b)- categorization and (c)-explanation of these errors. The results of

the study showed that: spelling errors are widely spread among advanced learners of English, error is highly concentrated in specific categories including substitution, inversion, omission and insertion, the advanced learners differ markedly as to the distribution of their error over various categories, there are significant differences between male and female students in spelling errors.

Cheng Feng, (2000) wrote a paper describing a new- component called writing error analysis model (WEAM) in the coca system for instructing composition of writing in Japanese as a foreign language. He explained that it can be used for: (a)- analyzing learners' writing error in certain types of morphological error and (b)- selecting the appropriate essays for learners' revising exercises.

Chanquoy (2001) conducted a research on "How to make it easier for children to revise their writing" to examine if a delay between writing and revising could improve the frequency and the nature of revisions. In two out of three writing sessions, the revising period was delayed to lighten the cognitive load associated with the revising process. Sixty children from 3rd to 5th grades participated in the study. In the study, four types of errors have been distinguished: (1)-Spelling errors that concerned errors in words. (2)-Grammar errors that concerned gender and number, agreement of nouns, verbs and adjectives. (3)-Script errors that were errors of writing. (4)-Punctuation errors, that consisted in a lock or error of capital letters or of any punctuation make in the text. The results showed that 3rd grader produces shorter texts, containing more errors, but revised more than 4th and 5th grader. In 3rd grader, text and grammatical errors were the most frequent type of formal error Spelling, script errors had similar percentages and punctuation errors were the rarest type of error. Grammar errors were the most common type in 4th graders. It is also noteworthy to mention Keshavarz's study in (1994). He classified errors in two main categories; the first category as syntactical morphological errors include wrong use of prepositions, articles,

plural morphemes, qualifier and intensifier, and the use of typical Persian construction in English. The second category as Lexical-semantic errors includes cross association and language switch.

The last previous study included in this study was by Puspitasari (2013). this was entitled "Grammatical Errors made by the Second Semester Students in Writing II Subject in the English Education Department of Yogyakarta State University in the Academic Year of 2012/2013". This study was in an attempt to sum up the common morphological error and syntactical errors based on Dulay's theory that second semester students committed. It was realised that in morphological errors, there were 27 items of errors, while in the syntax 165 items of errors was identified. This showed that the occurrence of syntactical errors was higher than the morphological error. By the end of the study, she found two main causes of students' errors. The causes were the influence of mother tongue and the lack of grammatical understanding of target language. The differences between this study and the previous studies above are in the subjects of study. The subjects of the previous studies seemed to focus on junior high school students and university students. The last study for instance focuses on the students in university, especially in second semester. Therefore, it is totally different from this study because this study takes to look at Senior High School semester students, who are in their 3rd year and have passed their first, second year examinations and was promoted to 3rd year class. Indeed, this study aims to identify the grammatical errors produce by Wapuli Community Day 3rd year students in their English essay writings. In conclusion, the researcher found that this review of related literature is of great value and important to this study.

2.9. Conclusion

This chapter touched on the theoretical frameworks to the research. The concept of error and the distinction between error and mistake, it also unfolds the importance of errors in second language

learning, the causes of errors as well as their categories. The chapter ended with a discussion on the approaches to studying error analysis which implies error analysis, interlanguage as well as related studies on errors in second language acquisition.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the procedure on how the researcher led the research. This will consist of the research design, population and sample, subject of the study, data collection, and data analysis. It also presents the procedures used in the collection of the data. Ethical considerations with respect to the research would be covered, as well as the reliability and validity of the research instruments.

3.1 Research Design

This research will make use of qualitative research design because the analysis will be purely descriptive in nature. Though there will be instances whereby the study will make use of some frequency counts to rate errors that will be identified in the student's essays, it is an undeniable fact that this research will be skewed towards the descriptive approach. This study will adopt the qualitative research design because the qualitative research design typically makes use of in-depth and verbal description in place of numerical data. That is, the qualitative research design prioritizes an in-depth analysis, description and interpretation of verbal behaviour as against predominant use of numerical data (Afful &Tekpetey, 2011). It is a case study of Year 3 students of Wapuli Community Day Senior High School. It is designed in a way to acquire information from two or more people. A qualitative research design is employed in the study because it is the type that is flexible as far as sampling technique is concerned. For Kader Parahoo (1997, p. 142) research design is "a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed research

data". Similarly, Research design as Owu-Ewie and Lomotey (2016), argue provides the most accurate and valid feedback in response to research questions. The research design is intended to provide an appropriate framework for the study. This means research design is a structure to plan and execute a particular research. This is the crucial part of the research as it includes all the four important considerations: the strategy, the conceptual framework, the identification of whom and what to study on, and the tools and procedures to be used for collecting and analysing data. In this study, the researcher used qualitative research method. This method was developed to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomena: observe feelings, thoughts, behaviours and the belief of the mass society. Examples of qualitative methods are action research, case study research and grounded theory. Qualitative data sources include observation and participation observation (fieldwork), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions. According to Catherine (1999: 2-3), qualitative research was an approach to the study of social phenomena; had a various genre which was naturalistic and interpretative, and they drew on multiple methods of inquiry. Louis (2007: 168) also explained that there were some purposes in qualitative research, they were describing and reporting the creation of key concepts, theory generation and testing. Then, Sugiyono (2008: 8) summed up that qualitative research was natural. This meant the research was taken from natural description without manipulating the condition. The process of taken data also called as "taking of the data naturally". This research also could be called as descriptive qualitative research. As Arikunto (2007: 234) explained that descriptive research had no hypothesis, but only described some variable and condition naturally. So, this research had a purpose to analyse the grammatical errors of Wapuli Community Day SHS Three First-Semester Students' essay writing. In this literature the qualitative case study approach was used. "a case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a

bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio visual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes" Creswell (2013, p. 97;).

3.2 Population and Sampling

population can be understood as the targeted community or group of people which is involved or selected by the researcher for his study. A population is a group of individuals that have something in common which is of interest to the researcher, (Best & Kahn 2006). Creswell (2013), he argue that population refers to the group of interest to the researcher; that is, the group to which one would like the results of the study to be generalized. The school has a population of about 723 students. The researcher chose the 3rd year class because they have the highest population in the school and would form a good sample to determine the generalizability of results of the study. The target population for the study is the 3rd year students of Wapuli Community Day SHS in the 2019/2020 academic year. The 3rd year students were divided into three programmes run by the school. And these programmes are further subdivided into the following classes; General Arts class A - D, General Science A and Home Economics A and B. In this research, the researcher found that almost all the students in the classes made some errors. One of the factors that pushes them to commit such errors was because they were the senior classes, they could not manage their time to study and work. So, the researcher randomly sampled sixty of the students to take part in the essay writing. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study and its importance. All students were informed that their names would be kept anonymous in order to help them answer the questions freely without anxiety.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

In this study, the researcher employed the purposive sampling method for the selection of the participants. Parahoo (1997) referred to purposive sampling as a method of sampling where the researcher deliberately chooses who to include in the study based on their ability to provide the necessary data. Purposive sampling refers to intentionally chosen sample according to the needs of the study. Similarly, Owu-Ewie (2012 p.31). assert that purposive sampling is a sampling method in which elements are chosen based on purpose of the study. The sample is selected because they possess the information the researcher needs. This is done with the purpose in mind. Purpose sampling may involve studying the entire population of some limited group or a subset of a population. It can also be referred to as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study. The sample size for the research consists of 60 students from form three classes which involves 14 girls and 46 boys. The researcher selected these classes because they are the classes he teaches and it involves students of different intellectual abilities and therefore serves as a better representative of the students. The target population was 60 students out of a total of 335 students.

3.4 Source of Data

Creswell (2013) argue that all research instruments involve data collection and are designed to answer research questions. In this regard, the data for the present study was collected from the written essays of 60 students. The students were given 3 different questions on specific topics to choose one and answer. Once a topic was chosen, the students were required to write and generate the ideas to build an appropriate paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting sentences and a concluding sentence. Afterwards, the data were collected in order to fulfil the data analysis

purposes. This study made use of students written essays, forming the basic source of data to answer the research questions.

3.5 Instruments for Data Collection

Data collection is the process by which the researcher collects information needed to answer the research questions. Data collection allows researchers to collect information that they want to collect about their study. (Karim Abawi, 2013). In this study, the method of data collection applied the documentary method by using the written assessments of the students. In order to find answers to the research questions, written essays of the 60 participants were examined. This research was constructed on the grammatical errors found in the written essays of the learners. The design was chosen to provide a clear framework for collecting, analyzing, discussing, and interpreting data to address the research goals (Creswell and Clark, 2011). three essay questions were set for the students as part of their end of first semester examination questions. The expected length of each one of the essays was to be 450 words in 60 minutes. The completed essays were collected and marked using the marking scheme. This enabled the researcher to collect the required information without any biasness. The researcher used document types of instruments. Therefore, the Essays written by the sixty students were collected and analyzed. Since the study is on error analysis, students' state of mentality and thoughts were taken into consideration on how it affected them while writing the essays. This could help teachers to understand their students need better and structure their lesson plan accordingly to match the target of delivering the English language in terms of the students acquiring it effectively. The main objective of this study was to analyse students writing errors, hence the use of written essays as the major instrument of the study. The students were given writing test in the form of open essay questions. The purpose of the essay was to identify the types of errors students commit and classify them accordingly. The researcher

scored the written essays per the West African Examination Council marking scheme. Using content analysis approach as an evaluative guide.

3.6 Data Analysis

The aim of analysing the collected data was geared towards analysing grammatical errors in the writings of students. After collecting the data through different instruments, the researcher used the following procedures to analyze the collected data. The data which was gathered through document analysis and observation were analyzed using qualitative data analyzing method. The data was then analyzed using error analysis technique. Therefore, the following four steps of Huang (2002). were taken to analyse the data. Data collection, Identification of errors, Classification of errors into types, and a statement of error frequency. The written essays were collected from the 60 students who were sample for the study. The written scripts of the sample students were then evaluated. The data obtained from the students" work was recorded in descriptive terms using a checklist. These errors were classified into eight types of errors: concord, verb tense, number, preposition, punctuation, spelling, sentence fragments, and article errors. After the identification, the frequency of each kind of error was calculated and the results were displayed in the form of a table to present the number of errors and percentage. The errors were then discussed in detail with examples of each type. The written essays were read, marked and analysed. In line 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.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

According to Bowen (2009) he argues that ethical issues in research, concerns personal disclosure, authenticity, and credibility of a research report by demonstrating a high level of objectivity and sensitivity in the protection of research participants. To ensure that ethical issues were adhered to in the study, the researchers first had discussions with the headmasters of the selected schools. This was followed with consent letter to head of the institution to officially ask for permission to use the school for the study. After consent has been given, the researcher went and met the English language teachers. Where he explained the purpose of the research to them. After they had asked a few questions for clarification, they agreed to assist in the research work. The teachers agreed to supervise the writing of the essays by the students as school end of semester examination. This arrangement was done because the researchers did not want to disturb structures in the school and wanted the students to write the essays under a relaxed environment. Lastly, the researcher met the students and explained to them what he wanted them to do. After the essays were written, the researchers purposefully selected the sample size needed. The name of every student was concealed to ensure confidentiality; the researchers used code numbers for the individual participants.

