UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

ANALYSIS OF COMMON ERRORS IN THE WRITINGS OF BASIC 4 PUPILS OF

NTOASO SDA BASIC SCHOOL

JOANNETTA PENUKU

2018

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

ANALYSIS OF COMMON ERRORS IN THE WRITINGS OF BASIC 4 PUPILS OF

NTOASO SDA BASIC SCHOOL

JOANNETTA PENUKU

(7160080024)

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

AUGUST, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

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

SIGNATURE :   ………………………………………

DATE :   ………………………………………

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

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

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. CHARLOTTE FOFO LOMOTEY

SIGNATURE: ………………………………….

DATE: …………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece to my precious Holy Spirit of God, who has been my help, strength, and comforter throughout this course.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

The learner should be able to develop and apply the skills of good handwriting and use writing skills to communicate his/her ideas appropriately but where errors appear to overtake one's writing, reading becomes somewhat difficult. Although errors are seen as a part of the teaching and learning process, it hinders communication and this was revealed in the writing of pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School. This is a qualitative study that analysed common errors in the written essays of Basic Four pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School. The data used for the analysis were pupils' written essays. From this, a total of 492 errors were identified. Six error types were identified and they include capitalization errors, punctuation errors, spelling errors, tense errors, article errors, and errors of word omission. From this, capitalization errors had the highest frequency with errors on word omission being the lowest. Based on the findings of the study, causes of errors in learners' writing were identified as ignorance of rule restrictions, overgeneralization of concepts and rules, context of instruction as well as L1 interference. Some suggestions are made to various stakeholders to ensure effective teaching and learning of the English Language in basic schools.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The major aim of teaching is to make learners proficient in all the basic language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. As Brown (2000) puts it, in order to master the English language, learners have to be adequately exposed to all the four basic skills. To achieve this aim, the English Language components of vocabulary, structure, pronunciation and spelling need to be taught right from the lower level of education. Presently, English language is an international language and it is used as the language of international relations, and in exchanging knowledge and technology. It is the medium of communication at all official gatherings. For this reason, it becomes necessary for anyone 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.

In Ghana, English is used as the official language and medium of instruction in schools. In the basic schools, English is taught as a subject in the lower primary and the first language (L1) is used as the medium of instruction. The target language is rather used as a medium of instruction when the child gets to the upper primary which begins from primary four. Though the child is taught some components of the target language at the lower primary, s/he still experiences some problems due to the switch from the L1 as medium of instruction to the L2 and the most difficult aspect is writing in the target language.

Writing is a highly complex task and performing this task in the second language (L2) makes it more complicated as it requires sufficient command to fulfil all formalities; composing and developing logical ideas which are essential for a written text to be meaningful and understandable (Sarfaz, 2011). To this effect, the contents of the English language syllabus

1

designed for instruction entails four major aspects namely; listening and speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Writing is more 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. It's being argued 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).

In Basic 4, "the learner should be able to develop and apply the skills of good handwriting and use writing skills to communicate his/her ideas appropriately" (MOES, 2007, p. 41). But many stakeholders, especially teachers, keep complaining about the poor level of pupils' academic performance which is evident in their written exercises, in all subjects. Pupils commit a lot of errors in their writing and this affects their performance. These errors seem to occur due to several factors. In most Ghanaian primary schools, a teacher is assigned to a class to teach all subjects, including the English language, whether the teacher is specialised in it or not.

Ntoaso SDA Basic School is situated in a homogeneous community, Ntoaso, a suburb of Nsawam in the Eastern Region, where English is seldom spoken. The dominant language spoken in the community is Twi. Most parents in the community are farmers and traders who have not received formal education. Pupils speak their local language both in and outside the classroom and even use it to answer questions during lessons. Moreover, library facilities which could have aided pupils to read wide in order to acquire enough vocabulary for good writing is absent in the school and in the community. Also, most pupils do not have access to electricity in their homes to enable them read pieces that are given them by their teachers as extra class assignment. Again, most teachers in the school lack knowledge of the English content but are supposed to teach it since they have been assigned the class, as mentioned earlier. What then will be the outcome of pupils' language as they write?

It is in this light that the current study seeks to analyse the common errors basic four pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School of the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality in the Eastern Region, commit in their English Essays.

1.1   Statement of the Problem

It has been observed that pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School face some difficulties in constructing simple and meaningful sentences. This reflects in their written essays and exercises where they constantly make errors such as wrong spelling of words, wrong use of punctuations, tenses, articles, etc. It has therefore become difficult for teachers to read their scripts, let alone make meaning of their writings. This goes a long way to affect their performance in class exercises, tests and examinations, and later their promotion since they are always marked down due to these errors which most teachers rather see as mistakes.

It is also realised that no free writing is done in the classroom unless it is a composition lesson. As said earlier, library facilities which could have motivated pupils to read wide to enable them acquire enough vocabulary for good writing is absent in the school and in the community. Teachers do not allow pupils to use the textbooks unless it is time for lessons. Pupils seem to commit errors in all aspects of the target language. They usually face difficulties in learning the target language aspects such as subject-verb agreement, spellings, the use of articles, and punctuation. Kahn (2005), in a similar study, investigated errors of 30 form five Malaysian students and found out that the students were weak in grammar. It is believed that learning a second/foreign language is 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.

3

Presada and Badea (2014) analyzed the errors made by students in their transition classes and asserted that this method could help them sort out the real problem. They confirmed that Error Analysis (EA) could lessen the number of errors in their students' work. Errors play an important role in learning a second/foreign language; from these, teachers can determine the level of mastery of language among their students and discover what they still have to learn, unlearn, or relearn. It is important for teachers to recognise the errors that their students commit, because they would have the opportunity to understand the different processes through which these errors are caused. These include borrowing patterns from the mother tongue, extending patterns from the target language, and expressing meanings using words and grammar which are already known (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). In order to better investigate the errors that students commit, teachers and researchers examine the types of errors that learners make and identify the frequency at which these errors appear in the writings of the students. According to Corder (1974) systematically analysing errors made by language learners makes it possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching.

Although errors are seen as a part of the teaching and learning process, it is also significant for teachers to realize that if the errors are not identified and remedied, they may become problematic. For example, in an era in Ghana where students are expected to pass English language before they can gain admission to institutions of higher learning, a fail can prevent them from continuing their education. Several factors can be identified as contributing to the student failing English, and errors have been found to contribute significantly. Where errors appear to overtake one's writing, reading becomes somewhat difficult for the examiner.

Thus far, there has not been any such study in relation to the errors that pupils of Ntoaso S.D.A Basic School commit, although such information would go a long way to expose the

teacher to the types and causes of errors that are seen in their writings. In view of this, the present study focuses on analysing the common errors that Basic 4 pupils of Ntoaso S.D.A Basic School commit in their English writings, the causes of these errors and their implications in the teaching of English language in the school since knowing the sources of learners' errors is an effective way to help reduce them (Bennui, 2008; Penny, 2001).

1.2   Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to identify the common errors basic four pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School commit in their writings. It analysed and discussed the causes of the errors as well as the implications of the findings, and made necessary suggestions to both teachers and learners to help solve the problem identified.

1.3   Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify the common errors primary four pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School commit in their writings.

- Discuss the causes of the errors found.

- Identifypedagogical implications of this situation on the teaching of English language in the basic school.

1.4   Research questions

The study seeks to find answers to the following questions

- What are the common errors that occur in the English writings of Ntoaso SDA Basic 4 School?

- What are the causes of these errors?
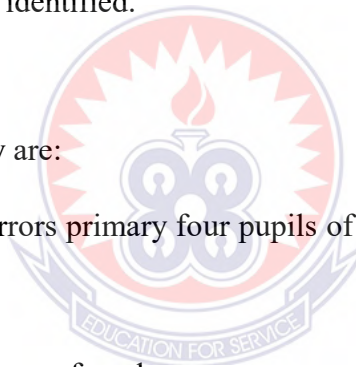
- What are the pedagogical implications of this situation on the teaching of English language in the basic school?

1.5   Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are significant for several reasons. First, it creates awareness in language teachers, about the kinds of errors basic school pupils make in their essays, as well as the sources of these errors. Secondly, it enlightens language teachers on the role error plays in the language acquisition process. Again, the findings of this study reveal to language teachers, aspects of the subject that need more attention in order to devise the appropriate remediation to help pupils out.The results help pupils to identify and correct their own errors with time. In addition, the findings of the study provide language curriculum planners with enough input on how to design appropriate language programs and resources for the basic school. Finally the results serve as a source of reference and add to knowledge on errors in Ghana and beyond.

1.6   Delimitation

The study concentrates on the errors that Basic 4 pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School 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.

1.7   Limitations

This study is limited to only the Primary 4 pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School. It is also limited to the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly in the Eastern Region and its findings cannot be generalized to all Ghanaian pupils. Due to the level of the pupils, the written essays were conducted within the normal instructional hours so it was always difficult to get enough time since the researcher needed to go by the school's time table. Some pupils were also reluctant to submit their scripts on schedule and this somehow delayed the data collection

process. Also, due to financial and time constraints, the study could not focus on the entire school.

1.8   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, sources of error, the significance of errors and related studies. Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology adopted for the study. In this chapter, the instruments and sampling technique used for the study, as well as data analysis, are discussed. The results of the study are discussed in Chapter 4. The analysis revealed that pupils committed spelling, capitalization, punctuation, article, tense, and omission of word errors. Lastly, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion of the study. This includes the summary of findings of the study, the pedagogical implications, as well as suggestions for future research study.
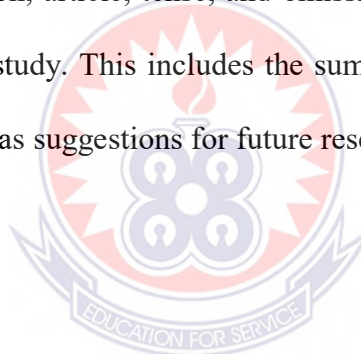
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the concept of error and the distinction between error and mistake. It also discusses the importance of errors in second language learning. The causes of errors and error categorization are also discussed. The chapter finally ends with a discussion on approaches to studying errors as well as related studies on errors in second language acquisition.

2.1   The concept of errors

In language study, errors can be termed as the deviation from the norms or rules of a language. Brown (1994) defines linguistic errors as a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner. For Burt, Duley and Krashen (1982), errors are the flawed side of a learner's speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norms of mature language performance. Errors are studied in order to identify the learning process and the strategies employed in learning another language (Lungu, 2003). The definitions by Brown and Burt et. al, differ from that of Corder (1981), who defines an error in the context of the effectiveness of the utterances made by language users. Corder (1971) identifies what he calls "covertly idiosyncratic" and "overtly idiosyncratic" errors. The former refers to flaws in utterances that are grammatical but do not clearly convey the speaker's intended meaning. Overtly idiosyncratic errors on the other hand, occur in sentences that appear to be ill–formed but whose meaning is transparent to the listeners. Corder's provision of these broad error categories was preceded by that of Burt and Kiparsky (1972). They classified errors in terms of whether they were "global" or "local". Global errors can be considered synonymous with what Corder

8

refers to as covertly idiosyncratic errors while local errors, on the other hand, are synonymous with overtly idiosyncratic ones.

As mentioned by Maicusi and Maicusí (2000), in the language learning process, errors have always been regarded negatively, and must be avoided. As a result, they contend that teachers tend to show a suppressive attitude to their students. On one hand, errors are considered as a failure of teaching process and on the other hand, they are seen as a natural result that can hardly be avoided, so we should deal and learn from them. Therefore, errors can be a very helpful means in learning a second language as Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p. 61) explain, Learners' errors are significant in three ways. (1) They serve a pedagogic purpose by showing teachers what learners have learned and what they have not mastered; (2) they serve a research purpose by providing evidence about how languages are learned; and (3) they serve a learning purpose by acting as devices by which learners can discover the rules of the target language by obtaining feedback on their errors.

2.2   Errors and mistakes

According to Brown (2000), a *mistake* refers to a performance error in that it is the learner's failure to correctly utilize a known system, while an *error* is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner. Corder (1967 cited in Karra, 2006) refers to mistakes as unsystematic errors and systematic ones as errors. Unsystematic errors occur in one's native language and are not significant to the process of language learning. Systematic ones, on the other hand, occur when learning a second language. It can therefore be said that errors are systematic deviation from the norms. An error cannot be self-corrected but for a mistake, if the deviation is pointed out to the speaker/writer, it can be corrected. Another way of identifying the difference between an error

9

and a mistake is by looking at the frequency of a deviation. The identification of an error by observing, analysing, and classifying to reveal what actually is operating within the learner's writing leads to error analysis.

A learner's errors are a reflection of a lack of understanding of the underlying competence in the language that is being learnt (Mezrag, 2013). Likewise, Ellis (1997) explains that errors reflect the gaps in the learner's knowledge; that is, an error is produced due to the fact that the learner cannot identify what is correct and incorrect. In contrast, a mistake reflects a learner's inefficient performance. This occurs because the learner is not able to correctly perform what one already knows. Jie (2008) also notes that a mistake occurs as a result of processing an undesirable habit rather than a lack of competence while an error is the breaches of rules of code. According to Jie (2008), an error happens from lack of requisite knowledge of a language learner. As such, one makes such errors in one's writing because one does not know the grammatical properties in the new language. The rules of L1 knowledge are then employed in L2 writing. From this explanation, it is reasonable to say that in language learning, an error is what learners commit in their L2 writing because they do not know the syntactic as well as the lexical structures of the second language whereas a mistake is in relation to the learners' low competence in using a second language. This distinction is crucial in this study because the researcher has to give a threshold of what becomes an error and what will be termed as a mistake.

2.3   Types of Errors

Errors found in second language learners' writing are analysed and categorized into various types. An error may vary in magnitude; it can include a phoneme, a morpheme, a word, a sentence or even a paragraph. Due to this, errors can be viewed as being global or local as

10

advocated by Brown (2000). For Brown, global errors hinder communication and they affect the structure of the entire sentence, such as a missing essential part of the sentence subject or verb. They prevent the sentence from being comprehended. On the other hand, local errors do not necessarily prevent the message from being understood because there is usually a minor violation of one segment of a sentence that allows the hearer to guess the intended meaning. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) propose four types of errors to explain how sentences deviate from the correct forms because the learners change the surface structure. These categories are discussed below.

2.3.1   Omission Errors

Omission is indicated by the absence of a certain item that must appear in a sentence. This usually happens in the early stages of second language acquisition. Example:

a. *She like rice* instead of *She likes rice*.

b. *He is good boy* instead of *He is a good boy*.

c. *My best friend name* instead of *My best friend's name*.

d. *The boy sick* instead of *The boy is sick*.

In the sentences above, some items which are required were omitted. Verbs are inflected with an –s when the third person singular pronoun like she, he and it, is used but this was omitted in the first sentence. Again in English, countable nouns especially singular forms must always have articles. This was not done in the second and third sentences

2.3.2   Misformation Errors

Misformation is indicated by the use of wrong forms of certain morphemes or structures. Unlike omission errors where an item is exempted. In misformation, the learner supplies an item

11

though it does not conform to the accepted norm. There are three sub-types of misformation errors. They are as follows:

2.3.2.1 Regularization

a. Regularization errors are errors in which regular markers are used in place of irregular ones. Examples:

1. *singed* instead of *sang* .

2. *growed* instead of *grew.*

3. *furnitures* istead of *furniture*.

4. *Womens* instead of *women.*

In these sentences, regular markers of past tense verbs as in sentences (1) and (2) as well as regular nouns as in sentences (3) and (4) were used for irregular ones.

2.3.2.2 Archi–forms

Here, the learner selects a marker of one member of a class to represent another in the class. The form selected by the learner is called archi–forms. For instance, in the use of demonstrative adjectives this, that, these, and those, the following are what the learner produces;

a. *This books are mine* instead of *This book is mine.*

b. *That girls came here* instead of *That girl came here.*

c. *These bag is nice* instead of *These bags are nice.*

d. *Those pencil got lost* instead of *Those pencils got lost.*

This and *that* should be followed by singular forms, while *these* and *those* should be followed by the plural forms but as in the sentences above, they were wrongly used.

2.3.2.3   Alternating forms

As learners develop more vocabulary and grammar, the use of archi-forms often develop into free alternation of various members of the class with each other. Examples:

a. *We have come here yesterday* instead of *We came here yesterday*.

b. *They should have went there* instead of *They should have gone there.*

2.3.3   Misordering Errors

Misordering is indicated by the incorrect placement of certain morphemes. Examples:

a.   *She slaps all the time her son* instead of *She slaps her son all the time.*

b.   *You are eating rice?* instead of *Are you eating rice?*

2.3.4   Addition Errors

Addition is indicated by the presence of an unwanted item in a sentence. Linguistically, this unwanted item should not appear in a well-formed utterance. This happens when the learner overuse certain grammatical rules of the target language. Example: *He must to go* instead of *He must go.* Haryono (2011) categorizes addition errors into three types as below:

2.3.4.1 Double Marking

These addition errors are described as the failure to delete certain items which are not required in the linguistic construction. Examples:

a. *She didn't brushed her teeth* instead of *She didn't brush her teeth*.

b. *I wanted to swept the room* instead of *I wanted to sweep the room*.

In both sentences, two items rather than one are marked for the same feature.

13

2.3.4.2 Regularization

Regularization errors refers those having exceptional items of the given class that do not take a marker's form. For example,

a. *Foots* instead of *feet* (plural for foot)

b. *Mouses* instead of *mice* (plural for mouse)

c. *Goed* instead of *went* (past tense for go)

d. *Sleeped* instead of *slept* (past tense for sleep)

In the examples above, it is realized that irregular names and tenses rather took regular form markers respectively in (a), (b) and (c), (d).

2.3.4.3 Simple Addition

These errors refer to the addition of an element to the correct utterance. Examples:

a. *I am is a girl* instead of *I am a girl*.

b. *He can to wash the shirt* instead of *He can wash the shirt*.

In addition, James (1998) suggests a category which is;

2.3.4   Blends

Blends occurs when two or more morphemes that have the same function appear in a sentence. Example:

a.   *The only one thing I know* instead of *The only thing I know*.

b.   *Both of the two girls* instead of *Both girls*.

2.4   Causes of Errors

It is very essential to know the source of errors learners commit in their writing because it helps the teacher to provide the appropriate remediation. Though knowing the source of an error is essential in language teaching, there is not a generalized agreement on the sources by

14

researchers. For instance, errors may emanate from first language (L1) habits, psychological state of the learner, teaching methods, styles of course materials and introduction of written language. In the opinion of Touchie (1989), language learning errors consist of components like phonological, morphological, lexical, and syntactic. Brown (2002) classifies second language error sources into two main categories. These are L1 interference and intralingual and developmental factors. The intralingual and developmental errors are subdivided into simplification, overgeneralization, hypercorrection and faulty teaching. Other subcategories are fossilization, avoidance, inadequate learning and false concepts hypothesized. In another development, Richards (1971) categorizes sources of second language errors into three which include interference errors, intralingual errors and developmental errors to build up hypotheses. According to Richards, intralingual errors can be broken into overgeneralization, ignorance of rules, incomplete application of rules and false hypothesis. As a result of criticisms from Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977), Richards combined intralingual errors and developmental errors into one and states that two major sources of errors are interlingual errors and intralingual errors. For him, the first refers to errors caused when learners wrongly transfer the rules of their first language to the target language as they produce sentences.

The second one is caused during the learners' language learning process and such errors include overgeneralization and false analogy. Heydari and Bagheri (2012) also suggest that interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer are the two main sources of errors committed by English learners. Based on her study, Penny (2001) also concludes that there are two sources of language errors namely interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. Likewise, Kaweera (2013) argues that interlingual interference and intralingual interference are the two major sources of errors in language learning. He explains interlingual transfer error as negative transfer of the

15

learner's first language while intralingual involves errors caused by the learner's incomplete knowledge of the target language. Besides, Hinno (2004) differently proposes that there are three sources of errors which are negative transfer of the mother tongue, limited knowledge of the target language and the difference between words and sentence structures of the mother tongue and those of the target language. Finally, James (1998:178) identifies the following as sources of second language errors: interference errors or interlingual tranfer, intralingual transfer, communication strategy-based errors and induced errors. These error sources are explained in the following sections:

2.4.1 Interlingual transfer

Interlingual transfer mostly occurs when one is learning a second language. Here, the second language learner frequently transfers L1 structures to the L2. When this happens, the second language learner produces what Latiff and Bakar (2007) term as *interlanguage*; the language produced by second language learners or foreign language learners in the process of learning a target language. Such transfer can be either positive or negative. Positive transfer leads to the facilitation of learning while negative transfer leads to error. Second language learners often write statements like *I have pen (Mewɔ kyerewdua)* instead of *I have a pen,* omitting the article 'a'. This happens because theoretically, Akan is less marked with reference to the articles a/an. Hence, learners tend to ignore such articles in their L2 written production which is a direct transfer from their L1. Another example of the L1 transfer is *Girl beautiful (Abeawa fɛɛfɛ)* instead of *A beautiful girl.* This is due to the fact that in Akan, adjectives mostly appear after nouns which seem to be a grammatical error in the target language. The language teacher, if not familiar with the learner's native language, might not be able to detect and analyse such errors.

16

2.4.2   Intralingual transfer

Intralingual transfer is one within the target language itself. This occurs when learners begin to acquire new structures in the target language. As learners progress in the, their experiences begin to include structures in the target language. This causes negative intralingual transfer or overgeneralization. Here students fail to apply the rules they have learnt in the target language correctly. Some errors caused by learning strategies include:

2.4.2.1   False analogy

Here, the learner assumes that a new item behaves like the one already learnt. For instance, he or she has learnt that the past tense of *play* is *played* and so assumes that the same rule applies to *sing*. So, this child writes *singed* as the past tense of *sing* which is not right.

2.4.2.2   Misanalysis

Learners resort to wrong hypothesis. For example the sentence, *ICT tools and its uses* shows that the learner assumes that when an *s* is added to it, you have a plural form, hence a false concept is formed. This results in the learner misanalysing the target language.

2.4.2.3   Incomplete rule application

This can be said to be the opposite of overgeneralization as the learners do not apply all the rules. They rather change or decrease the complicated rules to simpler rules since they aim at simplification rather than attempt to get the whole complex structure. An example is seen in: They showed me *who is their father* instead of *who their father is*. Here, learners have used a wh – element but have failed to invert the subject and verb.

2.4.2.4   Overgeneralization

This occurs when learners misuse words or grammatical rules. For instance, in the sentence, *The boy that came here,* the learner used a relative pronoun *that* instead of *who* and that is an error.

17

2.4.3 Communication strategy-based errors

This source is characterized by holistic strategies or approximation. Here, learners lack the required form of the language item so they tend to use an equivalent or another near item in the target language. It takes a number of forms. The first is to use a synonym. The second is to coin a word. For instance, using *leave* in place of *live.*

2.4.4 Induced Errors

These errors are the result of learners being misled by the way teachers give definitions, examples, explanations and present a structure as well as wrong pattern of drills. In other words, these errors are caused mostly by the teaching and learning process as follows:

2.4.4.1 Teacher–talk induced errors

This kind of errors might be caused by both, native or non–native teachers if they do not provide models of the standard TL in class.

2.4.4.2 Materials–induced errors

Teaching materials such as textbooks, pamphlets, pictures and flash cards with errors make the learners confused and they make similar errors in their course of learning the target language.

2.4.4.3 Exercised–based induced errors

The learners make errors while doing exercises especially on sentence combining when the teacher has provided the learners with two different sentences to put together. For instance, if learners have been taught that *if* is equivalent to *when*, and they are given these sentences (*I will eat* and *the food is rice*) to combine, this is what they will produce; *I will eat when the food is rice* instead of *I will eat if the food is rice*.

2.4.4.4   Errors induced by pedagogical priorities

Learners' achievement tends to match with teacher expectations based on what they wish to achieve. Some teachers choose to prioritize one of the following: accuracy, fluency or the idiomatic in teaching communication. Thus, if fluency is considered as superior, accuracy would have lower priority or vice versa.

2.4.4.5   Look–up errors

There are many learners' dictionaries and grammar books which provide guidelines on how to search aspects of the L2. However, learners fail to read them and as a result, they are unable to build their vocabulary stock. In addition, the learners sometimes incorrectly use the new words from the dictionary or get incorrect references from the grammar books, leading to the errors in their writings/utterances.

2.5   Approaches to the study of errors

According to Latiff and Bakar (2007), 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. The first three approaches are discussed in this chapter.

2.5.1   Contrastive Analysis:

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is a comparison of two different languages. It compares the native language with the target language with the purpose of determining similarities and differences between the two. Contrastive analysis holds the view that the structure of the first language affects the acquisition of the second language (Lado, 1957 cited in Brown, 2002). This theory originated from Lado's _Linguistic across cultures_ and underpinned linguistically and psychologically by structuralism and behaviorism respectively. Contrastive Analysis, which is

19

the primary approach to the study of L1 interference, focuses on the comparison of the linguistic systems of the two languages, especially the sound and grammar systems of L1 and L2 to identify learning problems in a second language, mainly caused by the interference of the first language and to find solutions to L2 instruction problems (Richards & Schmidt, 2002).

Contrastive Analysis is seen to be crucial because, for Thep-Akrapong (2005), there are many errors in the L2 which are attributed to the negative interference of the native language on the target language and for years, it was believed that errors in foreign language learning were caused exclusively by mother tongue interference. However, CA as a theory was not successful in predicting difficulties (Hughes, 1980) and through contest alongside the development of research into CA, it has been concluded that errors are not caused by language transfer only but that they may also stem from the internal structures of each language. It also lacks any satisfactory measure of difference. In the view of Wardhaugh (1970), the assumption of CA is quite unrealistic and unpredictable, and it is considered simplistic in terms of L2 acquisition.

The claim of Contrastive Analysts that the native language is the main factor affecting L2 learner's errors is therefore limited in argument. Even in those cases, the tests are unintentionally biased in favour of analysis; they were designed to detect the errors the analysis predicted and no other error. As a result of criticism, Wardhaugh (1970) proposed the "weak version" which recognizes the significance of interference across languages. Oller and Ziahosseiny (1970) however proposed a moderate version to fill the gap between the two earlier versions. The moderate version holds the view that interference is more likely to occur when there is similarity between the items to be learned and already known items (Brown, 2006). Although there exist challenges, the concept of L1 interference still stands as part of error analysis in L2 acquisition.

2.5.2   Interlanguage

Interlanguage is the type of language produced by second language or foreign language learners in the process of learning a target language (Latiff & Bakar, 2007). The term 'Interlanguage' was first introduced by Selinker in 1969 in reference to the ''interim grammars constructed by second language learners on their way to the target language'' (Mclaughlin, 1987, p 60). According to Mclaughlin, Interlanguage can mean two things: the learner's system at a single point in time as well as the range of interlocking systems that characterizes the development of learners over time. For James (1998), interlanguage is a system which holds a half-way position between knowing and not knowing the target language. Interlanguage can also be explained as the L2 learners' language system structured between the native language and the target language. It is an *approximate system* (Namser, 1971 cited in Brown, 2006) because the learner makes successive attempts towards the target language.

Interlanguage is synonymous with learner language, and Coder calls it *transitional competence*. Learner language has empirically been found to be systematic, dynamic, variable and simplified; both formally and functionally, relative to the target language and the learner's native language (Saville-Troike, 2006). 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 (Brown, 2007).