3.8 Validity

Validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Parahoo et. Al 1997). In the same vein, MacMillan and Schumacher (2001:407), posit that validity is the degree to which the interpretations and concepts have mutual meanings between the participants and the researcher. Similarly, Silverman (2004:285), said that validity is the degree to which the findings of the research are independent of accidental circumstances. In view of this, we can argue

that validity is closely related to assuring the quality of field notes and guaranteeing the public access to the process of the publication of the research results. One benefit of validity as a process is the possibility of positively harnessing the tension between creativity and rigor by influencing the rhythm, the internal and external dialog, and the intuitions of pushing the research forward because the processual approach does not operate as a fixed methodological rule. In this way, there are no mechanical or messianic elements to fulfill the stage of validity, but there are actions, observations, reflections, and sometimes even withdrawing from the field to be able to start the examination again. Validity ceases to be a product that is verified only at the end using numerical tests and begins to serve as a learning instrument for the researcher himself. With this, the critical and intuitive reflection establishes an essential personal strategy (Wainwright, 1997). From the discussion above, it can be inferred that the findings of the study were valid, this is because the researcher himself was actively involved right from the collection of the data as well as the analysis of the research findings. This to a large extent improved on the accuracy of the research work. This equally gives the right picture of the entire results in that the researcher stands to interprets the results of all the subjects with their difficult levels in the study. So, in this study, it can be stated that the research instrument used brought to bear the valid responses from the research subjects.

3.9 Reliability

Reliability, according to Joppe (2001:1) is the extent to which results are consistent over time, and are an accurate representation of the total population under study. Also, Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001), argue that reliability is therefore the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure. Similarly, reliability in a research study assesses the consistency of results over time. Reliability contains a particular embedded notion of stability of the results found, which means that they will be repeatable over time (Golafshani, 2003). In this

case, If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the instrument is considered to be reliable. On this note, the researcher gave the participants the opportunity to write on the same essay topics within a period of two weeks. This was to ensure consistency of results. So, in this study, it can be stated that reliability is the consistency with which a research procedure will evaluate a phenomenon in the same way over several attempts. In this regard, the findings of this study are seen to be reliable. Here, the researcher is of the view that if other researchers employed the same research instrument in their data collection, and with the same prevailing conditions would yield the same results when administered. This could be possible since the difficulty level of students cannot just be change over time. As a result of this, the researcher again sought for an assistance from a colleague who is an examiner to vet the mark scripts of the students, and that brought about the identified grammatical errors in this study.
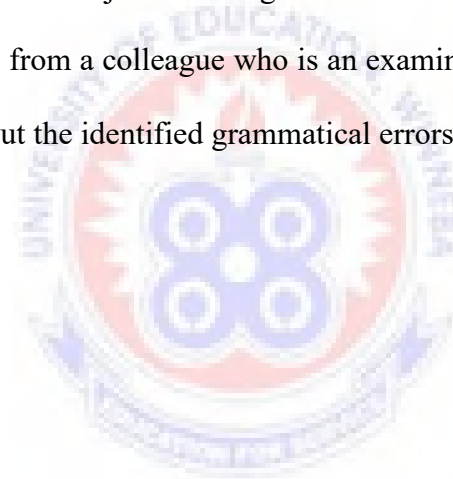
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data and discusses the results of the study, which focused on the analysis of grammatical errors in the writings of Wapuli Senior High School 3rd year students in the Saboba District. It analyses errors found in the written essays of the students. This chapter is further divided into two main sections. The first section presents an analysis of grammatical errors committed by students in their writing. The results showed that the major grammatical errors were mainly in the following categories; verb tenses, prepositions, articles, punctuation errors, spelling errors, concord and sentence fragment. The second section focuses on the causes of the errors based on the findings. From the study, the researcher found out that several factors were seen to be the causes of the errors in the students' writings. On number, the analysis showed that learners could not differentiate between proper and improper nouns and this was due to incomplete learning of rules. On punctuation errors, punctuation marks were wrongly used. This could be attributed to ignorance of the rule restrictions, incomplete learning of rules as well as L1 interference. Spelling errors were due to incomplete learning of rules which led learners to add incorrect elements, omitted needed elements and in other cases substituted letters in words. Verb tense were also spotted and these errors occurred as a result of over- generalization of rules where learners used verbs wrongly leading to distortion of the meaning of their sentence constructions. Also, on article errors, learners used articles wrongly and, in some cases, where articles were needed, they were omitted. And these are said to be as a result of rules. Finally, learners omitted words such as prepositions and making their utterances incomplete. These are also attributed to

mother tongue interference. The analysed data have been represented in simple percentages and bar chart. These are further discussed with examples in their various sections.

4.1 Categorization of students' Writing Errors

The researcher after collecting and analysing the data, identify different types of errors in the written essays of students. And based on this, the researcher went on to group the errors into mechanics (spelling and punctuation), verb tense, number, sentence fragments, concord, preposition and article errors. The individual error types are discussed in the sections below. The errors identified in students' essays were counted and rated in percentages in relation to their frequency.

4.1.1 Punctuation Errors

According to Grenville (2001:210) Punctuation is the use of special marks that you add to writing to separate phrases and sentences, to show that something is a question. Punctuation is not something one impose upon a sentence after one has written it out. For instance, Commas, semicolons, and the other marks are an intimate part of grammar and style. To write well, you must punctuate well; but to punctuate well, one must also write well. Punctuation marks used in punctuation are: full stops/periods, commas, semicolon, question mark, apostrophe, capitalization, etc. The analysis showed that 270 errors were committed with respect to punctuation. This involved wrong use of comma and wrong use of full stop. These are further discussed below.

4.1.1.1 Wrong use of comma

The comma as one of the important punctuation marks is used to show a separation of ideas or elements within a sentence. This all-important punctuation mark was wrongly used in place of

either a full stop or a semi – colon and sometimes not use at all in the identified data. From the data, the subjects committed about 182 errors. And some of these are shown below.

1. The chair. I wish to first and foremost explain the key words of the motion.

2. Chemicals which are dumped as refuse are not good for people to inhale into their respiratory system,

3. sir. as you know…

4. in conclusion. the reason why the environment should be protected.

5. People should make sure that, the environment is protected.

6. yours ever.

4.1.1.2 wrong use of full stop

The data revealed that the subjects could not use the full stop appropriately. They rather went on using the other punctuation marks in place of the full stop. The researcher identified about 88 errors of this from the data. Some of these are presented below.

- I am very happy to write you this letter,

- Dumping of refuse in the environment could lead to the spread of diseases,

- Participative in inter-school sports can help one in future,

- these can raise the image of the school in the country,

Table 4.1.1 shows the sub-categorization of punctuation errors made by the learners.

Table 4 .1.1 Summary of Punctuation Errors

Type of punctuation error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of comma	182	67.4
Omission of full stop	88	32.6
Total	**270**	**100**

Punctuation Errors
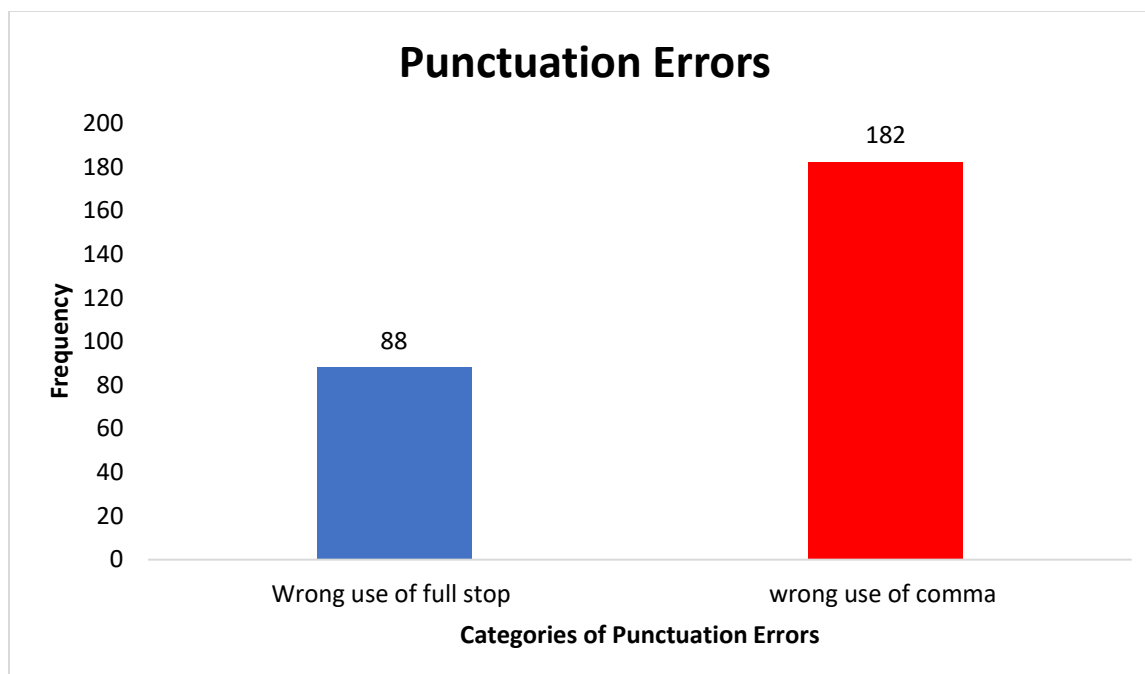
Figure 1. Summary of Punctuation Errors

Table 4.1.1 represents the sub categorization of the punctuation errors discussed in this section. From Figure 4.1.1, it is evident that punctuation errors due to wrong use of comma was the highest recorded in this category with a total of 182 occurrences representing 67.4% of the total number while wrong use of full stop recorded the lowest with a total of 88 occurrence representing 32.6% of the total errors found in the data. In a related study, Williams (2008) observes that without terminal punctuation marks, ideas and sentences might be very difficult to be understood. Correct punctuation enhances readers' understanding. For Robinson (2002), rules are very important, but the rules only are inadequate. Students need to know the functions of the rules, so that they are not easily forgotten. These findings revealed that students really have difficulties in the use of punctuation as seen in their written essays.

4.1.2 Spelling

Spelling is the art of forming words from letters. this has to do with the process of writing words by using the letters which are conventionally accepted for their formation. In writing, spelling is very essential because a wrongly spelt word may change the meaning of the message a writer intends to convey. The spelling errors that people make can be divided into two types; typographic errors and cognitive errors. The former includes errors such as letter insertions, letter omissions, letter substitutions and transpositions, whereas the latter stems from phonetic similarities such as writing "acedemy" instead of academy (Yanyan, 2015, p. 1629). Letter of addition, letter omissions and letter substitution, will be discussed in more detail bellow.

4.1.2.1 Spelling errors due to addition of letters

This category has to do with the inappropriate addition of letters to words which resulted in the words being misspelt. For third-year students, in most cases the <e> was inserted at the end of a word or kept after using the -ing ending, such as in "believeing", and in very few cases it was doubled where the representing phoneme was /i:/, as in "theese". The doubling of <e> was more common for the first-year students, as well as the insertion of <e> at the end of words. Here, the analysis revealed that learners added extra letters that were not required. This can be seen in the following sentences:

am very **glade** (**glad**)

The sports and games **committeed** (**committee)**

Truely, (**Truly)** this year's inter-school sports and games was plan and **healed** (**held)** in Dagbon state technical school and

peoples who do not want to participate in clean-up exercises should be caution. (**people)**

52

As you **known** in Ghana (**know)**

The analysis suggests that the learners' inability to read more often limits them as to the number of words they come across and this affects their spelling.