2.5.3   Error Analysis (EA)

To fill the gap created by contrastive analysis, Error Analysis (EA) emerged in the 1960s to demonstrate that the errors L2 learners make are not always due to the learners' native language but due to other complex factors. Maicusi, Maicusi and Lopex (2000) suggest that

21

Error Analysis is supplanted contrastive analysis (CA) and becomes a recognized part of applied linguistics. According to Coder (1975), EA is reserved for the study of erroneous utterances produced by groups of learners' language. Keshavarz (1997) suggests that there are two branches of error analysis; theoretical and applied. According to him, theoretical error analysis is concerned with process and strategies of second language learning and similarities with first language acquisition. Applied error analysis, on the other hand, deals with organizing remedial courses and adapting appropriate materials and teaching strategies based on the findings of theoretical error analysis.

James (2001) describes Error Analysis as the alternative approach used to investigate the errors in the target language which are ignored by L2 students. In other words, this ignorance is occasionally from the misuse of the linguistic properties that the users do not know how to deal with. Jie (2008) endorses Error Analysis, which has been prominently selected to analyse the errors caused by the influence of the mother tongue. Clearly seen, error analysis does not only assist researchers to identify L1 interference in the target language but also help L2 learners understand why they make such errors and start learning to correct them. As stressed by AbiSamra (2003), Error Analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language and the target language itself (Abeywickrama, 2010). This indicates that language errors do not only result from L1 interference but other sources which include overgeneralization, simplification, development, communication, avoidance and overproduction (Richards and Schmidt, 2002).

Error Analysis deals with the learners' performance in terms of cognitive processes. It recognizes the input learners receive from the language. The basis of Error Analysis is the fact that learners provide us with an understanding of the underlying process of second language

acquisition (Erdogan, 2005). Xu (2004) states that trained and sophisticated language teachers have undoubtedly applied Error Analysis to one degree or another for decades since it came to being. They have studied their students' recurring mistakes, classified them into categories and used them as the basis for preparing lessons and materials designed to remediate such errors. In support of this, Nonkukhetkong (2013) asserts that the analysis of errors found in learners' pieces of writing can be very helpful. Some scholars employed Error Analysis, one of the famous methods in writing classes, to improve students' writing performance. Presada and Badea (2014) for instance, analysed the causes of errors made by students in their translation classes and asserted that this method could help them sort out the real problem. They confirmed that Error Analysis could lessen the number of errors in their students' work. Again, Zafar (2016) states that Error Analysis is an effective tool to improve her business students' writing ability after a two-month remedial writing course.

Another scholar who approves Error Analysis is Hinno (2004). Hinno confirms that Error Analysis is beneficial after her long period of study of literature related to Error Analysis. She mentions that error analysis can help teachers to prepare accurate and precise teachings which are suitable for their students. Nevertheless, Error Analysis is also criticized as a model with confused explanatory (process) and descriptive aspects (product) and that the error categories lack precision and specification (Dulay, Burt & Krashen, 1982). James (1998) indicates that EA does not take into consideration the strategy of avoidance in L2 learning. Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977, cited in Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016) 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. Notwithstanding, error analysis has

23

added a layer to the analysis and classification of L2 students' errors (Owu-Ewie & Lomotey, 2016). The concept of Error Analysis hence helps to reveal the types and sources of errors which could lead to an effective way of reducing errors made by L2 learners.

2.6.   Importance of errors in language learning

Language learning, like any kind of human endeavour, involves committing errors. Previously, language teachers considered errors as something unacceptable which they try hard to prevent from occurring (Touchie, 1986). Most second language teachers also think that every error students commit should be corrected to make them excellent. In recent times, second language teachers and even first researchers in the area of applied linguistics have identified that errors are significant in language learning. They have noted that students' errors are evidence of what they are learning and how they are learning. It makes language teachers aware of how learners acquire the second language. In effect, errors are no longer seen as nuisance in the classroom which should be terminated by all means but are seen as enhancing second language learning. For the learners themselves, errors can be regarded as a device that one uses in order to learn. Gass and Selinker (2001) define errors as 'red flags' that provide evidence of the learners' knowledge of the second language. Selinker (1969; cited in Brown, 2002) has noted errors in two important ways. First, errors make the language teacher aware of the progress of learners in the language learning process. Second, it gives language researchers an insight into how language is learnt and lastly, errors help language teachers to get involved in hypothesis testing to know whether what their students have learned is being used appropriately. This implies that errors in language learning have importance to the language learner, language researcher and the language. Richards (1971) from a linguistic, psycholinguistic and pedagogic perspective sees errors language learners commit as having the following importance:

24

1. Linguistically, it helps us to discover what constitutes human intelligence

2. Psycholinguistically, errors can reveal mental process involved in language

3. Pedagogically, errors help language teachers identify and analyse learners' errors and design appropriate ways of dealing with these errors.

Other studies by Karra (2006), Mohammed (2013) and Jabeen, Kazemian and Shahbaz (2015) have identified the following as the importance of errors in language teaching and learning: They help the teacher to know a student's progress, provide feedback; they tell the researcher something about the effectiveness of one's teaching techniques, and show one what parts of the syllabus has been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention. Errors enable the teacher to decide whether he must devote more time to the item he has been teaching and provide information for designing a remedial syllabus or a program of re-teaching. Lastly, errors show how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner uses and help the learner to learn from these errors.

2.7   Related Studies

The analysis of the production of errors shows quite clearly that all systematic errors produced by the learner has a source. According to Xu (2004), such errors provide evidence for a much more complex view of the learning process, in which the learner is considered as an active participant in the formation of and revision of hypotheses regarding the rules of the target language. As indicated earlier, some of the errors second language learners commit come from the L2. Kim (1998) in a study to investigate errors in English verbs with reference to tense, mood, and voice found that mood were the most frequently committed errors followed by errors in tense. This study was conducted among Korean EFL students who were asked to translate Korean sentences to English. Kim noted that the errors originated from overgeneralization which

occurred most while L1 transfer and simplification had the least occurrence. Again, Kim (2002) conducted a study to examine the sources and the nature of learners' errors. He used 30 writing samples of Korean students from college freshman students who were registered for TOEIC class. Most of the learner's errors were in the areas of verbs, prepositions, articles, plural/singular agreement, adjectives and conjunctions. The study showed that most of the learners' errors were developmental errors.

Another research worthy of study for this research is the work of Bataineh (2005). Battaineh in a study to identify the kinds of errors committed by Jordanian first, second, third and fourth year minority EFL students identified nine types of errors. 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. Other errors 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. Chuang (2005) in a similar study identified a number of errors and an examination of all the errors showed that the foundation of students' formal errors fell into broad categories. The top ten categories were determiners, nouns, verbs, grammatical prepositions, lexical misconceptions, punctuations, sentence parts, tenses and aspects, modals and lexical-grammatical prepositions, and lastly syntactic complementation of a word. A further examination showed that the top ten most frequently error features were missing definite article, bare singular count noun for plural, redundant definite article, mis-selection of preposition, lexical misconception, wrong tense and aspect non-agreement, wrong collocation, missing a/an and lastly comma splice all in the target language.

Likewise, Huang (2006) presents an analysis of 34 Taiwanese English majors writing errors based on web-based writing programme. They included categories of grammar, mechanics, style and usage. He then concluded that the most EFL students' errors were not due to insufficient command of linguistic complexity. On the contrary, the students made basic errors such as subject-verb-agreement or incomplete sentences indicating intralingual errors. Of the three elements of writing; content, organization and language, it is reasonable to say that language has been considered the most difficult for L2 writers due to their limited language proficiency or limited linguistic knowledge. Silver (1993) explains that inadequate language knowledge at times, leads to ineffective L2 writing on account of the difference between the first and second language.

Furthermore, Weigle (2002) advocates that because of the constraints of limited second language knowledge, writing in a second language may be hampered due to the need to focus on language rather than content. She also confirms that it is impossible for L2 students to write properly in a second language without linguistic knowledge regarding grammar and vocabulary. That is, L2 writing can be more difficult if learners are not able to acquire the syntactic properties of the English languages, which makes them rely on their first language as well as overgeneralise rules when writing in a second language.

Obviously, from the above discussion, it is realized that there is a peculiar problem impeding the effective writing of second language learners. The causes can emanate from ignorance and inappropriate use of L2 rules as well as the difference between the L1 and the L2 systems. Sarfaz (2011) argues that though students are taught grammatical rules of target language, they lack practice and positive feedback.Due to this, L2 writers employ their own systems, eventually leading to errors in their writing.

2.8   Conclusion

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

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter presents with the methodology and research design that was adopted to carry out the research. It also discusses the sources of data, population and sampling, sampling size of the study and the factors that informed the researcher's choice of the sample population. It also talked about the procedures that were used to collect data for the study. The reliability and validity of the research instruments are also discussed.

3.1   Research Design

Creswell (1994) describes research design as a master plan specifying the research methods and procedures. This study analyses the errors made by primary four pupils of Ntoaso S.D.A. Primary School. Kothari (2004) describes research design as a plan, a roadmap and a blueprint strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions. In addition, Owu-Ewie (2012) confirms that research design provides the most valid and accurate answers possible to the research questions stated. In this study, the qualitative research design was used. For Owu-Ewie (2012), a qualitative research implies a detailed verbal description of characteristics, case and setting by using interviews, observations and documents as the data collecting procedure. Therefore, different data sources were employed to identify errors in the written essays of primary four pupils of Ntoaso S.D.A. Basic School. A qualitative content analysis of the students' writings was conducted based on the error analysis approach. As Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2006 p. 464) state that, "content or document analysis is a research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified

characteristics of the material". For this, the written essays of the learners were analysed for the common errors they commit.

3.2   Population and Sampling

According to Best and Kahn (2006), population is a group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common and of interest to the researcher. For Creswell (2013), it 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 186 pupils. The researcher chose the Basic Four 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 primary four pupils.

The ages of learners are between 10-12 years and have been introduced to English language within three years and above. It is obvious that the pupils in this class have acquired basic writing skills needed in writing simple and short essays. Ntoaso S.D.A. Basic School was selected because that is where the researcher teaches and has identified the problem in the course of marking pupils' exercises, tests and homework. The pupils are taught with Akuapem Twi and therefore face some challenges in their English writing since most of the language patterns differ in the target language. Due to this, pupils commit errors and that depict their knowledge or lack of it in the use of the language.

3.3   Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is known as sampling (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2001). 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 52 pupils from primary four which involves 34 girls and 18 boys. In

sampling, a portion that represents the whole population is selected (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001). In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling to select the Primary Four pupils since she needed to "choose who to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data" (Parahoo1997, p. 232).The researcher selected this class because that is the class she teaches and it involves pupils of different intellectual abilities and therefore serves as a better representative of the pupils. The researcher also considered time and money in selecting this sample rather than trying to study the entire population. The target population was 52 pupils out of a total of 186 pupils.

3.4   Source of Data

Creswell (2013) affirms that research instruments involve data collection and are designed to answer research questions. This study made use of pupils' written essays, forming the basic source of data to answer the research questions. Written essays were given to pupils since they are the outcome of a planned language production. The researcher informed the school authorities and the pupils about the study in order to ensure some level of co-operation throughout the study.

3.5   Instruments for Data Collection

A research instrument is a systematically prepared document purposely designed through compilation of questions to elicit responses from respondents with the aim of collecting data (Parahoo, 1997). Parahoo argues that a research instrument is a systematically prepared form or document purposely designed through compilation of questions to elicit responses from respondents with the aim of collecting data. Hence, the researcher used pupils' written essays for the study. The main objective of this study is to analyse pupils' writing errors, hence the use of written essays as the major instrument of the study. The pupils were given writing test in the

form of open essay questions. They were given adequate guidance on how many words to write. They were then given a time limit of 40 minutes. The purpose of the essay was to identify the types of errors pupils commit and classify them accordingly. Some topics that pupils were asked to write on included *How I spent the Christmas holidays, My best friend*, and *how to prepare my favourite food*. The researcher scored the written essays per the West African Examination Council marking scheme. The breakdown of the marks were as follows: Content (10 marks), Organization (5 marks), Expression (10 marks) and Mechanical Accuracy (5 marks).

3.6   Data Analysis

The Error Analysis Approach which is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the forms of language writing and speaking (Richards & Schmidt, 2002) was used to analyse errors in pupils' written essays. The written essays were collected from the 52 pupils that are the sample for the study. The following steps as outlined by Gass and Selinker (2001) were used: *Data collection, identification of errors and a statement of error frequency*. The written essays were read, marked and 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 pupils.The errors were categorized into tense, articles, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and omission of word errors.

3.7   Reliability and Validity

Reliability, according to Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001), is referred to as the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure. 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. Validity, on the other hand, is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Parahoo et. al). The

researcher presented the essay topics to the head teacher and other two teachers in the school to evaluate in order to ensure their content validity based on the standardized level of pupils.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the procedure that was employed for the study. It presented the population and sample size, the source of data, the instrument used for data collection as well as the technique that was used to analyse and interpret data. The next chapter discusses the results obtained from the data that collected from pupils' written essays.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained from the analysis of the data collected. It analyses errors found in the written essays of pupils. The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section presents an analysis of common errors committed by learners in their writing. Such errors include capitalization errors, punctuation errors, spelling errors, tense errors, article errors, and word omission errors. From this, capitalization errors had the highest frequency with word omission errors being the lowest. The second section discusses the causes of these errors based on the findings.

Based on the findings of the study, several factors were realized to be the causes of errors in learners' writings. On capitalization, 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 was due to ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete learning of rules as well as L1 interference. Spelling errors was due to incomplete learning of rules which led learners to add incorrect elements, omitted needed elements and in other cases substituted letters in words. Tense errors on the other hand, occurred due to overgeralization where learners used verbs wrongly leading to distortion of the meaning of their utterances. Also, on article errors, learners used articles wrongly and in some cases where articles were needed, they were omitted. Finally, learners omitted words such as prepositions and linking verbs making their utterances incomplete. The analysed data have been represented in simple percentages and bar chart. These are further explained with examples in their various sections.

4.1   Categories of Learners' Writing Errors

The errors were identified and categorized into different error types by the researcher. The errors identified in pupils' essays were counted and rated in percentages in relation to their frequency. They were punctuation errors, spelling errors, tense errors, capitalization errors, word-omission errors, and article errors. The individual error types are discussed in the sections below.

4.1.1   Punctuation Errors

Punctuation, according to Sekyi-Baidoo (2013), constitutes a set of symbols and marks which are used to clarify meaning in text by separating strings of words into clauses, phrases and sentences. They communicate the author's intensions and show how a sentence is constructed and should be read. For Christensen, Gotoh, and Renals (2001), punctuation marks include comma, colon, exclamation mark, question mark, semicolon, quotation marks, apostrophe, and full stop. Punctuation errors occur when any of these marks is omitted (McCuen & Winkler, 2000). The analysis showed that 72 errors were committed with respect to punctuation. This involved wrong use of punctuation marks and omission of punctuations marks. These are further explained and discussed as follows.

4.1.1.1 Wrong use of punctuation

This kind of error occurs when a learner uses a punctuation mark inappropriately in a written text. Some of these errors are seen in the following sentences:

1. 2 *brother's* and 3 *sister's*. (brothers/sisters)

2. He *come's* from Greater Accra. (comes)

3. She *go,s* to church at S.D.A. (goes)

4. *On,* 21st. (On 21st,).

35

5. *There.* I found a boy. (There,)

In sentences (1) and (2), the apostrophe, usually used to indicate the omission of a letter or letters from a word, or the genitive case, was wrongly used by some of the learners. The comma (,) is used in sentences to indicate the list of items or a pause in sentences but was used wrongly as in sentences (3) and (4). Again, the full stop which should be used to indicate the end or completion of a statement was also used wrongly as in sentence (5).

4.1.1.2 Omission of punctuation

An omission occurs when an item which must be present in a well-formed sentence or utterance is absent. Punctuation marks are put in a sentence for a reason, thus, to make the meaning clear (Woods, 2001). Hence, their omission will hinder the meaning of a sentence. In this category, learners omitted punctuation marks such as comma, full stop and apostrophe which were required to make meaningful sentences. The following sentences illustrate instances where such errors were made by learners.

1. She is 10 years old (.)

2. Her parents are *Mr* and *Mrs* Seyome. (Mr. and Mrs.)

3. Her *father name* is Mr. Osei. (father's name)

4. He *doesnt* like insulting. (doesn't)

5. *At home I ate fufu.* (At home, I ate fufu.)

In sentences (1) and (2), the full stop (.), used to mark the end of a statement and abbreviation were omitted. Again, as in sentence (3), the apostrophe ('), used to show the possession as in *father's name* was also omitted. Furthermore, in sentence (4), the same apostrophe (') which indicates the short form of *does not* was omitted. Finally, the comma, used as a pause after the word *home as* in sentence (5) is omitted. These are all errors because they do not indicate

36

completion of the sentence in the case of omission of the full stop while those that omitted the comma did not help to indicate the tone and the pause in the sentence. These errors are attributed to the ignorance of rule restrictions. The findings of the study has shown that punctuation is very important in writing; without it, it would be difficult to make sense out of what is written (Awad, 2012).Table 1 shows the sub-categorization of punctuation errors made by learners.

Table 1. Summary of Punctuation Errors

Type of punctuation error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of punctuation	16	22.22
Omission of punctuation	56	77.78
Total	**72**	**100**

Table 1 represents the sub categorization of the punctuation errors discussed in this section. This information is illustrated in Figure 1.

From Figure 1, it is evident that punctuation errors due to omission are the highest recorded in this category with 56 out of 72 occurrences representing 77.78% of the total number while wrong use of punctuation recorded the lowest with 16 out of 72 instances representing 22.22% of the total errors found in the data.
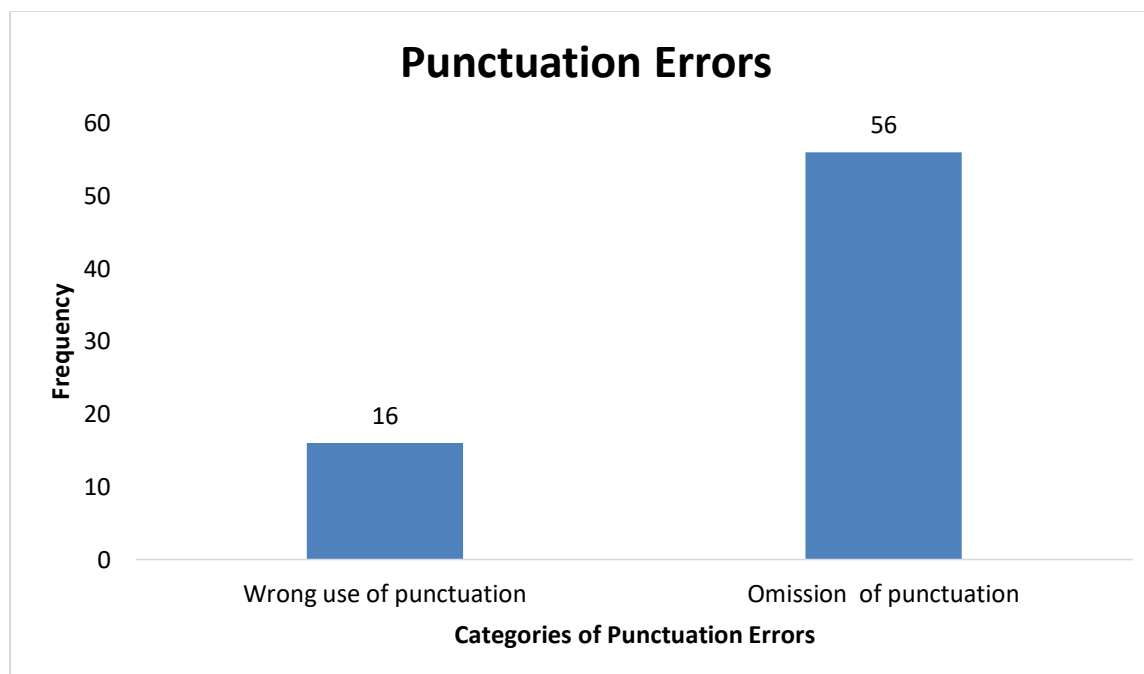
Figure 1. Summary of Punctuation Errors

In a related study, Avomah & Apam (2014) examined the level of punctuation errors among students in Ghanaian Polytechnics. Data were collected using test results on an unpunctuated passage and a written speech. Results of the study revealed that students of the Polytechnics have great challenges in identifying punctuation marks in written text. Awad (2012) also investigated the most common punctuation errors which the English and the TEFL majors at An-Najah National University make in their writing. He found that the participants used punctuation marks inappropriately by using commas in place of full stops. These findings indicate that students really have difficulty in the use of punctuation as seen in the current study.

To help reduce errors of punctuation, the researcher agrees with Stevenson (2005) that students should be encouraged to use punctuation since it is very necessary in language production. Many students do not know how to place the right mark in the appropriate place. Teachers should provide their students with short pieces of unpunctuated texts to help them apply punctuation marks correctly. 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. In this regard, Pumki (2005) opines that, teachers should teach students to value punctuation marks as much as letters and words for conveying meaning since the wrong use of punctuation can interrupt the meaning of ideas.

4.1.2   Capitalization errors

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. From the errors made by learners in this study, those on capitalization were the highest recorded. In some cases, pupils used the upper case where lowercase letters are to be used (e.g. **kumasi** instead of **Kumasi**) and vice versa (e.g. plays **Football** instead of **football**). The analysis showed that 175 errors were made on capitalization. This involves omission of capital letters and the use of capital letters where they were not required.

4.1.2.1 Omission of capital letters

A critical look at the learners' essays revealed that a basic sentence which needs to begin with a capital letter, was rather written without it. In other cases, proper names did not begin with capital letters. These are some examples of such errors:

1. *on* that day, I took my outfit to the tailor. (On)

2. *her* best subject. (Her)

3. My best friend is *nana kwame*. (Nana Kwame)

4. He attends school at *sakyikrom*. (Sakyikrom)

5. 30th*december*. (December)

39

From the examples, *on and her* as in sentences (1) and (2) respectively, begin the sentences and should start with capital letters but was replaced with lower case letters. This is wrong because a basic sentence must begin with a capital letter. Its omission therefore distorts its meaning since the reader will not know where a thought being expressed begins or ends. Also, *nana kwame* as in sentence (3), *sakyikrom* as in sentence (4) and *december* as in sentence (5) are proper nouns and must begin with uppercase letters. However, they were written beginning with lowercase letters. This problem is due to incomplete learning of rules which resulted in the learners' inability to distinguish between proper and common nouns.

4.1.2.2 Incorrect use of capital letters.

Here, some learners used uppercase letters where they were not required. Examples of such cases are found in the following sentences:

1. I *Played* football. (played)

2. She *Stays* at Ntoaso. (stays)

3. Her *parentS*. (parents)

4. From 27th*uP* to 30th. (up)

5. Christmas *HolyDays*. (Holidays)

The sentences stated above show that the words *played, stays, parents, up and holydays* are each written beginning with a capital letter which is grammatically wrong. This is due to the ignorance of rule restrictions. It is also attributed to the pupils' improper hand writing. Table 2 presents the sub-categorization of capitalization errors in terms of omission and incorrect use of capital letters.

40

Table 2. Summary of Capitalization Errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Omission of capital letters	78	44.57
Incorrect use capital letters	97	55.43
Total	**175**	**100**

The information in Table 2 is illustrated in Figure 2. From Figure 2, errors in terms of incorrect use of capital letters are the highest recorded in this category. It recorded 97 out of 175 occurrences representing 55.43% of the total number while errors in omission of capital letters recorded the lowest with 78 instances representing 22.22% out of the total number of errors found in the data.
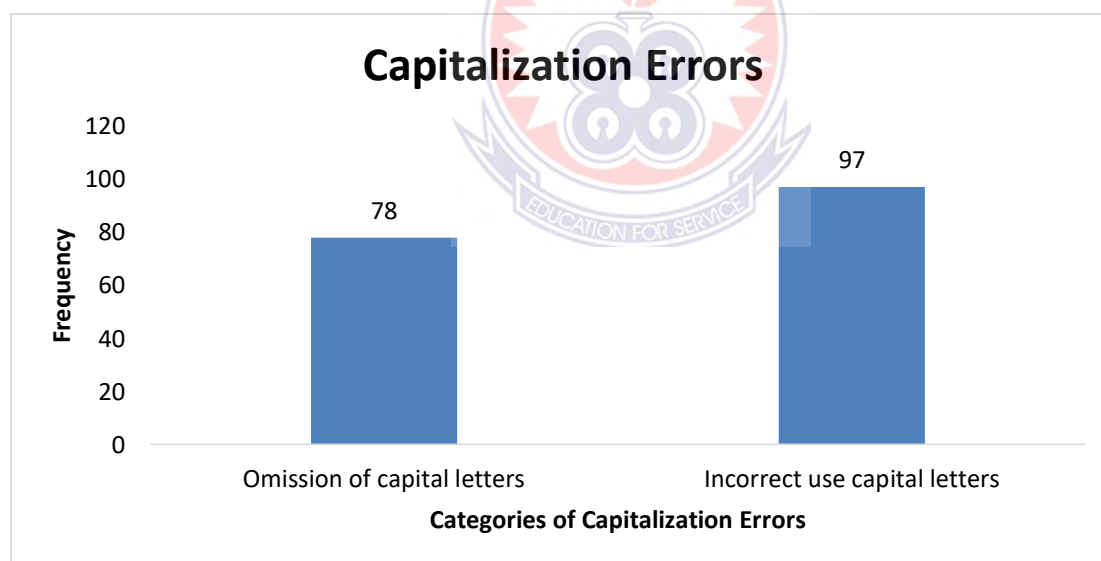

Figure 2. Summary of Capitalization Errors

In relation to capitalization errors, a study conducted by Hazarika and Mohammed (2016) on difficulties of learning English revealed that students always struggle with capitalization. It shows that students are not even aware of the fact that they commit mistakes in capitalization.

41

They unconsciously make mistakes while writing a paragraph. For them, 'realizing one's mistake is the first step on its correction'. Hence, students need to develop awareness regarding the use of capitalization. In their conclusion, they suggested that teachers must explain the rules of capitalization and make students practice them in the classroom. For instance, exercises on identification of capital and lower case letters as well as rewriting proper names with capital letters can help limit the capitalization errors of the students. The researcher thus suggests that capitalization must be given the needed attention in order to reduce such errors.

4.1.3   Spelling Errors

Spelling is the art of forming words from letters. It 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. A total of 82 instances were recorded. The common spelling errors identified in the data collected are spelling errors due to addition of letters (e.g. **complexsion** instead of **complexion**), omission of letters (e.g. **hans** instead of **hands**) and substitution of letters (e.g. **pensil** instead of **pencil**).

4.1.3.1 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. Here, the analysis revealed that learners added extra letters that were not required. This can be seen in the following sentences:

1. She washes her *sisthers* clothes. (sisters')

2. He *doesent* like *faighting*. (doesn't/ fighting)

3. He is fair in *complextion*. (complexion)

4. *I celebrated the Christmas wit he my parents. (with)*

42

5. *Cheristmas* holiday. (Christmas)

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

4.1.3.2 Spelling errors due to omission of letters

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. The family join *hans*. (hands)

2. He likes *lerning*. (learning)

3. It was very *exiting*. (exciting)

4. I *wach* television. (watch)

5. Fufu and *sup*. (soup)

From examples (1) to (5), 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.

4.1.3.3 Spelling due to substitution of letters

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. She has a round *fase*. (face)

2. Her best *sabject*. (subject)

3. I had a lot of fun that *they*. (day)

4. 25th*Dezember*. (December)

5. His best game is *foodball*. (football)

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 3.

Table 3. Summary of Spelling Errors

Type of spelling errors	Frequency	Percentage
Spelling due to addition	15	18.29
Spelling due to omission	31	37.80
Spelling due to substitution	36	43.90
Total	**82**	**100**

Table 3 represents the categories of spelling errors found in the study. The information in Table 3 is illustrated in Figure 3. Figure 3 reveals that spelling errors due to substitution recorded the highest in this category with 36 out of 82 occurrences representing 43.90% of the total number. Spelling errors due to omission recorded 31 instances representing 37.80%. The lowest in this category was spelling errors due to addition with 15 instances representing 18.29% of the total number of errors found in the data.