4.1.2.2 Spelling errors due to omission of letters

Letter omissions are spelling errors where one letter in a word is not spelled out. According to Cook (1997), the most common letter omitted by L2 users is <n> when it is used within consonant clusters, such as with the misspelling "desigs" (p. 483). Other common errors include the omission of one consonant in a pair of consonants, such as the omission of <c> from the consonant pairs <cq> in misspellings like "acquisition", or the <h> from <ch> or <gh> in misspellings such as "scolarship" or "thougt". Another common omission by L2 users is the silent word-final <e>, in misspellings such as "morphem" and "softwar", as well as when it precedes <ly> in "unfortunatly" or "completly" (Cook, 1997, pp. 483-484). In this category, the learners spelt words omitting some of the letters that make up the words. Examples are found in the following sentences:

1. I^ will be very interesting (**it)**

2. To avoid **futur^** occurrences **(future).**

3. Can cause **diseas^** outbreak (**Disease)**

4. In the refuse and later **ha^ch** (**hatch)**

5. In the environment **beca^se (because)**

6. The committee needs to **provid^** (**provide)**

7. The last but not the **l^ast** not the **(least)**

8. The **refree** would just whistle (**referee)**

From examples (1) to (8), it is seen that some letters were omitted from certain words which led to those words being misspelt. This can be attributed to the fact that the learners spelt words as they hear them being pronounced and not necessarily the way they are spelt.

4.1.2.3 Wrong capitalization

Capital is a letter of the alphabet in the form and larger size that is used at the beginning of sentences and names print in capitals. Capitalization is the use of capital letters. Using capital letter for the first letter of a word has a specific meaning for most readers. Capitalization can be confusing unless it is done correctly, so use capital letters only when you are doing so. Here are some rules for capitalization. a) Capitalize proper names of people (including titles and honorifics), ethnic groups, places, countries and states, holidays, institutions, and religions. b) Capitalize the first word in a sentence or a quoted word, phrase, or sentence of dialogue. Do not capitalize the first word of an indirect quote in paraphrase. c) Do not capitalize words to emphasize them in academic writing. The correct use of capitalization is a basic requirement for every written sentence. The uppercase letters are used to begin sentences and proper nouns such as names of *persons, places or towns* etc. The analysis showed that 104 errors were made on capitalization. Some of these are shown below.

1. Firstly, **During** inter - school sports and games. (**during)**

2. Finally, **The** provision of environmental protection officers (the)

3. When you drink water or use it for cooking, **It** may cause diseases in our body. (**it)**

4. The ways in which the environment can be protected are **Avoid (avoid)** cutting down of trees, **Over-grazing (overgrazing)** by animals should be stopped and **Avoidance (avoidance)** of indiscriminate dumping of refuse.

5. When the environment is protected and there are no **Stagnant** water around (**stagnant)**

6. These are **Some (some)** of the reasons why I think the environment **Should (should)** be protected

4.1.2.4 Spelling due to substitution of letters

substitution of letters is one of the most common errors that both L1 and L2 users make. According to Cook (1997), these errors are divided into either substitutions of single letters, or as grapheme substitutions of multiple related changes, for example writing "thort" instead of thought (p. 479). Cook (1997) argues that the most common vowel substitutions occur with the letters <a>, <e>, and <i>, for example, <a> may be replaced by <e> and <i> resulting in "persueded" and "imaginitive", <e> can be replaced by <a> and <i> resulting in "machinary" and "convinient", and <i> can be replaced by <a> and <e> resulting in "languistics" and "definitely" (p. 481). One of the reasons why these vowel substitutions are so common among L2 users of English is because nearly half of them can be pronounced as schwa /ə/ (Cook, 1996, p. 481).

Consonant substitutions are more common for L2 users than L1 users, and the most common errors involve the consonants <s>, <c>, <z> and <t>, resulting in misspellings such as "immence", "influencial" or "amasing" (Cook, 1997, p. 482). The analysis revealed that spelling errors under this category occurred when certain letters were replaced by other similar ones. Examples of sentences to illustrate this are as follows:

1. It was too **rampered** during the sports and games competition (**rampant**)

2. There were to lot of **emerjency** cases. (**emergency**)

3. The chair, first and **famouse** (**foremost**)

4. **Aslo**, the chair, the modern society **(Also)**

5. Whereby in the **odlen** days (**Olden**)

6. Puberty rite, trokosi system **juts** to mention but a few (**Just**)

7. Raise the **emage** of the same (**image)**

Here, the analysis revealed that the substitution is due to the fact that learners write the words just as they pronounce them or hear them being pronounced.

A summary of the spelling errors found in the data are presented in Table 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.2 Summary of Spelling Errors

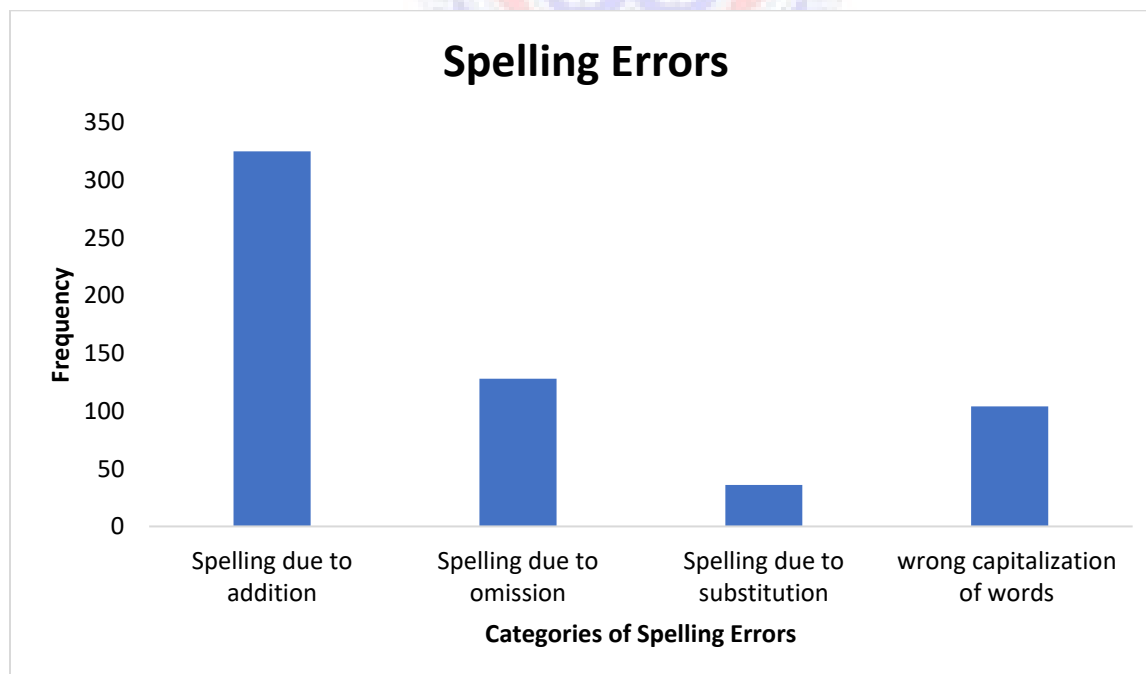| Type of spelling errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Spelling errors on addition	325	45.3
Spelling errors on omission	128	17.8
Spelling errors on capitalization	104	14.5
Spelling errors on substitution	161	24.4
Total	**724**	**100**

Figure 2. Summary of Spelling Errors

Table 4.1.2 represents the categories of spelling errors found in the study. The information in Table 4.1.2 is illustrated in Figure 4.1.2. this reveals that spelling errors due to addition recorded the highest in this category with 325 occurrences representing 45.3% of the total number. Spelling errors due to omission recorded 118 instances representing 17.8%. The next spelling error under this category was spelling errors due to transposition with an occurrence of 161 representing 22.4%. and the last was the use of wrong capitalization with 104 occurrences representing 14.5% of the total number of errors found in the data. This makes comprehension virtually impossible. Due to this, there is a considerable effect of pronunciation on writing and it's because English Language does not contain a single instance of one-to-one correspondence between sounds and letters (Norman, 2000). Likewise, Alhaisoni et al. (2015) scrutinized the English spelling errors of 122 male and female EFL Saudi students studying at Hail University. They categorised the learners' spelling errors into: omission, substitution, insertion and transposition. The data revealed that the students committed 1,189 spelling errors, and the errors of omission represented the highest percentage of all 39.6% (462 errors) followed by substitution errors which made up 34.9% (429 errors). Most of the errors were attributed to the wrong use of vowels and pronunciation. The researcher declare that the main reasons for the errors are the irregularity of English spelling which is clearly visible in the lack of phoneme-grapheme correspondence, and vice versa as well as the students' mother tongue interference. Similarly, Albalawi (2016) investigated the common spelling errors committed by 80 Saudi female EFL students studying English language as an essential requirement to begin their academic study in Prince Fahad Bin Sultan University. The researcher classified the students' spelling errors into four categories: substitution, omission, insertion, and transposition. The analysis of errors established that errors of omission (59%) constituted the highest proportion of errors followed by the substitution errors (28.9%) whereas

transposition error category had the least frequency of errors with a percentage mean of (4.3%). The students' spelling errors were attributed to a number of causes including the wrong use of English vowels, mispronunciation as well as the irregularity of the orthographic system of English and mother tongue interference. The spelling errors found in the data are very disturbing because the spelling of words eventually affects the meaning of a text.

4.1.3 Verb Tense Errors

Every language has a way of talking about time. The term tense is used only for time reference which is marked grammatically – that is, by purely grammatical elements such as affixes, auxiliaries, or particles. This definition is supported by both Comrie (1985) and Bybee (1985). For them, tense means the grammatical expression of the situation described in the proposition, relative to some other time. Tense in English identifies when an event happens or describes a state. The simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past. We use past tense to describe and narrate an event or situation that occurred in the past and is over. For example: "When I was twelve, I broke my leg. I slipped on the playground on a cold winter morning and fell. The bone near my ankle snapped with a loud "pop!" Even my friends heard it. The teachers called my parents, who came quickly. "In language learning, knowledge of grammar, particularly tense, is considered to be the crucial part for non-native learners to master properly (Muftah & Rafik-Galea, 2013). Verb tense refers to the way a verb is formed to communicate when an action takes place. Many verbs give the idea of *doing* something. For example, the words *drink, run,* and *read* suggest action. It tells one what to do at a particular moment. However, some verbs do not give the idea of action; they express the idea of existence or state of *being*. For example, verbs like *be, being, seem* and *exist* convey state. In simple terms therefore, we can say that verbs are words that tell us what a subject does or is. They describe action and state of being.

Tense errors in sentences are one of the common errors committed by learners of English and those in this study are not excluded. Verb tense errors occur when one uses the wrong verb tense. Tense errors in this study has been categorized into omission of verb element, wrong substituted verbs and wrong use of tense. These are further discussed below.

4.1.3.1 wrong substituted verbs

From the data analysis, it became apparently clear that the children used verbs wrongly in their essays. and this at the end makes their sentence constructions ungrammatical. Some of these are shown below.