The way learners of a language pronounce words to a great extent, influences how such words are written (Hassan, 2014). 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). The spelling errors found in the data are very disturbing because the spelling of words eventually affects the meaning ofa text.
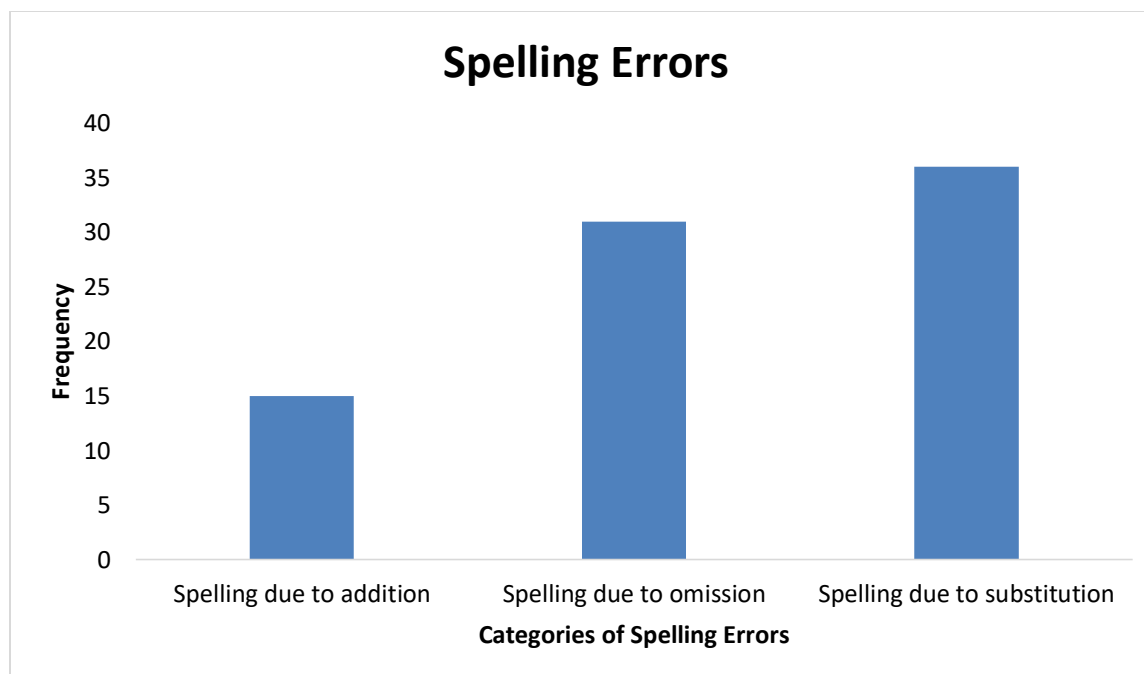
44

Figure 3. Summary of Spelling Errors

In a related study, Benyo (2014) examined spelling errors made by students of Dongola University. The result showed that the students committed error of letter omission, addition transportation and substitution. He concluded that the errors were due to irregularity of English spelling, ignorance and incomplete application of rules. In this study, it was revealed that the difference in the sound and spelling system of English is the main source of pupils' spelling errors. The researcher therefore supports the view that English spelling is difficult and irregular (Macline, 2001). However, spelling is important for everybody to communicate his or her idea. Correct spelling helps to convey the right meaning of a text while bad spelling on the other hand, hinders the reader from getting the actual meaning of a written language. Hence, any mistake in spelling can affect the written product and may lead to misunderstanding.

4.1.4   Tense Errors

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

45

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 have been categorized into misuse of verb tense (e.g. my mother **visit the salon yesterday** instead of **visited the salon yesterday**) and subject-verb agreement (**he play** instead of **he plays**). These are further discussed below.

4.1.4.1 Misuse of verb tense

From the analysis, it is evident that most learners used the present tense in place of the past tense. This was mainly because they have difficulty distinguishing when to use any of them. Below are some examples of such occurrences:

1. My mother *visit* the saloon. (visited)

2. On the 26th, we *pound* fufu. (pounded)

3. We also *share* some. (shared)

4. After the match, our team *is* the winner. (was)

5. I *find* a boy. (found)

From the sentences, the simple past tense, used to express an action or a situation in the past, was replaced with the simple present tense. This is considered an error because it changes the meaning of the message that should be conveyed to the reader. According to Renadya (2002),

46

such errors are from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language arising from the poor graduation of teaching items. Here, the learners could not distinguish the present tense from the past tense and therefore used them wrongly.

4.1.4.2 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). However, the analysis revealed that most of the learners had difficulty determining which verb tense was appropriate in a sentence at a particular instance. Wiredu (2005) states that the present tense can be used to express an action that is regular or habitual. He further notes that the simple present tense uses infinitive forms of the verb such as *write, play, come* and *wash* and only changes with the third person singular. He again explains that the verbs are inflected with *–s* when the third person singular pronoun like *she, he* and *it* is used. For instance, in *"I read a book"* and *"He reads a book"*, the verb *read* is inflected with *–s* in the second sentence because *he* is a third person singular pronoun. This exceptional rule in the simple present tense was seen to be a problem for most of the learners in this study. Some examples of such errors are seen in the sentences below:

1. She *like* reading. (likes)

2. She *have* three siblings. (has)

3. He *attend* school. (attends)

4. I *likes* her. (like)

5. Her *parent* are. (parents)

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

47

practice in terms of learning a target language. The researcher notes that with constant practice of the structure, such errors will be limited. Table 4 shows the sub categorization of tense errors made by learners in this study.

Table 4. Summary of Tense errors

Type of error	Frequency	Percentage
Wrong use of tense	82	90.11
Subject-verb-agreement	9	9.89
Total	**91**	**100**

The information in Table 4 is illustrated in Figure 4. From Figure 4, errors in terms of wrong use of tense are the highest recorded in this category. It recorded 82 occurrences representing 90.11% while errors under subject-verb-agreement recorded the lowest with 9 instances representing 9.89% out of the total number of errors found in this category.
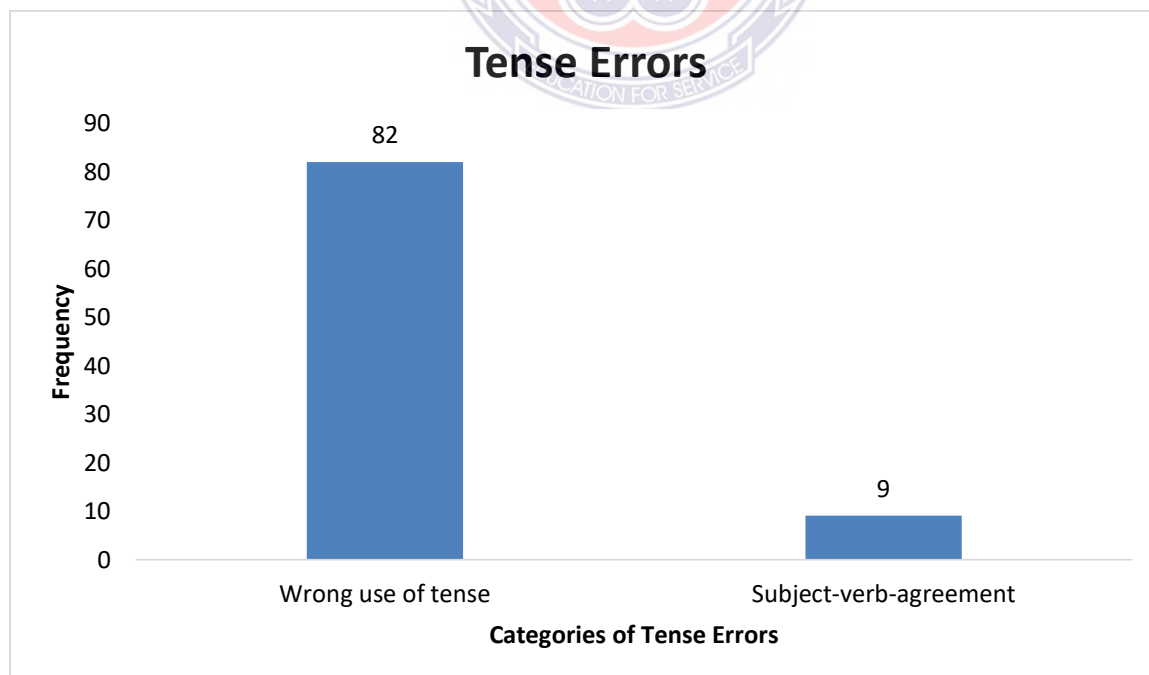

Figure 4. Summary of Tense Errors

From the analysis, it is evident that most of the tense errors committed were due to wrong verb form used. In a similar study, Huang (2001) presented an analysis of 34 Taiwanese English majors writing errors based on web-based writing programme. The errors included categories of grammar, mechanics, style and usage. He then concluded that the most EFL students' errors were not due to insufficient command of linguistic complexity. On the contrary, they made big portion of basic errors such as subject-verb-agreement or incomplete sentences indicating intralingual errors. In addition, the study reported the major causes of EFL learners' errors as overgeneralization, ignorance of rules restrictions, simplification, and incomplete application of rules of the target language.

This information revealed that the different tense rules were not completely mastered by the learners, but they have already learned that these tense forms exist in English grammar. Darus & Ching (2009) contend that it is not surprising that L2 learners face problems with tenses since English notion of tense is somewhat confusing to the L2 learners who regard time as a separate entity by itself. 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.

4.1.5 Omission of word

An omission is indicated by the absence of one or more items that must appear in a well-formed sentence as in '*she come Koforidua'*. Here, the learner omitted the preposition *from*. In the present study, learners omitted certain morphemes required in their sentences. Such morphemes include linking verbs and prepositions. This study recorded a total of 35 errors under

49

this category. The following sections reflect some instances where learners omitted morphemes which were needed to enhance understanding.

4.1.5.1 Omission of prepositions

Prepositions are grammatical morphemes which connect nouns or pronouns with other words within a sentence. They can also be described as words which are used to 'show a relationship or connection between a noun or pronoun and other words in a sentence' (Quagie, 2010). Prepositions, therefore, have relational functions and they often refer to location (*under* the table), direction (*to* the south), or time (*at* midnight). They can also be used to convey other relationships: agency (*by*); possession (*of*); purpose (*for*); source (*from, out of*). A sentence doesn't show such relations when prepositions are omitted or misused within a sentence. A total of 19errors were recorded under this category. The following utterances display the kinds of prepositions omitted pupils' utterances.

1. She stays ^ Sakyikrom. (**at**)

2. She come ^ Koforidua. (**from**)

3. We went to church ^ morning. (**in** the)

4. Listening music (**to**)

Obviously, the omission of such grammatical categories adversely affects the meaning of each sentence. The most possible reason is that, though they wrote in English, they used word ordering in their L1 to express their ideas. For example, it is right to say '*I stay Sakyikrom'* (Me te Sakyikrom) without the preposition 'at'. However, in English language, it is seen as an error. In the sentences, the researcher noticed the flaw of the learners' grammar which omits certain parts of the sentence as in (1), (2), (3) and (4). The prepositions 'at', 'in', 'from' and 'to' were

50

omitted respectively. The cause of this error category is therefore attributed to negative transfer of the learners' L1.

4.1.5.2 Omission of linking verbs

The omission of major constituents, such as verbs in a sentence hinders communication (Dulay et al, 1982). Since the function of linking verbs is to add grammatical content to an utterance, their omission hinders communication. Under this category, learners omitted linking verbs that were required to make their sentences complete. The sentences below show the omission of linking verbs in pupils' writing.

1. There ^ three girls. (**is**)

2. She ^ a beautiful girl. (**is**)

3. The name of my friend ^ Prince. (**is**)

4. The subjects he likes ^ ICT and mathematics. (**are**)

5. Her parents ^ Mr. and Mrs. Mensah. (**are**)

In the utterances given above, the linking verbs, *is* as in (1), (2) and (3) as well as *are*, as in (4) and (5), are left out; therefore, there is no connection between the subjects and the predicates. Table 5 presents word omission errors found in pupils' essays.