1. If the country leaders **does** not take the issues on the environment **(do)**
2. The dumping of refuse in the environment **had affect** our ways of life … (**has affected)**
3. I just want to tell you my **expressing** on the cause of disturbance ……(**experience)**
4. The indiscriminate dumping of refuse has **lead** to the employment**… (led)**

4.1.3.2 Missing of verb element

The data at hand revealed that the subject's knowledge of the verbal group is limited and as a result of this, they were not able to exhibit in their written essays the general rules of verb tenses. Hence, resulted in expression which were ungrammatical. verbal error is regarding the use of "to + a verb". According to English grammar, "the verb" does not take the past tense marker when it is being followed by the preposition "to". It is assumed that the error of using "to" with past tense forms of verbs is the cause of L1 transfer. Some of these are shown in the sentences below.

1. This has made it difficult for other schools ^ organized a… (**to organize)**
2. This ^ been happening (**has)**

3. It would be started procuring smell… (**will start to produce**)

4. The person was going to ^dealt with (**to be**) When dust bins are provided in every area, it ^help to reduce **……** (**will help**)

5. Indiscriminate dumping of refuse in the environment ^**contributed** to the increase in death rate (**can contribute**)

6. I ^ hoping to hear from you ….. (**am hoping**)

4.1.3.3 Wrong use of tenses

Another error in these subcategories is the wrong use of tense. The subjects could not distinguish between the two types of tenses. And as a result of this they tend using the past tense form for the present tense in their written essays. Typical instances identified in the data were in line with the poor usage of verbs especially after the introduction of the verb form "be". Instances of the wrong usage of tense forms in the student's essays and their corresponding correct version are given in the parenthesis below.

1. I hope if all these is (**are**)

2. Another major reason that **shall** be taken into consideration… (**should**)

3. I write to tell you a little about how the environment is **been** abused through…**…(being)**

4. how mosquitoes and other harmful living things can be **avoid** depend on us (**avoided**)

5. When we pollute the environment our water too will equally be **pollute**… (**Polluted**)

6. but we **do** what we **can** to end the game (**did**) (**could**)

7. and they even **gives** our number7 red card**. (gave)**

8. when the refuse get rot the scent (**gets rotten**)

9. they steal our school verses (**stole**)

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10. This problem are consists of…. **(is)**

In this study, errors related to the wrong usage of tense was the second ranked error type under this grammatical category of errors. Out of the total of 394 errors that were recorded under the grammatical category, 96 (24.4%) were linked to errors on wrong use of tense. That is, students in most situations were unable to select the right verb forms to match a particular time period that they made reference to. A summary of errors committed are presented in table 4.1.3 below.

Table 4.1.3 Summary of Verb Tense Errors.

Types of Errors	Frequency	Percentage of errors
Wrong use of tense	96	24.4
Missing of verb elements	174	44.1
Wrong use of verbs	124	31.5
Total	**394**	**100**

The information in Table 4.1.3 is illustrated in Figure 4.1.3. From Figure 4.1.3, errors in terms of omission of verb elements were the highest recorded in this category. It recorded 174 occurrences representing 44.1%. this was followed by errors on wrongly substituted verbs with 124 occurrences representing 31.5%. And the least here was errors on the wrong use of tenses with 96 total number of occurrences representing 24.4% out of the total number of errors found in this category.
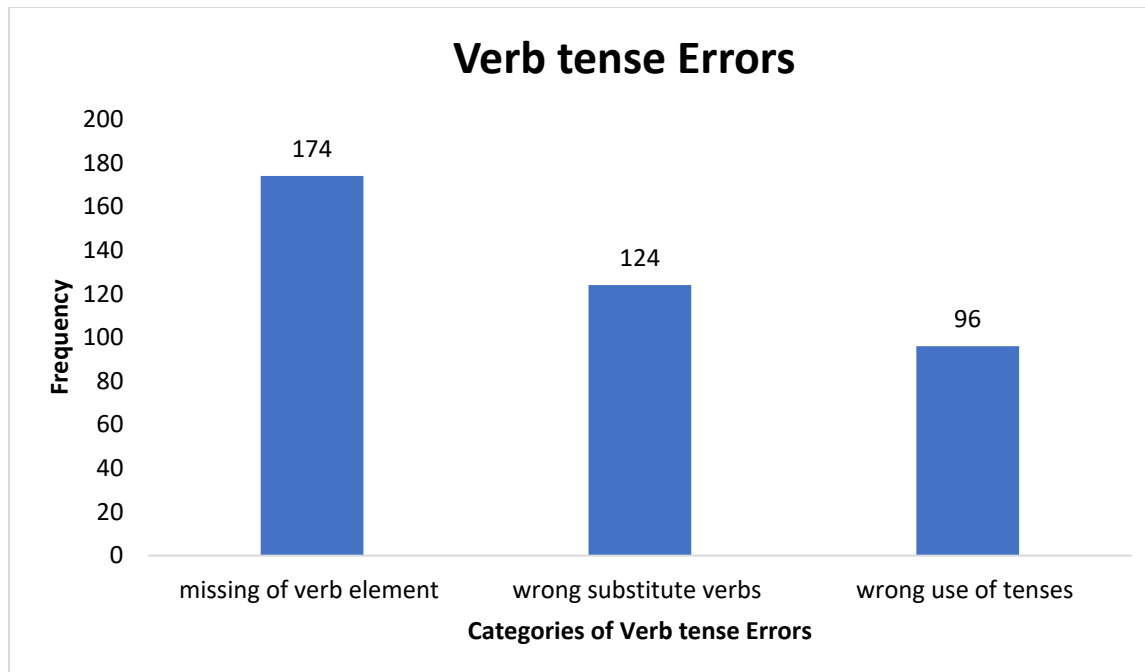
Verb tense Errors

Figure 3. Summary of Verb Tense Errors

From the analysis, it is evident that most of the verb tense errors committed were due to wrong verb form used. In a similar study, Iqbal (2013), asserts that

verb-tense errors are committed globally by English learners. Verb tenses play vital role in the sense of expressing the time in a sentence. As the time is a crucial factor in delivering a message. The results of the present study show that many similar researches were conducted by experts and different types of errors were recorded in their studies. Hamzah (2012), conducted a research aimed at providing explanation on the taxonomy of the grammatical errors made by the university students in written production of English. The results showed that students committed on word choice, verb group, article, preposition, plurality and spelling, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, possessive, copula omission. Sawalmeh (2013), analyzed written English essays of preparatory students in Saudi Arabia. All of the errors in essays were identified and classified into different categorizations. The results showed that the Arabic speakers in this study committed ten

common errors. These errors were: verb tense, word order, singular/plural form, subject verb agreement, double negative, spellings, capitalization, articles, sentence fragments and prepositions. He found out total of 1422 errors. The most predominant errors were Verb tense agreement 235 (16%), word order 156 (10%), subject/verb agreement 1114 (8.2%). Due to this, Ratnah (2013) encourage English teachers to explain the English pattern structure clearly so that students could use the tense forms of English correctly. In relation to this, the researcher is of the view that the rules, structures and systems of the L1 should be thoroughly taught to avoid counter interference in L2 usage. Again, L2 structures should also be given the needed attention to avoid developmental errors as well.

4.1.4 Concord errors

According to Thakur (2002), one of the useful rules of English language is when the verb agrees with the subject in terms of number and person, thus, the verb agrees with the subject. Quirk (2010) defined concord as the relationship between two grammatical units that aligns a particular feature with a displayed feature in the other. Thus, when one of the grammatical units displays a particular feature, for example, plurality, that accords with a displayed feature in the other. This simply means that a form of one word requires a corresponding form of another. From the above definition, it can be concluded that concord is a formal relationship that exists between elements of grammar, and a form of one word requiring a corresponding form of another.

Kwofie (2011) also defined concord as the way in which words are used together accurately, according to the rules of grammar. It is therefore clear that concord is used to describe the relationship (harmony) between the inflectional forms of different elements within a sentence. It is also deduced that concord is used in grammatical theory and description to refer to formal relationships that exist between elements of grammar. This explains Dada (2000) argument that

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concord should be the basic idea or fundamental principle behind a sentence. In other words, concord is one of the basic rules which a user of the English language, either as a first or second language must acquire or learn as the case may be. This was where Nelson and Greenbaum (2002 p.142) argue that the verb agrees with its subject in number and person. In this case, the agreement applies whenever the verb displays distinctions in person and number. For all verbs other than be, the distinctions are found only in the present tense, where the third person singular has the -s form and the third person plural – like the first and second persons – has the base form: [1] The noise distracts them. [2] The noises distract them. The agreement affects the first verb in the verb phrase, whether it is a main verb or not. As a result of this technicalities involving in the study of concord, the students could not apply all the rules in their writing, hence producing structures which violated this agreement relation. Some of this violated concord errors include subject- verb agreement, antecedent of relative clause concord, demonstrative pronoun subject- verb error

4.1.4.1 Subject-Verb Agreement

This has to do with the correspondence of a verb with its subject in person (first, second or third) and number (singular and plural). The subject and the verb should agree in number and person. For correct composition of English, it is necessary that subject and verb should be optimal/agree. These kinds of errors have been found common among the participants. We cannot use the following pattern of sentences in proper writing. For example, leaves gives us, reading give, some likes, hobbies makes, and four seasons all this kind of wording are improper and are against the rules of writing. However, the analysis revealed that most of the learners had difficulty determining which verb tense was appropriate in a sentence at a particular instance. Some examples of such errors are seen in the sentences below:

1. This is one of the **reason** why **… (reasons)**

2.   …has cause a lot of **problem** (**problems)**

3.   This is also another major one that my community people **is** facing .. (**are)**

4.   We **needs** to also protect use**… (need)**

5.   The two opposing **team** was (**teams)** were

6.   Many valuables **was** destroyed **(were)**

7.   These can easily **causes** diseases (**cause)**

From the examples, it is evident that learners chose the verb form which they deemed right due to the overgeneralization of forms learnt. They also seem not to have a clearer understanding to determine when to use which form. This is due to inadequate exposure and practice in terms of learning a target language. The researcher notes that with constant practice of the structure, such errors will be limited.

4.1.4.2 Demonstrative pronoun (subject) verb agreement errors

These items particularise the NG referent by indicating whether it is near (this, these) or not near (that, those) the speaker, in space or time or psychologically, for demonstrative pronouns. They can refer to both human and non-human entities in both singular and plurals. this century, these girls, that cat, those brakes (Downing, 2015). These demonstrative pronouns adjectives when they are used, they must agree in number with the noun it modifies: this solution, these solutions; again, demonstrative pronouns must also agree with their antecedent.

and this **gives** malaria……..(**give)**

And when all **this** things are done (**these)**

Health is the most important component in **these** world (**this)**

I am highly enthused to write you **these** letters (**this)**

65

This **problems** is caused by……… (**problem**)

4.1.4.3 Relative pronoun (subject) with singular verb errors

Agreement between a pronoun and its antecedent helps the listener to interpret the pronoun correctly. In English a pronoun must agree with its antecedent for person, number, and gender. Relative clause is a group of words that modify a noun, noun phrase, pronoun, or a sentence and the modify elements is called ''antecedent''.it is a subordinated clause and can be used to provide more information about the person or thing that appears in the main clause. A relative clause is introduced by either relative pronouns (who, whom-, which-, that-, whose-) or relative adverbs (when-, where-, why). Relative clauses are also called adjective clauses because they function as adjective to describe or modify the noun phrase.

In view of this one may say that a relative pronoun generally follows and points back to the noun it modifies, and like all clauses, both dependent, relative clauses have subject and a verb. The students found this confusing and as a result produce sentences without correct agreement of relative pronouns and their required verb. Furthermore, it is also seen that in some sentences, the errors of verb usage are observed in case of their agreement with relative pronouns. The grammatical rule goes like this that relative pronouns will have verbs according to their antecedents. From the explanations above, it can be stated that all the three sentences made used of a relative pronoun. Below are some extracts from the data.

1. Several things which **are** very important… (**is**)

2. The use of chemicals for fishing can destroy or kill the living things that **lives** in the water (**live**)

3. There were a lot of emergency cases in the sports and games that **destructs** the enjoyable part of the games. (**destruct**)

Table 4.1.4. Summary of Concord Errors

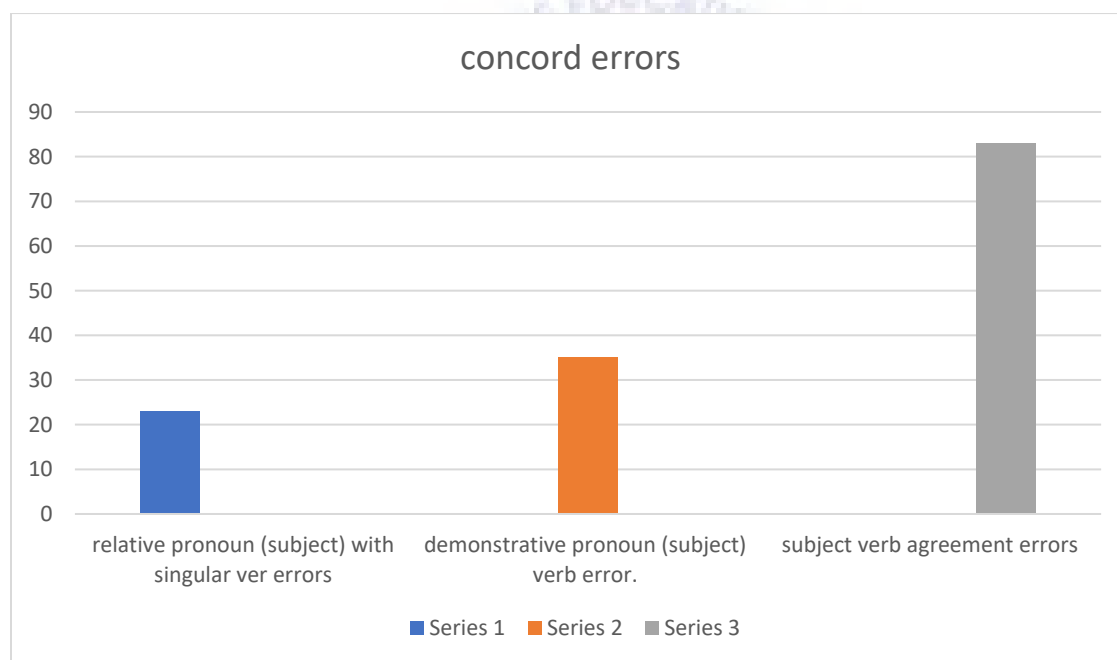| Types of errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Relative pronoun and its antecedent Errors	23	16.3
Subject – verb agreement errors	83	58.9
Demonstrative pronoun agreement errors	35	24.8
Total	**141**	**100**

Figure 4. Summary of concord errors

4.1.5 Preposition errors

Prepositions perform the important job of showing the relationship of a noun or pronoun to some other word within a sentence. They enable a speaker or writer to show the relationships between

separate things. Abushihab, El-Omari, and Tobat (2011) defined prepositions as a tool to express relation between two entities. They further argued that English propositions have different functions that are not easy for ESL learners to learn correctly. The students in Wapuli SHS tend to use proper preposition if equivalent was found in their mother tongue, but turn to select the improper prepositions if equivalents are not used in their mother tongue, and omit prepositions if equivalents are not required in their mother tongue. A preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence. The great majority of the participants in this study demonstrated confusion for the right usage of prepositions, addition of unnecessary prepositions. This category constitutes the most problematic area for the subjects. For, almost all the subjects omitted or misused some prepositions in their utterances. This category is the one that includes the least number of errors, which are 75 in total. Their detailed classifications are given below:

4.1.5.1 Missing preposition

 The first factor that makes this area is that some prepositions in English such as in, on, at can be used as suffixes in the same form without any distinction. For this reason, learners have difficulty while using prepositions in English. The most common error in this category is missing of prepositions. Some samples of such errors are as follows:

1. They keep the child in the house which will end up - death (**to**)

2. There should be dust bins provided ^ every part of the country. (**in**)

3. I would again appeal ^ you as the minister of health (**to**)

4. Because some ^ the refuse contains bacteria's (**of**)

5. The abuse ^ the environment through indiscriminate dumping of refuse (**of**)

6. Avoid cutting down ^ trees (**of**)

4.1.5.2 Wrong use of preposition

The most common error in preposition is the misuse. Since learners have difficulty in distinguishing some prepositions, and they have inadequate knowledge about their use then they tend to use them wrongly. Here are some samples of these errors from the extracted data:

1. Which eventually results **in (to)**

2. To take part in sports **through** motivating. **(by)**

3. Good sanitary condition will go a long way **(of)** eradicate some of the diseases. **(to)**

4. To promote good living condition **in**(**among)** people in the society

5. There must be the need **of** health care **(for)**

6. We need to protect the environment **to** taking into consideration its benefits to man **(by)**

4.1.5.3 Redundant use of preposition

Redundant use of preposition this is where the learners include a preposition in a sentence where they are not needed. These was also spotted in the data. Some of these are presented below.

➢ It may cause **(to**) diseases in the body

➢ when we stop cutting down **(of)** tree

➢ In some areas people cut down **(of)** trees without replacing them

➢ But it later turns to a conflict **(in)** between the various schools.

Table 4.1.5 Summary of Prepositional Errors

Types of Errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Omission of preposition	29	40.8
Wrong use of preposition	19	26.7
Redundant use of preposition	23	32.4
Total	**71**	**100**

Since most English prepositions have some different functions, it is difficult to learn to use prepositions correctly for ESL learners. Another factor that makes this area is that some prepositions in English such as in, on, at can be used as suffixes in the same form without any distinction in L1 learners. For this reason, L1 learners have difficulty while using prepositions in English. As it is seen in the table above, the most common error in this category is omission of prepositions.
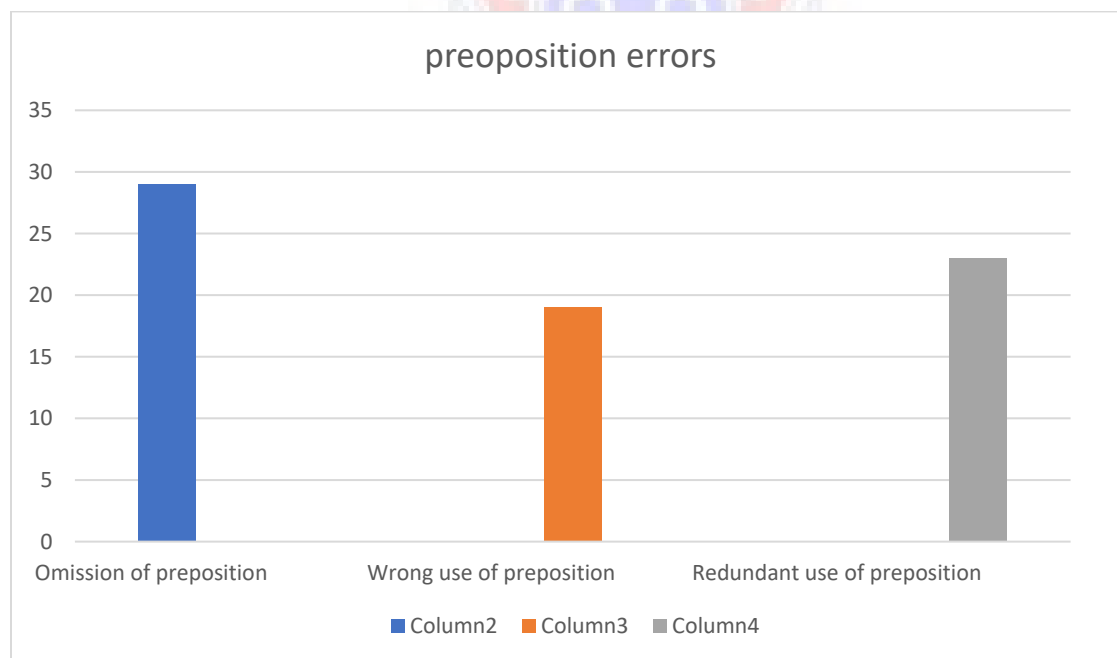

Figure 5. Summary of Preposition Errors

4.1.6 Article Errors

One of the most difficult structural elements for EFL learners is the English article system (definite & indefinite). Surprisingly, the English articles a (n), zero, and the are quite difficult to acquire not only for ESL/EFL learners but also for children learning English as a first language. Articles are believed to be a source of difficulty for learners and teachers of English as a second/foreign language, especially for those whose native languages do not have articles or do have articles or article-like morphemes which are used in ways that differ from English articles (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The article 'a' is called indefinite article because the noun it collocates with is indefinite. It is this article which an article is a word that is used with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. English has two articles: the and a/an. The is used to refer to specific or particular nouns; a/an is used to modify non-specific or non-particular nouns. We call the definite article and a/an indefinite article. These article errors can be vividly seen in the students' written works. And these errors are grouped as omission of some required articles, addition of incorrect articles and misuse of articles. A total of 159 errors were recorded for this error type. These are further discussed below.

4.1.6.1 Omission of Articles

This kind of error occurs when a learner omits an article in a well-formed sentence where it is required. This was caused by learners' inability to decide where and when to use an article in a sentence. Some instances where learners omitted articles are indicated in the examples as follows:

➢ Building of toilets is ^ main thing that needs to be considered (**the**)

➢ defecating near ^ sea (**the**)

➢ people should be advised to stop going to ^ bush to free themselves (**the**)

➢ To minimize the indiscriminate dumping of refuse to make ^ environment clean. (**the**)

➢ There is the need to introduce ^ police system during inter-school sports and games. **(the)**

➢ Many valuables were destroyed as ^ result of the conflict. **(a)**

➢ Withing a short time, - officials were able to bring it to control. **(the)**

From the examples above, it is clear that learners omitted articles in their sentences. In some instances, the definite article *the* is omitted while *a/an* are also omitted in other sentences. These errors might have occurred due to forgetfulness or ignorance of the use of the rule in the use of articles in English language. The rule indicates that a singular noun requires articles to introduce them, e.g. a bag, a stone, a boy, etc. (Downing& Locke, 2006).

4.1.6.2 Wrong use of Articles

The researcher after gathering the data saw that the subjects had difficulty using the English articles. They use the definite article where in actual sense they needed to have used the indefinite article in their essays and these make comprehension difficult when dealing with their scripts. Some of their extract are presented below.