Table 5. Summary of word omission errors

Type of word omission errors	Frequency	Percentage
Omission of preposition	19	54.29
Omission of linking verbs	16	45.71
Total	**35**	**100**

51

The information in Table 5 is illustrated in Figure 5. From Figure 5, errors in omission of preposition recorded the highest number in this category. It had 19 occurrences representing 54.29% while errors under omission of linking verbs recorded the lowest with 16 instances representing 45.71% out of the total number of errors found in this category.
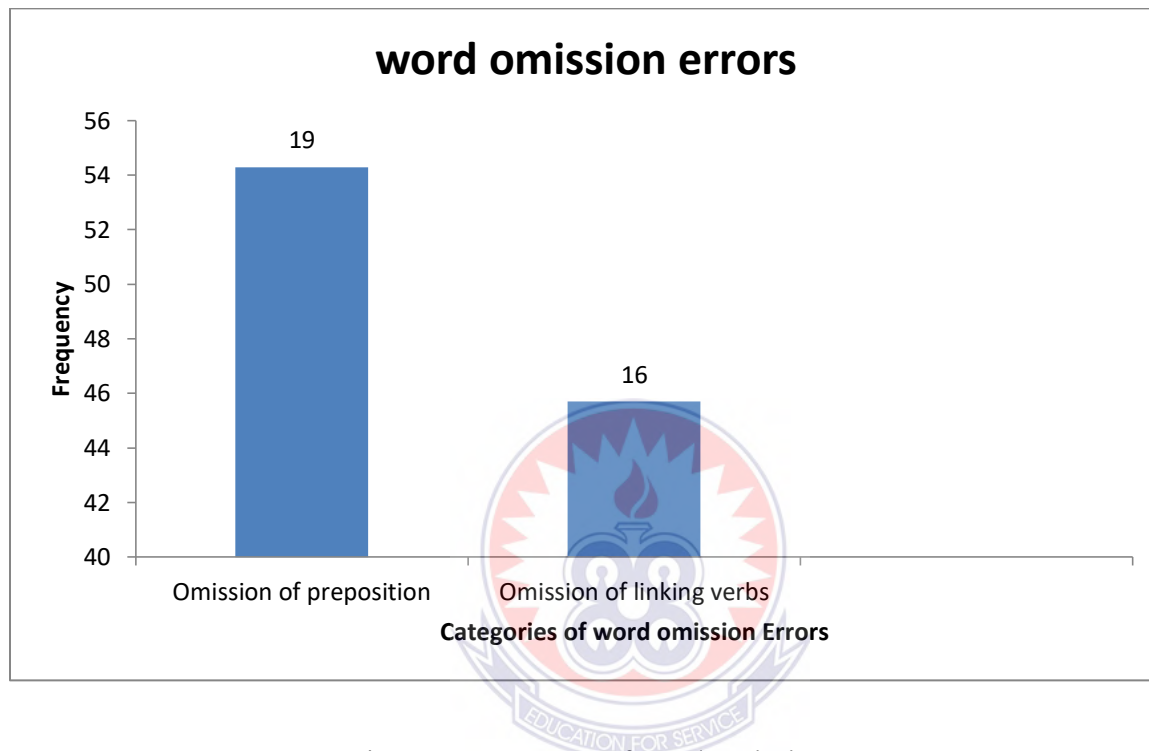
Figure 5. Summary of word omission errors

This error category can be attributed to lack of vocabulary to express ideas since the target language is seldom used. In a related study, Wu & Garza (2014) investigated types and attributes of English writing errors in the EFL context. The findings of the study revealed that the fourth and fifth most frequent errors were verb omission and subject omission. They indicated that these participants did not start to learn English until 3rd grade; therefore, their literacy skills in the first language affected their learning of English. In the present study, Basic 4 pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School though learnt a little English from basic one, omitted linking verbs and prepositions and this distorted the meaning of their utterances.

4.1.6   Article Errors

There are three articles in English which are a, an, and the; and the learner needs to describe which of these articles to use for a particular noun. This however becomes a problem for most learners. The article 'a' is called indefinite article because the noun it collocates with is indefinite. It is this article which becomes 'an' when the next word begins with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u) as in *an apple*, *an egg*, *an ice cube*, *an orange* and *an umbrella*. The article 'a' can be said to be similar to the number one, but one gives more emphasis. For instance, one can say, '*She has a dress'* or '*She has one dress'* but there is more emphasis on the second sentence which explains that, the subject, 'she' does not have two or any other number of dresses.

The article 'the' is classified as a definite article and specifies things. For instance, in the sentences 'I gave him a pen' and 'I gave him the pen', the first sentence refers to just any pen but the second one refers to a particular or a specific pen. Many nouns, especially singular forms of countable nouns, must have an article. In English language, it is wrong to say I have book without an article, however, a possessive adjective can be used instead of an article as in the sentence I gave him his pen or I gave him that pen. These errors are grouped as omission of some required articles, addition of incorrect articles and misuse of articles. A total of 37 errors were recorded for this error type. 21 were found under omission of articles and16 were also found under the category of misuse of articles. The analysis of this study showed that the errors in article use were due to omission of some required articles as well as misuse of articles.

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

53

a sentence. Some instances where learners omitted articles are indicated in the examples as follows:

1. We are happy family. (**a happy family**)

2. She is very beautiful girl. **(a very beautiful girl**)

3. He is understanding person. (**an understanding person**)

4. He has small nose. (**a small nose**)

5. This is end. (**the end**)

From the examples above, it is clear that learners omitted articles in their sentences. In sentence (5), the definite article *the* is omitted while *a/an* are also omitted as in sentences (1), (2), (3) and (4). 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

1. She will be *a* English teacher. (**an English teacher**)

2. My mother buy some *the* tomatoes. (**some tomatoes**)

3. *The* Madam Esther is my best teacher. (**Madam Esther**)

4. On the Christmas day, we cooked rice *a* tomato stew. (**and tomato stew**)

From the sentence, it is obvious that the learner misused an article. The article 'a' was used in place of 'an'. This could be traced to the fact that the learner does not know which kind of article to be used for a particular noun or word. As stated earlier, the article 'an' is used when the noun or word begins with a vowel as in 'English' which the learner could not identify. It is not surprising since their L1 has different rules of article use. As Raehan, Chodorow and Leacock (2006) observe that mastering the English articles is one of the most difficult tasks

54

facing the non-native speakers, especially when the L1 does not have articles. In Akuapem Twi, there are articles but the rule governing their use is different from that of English. For example, *the cup* as in English is written in Akuapem Twi as *kuruwa no* with the article rather at the end and it is the same word (*no*) for all words/ names that require articles. Table 6 presents the sub-categorization of article errors made by learners in the study.

Table 6. Summary of article errors

Type of article error	Frequency	Percentage
Omission of article	21	56.76
Misuse of article	16	43.24
Total	**37**	**100**

The information in table 6 is illustrated in figure 6. From figure 6, errors in omission of articles recorded the highest number with 21 occurrences representing 56.76% while errors under misuse of articles recorded the lowest with 16 instances representing 43.24% 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 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

55

articles; they omitted the articles that were needed to make their sentences complete and in another instance, they were misused.
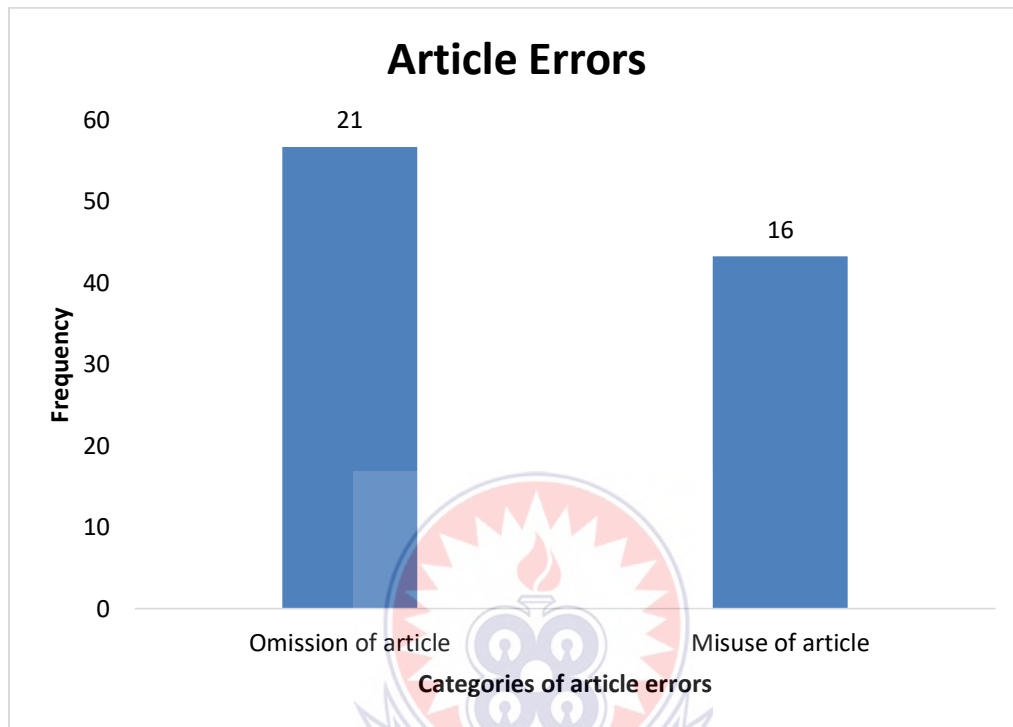
Figure 6. Summary of article errors

4.1.7 Errors in pupils' writing

Table 7 presents the summary of the main writing errors identified in the essays of learners in the study. It is drawn with the highest on top and the lowest at the bottom. In all, essays of 52 learners were analysed. A total of 492 errors were identified. From the analysis, capitalization errors were the highest with a total of 175 cases representing 35.56%. Here, the learners used upper case letters where lower case letters were to be used and vice-versa. Tense errors were the second highest recording 91 cases representing 18.50%. 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.

Table 7. Frequency of Errors in pupils' writings

Error Type	Frequency	Percentage
Capitalization Errors	175	35.56
Tense Errors	91	18.50
Spelling Errors	82	16.67
Punctuation Errors	72	14.63
Article Errors	37	7.52
Word-Omission Errors	35	7.11
Total	**492**	**100**

Spelling errors was ranked third with 82 occurrences representing 16.67% of the total number of errors. In this instance, the learners omitted certain letters that form part of a word, added letters that were not required and in other cases replaced letters with other letters. Punctuation errors rated fourth with a total of 72 errors representing 14.63% of the total number of errors. Here, punctuation marks were omitted and were also used wrongly. The fifth was article errors. It recorded 37 errors representing 7.52% of the total number of errors. Here, the learners omitted articles where they were needed and also used articles wrongly in some cases. Finally, word omission errors recorded 35 occurrences representing 7.11% of the total number of errors. In this category, the learners omitted plural morphemes and prepositions that were needed to make their sentences complete and meaningful. These errors emerged from learners' overgeneralizing grammatical rules. It was also due to their poor handwriting. Figure 7 represents the error types and their frequencies.
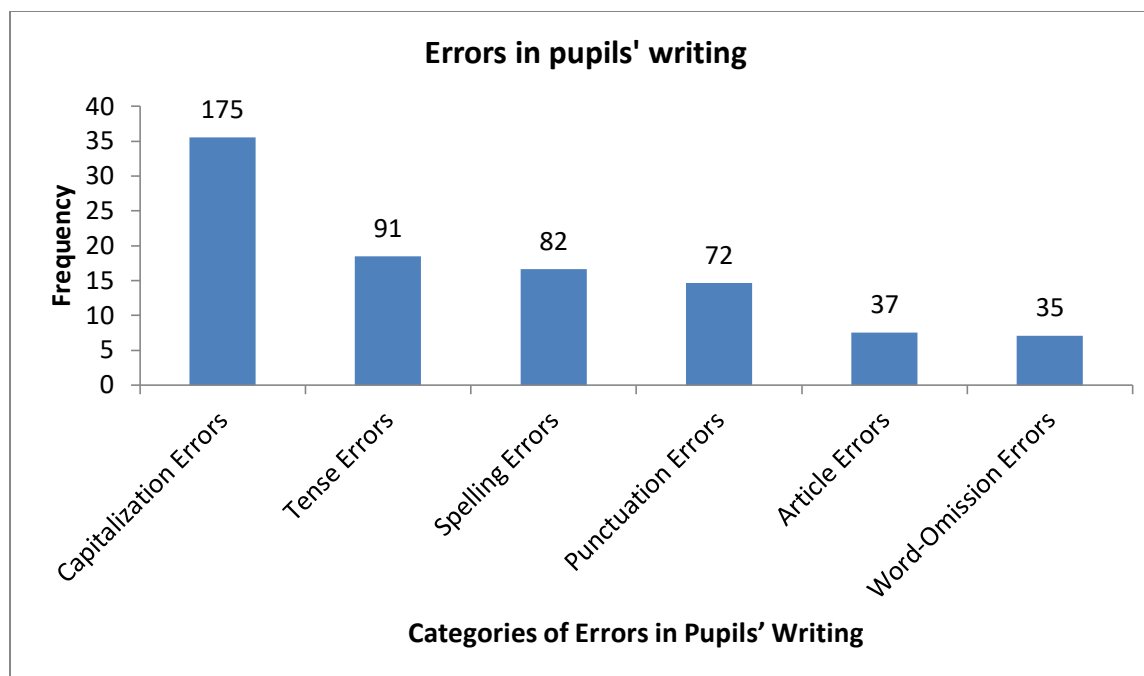
Figure 7. Error Types and their Frequency of Occurrence

To identify learning deficiencies in English writing, Nganbam (2016) examined 60 native Arabic speaking students. In all, 15 categories of errors were classified to find out the cause of syntactic errors, which type of errors are more frequent, areas of weaknesses and the problems that tend to occur in writing compositions. The findings show that errors made by the learners were due to mother-tongue interference, misuse of sentence fragments, and lack of grammatical knowledge, formation and development errors. The findings of a similar study done by Neda (2012) revealed that Malaysian ESL students have problems in writing tasks, especially in language use and punctuation. The first language interference also contributed to errors in their writings. In relation to this, the findings of the present study have revealed that learners of Ntoaso SDA Basic School have difficulties in the use of articles, concord, punctuation, and vocabulary register. Others were wrong organization of ideas, orthographic and semantic errors. These errors as said earlier, hinder the meaning of ideas in pupils' essays, however, their identification, through Error Analysis helped the researcher to realise the causes of such errors

and helped to rectify the problem through constant practice in class exercises, test and homework.

4.2   Causes of the Errors

The analysis has revealed that learners' errors are sometimes caused by teachers, learners themselves and the influence of their first language. 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. Tense errors were due overgeralization of rules learned. Punctuation errors were also due to incomplete learning of rules attached to the various marks. Learners could not identify and use marks appropriately. Capitalization errors were also due to incomplete learning of rules. Pupils were not able to distinguish between proper and common nouns and in some cases, poor handwriting caused those errors. Errors of word omission were linked to incomplete application of rules by learners. In a similar study, Huang (2001) investigated the nature of distribution of different grammatical errors made by 46 English majors of a Taiwanese university.

The study found the top six common errors as (1) verb (2) noun (3) spelling (4) article (5) preposition and (6) word choice. The findings of the study revealed that the errors that occurred were due to overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, simplification, and incomplete application of rules. Similarly, Richards (2015) outlines the causes of errors as overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized and ignorance of rule restrictions. The analysis revealed that the learners had poor reading habits. The contact time of pupils with English is limited to the classroom. Very little or no English language is spoken outside the school contact hours. Nevertheless, even in the classroom, it was only during reading

59

lessons or when they had been given assignments to work on at home. Though there are enough text books in the school, learners are not allowed to take them home with the notion of keeping them (text books) from being damaged.

Also, most learners do not have access to electricity to enable them read or do their assignments at home. Due to this, the motivation to read intensively or even speak the language was limited and this resulted in learners' lack of exposure to words and how they are used correctly in speech and in writing. Also, during grammar lessons, learners are not actively involved. Most of them do not answer or ask questions for fear of being laughed at by their colleagues. The few who answer questions produce a number of faulty constructions. This makes it difficult for them to grasp the concept taught leading to the construction of ungrammatical sentences. Poor handwriting also contributed to errors in the learners' essays. When learners do not practice writing often, they lack the appropriate writing skills and this results in their inability to write clearly making it difficult to read their essays. They omit letters, add letters that are not required to words as well as replace letters with inappropriate ones in the cause of writing.

Furthermore, most of the errors that learners made resulted from the context of instruction by teachers, right from the lower primary. This was seen in the techniques of language learning as the teacher tries to communicate or use it. Grammar lessons are taught in the local dialect (Akuapem Twi) by most of the teachers in the school. Outside the classroom, teachers communicate with learners and their own colleagues in the L1. This does not create enough room for learners to use the forms and structures learnt in class. In some cases too, teachers who handled the languages had little or no knowledge of the learners' native language to enable them teach learners the similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2 structures to enable the learners to use them appropriately. Teachers could not expose learners to

reading. Generally, unlike the JHS and SHS where teachers are assigned to their subject of specialization, teachers at the primary section are assigned to a class to teach all subjects which English language is one, and there are some teachers who have specialized in social studies, mathematics, home economics, etc. but are supposed to teach the L2. These teachers lack adequate content knowledge when it comes to the teaching of the various aspects of the English language. When teachers lack adequate content of the English language, they make errors in their speeches (Richards, 2015). This results in an automatic transfer of error from the teacher to the learners. It could therefore be said that the teacher, teaching materials as well as the teaching techniques play a major role in creating errors in the learners' essays. From this discussion, it is clear that learners' errors could be teacher-induced because most teachers have issues regarding the correct structure and form of the language.

Moreover, research has shown that L2 writers employ their L1 skills when writing in the L2. They adopt L2 composing strategies to recompense possible deficiencies in the L2 proficiency and as a tool to facilitate their writing process (Karim & Nasaiji, 2013). At the initial stage of L2 learning, learners frequently transfer L1 structures to the L2. This, according to Brown (2000), happens because the learners' native language is the only previous linguistic source they can draw from. Once a person tries to learn new habits, the old ones will definitely interfere with the new ones. That is, a learner's first language plays a significant role in L2 acquisition. Learners are likely to recall systematic resources from their native language for the synthesis of meaning, most especially in instances where they exhaust the L2 forms and structure. This probably is the most common cause of errors in language learning.

This assertion is not different in the case of the learners in this study. They over-generalize rules from structures in their L1 and use them in their L2 writings. The findings of

Huang (2001)'s study stated earlier in this section also indicated negative transfer of L1 structures in some cases. Some punctuation errors committed by learners were due to the interference of the L1, especially when the apostrophe should be used to show possession. For example, *My mother's name* is written in Akuapem Twi as *Me mama din* with no apostrophe to indicate possession as in the English language. They are not familiar with the similarities and the differences between the L1 and the L2 structures. For instance, the learner writes *sup* as soup which in effect is right in the L1 as required by the sounds of the L1 letters. Such errors, according to Brown (2000), can be detected if the teacher is familiar with the native language of the learners. However, teachers are advised to point out the differences between the L1 and L2 structures to the learners whenever these grammatical structures are being taught.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has presented details of results obtained from the analysis of data collected on pupils' essays and observations made. The first section presented an analysis of common errors committed by learners in their essays. From all, 492 errors were recorded from the essays of 52 pupils. Capitalization errors rated first with 175 occurrences. Tense errors recorded 91 cases while spelling errors recorded 82 cases. Punctuation errors recorded 72 cases, article errors had 37 occurrences and article errors recorded 37 cases. This was followed byword omission errors which had 35 occurrences. The second section presented a discussion on the causes of errors based on the findings. The causes of errors in learners' essays were then identified to be from the teachers, learners themselves and the influence of learner's L1. Other causes realized were lack of exposure to reading materials as well as lack of motivation to read, speak and write in the target language. Poor teaching techniques and teacher incompetence were not left out.

Some other causes of errors occurred as a result of linguistic differences between English and the learners' first languages (Saville-Troike, 2006). At their level, learners need the appropriate structure to assist them in their writings. They can however not express themselves well because they have limited exposure to good Standard English both in school and at home. This does not grant them the opportunity to use the structure learnt appropriately in their daily expressions. This inconsistency in practicing the structure often leads to forgetfulness and misuse or overgeneralization. Waring (2001) highlights that the learning of vocabulary items should be consistent so that they are not easily forgotten. It is very important to practice and review previously taught vocabulary. Moreover, Schmitt (2000) claims that since forgetting is natural and vocabulary learning is incremental, words are learned gradually from numerous exposures. The study therefore suggests that learners should be given enough room to practice well, any grammatical structure learnt in order to limit the amount of error occurrences in their writing.
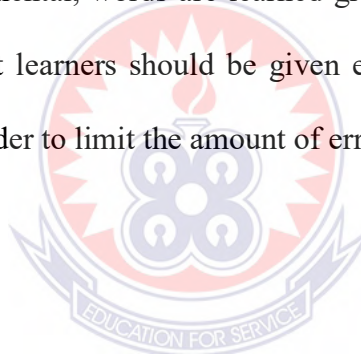
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

5.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings of the study, conclusion and suggestions. The purpose of the study was to identify the common errors learners commit in their writings. This study is a qualitative analysis which was conducted in Ntoaso SDA Basic School in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipal Assembly of the Eastern Region of Ghana. Data was gathered from 52 pupils. It revealed errors that were categorized under spelling errors, tense errors, article errors, plural form errors, capitalization errors, word-omission errors and punctuation errors.

5.1   Summary of findings

A total of 492 errors were recorded from the essays of 52 pupils. Capitalization errors which had the highest frequency recorded 175occurrences representing 35.56%. Errors in this category were wrong use of capital letters. In this case, learners omitted uppercase letters in some instances and also used them where they were not required. Certain words were written beginning with the uppercase letters, some, in the middle and at the end of some sentences when they were not needed. This problem was due to pupils' inability to distinguish between proper and improper nouns. Tense errors are second with 91 instances which represents 18.50%. Errors in this category were on wrong use of tense and subject-verb-agreement. Tense errors were due to overgeralization of rules learned. It is also due to the fact that pupils' L1 does not have the simple present tense marker –s to differentiate the third person singular so they transfer that into the L2. For instance, in the Akuapem Twi, He goes is written as ɔrekɔ with no tense marker and that is right in the pupils' L1.

Spelling errors were rated third with 82 occurrences representing 16.67%. Spelling errors were categorized into omission of letters, addition of letters and substitution of letters. These errors distorted the meaning of texts being conveyed in pupils' writing. This problem is being caused by the way learners hear words being pronounced, the way learners pronounce words, inconsistent reading which makes learners unfamiliar with words, as well as illegible writing. Punctuation errors recorded 72 errors representing 14.63%. They were mainly omission and wrong use of punctuation marks. In this category, punctuation marks were used where they were not required and in other cases they were rather omitted. This problem is attributed to the learners' inability to appropriately identify and use punctuation marks due to incomplete learning of rules. The fifth error category is article error and it had 37 occurrences representing 7.52% of the total number of errors. Here, the learners omitted articles where they were needed and also used articles wrongly in some cases. These errors occurred due to forgetfulness and ignorance of the use of the rule in terms of articles usage in English language Errors on word omission were the sixth with 35 occurrences representing 7.11%. This category is attributed to learners' lack of vocabulary to express ideas since the target language is seldom used by both learners and teachers.

Based on the findings of this study, several factors were identified to be the causes of errors in learners' writings. The first cause worth mentioning is the way English Language is taught at the lower primary level. Lessons in English as well as other subjects are taught mostly in the learner's native languages. It therefore becomes a problem when they get to the upper primary and have to express themselves in the L2. This results in the transfer of forms and structures from L1 to L2. Most spelling and punctuation errors were due to context of instruction. Careless writing also contributed to the occurrence of these errors. Tense errors

65

found in the writings of learners were also mostly due to overgeneralization of rules learnt and context of instruction. The learners' L1 also contributed to errors found in the study.

5.2   The role of errors in learners' writing

The findings of the study have shown that learners' errors help teachers identify the problems learners face in the language class. Frequent exercises on the investigations of learners' errors and the frequency with which they occur will enable the teachers devise appropriate alternative strategies to organize remedial lessons on those errors to help reduce them. This is necessary because, errors provide adequate feedback that informs the teacher on the effectiveness of teaching techniques. For instance, Presada and Badea (2014) analyzed the errors made by students in their transition classes and asserted that this method could help them sort out the real problem. They confirmed that Error Analysis (EA) could lessen the number of errors in their students' work. Karra (2006), Mohammed (2013) and Jabeen, Kazemian and Shahbaz (2015) have also identified the following as the importance of errors in language teaching and learning: They help the teacher to know a student's progress, provide feedback; they make the researcher aware of the effectiveness of one's teaching techniques, and show one what parts of the syllabus has been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention.

Errors enable the teacher to decide whether he must devote more time to the item he has been teaching and provide information for designing a remedial syllabus or a program of re-teaching. Lastly, errors show how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner uses and help the learner to learn from these errors. According to Richards (2002), errors play the role of enabling the teacher to discover, identify and analyse learners' mistakes as well as designing the appropriate methods for solving them. Again, errors are very important to the learner. This to Richards (2002) serves as a tool through which the learner discovers the rules of the target

language which could not be understood earlier and with time, these learners will be able to identify and correct their errors. Furthermore, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005, p. 61) suggest three significance of learner errors. (1) They serve a pedagogic purpose by showing teachers what learners have learned and what they have not mastered; (2) they serve a research purpose by providing evidence about how languages are learned; and (3) they serve a learning purpose by acting as devices by which learners can discover the rules of the target language by obtaining feedback on their errors.

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. Brown (2006) suggests that error correction can be very helpful in L2 learning. Since consistent practice leads to perfection, teachers should design learning tasks that encourage practice of forms and structures learnt. This can be done through role-play, drama, conversation, and peer-teaching. Teachers should also provide pupils with reading materials about things in their immediate environment to help them to read both at home and in school. The content of the reading material should communicate relevantly to the learners at their level. This will enable them enjoy the reading and as they read a lot, writing becomes easier and enjoyable because they will have enough vocabulary to express themselves. Teachers should also create opportunities for students to practice orally in the target language to make them efficient in the language. This can be done through self-talk and simulated conversation with peers. Their spelling of words can also be improved by encouraging them to practice pronunciation by drilling them on words and sounds, as well as listening using dictation. With this, their phonological awareness will be improved to help limit the spelling errors.

A conducive language learning environment if created, will enable even the timid child in the class to use the language freely. The researcher believes that with consistent practice through dramatization and peer interaction, the students will master the rules of the language to help curb the error occurrences in their writing. Again, language lessons should be learner-centred so that the learners will be actively involved in the learning process. Teachers should facilitate the learning process with all activities centred on the learners' interest. The learning process should be made fun and interesting. To achieve this, the teacher should be innovative in order to devise effective learning activities for learners to practice. Most importantly, the teacher must be abreast with knowledge of the subject matter as well as the techniques to make him/her proficient and a good model of the target language since learners so that he/she will be able to teach the learners the phonological, morphological, syntactic and the semantic rules pertaining to the language. Also, through in-service training, language teachers will learn new ideas and teaching strategies from one another. It is also suggested that teachers in the primary schools should rather be assigned to teach subjects in which they are specialised instead of being assigned to a class to teach all subjects.

Moreover, teachers should have an in-depth understanding of the L1 structure of their learners to be able to identify the source of their errors in order to provide the needed assistance to these learners where necessary. This way, they will help minimize such errors. Furthermore, the English Language syllabus only spells out topics but does not suggest how these topics can be effectively taught. Though there are handbooks, it does not provide enough information for effective teaching. The researcher suggests that the syllabus should include a variety of child-centred approaches to guide the teacher to teach learners based on their learning abilities. The syllabus should be designed with its corresponding textbooks to enable teachers get appropriate

materials for learners. Information in the text books should also match the topics in the syllabus. Finally, there should be a cordial relationship between parents and teachers to enable them work hand-in-hand towards their wards learning development.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

This study looked at the errors learners at the Basic four of Ntoaso SDA Basic School make in their writing. Researchers may also look at other categories of errors other than those found in the present study. Future research may focus on the effect of phonological deficiency on pupils' reading. 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 schools in the Eastern Region with an increase in the number of participants.

5.5 Conclusion

The study aimed at analysing the errors made by primary four pupils of Ntoaso SDA Basic School. The errors identified were capitalization errors, spelling errors, article errors, punctuation errors, plural form errors, tense errors and word omission errors. Based on the findings of the study, it is prudent that language teachers are given adequate training on appropriate language teaching approaches for all levels to make them effective and efficient in the class they are assigned. With that, they will be able to help their students to become proficient in the target language. As this study adds to existing knowledge on learners' errors, it is envisaged that more research is conducted on other linguistic aspects in the classroom.

REFERENCES

Abeywickrama, R. (2010). An Analysis of Error in English Writing of Sinhala Speaking Undergraduates. Saharamuwa University Journal, 9, (1), 139-316. .