- As the saying goes education is **a** key to success **(the)**

- the major ways by which we can protect the environment in **a** country **(the)**

- But it was **a** same in all the matches we played **(the).**

4.1.6.3 Redundant article use

It was also realized that the students in this error sub - category used articles which were not necessary. In this case, they needed not to have use articles but went on to use them in their written essays. The total number of errors committed here were 78. Below are some of the extracts from the collected data.

- The dumping of **the** refuse will make the environment filthy.

- Since **the** December 24th, 2018

- Also, it helps **the** students to be aware ……..

- Sir, the construction of **the** toilet facilities…………………

- And give them **a** good advises…….

- Provide us with **a** well-trained doctors…

- Can easily cause **a** diseases………

Table 4.1.6 Summary of Article Errors

Type of article errors	Frequency of errors	Percentage
Wrong use of articles	12	7.5
Omission of article	69	43.4
Redundant use of article	78	49.1
Total	**160**	**100**

The information in table 4.1.6 is illustrated in figure 4.1.6. From figure 4.1.6, errors in redundant use of articles recorded the highest number with 78 occurrences representing 49.1%. this was followed by wrong use of article errors and the least errors committed was under omission of articles errors which recorded 69 instances representing 43.4% out of the total number of errors found in this category.

The English articles, 'the', indefinite 'a/an', and zero can often be a problem for English language learners to master, especially in longer texts. Thomas (1989) demonstrated that English as a second language (L2) learners have difficulties with the right usage of articles and this is common from first languages (L1) that do not have the equivalent of an article system encounter more problems using articles. Barrett and Chen (2011) in their research findings observed that learners overused

both the definite and indefinite articles but underused the zero articles. The definite article was substituted for the indefinite article in specific environments. In the present study, learners constructed sentences without the required articles; they omitted the articles that were needed to make their sentences complete and, in another instance, they were misused.

Figure 6. Summary of article errors
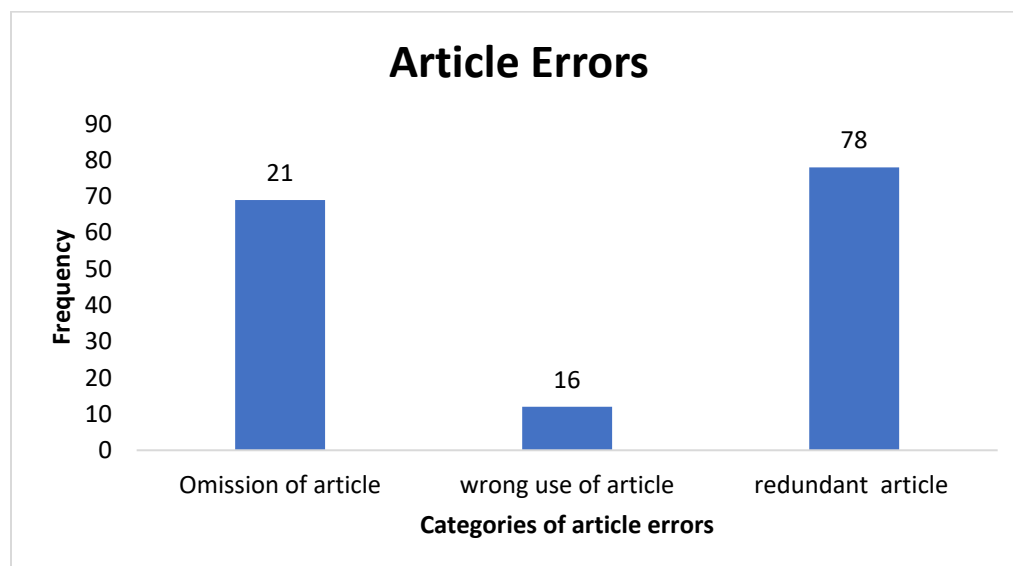
4.1.7 Sentence fragment

A sentence fragment is a word group that is incorrectly punctuated as if it were a complete sentence, beginning, with an initial capital letter and ending with a period or other end punctuation. To be complete, a sentence must contain a subject, a predicate or complete verb, and function as an independent clause. Therefore, when a sentence fragment lacks one or more of these elements; as a result, it cannot stand alone or function as a sentence. Fragment is also an essential part of language. In the scripts, the students made fragmental error, where they wrote incomplete sentences and used 'full stop'. These kinds of errors were very common in their scripts. They have lack of knowledge in using comma or they misused the comma. It shows that students were

unaware of the proper use of comma in sentences. Also, there was evidence where students made use of fragments in their essays. That is, instead of students to make use of full sentences in order to make their points clear and complete in meaning, they made use of these fragments which distorted the ideas that they wanted to advance in their essays. Instances of the use of fragments by these 3rd-year students of Wapuli SHS indicate their less knowledge in what constitute a complete sentence as well as the various sentence types that they can employ to construct complete and meaningful thoughts. That is, 75 (3.8%) instances of errors under the structural category were linked to the use of fragments in the students' essays where students made use of grammatical constructions that lacked complete thought and meaning and as such, impeded easy comprehension of students Some these are presented below.

First and foremost, reason why the environment should be protected.

- Use of chemicals for fishing,

- Avoidance of deforestation,

- First of all, cheating,

- to begin with, fertile land,

The use of sentence fragment in this study, indicates that the ideas that the students wanted to elaborate were not well captured. That is, the examples should have been written in completed sentences containing the topic sentences of paragraphs in the students essays instead of the use of fragments which do not clearly bring forth the ideas the students wanted to project in their writing. However, making use of fragments instead of complete sentences did not clearly bring out the point that the student wanted to express. The corrected version of the errors captured in the students' works are presented below.

- People should be educated to avoid the use of poisonous chemicals for fishing.

- People should be advised to stop deforestation in the country.

- first of all, the references should not be bias during the competition.

- First of all, the environment should be protected to preserve the fertilities of land.

4.1.8 Errors on number

Galasso (2002: 69) states that 'number is an additional functional feature which denotes the contrast between "grammatical" singular and plural forms'. The idea of countability is probably universal in the sense that it is readily accessible to all human beings and is expressed in the lexical structure of all languages. However, not all languages have a grammatical category of number, and those that do not necessarily view countability in the same sense. e.g. The car, The books, tooth>teeth, child>children, fish>fish. After analysing the data, the researcher realized that the children could not apply the rules regarding countability. And this mostly happens to mass nouns. Some of these are given below.

1. **Peoples** who do not want… (**people**)

2. It **consist** of both living and non-living**… (consists)**

3.Extend my **greeting** to all…… **(greetings)**

4. We will **has** peace in our area…. (**have**)

5. If all **this** are solved…… **(these**)

4.1.9 Analysis of Errors in students' writing

It is important to analyse the errors because by learning errors they are many advantages such as

(a) a device which the learner uses in order to learn (b) to fully grasp and understand the nature of

errors, and (c) instead of just being able to recognize errors, the learners are now able to explain the rules and correct errors. In language learning errors committing is considered as an essential part and parcel of the process. So, in the present study grammatical errors in essay writings of 3rd year senior high school students were analysed and the most common errors were identified and classified by the researcher. The most common errors recorded in the present study were classified into nine types. Firstly, punctuation errors were the most severe errors 79 (24%). Second type of errors committed by majority of students was subject-verb agreement, 48 (14%). Subject verb agreement is one of the several English writing difficulties which second language writers are face with. According to Hourani (2008), subject and verb should agree in number and person. It is necessary that subject and verb should be optimal/agree. Third type of errors that were committed by the respondents was use of preposition. Forty-six respondents' errors were recorded regarding the usage of proposition. Finally, the errors found most common among students were Verb tense and form, 35 (11%). Iqbal (2013), asserts that verb-tense errors are committed globally by English learners. Verb tenses play vital role in the sense of expressing the time in a sentence. As the time is a crucial factor in delivering a message.

Table 4.1. 7. Summary of Learners' Errors in Writing

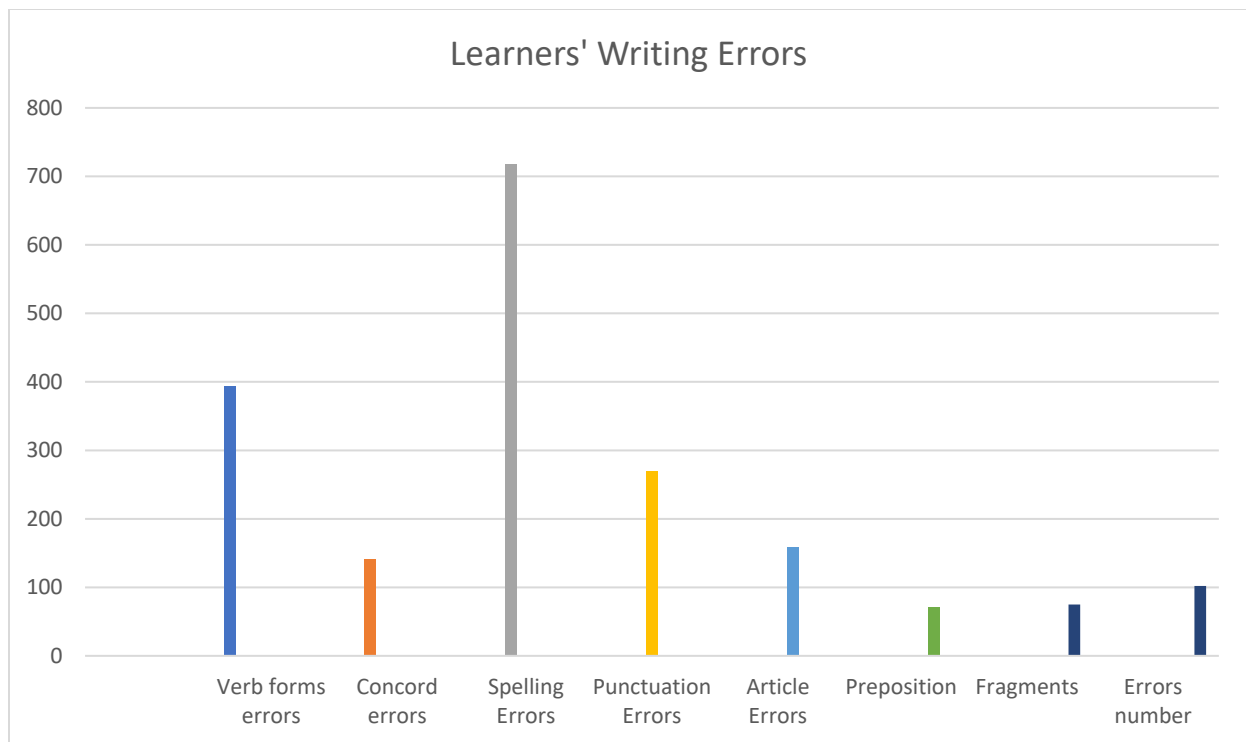| Error Type	Frequency	Percentage
Verb forms errors	394	20.4
Concord errors	141	7.3
Spelling Errors	718	37.2
Punctuation Errors	270	13.9
Article Errors	159	8.2
Preposition	71	3.6
Fragments	75	3.8
Errors number	102	5.2
Total	**1930**	**100**

Figure 7. Summary of learners' Errors in Writing

Based on the findings on students' errors. The writer came out with the percentages of the analysed grammatical errors. In all, the essays of 60 learners were analysed. A total of 1930 errors were identified. From the analysis, spelling errors were the highest with a total of 718 cases representing 37.2%. Here, the learners used upper case letters where lower-case letters were to be used and vice-versa. Verb tense errors were the second highest recording 394 cases representing 20.4%. Under this type of errors, learners used the present tense where they were expected to use the past and vice-versa as well as inconsistent agreement of a verb with its subject. Punctuation errors was ranked third with 270 occurrences representing 13.9% of the total number of errors. In this instance, the learners omitted certain punctuation marks in their written essays, and wrongly used the comma where in actual sense they were supposed to use the full stop and the vice versa. Article errors rated fourth with a total of 159 errors representing 8.2% of the total number of errors. The fifth was Concord errors. It recorded 141 errors representing 7.3% of the total number of errors.