AbiSamra, N. (2003). *An Analysis of Error in Arabic Speakers' English Writing*. Retrieved from http://abisamra03.tripod.com/nada/languageaoq-erroranolyisi.html.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. S., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. (2006). I*ntroduction to Research in Education* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Awad, A. (2012). *The Most Common Punctuation Errors Made by the English and the   TEFL Majors at AnNajah National University*, Vol. 26 (1), p. 211-233. Faculty of Education

Bao, X. L. (2015). An Investigation of English Majors' Discourse Errors' based on Micro-Level. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 10(5), 29-35.

Batainah, R. (2005). Jordanian Undergraduate EFL Students' Errors in the Use of Indefinite Article.*Asian EFL Journal*, 70, 56-67.

Bennui, P. (2008). A study of L1 interference in the writing of Thai EFL students. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research*, 4, 72-102.

Benyo, A. A. F. (2014). English Spelling Problems among Students at the University of Dongola, Sudan. *Educational Research in Education* (10th Ed.). Boston, M.A. Pearson Education Inc.

Best, J.W. & Kahn, J. V. (2006). *Research in Education*. Prentice Hall: New Delhi.

Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th ed). White Plains, NY: Longman.

Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (3rd Ed). New York: Longman.

Brown, H. D. (2002). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th Ed). NY: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Brown, H. D. (2006). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (2nd ed). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Brown, H. D. (2006). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (5th Ed.). New York. Longman.

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (5th Ed.) USA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Burt, M. & Kiparsky, C. (1972). *The Gooficon: A repair manual for English.* Rowley, Ma: Newbury House Publishers.

Chen, C. Y. & Huang, H. Y. (2003). *L2 Acquisition of Subject - Prominence* by EFL Students in Taiwan, English Teaching and Learning Journal, 27(4), 99 – 122.

Christensen, H., Gotoh, Y. & Renals, S. (2001). Punctuation annotation using statistical prosody models. In: *Proceedings of the ISCA Workshop on Prosody in Speech Recognition and Understanding*. pp 35-40.

Chuang, F. (2005). *Article Misuse: A Neglected Problem in Chinese EAP Students' Writing*. Retrieved on August 30, 2017 from http.//www.readingmatrix.com/conference/pp/proceding 005/chuang.pdf.

Coder, S.P. (1974). *Error Analysis*. London: Longman.

Collins, L. (2002). *The Role of L1 Influence and Lexical Aspect in the Acquisition Language Learning* Journal, 52(1), pp 43 – 49

Corder (1967). The significance of learners' errors. In Karra, M. (2006). *Second Language Acquisition: Learners Error and Error Correction in Language Teaching*. Retrieved September 10, 2017, From Http:/Www.Proz.Com/Doc/633.

Corder, S. (1971). Idiosyncratic Dialects and Error Analysis. IRAL, 9, 147-159.

Corder, S. P. (1981). *Error analysis and interlanguage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design*. Sage Publication, (4th edition). London.

Downing, A., & Locke, P. (2006). *English grammar: A university course (2nd Ed.)*. UK: Prentice Hall int.

Dulay, H. C., Burt, M.K., & Krashen, S.D. (1982). *Language Two*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analysing Learner Language*. China: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (1997). *SLA Research and Language Leaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ellis, R. (2008). *Oxford Introductions to Language Study: Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Erdogan, V. (2005). Contribution of Error Analysis of Foreign Language Teaching. *Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education*, 1 (2), 161-270.

Eun-Pyo, L. (2003*). Error Analysis on Medical Students' Writing*. Retrieved September 7, 2017 from http://docs.google.com/veiwer.

Gass, S & Selinker, L. (2001). Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction Course. *Mahwah, HJ*: *LEA*, Chapter 3.2

Haryono, P. (2011). *Hand out Error Analysis.* Klaten: Widya Dharma University.

Hassan, E. M. I. (2014). Pronunciation problems: A case study of English language students at Sudan University of Science and Technology. *English language and Literature studies*, 4(4), 31- 44.

Hazarika, Z., & Mohammed, T. (2016). Difficulties of learning EFL in KSA: writing skills in context. *International Journal of English Linguistics* ISSN 1923-869X.

Heydari, P. & Bagheri, M. S. (2012). Error Analysis: Sources of L2 Learners' Errors. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 2 (8), 1583-1589.

Hinno, A. (2004). Common Errors and Suggested Solutions of Thai University Students. *Thai EFL Journal*, 31(2), 165-180.

Hirose, K. (2008). Comparing L1 and L2 Organizational Partners in the Argumentative Writing of Japanese and EFL Students. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 12, 181-209.

Huang, S. L. (2001). *Error Analysis and Teaching Composition*. Master's Thesis. National Tsing Hua University.

Hughes, A. (1980). Problems in Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis. ED192573. Implications for Contrastive Rhetoric. *Written Communication*, 14(4), 460-480.

Jabeen, A., Kazemian, B., & Shahbaz, M. M. (2015). The Role of Error Analysis in Teaching and Learning of Second and Foreign Language. *Education and Linguistics Research*. Retrieved from http://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/elr/article/view/8189 on10/09/17

James, C. (1998) *Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis.* New York: Routledge.

James, C. (1998). *Errors in Language Learning and Use*. London: Longman

James, C. (2001). *Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Jie, X. (2008). Error Theories and Second Language Acquisition. *US-China Foreign Language*, 6(1), 35-42.

Jordens, P. (1977). Rules, Grammatical Intuitions, and Strategies in Foreign Language Learning. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 2, 5-76

Karim, K. & Nassaji, H. (2013). First Language in Second Language Writing: An Examination of Current Research. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 1 (1), 117-134.

Karra, M. (2006). *Second Language Acquisition: Learners Error and Error Correction in Language Teaching*. Retrieved September 10, 2017, From Http:/Www.Proz.Com/Doc/633.

Kaweera, C. H. (2013). Writing Errors: A Review of Interlingual and Intralingual Interference in EFL Context. *English Language Teaching*, 6(7) 9-18.

Kellerman, E. (1979). Transfer and Non-Transfer: Where we are now. *Studies in SecondLanguage Acquisition*, 2, 37-57.

Keshavarz, M. H. (1997). *Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis*. Tehran: Rahmana Pub.

Khan, P. (2005). *Analysis of errors in a secondary school in Kuala Lumpur*. Unpublished Masters thesis. University of Kebangsaan, Malaysia.

Kim, I. (1998). *A Study of the Error in the Use of the English Verbs with Special Reference to Tense, Mood, and Voice*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Basan National University, Basan: Korea.

Kim, S. (2002). *Transfer and Access Universal Grammar in Adult Second Language Acquisition*. Retrieved from http//dissertation.ub.nl/faculties/arts/2002 on 10/9/17.

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques (Second Edition)*. New Age International Publishers.

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across Cultures*. The University of Michigan Press. *Language Teaching*, 8, 201-218.

Latiff, R.A. & Bakar, A. N. (2007). Interference of Bahasa Malaysia (LI) in English (L2) Essay Writing among Rural Malay Secondary School Students in Malaysia. *Malaysia Journal of ELT Research*, 4, 72-102.

Lungu, I. (2003). *A linguistic Approach to Error Analysis in Teaching English as a Second Language*. Oridus University Annals of Philosophy. Vol. Xiv, No. 323-328.

Macline, A. (2001). *Reference Guide to English. A Handbook of English as a Second Language*. United States Information Agency. Washington DC.

Maicusi, T. & Maicusi, P. (2000). The Error in the Second Language Acquisition. *Maria Jose Lopez*, 168-173.

Maicusi, T., Maicusi, P. & Lopex, M. J. (2000). The Error in the Second Language Acquisition. *Encuentro*, 11, 168-173.

McCuen, R. J. & Winkler, C. A. (2000). *From Idea to Essay*: A Rhetoric, Reader and Handbook (3rd ed). America.

Mclaughlin, B. (1987). Second Language Learning and Bilingualism in Children and Adults. *Handbook of Applied Psycholinguistics.* S. Rosenberg (Ed.) New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Mezrag, M. (2013). *The Importance of Error Analysis in the Learners' Writing Skills*. *The Case of First Year English Students at Biskra University.* Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master Degree in Science of Language, Biskra University.

Michaelides, N. N. (1990). Error Analysis: Aid to Teaching. *English Teaching Forum*, 38 (4), 28-30.

Ministry of Education, Science and Sports, (2007). *Teaching Syllabus for English language, Primary Schools 4-6* (p. XIV, 41).

Muftah, M., & Rafik-Galea, S. (2013). Error Analysis of simple present tense in the interlanguage of adult Arab English Language learners. *English Language Teaching*, 6(2), 146-154.

Mungungu, S. S. (2012). *Error Analysis: Investigating the Writing of ESL Namibian Learners.* Unpolished Master's Thesis. University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.

Myles, J. (2002). Second Language Writing and Research: The Writing Processand Error Analysis in Student Texts. *Teaching English as a Second Language English Journal*, 6, 2.

Nation, P. (2003). The Role of the First Language in Foreign Language Learning. *Asian EFL Online Journal*.

Nganbam, H. (2016). *An analysis of syntactic errors committed by students of English language class in the written composition of Mutah University:* A case study. European Journal of English language, Linguistics and Literature, Vol.3 No.1, 2016 ISSN 2059-2027.

Nonkukhethong, K. (2013). *Grammatical Error Analysis of the First Year English Major Students*, *Udon Tani Rajabhat University*, Paper Presented at the Asian Conference on Language 2013, Osaka, Japan.

Norman, C. S. (2000). *An Introductory English Grammar*. Earl Mcpee. Thompson Heinle.

Oller, J. & Ziahosseni, M. S. (1970). The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and Spelling Errors. *Language Learning*, 20, 183-189.

Owu-Ewie, C. (2012). *Learn to Research: An Introduction to Traditional Action Research Methods*. Accra, Ghana: X-vision.

Owu-Ewie, C. & Lomotey, C. F. (2016). *L1 Interference in Ghanaian Junior High School Students' English Writing. Implications for Improving English Writing*. Paper Presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the Linguistics Association of Ghana, KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana.

Papp, S. (2004). *The Use of Learner and Reference Corpora to Foster Inductive Learning and Self Correction in Chinese Learners of English*. Paper given at the meeting of needs of the Chinese leaner in High Education Conference. University of Portsmouth, 17-18.

Parahoo, K. (1997). *Nursing Research: Principles, Process and Issues*. New York: Palgrave McMillan.

Penny, W.K. (2001). *An Analysis of Students' Error Patterns in Written English: Suggested teaching procedure to help*. Unpolished Master's Thesis. University of Birmingham, Birmingham: England.

Polit, D. F., Beck, C. T. &Hungler, B. P. (2001). *Essentials of Nursing Research: Methods, Appraisal and Utilization* (5thed). Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Presada, D & Badea, M. (2014). The Effectiveness of Error Analysis in Transition Classes: A Pilot Study. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(32), 49-59.

Pumki, S. (2005). How to Punctuate? Your Personal Writer: *Custom. Research Paper   Essays and Term Paper.* www.perfectediting.com.

Quagie, J. K. (2010). *English: A Tool for Communication for Universities and Tertiary Institutions*. 2nd Edition. Accra: Hybrid Publications

Raehan, N., Chodorow, M., & Leacock, C. (2006). Detecting errors in English article usage of Non-native speakers. Natural Language Engineering, 12, 115-129.

Ratnah, (2013). *Error Analysis on tense usage made by Indonesian students* Vol. 4, (6), 159.

Rattanadilok Na Phuket, P. & Othman, N. B. (2015). Understanding EFL Students' Errors in Writing. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(32) 99-106.

Renadya, W. A. (2002). *Task-based Language Learning and Teaching R.* Ellis Oxford University *Press 2003, 387, £20.25 ISBN O 19 4421597.*

Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (1971). A Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis. *English Language Teaching*, 25,204-129.

Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (3rded). London: Longman.

Richards, J. C. (2015). *Error analysis: perspectives on second language acquisition.* New York: Routledge.

Robinson, P. (2002). *The Philosophy of Punctuation.* Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Saville-Troike, M. (2006). *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schachter, J. & Celce-Murcia, M. (1977). Some reservations concerning error analysis. TESOL Quarterly, 11(4), 440-451. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3585740

Schmitt, N. (2000).*Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sekyi-Baidoo, Y. (2013). *Learning and communication.* Accra: Infinity Press.

Selinker, L. (1972). *Interlanguage*. IRAL. 10, 209-231.

Selinker, L. (1983). Language Transfer. In S. Bass & L. Selinker (Eds). *Language Transfer in Language Learning* (pp. 33-68). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Silver, T. (1993). On the future of L2 writing: The view from the Irony Tower. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 9(1), 5-7.

Stevenson, J. (2005). *The Pocket Idiot's guide to grammar and punctuation*. New York: Penguin.

Touchie, H. (1986). Second Language Learning Errors, Their Types, Causes and Treatment. *Proceedings of the JALT Journal*, 8(1). Retrieved from Jaltpublications.org/files/pdf-articl/art5-8.pdf. Undergraduates. *Saharamuwa University Journal*, 9, (1), 139-316. Undergraduates. *Saharamuwa University Journal*, 9 (1), 139-316.

Wardhaugh, R. (1970). The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 4.

Waring, R. (2001). *Vocabulary Learning Strategies*. Notre Dame, Seishin University: Okayama.

Williamson, A., A. (2008). "Period or Comma? Decimal Styles over Time and Place". *Science Editor* 31 (2): 42 – 43.

Wolfersberger, M. (2003). L1 to L2 Writing Process and Strategy Transfer. A look at lower proficiency writers. *TESL-EJ*, 7, 1-15.

Woods, G. (2001). *English grammar for dummies*. Hoboken: Wiley.

Wu, H. & Garza, E., V. (2014). Types and Attributes of English Writing Errors in the EFL Context- A Study of Error Analysis. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, Vol. 5(6), 1256-1262.

Xu, J. (2004). *A Survey Study of Autonomous Learning by Chinese English Major Postgraduates*. Retrieved September 15, 2017 from http://www.net.org/jounal/index.php/elt/article/viewfile/4441/3783.

Zafar, A. (2016). Error Analysis: A Tool to Improve English Skills of Undergraduate Students. *Procedio-Social and Behavioural Science* 217, 697-705.