Here, the learners omitted or selected wrong singular verbs where they were not needed and also used plural verbs wrongly in some cases. The sixth was errors on Number with a total of 102 representing 5.2%. The seventh being sentence fragment errors with a total of 75 representing 3.8.%. And the least was Preposition errors with a total of 71 and its percentage representation as 3.6%. The results of the present study show that many similar researches were conducted by experts and different types of errors were recorded in their studies. Hamzah (2012), conducted a research aimed at providing explanation on the taxonomy of the grammatical errors made by the university students in written production of English. The results showed that students committed on word choice, verb group, article, preposition, plurality and spelling, subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, possessive, copula omission. Similarly, Sawalmeh (2013), also analyzed written English essays of preparatory students in Saudi Arabia. He analyzed 32 essays of 32 Arabic speaking Saudi learners of English. All of the errors in essays were identified and classified into different categorizations. The results showed that the Arabic speakers in this study committed ten common errors. These errors were: verb tense, word order, singular/plural form, subject verb agreement, double negative, spellings, capitalization, articles, sentence fragments and prepositions. He found out total of 1422 errors. The most predominant errors were Verb tense agreement 235 (16%), word order 156 (10%), subject/verb agreement 1114 (8.2%). In relation to this, the findings of the present study have revealed that learners of Wapuli Senior High School third year students are limited in morphology and syntax and as a result, they were unable to write well in their compositions.

4.2 Causes of the Errors

After analysing the types of errors and calculating them into the tables and the charts, the writer identified the causes of errors based on the data. In this study, he used brown's theory on error

analysis. The theory outlines the following as the main causes of errors; interference error, intralingual error (developmental error), context of learning and communication strategies.

4.2.1 Interlingual errors

The beginning stages of learning a second language are characterized by a good deal of interlingual transfer (from the native language). In these early stages, before the system of the second language is familiar, the native language is the only linguistic system in previous experience upon which the learner can draw. (Brown, 1980: 173) As stated above by Brown, native language is the main source for the learner of a second language, so the learner tries to make some comparison between the systems of these two languages, and he will make some transfers from his native language which will result in errors. Interlingual is the system in the brain that language learners attempt to use the structure or the system of the prior language that exists in order to acquire second language. These errors result from the mother tongue interference. Below are some of the extracts from the data.

- and this **give** malaria……..(**gives**)
- And when all **these** things are done (**this**)
- Health is the most important component in **these** world (**this**)
- I am highly enthused to write you **these** letters (**this**)
- This **problem** is caused by……………………… (**problems**)

4.2.2 Intralingual and developmental errors

This is One of the main differences between CA and EA is the recognition of errors that go beyond interlingual errors in learning a second language. It is obvious that intralingual errors or intralingual interference is a significant factor in second language learning; shortly it can be

defined as the wrong generalization of rules in the target language. For example, He swimed, we could gone, and among others.   While the early stages of language leaning include abundant interlingual transfers, latter stages comprise more intralingual transfers as the learner has begun to have better understanding of the new system and new rules. However, after the learner progresses in the second language, he will acquire the correct form of the language. It is clear that a systematic observation of this type of errors will help teachers and researchers in language teaching. These kinds of errors occur during the learning process of the second language at a stage when the learners have not really acquired the knowledge. In addition, errors are also caused by the difficulty or the problem of language itself. Iamsiu (2014) states that there are four major types or causes of intralingual errors which consist of overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized.

Overgeneralization errors the learners create a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language. Tense errors were due to incomplete learning of rules and overgeneralization of rules learned.

For example,

I hope if all these is **(are)**

- Another major reason that **shall** be taken into consideration… (**should)**

- I write to tell you a little about how the environment is **been** abused

  through…**…(being)**

- how mosquitoes and other harmful living things can be **avoid** depend on us **(avoided)**

- When we pollute the environment our water too will equally be **pollute**… **Polluted**

Ignorance of rule restrictions the learners apply rules to the contexts where they are not applicable.

Incomplete application of rules the learners fail to use a fully developed structure. i.e. a statement form may be used as a question, one of the transformations in a series may be omitted, or a question word may simply be added to the statement form. It was realized that learners greatly contribute to the errors they make in their writings. Most of the spelling errors occurred due to the way learners pronounced words and hence spelt them as such. This was caused by incomplete learning of rules. Punctuation errors were also due to incomplete learning of rules attached to the various marks. Learners could not identify and use marks appropriately.

- I am very **glade** (**glad**)

- The sports and games **committeed (committee)**

- **Truely,** this year's inter-school sports and games was plan and **healed** in Dagbon state technical school (**Truly)** and (**held)**

- **peoples** who do not want to participate in clean-up exercises should be caution. (**people)**

False hypothesis the learners do not fully understand a distinction in the target language. For example, the form was may be interpreted as the member of past tense and is as a member of present tense.

- E.g and they even **gives** our number 7 red card**. (gave)**

- when the refuse get rot the scent (**gets rotten)**

- they steal our school verses (**stole)**

- This problem are consisted by…. (**is)**

4.3 Context of learning

As a result of some pedagogical factors, such as teachers, teaching materials and the social situation, this kind of errors come about. In a classroom atmosphere, the text book or the teacher can mislead the learner by the way they define a lexical or grammatical item or a faulty presentation of a structure in a textbook may lead to such errors. Richards (1971) called this type as 'false concepts' and Stenson (1976) termed 'induced errors.'

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter covers the result of the analysis of Wapuli Community Day Senior High School 3rd year students' written essays. At the end of the analysis ,1930 grammatical errors were found. These errors were first classified into eight major categories, namely spelling error, concord errors, verb tense errors, article errors, preposition errors, punctuation errors, sentence fragment errors and number errors. and later, they were divided into subcategories. After this was done the researcher then presented a discussion on the causes of errors based on the findings. And the following were identified as the major causes of errors in the students' written essays; interference error, intralingual error (developmental error), context of learning and communication strategies. The researcher will therefore like to suggest that despite the children having this kind of errors. They should have textual analysis and feedback based on their write-ups. They should also be motivated to get involved in peer group discussion of the necessary rules including the rules of verb forms. Thus, awareness, analysis, practice and feedback should be regular part of academic activities. This will enable them limit the amount of error occurrences in their writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from the study as well as the conclusions, and directions for future research. The purpose of the study was to identify the grammatical errors learners at SHS commit in their writings. The study adopted qualitative analysis conducted in Wapuli Community Day Senior High School in the Saboba District Assembly of the Northern Region of Ghana. Data was gathered from the 60 learners across the three programmes run by the school. It came out that the learners committed series of errors in their end of semester written essays script.

These were categorized under spelling errors, concord errors, verb tense errors, article errors, number errors, sentence fragment errors, preposition errors and punctuation errors. This chapter would also shed lights on the role of learner errors in their essay writings. Then, the chapter would end with a discussion on pedagogical implications of the leaners errors and some suggestions for future research.

5.1. Summary of the findings

The current study aims to identify and categorized the grammatical errors of Wapuli Community Day SHS students in producing written essays. The findings of the study confirmed that Wapuli Secondary School students, who had learned English for a long period, committed some grammatical errors. From the analysis of the first research question, the findings showed that the learners committed a total number of 1930 grammatical errors in their written essays. These errors

were first classified into eight major categories, then later, they were divided into subcategories. It was again observed that the largest group of errors committed was spelling errors with a total of 718 cases representing 37.2%. Here, the learners used upper case letters where lower-case letters were to be used and vice-versa. Verb tense errors were the second highest recording 394 cases representing 20.4%. Under this type of errors, learners used the present tense where they were expected to use the past and vice-versa as well as inconsistent agreement of a verb with its subject.

Punctuation errors was ranked third with 270 occurrences representing 13.9% of the total number of errors. In this instance, the learners omitted certain punctuation marks in their written essays, and wrongly used the comma where in actual sense they were supposed to use the full stop and the vice versa. Article errors rated fourth with a total of 159 errors representing 8.2% of the total number of errors. The fifth was Concord errors. It recorded 141 errors representing 7.3% of the total number of errors. Here, the learners omitted or selected wrong singular verbs where they were not needed and also used plural verbs wrongly in some cases.

The sixth was errors on Number with a total of 102 representing 5.2%. The seventh being sentence fragment errors with a total of 75 representing 3.8.%. And the least was Preposition errors with a total of 71 and its percentage representation as 3.6%. These kinds of errors have been found common among the participants. Interestingly, we cannot use the following pattern of sentences in proper writing. For example, leaves gives us, reading give, some likes, hobbies makes, and four seasons all this kinds of wording are improper and are against the rules of writing. In the same vain, from the analysis of the second research question, the results of the findings also showed that the main source of the learner's errors were either from their mother tongue or intralingual transfer. For instance, the largest group of errors were as a result of the learner's inability to properly apply the rules of the second language, due to this incomplete learning of the rules of the target language,

their essays were filled with spelling errors. Next in this was verb tense errors which became second largest errors committed by the learners in this study. With equally the same source of their writing errors. In this case, one can state here that the main cause of WAPSEC students written errors are due to intralingual transfer.

It was also observed from the findings of the study that the major factors accounting for the learner's errors in their written essays can be trace to a number of factors. one contributory factor that affects second language learners is L1 influence. My interactions with some of the students revealed that, students prefer communicating among themselves in the local languages to English language. When students are compelled to speak English, they see it as an infringement on their rights. The frequent use of the L1 among students was more profound in co-educational institutions than in single sex schools. The reason for this development which was obtained by the researcher is that, students feel ashamed to make mistakes in the presence of the opposite sex either in class or outside the classroom. Therefore, to avoid disgrace and shame, students find it safe to go the vernacular way. This was observed during their interactions in the school. On the campus of WAPSEC the preferred medium of interaction among the students is the local language –Dagbani. In order to deal with their L1 interference, the teachers should explain the differences between their mother tongue and English to their students.

In addition, the poor reading culture among students is also another factor responsible for the falling standard of English in the country. Many students these days do not read. They prefer watching movies or fidgeting a mobile phone to reading books. By so doing, they become addicted to modern entertainment gadgets which consume most of their time to the detriment of their books. Furthermore, it can also be reckoned that teachers'' attitude to the teaching of grammar also affects language proficiency. Many teachers confess that teaching grammar is not only boring but also

uninteresting and difficult to handle. As a result of this perception, they either teach it anyhow, without adequate preparations or they sometimes ignore it completely. Error analysis illustrated that the English teachers at second cycle should motivate their students to minimize their grammatical errors by modifying their teaching methods. They should implement effective teaching techniques based on the needs of their learners. The first point to consider is to motivate the students to develop some good writing habits through the Writing Centre.

Through this phase, the teachers should continuously provide guidance to the students and enable them to learn and practice English grammar step by step. We can also not rule out the effect of speaking pidgin among our students. It has been observed that students enjoy communicating among themselves using substandard English in informal situations. It has been proved by researchers that, addiction to the use of pidgin affects writing and speaking. The use of modern technology can also help the students learn and use English in a natural way. The methods of teaching should be modified to a certain degree. In order to increase the students" interest in learning and their ability to use English efficiently, the grammar component should be included in the teaching scenario in an appropriate manner.

5.2. The role of errors in learners' writing

This study provides a deeper insight into perceptions about the real performance of ESL learners. The findings may help English language teachers to identify the range of weaknesses and the obstacles that students encounter in producing written form. The current study concurs with Corder's view (1967) that errors are indispensable. This means that they can be used as devices in learning. Accordingly, the analysis of these grammatical errors can be used for diagnostic and

prognostic purposes, which ultimately aim to improve the process of students' learning. In this study, EA can be considered a diagnostic tool to determine current problems.

Through the errors, teachers and researchers would be able to identify the aspects of students' weaknesses and concentrate on them by finding suitable implications. Also, EA reveals the sources and causes behind these types of errors. Thus, it provides both teachers and researchers with a precise picture of the students' performance and the reasons behind these types of errors. For example, from the analysis performed in this study, the researcher identified the students' performance in grammar and was able to identify the types of students' errors and the most influential factors behind them. Based on the identified errors, researchers and teachers can choose suitable ways of treatment. Furthermore, this analysis provides teachers with information regarding how the students' errors change over time. Ellis (1997) argued that "classifying errors in these ways can help us to diagnose learners' learning problems at any stage of their development and to plot how changes in error patterns occur over time" (p. 23).

Additionally, for this discovery to take place, learners have to go through several stages and processes. One of the most important factors included in almost all the stages and processes of language learning is error making. Dulay and Burt (1974) stated that error making is expected and that it would appear necessary and essential to language learning. In fact, it is a clear sign to show language learner actually develop and internalize the rules of the language. While the errors a learner makes provide no direct measure of his knowledge of the language, it is probably the most important source of information about the nature of his knowledge. From the analysis of the learner's errors, teachers are able to assume the nature of his knowledge at that point in his learning and discover what he still has to learn. By describing and classifying his errors, teachers may build up a picture of the features of the language which cause him learning problems. A learner's errors,

therefore, are significant to the teacher, in that they tell him if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn (Corder, 1981).

On the other hand, learner's errors provide researchers evidence of how language is learnt and acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner employ in his discovery of the language. In fact, errors are essential to the learner himself and it is a method the learner uses to test his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning. In fact, Teachers can gain much benefit from error analysis and description because errors provide them with feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching materials and their teaching techniques.

In addition, errors enable teachers to decide whether they can move on to the next item they have been teaching and they provide the information for designing an improved syllabus or a plan of improved teaching. Therefore, errors made by students are major elements in the feedback system of the process of language teaching and learning. It is on the basis of the information the teacher gets from errors that he modifies his teaching procedures or materials, the rapidity of the progress, and the amount of practice that he plans at any point of time.

In view of this, Corder claims that teachers should be able not only to discover and describe errors linguistically but also understand the psychological reasons for their occurrence. He also claims that for teacher, being aware of the diagnosis and correction skills for errors is fundamental as it might help them understand why and how they can interfere to help their students.

Highlighting the importance of errors, Corder (1967) points out three significant aspects of errors. Firstly, they educate and inform the teachers about the progress level of the learners, and the area

that needs students" attention. Secondly, errors provide information about how language may be acquired, and the techniques the students employ while learning the language.

Third, errors prove to be useful for the learners in a way that the committing of errors can be seen as an indicator for them to learn. Lightbown and Spada (2000) suggest that when the causes of repeated errors are discussed and shared by the students in a classroom, it proves to be useful for teachers as the students are made aware of the problems. "Errors can tell the teacher how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and consequently, what remains for him or her to learn. So, student errors are valuable feedbacks" (Xie & Jiang, 2007). As proven by research, the finding of learners' errors can be utilized as an effective way of improving grammatical accuracy (Carroll and Swain, 1993). As noted by Jamil and Kamran (2016), "Knowing more about how grammar works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused". Therefore, students should realize the importance of errors in their writing so as to understand the nature of the errors completely. This process requires English language teachers to be well equipped and more knowledgeable about the students" difficulties in grammar.

5.3. Pedagogical Implications

This study has pedagogical implications for the teaching and learning of English Language. When students are assisted to correct their errors, they become more accurate in using the L2. In this study, the term correction would be viewed as a form of feedback given to learners on their use of the language. All teachers would agree that correcting the errors that the students make when they speak or write is one of the most difficult tasks in language teaching. There are so many issues the teacher has to consider: whether it is an error or a mistake, at what stages the teacher should correct, how much correction should be made, how the student can be corrected without being de-

motivated that is why the teacher's point out when something has gone wrong and see whether the student can correct himself, then, to find out if what the student say or write is just a mistake, or it is global or local. However, the technique of correction is not simply presenting the data repeatedly and going through the same set of drills and exercises to produce the state of over learning.

On the contrary, it requires that the teacher understand the source of the errors so that he can provide appropriate mixture, which will resolve the learner's problems and allow him to discover the relevant rules. Thus, the source of the learner's error in this study would be an important clue for teachers to decide on the sort of treatment. For this reason, it can be stated here that where there is proper identification of errors, it leads teachers to devise appropriate materials and effective teaching techniques, and constructing tests suitable for different levels and needs of learners. Studying the nature of errors enables English language teachers and researchers to have a better understanding of the areas where students face the most difficulties while writing. Being aware of learner errors not only introduces teachers to the knowledge of learner's language, but also helps discover the subtle aspects of learning and teaching of a second language. At the same time, studying learner errors involves approaching learning in an intimate way thus enabling teachers to promote appropriate pedagogical tools through understanding the nature of that language. In addition to the identification and description of errors, it is also important to correct them.

The sources and the types of the errors determine what sort of feedback the teacher might receive since errors provide the teacher with a platform of getting feedback reflecting how effective he is in his/her teaching style and what changes he/she has to make to get better performance from the students. So, the findings of error analysis function as facilitator in language teaching in many ways only if the teacher is aware of them and able to make use of them in the teaching process appropriately. Error analysis can also benefit teachers and students simultaneously, since errors

tell the teacher how far the learner has progressed in achieving the goal and what remains for him to learn. Measuring the student's progress, the teacher can reshape his teaching strategies and plans in accordance with the needs of the learner. Moreover, these errors can be considered as signs that guide language teachers to improve their teaching. Rahimi and Tafazoli (2014) contended that, "By learning error sources and their frequencies, teachers can meet their students' needs. It will be easier for them to deal with their affective, cognitive and other important domains of language learning" (p. 68).

Moreover, Teachers of English should feel a strong sense of responsibility towards the students they teach. They should not be only concerned with the success of their students in both internal and external examinations, in this case, teachers should rather maintain a good relationship with their students. Positive Teacher- student relationship develops and improves students" academic performance. Teachers who are affable, maintain a good relationship with their students, and are responsive to their academic needs contribute greatly to the academic well-being of the students. Teachers must themselves have a good understanding of English and grammar in particular, and appreciate how it is linked to other aspects of English and how it applies to the real world of communication. The teacher should command specialised knowledge of how to convey and reveal the subject matter to students. Their instructional repertoire should allow them to create multiple paths to the subjects they teach. It should, therefore, be possible for the education authorities to consider a form of specialisation in the area of English.

This implies that one, upon completing the College of Education should specialise, in addition to the general English, an aspect of English. This will enable the trainee teacher to gain an in-depth knowledge of her area of specialisation. Secondly, teachers should be aware of the fact that they are responsible for managing and monitoring students learning. The English teacher should be

trained in a manner that can enable them to create, enrich, maintain and alter instructional settings to capture and sustain the interest of their students. The teacher should be adept at engaging students and adults to assist their teaching and at enlisting their colleagues 'knowledge and expertise to complement their own. the existence of these errors proves that the students need to improve their writing. Thus, it is suggested to motivate students to write and guide them through creating extra writing courses or using new applications that are proven in terms of their success such as WhatsApp (Awada, 2016). Teachers should increase the number of assignments for the sake of which the students would have to do a lot of writing during their free time, hence they would be reading a lot of English material and thinking in English, especially if they have to make oral presentations for their work. In addition, if teachers implement Team Work in class and get the students to work in groups on their projects, students will have the chance to practice together to develop their writing skill, they will also have the chance to speak English with each other instead of their L1. In addition, the students as the main subject of the language teaching and learning process.

The research findings will lead them to be aware of their own deviant utterance not only in speaking but also in writing. The important part is that, the research findings will give them tolerance on the errors committed, by correcting their deviant utterances gradually. The last but the least, a further result of this study suggests that keeping a learning journal in English is useful for both teachers and students. To the teachers, it enables them to know the learner's language competence from the composition as well as it also enables them to understand the difficulties faced by the students in second language acquisition. Therefore, the students would also have a better change to improve their language skills. It would also enable them to evaluate their own competence in the teaching and learning process by understanding language target. In short, this

will lead the student to do self-correcting treatment which plays a central role in second language learning process.

Finally, Errors are significant to syllabus designers to see what items are important to be included in the syllabus and what items are redundant and should be excluded. The analysis of the participants' errors can help identify learners' linguistic difficulties and need at a particular stage of language learning.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

This study looks at the analysis of grammatical errors learners at Wapuli Community Day Senior High School make in their writings. Researchers may also look at other categories of errors other than those found in the present study. Future researchers may focus on replicating the same study with a large sample consisting of both genders to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Again, researchers may investigate how errors in the writing of L2 learners are corrected by both teachers and learners in the classroom. The researcher also suggests that this study be extended to other private schools in the Northern Region to compare its results with the current study's results.

5.5. Conclusion

The study aimed at analysing the grammatical errors made by learners of Wapuli Community Day Senior High School in their essay writing. As presented in the data, the results obtained from observations and an examination of students' essays revealed there are eight kinds of grammatical errors made by the students. In most of the cases, some of these errors resulted from what Richards (1973) suggested as overgeneralization and inadequate knowledge of grammatical rules.

The errors identified were spelling errors, article errors, punctuation errors, number errors, tense errors and sentence fragment errors. From students' perception, the causes of their errors were their incomplete knowledge about grammar and basic writing rules. From the results, it came to light that it was necessary for language teachers to have adequate training on contemporary L2 teaching strategies. In addition, it was observed that some of the learners written essays errors were as a result of interlingual transfer. Intra-lingual transfer and developmental errors have also been observed as the causes of the learners' errors.

The study also shed light on the writing difficulties of Wapuli SHS students and it has the hope that this study adding to the other researchers on this aspect would be a guide for the betterment of future teaching on writing. And language teachers should be given adequate training on appropriate language teaching approaches for all levels to make them effective and efficient in the classes they are assigned. This would enable them to be able to explain abstract and complicated grammatical structures to learners. With this, the learners will improve their general language proficiency in the target language.

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